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**Counter-identification processes among the third-fourth
generation of immigrants in France: the Arab community
in Marseille**

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Abstract:

The importance of the thesis derived from the perspective offered: issues concerning immigration and integration often have been dealt with approaches which stress the conflictuality between faiths and cultures, or unload on the immigrant, meant as individual, the burden of a failed or successful "integration". In countries such as France, where concepts such as integration and assimilation continue to engage in the public debate even though they are dealing with the third and fourth generation of immigrants, the fallacy of these approaches is relevantly shared among scholars. Hence, my choice to highlight the negative inputs entered by the State/society, and perceived as threat and discrimination by the French with Arab origins, is justified by the need for a different approach. In fact, among the final results of the thesis, appears the trend (more or less extended among the young "Beurs") of re-establishing their identity on ethnicity and religion rather than their French nationality, since not always perceived by peers and institutions/authorities as pure French.

Abstrakt:

Význam teze odvozený z nabízené perspektivy: otázky týkající se imigrace a integrace se často zabývají přístupy, které zdůrazňují konfliktnost mezi vírami a kulturami nebo vykládají přistěhovalce, což znamená jako jednotlivce, břemeno neúspěšné nebo úspěšné „integrace“. V zemích, jako je Francie, kde koncepty, jako je integrace a asimilace, nadále zabírají veřejnou debatu, přestože se zabývají třetí a čtvrtou generací přistěhovalců, je omyl těchto přístupů relevantně sdílen mezi vědci. Moje volba zdůraznit negativní vstupy státu /

společnosti a vnímaná jako hrozba a diskriminace Francouzi s arabským původem je tedy odůvodněna potřebou odlišného přístupu. Ve skutečnosti se mezi konečnými výsledky práce objevuje trend (víceméně rozšířený mezi mladými „Beurs“) o obnovení jejich identity na etnicitě a náboženství spíše než na jejich francouzské národnosti, protože to není vždy vnímáno vrstevníky a institucemi / autority jako čistě francouzština.

Keywords: immigration, integration, identity, ethnicity, religion, racism, identification, Islam, France, sociology

Klíčová slova: imigrace, integrace, identita, etnicita, náboženství, rasismus, identifikace, islám, Francie, sociologie

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Declaration of Authorship

- 1. The author hereby declares that he compiled this thesis independently, using only the listed resources and literature.**
- 2. The author hereby declares that all the sources and literature used have been properly cited.**
- 3. The author hereby declares that the thesis has not been used to obtain a different or the same degree.**

Prague, 19th May 2020

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Thesis Proposal - Enrico Maria la Forgia

Topic: Integration, third-fourth generation of immigrants, French assimilationist pattern

Social relevance: life between “double identity” in the third-four generation of immigrants in Marseille (eventual repulsive and counter-identification processes of the French society meant as the majority of "natives").

Supervisor: Zdenek Uherek

Since the beginning of the great migrations, mostly after WWII and the economic development that characterized Europe in the latter part of the last century (Castles S., Miller J., 2013), integration and immigration have always got the attention of social scientists. Since the very first moment, it was clear that this "wave" of people would have changed the society of European countries strongly involved in this process. With the passing of decades, the increase of incoming people and the failure of many of the strategies adopted by European countries (concerning education, labor, religion, accommodation, etc), social scientists started to highlight the risks of a fragmented multicultural society. The crisis triggered by the inability of the political class to control the social processes related to migration flows has started a well-eradicated concept based on counter-identification (social theory of "us" against "them") among society. The effects of this counter-identification process touched different environments of civil society: from faith-right to language, from culture to competition on the labor-market, immigrants have been perceived as a stranger element in a society they don't "belong" to. In order to face this dangerous situation, the European political class tried to introduce integration strategies (divided between a multicultural approach or an assimilationist one) focused more on jurisprudence and legal status than real needs of those people. Some decades later, we are still able to observe the effects of these strategies in Europe: countries as UK, France, Germany, and others, have now hundreds of thousands of citizens with foreign origins (all of these countries proceeded to release their

citizenship to immigrants settled on their national territory) that still face social tensions in their everyday life (Roy O., 2016).

Now, decades later, we are assisting to a new wave of migration caused by geopolitical and economic events into the Arabic world (Arabic springs, etc.), and Europe risks facing a similar crisis and the relatives effects on its society. A focus to what could represent the failure of the old-politics adopted (third-fourth generation of immigrants, probably not yet totally integrated/assimilated) can highlight some solutions to old and new problems concerning the double identity and the social tension in front of flows of incoming people.

The case study is the French society and the city of Marseille in particular. As a matter of fact, in France the adoption of the *ius soli* (citizenship if born on the national territory) didn't solve the problems related to immigration and the resulting multi-ethnic mosaic: entire communities of "French citizens" are exiled to the periphery of society, physically through the banlieues and socially through a not-so-hidden racism and mistrusting by the so-called natives (Sayad A., 2002).

The thesis research will be related to this social phenomenon and his perception of the third-fourth generation of immigrants. In particular, the processes of counter-identification and social-repulsion they underwent in public environments such as schools, authorities' offices, job place, etc. The social relevance, is to show integration and immigration problems under another perspective observed from inside that fringe of French society that represents the problem and the solution: the final full integration of French minorities goes through the last generations of immigrants, divided between two identities and none, between two homes and two society that mistrusts them risking to generate the social conflict of our century (Roy O., 2016).

Despite a multicultural society established decades ago, phenomena linked to xenophobia, racism, and more, in general, a Eurocentric point of view of the common civil rights, are still infesting the French society. While most of the media are focused on populism as the reason of this trend (despite is probably a consequence instead) social scientists are investigating the effects of this new social tension on migration community. In my opinion, the attention

should be directed to whom already undergone that process: the third and fourth generation of immigrants already presents in France.

As a matter of fact, despite the situation get better compared with the last century's one (Garlaye), people born by French parents but with foreign origins are still stigmatized as Arabic or Muslims, despite their French identity (in some case the only one, since not all the new generations born conserve original religion, or bilingualism, etc.). These particular population of the French Nation is in the so-called grey-zone: without feelings able to connect them to their original land and without the acceptance of all the fringes of the French society.

In order to explore this particular dimension of French society, I opted for a very particular field where focus my research: Marseille. Located in the South of France, Marseille is the most important harbor of the country and the only European city daily connected with the African continent (Algiers, Algeria). The link between Marseille and the Arabic world, as a matter of fact, has always been strong: during the seventies and the Algerian war, thousands of immigrants used the harbor of the city to reach France and hope (Sayad). This influenced the socio-physical structure of the city, that shows a great alternation of Europeans neighbors and Arabic ones. Furthermore, in 2011, the residents with maghrebian origins, were more than 150,000 (presumably increased after the Arab springs and the international migrant crisis), one of the highest in the entire country (Eurostat).

In light of this, Marseille is presumably the perfect field to find subjects for the interviews: the incisiveness of the Arabic population on the total of the city is high and therefore also in public institutions like universities, social centers, sports, and every other social space.

The methodology adopted is a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods. In particular, the core of the research will be based on interviews (addressed to youngers of Arabic origin) about experiences in school and others public spaces related to racism/tolerance concerning their faith, their second language, their origins, etc. Alongside the interviews, I'll also use quantitative data gathered through questionnaires and concerning personal data and

information about the family (parents job, brothers, , etc., origins, relations with relatives abroad, etc.).

For technical exigencies, the interviews will be probably recorded and then reported as text.

Question ☐ is the repulsive process of nowadays French society affecting the third-fourth generation of immigrants despite their citizenship? Is this process starting a counter-identification process on the subjects who undergo it?

Interviews ☐ set of questions addressed to racism depending on skin-color, origins, religion. Particular focus on the dimension of faith in public spaces (streets, offices, schools, universities). If it's possible, explore also matters linked to double identity as bilingualism, relations with relatives abroad, etc.

Quantitative questionnaire ☐ general data. The questionnaire will be in anonymous form.

Place of the research ☐ Marseille, and in particular schools, universities, sportive associations and every other kind of social institution with a population of the third-fourth generation of immigrants (Arabic origins).

The literature used to give information about the state of knowledge of the subject and a general perspective on the topic (through analysis of related theories from the previous century and the beginning of ours). The chosen authors come from a wide range of schools and approach to the issue. Most part of the literature will be based on works by French authors (or France-related) such as Abdelmalek Sayad, Olivier Roy, Garlaye plus scholars belonging to the anthropological school of the United Kingdom (Goody R., Rundell J., Meer N.) and others approach deriving from other Europeans schools (Maniscalco, Haller, el-Khayat, Zaouanst, Accoccella, Abu Lughod, etc.). The bibliography, will be used as a theoretical base for the research and argue my work. Indeed, a theoretical approach could answer some of the questions or at least strengthen eventual pieces of evidence derived from the research.

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Introduction:

At the beginning of the great migrations that waved Europe in the second half of the last century, no one would have expected that the discussions concerning the “integration” of those migrants will still be relevant nowadays. To be more specific, today’s’ discussions are related to the nephews of those immigrants.

Indeed, the inability of political actors to lead and manage the flows of people and the phenomena related to their “integration”/acculturation, contributed to the creation of a heterogeneous society full of tensions and not really “melted”. The most emblematic case, and country to which the thesis refers to, is France.

As a matter of fact, the French Republic is one of the first “immigration” countries of Europe and, in the course of decades, adopted several different welcoming and integrating strategies in order to limit the social tension due to such a prolonged and massive flow. From legal procedures of citizenship-releasing to social policies, the political guideline often changed, also depending on the political forces at the Government, appearing confused and even passive.

The results of such strategies, sixty years later, are still the argument of debate. Besides citizenship, not a lot has been done for the families of the immigrants who arrived in the second half of the last century. On an economic level, the integration in the labour market never occurred, on the contrary, french citizens with foreign origins are often thwarted in the research of employment; on a social one, racism is still an issue in modern France, and the limited role left by French institutions to religion in public life (in this case Islam) accentuated the cultural contrasts instead of preventing them. For consistent ethnic minorities, in this case, the Arab community, decades of implicit social segregation and subordinate social role have triggered a process of “counter-identification” opposed to the common values, or presumed so, of French society. The thesis aims to investigate the development and causes of such a process.

With the “counter-identification” process, I refer to the trend found within the youngers of the Arabic community of adopting traditions and behaviour closer to the culture/identity of origins than to the French one. From the adoption of religious customs to the use of the Arabic language, there are many ways to conform individuals to identities, understood as a cultural construction constituted on a personal and collective form.

In particular, I assume that the failure of the “assimilationist” French model led to a lack of sharing of the “French identity” among the third-fourth generation of Arab immigrants. Consequently, the missing of the presumed French values (meant as a rupture with the secular, de-cultured and individualistic model of society), and the general diffident clime surrounding wide fringes of this population, contributed to a crisis of identity. If it’s widely shared among scholars, that in modern society we are assisting to the construction of multi-identities based more on a personal level than on a collective one (Bauman, 1999), it’s also taken in consideration that individuals at the periphery of society might develop an attachment to a collective identity different from the national one.

As a matter of fact, the French youngers with Arabic origins have the “opportunity” of finding social protection through the ethnic identity, and so on the base of their blood links, their aspect, and their culture. In other words, if the national identity (the French one) doesn’t provide social protection, a secondary national identity (in this case the one belonging to immigrant ancestors) might do it. If on one hand, the French citizenship is granted to these youngers as a right of birth; on the other, the difference of wealth between French with Arabic origins and “pure French” or “Franco-French”, and the hostile social frame reserved to the first ones, have the capacity of enact repulsive processes and push in the direction of secondary identity.

In order to investigate this phenomenon, the thesis is provided with both quantitative and qualitative data: to a wide set of statistics/reports, is added my research on the field (the city of Marseille) made by interviews. The methodology and case study adopted is discussed later in the specific chapters. The outcomes of the research are integrated into the already existing theoretical framework concerning immigration, identity, and the French assimilationist model, in order to offer a wider perspective of the matter.

Although I throw important consideration on identity (a lack of a French national identity might bring to the development of other kinds of identity, and not only to a national “replacement”-one), the matter of counter-identification processes within French population is of undeniable relevance: from poverty, to national security the failure of French assimilationist model and the repulsive feeling of its ethnic minorities is affecting the social-structure on many levels. Furthermore, since the beginning of new waves of

immigration from Africa and the Arab world (2011), questions on the efficacy of integration/welcoming pattern and its republican approach returned in the middle of the political debate. Therefore, individuating problems generated by the policies adopted 60 years ago, might help in elaborating a more inclusive approach to immigration.

PART I

The French assimilationist model: a failure seventy years long

1.1 The beginning of work-immigration from the Maghreb

Although modern France has been considered an immigration-country for all the industrial era, the major flow that hit the nation, and re-shaped its society, is the one from North Africa. In particular, the historical period known as “decolonization” (1947-1980, until the ‘60ies for North Africa, until 1980 for Zimbabwe, last african country in obtaining the independence from its former colonial power) coincided with mass immigration from previous colonies to European lands. As a matter of fact, immigration flows are among the results of the

decolonization process and the centre-periphery relationship installed with the former “motherland” (Sayad, 1999). The independence transition of Maghreb countries indeed, also depending on the modalities of the recognition from France (after conflicts in Algeria and Tunisia, in a more gentle and political way in Morocco), led to a massive movement of people in search of employment. The socio-economic scenario that followed the end of French military dominion was characterized by the lack of industrial power and millions of low-skilled workers impossible to absorb in the newborn labour market of North African countries. To those unable to find a job nor in the agricultural sector nor in recent urban one, no choice was left but to reach France (Sayad, 1999).

Counterposed to the ex-colonies’ economic struggles, after WWII France faced a period of economic growth. The lack of an industrial workforce, due to the demographic disaster of the war, encouraged France Governments to recruit the required workers among unskilled Arabs. These latter ones were encouraged to migrate to France by the above mentioned economic situation of the origins countries, and by the presence of Maghrebi communities already settled in French towns since previous flows (in the first part of the XX century).

Most Maghrebians were massively employed in industry or civil engineering (construction sector), a situation that encouraged the development of ethnically homogenous communities of workers, and consequently also ethnic nets (Barou, 2014).

However, the composition of the immigrants’ population, the nature of their migration, and the lack of integration policies on a national level limited the insertion of Arab workers in the society (Sayad, 1999). Migrants until the second half of the ‘50ies were young men from rural areas, in search of seasonal/annual employment in continental France in order to gain money to send back home. The intention of these immigrants was temporary: moving to France as a way to earn enough to go back “at the village” and start a business or buy a property. Since the temporary nature of their intentions in France, these immigrants reproduced their community life on the base of their rural tradition. The missing of citizenship and civil rights on to the one hand and the hope to return to Algeria/Maghreb as soon as possible on to the other, contributed to the construction of communities based on a rural-life structure, with the same hierarchies, the same duties, and the same daily life adapted to the industrial-work scenario (Sayad, 1999).

Often, differently from the expectations, migrants were not able to return home due to the economic situation and the need to work for prolonged periods. Among those Algerians (the focus of Sayad's work) incapacitated to return at the original country, a feeling of emptiness developed. What Sayad defined "double absence", is meant as a phenomenon linked to the identity conflict. In particular, such a conflict is generated by the impossibility to interact with the surrounding society and to participate in community life. As a matter of fact, migrants could not enact political and social power in the "hosting country", due to the lack of the most basics rights, nor in the native one due to the physical absence; therefore, they developed a sentiment of alienation and consequent exclusion from society.

The impossibility of returning to Algeria also had other effects besides the identity conflict generated by the "double-absence" phenomenon. One of these effects, according to Sayad, is the switch from communitarian economic logic to a more individualistic one. With the past of seasons spent "alone" in France and the rise of new needs related to the new social-habitat, immigrants enacted a change in their working mentality and consequently on their family and community structure. The rural society to which immigrants were still "belonging" to, had at its center the leading roles played by the elders of the village, while the younger men were working in fields and taking care of elders, children, and women (Sayad, 1999). Since the immigrants were mainly young men generally married, the distance between them and the top of the rural hierarchy, the elders, contributed to the shift of the economic and so societal power. From sending the most significant part of the wage to Algeria, and keeping the minimum need to provide for themselves in France, immigrants started to send fewer capitals and to fewer people (usually wives and sons), realizing the need for money for living in the hosting country (Sayad, 1999).

At this point, after the rupture of the "myth of return", another need afflicted immigrants, this time on a personal and moral level. With the worsening of the Algerian situation, due to the independence war and its economic/social effects, the need for affection and community triggered a process of family-reunion that characterized the people flows directed to France for the following years ('60ies - '70ies).

This period of France immigration history represents a key moment for French society: families reaching men working in France, found entire communities of Algerian people living all in the same neighbourhoods and with the tradition of “home” (Sayad, 1999). In this way, entire neighbourhoods of the principal industrial centers became “cities in the cities” similar to the estates of North Africa, due to the superior ethnic presence of Algerians that shaped the urban identity of determined areas. This flow of women and children from Algeria to France is estimated to involve around half a million of Algerians, reaching the already present 200.000 workers (Deroo, 2014).

1.2 Arabic families in France and the assimilationist model

As already mentioned, the biggest immigration flow involving France in the last century has been the one in the period between the ‘60ies and the ‘70ies, which involved mainly Arab migrants from North Africa. Not only Algerians but also Moroccans and Tunisians increased their numbers in Metropolitan France (INED, 2005). At the beginning of the decade (1960) around one million Maghrebians reached continental France following both working and familiar conjunction schemes. In a few years, the number of Arabs in France quadrupled and changed in its composition: from a population of mainly young men in working age, self-segregated in peripheral neighborhoods and inactive on a societal and political level, it became composed by families. The increase of the migrant population forced France to manage the integration in public education and housing of tens of thousands of children and women. Furthermore, the nature of this immigration wave, aimed to settle in France instead of searching for seasonal work, pushed France to consider political approaches to the matter of citizenship. Since the very first moment, it was clear the socio-demographic change that was occurring in French cities: women from Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia, due to the traditional life of rural areas, had a fertility rate close to three children per-capita (in some years even higher), almost the double of French women (Insee, 2004).

Just after the ‘60ies’ arrivals, entire neighborhoods of industrial cities get overwhelmed. Maghrebi families overcrowded quarters nearby industrial plants, bringing into the public

debate the two pillars on which the assimilationist model is based: citizenship and public housing. Both of these “instruments”, were understood as a first step to reach the total assimilation of the foreign population in continental France. As a matter of fact, with “assimilation” we generally refer to a process similar to the anthropological definition of acculturation. To be assimilated, immigrants must proceed to an effort of acculturation, understood as the adoption of part of the hosting culture traditions and values. The aim of this process is usually to make ethnic minorities as much as similar to the dominant culture/component of the society (Safi, 2008), as enacted in the U.S almost one century before France. Exactly as in the American model (generally called “Americanization”), the French assimilationist model tried to erode public and private boundaries among and between ethnic groups (Kazal, 1995). The initial way adopted in order to reach a similar outcome was going through the integration in the labour market, and public education (two fields I dealt with in the section dedicated to the research since are two of the “spheres” analyzed) but also the integration in the citizens’ community (understood as the group in possess of the French citizenship) and in the public policies (Barou, 2014), mainly the housing one.

1.3 Immigrants and the French citizenship

In France, the issue related to the assimilation of ethnic minorities, become central in the public debate at the end of the XIX century. At that time, the matter was following the social tension generated by the contrasts aroused between French Catholics and Jewish French. As a matter of fact, the term assimilation was meant as a strategy to forge a collective identity that did not correspond to a religious one. What at that time was considered a social pact, was based on the assumption of liberty of maintaining religion in a private sphere in exchange for participation in the Nation construction on a public one (Lacroix, 2015).

If this social pact seemed to work for Jewish communities in metropolitan France, the discourse involved also the overseas territory. Colonies as Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco were considered part of the French Empire and so part of France as a country. Besides that,

the Arab population of those regions, according to socio-cultural criteria taken into consideration, were considered as the ethnicity less assimilable (Lacroix, 2015). Tocqueville (1840), during his studies on Arabic tribes of Maghreb, described Arabs as extremely religious, closed-minded, and with traditions incompatible with the French society model (like nomadism and polygamy). To deal with this problem, Arabic Muslims were allowed, according to the legal status implemented by Napoleon III, to preserve their religious/socio traditions (including polygamy) but not to express vote or be eligible for citizenship (Pierantoni, 1961).

The situation changed during the last decade of the 19th century when demographic depression “forced” French politics to concede citizenship to the sons (born in France) of foreign immigrants. The introduction of *Jus soli*, or the right to citizenship on the base of the place of birth, in 1889, was addressed mainly to Belgians, Italians, and Portuguese migrants, but also involved a minority of Arabs, mainly Algerians (Lacroix, 2015). Anyway, in order to obtain citizenship, migrants were obliged to demonstrate their assimilability, and that often means the abandonment of religious precepts (Barou, 2014).

To start talking about full citizenship released to Arabs migrants, French politics waited for the second after war. The 3 March 1945, General Charles De Gaulle, during a public speech, sustained that: “*the lack of population and the lack of births are the principal cause of French unhappiness and the main obstacles which prevent French recovery*” (Bertossi, 2010, pp. 5), alluding that people from countries with a higher rate of fertility than France might help the re-construction of the state itself (Bertossi, 2010). To be precise, these words were referring to European migrants (Italians, Spanish, Belgians, and Portuguese), considered more assimilable than Arabs, according to the approach to immigration established by George Mauco, a politician that programmed the denaturalization of more than 100.000 persons among French jews and Algerians under the filo-nazi France of Vichy (Berdah, 2006).

The need for births of the French Republic, and the rapid economic development known as Glorious Thirty Years (1944-1974) contributed to the instauration of a pro-immigration

policy of naturalization and citizenship (Berdah, 2006). An important date in the immigration history of France is 22 December 1961, when the Government modified the conditions under which inhabitants of colonies were naturalized (Bertossi, 2010). As a matter of fact, by 1960, almost all the previous French colonies were *de facto* independent, and the need for newborns encouraged the modification of the previous naturalization law. Indeed, with the 1961's Law, citizens of former colonies were naturalized without the need for residence requirements (Bertossi, 2010). Twelve years later, in 1973, following the demographic course of events generated by the immigration flow of the '50ies, a law enforced the *jus soli* (until that time *de facto* limited), providing with the French citizenship all the kids born in France from foreign parents, which were not naturalized yet or not naturalize since not from former colonial territories (Lagarde, 1997).

This favorable socio-economical situation changed in 1974, with the beginning of the economic crisis that will characterize Europe in the following ten years (Bedrah, 2006). As a consequence, in front of the growth of unemployment, French government stop encouraging workers' migration, and instead of releasing citizenship and naturalizing immigrants, provided stable foreign residents status with ten-years-long permits (Bertossi, 2010). While the social tension grew alongside unemployment, French politics and mainly its right-wing started to draw consideration on immigration. Despite extreme plans elaborated, like the one proposed by Chirac of repatriating a number among 100.000 and 500.000 Algerians (Bedrah, 2006), the right-wing Government founded a commission aimed to study the "meaning of being French" and propose a limitation to naturalization. The product will be the base for the law on citizenship of 1993 (Lagarde, 1997).

The law on citizenship of 1993, represents a particularly restricted approach, in rupture with the previous one adopted. In 1993, the right government of Chirac tried to limit the naturalization through marriage, increasing the time required to ask the citizenship (after the marriage contract) from 1 to 3 years; but most of all, modified the *jus soli* right (Bertossi, 2010). The previous "*pure jus soli*" (citizenship as a granted right to whom born in French territory) was limited to children born in France by foreign parents which at least one was French or born in a former colony. With the new law, citizenship was not automatically gained, but the candidate must require it after the maturity (between 18 and 21 years old).

The following law in 1998 tried to limit the content of 1993's one, specifically releasing the citizenship only to children born from foreign parents who spent their teenhood in France until the age of 18 (Bertossi, 2010); with the effect of leaving thousands of youngers without citizenship. Furthermore, the following right government in 2003, introduced in the procedure of "the request for citizenship" an exam of French language and a test on Republic values and civil rights, in the attempt of "measuring" and evaluate the allegiance of "foreigners' sons" to France.

1.4 Immigrants and the public housing system

As relevant as citizenship, the problem concerning the allocation of immigrants became of primary importance in the public debate (Verdugo, 2018). With the increase of arrivals, and the conjunction of families (beginning of the '60ies), the *bidonvilles* previously inhabited by immigrant workers grew exponentially. As a matter of fact, until the end of the '60ies and the beginning of the '70ies, public housing policies for immigrants targeted single men providing them space in collective dormitories or makeshift housing in slums (Verdugo, 2011). These slums grew as a consequence of the massive recruitment of workers in North African countries. Employed mainly in the industrial sector, Arab workers inhabited the areas surrounding the factories, often in precarious and illegal housing (Gastour, 2004). These makeshift homes, unhealthy and without services, remained the norm for several years: in 1962, one in four immigrants lived in a shantytown (Gastour, 2004). During the '60ies, when Arab workers were reached by their families for a more permanent staying in France, the size of *bidonvilles* became an important matter in the public discourse. To face the problem of immigrants' accommodation, France instituted the public housing service, among the firsts in Europe (Harloe, 2008). Public housing is generally meant as the provision by the state of housing at a lower rent-price than the market. In France, this service is universal and refers to all the families legally living in France included under a determined threshold of incomes (Verdugo, 2018).

A first legal provision, in the attempt of re-absorbing *bidonvilles* and, solve the inhabitation problem of immigrants, will be presented in 1966 as Nungesser Law (Blanchard, 2016). The

content of the law was aimed to tear down the slums, moving the families in other accommodations provided by the state and re-invest in the territories gained back by the demolition of *bidonvilles*, all before 1970 (Gastaut, 2004). Despite the plan elaborated by the government, in 1968 the situation was still disastrous: 75,000 people in France were still living in precarious houses in slums, 42% of them were Maghrebians gathered mainly in industrial areas with Paris and Marseille overall, with more than 35,000 inhabitants together. The number of *bidonvilles*' inhabitants decreased in the following years but in 1970 it was still around 45,000 people, of which 75% was compounded by immigrants (Gastaut, 2004).

The habitation crisis led to fast urban development, with the growth of the peripheral area of cities. The amplification of ZUP (Zone à Urbaniser a Priorité - Prior Areas to Urbanize), created in 1958 to face the dangerous habitation emergency around the principal industrial cities, coincided with the construction of hundreds of blocks. These blocks, were often not connected to the city center by public transportation or not provided by the most basic services like schools and hospitals (Lagarde, 1997). What was meant in the Law Nungesser, was a strategy aimed to de-locate thousands of immigrants from *bidonvilles* into new "projects", called *cités*. As a matter of fact, the urbanization of industrial areas was understood as the construction of new modern neighborhoods, provided with services and public transportation. The outcomes, as known, were very different: the slow realization of connections with cities central areas, and the end of the "Glorious 30 years" (and the consequent increase of unemployment), isolated the new neighborhoods that assisted to a worsening of the socio-economic conditions (Gastaut, 2004).

In 1982, another attempt to improve the living conditions of such areas was made. Named "politique de la Ville" (policy of the city), aimed at urban minorities rather than ethnic minorities, tried to solve problems regarding missing housing policies, poor infrastructures, and essential services still not provided as flowing water (Donzelot, 1991). Ten years later the results were not insignificant, mainly in the provision of sanitarian services and the complete accommodation buildings, but still not functional as expected. The social situation was not resolved too: violence, scholastic failure, and unemployment rates were still higher than the national average (Fitoussi, 2004).

With the past of years, the Franco-French population of *cités* left for less segregated urban areas (Gastaut, 2004). At the beginning of the housing policies, authorities tried to preserve a mixture of ethnicities in order to prevent the reproduction of social habitat different from the European ones (Donzelot, 1991). Instead, with the increase of unemployment among low skilled workers (mainly immigrants) who were therefore “forced” to keep living in low-rents housing, appeared how these suburban areas were becoming ethnic ghettos (Donzelot, 1991). Indeed, according to Insee statistics, from 1982 to 2012 the “Maghrebians” (immigrants or French with origins) increased their presence in the peripheric suburbs: from covering 30% of the population resident in public housing structures in 1982, they were 42% of the total in 2012 (Verdugo, 2018).

2 Segregation and social tension in contemporary French society

The high level of concentration of people of the same nationality in the same suburb degenerated in segregation soon. At the end of the massive urban development of industrial cities, the participation of Maghrebis in public housing was close to 50% (Verdugo, 2001). As shown by Verdugo in his study on the rates of residential segregation of immigrants between 1968 and 1999, the segregation by region of origin of non-European immigrants increased for participants in public housing. That means that groups of immigrants from the same region (example: Maghreb), for reasons not always depending on them, tend to live in the same urban area. The final result is a vicious circle in which communities are excluded in reason of their spatial segregation and the other way around. Dislocation is, hereby, the cause of inequalities instead of the solution (Fitoussi, 2004).

However, at the base of this phenomenon of exclusion, additional behavioural factors must be taken into consideration. Besides the policies enacted in the political arena, there are

processes of spatial assimilation, place stratification, and racial residential preferences behind the segregation of minorities and immigrants (Verdugo, 2018). With the first term, it is usually meant a political decision: the government may enact strategies aimed to find spatial opportunities for immigrants (like in France), with the building of projects ready to face the public housing demand. At the base of these political actions, there is the assumption, already considered by Americans at the beginning of last century, that immigrants, once acculturated in the hosting culture, will move in better neighborhoods, following better employment and opportunities (Verdugo, 2018). As for the American scenario, this assumption is often wrong in France, and not all immigrants manage to leave ZUS (Zones Urbaines Sensibles - sensitive urban areas).

Related to the failure of the assimilationist assumption, and other behavioral phenomena to take into consideration in the optic of spatial segregation, is the concept of place stratification. Indeed, even if the assimilationist assumption was realistic, and immigrants would be able to move from ZUS, there is still a trend in the house market that prefers white-French-male instead of Arabs in the offer and rent of apartments. With place stratification, it is hereby meant the tendency, enacted by factors exterior to immigrants' will, to "force" minorities to live in ZUS (Verdugo, 2018). This phenomenon, in particular, also affects economic integration (Fitoussi, 2004). Indeed, the lack of economic interest and working activities in ZUS, limits the occasions left to immigrants to the peripheral areas. As a consequence, immigrants see the decrease of their chances of both, earning money and leave the neighborhood (Fitoussi, 2004).

Finally, the third behavioral factor: residential preferences. With this term, social scientists usually refer to two behaviors/trends in two different groups. On one hand, as expected, we indicate the will of wealthy natives (Franco-French) to avoid mixed neighborhoods with high rates of crimes, pollution, and other urban inconveniences. In social sciences, this behavior is called *ethnic avoidance* and expresses the habit to avoid high concentrations of immigrants understood as a synonym of danger and degraded area (Andersson, 2013). On the other, when given the opportunity, immigrants incline to ethnic networks for moving. Following this logic, as often happens, immigrants would prefer, at least in the first period of living in the hosting society, neighborhoods where the presence of people belonging to the same ethnic

group (not only nationality), or eventually to the same family, is solid enough to grant social safety (Verdugo, 2018).

These three factors represent a pillar in French society's inequalities. As showed by Fitoussi in his report on sensitives urban areas, the prolonged effects of such behavioral processes on many levels might increase the distances between social classes in neighborhoods in which the lowest skilled workers are mainly immigrants. As often happened in the history of France, the climate of injustice and inequalities perceived by ethnic minorities of ZUS results in riots and social tensions. In particular, demonstrations and in some cases riots. With the increase of the perception of social injustices, violence acts became the most used tools of peripheric minorities to make their voices heard.

1.4 violence, relation with authorities and public demonstrations across five decades

The history of the violent relationship between segregation areas' inhabitants and authorities came along with the housing crisis and the creation of ZUS. The very existence of *bidonvilles* became a security problem for French society, leading to aggressive treatment of the matter. In 1964, the police prefecture of Paris created the Assistance Service: City Hall employees in charge of the census of the inhabitants of slums and of the numbering of the barracks (Gastout, 2004). Therefore, member of the Assistance Service were in charge of the control of the situation and the activities of *bidonvilles*, duty that often exceeded in the violation of privacy and private spaces. Since these employees were escorted by police officers, the contrasts and the misunderstandings were common events. The difficult relationship between Arab immigrants and authorities' agents, already in those days, deepen its roots in the previous decade. As a matter of fact, during the years of the independence of North African countries, and in particular Algeria, characterized by a long and blood-full war, brutal actions enacted by police officers were aimed to control the foreign population (Gastout, 2004). Police forces, since the beginning of Algeria's war (1954) used to consider the population of *bidonvilles* as enemies (Lapeyronnie, 2006). In those days, the census system was used by police as a tool to investigate and individuate eventual members of the "Front de Liberation

National” (Front of National Liberation, Algerians independentist armed group during the war) infiltrated among immigrants (Gastout, 2004). The methods adopted by police, thanks to the well-being of political forces, common citizens and the public opinion that generally considered Algerians immigrants as terrorists or enemies, exacerbated the climate of tensions and violence, and the 17 October 1961 it flowed in one of the saddest pages of French history.

In that period, tired of bloodsheds and pressure from a growing fringe of anti-war citizens, President De Gaulle was considering the independence of Algeria as a solution to the 8 years war. The news was greeted with anger by the most of the army and the fringes of the conservatives, and so the tension grow more (Brunet, 2008). The 17 October, 30.000 Algerians, among those children, women, and elders, flowed into the streets demanding the end of the curfew previously announced by Paris’ authorities and inherent to all “French Muslims of Algeria” (Brunet, 2008). Acting on the order of Papon, Paris Police Chief since 1958 and previously collaborationist of pro-Nazi Government of Vichy’s France, police officers violently suppressed the demonstration, arresting over ten-thousand Algerians and causing among 150 and 300 casualties (Blanchard, 2016). The violence enacted by authorities, with the support of independently formed armed groups of citizens, marks a historical moment entered in the French mass culture. For the entire night, Algerians have been beaten with clubs, shot, tortured and drowned in the Seine (Brunet, 2008).

The massacre and its responsible benefited from the silence of the French State for many decades. The event will be recognized only 51 years later, in 2012, by President Hollande (Le Monde, 17 October 2012). Indeed, despite the acknowledgement of an increasing number of victims (48 in 1998, after a trial regarding Papon’s orders) during the past of the years, the government denied for a long time its involvement and its actual casualties.

The events of Paris, besides representing the peak of violence against immigrants, are unfortunately among the firsts of a long series. Generally called “*ratonnades*” (rats hunting), from the ‘70ies these kinds of episodes become much more frequent (Blanchard, 2016). Particularly violent were those of Marseille, between August and December 1973 (Cohen,

2002). Furthermore, global events such as the oil crisis of 1974 or the Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979 strengthen the rise of Islamism and consequently the perception, shared by many citizens, of Muslims and Arabs as terrorists (Blanchard, 2016).

Interestingly, demonstrations and marches continued during the decades, alongside the growing generation of Arabs born in France. In 1983, the “March for Equality and Against Racism” that involved thousands of youngers in the path between Marseille and Paris, marked a clime of distension between the communities of Arabs and French. Despite the tensions and the contrasts will increase once again at the beginning of 2000, the march of 1983 is one of the distensive events in stressing the identity-issue of the second generation of immigrants: still in nowadays, the march is called the “ Marches des Beures”, where Beures, appearing for the first time, is a slang term referring to young French with Maghrebi origins (Blanchard, 2016). This term, “Beur”, will be used to refer to the entire movement that organized the march and many other cultural events in the following period.

The “Beurs Movement”, tried to canalize the tension between young Arabs and authorities of that time in legal protests (Chabanet, 2016). Members of the movement obtained the trust of the people of the banlieues through initiatives on the ground, becoming a sort of mediator between the Government and difficult neighborhoods (Bloul, 1998). Interestingly for the thesis aim, the movement had several consequences on the identity of that generation of immigrants. On one hand, the march attracted the attention of the country and most importantly of that day’s President Mitterand, which even received the leaders of the movement (Bloul, 1998); on the other split the opinion of the banlieues. Indeed, opposingly to the majority of the movements, a rather small wing of politicized youngers pushed for the adoption of a more political/ethnical approach rather than a moral one as typical by “anti-racism” demonstrations (Jazouli, 1992). For many reasons, this small wing of the movements couldn’t win: the moral structure of the bargain involved also Franco-French with anti-racist political orientation; hence, the presence of “whites” among “Beurs”, increased the legitimacy of the moral approach and satisfied the desire of the majority of the members of not politicizing/ethnicizing the movement (Jazouli, 1992). However, movements as France Plus (existing between 1985-1997) managed to candidate 550 Beurs for municipal elections,

among which 150 occupied political roles between 1985 and 2001 (Wihtol de Wenden, 2011).

As demonstrated by Lapeyronnie (1992), after 1983's march, France assisted in the implementation of both its Beurs bureaucrats and public administration officers on a micro level, and Government's initiatives concerning public housing and education in degraded suburbs. Unfortunately, as typical in Western democracies, the changes of the political orientation of Governments lead to the destruction of previous executives' provisions, limiting, in this case, the policies adopted by Mitterand and contributing to the explosion of others demonstration strategies.

Thereby, the Beurs Movement decreased in its importance until almost disappearing from the political/public opinion scene, while the situation in suburbs and neighborhoods with Arabs majorities kept a negative trend concerning criminality, education, and unemployment. At the beginning of 2000s, the conflict between periphery and authorities exploded, triggering a wave of violence and riots that showed once again the rage of the new generations of immigrants for the treatment reserved to them by the central power.

In 2005, following the death of two teenagers during a chasing with police officers, the people of banlieues (starting from Clichy-sous-Bois, east of Paris) showed their frustration and rage in the streets using the violence as proto political mean (Lapeyronnie, 2006) in order to gain visibility. The level of violence appeared, since the beginning of the demonstration, extremely high, with attacks on vehicles, buildings, and actions of urban guerrilla engaged with police officers (Moran, 2011). What is interesting to report about the riots of 2005, is the dynamic of the relations between the people from the banlieues (called *jeunes de cité*) and the authorities. As a matter of fact, the accident that triggered the riots (two teenagers death electroshocked in a power plant while attempting to run police officers during an identity control) is just a representational event of the mistrust and rivalry between inhabitants of ZUS and police officers (Moran, 2011). According to Moran, police actions in ZUS, even small operations as identity control, often flow into provocation and abuse; while on the other hand, the high incidence of criminality and violence in the suburbs brutalizes police officers in a vicious circle. Hereby, it is correct to assume the violence of 2005 riots as grievances for decades of small opportunities and socio-cultural investments in the periphery.

The riots in 2005 brought up the consideration of banlieues among the political class. The then Minister of Interior, Sarkozy, during his visit to the involved neighborhood, after receiving threats and launch of objects by a group of teenagers, called them (live in TV) “*racaille*”, that we could translate with “scum”. Furthermore, a famous declaration released by Sarkozy himself, and largely shared by other politicians, stressed the conceptualization of the life in ZUS among the dirigent class of France (or at least part of it):

“La première cause du chômage, de la désespérance, de la violence dans les banlieues, ce ne sont pas les discriminations, ce n'est pas l'échec de l'école. La première cause du désespoir dans les quartiers, c'est le trafic de drogue, la loi des bandes, la dictature de la peur et la démission de la République” (Sarkozy, Le Monde, 21 November 2005).

[“*The primary cause of unemployment, despair, violence in the suburbs is not discrimination, it is not school failure. The first cause of desperation in the neighborhoods is drug trafficking, gang law, the dictatorship of fear and the resignation of the Republic.*”]

These few words, released by such a fundamental key-figure such as the Minister of Interior, could be interpreted as the French state turning its back on its own children, once again.

The riots of 2005, finished after four weeks of urban violence, thanks also to the decision of the Government, under the pressure of Mr. Begag (Minister of Pair Opportunities) to suspend the prohibition of gather data on ethnic minorities, in order to analyze discrimination in education and work. Despite that, the promises made by the authorities, won't be enacted or at least not totally (Lapeyronnie, 2006). The “*racaille*” living in the banlieues will take to the street and demonstrate several other times, like in 2007 and 2017.

2.1 An extreme counter-identification phenomenon: Islamic fundamentalism among globalization losers

As written in the introduction, the theses assumes that the contrasts between the central authority of the French State and its second/third-generation-immigrant citizens is one of the

base of the counter identification process that might push individuals to embrace other identities over the French one. An important work that inspired me in taking the decision of approaching such a phenomenon is the work of Olivier Roy over the identities and characteristics of the so-called “lonely wolves”, the terrorists that terrorized Europe in the last years. Indeed, despite Roy is more focus on the nihilist dimension and the attraction to violence, some data and intuition highlight the importance of the contrasts between the subjects and the State.

Starting from the over-representation of the second-third generation of Maghrebians (60% of the cases) among the terrorists related to Daesh and active in Europe since 2014, there is clearly a rupture, in the subjects, between the French/European identity and the one of *homo islamicus*, a concept elaborated according to the propaganda of ISIS (Roy, 2017). The term *homo islamicus* must be understood as the total refuse of national identity and the adoption of an identity totally relying on faith. Interestingly, this identity is perfectly suiting to those we are used to calling globalization losers, especially if belonging to ethnic minorities usually associated with Islam.

Professor Roy, alongside *homo islamicus*, often uses the term “deculturation”. In particular, he refers to that range of phenomena, among which there is the secularization perpetrated by the French state, which contributed to the feeling of “missing identity”.

The deculturation occurs not only on the level of the French identity but also on the one of “Arab”. The studies of Roy, based on police investigations and reports, show how the French lonely wolves were not able to write, read and often speak in Arabic, nor were used to mosques’ environments, pretty unusual in the previous generations of immigrants.

As a matter of fact, their radicalization pattern follows an unusual “model of Islam”: despite Muslims are the second religious group of France, radicalized youngers are openly in rupture with them as well. Indeed, what they call “the Islam of fathers” (terminology used in Daesh’s propaganda) is understood as an institutionalized faith, or “the faith left by the French colonizers” more than 150 years ago. Under this perspective, the rupture occurs on two levels, one with the Franco-Muslims, accused of accepting the submission to French society, and the other one against France as country/institution/historical actor accused to humiliate

Islam through its processes of extreme secularization and its military presence in African/Middle East scenarios (Roy, 2017).

As reported by many news channels, such as Al-Jazeera and France24, third-generation-immigrants, often left France to join the Jihad in Syria. The same youngers appeared in different propaganda videos referring directly to President Hollande or to France as a Nation and as a community of people, accusing them of humiliating and threatening the *Umma* (a term referring to the global community of Muslims) and swearing revenge. Despite this particular case, Roy highlights how, generally, the link between radicalized French youngers and conflicts in the Middle East region is generated. Indeed, the difference between today's terrorists and those active pre-1995 , is the apparent lack of solid links between the lonely wolves and their presumed "countries of origin". This detail, is particularly interesting for us, since the link is created after the radicalization (and so must be understood as a discovering or a coming back to origins (not only to Islam).

What makes me think about a coming back to origins that follows an identitarian rupture with France and French, is the past of the lonely wolves. Indeed, despite is not the only profile possible, most of them have a turbulent past also made by conflict with authorities and periods spent in prison. One of the scholars' works cores, for example, is the space of radicalization. Despite what many people would think, lonely wolves active in Europe didn't radicalize in mosques, but in prison (Khosrokhavar, 2004). The arrest and the following imprisonment are the maximum consequence of an identitarian crisis leading to contrast with the State as an authority. Furthermore, the second/third generation of immigrants is over-represented among prison population (Sizaire, Le Monde Diplomatique, 02/20) and prison represents an occasion for entering in contact with radicalized Muslims and members of the same presumed ethnic/national group, characterized by the same rage and antagonism with State authorities such as police and juridical system (Khosrokhavar, 2004). As a matter of fact, despite not all the considered subjects come from difficult neighborhoods, all of them have a past of criminality that brought them in prison, sometimes violence and steals, more often use and possession of drugs, all of them "rebellion behaviors" (Matza, 1961).

Finally, it is important to notice how the “action” (terrorist attacks) is always preceded by an identity crisis expressed often with an unexpected change in behaviors. Roy himself highlights how people related to lonely wolves (parents, friends, and neighbors) refer to a change of habit: people that spent their entire lives without considering ethnicity and religion, from some moment start to talk and share on social media materials concerning it.

With this paragraph, I didn't want to make a connection between ethnicity, identity crisis, Islamic fundamentalism, and terrorism as a mechanical process, but explain the antagonism with the State, actually a really common feeling among globalized youth and in particular, the so-called globalization losers, and how it might generate extreme counter-identification processes among those who are endowed with a secondary identity (ethnic or religious or, as I'll explain later, every kind of identification with symbols or territorial belonging).

PART II

Research design and methodology adopted

In order to investigate the phenomena core of the thesis (counter identification processes), I used a research methodology focused on qualitative data gathered through “face to face” interviews, following a set of sensitive questions on the topics indicated in the introduction.

Despite the ethnographic-style approach to the research, I used quantitative tools as well in order to measure variables as the nationality and the neighborhood of residence of the

subjects interviewed. The research is focused on a particular community of Arabs in Marseille composed of Tunisians and Algerians. However, I expected to interview also smaller samples of Moroccans since there was not an exact way to refer to a specific national origin. Indeed, the sampling process had followed a snowballing pattern, and so, since I started the research from the contacts provided me by the Tunisian Consulate and an Algerian association (that I describe further), most of the respondents were Algerians/Tunisians as well.

Since my interviews were aimed to investigate a non-national sphere of the identity (so not related to being Tunisian or Algerian or whatever), the results are applicable to populations of different nationalities. As a matter of fact, the specification of the sample examined is needed only for a need of scientific precision. The fact that the focus was concentrated on Tunisians/Algerians has not been voluntary. Indeed, during my first exploratory travel in Marseille, the Tunisian consulate, to which I addressed since responsible not only for foreigners citizens but also for several initiatives involving “French youngers willing to discover their cultural heritage, has been the more open to my idea and the more available to collaborate and provide me contacts and addresses of associations. The consulate of Morocco had been impossibilitated to help me since the major community of Moroccans in France is resident in Evian, and the major intra-ethnic organizations/NGOs as well. Finally, the Algerian consulate has been opposing my research suggesting me to go directly to the Algerian embassy of Paris since they were not supposed to provide personal contacts and addresses of organizations. However, I had the opportunity of interviewing members of Solidaire (Trade Union) to which is affiliated CADSA Marseille, an association gathering pure Algerians or third-generation immigrants with the aim of informing and discuss Algeria’s and France’s politics.

The questions which compound my set of sensible topics are related to four main spheres of the immigrant life. According to the definition of “counter-identification” process I gave in the introduction (*“With the “counter-identification” process, I refer to the trend found within the youngers of the Arabic community of adopting traditions and behaviour closer to the culture/identity of origins than to the French one [...] adoption of religious customs [...] use of the Arabic language, there are many ways to conform individuals to identities, understood*

as a cultural construction constituted on a personal and collective form.), these four main spheres are at the base of the inter-ethnic social interaction and identity building (there is a long tradition of cultural anthropology that I inserted later in the appropriate paragraph) and so of primary importance and interest for my research.

In order to explore these four spheres, the questions are addressed on some specific contrasts that are generated by the spheres themselves: regarding the “socializing sphere”, I focus on the primary form of inter-ethnic contrast occurring in the secondary socialization environment (school) with questions investigating previous racists episodes due to physical characteristics attributable to the Arabic-ethnic group. The same type of questions were made on other socialization environments, such as the workplace, considered a second sphere, for the different nature of the interactions. Concerning the third sphere, that is related to bilingualism and the relations kept with the “native land”, the questions are aimed to measure the quality of the nets with the origin of the nation, such as: *How many times do you go to...?* *How would you evaluate your knowledge of Arabic language? How often do you use it?* etc. The last sphere, and particularly important, is “Islam in French public space”. In this sphere, the questions will be aimed to investigate potential events occurred in public life in young Muslims life. In particular, the subject will be asked to answer questions related to *niqabs* worn in public spaces (university, office, streets, etc.) and their feelings about being a Muslim in France (of common knowledge the space left by French laicism to religion in public space could be perceived as humiliating for those people who had a strong connection with their religious life).

My assumption is that analyzing the answers will help me to individuate counter identification processes in the studied population. Rationally, I can expect that who underwent more problematic and racist situations or faced discrimination will have a lower conception of France as a State and will, consequently incline on his other identity, the one of Maghrebi.

Finally, concerning the quantitative tools I used in the research, is important to refer to the wide literature I used, the newspapers articles quoted and the INSEE reports analyzed, all provided by the Centre of Social Research Norbert Elias, the leading institution in collecting studies, data and researches in sociology and anthropology.

Marseille as a case study

To whom studies the French pattern of “assimilation”, or the melting pot of such a Nation, Marseille looks like the first place where to start. As a matter of fact, its privileged position makes it one of the most important immigration hub of the Mediterranean area. Since the 18th century, the city has been welcoming people from nations such as Greece, Italy, Turkey, and Armenia. The Maghrebi immigration, the main focus of the thesis, started to re-shape the city after WWII. Not only Arabs but also Berbers and pied-noir (French people born in North African colonies from French parents/colons) participated in the huge flow that invested France during the decolonization period. Furthermore, thanks to its daily connection with the African continent (the fairy Marseille-Algiers is the only daily one in Europe connecting North Africa and Southern Europe), Marseille keeps its privileged relationship with the Maghreb region also in nowadays.

At the light of all of this, it is important to keep in mind some pieces of information about the city, that might be useful in understanding the melting pot of such a multicultural town: according to INSEE (National Institution of Statistics and Economic Studies), in 2015 the largest communities of foreign residents were Algerians (37,673), Tunisians (32,800) and Moroccans (30,000). To these recent migrants, we should add those French citizens with Maghrebi origins that are more than 100,000 (around 15% of the population). Furthermore, also according to INSEE, from 1999 to nowadays the percentage of minors of Maghrebi origins in peripheric *arrondissements* (neighborhoods) increased, reaching 50% of the total population of the category (minors). If we consider the entire metropolitan area of Marseille (that has around 1.800.000 inhabitants) these numbers are expected to increase. As easy to imagine and understand, these characteristics of the city imply specific outcomes really interesting for social sciences: there are more than 200,000 Muslims in the city, second religious group after Catholics, and even more Arabic descendants.

Despite the expected tensions between ethnic groups, Marseille still represents an incredible case study for the entire French scenario: its inhabitants developed a strong identity linked to

the city and built around the Marseille's melting pot. The multicultural base of the city is admirable in its art, its football club (that is Olympique Marseille, famous for having an anthem which words mean "nor Arabic, nor french, we all are Marseilles"), in the many markets inspired by the *souk* model (means the typical Arabic market of fruits, spices, and halal meat), and so on. Walking around the city is easy to notice how in shops, restaurants but also in offices and public transportation, the Arabic language is treated as the second language of the city: every communication appeared in both French and Arabic. National flags of Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Amazigh are shown with pride in every minimarket of the city; as much as before, during and after every football match involving Maghrebi national teams. An example could be the 2019's summer, when Algeria won the FIFA African Coup triggering the happiness and celebration of thousands of Algerian descendants all over the city.

However, despite the clearly multicultural DNA of the city and different initiatives for integration, depicting Marseille as peaceful heaven of interethnic life couldn't be further from the truth. The ethnic tension is still very present: Arabs communities are generally living in the poorest neighborhoods of the city (Northern neighborhoods), the unemployment among Arabs/Beur is much higher than the "Franco-French" counterpart, and the discussed conflict generated by Islam and its uses and traditions increase the tension among inhabitants (the grow of the Front National, a far-right party, in the city it is an indicator).

Exactly in the middle between integration and segregation, Marseille is dominated by contradictions that could result in urban uniqueness as well as inter-ethnic conflict depending on the ability of the political class on the national level and on the local one of constructing the next steps.

For these reasons, and many others that are explained along with the research, the city of Marseille represents the perfect scenario to investigate the counter-identification process taking into account variables related to other patterns of identity building. In a city where diverse cultural inputs are available to youngers facing an identity crisis, counter-identification processes might be a successful alternative for identity-building.

People from Marseille: introduction to the sampled population

Concerning the sample, it must be specified the composition of its population: the interviewed are all French citizens with Maghrebi origins. Hence, the term used to refer them in the text is “Beur”, word that I already presented in Part I of the thesis, that is a *verlan* (l'anver - reverse in French, typical slang used by youngers in which the syllables of the same words get reversed) of the French word “Arabeu” - Arab. The choice of this term depended on my desire of presenting the sampled population as young, somehow Arab for the heritage inherited, still French for birthright and partially for the *habitus*, but socially in “the middle” between the two identities (mestizo). Concerning the fourth sphere (the one of religion), another term is presented alongside Beur: French-Muslim, in the attempt of highlighting the identity of Muslim without antepone it to the legally one of French (the term is widely used in the literature). Indeed, in both cases, referring to them as totally Arab or totally French ignoring their personal consideration of themselves, would be an imposition and somehow a proper “counter-identification” process.

However, the most of the sampled population has in their grandparents the first generation of immigrants from their family, while one of them has the grandfather born in France in the late ‘30ies and the grandmother born in Algeria but migrated in France in the second after-war. One of them, Aziz, my “privileged witness”, is an immigrant of first generation arrived in France with his family in “[...] 1958...or 1959 [...]” and father of two and grandfather of five. The role of privileged witness derived from his long activity in Trade Unions that used to represent Maghrebi workers (profiles of these Trade Unions and their stories are provided in the analysis of the interviews), and therefore from the knowledge acquired in forty years of political activity in defense of ethnic minorities rights in France. Furthermore, Aziz has been able to offer the witnessing of his sons and of many other youngers he met in CADSA Marseille, already-mentioned association gathering with social initiatives concerning politics, culture and economy both pure Algerians and “Beurs” (third-four generation of , immigrants). Hereby, is understandable the attention I dedicated to him and the youngest members of the association.

Finally, the sample interviewed is composed by 27 “Beurs” comprehended in the range of age that goes from 18 (for legal reasons I opted for youngers that already reached the major age) to 28 years old (exception made for Aziz, definitely not considerable as belonging to third-fourth generation of immigrants). However, only the most “interesting” and “valuable” replies have been reported. With that, I mean that I haven’t reported answers I considered too short or simplistic. Concerning the gender of the interviewed, I present a slightly majority of females (14 out of 27, the other 13 are males). 19 out 27 respondents live in the Central-Southern neighborhoods of Marseille, hereby with an expected social status of medium/medium-high wealth and high level of education (12 have a bachelor degree, 1 has even a Master degree). The others are equally divided in the Eastern-Northern neighborhoods, therefore with an expected social status of medium or low wealth. However, experiences concerning life of “Beurs” in Northern neighborhoods are described by Dorsaf, 27 years old woman with Tunisian origins that works in the “scientifique” (Gendarmerie Francaise - scientific Police) and dealt with reports from schools in difficult areas; and Veronica, 56 years old woman with a past as teacher in schools in Northern Marseille. However, since not “Beur” and not even Arab, Veronica is not counted among the 27 interviews. Also, our meeting happened randomly during my stay in her Air-Bnb apartment.

Concerning the conduction of the interviews, I preceded with face to face - one by one interviews (except in two cases, in which I interviewed two persons per time). The location of interviews changed from my Air-Bnb room, to Centre Norbert Elias or bars where we had the opportunity of talking freely without any external noise. In order to get as honest answers as possible, the interviews were preceded by small talks on normal topic and interests we shared as peers. Furthermore, all the participants received, few minutes before the interview, a written explanation of the research design and an oral presentation of myself that stressed my pro-social attitude and passion for North-Africa and Arabic culture (language and history), in order to be perceived as friendly and not as one of the many “nosy” who got interested in the topic only after last decade terrorist attacks and interested only on the “Islamist” and more radical version of Islam. Hereby, I can admit I’m satisfied with the answers I gathered, that I evaluate as honest and, in many cases, well articulated.

What is identity: an anthropological framework

Before starting the analysis of the outcomes of my research on the counter-identification process on an ethnic/cultural identity level, it is useful to offer a brief perspective on what is generally meant in social sciences with “identity”, and what exactly is the dimension of the “Arabic identity” in Europe.

Starting from the first point, it is generally accepted in anthropology that identity, in both its personal and collective dimensions, is not naturally given, but defined and constituted culturally (Anderson, 1991).

Identity construction is a process that involves different frames of social life and among which the communal frame. This latter one, essential to the thesis point, could be explained as the cultural constraints that people live by and depends on the cultural group of belonging. Cultural constraints occur in both the “self-image” and the “common-image” of a person, with a function of self/personal integration in a wider group based on shared beliefs/norms that differentiate from individuals of other groups (Anderson, 1991).

Hereby, “cultural constraints” is a set of customs and collective knowledge promulgated through tradition, and referring to a specific community which rely on the set itself. Shared values and beliefs are at the base of collective identity, that grants social recognition and protection. The “adoption” of a collective identity, hence must be interpreted as an answer to the human being need of belonging (Golubovic, 2010).

Among the shared values of a collective identity, there is also the ethnicity of the group. Indeed, belonging to the same ethnic group, often tantamount to share mythological ancestors and symbols (Anderson, 1991). Basing their membership on blood links and origins, “ethnic” identity represents one of the most primordial “exclusive model of collective life”, and among the most used along with history and nowadays in specific regions (Golubovic, 2010).

According to Habermas, modern societies, that base their rules on the principles of the Market, ethnic and collective identity are losing their primary importance.

This is a characteristic of the Western World, where the cultural inputs are many, all different and undergoing socio-economic phenomena typical by the postmodern society pattern. The pattern that defines us more as consumers than persons with identity (Bauman, 1999).

In a society that does not encourage a particular form of identity or another, identity can easily take a plurality of forms. The identity of the members of postmodern societies is always more often assuming and developing multidimensional identities (A.D. Smith, 2009). By definition, the development of individual identity is often opposed to the collective one, and hence incompatible.

At the light of that, we understand that identity conflicts generated by an actual lack of a solid identity may be leaning towards the adoption of a secondary identity as an answer to the belonging need. In the case of third-fourth generation of Arab immigrants (Beurs), the retrenchment of identity as the answer to the postmodern societies identity-chaos might correspond to the adoption of the "Arab ethnicity identity". As a matter of fact, due to blood and kinships, this identity is always available, and it represents a model opposed to the blurrier one promulgated in French society (individualism of Western World vs a more collective and integrative approach of Middle East cultures).

Furthermore, according to my work, youngers with identity crises might adopt the Arab identity as an answer to the xenophobic and racist structure of French society. Indeed, given that discrimination in France occurs on an ethnic basis (and cultural characteristics such as religion), we can assume that such discrimination contributes to the feeling of ethnic-identity revenge: if the society in which I live does nothing but repeating that I am not French since partly Arab, perhaps it is on my "presumed ethnic diversity" that I have to base my identity. In other words, beurs that are not considered French by the society they are living in (institutions, peers, media, everything definable as part of French society as a whole), might embrace the identity of Arab, instead of the mestizo one of "French-Arab", since offering more certainties in relationships and personal identity. From here, the counter identification process affecting identity.

The practical meaning of Arab identity, that constitutes also the set of parameters I decided to investigate in the research, is based on the characteristics (even cultural) generally accepted

as “particularities” of Arab ethnicity. In order to indicate it, I partly used the psychological research by Declan Barry (2000) on Arab immigrants in the U.S.

According to the American scientists, Arab identity could be described as the midpoint between Western individualism and Eastern collectivism. Into one hand, Arab identity is strongly connected to collective life, into the other, it is embedded in Islam, that offers an individual relationship with God (Barry, 2000). Islam, moreover, involves scanning the daily-life according to the religious precept of five prays per day (Cipriani, 2000). Indeed, Arab identity belongs also a wide set of typical behaviors, not always possible to enact in a Postmodern and secular society.

Finally, here is a short scheme of the four spheres-dimension I presented in the previous chapter, and relative life-sphere to which they refer (collective or individual life dimension):

- Education and educative system in France (discrimination/racism) as part of collective life.
- Work-life and Labor Market in France (discrimination/racism) as part of collective life.
- Communal life (use of Arabic language/use of Arabic media/relation with eventual relatives in North Africa) as collective/individual life.
- Religious dimension in French society (discrimination and impressions) as individual/collective life.

To each of the sections, alongside quantitative data from reports (like INSEE), are reported and analyzed. Furthermore, experiences and considerations on the relation/mistrust between Arab youngers and authorities’ representatives (police officers, bureaucrats, etc.) might be reported in the different paragraphs.

The first sphere of identity: education and school as secondary socialization environment

In the process of formation of personal identity, schools represent one of the most favorable environments for observations. The immigration flows addressing France during the second half of the previous century had effects also on the educational system, re-shaping it and highlighting lacks of the system itself.

Education in France is free, compulsory and integrative, meant as theoretically not excluding anyone on the base of religion, status nor political orientation. Besides it looks like an institution aimed to generate social justice and parity; the reality couldn't be further from that. The French educational system is more an instrument aimed to assimilate minorities but not socio-economically integrating them: the pedagogy at the base of the French school system is meant as the vehicle of transmission of the unique national culture based on patriotic/republican values (Zanten, 1997). It is based on the idea that the *status quo* isn't changeable and as a mechanism to keep the social-classes division working through selection processes (Bourdieu, 1990).

On the base of this assumption, it is important to analyze the history of the French school system and the racism/ethnocentrism that got propagated by such an institution. What I target in this paragraph, are the counter-identification processes generated by the opposition between school authorities (teachers, class councils etc.) and pupils with foreign origins, episodes of racism/exclusion occurred in schools and perpetuated by school authorities/other students, and the influences of other immigration/integration factors (as public housing for example) on schooling careers. But before report episodes from the experiences I gathered during my stay in Marseille, it worths a brief description of the history and structure of the French educational system.

As expected, the pressure which France underwent during the immigration flows provoked changes within the educational system; changes aimed to face the integration of thousands of new pupils (often not even able of writing and reading) in the school program. Such an emergency stimulated, in the '70ies, the creation by the Ministry of Education of adaptation classes, aimed to offer integrative lessons of French language to pupils in need (Zanten,

1997). These classes were sided by the regular scholar structure of French educational curricula: three different levels of compulsory education that includes elementary schools, primary schools, and secondary schools. This latter one divided into patterns bringing to different diplomas: baccalaureat, technical diploma, vocational diploma (Birnbaum/Cebolla-Boado, 2007). The type of diploma/school pattern that students are being told to attend is decided by the Class Council, organ created in order to evaluate pupils and find the most suitable professional/educational path to them (Birnbaum/Cebolla-Boado, 2007). This approach revealed itself as inappropriate and often discriminatory. Indeed, due also to the external factor as provenience neighborhood and family social class, it appears that Maghrebi students were often addressed to secondary diplomas, that were not allowing the enrollment at the university.

The creation of Zones Educatives Prioritaires (ZEP - Priority Educational Zones), on the other hand, solved the issue as much as ZHB solved the problem concerning public housing and degradation (Zanten, 1997). As a matter of fact, instead of helping the insertion/integration of foreigners, exactly as ZHBs, ZEPs become the symbol of racial segregation, since 23% of students in such areas have foreign origins. Among them, 37% have Maghrebi origins (UNICEF, 2009).

Furthermore, following the European trend of the last decades, a wide process of privatization of the educational system occurred in France, therefore the adoption of a market logic applied to schools. This process had two main effects, both of them excluded Maghrebians of second-third generation: into one hand, the growing privatization of the educational system brought a new level of competition among schools, a competition aimed to increase the “quality” of pupils in order to attract more funds and students; into the other, it generated competition among immigrants, motivated to show as much as possible their will of being assimilated to France in order to be less discriminated in the choice of schools (Zantan, 1997).

In the first scenario, the Beur population got discriminated as an effect of the strengthening of disciplinary measures such as expulsion or suspension. Indeed, following the logic of market, the schools with less problematic students (such as those coming from degraded areas) were the same with more request of enrolling (Zantan, 1997), leaving the educational and pair opportunities rhetoric on paper. Hence, the first victims of privatization were once again

children of immigrants and especially Arabs, since their evaluation relied more on their attitude in class and way of express/speak than on their school performances (Payet, 1985).

Concerning the second case, to the increase of “exclusivity” of the French education system, occurred an increase in the competition among immigrants divided for nationality (and so apparent assimilability) since the public school was still seen as the major mean of ensuring upward social mobility (Birnbaum/Cebolla-Boado, 2007). Each group of immigrants entertains a different relationship with the school system that can be linked to the cultural/social/economic position of the group itself (Zantan, 1997). Hence, we understand the favorability of European immigrants (Portuguese, Spanish and Italians), facilitated in the learning of the language and united by several cultural factors as Catholicism or Europeanism.

In the following decades, the differences in school achievements between children of immigrants and children of Franco-French became a relevant issue. Many researchers and French institutions focus on students population in order to quantify the differences occurred in the school system. In 2009, the Innocenti Research Center of UNICEF revealed that half of the students with foreign origins repeated one year of the elementary school, high rate if compared with one-quarter of Franco-French students. If it's true that the reason to such a scholastic un-success might be seen in class-background/cultural capital (INSEE, 2016), estimated as pretty low among the families with Maghrebians origins, belonging to the working class for the 77% (INSEE, 2011); it's also true that the incidence of such factors are more important in college/university than in primary/first circle of secondary school, where Maghrebi students are usually pushed towards technical/vocational diplomas (Birnbaum/Cebolla-Boado, 2007).

This latter phenomenon might be represented as the apex of the clash between schools and Arab pupils: according to research led by INSEE in 2011, children of immigrants were over-represented in technical institutes (Brinbaum & Kieffer, 2009) and among those, 42% of the Beurs enrolled in such schools felt injustice in the decision of the Class Council (as mentioned above, the scholar corp in charge of individuate the best educational path for each student). The disappointment of being selected for a vocational track instead of an academic

one (according to the 1995 dataset of the Panel of the Ministry of Education, still preferred by Maghrebi parents for their sons) is one of the reason of high numbers of students leaving school prematurely. As a matter of fact, also in this statistic, students with North African origins are over-represented: 43% among males and 27% among females left school without diploma (Lainè & Okba, 2005). What is important in the optic of counter-identification processes, is that children might use their ethnicity to oppose to school when they feel injustice from teachers and members of the school staff (Rinaudo, 1998).

What came out on the topic from my research, is an interesting witnessing of the above-described situations plus a set of answers and experiences (from both perspectives, Arab students' and Franco-French teachers') related to racism and the relations between pupils and school authorities. With this latter term, we refer to teachers, janitors, head-teachers, etc., often represented by Franco-French over fifty or, in less cases, younger teacher with Maghrebi origins (UNICEF, 2009). However, in this latter case, they are often perceived as "hostile" as well, since the antagonization of the relation pupil-teacher in ZES goes beyond the shared "*Beurity*".

Starting from the concept of the French school as an institution, most of the respondents consider it in part racist to the Beurs and generally to the Muslims. A smaller part of the sample considers the Educative French system fair and integrative, despite "some problems" concerning mainly the behavior of teachers and staff. In particular, around 80% of the sample reported stories of aggressive or narrow-minded behavior of teachers towards Beurs students. Ahmed, 26 years old, spoke about the passive methodology of French Professors: "[...] often, we (Beur students) are relegated to the bottom of the class [...], sometimes some (Beur students) go of their own will, to stay away from the chair, but very often places are assigned by teachers, also after bad behaviors [...] so it ends that the lessons are followed and taught only to the French francs of the first rows". This "passivity", as the interlocutor described it, seems the typical resignation of teachers that deal with pupils with improper behaviors or a lack of interest in following lessons. Since we already saw how the most of the Arab population of France belongs to the lower social-classes, we can expect (thanks to the INSEE reports) Beur children from ZES to be more affected by the risk of hostile behaviors and so disciplinary provisions and early-school-leaving, than the Franco-French pupils (also

represented in lower classes but with fewer changes of ending without diploma). This “resignation” among members of teachers corp, also transpires from the words of Veronica, 56 years old secretary, previously a teacher in ZES, not as convinced of the thesis of the repulsive processes of French institutions/societies as much as the excessive victimization of Beur students. “[...] they (referring to politics) *already provide them (Arabs) with shares in both public offices and institutions, it seems to me they had even more than French people* (Franco-French) [...] *despite that they keep complaining about their situation and their poorness [...]*”. In particular, Veronica told me about a series of “incidents” at the school where she worked, in the north of Marseille, started with “[...] *a punishment I ordered to three Arabs for keeping talking during my lesson*” and ended up with “*the barbaric revenge of those kids* (she believes and said they burnt her car in the parking lots close to the school, despite the accusation the fact never get proved) [...]”.

This extreme episode represents how situations involving what got polarized as “opposing sides” might escalate quickly. In this particular case, it seems clear the presumed overreaction of the students, which belongs to the periphery north of Marseille, where problems related to violence and gang-mentality are very spread. For example, Veronica herself during the interview described groups of Beurs pupils as dangerous “gangs”: “[...] *also in the school-yard (just like in streets), they are always together, always among Arabs and Arabs, when you pass by they make noise, they spit, they make faces [...] they have no respect!*” and “[...] *every time we got problems in school related to drugs or fights it's always them [...] when they go to the bathroom, is always three or four of them, and you smell marijuana [...] when there are fights in school, often during lunchtime or during GYM/sports, it's always them and it's always many of them against one or two other guys [...]*”. These experiences, somehow testify a sort of feeling of mistrust, towards Beurs students, from teachers in sensible areas.

To be honest, the aggressivity of Veronica in talking about her previous Beurs pupils, transpired more than exasperation. As a matter of fact, during the following chat, she confided that her sons too, he got problems with the violence of some pupils with Arab origins from degraded areas. This series of experiences shows us the vicious circle of degradation - improper behave at school - passive/exasperated reaction of the school body and bad school performances/school leaving. Stories like this spread easily and contribute to the atmosphere of prejudice that often characterizes the relations between teachers and Beurs

pupils. Into the other hand, for example, we have the experience of Omar, 20 years old with Algerian origins, that confided how “*[...] the punishment reserved to me was different from other students* (Franco-French students): *if me and my friends (not Arabs) were caught out of the class in the corridor, they'd be ordered to go in class, while I'd be sent to the principal*”. On the same way of grievances, that of injustice, Leila, 19 years old, told us about Neil, a kid with Algerian origins and with a problematic background which “*[...] was kind of disturbing, it was really impossible to make him sit [...] but with him, teachers hadn't much patience [...] every time a teacher got mad at him he was forced to sit in the corner in front of all the class [...] I'm not sure she (the teacher) was allowed to do that [...]*”.

The topic of injustice perpetrated by teachers to Beurs students appears as one of the most relevant to the interlocutors. Besides that, I also have to report the lack of similar episodes in the interviews with students that attempt schools in more central neighborhoods and come from a different social background. That means, as expectable, that the most aggressive-violent episodes occur to the most peripheral areas of the city, and so presumably due to other social factors as criminality and degradation.

What is not missing not even in the school in the center of Marseille, are cases of racism due to religious reasons. More or less half of the interviewed reported cases of racism they suffered, almost all the cases were involving other pupils, not teachers or other members of the school body. Fatima, 25 years old, revealed to have been the object of jokes concerning her faith “*[...] once, in the canteen during the lunchtime, different kids asked me laughing and giggling if my meal (vegetables) was halal [...] I really didn't care about it, but someone else might suffer [...]*”. Safa, 18 years old, explained to me that in her school (in a “normal” neighborhood in the south-east of Marseille) “*Everytime a Muslim girls come to school with a veil or a niqab there are problems [...] I remember to have seen a girl I knew crying once, they asked her to take off the veil or to go home because veils are not allowed.. all in front of the class... so embarrassing [...]*”.

Other racists episodes, happened on the base of skin-colour or stereotypes of the Arab: “*every time there is something going on with hash at school teachers asked me to talk with them [...] I'm sure also the other alums think it's me only because I'm Arab...if I go out with*

friends, at some point someone always come asking me “something to smoke” (lit. “un truc à fumer”)...the funny thing is that I often buy from whites at school.”

Anyway, it must be reported how many interviewed (50% more or less) answered negatively at the question concerning racists episodes suffered. Afaf, 24 years old, explained that: *“French schools have always a lot of foreign students or students with foreign origins, doesn’t matter what school is if in North (poor neighborhoods) or middle - south (rich neighborhoods)... that makes French school multicultural and very often kids grew up together like that...you know..they grow up understanding each other and different cultures”*. What Afaf said, is surely an important witnessing of how the presence of many different faiths and ethnicities in schools is a key to fight racism and understand each other, if the wealth conditions of the area are sufficient for all the families. Indeed, as transpired by Veronica’s words, ZES’s schools show a higher index of violence in schools, that usually is perpetrated by students from the most difficult backgrounds and so very often with Arabs origins. Thus violence, changes the conception of teachers and other pupils/parents about Beurs students, often described as violent and troublemakers without any interests in schools *“[...] they don’t have culture, they are just not interested in having one [...] it’s always like this with them (the Beurs)”*.

Obviously, a similar conception is also affecting the “children with North-African origins” not guilty of bad behaving, following the scheme of generalization of characteristics in stereotypes (Andersen, 2017). Label every Beur student as violent and troublemaker it’s definitely affecting the consideration of teachers toward them, and such pupils might retrench their position behind exactly what they are being accused of : the Arab identity.

Finally, concerning the French Educational System as partly repulsive for the Beurs, it worths a mention the work of Lemaire (2005), who studied the lack of history programs in French schools: the colonial and postcolonial periods. As a matter of fact, the post-colonial period is not very addressed by history books: the lessons’ orientation is clearly ethnocentric with a focus only on the French/European point of view, describing Arabs and African populations as prived of civilization and culture. Furthermore, history books seem to ignore the violence perpetrated in France (as the episode of Paris 1961, already described in the First Part of the

thesis) and in colonies during the decolonization (Lemaire, 2005). On the same way, it seems unjust how the French School is still not taking into consideration Islamic precepts, holidays or anniversaries in the calendar. Islam itself seems to be presented in French books as an exclusive reactionary and sexist phenomenon (Bozzo, 2005). These two particularities, are also at the base of the contrasts lived by Beurs in French school: institutions seem to be attacking Islam and every other ethnicity that doesn't correspond to the one of Franco-French or at least European.

The second sphere of identity: work as secondary socialization environment

As much as citizenship, housing and education, labor is a fundamental dimension in being immigrants. Labor, is the universal mean for sustainment and achieving opportunities, and corresponds to an environment in which individuals spend several hours per day and build relations/links with other human beings. According to Durkheim, Labor is the main condition for integration into modern society. The French sociologist sustained that “work” is one of the socio-economic factors that contribute to social cohesion. In the absence of work, the organic solidarity that characterizes modern era (the members of society depend on each other due to the complementary of their roles) come less, consequently followed by a lower social-cohesion and integration. Durkheim, furthermore, related the absence of work and then of integration, to suicide: according to his studies on suicide, “unemployed” was one of the groups with the higher rate of suicide, since not integrated into society, showing once more the “solidity” of his assumptions on the importance of the binomial work-integration (Durkheim, 1897).

The fundamental role in social-integration given to “labor” is largely shared. Related to the thesis and so to the French society, it's well-known that accessing to Labor Market for French with Maghrebian origins it is more difficult if compared with Franco-French. As a matter of fact, despite the statistically relevant occasion of employer unwilling to assume subjects on the base of ethnic prejudices, the high unemployment among Beurs (young “Arabs”) also

depends on two structural factors already analyzed: public housing and education. Into one hand, the segregation of immigrants in urban periphery with low chances of moving out (“social elevator” absent), made possible for their descendants to be still nowadays segregated far from the “physical” Labor Market (offices, restaurants, etc.) and schools (Fitoussi, 2004). Into the other, the bad school performances (due also to the institutional adversity) of children of maghrebians made the group highly represented in the low educated, in the unemployed or the low-skilled workers. The frame seems a vicious circle based on the mistakes made by the Governments decades ago.

Not secondarily, I take into account also the episodes of racism occurred within the area of the job. For racist episodes, I mean both the intolerant/islamophobic action of colleagues and the adverse behavior on an ethnic/religious base of employer or superior. Indeed, if having a job is the primary mean to live, the environment in the space of job is fundamental in the development of identity and might influence this latter one. Besides the personal experiences asked to interviewed, Aziz, head of CADSA - MARSEILLE (Collectif pour une Alternative Démocratique et Sociale en Algérie - Collective for a democratic and social alternative in Algeria), and experienced member of Solidaire (local Trade Union), offered a precious perspective on the national issue of inequalities in the Labor Market.

According to the High Comity of Integration (2011), the French citizens with foreign origins are twice as likely to be unemployed than Franco-French (Barou, 2014). Indeed, French with foreign origins’ unemployment rate is around 24,2%, which slightly increases in the young-unemployment with 24,7% (Replay-Vet, report 2017). For the Maghrebian population, the data are worse. Due to the high rate of precocious school-leaving (39,2%, according to Replay-Vet 2017 report; with a peak of 42% among males, according to Lainè & Okba 2005’s study), French youngers with Maghrebian origins result over-represented among that 71% of the low-skilled workers without a diploma (Dos Santos, 2005). According to Dos Santos, who led a research among low-skilled workers in France in 2002, youngers with Moroccan origins, distinguished by a high rate of school leaving, appear to own a significant experience in manual work or low-skilled work than their Franco-French peers. According to that, French students with Maghrebian origins are likely to abandon school before the obtainment of a diploma and consequently either enter the Labor Market as low skilled

workers or being unemployed. In the second case they are expected to obtain social assistance or provide themselves with a living joining criminal activities (the young Maghrebians are over-represented among prisoners; Sizaire, *Le monde Diplomatique*, 02/20); into the first one, they would probably develop low-skills required only to secure their job, with a big chance of remaining unemployed, due to absence of similar jobs, if fired. Therefore, it is assumable that the descendants of Maghrebi immigrants are still occupying the most humble jobs, and so not provided with the same opportunities as their Franco-French peers. The “weakness” of original North Africans on the Labor Market goes alongside the political representation of Maghrebians. As a matter of fact, among the causes of high rates of unemployment of the third-fourth generation of Maghrebi immigrants, there is a lack of actors able to dialogue and to bargain with institutions for better conditions and opportunities.

The political representation of Maghrebi workers has always been a key factor for the integration of such workers into society since an immigrant without a job, or institutional representation cannot develop class consciousness (Sayad, 1999).

The first organization aimed to represent Maghrebians on the French territory, was SONACOTRA - Societè National de Construction de logements pour les Travailleurs (then SONACOTRAL - with the addition of Algerians to the word travailleurs, workers) - created in 1956 by the State with the participation of private organizations (Bernadot, 2008). The goal of such an organization was, in the beginning, to offer economic and social assistance to Algerians workers in the attempt of solving their housing and hygienic crisis (Barou, 2012). With the development of new immigration patterns, such as the familiar reunification, also the interests and priorities of SONACOTRAL changed. During the 1960ies - '70ies, it offered its help in locating Algerian families in the Labor Market and in the public housing (Barou, 2012). Besides this organization, that had the official support/funding of the State itself, the associationism of Maghrebi workers was barely existing. During the entire period, the 1960 - end of the '70ies, organizations of Arab workers were related to their own countries or Islamic religion and the practice of its precepts. These organizations were anyway controlled by “Amicales”, official organizations headed by foreign governments in the attempt of control and represent their population living abroad, and always under the influence of the State (Wihtol de Wenden, 2013). Therefore, the associationism present

during the first 30 years of immigration from the Maghreb was not able to organize and protect workers.

The first organization of Maghrebi descendants workers (but also first-generation of immigrants) was established in 1982, less than three months after the abrogation of Pétain's Law (October 1981), until then forbidding the free and political association of immigrants (Bernadot, 2008). The so-called ATMF - Association of Travailleurs Marocaine en France (Association of Moroccan Workers in France) - provided for decades the political representation and socio-cultural protection for Moroccans and subsequently all the Maghrebians, and distinguished itself, at least at the beginning, for a clear orientation against the regime of Hassan II (Wihtol de Wenden, 2013). With the past of time, part of the Maghrebians workers developed political and class consciousness, consequently, the ATMF got absorbed by bigger Trade Unions, distinguishing itself for the fights and cultural initiatives for Islam recognition in the place of work, a battle that attracted thousands of others North Africans until changing the name in Association de Travailleurs Maghrébins en France - Association of Maghrebian Workers in France - in 2000 (ATMF, official history).

In the years of political activism, the ATMF organized demonstrations and political events for thousands of low-skilled workers. In those years, the link between Maghrebi workers and the French Socialist Party strengthened, giving a political representation far from being based on ethnicity to hundreds of thousands of workers. However, despite the ATMF and other minor associations, the polarization of Maghrebi immigrants and their descendants on the lowest classes and the low-skilled job kept going. Exactly as at the beginning of the 1950ies, when Algerians immigrants were employed mainly in the industrial or minor sector (Sayad, 2002), at the beginning of the XXI century, original Maghrebians were still occupying the most humble positions (Dos Santos, 2005). According to the INSEE Report "Emploi" of 2002, 28,5% of Maghrebi descendants were unemployed. Those who were employed appeared over-represented in the personal service sector and the construction's one with relatively 44,8% and 21,2% of the total employed Maghrebi population (Dos Santos, 2005). What shows once more the apparent adversity of institutions/employers towards originally Maghrebians, is the wage. According to INSEE, at the beginning of two thousand, Algerians/Moroccan/Tunisians salaries were 20% inferior to those of Franco-French, at the

parity of conditions. Furthermore, stressing the fact that the racism on the Labor Market is addressed mainly to Arabs/Maghrebians, it appears that, in the same period, Algerians/Moroccan/Tunisians salaries were 10% inferior to the average of other Mediterranean immigrants, mainly Portuguese, Spanish and Italians (Dos Santos, 2005).

Different shreds of evidence, also highlight the few chances of success of young “Beurs” in applying for jobs. Between the years 2013 and 2014, research led by Marie-Anne Valfort (Institute of Labor Economics), consisted of the creation of fictitious individuals’ CV (with different profiles in ethnicity and religion) that were successively sent to job applicants. The outcomes show that only 10.4% of Muslims were called back, compared with 15,8% of Jews sounding profiles and 20,8% of Catholic-French looking profiles (Valfort, 2018). Even fewer possibilities were recorded in the case of men Muslim: only 5% got called-back. Similar results were gathered in 2019 in a study commissioned by the French Government: fake CVs were sent to 40 different companies, some of them of primary relevance, such as AirFrance and Renault. According to the results, originally Arabs applicants had only 9,3% of chances of being called back, 25% less than Franco-French profiles (Amiel, Euronews, 07/02/2020). The problem of discriminatory attitudes of employers, a factor that is also discussed at the light of the experiences reported in the interviews, has deep roots in France. As a matter of fact, scholars and institutions started questioning such a problem decades ago. Already in 2004, the “Observatoire des discriminations” warned the Ministry of Labor that Maghrebian sounding CVs have ½ of Franco-French opportunities in being employed, then confirmed in 2006 by the International Labor Office and successively in 2010 by the Université de Paris-East, that brought to public opinion’s attention the fact that also with better qualifications, youngers with Arabic origins were discriminated in the employing logic of enterprises (Valfort, 2018).

The interviews gathered during my research in Marseille, offer a plural mosaic of experiences. Most of the interviewed confess racist episodes suffered on working hours (mainly for religious factors) or in the hiring process, despite a not indifferent part of the sample deny any discriminatory attitudes towards them. However, it appears that this part of the sample is compounded mainly by white-collars or highly educated people. Interesting is

the experience reported by Aziz, by far out of the range of the sample (not exactly belonging to third-fourth generation of immigrants) but able to offer a perspective on the associations of Arab/Beurs workers.

Starting from this latter point, Aziz is heavily convinced that the worsening of the situation of Maghrebians workers is due also to the disappearing of the ATMF. “*[...] while we were having the ATMF, we had representation, and we were part of the political life [...] at that time* (end of ‘70ies beginning of ‘80ies) *we (Algerians/Moroccans workers) fraternized with the other workers, we voted Communist or Socialist party [...] we joined demonstrations and we were part of public bargaining between State and Trade Unions [...] then the Union (ATMF) disappeared, and we have become less united*”, according to Aziz, the disappearance of the ATMF was due to: “*[...] the lack of interests in continuing (the struggle/movement) by Maghrebians themselves [...] once we participated in the fight for the minimum salary and the pension, we become less united: in France Left and Right ain’t both space for religion and ethnic grievances...Maghrebian workers wanted representation. They were more interested in secure their welfare rights than their cultural ones [...]at the end the Union dissolved and its members got absorbed by other Unions*”. What is interesting in Aziz’s words, is how at some point in their history, Maghrebian workers had to choose between workers’ struggle/bargaining (making another step closer to be assimilated to French) or their cultural identity. As we just discovered, Maghrebians opted to worry about their conditions as workers and as potentially beneficiaries of Welfare State, and so at the beginning of the first decade of the XXIth century, the ATMF dissolved. If on the one hand, Maghrebians workers did not secure their positions nor their rights, into the other the need to protect their cultural/religious dimension in the working environment came up again. “*[...] among French, it looks that the first problem of the nation is Islam, and so is also in the Labor Market [...] every day Muslims workers have to renounce to part of their breaks or fight with the employer in order to have the time to respect the Islamic precept of praying five times per day [...] our employers don’t consider our faith [...] there is no room in calendars for Muslims holidays, and if you’d rather work in Sunday/Saturday instead of Friday (Muslims’ holy day) that till is no possible...sometimes it seems they are doing it on purpose [...] if you try to complain about that you seriously risk your position: if you fight for your Muslim rights you are described as fundamentalist and if they are (the employers) enough*

narrow-minded they can threaten you of firing you for undisciplined...nowadays is still part of my daily life”. The attitude towards Muslims at work is an argument still debated in France. In defence of Muslim workers, associations and Unions are trying to organize demonstrations and bargaining: “[...] in the last years we (Aziz and CADSA MARSEILLE and the Trade Union of SOLIDAIRE) tried to bring up the ATMF, at least to represent and organize Muslim workers, they have rights and they need to fight for their religious right [...] people is not very interested, also Left parties and other Unions are reluctant in participating [...] our demonstrations gather few people but we are trying to grow more, mainly among youngers, the most vulnerable [...]”.

The topic of Islam dimension in the workplace has been asked also to the others interviewed. Generally, no one of the participants revealed to consider the space left at work to Islam satisfactory. “Nowadays if you want to pray you have to hide or postpone your prays [...] nowadays Islam is the public enemy of French workers” said Ahmed, 26 years old.

“Islam precepts can be followed only if you are the owner of your own business. My father has a barbershop, he closes on Fridays, or he closes the time to go pray in the closest mosque. Me? I can’t do that: I work in an office” said Fatima, 25 years old young woman, then she added: *“for us (women) is not allowed to wear hijab at works, only a few can [...] I don’t bring it but I know girls who do [...] it’s just not respectful”*.

According to the interviews, being Muslim is perceived negatively by French employers and also colleagues. The discriminations, for what came up during the interviews, seem to occur in both, the hiring process and the daily life in contact with co-workers, despite not always concerning the interviewed subjects. “*Every day, in France, a younger of Arabic origins see a Franco-French being preferred to him for a job..also if they have the same qualification*” explained me Aziz “[...] when they see names like Mohammed, Ahmed, Sulaf, etc. they already decide to not employ them [...] I should’ve called my son Jaques wanted to image the faces of employers once they’d meet him” added laughing loudly. “[...] but when the Government decided to include any provision for positive discrimination in jobs, like the quotas of Arabs to be assumed by big enterprises, it just turns other workers against Arabs, so they are even more discriminated than...” concluded the head of CADSA MARSEILLE.

Despite no one of the interviewed had undergone such episodes of the racism in the hiring process, they sustain that the issue is well-known among French Arabs, and all of them knew someone that could be a subject of discriminatory policies: “[...] I have a lot of younger

friends and for them is hard to find a job [...] no one ever knows why but it takes months for them to find a job, also if they have the baccalauréat (high school diploma) or other titles..I guess for white French is easier” revealed Sulaf 22 years old girl with Algerian origins.

Dorsaf, 27 years old young woman with Tunisian origins revealed how “*[...] the impression is always that they prefer to hire white French [...] they can discriminate you also on the base of your neighborhood: if you come from one of the neighborhoods in the North you have fewer chances of being hired. If you are from an area with too many Arabs, for them you are surely part of some gang or clan or criminal organization [...]”* so discrimination that occurred also on the base of location and not only on the base of ethnicity, increasing the perception of “vicious circle” affecting segregation and unemployment of Beurs. Finally, Ahmed, 26 years old, sustain that: “*if you have Arab origins, you rather look for those jobs French people don’t want to do, like cleaning services, construction workers, garbage collection, etc, otherwise you have no chance [...] every time a white employer see me, it looks uncomfortable, is like they perceive you as a threat for them.”*

As I mentioned above, once the Beurs obtain a job, the episodes of racism and discrimination occur also with peers (in this case co-workers), as much part of the problem as the employer, since supposedly people with which Arab workers spend the biggest part of the day. Having the impression of undergoing racism and discrimination in an important environment such it is the working one, surely increases the feeling of opposition toward French society for its citizens not ethnically Franco.

The episodes reported, are once again related to religious issues. Dorsaf, 27 years old “*[...] despite I work in the Police and so we are supposed to have a lot of respect for each other, it happened to me to undergoing episodes of racism [...] they were mainly jokes but people should understand that faith is not always a good subject for jokes”* concerning the specific episode “*[...] once I was at work, wearing my hijab [...] when I entered in the coffee break area, one of my colleagues, in front of the others, asked my smiling if my husband accompanied me to work or if I runaway (referring to the prohibition, for women in salafist countries, of leaving home unaccompanied by male) [...] that obviously kind of offended me”.*

On to the same way, Mohammed 28 years old of Tunisian origins told me: “*[...] we (the employed of the enterprise) eat altogether during the break time, we share the tables, the area were to have lunch and everything else [...] once I was with my colleagues, I left for the*

bathroom for a while and when I got back I found my chips with “Halal” written on the box. Another episode of racism, is the one discussed by Afaf, a girl with Algerian origins: “*when I work I always wear a niqab, since it’s a private company and I’m allowed to do it [...] that day we had an important meeting, I was supposed to be at the meeting since I’m in charged of taking notes and report what is said in the room* (she works as secretary) [...] *that day my superior wasn’t present and we were following the directive of his substitute [...] 5 minutes before the meeting we were discussing the schedule of arguments when the momentary superior came in [...] I’ve never seen her but I’m sure that day she looks particularly stressed and nervous [...] when she saw my niqab, she immediately said I had to keep it off if I wanted to attend the meeting... then she left leaving me totally embarrassed and unable to reply*”.

An episode of discrimination on ethnic-based happened to Medhi, 18 years old French with Moroccan origins by his mother side: “*at that time I was working as a delivery guy, once I was in late and my colleagues were waiting for me [...] when I arrived they started to laugh at me asking where I was and hypothesizing I was consuming some cannabis or doing things related to drug or qais (the slang word referring to Arab bosses of criminality in Marseille) [...] I didn’t care that much because they were kidding but still, that was clearly a stereotype that often penalizes people with Arabic origins or heritage*”.

As expected and in line with the outcomes of the Education sphere interviews, also the research about racism and discrimination in the Labor Market highlighted some interesting phenomena: the episodes of racism are related mainly to religious matters, and that makes the issue extremely actual. The weakness of Muslim workers and their vulnerability to racists episodes are enforced by the lack of protections on an institutional level and an associationist one. As enlightened by Aziz, both Left and Right wings of the French Parliament are extremely secular, leaving Arab Unions/organizations the duty to representing millions of Muslim workers.

As much as education, the work environments are the arena of many hours in our daily life, feeling antagonism with society and people in such an environment might trigger feeling of alienation and socio-cultural range, two of the possible bases for counter-identification processes.

The third sphere of identity: bilingualism and links with original country

As it is widely shared among scholars, language and the frequency in its use are key factors in the construction of identities based on ethnicity or nationality. The matter of bilingualism in France has deep roots: as we have seen, the presence of Arab speakers in France, in particular Algerians, is datable since the beginning of the XX century. Once the phenomenon started to involve entire families, Arabic language increased its relevance, becoming the second language of France. However, according to the acculturation-oriented approach used in the French assimilationist model, not much space was left to the Arabic language. If into one hand French-classes were offered in order to facilitate the alphabetization in the hosting language (Zanten, 1997); into the other, there is the suspicious dedicated to Arabic language, considered as a threat for national unity and public security, due to the risk of Islamist propaganda (Hargraves & Mahdjoub, 1997). As a matter of fact, only a few schools all over the country have the Arabic language comprehended in their scholar curricula, a trace of under-representation of such a language compared to the number of its speakers (Messaoudi, 2006). The insufficient space left to the Arabic language must be understood as a strategy to make as quick as possible the language integration of thousands of children and grown-women, since to the proficiency in the hosting language corresponds a set of psychological adjustments to the hosting society (Kim, 1977). As we already saw, the strategy of acculturation/assimilation did not work since not supported by unique, decisive and constant political strategies. In this particular case, it only makes it more difficult for Arab descendants to enter in contact and learn the language of their Maghrebian grandparents.

As I expected before starting the research, the knowledge of the Arabic language is limited among youngers of the third-fourth generation of immigrants. Many of them (9) revealed to be able to talk and to understand (partly) but not to write or read. Even more (16) respondents confess to knowing very little or nothing of the Arabic language, but to have started classes/private lessons/E-learning in order to improve it. None of them showed total disinterest in the Arabic language.

In order to explore such a dimension of the Arab-identity, I focused on their use/knowledge of Arabic language (where and how much?) and also on the frequency of eventual travels to their original countries and eventual relatives. Finally, the theoretical/historical framework of the chapter will focus on the use of media in the Arabic language among the population of Marseille (known to be the headquarter of many Arab-radio stations and other cultural organizations). Indeed, the use of Arabic-media has been subjected to debate within French politics and society.

It's well-known that media, due to its entertainment/linguistic/informative potentials, help in the formation of identity (Croucher, 2009). Specifically in the case of immigrants, in particular children, media represent a wide set of instruments used in order to replace in them the old habits (from country of origins) with the hosting-society ones, a fundamental part of the deculturation process (Brim & Wheeler, 1966). For a long time, French Media were the only ones to be broadcasted on a national scale by national channels. Only in 1996, the Conseil Supérieur de l'AudioVisuel (CSA - Superior Council of AudioVisual) provided the Arabic community with programs in Arabic bought by Maghrebi channels and broadcasted in France (Hargraves & Mahdjoub, 1997). The same CSA, for the previous decades, opposed the provisions of Arabic Tv programs if not produced by the State, in order to prevent the spread of Islamist propaganda materials (Hargraves & Mahdjoub, 1997).

The imposition of only French broadcasts had been perceived by French-Maghrebi (as much as French-Muslims) as a cultural constraint exerted by the French State and so boycotted in the attempt of preserving the original cultural identity (Croucher, 2009). Under this perspective, the use of Arabic Media was perceived as a chance to fight back against a cultural demanding of giving up their religious and linguistic identity (Croucher, 2005). Really often, indeed, immigrants find connection with the original country using cultural products (not only media but also music and books) in the attempt of identifying themselves with the homeland (Andersom, 1991). This trend was more typical during the first decades of Maghrebi familiar immigration (-60ies-'70ies), when first-generation immigrants followed media illegally broadcasted from the Maghreb and wanted their children doing the same, despite there are cultural variables as education to take into account (Hargraves & Mahdjoub, 1997). However, it was and still is assumed that, despite the immigrants of third-fourth

generation generally prefer French Media, the host society is still able to reignite in them a desire to connect with their ethnicity through media and cultural material in a sort of linguistic retro-acculturation tendency (Shiramizu, 2000), comparable to my more general counter-identification process. This tendency has been found pretty much in periods in which social tensions involve the second/third generation of immigrants (Sinardet & Mortelmans, 2006).

At the core of Muslims and Arabs grievances, was the negative perception of Islam in French television, showing Muslims only in connection with fundamentalism and Arab youngers in connection with criminality (Echchaibi, 2001). So, around 1990, French authorities started to observe the appearing of thousands of satellite receivers for broadcasting Maghrebi Tv (Hargraves & Mahdjoub, 1997). In 1995, 21% of Arabic-speaking householders in France invested in private satellite receivers (Le Monde, 29 November 1996). This widespread tendency continued until the above mentioned CSA's step back of 1996.

Similar to television issues, also Arabic Radio faced a long process in order to be created and broadcasted in the Arabic language. As a matter of fact, under threat/suspicious of Algerian National Front (organization fighting for Algeria's independence back to the '50ies and '60ies) broadcasting propaganda to their compatriots in France, also Radio programs have been thwarted. From 1987 to 1992, following the privatization period of French media occurring at that time (Hargraves & Mahdjoub, 1997), were organized 42 petitions to obtain Arab-speaking Radio Programs (Echchaibi, 2001). The creation of two main Arab-Radio frequencies, Radio Soleil and Radio Beur, both founded in Marseille, soon became a fundamental mean of cultural preservation among Arabs, since the transmission goes from Arab music and news to lessons on religious matters (Chaaboui, 1992). These two radios had an important role in the spread of *rai music*, original Algerian melodic music, meant by youngers as a mean to fight back monolithic conception of Islamic/Arabic and French cultures, becoming in the past a pretty popular element among Beurs and more generally youth culture (Gross, 1994). The importance of these radios is still nowadays very high: for both a genuine re-discovering of cultural roots and a rebellion against the racist-perceived French Tv/Government, the request of Arabic media is constantly increasing among youngers of the third-fourth generation of immigrants.

Starting from the knowledge/proficiency of the Arabic language detected in the respondents, the outcomes are in line with the expectations. Among the interviewed, only two declared to have a very good knowledge of the Arabic language (meant in all its forms: speaking, writing and reading). All the other had some basilar/intermediate knowledge of the Arabic language. Very often, the less mastered version of the Arab language is the written/read one. Dorsaf, 27 years old: “*maybe we understand our parents, and we can speak a bit but no one ever taught us to read and write [...] French school doesn’t, and it is difficult for parents to educate in Arabic their young children*”. Almost all the interviewed which grow with some kind of contact with the Arabic language are typically referring to their parent’s dialect when they talk about “Arabic language”. The most of them speak Tunisian (for the over-representation of Tunisians among the sample), others Algerian or Moroccan. Interestingly, those with a lower level in Arabic language, or those who re-discovered their interest in the subject only in mature age appear to be those with a better knowledge of what is meant for “classic Arabic”. The reason, is that this part of the sample (low-knowledge of Arabic or recent interest in the subject) used to take regular lessons of Arabic in private language schools. Furthermore, these subjects, are also those less used to talk/interact in Arab, also at home. Indeed, “home” or “parents” have been among the most popular answers to the question: “*where and with whom do you use Arabic the most often?*”. Two of the interviews confessed using the Arabic language also with friends and at work (both low-skilled workers with Arab superiors).

Ikhrame, the 18 years old girl, said that she uses the Arabic language occasionally: “*I use it with my cousins in Morocco or with friends some time, but more for having fun [...] I have a friend of mine, her grandfather is Algerian so she knows a bit of Arabic, when we are alone we try to say some words of Arabic [...] Moroccan and Algerian are different as dialects [...] is funny to check if I can understand Algerians/Tunisians and if they can understand me*”. Concerning the use of language in North Africa, and so in relation also to the frequency of these travels to the Maghreb, other interviewed told me to use Arabic exclusively during holidays in North Africa “*I use Arabic mainly in Tunisia, with my grandparents..they don’t speak clear French, so I have no other option left [laugh] [...] I can’t read, but I can talk with them, and that’s important [...] it’s good (being able of understanding Arabic) also because I’m used to watching movies in Arabic when I’m in holidays in Tunisia*”.

As expected and highlighted in these interviews, grandparents are usually the best knowledge keeper of the Arabic language among families. That's mainly because of their permanence in the Maghreb (they usually still live there, others reached France following their sons and grandsons) and for the above mentioned linguistic policies of the Education Ministry of France: previous generations of immigrants, mainly the third but in some way also the second one, never reached the proficiency of Arabic language because not stimulated in school nor at home (parents were encouraging the use of French, as highlighted in many types of research). In light of this, it makes sense that people with relatives in North Africa have a better knowledge of the Arabic language. As important, is to stress that not all the interviewed had family in the original countries: many of them, with the past of decades and generations, lost every contact with their "motherland". During the '60ies - '70ies entire families moved, grandparents, uncles and cousins included. That brings us to one of the following points: the frequency of travels in motherlands. Many of the interviewed (17), had no family or close relatives/friends in the Maghreb. Those who did, revealed an obvious higher frequency in travels. Aziz: "*I go Algeria every summer with my wife and children [...] we both (him and his wife) have cousins and friends in Algeri [...] we often go there and they often come here..it's nice and important for my children to see where their grandparents were born*". while Ahmed:

"My grandparents live there (Tunisia) [...] they used to live here (Marseille) but then they returned in the Maghreb when they retired while my parents stayed [...] also the sister of my mother is in Tunis and so we go very often... every time we have one week - ten days of holidays we go".

Also, this outcomes concerning the relations with homelands were in line with the expectations and the socio-demographic trend of France: the immigrants of the '60ies/'70ies's children, and the following generations, were unable to cultivate their links/kinships with the Maghreb, losing part of their ethnic identity that, as we already have seen, hasn't always been replaced by the French one.

Another indicator of the occurrence of counter-identification process, or a re-discovery of ethnic identity or interest in Arabic culture, is the use of media and cultural items in the Arabic language. As previously written, the use of such cultural items has been heavily

thwarted by French institutions until 1996, from this date the freedom of broadcasting material in Arab, grew constantly. In recent years, the request of books, movies, newspapers and radio/media in Arabic growth among youngers, and so growth the offer of materials. Besides the above.-mentioned radio station of Radio Beur and Radio Soleil, during the interviews, it came out that radio stations broadcasting either discussion concerning the Arab communities of Marseille or Arabic music were tens. Alongside the two main stations (Radio Beur and Radio Soleil) the most popular among the sample and especially students was Radio Noailles. This station is a small one based in Noailles, one of the neighborhood with Arabic majority, place of the Arabic market and different banks, schools, NGOs linked to Arabo-Muslim culture. The radio appeared to be appreciated for “*[...] its wide offer of programs, is not only music, they discuss a lot and you can call and intervene [...] it is both in Arabic and French...it depends on the program [...] I like when they talk about politics, a lot of things happens in Noailles and is important to talk about it [...] not many people care about Noailles, not the Government or the major nor authorities... it's us! People from Noailles the authority listening our voices and fighting our battles*” said Ikhrame. Apparently, this neighborhood of Marseille, Noailles, located between Cours Julien and St. Charles train station in the middle-south of the city, is one of the most culturally lively areas of the city but also rich of tensions. Misunderstandings and grievances against local authorities often come from contrasts born with police officers patrolling the area against pickpockets, drug dealers, smuggled cigarettes dealers, etc. often exaggerating with the use of violence (in the recent decades, the neighborhood history is full of accidents involving youngers and police officers) “*[...] Noailles is very Arabic area [laugh] the Market is like the souk of Algiers and is full of mosque and Arabs and Muslims [...] you can see a lot of “Nourriture Tunisienne” (Tunisians restaurants) or pastries*” described it like that Medhi, 18 years old kid. “*[...] Radio Noailles is what people use to denounce things happening here, to discuss it, is like a community in the radio but is not made only by Arabs, also other Muslims and even white French call the radio when the program is in French*”. Radio Noailles, finally, appears to be extremely popular also for broadcasting Arab music, like Radio Beur and Radio Soleil do as well. “*[...] I prefer French music, I don't speak good Arabic, but my mother is always there, at 19:00 for her music program [...] she loves those old Algerian songs. They were very popular when she was young or when she was visiting her grandmother in Algeria*” revealed Ahmed.

Others interviewed showed their interest in online websites/podcast broadcasting news. “*Is plenty of podcasts or websites if you need news from Algeria* (country of origins of the interviewed), *both in Arabic and French [...] also on Spotify [...] you just search the “episode” of the day and they read all the first pages of newspapers in Arabic countries...I wouldn’t be able to do it myself [laugh] I don’t read Arabic at all*” Said Dorsaf; Afaf alike: “*if I can I buy newspapers in Arabic, I do it for grandpa but I also read the news in Arabic [...] usually I prefer the news of this youtube channel...I can listen to it while driving..is good*”.

Highlighted in the research, it seems that among Arab workers, there is also the “tradition” of following prays from work through religious radio-channels. “*When is Friday and we are working, if we can, we use the radio to listen the pray [...] for us (Muslims) is important to follow the precept of Islam, and the pray on Friday is very important*”. Despite these words of Aziz, as expectable, the most younger elements are less religious and so less linked to religious programs. However, many of them revealed parents using such stations and so to be used to “discuss” Islam in Arabic.

Finally, it is important to report the interest of the young interviewed in books and movies in Arabic. Many of them are those youngsters trying to learn Arabic lately, but there were also older men and women using movies to practising their Arabic. This entire part of the research sample, is showing us how the trend of re-appropriation of culture through the use of radio or even books, newspapers and movie in the Arabic language is constantly growing. If into one hand is generated by curiosity and the pleasure of exploring part of its own multicultural dimension; into the other, this curiosity might be generated from the need of “getting closer” to the Arab identity, possibly as an effect of counter-identification processes, and further stimulated by the facility with which gain such material.

The fourth sphere of identity: being Muslim in France

An essential part of cultural identities, nonetheless the North African Arab one, is closely related to religion and in this very case Islam. Islam itself has often been described as a “problem” in modern France, also in recent times. Due to part of its customs such as traditional veiling and “clothes”, considered *unusual* in modern European societies, and to the misleading accusatory tones used by politicians and newspapers when publicly “dealing” with Islam and integration; Islam and its fedels are surrounded by a clime of diffidence and hatred. This hostile clime that aims every Muslim and so the biggest part of Beurs, is often perceived as an attack by the French Government/society to a pillar of personal identities and personal faith. One of the most delicate issues related to the relation between France and Islam, and also the main focus of my interviews, is the practice of veiling by Muslim women. The debate around the use of veil has deep roots in France recent history and has been instrumentalized often by political parties. If into one hand it has been claimed to be an integrative part of Muslim identity and a fundamental precept of Islam; into the other someone argued that the use of veil as a symbol of religion affiliation violates France secularism.

Despite the migration flows of North African Arabs directed to France have been constant since the ‘50ies, the problem of women wearing *hijab* or *niqab* became a public issue at the end of the ‘80ies. As a matter of fact, the first generation of immigrant women, wives of workers already settled in France, was not used to participate in French public life, limiting their interactions among the ethnic community/family. The daughters of these women occupied, or tried to, a role in public space, participating in the education system and the labor market. Exactly how will happen more spreadly a few years later, in the ‘90ies - ‘00ies, young French -Muslims opted for orthodox Islam in their quest of identity (Barras, 2010). This “*cultural emancipation*” had been the trig of conflicts with a wide public (meant as “average” citizens) involvement.

The first “veil case” was recorded in Paris in 1989, where three Maghrebi girls got expelled by their school for refusing to take off their veils (Croucher, 2008). The event triggered a

huge debate over the use of the veil in public school. If the specific event of Paris finished with the State Council granting the children their rights of religious expression (Croucher, 2008), the case led to a debate within the scholastic institution. The aim was to regulate school-dressing code in order to let room for personal identities expression to the kids, and interpretative juridical power to administrative officers (schools' principals). What came out was a confusing guideline imposing that “*[...] students' clothes shouldn't be disrespectful for other students beliefs, institutions' pluralism and must not obstruct the student in the normal progress of the school-curricula*” leaving to school authorities an excessive interpretive power that might result just in another trigger for social contrasts (An-Na'im, 2000). This total discretionary guideline is offering little or no rule to stick straight to and leave Muslim young-girls unprotected by the wrong limitation of their rights. All of this makes the Educational system (for veiled girls) the less emancipative and the more punitive institution/public space (Keaton, 1999). The clash on headscarves in schools involved French society up to its highest political figure. In 2003 that day's President Chirac, defined schools as “*[...] a sanctuary of republican values [...] they must be religious free*” (Independent, 18 December, 2003). The debate enlarged the meaning of public space triggering contrasts and tensions not only in schools but also in hospitals and other State's buildings (Barras, 2010). This discussion, should be inserted in the wider one concerning the notion of laicism in French politics/society.

Indeed, due to its “fury” on Muslim veils, laicism seems an excuse to justify the importance of physical uniformity; hereby it is a social construction politically settled and interpretative, not a concept with a fixed meaning (Barras, 2010). The climate of “secular crusade” surrounding Islamic veils, is due to the exaggeration of the rhetoric of “clash of civilization”, according to which Islam cannot coexist with democracy due to its customs (Abu-Lughod, 2002). Therefore, laicism appears as a collective ethnic logic dominating the public life moral authority, that asks people to transcends their cultural/individual particularities in exchange to uniformity to the Republic values/customs (Barras, 2010), in a process similar to religious-justice apparatus.

The discussion about Muslim veils, as we seen particularly debated, reached a symbolic point in 2004. This year, for France's laws and society, might be considered as a watershed. As a

matter of fact, the 15 March 2004, after the signature of President Chirac, the French Code of Education got a further amendment (Law 228-2004) that will get known in the foreign press as “headscarves ban”, since an attempt to forbid veils and any other religious symbol from schools (Fredette, 2015). Although the amendment doesn’t have any direct reference to *hijabs* or Muslims in general, it appeared clear how it was referring exactly to such a community. However, many commentators, argued that Jews kids have more chances to attempt a Judaic school in which Kippahs would be conforming, while Christians kids are not scolded for wearing crosses. Hereby the ban is referring exclusively to Muslims. According to Barras (2010), the headscarves ban is an exclusive understanding of French laïcité, meant as a product of France’s society and history often corresponding to the political/social anxiety over the fact that national identity is disappearing in favor of multiculturalism. In a report dated 2005, the Islamic Institute of Human Rights, defined the Law 228-2004 as “*a State-sponsored attack to Muslim identity*”, on the same line of those who interpreted the amendment as an attempt of French authorities to avoid the formation of an Islamic identity (Bramham, 2004) and the Muslim associations which saw it as a “white-paper” to French society to exclude Muslims (Croucher, 2008). Into the other hand, politicians, scholars and other associations agreed on the Law as a ban able to preserve the idea of secularism, until that time applied only to public servants (they were forbidden to wear religious symbols during the service), and extend it in some delicate areas as schools and the education system (Gaspard & Khosrokhavar, 1995). The position of this latter “faction”, has been strengthened by the commonly shared assumption among public opinion, that using the veil tantamounts to admit to belonging more to God/Umma (borderless concept) than to France and its national identity (Barras, 2010). On the base of that, Law 228-2004 has then been used as “track” to follow also other issues. In 2004, The New York Times, reported an interview telling the story of Miss Silmi, which French citizenship request (she was half Moroccan half-French since married with a citizen) had been denied since not enough assimilated to France/Republican values (Bennhold, 19 July 2008). The degree of her assimilation and division of French values was determined on the base of her habit of wear a *hijab*, according to Islamic precepts. In the notes, it appears how Miss Silmi has been defined submitted to the male of her family (due to the veil, customs of Islam) and so not in line with the principles of France as a State. The case got important relevance on a national/international scale since the avoidance of citizenship due to the fulfilment of Muslim precepts “could hit” 5 millions of

French Muslims, bringing once again the debate regarding secularism and freedom of faith (Bennhold, 19 July 2008).

Therefore, the already debated concept of secularism in school applied to other spheres of public life (such as citizenship and life in public spaces) is the main trigger of a debate that characterized French society in the last 30 years and that corresponds to the main focus of my research on Islamic sphere of identity. As a matter of fact, the concerns about veil are based not only on the attempt of defending secularity in French society but also on, as already mentioned, years of “clash of civilizations” logic, in an Huntingtonian way. Hence, the Muslim ban and the general French conception of headscarves must also be interpreted as an attack to stereotyped Islam as the enemy of the Western world.

Indeed, the discussion on *hijabs* have increased after the terrorist attack of the -90ies and the more known of the ‘00ies. As a matter of fact, in the context of the international war on terrorism, and in order to gain popular consensus in military campaigns, the rhetoric of “enslaved women” and “burqas as prisons” got exaggerated, in the attempt of making public opinion focusing only on the most contrasting sides of Islam instead of the role played by Western powers in the Middle East/North Africa regions (Abu-Lughod, 2002). This rhetoric/strategy is not new among French history: the binomial saving women - civilizing savages has always been present in France’s colonial heritage, mainly in Algeria, when French tried to transforms Maghrebi girls according to French customs (Lazreg, 1994). Eventually, the same strategies were used in more recent times, just after Daesh terrorist attacks in Europe, with the modern idea that “Islam and democracy are not compatible”, and that Muslims “want to force our women to wear headscarves” (Mernissi, 2002). Hereby, the logic of Western vs East is based on pure eurocentrism and on the assumption that is all a cultural phenomenon not involving socio-economic factors, such as quality of life, education, opportunities, etc. (Abu-Lughod, 2002).

In the last decade, while Right-Wing politicians (Le Pen) and newspapers insisted on the oppression felt by women wearing headscarves, needing a man to leave home and forbidden to drive/drink/work, etc., groups of scholars and Muslim associations started a campaign of sensibilization on the hijab as culturally and religiously appropriate choice enacted by

Muslim women. To quote Abu-Lughod (2002), “*think the hijab only has unfreedom is ethnocentricity [...] are we sure that Muslim women feel oppressed and want to be liberated by burqas?*”. In the same position as Abu-Lughod, many anthropologists argued that every culture/community develops its own set of traditions and customs. Often veiling is a chosen action of Muslim women, the real oppression of women in Islamic countries is the index of human development (education, labor market, healthcare, child marriage, etc.). Furthermore, Western public opinions are used to consider every headscarf a burqa/niqab (covering all the face and hairs letting only eyes uncovered) a danger for public security and violence to the woman wearing it. As enlightened often, that's not true: *niqabs* are typical by some countries such as Pakistan and Afghanistan, while other countries developed different types of headscarf according to the type of Islam/culture of the region (for example, Maghrebi are known to be malikist, and so their women use a *hijab*, covering only hairs, and not *niqab*). Furthermore, the modernist turn in the use of the veil, recorded since the ‘80ies in both Europe and North Africa/Middle East, developed a more libertarian approach to the veil, that more often leaving the face totally uncovered and follows a logic of transnational fashion according to popular colors and material of the “season” (Abu-Lughod, 2002). Consequently, the use of veil also spread in the second-third generation of immigrants, willing to preserve part of their Muslim/Arab identities and let the world know that veiling isn't oppression (Shirazi, 2010).

The last decades of debate on veiling also saw the birth of positions in line with some feminists movements linked to Islam. As a matter of fact, for Muslim feminists, the use of burqa shouldn't bee blame for women's position of inferiority, which should be counted among patriachism and a masculist-reading of the Quran faults (Salih, 2015). Furthermore, many Muslim women see in the hijab the possibility of showing ethnic independence and challenging capitalism and globalization, learning the importance of wearing a hijab in schools (Mernissi, 2002); bringing back the notions of Islamic revivalism, in which young Muslims adopt Islamic practices to defend their ethnic origins /richness and aim to re-treat the relation between religion and public space (Salih, 2015). According to research on the use of veil led by Croucher in 2008, many French-Muslim women defined their headscarves as part of their woman identity. The hijab is indeed a way to show the North African ancestry pride and feel closer to the Umma, community made by all Muslims together, and so an

undeniable desire (Croucher, 2008). For these women, as revealed by both Croucher's research and mine, see in the hijab the conjunction between their being French, their being Muslim and their being Maghrebians. Hereby, they started to feel attacked and different after 2004's law, and they feel as their identity is under inspection when public debates bring up once again the matter of veiling in France (Croucher, 2008).

The experiences and opinions gathered during the research, appear to confirm the trend already highlighted in the last paragraph. Into one hand, we have the veil meant not only as a symbol/precept of Islam but also as "ethnic characteristic" and tool of protests; into the other hand, I asked the interviewed to express comments on some event veil-linked happened recently in France, on the concept of laïcité expressed by French authorities/society and on the concept of Islam in French public opinion. In general, I can stress the appearance of Islam/religion as the main field of contrast between the third-fourth generation of Maghrebi immigrants and French society/institutions.

At the question "How do you consider French public opinion position regard Islamic religion?" all of the interviewed answered expressing concerns about the safety/freedom grant them as Muslims, only one of the interviewed decided to do not answer.

Ahmed, 26 years old of Tunisian origins defined the French public opinion regard Islam as "*catastrophique* (catastrophic)", then continuing "*nowadays it appears that the first problem of France is not unemployment, nationalism, sexism. It is Islam...you turn on the TV and they are talking about Islam, you change the channel and there is someone talking about Islam [...] not even in Tunisia they talk that much about Islam [laugh]*".

Dorsaf, 27 years old Tunisians origins as well, answered the same question with "*tres negative* (very negative) [...] *Islam is France's public enemy right now, it has always been, but since 2014 (Daesh several attacks in France) it worsened*". Aziz, on its own, offered a similar perspective (to Dorsaf one): "*French public opinion is totally islamophobic. I don't think so that French people are racist, I think is media's and politics' fault: every day there is much news about Arabs' crimes and veils, and mosques and terrorism and so on [...] they describe us as not French because that scares White-French and increases the separation between French Muslims and not [...] in all of this is politicians gaining (he explicitly referred several times to Le Pen): they earn votes on the hate and the fear of French people*

and the sufferance of French Muslim” he continued “France has always had a problem with xenophobia and racism, but politics and newspaper started to exaggerate after Isis’s terrorist attacks: since a few years, every man with a beard is a terrorist and every woman with a veil is oppressed by her husband... we are all Salafists for them (newspapers and politicians)”.

Also Safa highlighted the association, usually made by newspapers, Muslim-Salafist-terrorists: *“I think all of this is just coming from ignorance they (Franco-French) consider all of us Salafists, it’s cool now using that word..also if it’s wrong to use it like this...Salafists are like orthodox Muslims. Exactly how you have orthodox jews and Mormons there are also orthodox Muslims [...] is wrong from many points of views: usually, people from the Gulf or Pakistan/Afghanistan are Salafists, in North Africa, we follow other confessions (knowingly Malaki’s and Hanafi’s) [...], but in France, everyone thinks we are ultra-Muslim always praying and hating the others, but it couldn’t be farther from reality”.*

The perception of feeling under attack by French public opinion is knowingly spread among French-Muslims, also for what appeared in my research, and is one of the k-factor for the identity contrasts and the generated counter-identification process that I’m investigating. Clearly, the sentiment of oppression/attack by public opinion is generated by the symbolic meaning of hijab and veils (but religious symbols in general) that French-Muslim appears to defend. Despite the question was aiming mainly women (for obvious reasons), also men were interviewed in the matter concerning not only headscarves but every kind of Islamic symbol. *“Is not just a headscarf, is part of my identity” said Afaf “if I don’t wear it out of home, I feel bad. It is not only about God, but is also about me!”. “I like the veil, I don’t wear it always [...] at work I can’t (she works in public service) but when I’m out I do [...] is not only showing the belonging to Islam, is also showing my grandparents’ legacy and the heredity of Tunisia. Is what I am: French-Muslim-Tunisian” add Dorsaf.*

Ikhrame, one of the youngest girls interviewed, offered a perspective on the “safety” of using the veil: *“I feel safe when I wear it [...] I can decide what people can see and what they cannot [...] and then it makes me feel a good Muslim [...] Muhammad’s wives used to wear the veil, wear it makes me feel closer to them and to God”* the feeling of safety, appeared to

be generated by the sense of belonging to a community “*when I wear it in France, or also when I wear it in Morocco when I go in summer, I feel part of something: wherever you go you find always other women with hijab, we are all faithful, we are all Muslims, is something beautiful [...] sometimes in Marseille (her city) I feel observed [...] white men and people look at me sometimes, they can't understand*”.

Finally, Safa highlights once again the role in Arabic-identity construction played by hijab “[...] *I wanna wear it, I'm Muslim, I'm coming from an Arabic family, it's part of being Muslim and it's part of being Arab...they can't control what we are*”.

As easy to expect, since the sample of this part of the research was composed mainly by females, the experiences concerning the prohibition of wearing hijabs in public space were often described. Part of the interviews has been inserted in previous paragraphs/spheres of identity analyzed since often happened in contexts relatable to school and work (two of the spheres previously analyzed), in this section I'll report the others (more interesting).

Medhi, 18 years old, told me his opinion on the veil ban: “*is bullsh*t! They don't do the same with the others* (other religious persons, I guess), *is something aiming only Muslims [...] every day my sister had to take off the veil before entering school. At the end of the classes, she can wear it again, outside...is just stupid*”. On the difficulties faced by young girls in public spaces, also other interviewed released impressions/experiences, such as Ahmed's: ”*I work in a fruits shop in front of a high school. Every Morning I see them (young Muslim girls), they meet out of school wearing hijabs and when the bell rings they made group and they take them off, while the white friends enter school... It is not a nice scene to assist to for a Muslim*” same impression of Fatima “*I saw once a young girl close to the post office, as soon as she entered the office she took off her hijab [...] she had a hat with her, she wears that baseball hat instead..that's why I say is crazy: no veil, but if I wear a baseball hat I'm fine [...] I'm sure she was obliged (the young girl) to take off the veil, it hurts the heart of every Muslim woman but is the rule and we have to respect it [...] next time I'll go to the bank I'll bring with me a hat as well [laugh]*”. Finally, always related to the 2004's veil-ban and the consequent discussions, the subjects have been asked to express an opinion also concerning the concept of laïcité generally attributed to French society.

Dorsaf “in the last years they (newspapers/politicians) convinced French people that Islam is not compatible with Democracy and so it should not be part of it in any measure....but then I think that Algeria, Tunisia, Lebanon, and many other countries are republic/democracies as well, and there are a lot of Muslim and Arabs there [she smiled]” Ahmed, that was interviewed a few minutes after adding “when they (Franco-French) ear talking about Islam always Saudi or Iran came to their mind, but there are many others Islamic-majority countries that are not Islamic Republics or Islamic States..the submission of democracy to God is not the only way Muslims have to do politics you know..”.

Aziz, as always the most talkative of the interviewed: “French laïcité got out of control, under young Muslims/Arabs perspective, looks like an insane injustice. It just makes them feel different and not welcome in their own countries [...] French people hate religion but they don’t realize that French laïcité became a form of religion: it’s dogmatic, is not interpretative and is the principle to which everything else should be submitted to..it’s like Islamic Salafism and Shari’a [laugh loudly]” continuing: “the only effect of this extremely aggressive laïcité it was to dig a barrier between French Muslims and French atheist. This country should not be like this, is gonna be harsh for Arab youngers, they are always being cut out of public life if things will keep going like this”. Mohammed, 21 years old with Moroccan origins: “laïcité in France is just a tool to attack Muslims [...] every year they stop the construction of some mosque cause they talk about spending public money for a minority confession, but they don’t do the same with churches and synagogues or with Notre Dame (to which a lot of funds have been destined after the catastrophic fire that damaged it recently) [...] is a war to Islam, they want to forbid it!”.

“I can’t really understand all of this.” said Karim, 24 years old Franco-Algerian guy: “the freedom of faith is granted by the constitution, so then why persecute Muslims? ”.

The general feelings of the interviewed seem to be under attack. Muslim women see the Muslim ban and the French society as totally hostile to the veil, part of their personal and ethnic identity. Also, male Muslims feel assaulted by French society, according to the interviews being compared to Salafist or terrorism became normal in France. This climate of diffidence surely is at the base of many tensions between the communities of Franco-French

and Maghrebi-French, and since attacking Islam as a pillar of personal and ethnic identity, is surely at the base of the counter identification processes as well.

Conclusions

Despite the subject, and its same definition, are both general and extremely difficult to measure, some important outcomes have been gathered. The fact that French society has been extremely racist, xenophobic and classist towards the Arab community since the very beginning of the immigration flow is a very well-known matter nowadays. Through the analysis I made across the history of French society since WWII, it appears clear the effects of misleading policies adopted by French Governments in relation to housing and citizenship, two pillars of integration and identification. Now, more than 50 years after the beginning of the most important immigration flow in France history, thousands of Franco-Arabs are rejected by their own home country despite citizenship. As sustained in the thesis, these subjects usually adopt retrenchment-of-identity-strategies in an attempt to overcome the sense of isolation left by an identity crisis. Among the possible retrenchments, the one on the base of the original ethnic-national identity is one of the most chosen.

For what outcome from the research, we cannot deny a trend in Arab French descendants of re-discover their culture, at least for what concerns their language. Media in Arabic and school languages are represented as important cultural tools among the interviewed population, even more than travelling to North Africa (not really used, according to the outcomes). Furthermore, a lot of the sample members confessed to having faced racist episodes not only on the base of religion but also of ethnicity and not only in school but also at work. However, it appears to be the religious sphere the most important one in the optic of triggered conflicts: both males and females considered France's provision concerning veils and Islam as racist and islamophobic. Many of the interviewed women said to feel attacked by French society when in the middle of tensions due to Islamic headscarves and consequently to feel less integrated of such society. Hereby, we got the empiricism to confirm the existence of the counter-identification processes among French society.

What came out from the research, is that despite a successive identity-retrenchment that occurs after the counter identification processes, ethnic identity is not always the most followed option. Globalization losers and mainly its youngest ranks retrench their identity in many occasion in modern society. Anyway, young Arabs underwent racists episodes might also refuse the ethnic-religious identity of Arab Muslim since belonging to previous generations. Therefore, identification processes linked to the *identité de quartier* (hood identity) much more often occur among the third-fourth generation of immigrants from disadvantaged areas. On the other hand, in many cases, it appeared that the identity of Muslims is often much superior if not even totally unbound to the one of Arab: many interviewed defined themselves as French-Muslims instead of Maghrebi-French. However, youngers born in France by French parents but with a strong connection with North Africa's identity have been highlighted, and often in the subjects that faced more racists episodes along with their lives in French society.

Finally, the research stressed the need of exploring more deeply the matter and its different particularities. The re-appropriation of the Arabic language, for example, might be an interesting topic for future works. The counter-identification process should be considered normal in the light of the colonial/racist recent past of European countries, but it might be a problem for European identity and also the personal one: if we haven't been able to welcome, integrate and share life peacefully with the descendant of the immigrants arrived in Europe 70 years ago, how can we hope to welcome, integrate and share our lives with the immigrants of the most recent flows?

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