No longer a waltz between red wine and mint tea: The portrayal of the children of immigrants in French newspapers (2003–2013)

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A B S T R A C T

Despite the egalitarianism that informs French civic culture, the socio-economic marginalization of citizens of non-European origin, mostly from North African countries, provide empirical evidence that challenges the French Republican ideal of integration. Such marginalization needs to be reconciled especially within the cultural realm. In this article, we look at French newspapers' coverage of the children of immigrants during a ten-year period (2003–2013). We analyse coverage in three major newspapers since French news coverage can be considered to follow a specific political/literary model, which has a profound influence on how news in France is both coded and decoded. The article examines the ways political allegiances affect the portrayals of the children of immigrants. Using the constant comparative method, an analysis of the discourse over time shows that the narratives of integration of the decedents of North African immigrants have been complicated by the 2005 riots, both as a romantic illusion, a reflection of reality, or a possible outcome of events. The three newspapers grapple with the ambiguous position of the children of immigrants in French society in different ways. Coverage of children of immigrants continues to be divided along partisan lines which are bounded by the political/literary model of journalism. What is also clear is that the changing portrayal of children of immigrants is intrinsically attached to evolving social, political, and economic dynamics both nationally and beyond state borders.

1. Introduction

The tragic events that overtook Paris on 7 January 2015[1] once again brought children of immigrants[2] to the national public and media forefront. Reminiscent of the 2005 suburban riots[3] which led to a questioning of the relationship between the

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[1] Two French men born to Algerian immigrant parents attacked the office of the satirical weekly newspaper Charlie Hebdo in Paris killing eleven people and injuring eleven more. The assailants were identified as belonging to the terrorist Islamic group Al-Qaeda.

[2] We use this designation to refer to those born in France to immigrant parents. We believe that the more commonly used term, second generation immigrants, is less accurate in describing their experiences since, by virtue of being born and raised in France, these individuals should not be referred to as immigrants.

[3] In October and November of 2005 a number of riots took place in the ethnic suburbs of Paris and spread to other cities in France following clashes between ethnic youth and the police. In response, the then Minister of Interior (later president) Nicolas Sarkozy declared a "zero tolerance" policy and the police arrested 2900 rioters who were mostly unemployed teenagers from impoverished housing projects in ethnic suburbs.

young citizens and the Republican utopian values and its immigration and integration policies (Haddad & Balz, 2006), recent media discourse appears to have come full circle. In the information age, media discourse is a key factor in shaping people's knowledge, attitudes and actions towards any given issue (see for example Castells, 2010; Cohen & Young, 1973; Gamson, Croteau, Hoynes, & Sasson, 1992). This article seeks to analyse newspaper discourse surrounding North African French youths over a period of ten years. To be able to appreciate any potential effect that a news article may hold, an effort must be made to retrace the steps and contextually analyse the source material. Thus it must be asked: How have leading French newspapers portrayed the children of immigrants? We especially focus on the ways major newspapers persuade specific understandings of immigration and its consequences, which may ultimately shape integration policies and discourses in France.

Since the mid-twentieth century, the number of immigrants from non-European countries to France has steadily increased, and so have the concerns over the economic benefits, integration policies, national identity and cultural conflicts (Kastoryano, 2002; Reitz, 1998). France is a nation-state that sees itself as universalist and egalitarian (Kastoryano, 2002) and French national identity rejects the possibility of multiculturalism (DeGroat, 2001). Since the early 1990s, French policies and rhetoric emphasized integration as the means for incorporating new immigrants into the Republic's civic institutions and official culture without the demand to relinquish their specific traditions (see for example Schnapper, 1991). The universal claims of the French Republican model require that all individual particularities (such as religion) be confined to the private sphere. Historically, national institutions such as the church, school, army, and unions performed the function of assimilating immigrants (Ibid.). The Republican model is supposedly concerned purely with individual equality. However, it is in fact based on certain assumptions on language use, social behavior, dress, secularism and political behavior, summed up in the notion of *civisme* or civic virtues. Thus, newcomers are allowed into the community only if they adhere to the political rules and are willing to adhere to the national culture (Axtman, 1997).

French civic culture emphasizes an "ideology of national unity," which informs the French aspiration for assimilation. The French emphasis on making "peasants" and "foreigners" into French men and women is usually opposed to the German organic view of the nation and reliance on *jus sanguinis* as well as that of the U.S. whose multiculturalism was caricatured as equivalent to ghettoization (Guiraudon, 1996; Safran, 1991; Todd, 1994). The French Republican model is based on an egalitarian notion of citizenship that is universally applicable. Castles and Miller (1993, pp. 224–225) cite the first report from the *Haut Conseil à l'Intégration* (High Council for Integration)[4] as expressing the essence of the Republican model:

> French conception of integration should obey a logic of equality and not a logic of minorities. The principles of identity and equality which go back to the Revolution and the Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizens impregnate our conceptions, thus founded on the equality of individuals before the law, whatever their origin, race, religion. . . to the exclusion of an institutional recognition of minorities.

Active citizenship is an important aspect of the Republican tradition, which emphasizes that anyone can become a French citizen if he or she assimilated (Miles & Singer-Kérel, 1991). This form of integration is the responsibility of the individual. Van Der Valk (2003, p. 311) describes that in the process of integration:

> Notions of 'community', 'cultural pluralism', or any concept that emphasizes the importance of the immigrants' culture of origin are rejected because they are assumed to reflect an immigré's state of non-integration. This state is believed to engender social problems between immigrés and French society, and thereby threaten social cohesion which, in turn, would favor the development of racism.

Under this model, membership in the national community involves voluntary commitment to the republic and its values. Religious, ethnic, linguistic, regional, subcultural, and other ascriptive identities have been accepted as temporary features but relegated to the private realm (Castles & Miller, 1993; Ireland, 1996). The division between public and private is particular to France and group identity is meant to be a private matter. Minorities are not recognized in the public sphere, in legal texts, and official surveys cannot include questions about religion or ethnicity, as is the case in the United States. Retaining ethnic identity in private and asserting Frenchness in public is the main tension in French public policies towards immigration and minority right.[5] In the French context, integration refers to the incorporation of foreign-born people into French social, political, economic and cultural institutions. Alec Hargreaves (1995) holds that the notion of "integration" in France serves the same function as "race" and "racial relations" in Britain and the US. The main difference that using "integration" brings is that its does not imply the recognition of permanently distinct groups the way "race" does. Moreover, "integration" denotes that social differentiation is (or should be) in the process of elimination (Ibid; see also Weil & Crowley, 1994).

Despite the egalitarianism that informs French civic culture, "there remained an organic conception. . . according to which non-Europeans, Jews, and other non-Christians could not be considered fully French" (Safran, 1991, p. 221). More

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[4] The council was put together as the government's response to the Headscarf Affair in 1990 to develop solutions to the immigration challenges. The Council's various reports championed a model of integration firmly in the Republican mold: equal rights and obligations for all would generate solidarity among the different ethnic and cultural components of French society. In the Council's first report in February 1991, the active individual model of integration was stressed, but emphasized changes in the mainstream culture: immigrants should "accept the rules" and "adhere to a minimum common values" so that their "fusion with the national collectivity" continues to enrich it.

[5] In describing the place occupied by immigrants in French politics & public policy, Patrick Simon (1999) describes the French model of integration as one where ethnic difference are viewed in the same way as sex in puritan societies, "as something to be neutralized, dissolved, and made invisible, all the while serving as an object of obsession."

importantly, the socio-economic marginalization of people of non-European origin, mostly from North African countries who are concentrated in the lower segments of the labor market, and experience high unemployment rates, especially for youth, provide empirical evidence against the French Republican ideal (Lutz, Brinbaum, & Abdelhady, 2014; Schain, 1988). So, how does the Republican ideal of integration reconcile such discrepancy that is reflected in the daily experiences of the "Other" within French society? What are the stories that justify the inability of the Republican model to integrate North Africans and make them French? Importantly for the purposes of this article, what are the discursive constructions of the immigrant narrative in French newspapers?

To provide an answer to this question, this article begins by assessing the role of the news in shaping readers' perceptions of issues in general, and of immigration in particular. Following on from this, it explores literature dealing with the French model of journalism and its implications for such a study before shedding light on current analysis of portrayals of French children of immigrants in the written news. After recognising where scholarly gaps exist, the study finally proceeds with an in-depth analysis of newspaper articles from Le Monde, Le Figaro and L'Humanité covering a period which dates back to before the 2005 riots and extends to six months before the Front National's victory in the 2014 European elections, and to a little over a year before the 2015 shootings.

2. Why study the news?

The role of the news in shaping individual thoughts and collective perceptions about a given issue has long been understood as influential, as the mass media "provide the guiding myths which shape our conception of the world and serve as important instruments of social control" (Cohen & Young, 1973, p. 9). The lens through which a reader receives news stories "is not neutral but evinces the power and point of view of the political and economic elites who operate and focus it" (Gamson et al., 1992, p. 374). As Hall (1973, p. 86) reminds us, the news is "a product, a human construction" where selected news stories are "coded and classified, referred to their relevant contexts, assigned to different (and differently graded) spaces in the media, and ranked in terms of presentation, status and meaning." As codes, news stories are constructed and loaded with messages; laid bare in the form of provoking headlines, shocking images and overemphasised details. The individual is not merely a passive receptacle in a mechanical power relation however. Rather, the fluidity of communication allows the receiver or reader to decode a story differently from its intended encoded message, the processual nature of which both reflects and shapes reality (see for example Boomgaarden & Vliegenthart, 2009; Chavez, 2001; Hall, 1973). The demand for news therefore relies in part on reporting significant issues or events which can be decoded as meaningful and significant for the reader, for newspapers cannot expect to maximize readership and attract audiences if the stories are otherwise meaningless.

Immigration as a concept, and immigrants and their offspring who seemingly embody and inflate national tensions relating to identity, social issues and economic problems, will generally always be decoded as meaningful by news readers. One reason for this is that immigrants' 'otherness' is continually perceived as threatening in relation to cultural override, economic distribution, or competition for employment for example (Chavez, 2001, p. 3–4). Yet the news' role is not always to bolster such negativity, and writers and editors can adopt a more positive coverage if they so wish (Ibid. 40). Such an exposure of divergence demonstrates how news coverage are sites of contestation, where, through discourse analysis, different newspapers are shown to adopt varying perspectives on similar issues (Ibid. 53). In turn, it is important to not render news coverage monolithic or essentialise various newspapers' stances on an issue such as immigration. Rather, we need to appreciate that newspapers portray a complex reality that is neither simply pro- nor anti-immigration and immigrants. As such, the task is to identify how such complex portrayals have changed over time, and how this reflects changing social, political and economic dynamics.

Benson (2002, 2010, 2014), who explored coverage of immigration in French newspapers starting in the 1970s, argued that over the years "public framing of immigration shifted, starting from generally altruistic concerns with the social suffering of 'immigrant workers' and progressively moving toward the politics of fear" (2002:49).[6] In this article, we trace the ways the three major French newspapers have covered immigration in general and the children of immigrants in particular to highlight the ways they may aid to form perceptions of immigration and the social benefits or problems associated with it.

2.1. The specificities of French news

French newspapers and news coverage can be considered to follow a specific political/literary model, which has a profound influence on how news in France is both coded and decoded. In comparing the US and French news, Benson (2014) explains that the mediated immigration debate in France relies in part on the lack of a shift towards more politically-neutral journalism, or the 'Americanisation' of news coverage. As French news media is found to be less market driven than the US, Benson characterises French press as being heterogeneous and politically plural, with a set of newspapers (including the ones chosen for this study) occupying a position of prestige and influence in their society. French newspapers have demon-

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[6] Benson focuses on peak years, or years during which media attention to a particular topic was not typical. His analysis raises the question of whether these atypical years provide adequate analysis for French media discourse. Moreover, Benson's analysis looks at institutional logics shaping the news on immigration rather than an analysis of the discourse itself.

strated a continued political allegiance in regards to what news is significant and how that is then coded and presented. Benson explains the strong political orientations of French newspapers by maintaining that "journalistic professionalism in France has been defined not as a detachment or distance from political or ideological allegiances, but as the right to hold and defend a set of ideas" (Benson, 2002, p. 53). In Benson's opinion, this political/literary model of journalism aims not to trivialise the news and can offer "much needed space to correct stereotypes or introduce new ways of understanding immigration" (Ibid. 63). More recently, Benson (2010) reveals that French newspapers reflect the political landscape of the country, where partisanship and ideology divide newspaper leanings and their readers (7). These political demarcations notwithstanding however, such divisions are not manifested in wholly biased coverage (15). Indeed, French press is quite likely to offer critical coverage of stories and criticism in terms of ideology, policy, and strategy.

2.2. Covering children of immigrants

While Benson looks at news coverage of immigration in general, a handful of studies have looked at the children of immigrants in specific. According to Zammoum (2011), the French media's role in framing children of immigrants is recognised by the interplay between various topics and dramatization. He states that

> [s]ubjects such as violence, delinquency, fundamentalism, illegal immigration, unemployment. . .are rarely treated in an objective and neutral manner in France. The mundane news item, which a stranger can even accidentally be found mixed up in, is often amplified and dramatized to be positioned and exploited (100).

Zammoum contends that the youth descendants-of-immigrants generation represented a true mediatised category as they became a front-page news headliner following the Equality March in 1983[7] (Ibid.). Despite the introduction of a new political-media approach in the 1980s which looked to the role of the media as one to promote tolerance and respect of ethnic minorities, "the terms immigration and immigrant have ended up possessing negative connotations, synonyms of problems, insecurity and unemployment. . .via an under-representation and a systematically tendentious social interpretation, unfavorable of immigration" (Ibid. 101).

To contextualise the situation further, Garcia and Retis (2011) have explored the relationship between Le Monde and Le Figaro and the Parisian riots of 2005, arguing that the concept of integration invaded the media discourse during the 1990s, wherein the banlieues[8] came to be considered by the media as "a world which generates violence, dangerous and threatening places for the rest of society" (81). Through framing discourse, the rioters themselves were associated with delinquency, immigration and religion where terrorist images became interwoven with 'foreign youths acting outside of the law', and where in turn, urban violence becomes synonymous with young *French* children of immigrants. As a result of the insistence on delinquency and violence, the actions of the youth were unable to acquire a legitimate political dimension (Ibid. 86), which then re-enhanced traditional social and political hierarchies and relations. This lack of legitimacy was then used as a key tool in the rise of the right-wing political discourse in France, most notably by Nicolas Sarkozy whose reinforced stigmatisation of the banlieues and the youths through a securitization discourse aided the then current Minister of Interior to win the Presidential election just two years later.

The aim of this study is two-fold. Initially, it seeks to recontextualise the aforementioned issues within the latest period from 2003 to 2013. In the process, we also investigate the ways the ideological orientation of the different newspapers impact the specific forms in which the children of North African immigrants are represented. Current literature has either tended to focus on the process of immigration itself and the consequences that this has had in the national imagining, or on less recent overall coverage (up until the new millennium) of immigration news or specific events (such as the 2005 riots). So, we specifically ask: How have the children of immigrants been portrayed in the past ten years? Our analysis provides a more up-to-date coverage which takes into account how the past decade has witnessed a surge in Islamophobia across Europe, the 2005 national riots, the continuation of the war on terror, the rise of the political right in Western Europe (particularly the FN in France), and among other happenings, France's military actions against Muslim extremist groups in the Middle East and Africa. Importantly, we conclude by exploring how can such discourse be understood in relation to the Parisian events of January 2015, and how can it be implicated into future research as a basis to understand wider social actions such as the political and actual alignment of European youths with extremist groups such as the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. Secondly, we ask: to what extent does the French political/literary model influence the representation of the children of immigrants? Is there evidence of a stable or more fluctuating political parallelism in French coverage of immigration? To what extent do ideology and ideological criticisms influence the portrayal of the children of immigrants in the different newspapers? Answering these interrelated questions may aid in understanding the ways the children of immigrants are positioned in French society and the ways their marginalization is reconciled within the Republican ideal of equality.

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[7] Following a few months of confrontation between the police and North African youth in the suburbs of Lyon, an anti-racism nonviolent march was proposed, Marche pour l'égalité et contre le racism, finding inspiration in the nonviolent teachings of Martin Luther King and Mahatma Gandhi. The march commenced in Marseille on October 15, 1983 and ended in Paris in December 3, 1983.

[8] 'Banlieue' is the French term for 'suburb'. In abthe French national context, the word has become socially and culturally associated with the economically disadvantaged outer areas of Paris (along with other major cities) where immigrants and families of foreign descent represent large percentages of the residents. The 1995 film entitled *La Haine* remains one of the most famous representations of the suburbs in French cultural history.

3. Methodology

This study looks at the representation of 'Maghrébin'[9] children of immigrants or North African French youths in France in three leading French-language newspapers over a ten year period. The newspapers – Le Figaro, Le Monde and L'Humanité[10] – were chosen in order to represent a wide readership and a broad political spectrum (center-right, left-leaning, far-left respectively) but with equal frequency of distribution (daily). The range of newspapers will also help to further explore the importance of the French political/literary model of journalism as suggested by Benson, to determine the effect of such a model on such news coverage.

3.1. Sampling

Empirical data was collected according to an initial online search. The criteria 'Maghrébins' and 'Intégration' were chosen as representing general terms allowing access to a wide sample of data whilst remaining associated to the overarching research topic to filter out irrelevant material. A second search with the terms 'Maghrébins' and 'République' was carried out for similar reasons. This was the initial sampling procedure for accessing data in both Le Monde and L'Humanité. The same practise for Le Figaro yielded extremely unfruitful results, and so the search terms were made even more general to the extent that the first search employed the term 'Enfants' and 'Maghrébins' and the second just simply 'Maghrébins'. For all searches, articles were then filtered in accordance with their relevance to the research topic, and many were discarded to re-counter the 'generalness' of the search terms.[11] In all, 109 articles from Le Figaro, Le Monde and L'Humanité became part of the findings and analysis .

3.2. Coding and analysis

Articles were then categorised depending on the main topic that the article evoked.[12] The constant comparative approach was applied, which aims to produce initial categories relating to major patterns and themes through comparing articles. Following Strauss and Corbin (1990), we carried out open, axial and selective coding/categorization to arrive at our analysis. For each article, we listed the different categories that are present. As more articles are compared, initial categories are refined, until final, established categories are set (Glaser & Strauss, 2006). The constant comparative method took both direct repetitions and indirect word-association in mind when deciding on the final themes. For many of the articles, repetitions of (the here translated) words such as 'job' and 'career' were easily identifiable as within the semantics of *employment*. Other words were more complicated to categorise, for terms such as 'C.V.' and 'interview' created an overlap with the aforementioned theme and the theme of *discrimination* for example. Glaser and Strauss' operational comparison allowed in the end to distinguish where indirect meaning was marking differences in articles, pushing them further into the latter category for example. That said, the researchers acknowledge how articles could have been analysed under various rubrics. Such complexities are telling of how the final categories are not fixed and separate, but rather fluid and interdependent. Simultaneously, they hallmark the interlinking nature of the analysis and the study as a whole. The established categories for this study were: Discrimination/Racism; Identity; Crime; Employment; Politics; Banlieues.[13]

Axial categorization of articles involved their examination and comparison along the topical lines, and then according to newspaper. This allowed us to see the similarities and differences between the newspapers within each theme. The final stage of Strauss and Corbin's method is selective coding, which aims at "integrating and refining the theory" (p. 143). While Strauss and Corbin explain that selective coding is achieved by selecting a core category and relating it to all the others categories, we chose to highlight the complex ways the variables are interrelated and explore the relationships between the themes. As an integral part of grounded theory, the constant comparative method aims at a general theory of the range of expressions or representations. In this paper, our aims are different. Instead of accounting for the range of representations of the children on immigrants in France, we explore the ways these representations reflect cultural, political and social dynamics guided by discourse analysis (Gee, 2005).

The theoretical implications of discourse analysis, which works to establish meaning due to discourse's close association with ideology and implicitness (Halim & Meyers, 2010, p. 92), were employed to complement the constant comparative method. Pushing grounded theory (and constant comparative analysis) in line with postmodernism, Clarke (2005) argues for

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[9] Maghrébins generally means North African immigrants in France and their descendants. While the majority are believed to come from Algeria and Morocco, it is statistically impossible to differentiate the members of this group based on their national or ethnic origin. The statistical limitation reflects the generalization imposed on members of this group by French society itself. Maghrébins as a search term is both limiting and illuminating. As a generalization of youth of North African descent it ignores various cultural and social differences in French perceptions between those French citizens who have Algerian roots and those with Tunisian origins for example. That said, it reflects the extent to which the newspapers themselves generalize the youth, which is important to bear in mind. Additionally, it exposes how this study is functioning on a macro-level as opposed to highlighting an individualized and micro perspective of the place of children of immigrants in France.

[10] Online versions.

[11] Full results of this process can be seen in Tables 1 and 2 below.

[12] We follow Van der Valk's (2003, p. 317) definition of a topic as "expressing the most important information of a discourse (fragment)... and as a semantic macrostructure regulating the overall coherence and global meaning of a text including ideological dimensions."

[13] Full results of this categorisation can be seen in Table 3 below.

Table 1

The initial numbers of articles retrieved according to the various search terms. The search dates were September 1, 2003–November 1, 2013.

Search terms/newspaper	Le Monde	L'Humanité	Le Figaro
'Maghrébins'/'intégration'	350	527	N/A
'Maghrébins'/'république'	340	902	N/A
'Enfants'/'maghrébins'	N/A	N/A	69
'Maghrébins'	N/A	N/A	727

Table 2

The process of elimination of articles and the final number retained for analysis.

Reasons for discarding articles/newspaper search[a]	1. Le Monde Maghrébins Intégration (350)	2. Le Monde Maghrébins République (340)	3. L'Humanité Maghrébins Intégration (527)	4. L'Humanité Maghrébins République (902)	5. Le Figaro Enfants Maghrébins (69)	6. Le Figaro Maghrébins (727)
Not related to France	91	53	167	254	15	265
Not related to topic	109	87	125	225	20	157
Different topic agenda	34	27	97	160	3	25
Media/culture/events	21	5	63	132	0	9
Repetition of article	73	142	49	113	24	261
Total remaining	22	26	26	18	7	10

[a] The numbers in brackets represent the results of the initial search as detailed in Table 1.

Table 3

Shows the main themes that were identified and the number of articles which were assigned to each category.

Themes/searches	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Discrimination/racism	7	5	6	5	2	1	**26**
Identity	5	7	7	2	1	2	**24**
Crime	2	5	4	1	2	5	**19**
Employment	3	2	5	4	1	1	**16**
Politics	3	4	2	2	1	0	**12**
Banlieues	2	3	1	4	0	2	**12**

an approach to data analysis that reflects a concern with the ways discourses are produced and how subjects are constituted through them. Looking at the forms of representation of the children of North African immigrants in France thematically, we highlight their significance in a larger social context. Thus, these forms of representation are an integral part of social practices that reproduce power relationships within French society (see for example Fairclough, 1995; Wodak & Meyers, 2001).

The main structure of the analysis is thematic. Within each theme, the discussion is ordered according to the newspapers' partisan political views, beginning with Le Figaro's center-right wing leanings, moving towards Le Monde centralist left-leaning position, and ending with L'Humanité's communist associations. The hierarchy of themes reflects the numerical frequency of the articles, where articles dealing with issues of *discrimination and racism* were the most reoccurring across the three newspapers, and those concerned with the *banlieues* were the least apparent (see Table 3).

The thematic analysis gives way to a longitudinal post-analysis, where time becomes the overarching point of reference. Informed by discourse analysis, we searched for ways the specific forms of representations within each theme changed over time. In doing so, the narratives led us to highlight the different forms of portrayal in three time periods. Understood as incremental with important political points of reference, we use time in a temporally-contextual manner to cluster articles into three groups; 2003–2005 (e.g., pre-riots), 2005–2009/10 (e.g., post-riots), and 2010-present (e.g., the re-emergence of the Front National). Using time in this methodological manner allows for an assessment of the political/literary model of French news in its interactions with the changing political and social dynamics of contemporary France where children of immigrants are spotlighted. This final stage of our analysis allows us to explore the inter-relationship between the original six themes and the complex nature of the forms of representations.

4. Findings and thematic analysis

4.1. Discrimination/racism

The operational definition of discrimination/racism recognises where children of immigrants were set apart and treated differently from other French citizens for reasons, both directly and indirectly, relating to their cultural, religious, social, or ethnic background or heritage. In the right-leaning Le Figaro, children of immigrants were mainly recognised as source actors of discrimination; linking their actions explicitly to anti-Semitism. In such cases, the youths were recognised either by their North African origin or by their relative piety to Islam. One article for example emphasised that "it is above all the Muslim religious practice which influences anti-Semitic prejudices" (Gabizon, 2005). In addition to advancing the Muslim

anti-Semetic causal relationship, statistics compared the 'Maghreb youth' with the 'French'; a distinction between 'French' and 'immigrant origin' which debated the process of secularisation. Adhering in part to discourses of the Enlightenment, the article stated that "some [Maghreb youth] distance themselves from their parents' religion, notably in mixed couples, and in the main overwhelmingly adopt the habits of the French."

Le Monde's centralist coverage shifted sharply towards presenting children of immigrants on the receiving end of discriminatory acts. Unlike in Le Figaro, the second-generation were characterised as "young French descendants of postcolonial immigrants" (Beaud & Noiriel, 2004), or "youth, whose parents were born abroad" (Baumard, 2009). Additionally, Le Monde was far more critical of state-affiliated institutions in its search for accountability. For example, one article spoke of how state stigmatisation is reinforced by the media, and another directly called upon the Public Employment Service to realise its crucial role in combatting discrimination. Elsewhere, children of immigrants were portrayed as not only belonging to France but recognising the nation as their own, caring to the extent of worry. In an interview with Sihem Souid, a young police officer who wrote a book about the difficulties she faces as a French citizen of Maghreb origin in the police, one article quoted her saying, "I am scared for our country, I am scared for *my* France" (Montebourg, 2010). Another written by children of immigrants stated "it is up to us to reconstruct [the Republic]" and that "[i]t is only by dialogue. . .that *we* will manage to restore the Republic as strong and generous" (Benatsou & Cherkaoui, 2006).

Given its far-left orientation, L'Humanité's third version of reality preferred to describe children of immigrants as 'victims' and 'targets' whose place in society is not recognised. This characterisation of the 'victim' was often accompanied by a sense of desperation regarding the nation-state and its power system. In one article, which addressed the issue of state agencies who ask not to be sent Maghreb clients, SOS Racisme[14] is quoted as wondering "[h]ow [it is possible] to accept. . .a system which appears to be the summit of discriminatory systems" (Genthial, 2005). L'Humanité also adopted a critical approach to issues of racism where children of immigrants were concerned. They were informative and inquisitive to a greater extent to those found in Le Figaro and Le Monde. For example, one article explained the dangers of a reliance on statistics. Criticising the notion that children of immigrants are less likely to pass the Baccalaureate than the children of non-immigrant origin,[15] the author noted that "to interpret a table of statistics requires going beyond the simple factual document, which itself has no meaning, and reading it whilst taking into account the social variables which accompany it" (Hocini, 2013).

The initial obvious divide separates Le Figaro from the latter two newspapers, where the children of immigrants are seen overwhelmingly as perpetrators of racist attacks in the former. Indeed, the youths are presented as the aggressive Other, a process of Othering which is exacerbated by the refusal of Le Figaro to reconcile 'Maghreb' with 'French'. Consequentially, the youths' connection to the Republic is delegitimised; a process of negation perforated with religious terminology and its rather unsubtle indictment by the direct association between perpetrator, religion, and discriminatory act.

The more left-leaning newspapers, Le Monde and L'Humanité, both sought to humanise the youths by readdressing their spatial separation from the nation. In Le Monde, this was recognised by direct association; by a portrayal of success and active citizenry. In L'Humanité however, this readdressing was formed around a climate of desperation and victimisation, and creating a culture of sympathy. Despite their different approaches, the newspapers are ultimately working towards similar goals—to expose the realities of social injustice, corroborated by references to the impeachment of state institutions and the larger social system.

L'Humanité's focus tends to be more sensationalist than that of Le Monde due to its sense of victimhood. Yet, the former was similarly recognised to offer more critical journalism than the latter under the discrimination rubric. Accounted for by Benson's political/literary model, L'Humanité relied to a greater extent on the interview and reaction style mode of article. Through this style of reporting, the reader is exposed to a more nuanced view of the situation whilst the reaction pages form the catalyst for the sensationalist climate of desperation to be manifest. Similarly in regards to Benson, all three newspapers were divided along partisan lines; displaying their individual biases and aligning with their varying political ideologies.

4.2. Identity

Identity was a second important theme for all the newspapers. Identity here is understood as representing those articles which express how the youth are positioned within French society and vis-à-vis the nation and the state. These articles illustrate the ways the youth are constructed as different in cultural traditions, ethnic affinities, or communal allegiance. While addressing diverse issues, right-leaning Le Figaro focused on how religion and the traditional culture of the youths' parents impose themselves on their children. While not explicitly expressed in essentialist terms, the force of an all-encompassing culture becomes the threat which prevents the children of immigrants from becoming French. For example one article, which discussed 'Western' Muslims in Yemen and Saudi Arabia, speaks of

> French youth of Maghreb origin. . . have come to be reacquainted with the ascetic life of the Prophet. . .often in rupture with their own societies. Jihadists? Not yet. "But in these hubs of activity, the risk of bad company is heightened" warns

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[14] SOS Racisme is an anti-racist non-governmental organisation founded in France in 1984, established one year after the first national anti-racist movement in France—the March for Equality and Against Racism. See www.sos-racisme.org (in French only).

[15] This description emphasises l'Humanité's efforts to counter inequalities that exist among the French population. To employ the term 'children of non-immigrant origin' arguably seeks to minimise differences and foster a sense of equality and lexical balance that oppositional terms such as 'children of immigrants' and 'French' would only exacerbate.

a police officer. . .Most of them are still in the first phase of the Jihadist route, that of indoctrination. . .followed by recruitment and then training, and sometimes moving to the act (Malbrunot & Chichizola, 2012).

Another addressed the cultural practice of arranged marriages, and discussed the position of young Maghreb-origin girls and their conflict with the cultural practice. As it read,

> The trap closes in on them. . .they are not able to really say no. For fear of hurting their family, of breaking the dreams of their parents. . .the immigrants who come from the Maghreb. . .keep their ties to their homelands, put down roots in village life, and cultivate ancestral alliances. The girls feel sacrificed (Gabizon, 2004).

A tone of victimisation reigns over the article, where words such as "fear", "helpless", "violent" and "isolated" are embedded within a separation between what it means to be French and what it means to be 'of Maghreb origin'. One girl was for example quoted as saying "I just had friends, like the French youths do. But for me, it is forbidden."

Le Monde, the centralist left-leaning newspaper, continued to emphasise religion in relation to identity. Similarly to Le Figaro, there was a tendency to highlight the apparent, real, and durable connection between the youths and Islam. In one article entitled "Youths faithful to Islam" (Joignot, 2012), it was noted that the most practising Muslims are the youngest. However, this connection was contextualised as a reaction to the failure of the state, speaking of how "[r]age and Islam have developed where the Republic has failed" and elsewhere how Muslims have "filled the identity fountains of the youths who have been crushed by contempt of the political system and system violence" (Begag, 2003).

While still stressing the overlapping cultural and religious difference of Maghrébins youth, many Le Monde articles also viewed identity as historically-situated, with some articles looking retrospectively to the situation faced by the immigrant parents, and comparing it with current realities. In some cases, there was a distinct impression of progression. For example, one article mentioned how, whilst the previous generation were demanding the end to racism and ten-year resident permits, their children are now striving for equality. This sense of optimism was mirrored in other articles which recognised a similar progression. As noted, "[f]or these youths, it is a renaissance: they can invent for themselves a future and discover a France more open than they could have imagined" (Zappi, 2013). Conversely, the historical dimension was occasionally tarred by a sense of current alienation and lack of progress. Written by a youth, one article compares the experiences by stating that the previous generation were "a waltz between a glass of red wine and mint tea. Us, we are floating. Not even adults, already headed for extinction" (Laroussi, 2003).[16] The blame of alienation lies with the state and wider society, characterised by a recognition that "[t]here was always this fundamental impossibility to take us seriously—to admit that we were part of the solution, not the problem."

Articles in the far-left L'Humanité particularly emphasized the double or multiple identities of the children of immigrants. Common phrases for example were that they are "between two cultures" (Arnaud, 2003). In some cases, this was embedded within a narrative of discrimination. One article stated that, despite having multiple identities, youths were "only considered as a person of Maghreb origin" and that as a result, "[t]he youngest generation have lost even more hope. . .It is a time bomb" (Deroubaix, 2010). Elsewhere, the notion of not belonging was apparent. Youths were viewed as being left either in a temporality, not in their own home, or considered themselves as being in exile. One article in point discussed Obama's rise to presidency, stressing the positive connotations of his election: "[Obama] advocates a type of politics. . . [which] allows each individual to be recognised by all their identity components without having to disown one component" (L'Humanité, 2008). This pluralistic outlook was nevertheless grounded within a French daily reality, realised by "the feeling of not being considered as a French person. . . [which] has made youths. . .consider themselves. . .in exile." The youths, as a result of being reduced to just one aspect of their constructed identity, see themselves as strangers. Another article highlighted this resistance to pluralistic identities by illustrating its tension with the French Republican model. In an interview with Rachid Taha, the singer noted that "we do not exist without the other. . .Even if we are from different cultures, different religions, we represent the French Republic. The problem is that it has deceived us a bit" (Hache, 2004).[17]

Both Le Monde's and Le Figaro's coverage of identity emphasised the importance of religion in the construction of the youths' everyday identity, arguably attaching somewhat negative connotations to the religion. This is more overtly done in Le Figaro where Islam is conflated with Jihadism, but it is also present in Le Monde's article where Islam is classed as developing alongside rage. Indeed Islam, and thus by extension the youths who are faithful to it, is characterised as a negatively charged reactionary force to state oppression.

Nevertheless, the similarities end here, marked by Le Figaro's insistence on recognising the cultural dangers that those of Maghreb origin are privy to, which in turn is supported by a victimhood portrayal of the young Muslim girls. Having so staunchly fused the youth and Islam together, the newspaper surrounds the fusion with a culture of fear and sacrifice. This in turn is then legitimised by once again creating a distinction between 'Maghreb' and 'French'. The culturalist/religious

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[16] Many of the articles that appeared in Le Monde were written by children of immigrants or contained a proportion of the article devoted to 'voicing' the opinions of these French citizens. The impact of this, which relates to Benson's political/literary model of French journalism, will be discussed in the analysis.

[17] Rachid Taha was born in Algeria but moved to France at the age of 10 with his parents in 1968. His passion for music alongside his activist work rendered his music into a medium to express the social and political desires of Algerian youth in the 60s and 70s. In 1981, Taha formed a band named Carte de Séjour (residency card) to continue this musical development. For a thought-provoking discussion into the relationship between Carte de Séjour's 'success', its linkage to the anti-racist movements of the 1980s, and the band's position as the inassimilable 'beur' Other in France, see (Lebrun, 2012).

understanding of identity is more pronounced (or essentialized) in Le Figaro's portrayals whereby Le Monde's use of a historical perspective renders Maghrébins identity less essentialist.

Le Monde, like L'Humanité, created pockets of opportunity and optimism by stating the youths' attachment to the nation and emphasising their shared wishes to be recognised as belonging to it and the possibility for this to occur in moments of collective highs such as the election of Obama to presidency. Both newspapers' attempts to cast the situation in a wholly positive light however were hindered by the reality of inequality. As both Le Monde and L'Humanité highlight, it is the lack of acceptance of the youths' identities on the part of the greater nation that has led to the process of marginalisation, rather than being a direct result on the part of the youths themselves. These trajectories of blame attest to the newspapers' political leanings.

4.3. Crime

The theme of crime encompasses articles which mention both physical and verbal acts of violence, and those which draw upon statistics to offer insights into the relationship between criminal acts and the children of immigrants. Le Figaro discussed crime in relation to issues of religion, poverty, and poor socio-economic standings, where explorations of why youths of foreign origin are overrepresented in crime statistics were built on a constructed image of a dysfunctional home setting. As one article put it, the statistical overrepresentation was a result of ethnic and cultural aspects (Portes, 2004). Drawing on the poverty to crime causal relation, one article which discussed crimes on trains in Parisian suburbs noted that "[t]hese young thieves are poor—envious of those who have money" (Pech, 2004). Elsewhere, youths were characterised as being in gangs, whose threatening presence stripped them of their humanness. In one article commenting on the attacks committed by Mohammed Merah, the youth is seen as possessing an infinite killing pleasure, who wanted to see, touch, and film his victims (lefigaro.fr, 2012).[18]

Le Monde took to issues of crime by two separate avenues; those dealing with children of immigrants as perpetrators, and those where the youths are victims. In the former case, articles were mostly confined to anti-Semitic attacks, where youths were always characterised as being of Maghreb origin or "descendants of Maghreb origin families" (Garcia, 2003), rather than emphasising their Frenchness. There were also attempts to rationalise the attacks, or to present these cases as unrepresentative of the whole Maghreb/Muslim community. For example, in an article which explained an anti-Semitic knife attack, the President of the French Council of Islam "condemned in the name of the French Muslim community this attack which inspires horror, revolt, and disgust" (Davet, Juillet, & Garcia, 2004). In terms of the latter, the youths were victims of either political or police forces. In one article for example (Leclerc, 2007), a youth was hospitalised after an altercation with Front National militants, who had called the man a 'dirty Arab'.

In a similar fashion to Le Monde, L'Humanité presented the youths as both aggressors and victims. In fact, one article used the same quote from the President of the French Council of Islam. In this case, there was an effort to denounce the attack as an individual case of human violence rather than affiliating it to any religious reasoning, stating that "nothing suggests any ideological motivation" (Bertrand, 2004). Elsewhere, the rise of anti-Semitic attacks was explained through a lack of access to Republican values for those in the 'urban ghettos', and how the threat of anti-Semitism was linked to the failed integration of a part of the youth born in France whose parents came from the Maghreb (Venturini, 2003).

Le Monde's and L'Humanité's portrayal of the youths as both perpetrators and victims in regards to crime testifies to Benson's argument that despite being divided along partisan lines, effort persists to not present completely one-sided news. Additionally, the technique of rationalisation employed by both newspapers attests to the argument that one of the symbolic features of the French political/literary model of journalism is to offer the spaces to correct stereotypes.

The most striking feature of Le Figaro's crime articles remains its efforts to systematically characterise the youths as delinquent and threatening 'foreigners' who originate from disadvantaged backgrounds which Le Figaro uses as the basis for its cause and effect argument. The effect of this exclusive angle is similar to that previously mentioned by Garcia and Retis, in that the exclusivity of the characterisation of the youths as menacing delinquents renders 'youth' and 'criminal' as synonymous terms. Yet the issue goes beyond this. For as synonymous terms, attempts to then shatter the image of the delinquent youth become increasingly difficult, as the fusion delegitimises any future alternative claims. Ultimately, the youths become trapped within a circle of discriminatory linguistic suppression with little to no opportunity to alter the situation.

4.4. Employment

Employment here recognises those articles which spoke of the youth's access to the job market and their representation within it. One article from Le Figaro typified the newspaper's stance on employment. Acting more as a case study rather than a generalisation, the article looked at youths of Maghreb origin in the police force. It highlighted that "[c]hildren of Maghreb

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[18] Mohammed Merah was a French citizen of Algerian descent who became infamous for killing seven people in attacks on French soldiers and Jewish civilians in France, 2012. The tragic events raised another media and national debate regarding the place of 'immigrants' in France and the issue of home turn religious radicalisation. In an academic effort to contextualise the attacks within a divided French society and a wider national identity crisis, see (Andre & Harris-Hogan, 2013).

and African immigrants wearing uniform do not feel discriminated against" (Gabizon, 2010), and noted that although some children of immigrants showed reluctance at first to be a part of the 'team', the strong internal culture of the police gives the force an immense ability to assimilate. As a result, the police now represents the image of the whole of France. Interestingly, according to the article, problems originate with the suburban youths' treatment of the officers, who consider them as traitors, as opposed to the "normal people [who] appreciate diversity."

In Le Monde, two articles are worth mentioning as examples of the general consensus regarding children of immigrants and employment. One article which looked at the citizens who decide to join the army highlighted that the youths joined "to finally feel French" (Van Renterghem, 2003), and "to find a solution to their life." Constructing the narrative from the viewpoint of the youth rather than the state institution, the article instils upon the reader the understanding that these youths came from a background with little opportunities available to them; that they are "the children that France forgot."

Another typical article noted the link between employment and discrimination and how being of North African origin disadvantages individuals in the job market. One article considered the case of Malek Boutih, described as "the son of Algerian immigrants, a socialist, the ex-President of SOS Racisme and a member of the Economic and Social Council" (lemonde.fr, 2010), who was 'in the unequal running' for the position of President of the High Authority for the Fight against Discrimination. As it proceeds, it is made clear that "[d]ue to that fact that his parents are Maghrebi, Malek Boutih will never be fully French, and he will never be part of the 'traditional French community' and will therefore not qualify to manage an official institution which seeks to precisely fight discrimination."

Articles in L'Humanité overwhelmingly dealt with issues of employment in direct relation to those of discrimination. Many articles highlighted that the children of immigrants' inabilities to secure employment opportunities were based on phenotypical discrimination from employers. One spoke of the extent of ethnic discrimination to the point of "misconduct against equality" (Rive, 2005), whilst another mentioned the irony of "discrimination in a formally egalitarian society" (Delaporte, 2012), readdressing the problem as one of the French model of society, whose colour blind approach made it difficult to formally assess levels of discrimination in the job market. Many articles offered solutions to issues of discrimination in employment, suggesting anti-discrimination brigades, educational programmes, and positive discrimination techniques of employment. Yet these possibilities were grounded in everyday harsh realities, highlighted by one article which quoted a youth as saying "Anonymous CVs, it is nonsense [w]hen the guy will see your face" (L'Humanité, 2006), and another which described successful Maghreb youths as "survivors of a network of prejudices, fears and suspicions" (Rive, 2005).

Instead of emphasising the negative aspects of the youths, Le Figaro's angle here is rather to represent the positive aspects of the state. Indeed, the 'strong internal culture' to counter preliminary fears on the part of the youths fosters a rather paternal feeling of being taken under the nation's wing. The possibility that this interpretation be taken with a more optimistic outlook is so quickly contradicted by the polarisation of the youths' reactions and those of 'normal' people. Not only does the article undermine the agency of those youths in the police force, but equally casts their fellow youths as bitter and irrational individuals regarding the nation, all behind a feigned celebration of a métisée France.[19]

Opposed to Le Figaro's insistence on a lack of discrimination, Le Monde and L'Humanité were keen to expose the persistent discrimination that children of immigrants faced in the world of work. Indeed, both newspapers could be seen as rather pessimistic in their outlook, as both emphasised the lack of equality for job competition. Whilst this is an important effort to be made in the pursuit of redistributive justice, this pessimism must be taken in conjunction with the sense of achievement that both newspapers advocate. For alongside the misconduct and unequal running, there exist the survivors and those who find the solutions in the face of adversity. This exposure of success and creativity not only offers the opportunity to view the situation from a different vantage point, but it simultaneously helps to delegitimise the narrative of troublesome youths, eschewing popular, over-generalised stereotypes of the youths as unwelcomed Others.

4.5. Politics

Politics was a highlighted theme in a vast majority of the articles examined. The theme of politics incorporates articles discussing the relationship between the youth and institutional politics, dealing with understandings of political inclusion and exclusion. In order to offer a more precise analysis, this rubric has been approached by contextualising the articles in relation to one influential event, that of the 2005 riots. In turn, one article from each newspaper has been selected for comparison.

Le Figaro's contribution examined political involvement in the banlieues in the aftermath of the riots. Spotlighting the 'anti-Sarkozy' sentiment, the article commented that the traditional vote to the left cast by children of Maghreb immigrants was "[a] vote conditioned by their social position, but also by 'taking the interest of their origin community into account' rather than their individual situation" (Gabizon, 2006). The youths were characterised as a pawn within a political game, benefitting the Parti Socialiste at the expense of the Union pour un Mouvement Populaire, who see the youths as casting an 'ethnic vote'. Opposing the youth of the banlieues to other 'French' citizens, it stated that

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[19] The term 'métisée' has been left in the original French as it adopts a specific significance to French society which would be lost in translation. Derived from the noun 'métissage' which loosely means 'mixity' or 'hybridity', it has been a term both lauded and condemned in French discourse, and refers to the 'mixing' of 'black, blanc, beur' in France and its implications for the French Republican ideals. For an insight into the debate around métissage placed in its historical context, see (Lee, 2003).

[w]hilst the residents of the sensitive urban zones mainly explain the violence as rooted in social causes, nearly 50% of the French develop a 'clash of civilizations' outlook according to CEVIPOF. These French citizens are more likely to demand a strong takeover, a situation which Sarkozy wants to embody.[20]

From Le Monde's perspective, the issue was whether political abstention in the banlieues was worse than the riots themselves. Through high abstention rates, the article stated, "residents of tough neighbourhoods have expressed their feeling of being outside electoral life, outside the political system, outside the Republic" (Bronner, 2010). The refusal to vote was considered both as an act of defiance and a response to feeling of abandonment, for which the explanation was "[d]ue to the Republic breaking its promises, the majority of residents. . .no longer felt bound by their electoral duties." The article ended by invoking the most worrying aspect of voting abstention—complete alienation by the political parties.

L'Humanité stated that politics and politicians could cause the riots anew. The author, a youth of the banlieue Saint-Denis, emphasised that

[i]t's the state, it's politics, the politics of the current government which pushed the youths to burn the cars last year. . .. You can't just call the youths 'scum'. . .Especially when we think of what the French did in Algeria. . .massacres. . .Last year's riots could very easily happen again. . .if Sarkozy was to be offensive once again. It would be better that he didn't forget that he too is the son of an immigrant (Hocine, 2006).

What most obviously differentiates the three articles is the individual emphases on the youths as active social actors. In Le Figaro, the youths' 'pawn' state delegitimises their position as independent, eligible voters by defining their political actions in reference to the markers of their 'immigrant' identity. Such a portrayal creates an inherent and lasting link between these youths and their historical situation; forcing them once again outside of the French citizenship narrative. In contrast, the other two articles offer explanations for their acts of political engagement (or lack thereof), portraying the youths as active political agents.[21] As has been the proof earlier, this level of active engagement is continually grounded within a reality of disappointment and lack of opportunity in regards to Le Monde. L'Humanité on the other hand evokes the more typical sensationalist approach; characteristic of the literary model of journalism. The emotive language of the viewpoint story, 'scum' for example, uses the historical events of colonial wars to persist in an image of past oppression which has resulted in current resentment.

4.6. Banlieues

All articles grouped under the heading *Banlieues* deal with the geographical space of French city suburbs, mostly in Paris. They attend to the symbolic role of the suburbs in the construction of the image of the youth within French society.[22] For Le Figaro, the banlieues are a place of colonial trauma and a site of "unprecedented violence" (Slama, 2005). Worse, they are places of unsalvageable ghettoization,

[c]hildren of Maghreb immigration have. . .suffered. . .from a rapid and complete deculturalisation. The disappearance of family structures which framed them should have been compensated for by the teaching of their host society's codes and values. It is unfortunate that schools, dominated by the ideology of those who had fought in the Algerian War, have largely been paralysed by the guilt of the colonial memory.

The article concluded by mentioning that despite the Equal Opportunities Plan which fights against discrimination, "the failure of the ZEPs is evidence that this [plan] will only succeed if the key principles of laïcité, respect for the law and equality before the law are strongly maintained."[23] Elsewhere, it is stated that "[i]n the banlieues, the police force is seen as a colonial presence. The Frenchman is in a foreign territory" (lefigaro.fr, 2007). The article in question spoke of Islamisation of the community, which made it worrying that "many influential youths, future voters, will be picked up by this political Islam, which does not intend to be eradicated."

Le Monde characterised the banlieues as both abandoned territories and closed spaces, with the former creating difficult living conditions for the youths. As one article stated, "these kids face a high risk of being destroyed or crushed by the desert which has been created between repressive institutions and the populations" (Baudry & Mazzorato, 2005). When asked whether this was also an act of abandonment on the part of parents, it was noted that

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[20] CEVIPOF is the French acronym for the Centre for Political Research.

[21] Here, it should be noted that political engagement or non-engagement in this context extends beyond that of the traditional act of voting/abstention to include riots as a form of protest. As noted in the article by L'Humanité, the likelihood of renewed riots is contemplated, and this should be understood as a manifestation of political engagement.

[22] We use the word banlieues instead of the English translation given the culturally specific connotations of the term. In French society it implies more of a ghetto than a suburb; "a stigmatized neighborhood situated at the very bottom of the hierarchical system of places that compose the metropolis" (Wacquant, 2008). For many in and out of France, the word has become associated with the 2005 riots and other forms of violence. It is the symbolic value of the word that we wish to evoke using the term here.

[23] ZEP is the former French acronym for the Educational Priority Zones, an initiative set up by the French Education Ministry in the early 1980s to tackle issues and shortcomings in low-achieving schools. Nowadays the acronym ÉCLAIR is used, which stands for Schools, Colleges and High Schools for Ambition, Innovation and Success.

> Everywhere parents worry about being good parents, and everywhere kids want to escape from their parents' authority. . .The difference in the banlieues is that there are many families whose ability to function is broken by a wealth of pressures, or of socio-economic hardships.

It was suggested that the issue is not one of urbanism, but rather of social relations and exclusion "which contribute to enclosing entire populations in urban sites which have been abandoned by public politics." Additionally, "[t]he youths who hang around the area have made the land their own space. Sometimes, they find themselves caught in this space, in which they move about. Other public spaces are inaccessible to them. . ..they are both symbolic owners of this space, and equally prisoners" (Cauvin & Mazzorato, 2005).

Other articles in Le Monde were quick to suggest that the banlieues and their inhabitants must not be always portrayed in a negative light. One, written by a youth, was sure to emphasise that "[t]he banlieue has its positive sides. . .Its unique culture" (Hocini, 2010). According to the youth,

> [s]omeone from the banlieue lives with the good and the bad, he is like a big rat who has fallen in a pot of cream. If he lets himself go, he will drown. But if he struggles a little bit in this social bog, he can turn the cream into butter, make great food, and will leave the pot satisfied.

L'Humanité's articles were perforated by an undertone of disadvantage and lack of change. When asked in one article whether the situation in the banlieues had improved since the 1983 march, one respondent stated

> [f]rankly, there has been no political evolution, but rather a regression. . .we repaint stairwells. . .but we never move on to anything else. . .[w]e have gone from "Maghreb youths" to "descendent of immigrant youths". Then we slided from the third and fourth generation, to the "French Muslim". In the end, the kids are still foreigners (L'Humanité, 2009).

Another article, based on the interview style with different youths of the banlieues, looked retrospectively at five years after the riots. Typical responses included "we are invited to be independent, but it's hard when mobility is difficult" (Stive 2010), "the piling up of problems plays a very negative role on the youth of Clichy, some give up," "our town is never mentioned for anything positive" and "the feeling of being enclosed in our city." Elsewhere, it read

> [w]hen we condemn the youths of the banlieues. . .we want to just remove them with the Karcher. . .but we should use the Karcher on the dirty walls, the lifts that stink of urine, the roaches. . .In the banlieue, life is depressing. France has not integrated it. Nevertheless, things are going forward (Mélinard 2006).[24]

It is within the theme of the banlieues where both the political/literary model of French journalism and the partisan biases of French news coverage are so quintessentially evoked. Le Figaro portrays the youths as paralysed by their colonial past and unequivocally infected by political Islam, where the only saving grace lies within the bounds of the French Republican values. There remains an incessant overgeneralisation to condemn the youths to a radicalised future against which the state has continued to combat against in 'hope'.

True to their form, Le Monde and L'Humanité persist in their recognition of the social inequality facing the youths. Following the sensationalist avenue, the articles play on the injustice by portraying the youths as crushed prisoners and continually trapped foreigners in the larger society. The defeatist attitude presented in L'Humanité is justified by a lack of opportunity rather than placing the youths themselves at fault. Yet, it must be remembered that, as Le Monde has continued to do throughout, the newspaper looks to offer an alternative narrative of creativity and endurance to see through the difficulties that lie in the path of the children of immigrants.

5. Changing portrayals over time: continuing to be foreign

The analysis drawn thus far has been based on the constant comparative approach and has therefore been thematically based. That said, in order to truly assess the discursive constructions of the immigrant narrative in French newspapers, it is necessary to identify how such complex portrayals have changed over time, and how this reflects changing social, political and economic dynamics within France. In order to trace change over time, we narrate our analysis with three time periods in mind: 2003–2005 (e.g., pre-riots), 2005–2009/10 (e.g., post-riots), and 2010-present (e.g., rising anti-immigrant sentiments). While still focusing on the specific attributes of the narratives provided by each newspaper, we also discuss the ways these narratives are interrelated in complex ways that represent the ambivalent position occupied by the children of North African immigrants in France.

Before and shortly after the 2005 suburban riots, The centralist right-leaning newspaper, Le Figaro, refers to children of immigrants as perpetrators of discrimination, embedded between their parents' dreams and a dysfunctional home life. They are recognised as being paralysed by a colonial memory and making political decisions based of the interest of their origin community; a narrative which intrinsically ties the youths to their (parents') past and emphasises the apparent influence

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[24] The article's reference to the use of the Karcher, or high-pressure washer, is significant in that it works as a reaction to Sarkozy's original statement that the banlieues should be cleaned out with the device in June 2005. It has been considered by some as a catalyst to the proceeding 2005 riots.

of the 'home' society's codes and values as opposed to those of the 'host' society. This attributed blame, however, shifts quite distinctively between the years of 2006 and 2010. During this post-riots time, Le Figaro moves to celebrate the youths who live in a society which breathes le métissage. Indeed, the newspaper highlights the successes of those youths in the police force for example among 'normal people' who appreciate diversity. Rather than highlighting historical links, Le Figaro moves towards a celebration of an all-encompassing nation. Yet it can be argued that the historical seeds which Le Figaro planted blossomed into a dichotomy between a France métissée and the youths who are not part of it. Whilst la France is lauded for its assimilation policies, the youths left behind are implicitly blamed for their own failure to assimilate. In the latest timeframe (2010-present), we witness a narrative which reacquaints the youths with their 'roots' with an emphasis on extremist religion. Children of immigrants are considered as potential Jihadists and devoid of human qualities and empathetic emotions. In this context, incidents of violence, like the Charlie Hebdo attacks may serve as a self-fulfilling prophecy.

For the centralist left-leaning Le Monde, the earliest discourse is rooted in a recognition of the historical connection between the youths and their familial ties. For example, they are described as descendants of postcolonial immigrants or descendants of Maghreb origin families. This explicit exposure of the place of the youths in relation to France's colonial history is construed with messages of the French Republic made up of repressive institutions and populations. Indeed, the youths are cast as prisoners in their own space—a phrase not uncommon to narratives of colonialism. This shifts however during the middle of the past decade towards a discourse of agency and possibility. Following the riots in 2005, it seems that news coverage in Le Monde tended to recognise that the Republic presents challenges to the youths but generally reinforces both positive aspects of the banlieues and the youths' will to reconstruct a France that is their own. Regressing from the colonial ties, the youths are cast as having parents who were born abroad. In the final phase (2010-present), the future painted by Le Monde is a fusion between a recognition of the failure of the Republic to integrate the youths and an agency-imbued one, where the future is one that the youths can invent for themselves in a more open and tolerant France. Indeed, the future in Le Monde's eyes is neutral, where neither the youths nor the state are seen as laying on any extremes.

Not surprisingly given its communist orientation, L'Humanité's coverage in the pre-riots time period characterises the youths as victims of discriminatory systems which amalgamate into a deceptive Republic. This narrative of deception is accompanied by a discourse of liminality in which the youths are living between two cultures and living out of respect of their parents' and ancestors' struggles. This discourse is altered post 2005 riots and is typified by an atmosphere of loss and hopelessness. As we read previously, not only do the youths consider themselves in exile but the youngest generation have lost major hope. In their eyes, they will always be foreigners, no matter what terms are inscribed upon them. The more recent years (2010-present) are slightly more optimistic, stressing for example that we should look beyond statistics to uncover the real reasons of social exclusion behind school pass/failure rates. Nevertheless, L'Humanité continues on the whole to center its narrative of blame on the 'formally egalitarian society.'

The change in portrayal over time in all three newspapers can be understood in the context of evolving dynamics, which are in turn shaped by the political/literary model of French news. All three newspapers opted between 2003 and 2005 to evoke the youths' historical roots and breathe the colonial and parental ties into the young adults' (then current) lives. This is a logical first step, given for example that 2003 marked the 30th anniversary of the Equality and Anti-Racism March. Between these years, the past struggles become very much a part of the present and the newspapers allusions to it corroborate this.

The first real schism erupts after the riots themselves, where right-leaning Le Figaro begins to adopt a celebratory narrative of the right-wing government under the presidency of Jacques Chirac, centralist left-leaning Le Monde seizes an opportunity of optimism and communist L'Humanité capitalises on an atmosphere of hopelessness. These three different stances can be understood as a result of the same events (the riots) but differ due to the French model of news whereby the discourses reflect the political leanings. Where the right-wing Le Figaro celebrates the successes of the state, the left-leaning L'Humanité unearths the levels of discrimination facing the youths and its detrimental impact on their attitudes. True to its center-left form, Le Monde seeks to construct a narrative of hopefulness through a building of a relationship between the youths and the state.

The most recent years (since 2009/10) until the present provide the most illuminating examples of the influence of shifting political and social dynamics on the three newspapers' portrayals of children of immigrants. Le Figaro's reference to Jihadism and political Islam is characteristic of the rising Islamophobic sentiments permeating Europe as a whole of late. As Benson had noted a changing shift towards a framing of the politics of fear between 1973 and 1991, so too has Le Figaro adopted a similar framing technique by capitalising on Islamophobia and adapting it to offer a religiously politicised portrayal of the youths.

Le Monde's take on a more open and tolerant France can be understood as both a counter-narrative to rising Islamophobia and as a method to re-instil upon its readers the image of an accepting nation. France's military involvement in Libya, Mali, and Central African Republic for example has brought the Muslim question to the forefront of French politics. When we re-nationalise this question and embed within it the Toulouse shootings by Mohammed Merah in 2012, it becomes understandable that a center-left newspaper such as Le Monde would attempt to neutralise the future in order to counter any polarisation of views about Islam and the presence of the 'Muslim world' in France. Through a narrative of neutralisation, Le Monde can offer an image of equality for both the youths and the state.

In the case of L'Humanité, the narrative of blame centres on the state and can be interpreted as a left-wing reaction to the rise of the Front National in France. As Marine Le Pen has continued to gain momentum and support which culminated in her victory in the recent 2014 European elections, L'Humanité's referral to a 'former egalitarian society' arguably moves past portraying the position of the youths themselves vis-à-vis the state, to recognising the current situation of the state

itself. Indeed, we must look beyond the statistics and consider the social variables in order to understand how L'Humanité is transcribing national trends, and its reaction to them, through the lens of children of immigrants.

6. Discussion and conclusion

Our analysis shows that the waltz between France and its immigrants has been complicated by the riots, both as a romantic illusion, a reflection of reality, or a possible outcome of events. The three newspapers grapple with the ambiguous position of the children of immigrants in French society in different ways. If we retrace our steps to the original questions of investigation, it seems clear that French news coverage of children of immigrants continues to be divided along partisan lines which are bounded by the political/literary model of journalism. What is also clear is that the changing portrayal of children of immigrants is intrinsically attached to evolving social, political, and economic dynamics both nationally and beyond state borders.

The French republican model rejects the possibility of multiculturalism, and thereby difference in language use, dress, social or political behavior are expected to disappear before newcomers can become full and equal members of society. This assumption continues to be the axis on which the three newspapers chosen for our study construct their portrayals of the descendants of North African immigrants, albeit in somewhat different ways. The marginalization of the Maghrébin population in French society stands in sharp contrast to the French Republican ideals of equality, fraternity and freedom, and the 2005 riots are one of many events that exemplify such marginalization. Tracing the representation of the children of immigrants from North Africa in the leading French newspapers shortly after the turn of the new millennium sheds light on the ways such marginalization is reconciled, tolerated, or questioned in French society.

The centralist, right-leaning Le Figaro accepts and encourages exclusion based on the construction of difference stressing anti-Semitism, Islamic origins, criminality, and colonial trauma. These factors are taken to explain the youth's refusal to integrate to a larger French society as it continues to be faithful to an ethnic community based on traditional allegiance. It is important to note that during the time period for our study, France was governed by the political right, which could explain that the ideologically aligned newspaper is less likely to offer criticism to state policies or discourses in its portrayals of the Maghrébins.

The centralist left-leaning Le Monde was more likely to offer critique to state institutions in search for answers to the failure of the Republican model. The children of immigrants from North Africa were portrayed as undergoing the process of integration, with some of their differences disappearing. As integration is a process, the newspapers sought to highlight incidents of success such as youth belonging to the national community and believing in its ideals, taking opportunities for socio-economic integration, and a limited sense of optimism. At the same time, integration is being hampered due to institutional and group processes such as religious identity, legacy of colonialism, discrimination by French society, political absenteeism, and residential segregation. Keeping with the Republican tradition integration was portrayed in individual narratives but is limited by institutional forces.

Our third newspaper, L'Humanité is ideologically on the far left which understandably informs its explicit critique of the right-wing government and its policies. The sense of hopelessness towards the situation of the children on North African immigrants is perceived in the newspaper's emphasis on victimization, discrimination, ghettoization, and failure of the state, which together maintain unequal power dynamics that would remain unchanged given the political climate. In contrast to Le Figaro and Le Monde, which both stress the active notion of citizenship that is central to France's national identity, L'Humanité's emphasis on institutional obstacles may be an effective way to combat the marginalization of the children of North African immigrants in France. The sensationalist style of writing and persistence on narrating a bleak future of the nation state and the North African youth within it may detract readers from seeking solutions to the problems. Indeed, the lack of optimism for the future may also serve as a self-fulfilling prophecy informing actions by the state and the Maghrébins youth.

Whilst readers of news coverage can never be considered wholly passive receptacles of linguistically constructed images, it must not be forgotten that newspapers are capitalist enterprises looking to sell stories. In order to sell, the stories must be meaningful. To make them meaningful, newspapers rely on popular biases. Whether these biases are rooted in the pursuit of presenting an alternative narrative and exposing social injustices or not should only be part of the concern and justification. Equally, we need to appreciate that newspapers portray a complex reality that is neither simply pro nor anti-immigration and immigrants. Rather, newspapers are part and parcel of larger changing dynamics, and both shape and are shaped by such undercurrents.

The greater concern lies rather with what this study has laid the groundwork for. Recent immigrant narratives have oscillated between spotlighting children of immigrants as inhumane Jihadists and contextualising and displacing their situations to critically reflect upon the state of the French nation. Based on such changing dynamics, future research should bear the following questions in mind: What is the relationship between state policy on immigration and integration and newspaper discourse on children of immigrants? To what extent are such immigration narratives reflecting and informing current nation-wide perceptions of the place of children of immigrants in France? In what ways is the stalwart political/literary model of French journalism implicated in the current debate on freedom of speech in France, set within the context of the Parisian shootings? How should these changing narratives be understood and contextualised within the experiences of the children of immigrants?

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