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FRANCE BETWEEN EUROPE AND AFRICA:
YOUTH, RACE, AND ENVISIONING THE POSTWAR WORLD, 1940-1960

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EMILY MARKER

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For My Parents

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ABBREVIATIONS

AEF	French Equatorial Africa
AHC	Archives de l'Histoire Contemporaine, Sciences Po, Paris
AHUE	Archives Historiques de l'Union Européenne, Florence
AMAE	Archives Diplomatiques, La Courneuve
AMEAN	Association Musulmane des Étudiants d'Afrique Noire
AN	Archives Nationales, Paris
ANOM	Archives Nationales d'Outre-Mer, Aix-en-Provence
ANS	Archives Nationales du Sénégal, Dakar
AOF	French West Africa
BNF	Bibliothèque Nationale de France
CAC	Centre des Archives Contemporaines, Fontainebleau
CAME	Conference of Allied Ministers of Education
CFLN	French Committee for National Liberation
CNR	French National Resistance Council
ECHR	European Court of Human Rights
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EDC	European Defense Community
EEC	European Economic Community
EU	European Union
EYC	European Youth Campaign
FEANF	Fédération des Étudiants d'Afrique Noire Française
FIDES	Fonds d'Investissement pour le Développement Économique et Social
FNC	French National Committee
GPRF	Provisional Government of the French Republic
IHED	Institut des Hautes Études de Dakar
IUS	International Union of Students
MEN	French Ministry of National Education
MFOM	Ministry of Overseas France
RJDA	Rassemblement des Jeunesses Démocratiques Africaines
UEF	Union of European Federalists
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
WAY	World Association of Youth
WFDY	World Federation of Democratic Youth

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Introduction

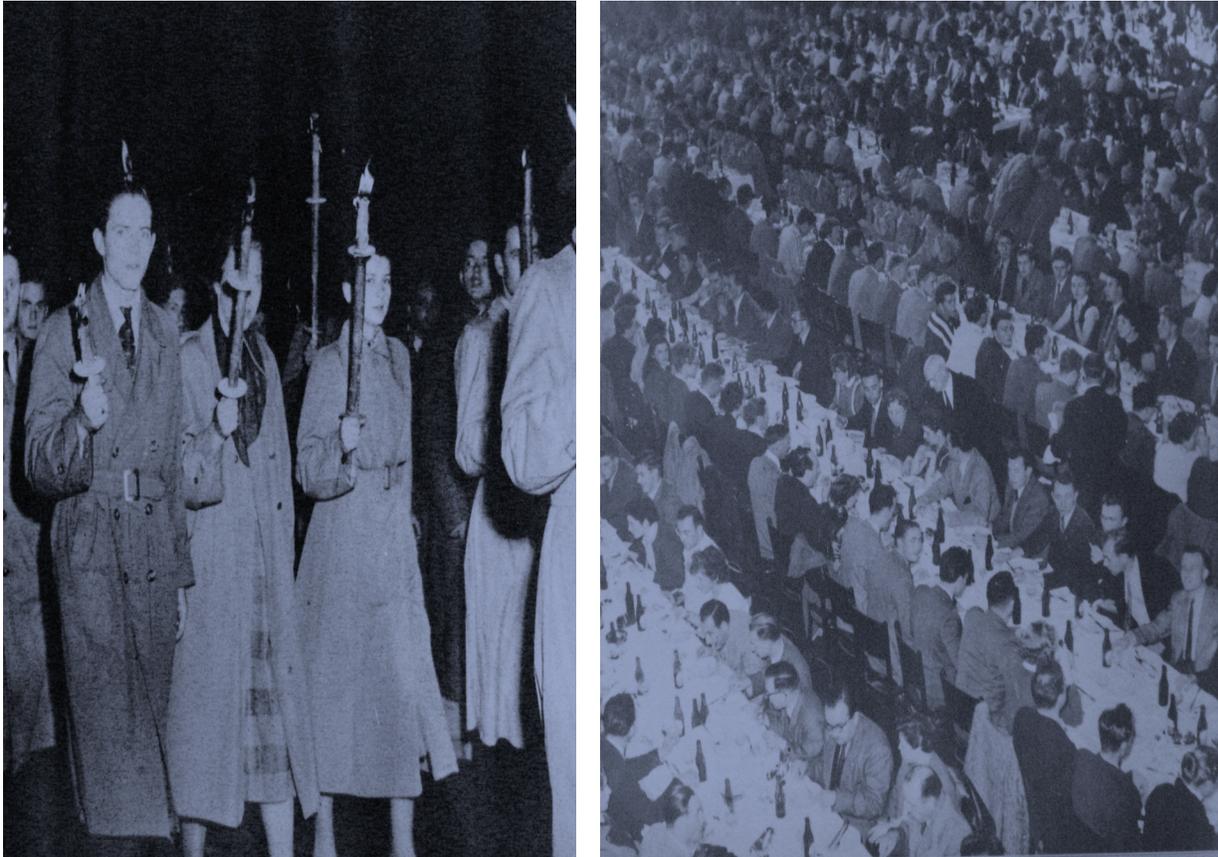
In the spring of 1953, one hundred and thirty high school students from western and northern Europe arrived in Paris for a ten-day “gathering of European youth” during Easter break. After two days of sightseeing in the City of Light, this group of young Italians, (West) Germans, Britons, Belgians, Austrians and Scandinavians headed west to Brest, where they spent the remainder of their Easter holiday with local French students attending lectures and roundtable discussions about the future of Europe during the day, and going to dinners, concerts and dances at night.¹ This program was sponsored by the European Movement, the largest of the postwar activist networks seeking to establish a “United States of Europe.”² Founded in 1946, the European Movement played a central role in the creation of the Council of Europe in 1949, and its “European Youth Campaign” [EYC] (1951-1959) sought to mobilize young people as critical agents in the process of European integration.³ Although the Brest gathering was small, it was part of a larger landscape of pro-Europe youth initiatives that involved significant numbers of

¹ Groups of 10-20 students came from the Netherlands, Italy, Britain, West Germany, Belgium, Austria, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland. Letter from Jean Moreau (General Secretary of EYC) to the Director of the Louvre requesting free admission for the group, 19 March 1953. For the daily program at Brest, see Rassemblement européen de jeunes lycéens à Brest à Pâques, s/d, s.n. Archives Historiques de l’Union Européenne [AHUE] ME-218.

² On the European Movement, see Desmond Dinan, *Europe Recast: A History of the European Union* (London: Lynne Rienner, 2008): Chapter 1. See also Jean-Marie Palayret, “Le mouvement européen: 1954-1969: Histoire d’un group de pression,” in René Girault and Gérard Bossuat, eds., *Europe brisée, Europe retrouvée: nouvelles réflexions sur l’unité européenne* (Paris: Sorbonne, 1994).

³ Not much has been written on the EYC. For a pioneering study, see Christina Norwig, “A First European Generation? The Myth of Youth and European Integration in the Fifties,” *Diplomatic History* 38:2 (2014), 251-260; also Brian A. McKenzie, “The European Youth Campaign in Ireland: Neutrality, Americanization, and the Cold War, 1950-1959,” *Diplomatic History* 40:3 (2016), 421-444. Richard Ivan Jobs touches on the EYC in his “Youth Mobility and the Making of Europe, 1945-1960,” in his and David M. Pomfret’s edited volume, *Transnational Histories of Youth in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Palgrave, 2015).

young Europeans. Just a few months later, the EYC convened a “Congress of European Youth” in the Hague that was attended by more than 5000 youth and student leaders.⁴



Figs. 1 & 2. European youth leaders marching and dining together at the Congress of European Youth in the Hague in 1953. SOURCE, Archives Historiques de l’Union européenne/ME-43.

The goal for the Brest gathering, like the Congress in the Hague, was to promote the “European ideal” to a group of politically engaged 16-to-20 year-olds who would one day become Europe’s ruling elite. While the Youth Congress in the Hague was a dramatic show of young people’s support for European unity, the EYC deliberately prioritized smaller-scale educational programming like the event in Brest. EYC leaders hoped this strategy would have a

⁴ Rapport a/s Journées européenne de la jeunesse, le Haye 9-10 octobre 1953, s/d, s.n. AHUE ME-42.

more lasting impact on participants and also distinguish their liberal-democratic approach to youth from the mass youth rallies associated with both fascism and Soviet communism.⁵

Indeed, the intimacy of the Brest gathering was key. Its organizers believed getting a transnational group of teenagers to live together for ten days and form personal bonds across historic national and linguistic divides would be a crucial means of forging transnational European solidarity. The formal program framed those bonds of friendship and inter-personal interaction in explicitly political and institutional terms. Prominent politicians and activists committed to the European cause, like French socialist leader André Philip, Belgian senator Etienne Vallée-Poussin, and British EYC official E.G. Thompson, came to talk to the students about European bodies like the Council of Europe and the European Coal and Steel Community and the work of the Euro-Federalist movements. They also publicized plans to deepen European cooperation in political and military matters with the proposed European Defense Community — which would have created an integrated European army and a centralized supranational political authority—that was then awaiting final ratification by the national parliaments of potential member-states.⁶ With the prospect of a more robust European union seemingly on the horizon, the students in Brest were shown a series of documentary films to familiarize them with different parts of Europe and to get to know their fellow Europeans better. On Easter Sunday, they sat for a screening that included short films on the fishing industry in the North Sea, sculpture in the Netherlands, the history of Luxembourg, and everyday life in Cameroon.

⁵ Norwig, “A First European Generation?” 255-256.

⁶ The EDC was envisioned for the six member-states of the European Coal and Steel Community: France, Germany, Luxembourg, Belgium, the Netherlands and Italy. On the EYC’s support for the EDC, see Norwig, 256-257.

When we think about the opening chapters of European integration, Cameroon does not usually come to mind.⁷ But in 1953, Cameroon, like the rest of France's colonies in sub-Saharan Africa, was part of the French Union – the post-World War II instantiation of France's overseas empire – and the French Constitution of 1946 decreed that the French Republic and the French Union formed an indissoluble whole.⁸ For both French and African leaders, the French Union held out the promise of a fundamentally new form of political organization for France and Africa, an egalitarian polity with democratic legitimacy and political longevity. In the mid-1940s, dozens of black African deputies were elected to the French parliament, several of whom lent their names to significant colonial reforms, including the laws that abolished the distinction between French citizens and colonial subjects (*loi Lamine Guèye*) and outlawed the use of forced labor (*loi Houphouët-Boigny*). More and more Africans also became involved in the political process in their home territories with the expansion of local representative assemblies.⁹

⁷ This has started to change with a veritable explosion of interest in the entangled histories of colonialism and early European integration in recent years. On European integration and overseas France, see Muriam Haleh Davis, "Producing EurAfrica: Development, Agriculture and Race in Algeria, 1958-1965" PhD Diss., New York University, 2015; Michael Kozakowski, "From the Mediterranean to Europe: Migrants, the World of Work, and the Transformation of the French Mediterranean, 1945-1974," PhD Diss., University of Chicago, 2014; Yves Montarsolo, *L'Eurafrrique, contrepoint de l'idée de l'Europe: Le cas français de la fin de la deuxième guerre mondiale aux négociations des Traités de Rome* (Aix-en-Provence: PUP 2010). On European integration and colonialism more broadly, see Peo Hansen and Stefan Jonsson, *Eurafrica: the Untold History of European Integration and Colonialism* (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014); Giuliano Garavini, *After Empires: European Integration, Decolonization, and the Challenge from the Global South, 1957-1986* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Marie-Thérèse Bitsch and Gérard Bossuat, eds., *L'Europe Unie et l'Afrique: De l'idée d'Eurafrrique à la convention de Lomé I* (Brussels: Bruylant, 2005).

⁸ The legal position of Cameroon within the French Union was contested by Cameroonian leaders throughout the period. As a former League of Nations mandate, Cameroon was technically a territory under international "trusteeship," whose governance was overseen by the United Nations. I elaborate on the complex tableau of legal statuses of different territories in France's postwar empire in Chapter 1.

⁹ Frederick Cooper, *Citizenship Between Empire and Nation. Remaking France and French Africa, 1945-1960* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014); Gary Wilder, *Freedom Time: Negritude, Decolonization and the Future of the World* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015). See also James Genova, "Constructing Identity in Postwar France: Citizenship, Nationality and the Lamine Guèye Law, 1946-1953," *The International History Review* 26, no 1 (Mar 2004), 56-79.

These political transformations produced what Frederick Cooper has called the “explosion of citizenship” in postwar French Africa.¹⁰ With African subjects becoming citizens of the French Union, French and African politicians increasingly focused on social as well as political reforms. In addition to calls for equal pay for equal work and the “Africanization” of the colonial bureaucracy, they pushed for the complete overhaul and dramatic expansion of education for French Africans.¹¹ Confidence that the French Union could achieve African aspirations for *decolonization without independence* dissipated by the mid-1950s,¹² but in the first postwar decade, both French and African leaders felt that they were living through a moment of radical possibility to remake the French colonial world.

In light of these auspicious colonial developments, French leaders did not want to let European integration drive a wedge between France and French Africa. Unwilling to see united Europe and postwar empire as an either/or proposition, they aggressively negotiated for the inclusion of the French Union in early European institutions. From its founding in 1952, the European Coal and Steel Community [ECSC] extended to the southern shores of the Mediterranean in the three departments of French Algeria; Senegalese politicians Léopold Sédar Senghor and Ousmane Socé Diop were part of the French delegation to the European Consultative Assembly in Strasbourg in 1950 that debated the form the ECSC would ultimately

¹⁰ Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question. Theory, Knowledge, History* (University of California Press, 2005): 18.

¹¹ Emily Marker, “Obscuring Race: Franco-African Conversations about Colonial Reform and Racism After World War II and the Making of Colorblind France,” *French Politics, Culture and Society* 33:3 (Winter 2015), 1-23; Harry Gamble, “La crise de l’enseignement en Afrique occidentale française (1944-1950)” *Histoire de l’éducation* 128, (Octobre-Décembre 2011), 129-162.

¹² Political upheavals in French North Africa—the onset of the Algerian War in 1954 and Tunisian and Moroccan independence in 1956—prompted a massive reorganization of the French African Federations that increased the local autonomy of the territories in 1956. Just two years later, the worsening crisis in Algeria led to the dissolution of the French Union (and the Fourth Republic). Upon his return to power in 1958, de Gaulle reorganized France’s African territories yet again, this time as “the French Community.” That political formation proved extremely short-lived: by 1960, it had virtually collapsed as all of France’s sub-Saharan African colonies became independent nation-states.

take; and special articles of association for France’s African territories were written into the 1957 Treaty of Rome that created the European Economic Community, the key precursor to the EU.

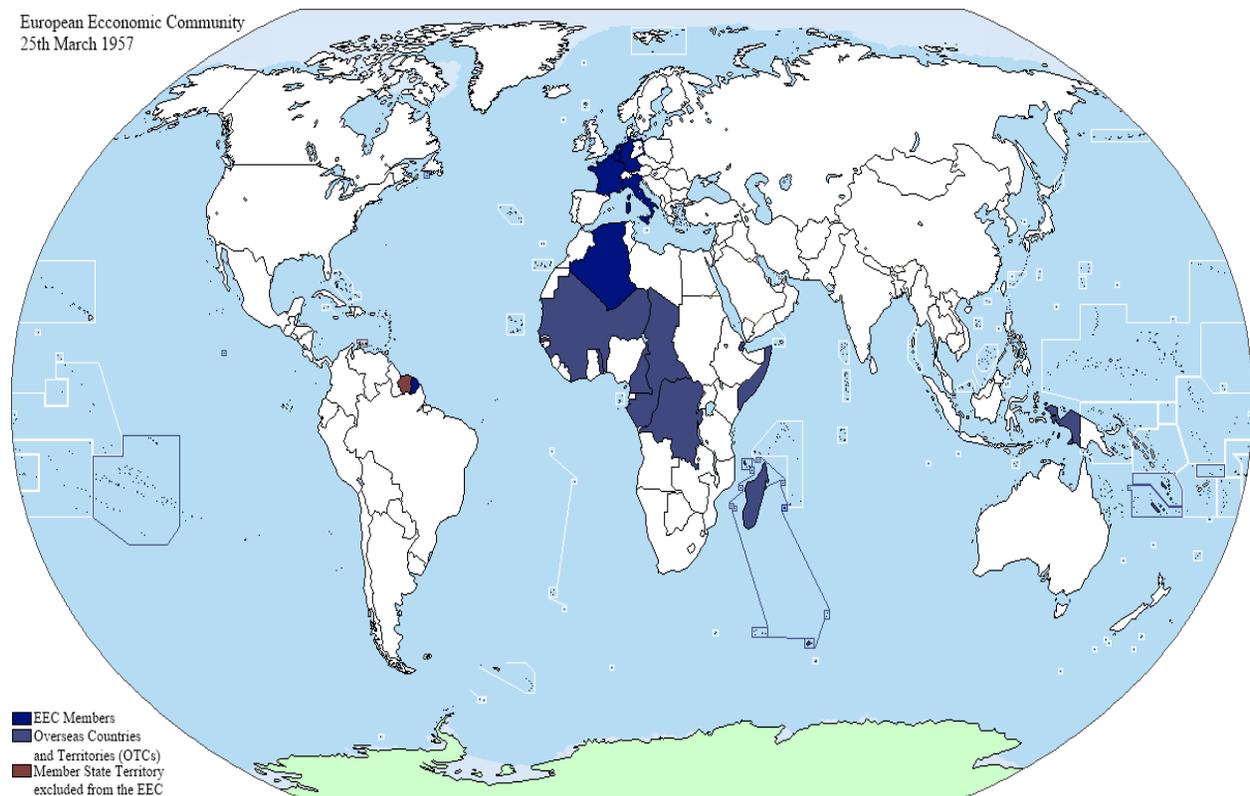


Fig 3. Map of the EEC in 1957, OPEN SOURCE.

By including the film on Cameroon in the screenings at Brest, the French organizers of the program were inviting a rising generation of French and west European elites to envision Cameroon as part of France—and, by extension—as part of Europe. However, not everyone subscribed to that vision. In an angry letter to the chairmen of the European Youth Campaign, one volunteer at the Brest proceedings protested what he derisively referred to as “the supposedly European films” the students were shown. He reported that he had seized the floor

between the screenings of the films on Luxembourg and Cameroon to deliver an impromptu *exposé* on the immense gulf separating Europe and Africa. He congratulated himself for having impressed upon the students that travel to other continents, *especially* to Africa, was the surest way for them to appreciate the uniqueness and unity of European culture. After hearing such a speech, we can easily imagine that at least some of his young audience came away with a sense that French Africa, and African citizens of the French Union, were not, and probably could never be, “European.”¹³

The controversy over the program at the European youth gathering in Brest reflected a broader political debate about the horizons of belonging in postwar France. The incredulous volunteer in Brest was certainly not alone in believing that African France did not quite fit into the new Europe-in-the-making. However, most of France’s governing circles drew the opposite conclusions in the face of those tensions: their investment in keeping French Africa French tempered their support for more robust political integration in Europe, at least until the French Union began to unravel in the late 1950s. The fate of the European Defense Community [EDC] is a case in point. The EDC, which was first proposed in 1952, was quickly approved by all of the national governments of “the Six” *except* France, where it sparked one of the most contentious political debates in the history of the Fourth Republic.¹⁴ French Communists opposed the project on anti-American grounds, but for most French leaders the key roadblock hinged not only on fears about the loss of national sovereignty in the abstract or discomfort with the prospect of German rearmament, but also on specific concerns about the future of the French Union. Gaullist deputy and future prime minister Michel Debré, who led the non-Communist

¹³ Rapport sur la rencontre internationale des lycéens Brest 2 - 10 avril 1953, à l’attention de MM. Moreau et Deshormes, 9 avril 1953, s.n. AHUE ME-218.

¹⁴ Gérard Bossuat, *Faire l’Europe sans défaire la France. 60 ans de politique d’unité européenne des gouvernements et des présidents de la République française (1943-2003)* (Peter Lang, 2005). See also Montarsolo, *L’Eurafrique*, Part II, “Un danger redoutable, l’anticédisme (1952-1954),” 93-194, *op cit*.

parliamentary campaign against the EDC, argued that French participation in a supranational European political community would erode the foundations of the new imperial citizenship they were working so hard to invent across the postwar Republic and French Union.¹⁵ That argument resonated with Debré's fellow deputies; after two years of fierce debate, in 1954 the French National Assembly voted against ratification and effectively killed the EDC. The failure of the EDC proved to be a critical turning point in the longer trajectory of European integration. Forced back to the drawing board, Euro-idealists narrowed their quest for greater European cooperation to coordination in economic and trade policy, which culminated in the creation of the EEC/Common Market three years later. This set Europe on course for a primarily economic and technocratic kind of integration that lacked a strong political armature, the repercussions of which continue to be felt in the EU today.¹⁶

Even in this realm of high politics and diplomatic negotiations, “youth” functioned as a key prism through which French leaders meditated on the tensions of united Europe and postwar empire. Just as the EYC was trying to enlist French youth to support the EDC, Debré frequently alluded to youth in his campaign to defeat it.¹⁷ In one of his longer policy pronouncements on the subject, he warned, “European citizenship might have meaning for French youth who live in Europe, [but] it strongly risks having none for French youth who live outside of Europe, especially for those who belong to other religions or other races.”¹⁸

¹⁵ Michel Debré, “Proposition invitant le gouvernement à constituer une commission chargée d'étudier les rapports entre l'Union française et une organisation politique de l'Europe,” s/d. Archives de l'Histoire Contemporaine [AHC], Fonds Debré, 1/DE/513.

¹⁶ For an overview, see John Gillingham, *European Integration, 1950-2003. Superstate or New Market Economy?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

¹⁷ Norwig describes an incident in which the Young European Federalists and communist youth groups engaged in a poster-war over the EDC on the Ile d'Oléron in early 1954. Norwig, “A First European Generation,” 257.

¹⁸ Debré, *op cit.*

These remarks are worth parsing carefully. In his reference to “other religions” and “other races,” Debré subtly coded Europe as essentially white and Christian, even as he strongly affirmed that young people in overseas France, who were not white and/or Christian, were in fact French. In other words, for Debré, “European” was an exclusive, racialized category, whereas “French” was open and race-neutral. In his formulation, then, it was dangerous for young metropolitan French men and women to consider themselves *too* European, which would reinscribe racial and religious boundaries between them and their new co-citizens overseas. It is precisely in this sense that Debré’s focus on youth was neither incidental nor symbolic; breaking down those racial and religious boundaries was the express purpose of a vast array of programs for French and African youth that were being organized in this period as part of the larger project of democratizing France’s African empire south of the Sahara.

Like the initiatives of the European Youth Campaign, Franco-African youth programs, student exchanges, and colonial education reform more broadly, sought to develop a shared political identity and build social solidarity among young people who had previously been taught to focus on their differences rather than their common interests. Prior to the Second World War, in both the European and the colonial contexts, dominant understandings of those differences traversed an intricate tableau of racial, religious, national, and linguistic modes of differentiation.¹⁹ After the war, conceptions of diversity within Europe narrowed to issues of language and nationality, through an interlocking set of processes that will become clearer over the course of this thesis, whereas in the colonial African context, race and religion remained the principal fault lines to be overcome. This was no small feat, given that the entire edifice of French colonial rule in sub-Saharan Africa prior to WWII was rooted in the exclusion of African

¹⁹ For these overlapping registers of difference in Europe and European empires in the interwar period, see Elisa Camiscioli, *Reproducing the French Race: Immigration, Intimacy and Embodiment in the Early Twentieth Century* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009).

colonial subjects from the French body politic on the very bases of race and/or religious affiliation.²⁰

On the eve of the war, racial segregation was the order of the day in the Federations of French West and Equatorial Africa.²¹ Throughout the Federations, Africans lived in segregated urban centers and attended separate schools – if they attended school at all. For all the grand rhetoric of France’s “civilizing mission” in Africa in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries,²² in 1938 barely 1% of the populations in these vast territories had had any kind of schooling whatsoever. Secondary education for Africans in the territories was almost non-existent, and only a handful of elite francophone African students had the opportunity to go to metropolitan France to attend proper high schools and universities.²³ However, by the late 1950s things had indeed changed. The French colonial authorities built hundreds of new schools in the territories, which helped raise the average rate of primary school attendance across the Federations to 15%, and there were some 8,000 students from France’s African territories in

²⁰ On race, see Emmanuelle Saada, *Les enfants de la colonie: les métis de l’empire français entre sujétion et citoyenneté* (Paris: Découverte, 2007); Gary Wilder, *The French Imperial Nation-State: Négritude and Colonial Humanism Between the Two World Wars* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005). On religion and colonial rule in sub-Saharan Africa, see Elizabeth Foster, *Faith in Empire: Religion, Politics and Colonial Rule in French Senegal, 1880-1940* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013); David Robinson, *Paths of Accommodation: Muslim Societies and French Colonial Authorities in Senegal and Mauritania, 1880-1920* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2000). Most of the literature on religion and French colonial politics after World War II focuses on Algeria. See Darcie Fontaine, *Decolonizing Christianity: Religion and the End of Empire in France and Algeria* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2016); Naomi Davidson, *Only Muslim: Islam in Twentieth-Century France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012). New work is beginning to take a broader, empire-wide view. See the recent special issue of *French Politics, Culture and Society*, “Decolonization and Religion in the French Empire,” vol 33, issue 2 (Summer 2015), edited by Elizabeth Foster and Giuliana Chamedes.

²¹ French West Africa [AOF]: Senegal, French Sudan (Mali), Upper Volta (Burkina Faso), Dahomey (Benin), Guinée, Ivory Coast, Mauritania. French Equatorial Africa [AEF]: Congo, Gabon, Oubangui-Chari (Central African Republic), Chad. Though officially territories under UN trusteeship, Togo was attached to AOF and Cameroon to AEF.

²² On the civilizing mission and education in French West Africa at the beginning of the twentieth century, see Alice Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize. The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa, 1895-1930* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).

²³ Jean Capelle, *L’éducation en Afrique noire à la veille des Indépendances (1946-1958)*. Préface de Léopold Senghor (Paris: Editions Karthala, 1990): 171-173.

secondary schools and universities in metropolitan France. By the end of the decade, regular youth exchanges, internships, and professional training programs brought even more young Africans to France during school breaks and summer holidays.

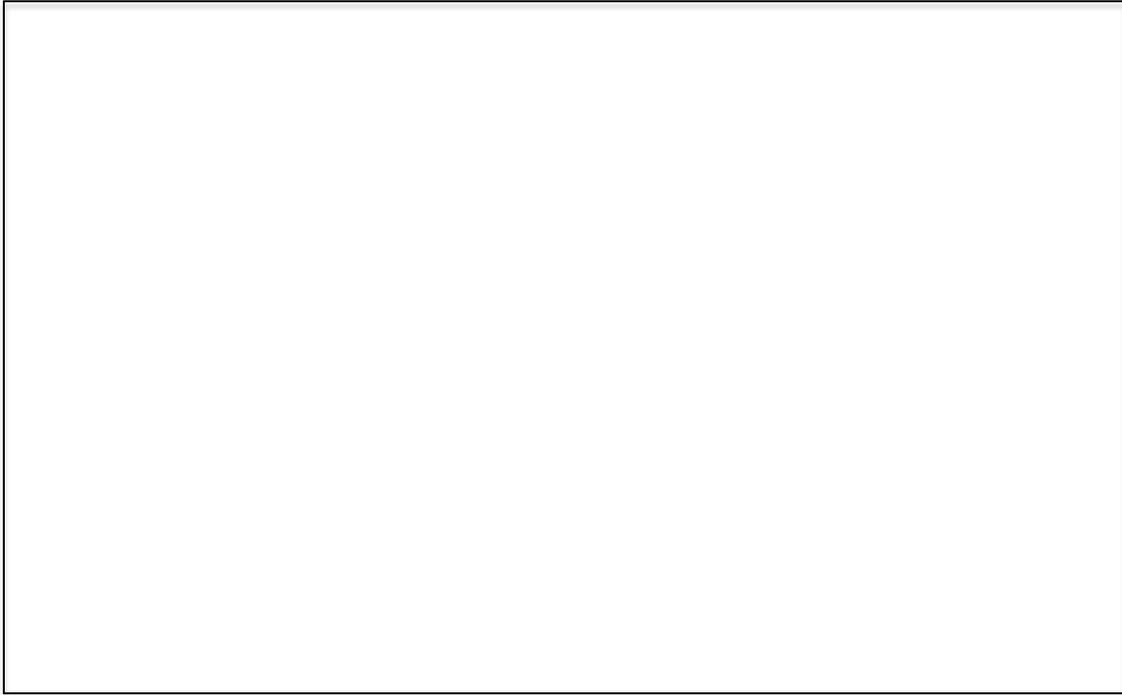


Fig 4. French and African participants in the French Alps during a program for African students to spend the summer in France in 1960. SOURCE, Centre des Archives Contemporaines [CAC] 19770181/7. Image has been removed due to copyright protection.

Significantly, the state-funded expansion of education in the French African Federations in this period was not limited to secular public schooling. In 1946, the French government allocated billions of francs for social and economic development in the overseas territories, and a significant portion of those funds, known as FIDES, supported mission schools and Catholic youth organizations in French Africa.²⁴ African leaders leveraged state funding for private

²⁴ For a detailed study of FIDES and schooling in French West Africa, see Rachel Kantrowitz, “‘So That Tomorrow Would be Better for Us:’ Developing French-Funded Catholic Schools in Dahomey and Senegal, 1945-1975,” PhD Dissertation, New York University, 2015. Collaboration between the colonial

Christian education to advance longstanding local demands for subsidies for Qur'anic schools and for including Arabic instruction and Islamic religious education in the public school curriculum in Muslim-majority areas. By the early 1950s, territorial governments were experimenting with new kinds of “Franco-Muslim” and “Franco-Arabic” schools in Mauritania, French Soudan (contemporary Mali) and Chad, as well as incorporating Arabic language instruction into public school programs in those and other territories with large Muslim populations.²⁵

Ultimately, the scope of Franco-African youth and education initiatives in the 1940s and 50s proved more modest than most French and African policymakers, educators and activists had hoped. Still, those policies projected a powerful vision of what an inclusive, multiracial, and religiously diverse France could look like that stands in stark contrast with the exclusivist conception of Europe that rose to the fore at the gathering of European youth in Brest. At a time when the contours of the postwar order were not yet firmly fixed, France seemed to be at a crossroads: would it be part of a primarily white and Christian Euro-state? Would it be part of some kind of new transcontinental Franco-African polity? Could it be part of both?

Writing the History of Postwar Empire and United Europe

This is a dissertation about notions of diversity, equality, and postnational citizenship that were elaborated in Franco-African and pan-European youth and education programs in the decades after World War II. Within that world of youth and education policy, French politicians, administrators, and educators were in dialogue with two distinct sets of interlocutors—

administration and Catholic missionaries in the region has a longer history. See Foster, *Faith in Empire*.
²⁵ Louis Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge. Religion, Power and Schooling in a West African Muslim Society* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001). Arabic and Islamic instruction was also a central concern in Senegal and parts of Cameroon, Oubangui-Chari (contemporary Central African Republic), Niger and Upper Volta (contemporary Burkina Faso).

francophone Africans and west Europeans—about two competing political geographies and cultural imaginaries that have typically been treated independently of one another. I emphasize that these actors were actually all part of the same conversation about youth and global transformation that was unfolding across metropolitan French, colonial African, and transnational European space. To fill out the contours of that conversation, I tack back and forth between the methodologies of political and intellectual history: I analyze similarities and tensions among specific policies and programs; I map the professional trajectories of key officials who helped shape *both* colonial and European youth and education initiatives; and I identify contemporary thinkers and commentators who provided a shared vocabulary and common cultural repertoire for French, African and European actors who sought to effect and control social and political change through youth and education policies in the postwar era. By bringing this constellation of people, institutional practices, and ideas into the same frame, I am able to trace how the meaning of race, religious pluralism, and the concept of Europe changed as the imperatives of late colonialism and European integration collided and converged in postwar France.

I argue that the histories of African decolonization and European integration cannot be isolated from one another if we want to more fully understand how French leaders thought about France's imperial and European futures, and how those visions prompted subtle but significant transformations in French republican political culture. The intensity with which French leaders tried to reconcile France's commitments to its old African empire and the new Europe is obscured in conventional narratives of twentieth-century European history, which present the Second World War as a watershed when European powers, with the ambiguous exception of

Britain, renounced their claims to world domination and abandoned their colonial vocations.²⁶ In these narratives, the brutality and devastation of the war shattered Europe's "civilizational confidence," such that continental European leaders turned inward to focus on securing peace and prosperity *within* Europe.²⁷ Though European powers continued to control vast territories overseas after the war, it was clear to all – so this line of thinking goes – that the age of empire was over in 1945; the only question was how Europe could extract itself from its colonial entanglements as quickly, cheaply, and peaceably as possible. In this telling, then, European leaders felt they *had* to pursue European union *over* empire. The only relation posited between the two is essentially sequential: first there was empire, and then there was Europe. This narrative effectively detaches the history of colonialism from the history of European integration. The result, as Swedish scholars Peo Hansen and Stefan Jonsson cheekily observe, is a "whiggish" history of the EU in which the European project is spared the taint of past associations with colonialism that could add weight to more contemporary accusations of European *neocolonialism* in the present.²⁸

Contrary to the general European narrative sketched above, after the humiliation of the French military defeat and the indignity of the collaborationist Vichy regime, France emerged

²⁶ Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (New York: Penguin, 2004); Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (New York: Vintage, 1997); René Girault, *Identité et conscience européennes au XXe siècle* (Paris: Hachette, 1994). Mazower has begun to add some nuance to this kind of thinking, if not dispensing with it entirely. See his "End of Eurocentrism," *Critical Inquiry* 40:4, Special Issue, "Around 1948: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Global Transformation," Leela Gandhi and Debbie Nelson, eds. (Summer 2014): 298-213. The most recent heir to Judt's and Mazower's narratives is Konrad Jarausch's *Out of Ashes: A New History of Europe in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015). Though he also has a more nuanced approach to how decolonization "crisscrossed" many other postwar European developments, the overarching narrative of Europe ridding itself of its "imperial baggage" (p 15) remains the same.

²⁷ Judt, *Postwar*: 5.

²⁸ Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrica*; Garavini, *After Empires*. For more extended studies of neocolonialism and European integration, see also Véronique Dimier, *The Invention of a European Development Aid Policy: Recycling Empire* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2014).

from the war more attached to its empire, not less, in Africa especially. As Eric Jennings' recent work has underscored, with the metropole under German Occupation in the north and the racist Vichy government in the south, for four long years "Free France"—the good, republican France — *was* French Africa.²⁹ In light of that wartime experience, when African colonial subjects started making more demands for political rights and social equality in the increasingly anticolonial international climate of the mid-1940s, French leaders listened. And they responded with a massive overhaul of French colonial governance in a bid to keep French Africa French. Thus as the prospect of European unification gained traction, French leaders found themselves trying to remake the European and colonial worlds simultaneously. But these were not just parallel or contemporaneous projects. I build on the methodology of *histoire croisée*, or "entangled history," to explore how, when, and why those efforts intersected, and I contend that those points of intersection profoundly shaped the contours of decolonization in France and Africa and the longer trajectory of European integration.

Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmerman identify the notion of "intersection" as the basic principle of *histoire croisée*, from which they derive four main analytical advantages over the related methods of comparison and studies of "transfer." First, they distinguish the dynamic and active principle of intersection from comparative approaches that often position units of analysis as static, fixed entities. Second, the emphasis on relational configurations and active processes points beyond the moment of contact itself to the *consequences* of intercrossing. Third, they stress that "to cross" is also to "*crisscross*," which carries a further process-oriented dimension that recognizes that new combinations can both result from and develop in the process of crossing. Finally, Werner and Zimmerman underscore that the transformation of entities,

²⁹ Eric Jennings, *La France libre fut africaine* (Paris: Perrin, 2014).

persons, practices, and/or institutions often derives from relations of asymmetry. This last point is key, as it brings questions of power into the study of “intercrossing” processes that generate meaning.³⁰ Each of these points informs the modes of analysis deployed in this thesis.

At its core, this study is an exploration of political imagination in an era of profound global transformation. It is an intellectual and political history of how French leaders were conceptualizing France’s changing place in the world as France’s relations with its European neighbors and African colonies changed, often in ways they did not want or that they could not control.³¹ It focuses on the realm of youth and education policy to illuminate those broader processes of world-making.³² Students, youth leaders, teachers and parents are a part of this story, but this is not a social history of these groups.³³ Rather, I trace how the architects of

³⁰ Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmerman, “Beyond Comparison: *Histoire Croisée* and the Challenges of Reflexivity,” *History and Theory* 45 (February 2006): 38.

³¹ In this sense, my work draws inspiration from Thomas Holt’s *The Problem of Freedom: Race, Labor and Politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832-1938* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1992) and Laurent Dubois’s *Colony of Citizens: Revolution and Slave Emancipation in the French Caribbean, 1794-1804* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

³² “World-making” connotes an increasingly common way of thinking about agency and global transformation in this era. In addition to recent works on France and Africa by Frederick Cooper and Gary Wilder discussed below, see Christopher Lee’s edited volume, *Making a World After Empire: the Bandung Moment and its Afterlives* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2010) for a more global perspective.

³³ For an excellent study of African teachers in a slightly earlier period, see Boubacar Ly, *Les instituteurs au Sénégal, 1903-1945*, 6 vols. (Paris: L’Harmattan 2009). On the experience of students in colonial schools in the postwar period, see Samba Gadjigo’s study of autobiographical novels in *École blanche, Afrique noire: l’école coloniale dans le roman d’Afrique noire francophone* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1990). On African students in the metropole, see Louisa Rice, “Between Empire and Nation: Francophone West African Students and Decolonization,” *Atlantic Studies* 10:1 (2013), 131-147. On the gendered experience of colonial schooling, see Pascale Barthélémy, *Africaines et diplômées à l’époque coloniale (1918-1957)* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2010). There is a large literature on organized youth movements in France and Africa in the context of decolonization. See Hélène d’Almeida-Topor and Odile Georg, eds., *Le Mouvement associatif des jeunes en Afrique noire francophone au XXe siècle* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1989); Nicolas Bancel, et al., *De l’Indochine à l’Algérie. La jeunesse en mouvements des deux côtés du miroir colonial* (Paris: La Découverte, 2003); Aly Dieng *Les grands combats de la Fédération des étudiants de l’Afrique Noire: de Bandung aux indépendances, 1955-1960* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2009); J. Sabot, *Le syndicalisme étudiant et la guerre d’Algérie: L’Entrée d’une génération en politique et la formation d’une élite* (Paris: Editions L’Harmattan, 1995); Eithan Orkibi, *Les étudiants de France et la guerre d’Algérie: identité et expression collective de l’UNEF* (Editions Syllepse, 2012); Burleigh Hendrickson, “Imperial Fragments and Transnational Activism: 1968(s) in Tunisia, France and

postwar youth and education policies envisioned “multiple and unequal paths to citizenship”³⁴ for French, African and European young people, and I argue that those paths both reflected and created new patterns of exclusion that were tied to the competing but also overlapping political geographies of postwar empire and united Europe. Although I emphasize that French ideas about youth and the future of France in this period resulted from a multidirectional, tripartite dialogue among metropolitan French, francophone African and west European actors, the views and actions of white French men anchor the first third of the narrative in this study, a reflection of the power relations and political realities of the time.³⁵ However, that constellation of power and politics shifted considerably over the period under discussion here. Accordingly, the initial source base for this thesis comprises administrative reports, correspondence, and policy documents from the French Ministry of National Education, the central French colonial authority in Paris, local colonial administrations in French West and Central Africa, and transnational European forums and early European institutions. As the narrative progresses, I increasingly draw on European and francophone African youth and student publications; the memoirs and other writings of students, administrators, and teachers; local, national and international print

Senegal,” PhD Dissertation, Northeastern University 2013. Less work has been done on youth leaders as agents in the process of European integration. See note 3 for the 1950s, and for a slightly later period, see Richard Ivan Jobs, “Youth Movements: Travel, Protest and Europe in 1968,” *AHR* 114:2 (2009), 376-404, and his *Backpack Ambassadors: How Youth Travel Integrated Western Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017).

³⁴ I borrow this formulation from Clif Stratton, *Education for Empire: American Schools, Race, and the Paths of Good Citizenship* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016): 1.

³⁵ That said, as Kelly Duke Bryant has shown, African responses to colonial education policies had a significant impact on colonial politics more broadly from the early days of colonization. See her *Education as Politics: Colonial Schooling and Political Debate in Senegal, 1850s-1914* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2015). On the impact of West Africans’ engagement with colonial education policies elsewhere in the empire, see Spencer D. Segalla, *The Moroccan Soul: French Education, Colonial Ethnology, and Muslim Resistance, 1912-1956* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009): 61-114.

media; political treatises on Europe and empire; and transcripts of proceedings in both the French parliament and local African representative assemblies.

As an exploration of efforts to remake the French colonial world in the mid-twentieth century, this dissertation is in conversation with recent works by Frederick Cooper and Gary Wilder that reconstruct French and African leaders' federalist aspirations for new forms of non-national sovereignty in the decades after World War II.³⁶ But my analysis differs from their focus on "futures past" and "lost possibilities" by honing in on what *did happen* in those failed processes of political reinvention: the transformation of ways of thinking, talking and policymaking on matters relating to youth, race, and religious diversity in postwar France. Cooper is ultimately unable to fully account for why neither French nor African leaders "got what they wanted" in their political negotiations in this period because his interest in reciprocity and their continual "give-and-take" does not adequately engage questions of race and power. Postwar French leaders may have genuinely believed that their reform efforts would put an end to racism in France and French Africa, but the French Union was laden with structural contradictions that were rooted in the dogged preservation of French supremacy within that new "democratic" configuration.³⁷ This thesis follows the political evolution of French policymakers who no longer wanted to be associated with racism, religious persecution, and other forms of colonial domination, but who could not quite get behind anything more than a nominal commitment to equality. I argue that the explanation for this lies not so much in their inability to cast off older ways of seeing the world, but rather in the emergence of *new* exclusionary logics that were produced at the crossroads of colonial reform and European reconstruction.

³⁶ Cooper's *Citizenship Between Empire and Nation* is a political history of "how it happened that in 1960 the political actors of France and French West Africa ended up with a form of political organization that neither had wanted during most of the previous fifteen years" (3). Wilder's *Freedom Time* is an intellectual history of the political thought of Léopold Senghor and Aimé Césaire in this same period.

³⁷ For a more detailed discussion, see my "Obscuring Race," *op cit*.

By focusing on youth, I offer a new interpretation of what united Europe and postwar empire were really all about. The literatures on early European integration and postwar French colonialism concentrate on high politics, geostrategy, and economic development. There has been surprisingly little engagement with the cultural politics of either phenomenon. Histories of the EU have been especially limited in this regard; they tend to treat the cultural politics of European integration as a belated afterthought that European activists and institutions only really began to consider in the mid-1960s or later.³⁸ A noteworthy recent exception is Christina Norwig’s pioneering work on the European Youth Campaign. Her research details how EYC officials and other pro-Europe activists approached United Europe as a “generational project,” adapting nationalist discourses about the “young generation” and political rejuvenation to forge Europe’s *postnational* future.³⁹ She argues that generational thinking resonated so strongly in the postwar conjuncture because postwar European leaders saw youth as more open and optimistic and less attached to old prejudices than their elders. Young people were also seen as guiltless in the conflicts of the past. Those qualities seemed to make youth uniquely positioned to effect real and lasting transformations in intra-European relations.

In this dissertation, I argue that the renovation of France’s African empire was also conceived and pursued as a generational project, whose success hinged on getting French and African youth to develop organic ties that transcended historic racial and religious divides. Faith in the ability of young people to willingly embrace diversity was precisely what made youth a target demographic for pro-Europe activists and colonial reformers alike, both of whom

³⁸ Cris Shore, *Building Europe: the Cultural Politics of European Integration* (London: Routledge, 2000); Oriane Calligaro, *Negotiating Europe: EU Promotion of Europeanness Since the 1950s* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2013).

³⁹ Norwig, *op cit*. She focuses on what she calls “generational thinking” within the ranks of the EYC, but she uses the term “generational project” on p 256.

hailed the multicultural mantra, “Unity in Diversity,” as the guiding ethos of their respective political aspirations.

Thus beneath all the geopolitical and juridical tensions of united Europe and the French Union, postwar empire and European unity were also *competing generational projects*. Conceived in this way, the confluence of those projects posed a vital, existential dilemma for France that carried serious implications for the rest of Europe as well: Would future generations of black Africans, and black African Muslims in particular, be French? Would they then also be European? And what would that mean for the French Republic and Europe more broadly? These were the fundamental questions with which postwar youth and education programs in metropolitan France, French Africa and Western Europe were grappling, questions they ultimately failed to resolve. France, postcolonial francophone Africa, and institutional Europe have been living with the consequences of those unresolved questions ever since.

These kinds of questions of political and social belonging are typically framed as conflicts over “identity.”⁴⁰ Certainly, defining and promoting rival formulations of French, African, and European identities was a central preoccupation of the historical actors in this dissertation. However, for the analyst, a significant advantage of approaching European unity and colonial reform in Africa as generational rather than identity projects, is that unlike the amorphous concept of identity, “generation” is an historically-grounded and process-oriented category. As Richard Ivan Jobs has observed, “generation” represents a temporal conceptualization of the past, present and future. That temporal dimension was particularly salient in the immediate aftermath of the war as postwar French leaders struggled to both establish continuity with the past and chart a radically new future through concrete social

⁴⁰ I discuss how “identity” figures in the existing scholarship on France, Africa and Europe in Chapter 1.

programs and policies that targeted youth.⁴¹ Furthermore, as Gary Wilder shows in *Freedom Time*, contemporary observers began to meditate on the nature of temporality itself amidst the astonishingly rapid global transformations in the postwar years. Wilder focuses on temporal themes in the postwar thought of Léopold Senghor and Aimé Césaire, but they were not alone in their “timely” reflections.⁴² In this thesis, I identify French Catholic intellectual Daniel Halévy’s largely forgotten 1948 treatise, *Essay on the Acceleration of History*, which described the quickening pace of historical time, as a common point of reference for French, African and European youth and student leaders (Chapter 5). I suggest the concept of historical acceleration brought together themes of youth, agency, and global transformation in a way that sharpened the purchase of generational thinking in the postwar era.

Though French, African and West European actors of the period shared a common cultural repertoire and in some ways seemed to be facing the same structural-historical conditions, the postwar moment was also a time when visions of European and African futures radically diverged. This project traces how exclusivist visions of Europe, like the one that erupted between film screenings in Brest, won out in the end. I contend that the consolidation of those visions in postwar youth and education campaigns for European unity limited the scope and effectiveness of French youth and education initiatives for Africans. That new repertoire of difference informed crucial decisions about what kinds of schools, programs, and organizations the French state was willing to fund in its African territories. This interplay between discourse

⁴¹ Richard Ivan Jobs, *Riding the New Wave: Youth and the Rejuvenation of France after the Second World War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007): 8-11. Jobs’ excellent study details how the concept of youth became an organizing principle for reconstruction in postwar France. The book’s main limitation lies in its exclusive national-metropolitan focus. Though I dramatically broaden the scope of analysis in this study, I build on Jobs’ insights throughout the dissertation.

⁴² Wilder’s use of “timeliness” implies a trans-temporal “historical constellation” that connects Senghor’s and Césaire’s concerns about disaggregated sovereignty, cultural multiplicity, legal pluralism, federalism, and autonomy in the postwar period with the defining issues of our own era, which Habermas has characterized as a “postnational constellation” (14-15).

and practice came to form a sort of feedback loop. In this study, I refer to that interplay as sedimenting into a new kind of “racial common sense” in postwar France.

French administrators obsessively scrutinized how African students were faring in school and how they comported themselves beyond the classroom. In contrast, European youth were never subjected to that kind of scrutiny. Whenever African students’ academic progress or social behavior was found wanting, it was taken as confirmation of the incommensurability of African difference. Administrative discourses that youth and education initiatives for Africans were failing, in turn, contributed to a growing fatalism in the mid-1950s that France’s postwar experiment with egalitarian empire was destined to fracture along racial and religious lines. Todd Shepard’s work has shown, in the case of Algeria, that discourses of the inevitability of decolonization made it more difficult for Algerians to integrate into French society once Algeria became independent in 1962.⁴³ I argue the same holds true for sub-Saharan Africans. However, in contrast to Shepard, by connecting these processes to early European integration, I show that those exclusionary logics assumed new forms long before French sub-Saharan Africa became independent in 1960. In this sense, my focus on youth and education functions not only as a useful lens onto broader questions about European integration and decolonization but also carries its own explanatory force. Indeed, the critical interplay between colonial and European youth initiatives is key to explaining why, despite France’s efforts to strengthen ties with its African colonies in the 1940s and 1950s, France became more “European” during precisely those years.

The final intervention of this project concerns the reproduction of social inequality in late- and post- colonial France. There is a vast social science literature that explores how the establishment of the European Union in 1992 has affected people from Europe’s former colonies

⁴³ Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006).

and their descendants who reside in Europe today. Because we do not typically think about the interconnected history of the cultural politics of early European integration and postwar colonialism, this literature tends to take the arrival of these populations, most of whom came in the 1960s or later, as its point of departure. If we follow that timeline, diversity in contemporary Europe appears to be an “immigration” issue.

The trouble with that framing is that it construes the sheer presence of more racially and religiously diverse populations in Europe as intrinsically problematic. It identifies “the problem” with the people themselves. By contrast, my analysis builds on the insights of critical race theory, which locates the production of racialized difference and social inequality in state institutions, social structures, and everyday relations. I demonstrate that the educational infrastructure that the French put in place in the postwar decades inhibited rather than enhanced Africans’ ability to integrate into French society.⁴⁴ In so doing, I show that state practices and policy choices in the decade and a half after World War II *constructed* the later settlement in France of black Africans, and black African Muslims in particular, as a social problem.

Youth, Education and French Republicanism

So why did postwar French leaders focus so intensely on youth in their quest to forge new relationships between France, Europe and Africa? The popularity of works like Halévy’s across French, African and European political, intellectual, and student milieus shows that the postwar preoccupation with youth was not a narrowly national, French phenomenon. However, there is a distinctly French tradition of linking education with radical political transformation that dates to the revolutionary era that shaped how that preoccupation played out in postwar France.

⁴⁴ Naomi Davidson makes a related argument about the racialization of Islam in France during this period. She argues that the French state constructed Islam in such a way that made Islam unassimilable in republican France. See her *Only Muslim*.

Successive waves of French revolutionaries in the 1790s of various ideological stripes approached education as the lynchpin of their respective visions for the Revolution. They viewed the Revolution itself as a kind of pedagogical project that would produce a new kind of citizenry for a new society that would no longer be controlled by the aristocracy, the Catholic Church, and other corporate entities.⁴⁵ Napoleon’s reorganization of French education into a national, centralized system in 1806-1808—which was known as “the University”—was a cornerstone of his efforts to unify the country and proved to be one of his most enduring legacies.⁴⁶ That centralized education system served as a bulwark of the liberal regime of the July Monarchy (1830-1848), which sought to refound a stable society in the post-corporate world of nineteenth-century France by erecting a new social hierarchy that would be based on individual “capacity” and education.⁴⁷ Though primary schooling was expanded under that regime, access to secondary education remained limited to a small bourgeois elite, which aligned with the constitutional monarchy’s political culture of limited suffrage and elite politics.⁴⁸

The original architects of the Second Republic (1848-1852), the short-lived “republican experiment” between the July Monarchy and the Bonapartist Second Empire, envisioned a

⁴⁵ See, *inter alia*, R.R. Palmer, *The Improvement of Humanity: Education and the French Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985); Mona Ozouf, *L'école de la France: essai sur la Révolution, l'utopie de l'enseignement* (Paris: Gallimard, 1984); Isser Wolloch, *The New Regime: Transformations in the Civic Order in France, 1789-1820s* (New York and London: Norton, 1994).

⁴⁶ On the “imperial university” and its legacy, see Christine Muesselin, *The Long March of French Universities* (New York and London: Routledge Falmer, 2001). For an overview, see W.D. Halls, *Education, Culture and Politics in Modern France* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1976).

⁴⁷ Jan Goldstein, *The Post-Revolutionary Self: Politics and Psyche in France, 1750-1850* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008). On the liberal discourse of capacity, see Alan Kahan, *Liberalism in Nineteenth-Century Europe: the Political Culture of Limited Suffrage* (New York: Palgrave, 2003). On this discourse and theories of empire in France and Britain, see Jennifer Pitts, *A Turn To Empire: the Rise of Imperial Liberalism in Britain and France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

⁴⁸ In addition to Kahan, see André Jardin and A-J Tudesq, *La France des notables*, 2 vols (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1973). The Guizot Law of 1833 did mandate the creation of primary schools in every commune that reached certain population thresholds, and by the end of the July Monarchy the total number of primary schools in France had doubled. But this did not extend to secondary schooling.

dramatic expansion of secular primary education to support a democratic republic based on universal male suffrage. However, the idealistic “48ers” quickly lost control of the fledgling Republic to the conservative bourgeoisie and Louis Napoleon. The legislature reinstated Catholic education in the 1850 Falloux Law, shortly before rallying behind Napoleon’s *coup d’état* that dissolved the Republic altogether. As Maurice Agulhon has argued, the great political lesson of the Second Republic was the necessity of universal public education to sustain a durable socially inclusive and democratic polity.⁴⁹

That lesson was not lost on the next generation of French republicans. As soon as they consolidated their grip on France’s Third Republic (1871-1940) in the early 1880s, republican leaders sought to elevate the school as the bedrock of the new regime. The Ferry Laws (1881-1886) abolished fees and tuition charges in all public elementary schools, made primary school attendance compulsory for boys *and* girls, mandated the creation of new schools in any commune with as few as 20 school-age children, and standardized teacher training programs, school inspections, and other bureaucratic controls. The extension of primary schooling into the French countryside in the 1880s was intended to “civilize” its supposedly backward and “savage” inhabitants. In his classic study of the modernization of rural France, Eugen Weber highlights the civilizational discourses associated with the education reforms of the period, in which schools “were credited with the ultimate acculturation process that made the French people French,” and “finally civilized them.” Likewise, schoolteachers, “in their worn, dark suits, appear[ed] as the militia of the new age, harbingers of enlightenment and of the Republican message that reconciled the benighted masses with a new world, superior in wellbeing and

⁴⁹ Maurice Agulhon, *The Republican Experiment, 1848-1852*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983). For a competing interpretation that locates the crucible of French democracy in political practices under the Second Empire, see Sudir Hazareesingh, *From Subject to Citizen: the Second Empire and the Emergence of French Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998).

democracy.”⁵⁰ For most republicans of the era, that message was a militantly secular one, duly rejected by the Catholic hierarchy, Catholic educators and Catholic parents. Nevertheless, though certainly not accepted by all, both the school and the *instituteur* became enduring symbols of the republic, national unity, civic consciousness, and “French civilization” itself. This cultural repertoire was revived once more as postwar French leaders set about founding yet another republic in the wake of the German occupation and Pétain’s collaborationist Vichy government.

To many contemporary observers, the French defeat of 1940 and the ignominious Vichy regime that followed reflected the abject failure of the republican school to produce a united, patriotic citizenry committed to democratic values.⁵¹ The classist nature of the education system was singled out as one of its greatest shortcomings, for although the Third Republic had universalized primary schooling, it had deliberately left secondary education to the preserve of the bourgeois elite. As a result, postwar planners considered sweeping education reforms an integral part of both national reconstruction and social democratization. As I discuss in Chapter 3, the national-metropolitan education plans that were proposed in the postwar conjuncture, which were largely socialist and communist in inspiration, were ultimately shunted aside, collateral damage of the expulsion of the Communists from the postwar coalition government and the onset of the Cold War in the late 1940s.⁵² Nevertheless, the overhaul of the national education system remained a central preoccupation of French politicians, educators and activists throughout the 1940s and 1950s, even though it would ultimately take the massive unrest in May

⁵⁰ Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: the Modernization of Rural France* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974): 3-5, 303, 308-309.

⁵¹ Jean-François. Muracciole, *Les enfants de la défaite: la Résistance, l’éducation et la culture* (Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 1998). Vichy leaders also blamed the Third Republic’s approach to youth and education for the *débâcle*, if for opposite reasons. See Jean-Michel Barreau, *Vichy contre l’école de la République: Théoriciens et théories scolaires de la « Révolution nationale »* (Paris: Flammarion 2000); Pierre Giolitto, *Histoire de la jeunesse sous Vichy* (Paris: Perrin, 1991).

⁵² For a detailed, journalistic political history of the Fourth Republic, see Frank Giles, *The Locust Years: the Story of the Fourth French Republic, 1946-1958* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1992).

1968 for substantive reforms to democratize access to secondary and higher education to finally get pushed through.⁵³

A key difference between French ideas about education and republicanism in the postwar conjuncture and the central role attributed to education in earlier moments of republican rebirth is that in the mid-1940s, “education” was no longer narrowly conceived as formal schooling. Rather, as I show in Chapters 2 and 3, postwar administrators and educators were developing a more capacious view of young people’s social, cultural and moral development. The increasing salience of “youth” as a key social category in advanced modern societies refocused postwar planners’ attention on the state’s role in developing activities and programs for young people beyond the classroom.⁵⁴ To be sure, public policy and concerted state action directed at youth had been evolving since the late nineteenth century, not just in France but across Europe, which scholars have linked to the development of modern forms of national consolidation and the nascent welfare state.⁵⁵ During the Third Republic, organized youth movements and cultural associations flourished, however they did so largely without state support at the national level. Beginning in the 1880s, municipal governments did help develop a vast network of *colonies de vacances* for working-class children, and under the Popular Front, an “Under-Secretariat for Youth and Sport” was briefly put in place within the Ministry of National Education. However most funding for scout movements, youth clubs, and other forms of popular education and

⁵³ Antoine Prost, *Education, société, politiques: une histoire d’enseignement en France de 1945 à nos jours* (Paris: Seuil, 1992) and its successor, *Du changement dans l’Ecole – Les réformes de l’éducation de 1936 à nos jours* (Paris: Seuil, 2013).

⁵⁴ Jobs, *Riding the New Wave*; Jobs and Pomfret, eds., *Transnational Histories of Youth*.

⁵⁵ Patricia Loncle, *L’action publique malgré les jeunes: les politiques de jeunesse en France de 1870 à 2000* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2003). For a global perspective on the institutionalization of education and the rise of the nation-state, see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (New York: Verso, 1983).

organized leisure for young people prior to WWII came from private groups and religious charities.⁵⁶

Ultimately it was Vichy's statist approach to youth that proved to be the key institutional breakthrough. Under Vichy, youth leaders were brought into the state bureaucracy, and the postwar Fourth Republic decided not to reverse course.⁵⁷ The postwar era therefore witnessed a dramatic intensification of public-private collaboration in the domain of youth programming, which opened up new possibilities for state funding for colonial and pan-European youth initiatives. As I show in Chapter 3, new patterns of public-private partnership relating to youth had significant ramifications for postwar religious youth initiatives in particular.

The politics of education in metropolitan France reverberated in the empire. Republican ideas about youth and education began to shape education policy in sub-Saharan Africa in earnest in the 1880s, when the consolidation of the Third Republic and French colonization of the African interior converged. As Alice Conklin has shown, education was an integral part of the Third Republic's "civilizing mission" in French Africa,⁵⁸ much as education played a key role in "civilizing" the countryside in the metropole. However, the purpose of colonial education differed from mass primary schooling in France; rather than produce patriotic citizens of a republican nation-state, colonial education sought to create obedient and useful colonial subjects to sustain French colonial rule.⁵⁹ As a result, French colonial education policy proved much less

⁵⁶ See for instance, Laura Lee Downs, *Childhood in the Promised Land. Working-Class Movements and the Colonies de Vacances in France, 1880-1960* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002); Arnaud Baubérot and Nathalie Duval, *Le scoutisme entre guerre et paix au XXe siècle* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2006); Joan Tumblety, *Remaking the Male Body: Masculinity and the Uses of Physical Culture in Interwar and Vichy France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

⁵⁷ Loncle, *op cit.*

⁵⁸ Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize*: 75-106; Jean-Hervé Jézéquel, "Histoire des bancs, parcours d'élèves: Pour une lecture « configurationnelle » de la scolarisation à l'époque coloniale," *Cahiers d'Études africaines* 43, Cahier 169/170, Enseignements (2003), 409-433.

⁵⁹ Bryant, *Education as Politics*: 9.

ideologically rigid and uniform than education policy in Third Republic France. Despite the regime's militant secularism, republicans and Catholic missionaries forged what J.P. Daughton has called an "informal, if rocky entente" in the empire, in light of the colonial state's limited financial and human resources. Republicans decided not to outlaw mission schools in the territories, and the missions channeled their project of evangelization into the republican civilizing mission.⁶⁰

In many ways, French colonialism shared its civilizing project with other colonial powers. But the French approach to colonial schooling, which insisted on French as the language of instruction, differed significantly from instruction in local languages in British colonial schools in Africa.⁶¹ Initially, the emphasis on French reflected a broader "assimilationist" orientation in French colonial policy, and most school programs were designed to resemble the metropolitan curriculum. However, the growing salience of scientific theories of race, the imperatives of economic development, and the rise of an increasingly vocal, politicized francophone African elite, led most French officials to move away from assimilation around the turn of the twentieth century, and even more so after World War I. Instead, they increasingly focused on "adapted" forms of education that would mold Africans into productive workers in the colonial economy while keeping them fixed in their place at the bottom of the colonial social order. By the 1920s, the colonial administration was prioritizing the creation of "rural" or "village" schools that would concentrate on agriculture, manual trades, hygiene, and basic writing and arithmetic to avoid "alienating" African youth from their traditional milieus.⁶²

⁶⁰ J.P. Daughton, *An Empire Divided: Religion, Republicanism and the Making of French Colonialism, 1880-1914* (2006): 6.

⁶¹ Bryant, *Education as Politics*: 17 fn. 30; Bob White, "Talk about School: Education and the Colonial Project in French and British Africa (1860-1960)," *Comparative Education* 32, no 1 (1996): 9-25.

⁶² For the classic study of this shift in French colonial policy, see Raymond Betts, *Assimilation and Association in French Colonial Theory* (Columbia University Press, 1961). On the interwar period, see

This shift changed the rhetoric of the civilizing mission and narrowed its goals considerably. Indeed, one can detect many commonalities between interwar conceptions of the civilizing process and colonial education and Vichy's openly racist colonial policies. (While the colonial leadership in French Equatorial Africa rallied to de Gaulle immediately after the armistice, Vichy controlled French West Africa [AOF] from 1940 until late 1942.) As Ruth Ginio has argued, most colonial officials in AOF experienced the fall of the Republic as a "great relief"—at least insofar as they found Vichy's racist ideology much more in line with their actual colonial education policies than the assimilationist logic of republican universalism.⁶³ As we shall see in Chapters 3 and 4, the parallels between colonial education under Vichy and the Third Republic became embarrassing for French leaders towards the end of war. Pressure to dissociate the new French Union from Vichy's vision of empire became a potent weapon for African leaders in their campaigns for sweeping colonial education reform, adding yet another dimension to postwar republicans' preoccupation with African youth.

Reestablishing republican France's international prestige after the ignominy of Vichy also inspired postwar French leaders to try to reclaim France's historic role in interwar institutions for European intellectual cooperation.⁶⁴ French officials aggressively, and ultimately, successfully, negotiated for the new United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization [UNESCO] to be based in Paris, though they failed to secure its first presidency for a Frenchman (Chapter 2). The European Movement's focus on youth and education offered

Wilder, *The French Imperial Nation-State*. For a more recent overview, see Bryant, *op cit*: 12-21. On rural schools, see Harry Gamble, "Developing Cultures: Debates over Education in French West Africa, 1930-1950," PhD Dissertation, New York University, 2002.

⁶³ Ruth Ginio, *French Colonialism Unmasked: the Vichy Years in French West Africa* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006): Chapter 4.

⁶⁴ Though interwar institutions for international intellectual cooperation nurtured global ambitions, in practice their scope was thoroughly European. See Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism*, and Frank Séréní, "La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris – ambitions mondiales et réalités européennes, 1926-1956," in Girault and Boussaut, *Europe brisée*, 89-108.

another chance to assert French dominance in international educational organizations. French pro-Europe activists were instrumental in the creation of the European Youth Campaign: the EYC's first chairman, Jean Moreau, was a Frenchman, and the EYC's international headquarters was located in Paris. Consequently, the EYC was able to establish more direct contacts with officials in the French Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Overseas France than with national officials in other European states. As we shall see in Chapter 5, those contacts kept European youth and education initiatives on French colonial administrators' and national educators' radar and encouraged them to incorporate a Europe-wide dimension to their own policies and programs.

Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation begins with an introductory chapter that presents an historical overview of the postwar era that integrates colonial and European developments into a single a narrative. It also provides an extended literature review that explores why the existing scholarship on late colonialism and European integration are not in conversation with one another, an analytical separation that obscures the central role race and religion played in both processes. Drawing on the work of cultural historians of postwar Europe, sociologists, and international historians, this discussion locates the salience of “civilization” and the generational mindset after World War II in the interplay between sociocultural change and geopolitics.

The postwar preoccupation with youth and the redefinition of civilizational boundaries originated during the war years. Chapter 2 traces the emergence of a far-ranging constellation of individuals and institutions during the war that debated and ultimately set the agenda for youth and education policies once the war was won. It maps the circulation of French officials between

wartime London, transnational capital of occupied Europe; Algiers, headquarters of “Free France” beginning in 1943; and the colonial administrations in the French African Federations. Place mattered in shaping the priorities of these wartime planners, but they were all part of a single conversation about youth and education that was unfolding across national-metropolitan, transnational European, and colonial-African space. That conversation entailed extensive, and unusually candid, reflections on matters of race and religion in the socialization of young people. This chapter emphasizes how and why those reflections came to be articulated in the language of “civilization.”

The next two chapters follow those reflections into the late 1940s. A central wartime development that shaped French postwar education planning was a dramatic reappraisal of French republican secularism, largely due to the important role French Catholics played in the Resistance and the imperative of national reconciliation after Vichy. Chapter 3 analyzes that shift in the French national-metropolitan context alongside the increasing integration of mission schools into the colonial education system in French Africa and a pronounced Christian orientation in transnational European conversations about youth, education and European unity. The confluence of these developments contributed to the culturalization of Christianity in the postwar French imaginary, in which secularism itself was framed as a distinctly Christian legacy. That conceptual repertoire recast older oppositions between French and European identities and Islam, and it authorized the ostensibly secular postwar Republic to financially support and recognize Christian youth and education initiatives while continuing to suppress private Muslim education and Muslim youth movements in the vast Muslim regions in French sub-Saharan Africa.

French attitudes and policies toward Islam in Africa were intimately bound up with racialized conceptions of African difference. Colonial administrators viewed African Islam, which they tellingly referred to as *Islam noir*, as more malleable and less firmly rooted in African societies than Islamic practice in the Arab world. They desperately tried to insulate and “protect” African Muslims from new political and theological movements in the Middle East through discriminatory youth and education policies. However, as French officials were confronted with mounting internal and international pressures to democratize the empire in the postwar conjuncture, they were deeply concerned to avoid the *appearance* of discrimination of any kind.

Chapter 4 continues to consider the disjuncture between rhetorical commitments to non-discrimination in the late 1940s and institutional practices, but it shifts the analytical focus from religion to race. New international norms against racism shaped debates about race and education in both Europe and French Africa after the war. While francophone African elites framed the overhaul of colonial education as part of the fight against racial inequality, the imperatives of the denazification of education in liberated Europe encouraged European education planners to avoid any and all references to race. This tonal clash and related conceptual shifts influenced how colonial administrators enacted postwar education reforms in the French African Federations. Building on the literature on racial formation in the US, this chapter develops the concept of a distinctly postwar “racial common sense” to connote the mutually reinforcing interplay between novel forms of racial conception, and the institutional arrangements to which they gave rise, at the interstices of postwar colonial reform and early European unity.

The final two chapters explore how the culturalization of Christianity and postwar racial common sense played out in student exchanges and international youth mobilizations in the

1950s. Chapter 5 examines encounters between French officials and African students in France, as young Africans inserted themselves into the conversations about youth, pluralism, and social and political change that French, African, and European leaders had been having for the past decade. I emphasize that those encounters were taking place in a French Union that was becoming more integrated into an expanding network of European institutions. European institution building reframed the urgency of educating Africans—whether in France or French Africa—as a fundamental building block in the construction of “Eurafrica.” The Eurafrican framework added new valences to France’s old civilizing mission in its African territories, prioritizing education and professional training geared toward technical advancement and economic integration. It also encouraged French education officials and European unity activists to include African youth in European youth and education programs.

Most francophone African students and youth leaders denounced the idea of Eurafrica. However, despite their firm opposition to Eurafrica as a political and economic project, young Africans in France were themselves contributing to the creation of a “Eurafrican” intellectual space. French officials, French-educated Africans, and pro-Europe activists forged this space together as they meditated on young people as agents of change amidst global forces that they were all still struggling to comprehend. This chapter concludes with a discussion of how francophone African students and pro-European activists alike turned to French historian Daniel Halévy’s notion of the “acceleration of history” to make sense of the rapid-fire pace of historical change in this eventful decade.

Chapter 6 situates Franco-African and pan-European youth and education initiatives in the broader context of international youth mobilizations during the early Cold War. The rise of international youth movements aligned with the opposing Cold War blocs further sharpened

French officials' conceptions of the postwar empire and European unity as generational projects. A review of youth and education policy in the French zone of occupation in postwar Germany, where Cold War dynamics were particularly laid bare, shows that the vision of Europe French officials promoted in response to Cold War pressures was both culturally Christian and secular, and tacitly raceless. Conversely, Cold War youth politics put racial issues front and center in the colonial African context. American- and Soviet-backed youth movements dramatically expanded opportunities for young francophone Africans to step onto the international stage to advance their claims for particular rights, to protest continuing discriminatory practices and new forms of oppression, and to embarrass France in the court of international opinion at a time when French leaders were trying to project an image of the French Union as a model of pluralist democracy to the world.

African militancy in these Cold War youth forums alarmed French colonial officials, but they were equally if not more disturbed by new patterns of south-south cultural and educational exchanges. The remainder of this chapter juxtaposes paranoia about African participation in youth forums aligned with the opposing Cold War blocs with French officials' outright panic as young African Muslims, who had long been denied access to Islamic education in the French African Federations, took advantage of new opportunities to pursue religious study elsewhere, particularly at al-Azhar University in Cairo. Building on Matthew Connelly's work on Algeria, this discussion reframes French anxieties about decolonization in sub-Saharan Africa as part of a general North/South, as well as East/West, global, and ultimately "civilizational," conflict. The French preoccupation with African Muslims heading to al-Azhar obscured new social and religious forces originating from within colonial African society, many of which were actually responses to French colonial practices. Because the French viewed those endogenous

developments through the racial-religious and geopolitical lens of *Islam noir*, the colonial administration missed a crucial opportunity to work with African education reformers to create a new kind of Franco-Muslim education in its African colonies. Instead, French actions severely inhibited the development of education in regions with Muslim-majority populations, which had long-term consequences for postcolonial African societies. Those consequences, and the legacies of postwar colonial and European youth and education initiatives in France and Europe today, are explored at length in the Epilogue.

* * *

Contemporary France, and Europe more broadly, are increasingly complex, ethnically and religiously diverse societies. Whether this diversity is a scourge to be combated or a value to be celebrated has profoundly divided politicians, cultural commentators and public opinion in France for decades. Interdisciplinary research in the social sciences has looked to a variety of transnational and global pressures on European nation-states to make sense of why cultural pluralism has become so divisive in France and Europe today, and how the European Union and its individual member states can more effectively “manage” this diversity in future. From this literature emerges a compelling, but historically and analytically vague, sense that the confluence of the collapse of European empires and the process of European integration helped consolidate a “postcolonial” vision of Europe as a cohesive cultural area that is essentially white and Christian, and a belief that postwar empires were destined to dissolve along racial and religious lines. The chapters that follow explore how the ostensibly secular, “colorblind” postwar French Republic actively contributed to development of that political imaginary and cultural repertoire.

Chapter 1

The Civilizational Moment: Postwar Empire and United Europe

“Civilization” was a salient concept for French, African, and other European leaders in the postwar conjuncture as they set about reimagining the European and colonial worlds.¹ A capacious and trans-temporal concept that encompasses past, present and future, and that also integrates ideas about race, religion and geopolitics in a single framework, “civilization” proved good to think with in this era of global transformation.² French and other European elites redeployed older discourses of civilization to give new coherence to a world that seemed to be unraveling before their eyes, while French colonial subjects appropriated the language of civilization to challenge the old colonial order.³ 1945 might not have been the “zero hour” once supposed by earlier generations of historians, but postwar leaders—European and African alike—felt that they were living through a moment of radical possibility to remake the world.

The first part of this dissertation (Chapters 2-4) explores competing visions of what that world would look like in policy proposals for postwar education reforms and new youth programs in metropolitan France, French sub-Saharan Africa, and the nascent European Community. Contrary to the widely held view that the war had shattered Europe’s “civilizational confidence,” my analysis shows that “European civilization” functioned as a key category for French policymakers as they contemplated how best to orient rising generations in both Europe

¹ Mark Mazower, “An International Civilization? Empire, Internationalism and the Crisis of the Mid-Twentieth Century,” *International Affairs* 82:3 (May 2006), 553-566.

² On the evolution of the concept, see Andrew Sartori, “The Resonance of ‘Culture’: Framing a Problem in Global Concept History,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 47:4 (October 2005), 676-699.

³ See for instance Aimé Césaire, *Discours sur le colonialisme* (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1955).

and Africa in the 1940s.⁴ There is no sustained engagement with this pronounced postwar civilizational idiom in the established scholarship, which detaches the history of European integration from the history of postwar colonialism and decolonization in French Africa. However, these histories are deeply entwined. Prior to the Second World War, the notion of “Greater France” [*la plus Grande France*] had provided a powerful formula for conceptualizing France as both an “African” and a “European” power.⁵ Colonial reforms, anticolonial movements, and European institution building in the 1940s and 1950s intensified the contradictions of those dual identifications, but they also created the political space to imagine different kinds of relations among France, Europe and Africa. The mid-century initiative to build “Eurafrica,” envisioned as an institutional community linking Europe and Africa with France at its core, represents a significant effort to reconcile France’s commitments to its old empire and the new Europe in the postwar era.

This introductory chapter presents a new narrative synthesis that brings the history of France’s postwar empire and the reconstruction of postwar Europe into the same frame. It also provides an extended literature review that explores why the literatures on late colonialism and European integration have not been in conversation with one another. I contend this analytical separation obscures the central role ideas about racial and religious boundaries, nestled in the

⁴ Judt, *Postwar*: 5. The notion that the war put an end to Europe’s “superiority complex” is also a fixture in the literature on postwar European identity. See Robert Frank’s contributions in his edited volume, *Les identités européennes au XXe siècle. Diversités, convergences et solidarités* (Paris: Sorbonne, 2004).

⁵ Much like Gary Wilder’s notion that France and its colonies constituted an “imperial nation-state” in the interwar period, I use the term “postwar Greater France” to denote metropolitan France and its overseas territories as an integrated geographical, political, and cultural unit from the Liberation (1944) to the dissolution of the French Community (1960). Like Wilder, I see this as a “concrete abstraction,” that is, a structuring representation in the French political imaginary as well as an actually-existing institutional framework. *The French Imperial Nation-State: Négritude and Colonial Humanism Between the Two World Wars* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005). On the phrase itself, see Raoul Girardet, “L’apothéose de la ‘plus Grande France’: l’idée coloniale devant l’opinion française,” *Revue française de science politique* 18: 6 (Décembre 1968), 1085-1114.

mid-century discourse of civilization, played in both processes. Crucially, the narrative I have constructed here situates the France-Europe-Africa triad in a broader imperial and global context, in which what was happening elsewhere in the French empire—in Indochina and Algeria—and also elsewhere in the world—from Washington and Moscow to Bandung and Cairo—significantly shaped the Franco-African and transnational European developments that will be discussed in later chapters. However, my narrative also makes an historical and interpretative case for the integrity and specificity of the entangled history of postwar French colonialism in Africa south of the Sahara and early European integration. Within the French sphere, neither blackness nor Africanness were coextensive with “Black Africa” – black Antilleans in the French Caribbean had been French citizens for more than a century, African American soldiers, artists and musicians had a significant presence in the metropole, and France had a vast North African empire.⁶ Similarly, French anxieties about new developments in the Islamic world and the significant Muslim populations in France’s empire were not uniquely, or even chiefly, focused on sub-Saharan Africa.⁷ And yet, conceptions of blackness, Africanness, and Islam came together in new representations of “Black Africa” in the postwar French imaginary that generated distinct opportunities and constraints in youth and education policy as France sought

⁶ On the postwar French Antilles, see Kristen Stromberg Childers, “The Second World War as a Watershed in the French Caribbean,” *Atlantic Studies: Global Currents* 9:4 (2012): 409-430; on black Antillian youth in this period, see Andrew M. Daily, “Race, Citizenship and Antillian Student Activism in Postwar France, 1946-1968,” *French Historical Studies* 37:2 (2014): 331-357; on African Americans in Paris, see Tyler Stovall, *Paris Noir: African Americans in the City of Light* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1996); on African Americans and French ideas about race in this period, see Celeste Day Moore, “Race in Translation: Producing, Performing and Selling African-American Music in Greater France, 1944-1974,” PhD Diss., University of Chicago, 2014. The literature on French North Africa – Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco – is too vast to cite here. For an overview of the place of North Africa in France’s wider empire, see Martin Thomas, ed., *The French Colonial Mind, Volume 1: Mental Maps and Colonial Encounters* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011). On the contrast in education policy north and south of the Sahara, see Spencer D. Segalla, *The Moroccan Soul. French Education, Colonial Ethnography and Muslim Resistance, 1912-1956* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009).

⁷ See for instance, Darcie Fontaine, *Decolonizing Christianity: Religion and the End of Empire in France and Algeria* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2016); Naomi Davidson, *Only Muslim: Islam in Twentieth-Century France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012).

to remain an imperial power and take the lead in European integration simultaneously. It is to that story—a story with deep roots in the interwar period and whose legacies have shaped many of the most pressing issues of our times—that we now turn.

Greater France, United Europe and Eurafrika: An Historical Overview

Prologue: the Interwar Period. The three narrative arcs of this dissertation—the drive to reform and revitalize France’s African empire, the project of European unification, and their points of intersection—begin in the interwar period. The histories of the French in sub-Saharan Africa and visions of united Europe are of course much longer; even the idea of Eurafrika had historical precedents in nineteenth-century Saint-Simonian development schemes in Africa and Victor Hugo’s vision of a “United States of Europe” whose vocation was to “enlighten” the “Dark continent.”⁸ Yet it was in the 1920s and 1930s when organized movements for European unity began to form, when proposals for joint European action in Africa gained traction, and when French interest in empire was at its peak.

Moreover, the majority of postwar French leaders went through their political and cultural formation during the interwar years. The generational issue is crucial for comprehending the tenacity with which France’s postwar political leadership held firm in their commitment to preserving the empire at all costs. The interwar period was the apogee of what Pascal Blanchard and Sandrine Lemaire call “*la culture impériale*” in metropolitan France.⁹ The 1930s were punctuated by a series of exhibitions and festivals celebrating the French empire and French

⁸ Montarsolo, *L’Eurafrique*: 9.

⁹ Pascal Blanchard and Sandrine Lemaire, “Introduction,” in their *Culture impériale: les colonies au coeur de la République, 1931-1961* (Paris: Editions Autrement, 2004). For a good review essay on the vast literature about interwar French imperial culture, see Edward Berenson, “Making A Colonial Culture? Empire and the French Public, 1880-1940,” *French Politics, Culture and Society* 22:2 (Summer 2004), 127-149.

imperial history, from the tremendously popular 1931 Colonial Exposition in Paris to centenary celebrations of the conquest of Algeria and nation-wide tricentennial celebrations of France's "Old Colonies" in the Caribbean.¹⁰ Youth were steeped in this culture in history lessons and schoolbooks but also beyond the classroom; the popularity of the scouting movement, with its colonialist ethos, as well as novels, comics, film, and the iconography of the everyday with colonial themes and imagery all formed a far-ranging "imperial cultural configuration" that shaped the life-worlds and worldviews of an entire generation of French women and men.¹¹

The spread of "imperial culture" in the metropole progressed in tandem with an intensification of economic investment and industrial development schemes in French colonies overseas, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and Indochina. The French business community, policymakers, and colonial administrators vociferously promoted the *mise en valeur* of the empire, which prompted increased interest in colonial governance and the management of indigenous cultures and native welfare.¹² The disciplinary mechanisms of colonial rule and colonial racism were in turn transported back to the metropole as increasing numbers of colonial students and labor migrants traveled to French metropolitan centers.¹³ Thus the empire was not "elsewhere" in the interwar period; as Gary Wilder has argued in his study of France and French West Africa between the wars, Paris was in the empire just as the colonies were in the nation-state. Metropolitan-parliamentary and colonial-bureaucratic societies were linked together in an

¹⁰ This is not to say that that counter-tendencies were not already forming. See Jennifer Anne Boittin, *Colonial Metropolis: the Urban Grounds of Anti-Imperialism and Feminism in Interwar Paris* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010); Wilder, *The French Imperial Nation-State*.

¹¹ Sandrine Lemaire, "Promouvoir: fabriquer du colonial," and Nicolas Bancel and Daniel Denis, "Éduquer: comment devient-on 'homo-imperialis,'" in *Culture impériale*. Bancel and Denis underscore that 63% of colonial administrators after 1945 were members of one of the scout movements in the 1930s.

¹² Richard Roberts, *Two Worlds of Cotton. Colonialism and the Regional Economy of French Soudan, 1800-1946* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996).

¹³ Clifford Rosenberg, *Policing Paris: The Origins of Modern Immigration Control Between the Wars*. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006); Elisa Camisicicoli, *Reproducing the French Race: Immigration, Intimacy and Embodiment in the Early Twentieth Century* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009).

integrated sociopolitical framework—in an “imperial nation-state”—such that a vast constellation of prominent decision-makers in the public and private sectors were convinced that imperial renewal was crucial for *national* regeneration.¹⁴

Though the conclusion of the First World War sparked a substantial wave of anticolonial mobilizations across the globe, French proponents of empire had every reason to be optimistic about France’s imperial position in the 1920s.¹⁵ The global anticolonial fervor of 1919 quickly fizzled out, while French rule overseas expanded significantly with new League of Nations mandates in Syria, Lebanon, Togo and Cameroon.¹⁶ The economic downturn at the end of the decade did turn many French producers and merchants against empire, but faced with Italian and German fascist expansionism, empire became popular once again by the late 30s as a force for equilibrating French and fascist power. Moreover, the few metropolitan voices that continued to press for France to abandon its colonial holdings in Asia and the Caribbean were nevertheless accompanied by calls for intensifying French commitments in Africa.¹⁷ It was in this context—of an expanding territorial empire with an increasing focus on Africa and a deepening imperial culture in the metropole—that postwar political leaders and intellectuals were formed.

The interwar period was also marked by new initiatives to prevent future conflicts among European powers. One of these was Woodrow Wilson’s League of Nations. Founded in 1919, the League quickly became a very European project, as Wilson could not convince the US Congress to authorize American participation. Based in Geneva, the League served as a key site

¹⁴ Wilder, *The French Imperial Nation-State*.

¹⁵ Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment. Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

¹⁶ Elizabeth Thompson, *Colonial Citizens: Republican Rights, Paternal Privilege, and Gender in French Syria and Lebanon* (New York: Columbia University, 2000); Michael D. Callahan, *Mandates and Empire: The League of Nations and Africa, 1914-1931* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 1999).

¹⁷ Charles-Robert Ageron, *La décolonisation française* (Paris: Armand Collin, 1991).

for the development of what French historians of European integration call “*la conscience européenne*”—the conviction that through coordination and institutional organization, Europe could secure its future peace and prosperity.¹⁸ In addition to devising common policies, such as coordinating European control of Germany’s former colonies and imposing democratic standards of governance in the successor states of the former Habsburg Empire, the League also promoted European cultural programs: the Cité internationale universitaire de Paris was an early attempt to create a transnational European university environment.¹⁹ Though it became clear in the 1930s that the League was unable to check fascist aggression, in the 1920s it appeared as a genuine inspiration.²⁰ Many of the key figures in postwar European integration came through the ranks of the League bureaucracy, including the “father of Europe,” Frenchman Jean Monnet.²¹

The League also inspired other projects for European unity. Foremost among them was Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi’s *Panuropa* (1923). A central European aristocrat based in Vienna, Coudenhove’s vision of European unity was intended to bring order to a chaotic central Europe still reeling from the war and the breakup of the multinational Habsburg Empire. *Panuropa* was an attempt to imagine a new multinational political and cultural unit in its place, but this was also a modernist and technocratic project to develop extra-European resources for Europeans, whom Coudenhove believed possessed a unique ability to maximize efficiency and

¹⁸ French historians of Europe draw a distinction between this and the ostensibly similar term *identité européenne*. The latter connotes the sentiment of “being European,” of belonging to a geographic and cultural area “Europe,” whereas *conscience européenne* indicates a commitment to Europe as a political project. See René Girault, ed., *Identités et consciences européennes au XXe siècle* (Paris: Hachette, 1994); Jean-Michel Guieu, Christophe le Dréau, Jenny Raflik et Laurent Warlouzet, *Penser et construire Europe au XXe siècle. Historiographie, bibliographie, enjeux*. (Paris: Belin, 2006).

¹⁹ Andrée Bachoud and Manuel Espadas Burgos, “Les élites intellectuelles au sud de l’Europe et la conscience de l’identité européenne” in Girault, *Identités*.

²⁰ Akira Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism & World Order* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1997): Chapter 2.

²¹ Monnet served as under-secretary general of the League of Nations from 1920-1923. See René Girault, “Chronologie d’une conscience européenne,” in his *Identités*: 176.

productivity.²² Coudenhove won some followers outside of central Europe in the 1920s, but interest in united Europe remained relatively marginal for the remainder of the decade. Those who did seriously contemplate European unification, however, envisioned a significant colonial dimension to the process. It is during this period that we find the first elaborations of “Eurafrica.”

Coordinated development schemes in Africa for the extraction of primary resources was the cornerstone of Coudenhove’s proposal for European unity. Indeed, French historian Charles-Robert Ageron describes Coudenhove as the inventor of the modern Eurafrican idea, which quickly gained a following among French politicians and colonial administrators.²³ Prominent metropolitan politician Joseph Caillaux advocated using some kind of collective European administration in Africa as a vehicle for Franco-German entente, while top colonial like administrators Albert Sarraut and Hubert Lyautey envisioned a European federation pooling its resources and power to finally achieve the *mise en valeur* of the African continent.²⁴ French businessmen and industrialists also embraced the idea, many of whom sought close collaboration with their German counterparts in the endeavor—even after 1933.²⁵

Thus Eurafrica was immensely popular in interwar France, which is perhaps why the concept continues to be associated primarily with France to this day.²⁶ However, support for Eurafrica quickly spread through the emerging structures of interwar international society. The League of Nations was a hotbed of support for Eurafrica, and the idea gained traction across Europe as another war loomed on the horizon. By the end of the decade, European collaboration

²² Antoine Fleury, “Paneurope et l’Afrique” in *L’Europe Unie et l’Afrique: De l’idée d’Eurafrrique à la convention de Lomé I*. Actes du colloque international de Paris 1^{er} et 2 avril 2004, sous la direction de Marie-Thérèse Bitsch et Gérard Bossuat (Brussels: Bruylant, 2005).

²³ Charles-Robert Ageron, “L’idée d’eurafrique et le débat colonial franco-allemand de l’entre-deux-guerres,” *Revue d’Histoire Moderne et contemporaine* 22 (1975).

²⁴ Ibid; Fleury, “Paneurope et l’Afrique.”

²⁵ Chantal Metzger, “L’Allemagne et l’Eurafrrique,” in *L’Europe Unie et l’Afrique*.

²⁶ See for instance the conference proceedings of the Center for Conflict Resolution, *From Eurafrrique to Afro-Europa: Africa and Europe in a New Century*, 11-13 September 2008, Cape Town, South Africa.

in Africa was increasingly about buying peace at any price, what French historian Yves Montarsolo describes as a “curious colonial appeasement policy.”²⁷ British labor leader Ernest Bevin was also an early proponent of Eurafrica in the 1930s; his vision was motivated by a desire for Franco-British entente, which he believed could be more easily secured in Africa than in Europe.²⁸ Thus Eurafrica was a transnational *idée-force* during the interwar years. It appealed to a broad swath of elites in public and private sectors with diverse motivations: politicians, diplomats, colonial officials, industrialists and intellectuals interested in peace, European unity, industrial development, and the projection of European power and culture in the world.

The Second World War. The Second World War was a watershed in the trajectories of Greater France, Europe and Eurafrica. The experience of the war intensified French investment in maintaining its empire as a salve for its devastating defeat in 1940, but it also strengthened colonial subjects’ claims on the French state. This volatile combination lay behind a dramatic shift in French colonial policy toward political reform and expanded development efforts. The experience of the war also dwarfed France’s place in the international arena: humiliated and impoverished, France’s great-power status was further compromised by the rise of the United States and the Soviet Union as superpowers. The war definitively ended the era of European hegemony in the world affairs,²⁹ which both reanimated Europe unity activism and made political union in Europe seem more attractive to French leaders. If France could no longer claim great-power status on its own, it could still position itself as the leader of an organized Europe or

²⁷ Yves Montarsolo, “Albert Sarraut et l’idée d’Eurafrrique,” in *L’Europe unie et l’Afrique*: 89.

²⁸ Anne Deighton, “Ernest Bevin and the Idea of Euro-Africa from the Interwar to the Postwar Period,” in *L’Europe unie et l’Afrique*.

²⁹ Mark Mazower, “The End of Eurocentrism,” Special Issue, “Around 1948: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Global Transformation,” *Critical Inquiry* 40: 4 (Summer 2014); see also Mazower’s *No Enchanted Palace: the End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

Eurafrican federation, a mediating “Third Force” between the two superpowers on the international stage. The war also offered a strong negative example of Europe and Africa united in death and destruction instead of in peace and prosperity. Political exhaustion and the imperative of economic recovery refocused postwar plans for both Europe and Eurafrika around technocratic economic development.³⁰

Africa was a central theater of the war and the use of colonial troops was a significant factor in French and British military campaigns on both African and European soil. The relationship between the war and empire was more complicated in the French case, however, in light of the contest between the Vichy regime and Free French forces for resources and legitimacy. For Vichy, control of the empire was crucial for maintaining the illusion of independence from Nazi Germany. This intensified the importance of French West Africa (AOF), whose administration remained under Vichy control until late 1942. Meanwhile, the leadership in French Equatorial Africa (AEF), including the Guyana-born governor of Chad, Félix Éboué, rallied early to de Gaulle at a moment when things were looking grim for Free French forces, conferring much needed legitimacy and prestige on de Gaulle’s shadow government-in-exile. Éboué was in fact the first colonial governor to declare himself for de Gaulle; his devotion to “Free France” was invoked as vindication of the colonial project and civilizing mission.³¹

Given the centrality of Vichy control of AOF to the legitimacy of the regime, the empire became an important dimension of Pétain’s National Revolution. Vichy colonial propaganda particularly targeted youth and employed many of the tactics I examine in subsequent chapters

³⁰ Muriam Haleh Davis, “Producing EurAfrica: Development, Agriculture and Race in Algeria, 1958-1965,” PhD Dissertation, New York University, 2015; John Gillingham, *European Integration, 1950-2003. Superstate or New Market Economy?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

³¹ Eric Jennings, *La France Libre fut africaine* (Paris: Perrin, 2014).

during the postwar period. Radio was a key medium of this propaganda; the program “La France coloniale” aired three times a week. Vichy reissued colonialist classics by Delafosse, Buisson and Delavignette, and organized festivals such as the “Semaine de la France d’Outre-Mer” (14-21 July 1941) and sports competitions like the “Quinzaine impériale” (14-24 May 1942). In summer 1942, the regime organized a colonial exposition on a train that traveled across Vichy France, which was visited by some 122,000 people.³² This propaganda put forth a nationalist interpretation of empire, which fit well with the broader framework of Pétain’s National Revolution. Nevertheless, Eurafrika was also popular among Vichy industrialists interested in a planned Euro-colonial economy, while virulent anti-Semites reconciled Eurafrika with nationalist sentiment as France’s last remaining “trump card” in its negotiations with the Third Reich. The most committed anti-Semites, moreover, mobilized the trope of Eurafrika in their appeals to North African Muslims.³³

Though the war heightened French commitment to empire in both the Vichy and Free French camps, the wartime disruption of French colonial rule created an opening for anticolonial nationalist movements across the empire. The Vichy interlude in Indochina, Syria and Lebanon contributed to the collapse of French rule in those territories after the war.³⁴ The French defeat and Africans’ mobilization for the French war effort also sparked a wave of revolts in Algeria

³² Pascal Blanchard and Gilles Boëtsch, “La France de Pétain et l’Afrique: Images et propagandes coloniales,” *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 28, no 1 (1994).

³³ Ibid: 7-8. Endorsement of *Eurafrique* could be found in all the prominent Far Right and anti-Semitic journals, including *L’Action Française* and Doriot’s *Le Cri du Peuple*.

³⁴ For conflicting interpretations on the weakened position of the French in Indochina, see Eric Jennings, *Vichy in the Tropics. Pétain’s National Revolution in Madagascar, Guadeloupe and Indochina, 1940-1944* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001) and Mark Bradley, *Imagining Vietnam and America: The Making of Postcolonial Vietnam, 1919-1950* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000). For Syria and Lebanon, see Thompson, *Colonial Citizens*.

and Madagascar, as well as a series of strikes in West Africa, in 1945-1947.³⁵ De Gaulle's shadow government in Algiers, the Comité français de la Libération nationale [CFLN], anticipated these developments and began preparing colonial reforms as early as 1943. A new status was promised to Indochina that year, a new ordinance on Algeria the year after. René Pleven, Commissioner of Colonies for the CFLN, inaugurated discussions for restructuring the empire into a large federation in Algiers in 1944, which laid the foundations for the creation of the French Union and the Constitution of 1946. The war also prompted the reform of the French army and the Africanization of the officer corps.³⁶

While the CFLN was beginning to think about the reorganization of the empire, it was also outlining a project for European unification. The utopian idea of European unity during the interwar period had already begun to take on concrete forms in the wartime experience of the resistance movements across the continent. French historian Gérard Bossuat underscores the prominence of references to European unity in the French resistance literature as well as joint calls from French, Italian and Belgian resistance leaders for a postwar European federation.³⁷ Working within the CFLN, Jean Monnet, René Massigli and René Mayer laid out a clear vision for postwar European cooperation as early as 1943, one that would bring France together with Italy, the Benelux countries, and Britain, but that would exclude Germany.³⁸

³⁵ Ageron, *La Décolonisation française*; Frederick Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society: the Labor Question in French and British Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

³⁶ Myron Echenberg, " 'Promotion Africaine': the Africanization of Military Officers in French West Africa: 1945-1960," in Charles Robert Ageron and Marc Michel, eds., *L'Afrique noire française: L'heure des Indépendances* (Paris: CNRS, 1992); Gregory Mann, *Native Sons. West African Veterans and France in the Twentieth Century* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006).

³⁷ Gérard Bossuat, *L'Europe des français, 1943 à 1959. La IV^e République aux sources de l'Europe communautaire* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1996): Chapter 1.

³⁸ Gérard Bossuat, *Faire l'Europe sans défaire la France. 60 ans de politique d'unité européenne des gouvernements et des présidents de la République française (1943-2003)* (Peter Lang, 2005).

Incredibly, interwar attempts to promote cultural exchange among Europeans continued during the war. Between 1942-1945, the Conference of Allied Ministers of Education [CAME] met regularly in London to create an Allied “common mental space” through educational programs that focused on Europe’s common culture and shared history. Ultimately, the specifically European orientation of this institution receded as the United States used their influence to impose a much vaster project in which educational and cultural programs would promote democracy and international cooperation on a global scale, which culminated with the CAME’s conversion into UNESCO in 1946.³⁹ The initial formulation of this initiative is significant, however; the CAME and its work reveals that the war did not in fact destroy the “illusion” of European civilization or pride in European culture.⁴⁰ On the contrary, as we shall see in more detailed discussions of the CAME’s work in Chapters 2-4, the war inspired attempts to promote and celebrate a European cultural identity and “European civilization” while the war was still raging, which then became an important part of the platform of European unity activists once the war was won.

1945-1949. Wartime planning within the CFLN and the CAME were important endogenous developments within French and European governing circles in favor of postwar European cooperation. However, concrete advances toward European unity lumbered along in a series of fits and starts from these early wartime plans until the end of the 1940s. It was ultimately American pressure that led to the creation of the first set of European institutions.⁴¹

³⁹ Denis Mylonas, *La genèse de l’Unesco. La Conférence des Ministres Alliés de l’Education (1942-1945)* (Brussels: Bruylant, 1976).

⁴⁰ Tony Judt writes in *Postwar*, “By 1940, to observant Europeans, the grandest of all Europe’s illusions—now discredited beyond recovery—was ‘European civilization’ itself” (5).

⁴¹ That said, Europeans did play an important role in convincing the American political leadership of the necessity of European unification: Coudenhove himself was instrumental in converting Harry Truman and

France proposed a number of institutional arrangements for Europe during this period, all of which would exclude and punish Germany: international trusteeship over the Ruhr and the Saarland or direct French control of these regions' tremendous stores of natural resources; a customs union with the Benelux countries; a bilateral customs union with Italy; a Franco-British "special relationship." All of these initiatives failed to gain the support of the United States—which, it was already clear, was a prerequisite for further action—and so the French were forced to reconsider their intransigence on the German question.⁴² Ultimately it was the Marshall Plan that led France to accept German participation in the postwar construction of Europe.⁴³ Significantly, French participation in the US-led European recovery ensured that Marshall aid and other forms of American assistance would finance French efforts to reclaim its shattered empire.⁴⁴

The Marshall Plan brought sixteen European countries together in the Organization for European Economic Cooperation [OEEC] in 1948. This inaugurated an explosion of European unity activism and transnational and intergovernmental European institutional initiatives. Also in 1948, the Brussels Pact established the Western European Union, which in turn paved the way for the founding of NATO the following year. The preponderant role of the United States in bringing these organizations into being marked these organizations with a strong Atlanticist orientation. As the "special relationship" between Britain and the US increasingly distanced Britain from continental European cooperation, France, resentful at being perceived as a junior

J. William Fulbright to the cause of a "United States of Europe"; Jean Monnet also made such entreaties in his wartime diplomatic missions to the US. See Bossuat, *Faire l'Europe*.

⁴² Bossuat, *L'Europe des français*: chapters 1-3.

⁴³ Michael J. Hogan, "The Search for a 'Creative Peace': The United States, European Unity and the Origins of the Marshall Plan," *Diplomatic History* 6, no 3 (Summer 1982); Gérard Bossuat, *La France, l'aide américaine et la construction européenne, 1944-1954*, 2 vols (Paris, 1992); Marc Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlement, 1945-1963* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); Judt, *Postwar*.

⁴⁴ Bossuat, *L'aide américaine*.

partner in the Atlantic alliance, finally committed itself to Franco-German reconciliation. On 9 May 1950, the Schuman Declaration—largely conceived by Jean Monnet—proposed the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community [ECSC]. This proved to be the key institutional breakthrough, as it set up the first supranational European executive organ, the ECSC’s High Authority, which would be restructured a decade later as the European Commission. Also established in 1950: the European Convention on Human Rights, which laid the groundwork for a European system of justice; the European Payments Union, which hastened robust European economic recovery and increased intra-European trade; and the College of Europe, which provided postgraduate training for European officials who would staff the expanding family of European institutions.⁴⁵ Thus while the construction of Europe may have begun during the war, it was not until the early 1950s that it gained political momentum and took on concrete institutional forms.

The same was true for colonial reform. The French Union was established in the Constitution of 1946, but that transformation did not resolve the tensions, ambiguities and challenges of postwar empire. The governing structure of the French Union consisted of a tangled web of institutions with overlapping jurisdictions and territories with radically different juridical statuses. The president of the French Union was also the president of the Republic, elected by the two legislative chambers of parliament. The 1946 Constitution also created a third parliamentary body that only exercised consultative powers, the Assembly of the French Union, half of whose members were elected by parliament, half by the overseas departments, territories and associated states. As protectorates, Tunisia and Morocco were slotted in this latter category.

⁴⁵ On the EPU, see Bossuat, *L’Europe des français*; on the ECHR, see Marco Duranti, “A Blessed Act of Oblivion: Human Rights, European Unity and Postwar Reconciliation,” in *Reconciliation, Civil Society and the Politics of Memory: Transnational Initiatives in the 20th and 21st Century* (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2012) and A.W. Brian Simpson, *Human Rights and the End of Empire: Britain and the Genesis of the European Convention* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). I return to the College in Chapter 3.

Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia were also technically “associated states,” despite the fact that the French military was engaged in all-out war to re-impose French rule there. Martinique and Guadeloupe, meanwhile, became departments with the same status as their metropolitan counterparts.⁴⁶

The nationality and citizenship status of the populations in these diverse juridical units varied widely, as did the rights attached to those statuses.⁴⁷ Citizenship was extended to many, but far from all, Muslim Algerian men in 1947, but the dual electorate remained in place. The *indigénat* was abolished that same year, but the overwhelming majority sub-Saharan Africans were recognized as “citizens of the French Union” rather than citizens of France. A series of legislative measures announced other reforms—foremost among them the abolition of forced labor and the expansion of the franchise—but these were still not in full force in the early 50s.⁴⁸

The 1950s and 1960s. French colonial imperatives and European institution building collided head-on in the 1950s, which reinvigorated interest in Eurafica across the French political spectrum. Though allusions to Eurafica became increasingly common in public discourse, the term still meant different things to different people: it was variously figured as a solution to the Algerian question; a way to pay for French development efforts in sub-Saharan Africa; and a counterweight to German economic ascendancy in Western Europe and American hegemony on the world stage. Around the turn of the decade, however, with the fall of the Fourth Republic and the worsening situation in Algeria, Eurafica began to lose its appeal. By the mid-1960s,

⁴⁶ Ageron, *La Décolonisation française*: 73-77.

⁴⁷ Frederick Cooper, “Citizenship and the Politics of Difference in French Africa,” in *Empires and Boundaries: Rethinking Race, Class and Gender in Colonial Settings* (New York: Routledge, 2009); James E. Genova, “Constructing Identity in Post-War France: Citizenship, Nationality, and the Lamine Guèye Law, 1946-1953,” *The International History Review* 26 no. 1 (2004).

⁴⁸ On gender and voting rights in the empire, see Emily Lord Fransee, “Without Distinction: Gender and Suffrage in the French Empire, 1943-1962,” PhD Diss., University of Chicago, 2017.

references to Eurafrika had largely disappeared from contemporaries' discourse about France, Europe and Africa. The rapid rise and fall of Eurafrika in this period provides an instructive lens on the points of intersection of France's final attempts to perpetuate its formal colonial rule overseas and institutional advances toward European integration. An exhaustive presentation of this eventful decade would be prohibitive; in the narrative that follows, I signal key moments when colonial, European and international developments converged.

Against the backdrop of the Korean War and increased American pressure in favor of German rearmament, the six member-states of the ECSC signed a treaty in May 1952 to create an integrated European army within the European Defense Community [EDC]. The treaty stipulated that the EDC would be placed under the supervision of the chief commander of NATO, but that it would also have supranational political institutions and therefore bring about a European Political Community [EPC]. France's European partners quickly ratified the treaty, but the EDC and the EPC sparked vehement debate in France. Gaullists denounced supranational European institutions as an unacceptable infringement on French sovereignty; members of all parties remained hostile to German rearmament under any circumstances. The debate became centered on *colonial* issues, however, once prominent Christian Democrat Pierre-Henri Teitgen proposed including France's overseas territories in the EDC/EPC later that summer. We have already seen how prominent Gaullist Michel Debré opposed the project on colonial grounds, but Debré's position transcended traditional party politics. Socialist Vincent Auriol, then president of the French Union, considered the EPC a dangerous forum for anticolonial nationalists and indigenous claim making.⁴⁹ In a bitter rhetorical twist, socialist and Gaullist *anticédistes* alike

⁴⁹ Montarsolo, *L'Eurafrique*: 148.

publicly denounced the project as antidemocratic, amounting to the subjection of the populations of Greater France to new forms of a distinctly “European colonialism” or “supracolonialism.”⁵⁰

Amidst the debate over the EDC, the French military position in Indochina was deteriorating. The death knell for French Indochina came on 7 May 1954 with the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu, and this latest humiliation affected support for the EDC. European integration had been embraced as a means of staving off France’s loss of international prestige; in the wake of Dien Bien Phu, participation in the European project now appeared to many as a total renunciation of French power overseas.⁵¹ That August, the National Assembly rejected the treaty instituting the EDC by some sixty votes. Three months later, violence broke out in Algeria.

The deepening crisis in Algeria colored French leaders’ perception of the rapid succession of events that followed. In 1955, Nehru, Nasser, Sukarno and Zhou Enlai brought together representatives of 29 Asian and African countries at the Bandung Conference in an attempt to unite the colonial world as a force on the international stage.⁵² Discussions of the status of Algeria at that forum reinforced the French impression that Nasser was largely behind the unrest in Algeria, an impression that ultimately led to the disastrous Suez expedition in October 1956. Though technically a joint French-British-Israeli action, historians agree that the French were the prime movers in the operation.⁵³ The British and Israelis, moreover, quickly aborted the mission in the face of overwhelming American pressure. The sense that France had been abandoned by its Anglo-American allies reinvigorated French participation in the European

⁵⁰ Ibid.: 152-157.

⁵¹ Denise Artaud, “France between the Indochina War and the European Defense Community” in Kaplan, Artaud, Rubin, eds., *Dien Bien Phu and the Crisis of Franco-American Relations, 1954-1955* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1990): 258.

⁵² For some of the best recent work on Bandung, see Christopher J. Lee, ed. *Making a World After Empire: The Bandung Moment and Its Political Afterlives* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2010).

⁵³ Wm. Roger Louis and Roger Owen, eds., *Suez 1956. The Crisis and Its Consequences* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).

project, strengthening its Franco-German axis. On the day the expedition was recalled, German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer reportedly reassured French socialist prime minister Guy Mollet, chief architect of the invasion, “Europe will be your revenge.”⁵⁴

Adenauer’s comment is often cited to signal a major shift in French geostrategy—just as the Suez fiasco is invoked more broadly as marking the definitive end of French (and British) pretensions to world-power status.⁵⁵ But the humiliation of another botched military operation further entrenched the French in the Algerian War. The post-Suez acceleration of European integration, moreover, did not mean that France had given up on the French Union. To the contrary, the French demanded the full inclusion of its African territories in the Common Market and Euratom during the negotiations of the Treaty of Rome (1956-1957).⁵⁶ That this became a *sina qua non* of French participation in the EEC demonstrates that powerful segments of the French leadership still refused to see the French Union and Europe as an either/or proposition. France’s European partners were forced to accept the principle of association; the Rome Treaty effectively created a “Eurafrican” free-trade zone and guaranteed the associated territories European development aid.⁵⁷ Under these favorable terms, the French actually envisioned the Common Market as an *incentive* for its African territories to retain their affiliation with France.⁵⁸

To some observers, Eurafrika was beginning to materialize in the institutional framework laid out in the Treaty of Rome and would continue to expand with time. But counter-tendencies were also emerging. In March 1956, France recognized Tunisia and Morocco as independent

⁵⁴ Maurice Vaïsse, “Post-Suez France,” in *ibid*: 336-337.

⁵⁵ Roger and Owen, eds., *Suez 1956*.

⁵⁶ Pierre Guillen, “L’avenir de l’Union française dans la négociation des traités de Rome,” *Relations internationales* 57 (Spring 1989); Rik Schreurs, “L’Eurafrrique dans les négociations du Traité de Rome, 1956-1957,” *Politique africaine* 49 (1993).

⁵⁷ This laid the groundwork for European development programs. See Véronique Dimier, *The Invention of a European Development Aid Bureaucracy: Recycling Empire* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2014).

⁵⁸ Irwin Wall, *France, the United States and the Algerian War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001): 63.

states in an effort to staunch the violence spreading across French North Africa. Three months later the so-called “Framework Law” (*loi cadre*) granted unprecedented autonomy to local assemblies in French sub-Saharan Africa. The *loi cadre* devolved responsibility for financing social programs and development projects to territorial governments based on local taxes, as French leaders balked at mounting African demands for the same social rights and entitlements enjoyed by their metropolitan counterparts.⁵⁹ Just five months after the Rome Treaty came into effect, French generals staged a *coup d'état* in Algiers (13 May 1958) that precipitated the dissolution of the French government and Charles de Gaulle’s return to power.

Thus in 1958, the discredited Fourth Republic was replaced by the Fifth, the latter distinguished by a strong president elected through direct suffrage. The French Union became the “French Community,” of which each overseas territory (excluding Algeria) had the option to opt out by popular referendum. Only the people of Guinée voted against remaining in the Community in 1958, but by 1960, every territory in the French African Federations, as well as Madagascar, Togo and Cameroon, had become independent states. The Algerian War lasted another two years until a ceasefire was negotiated in March 1962, which rapidly translated into full Algerian independence. At that point, what had once been a transcontinental agglomeration of 110,000,000 people was reduced to metropolitan France—“the Hexagon”—and a smattering of small islands in the Caribbean and the Pacific and Indian Oceans.

France nonetheless intended to retain privileged political, economic and cultural relations with its former African colonies, and institutional Europe initially remained one strategy for achieving that goal. In July 1963, the Yaoundé Convention reaffirmed the principles of

⁵⁹ Tony Chafer, *The End of Empire in French West Africa: France’s Successful Decolonization?* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2002); Cooper, “Citizenship and the Politics of Difference”; Mann, *Native Sons*.

association first laid out in the Rome Treaty and renewed European development programs.⁶⁰ However as the political and economic situation in postcolonial African states deteriorated in the 1960s, interest in maintaining the institutional forms Eurafrika had already assumed began to wane. The Lomé Convention of 1974 eroded the privileged formal association between francophone African countries and the EEC, as European trade and development policies broadened their scope beyond the former French colonial world.⁶¹

National French development aid mirrored the European pattern: in 1966, de Gaulle promised more than four billion francs to Mexico, Spain, Iran, Greece, Ethiopia, Turkey and Pakistan, while the French “cooperation” budget—aid to its former colonies—was slashed in half.⁶² Cooperation aid was subsequently negotiated in bilateral agreements between France and postcolonial African governments. Though some African leaders championed this approach—what Ivorian president Félix Houphouët-Boigny approvingly called *Françafrique*—bilateralism severely weakened the bargaining position of postcolonial African states. Their autonomy was circumscribed in neocolonial relations of dependence as the French government continued to intervene in matters of military, political, and monetary policy.⁶³ Africanist Tony Chafer suggests that the establishment of the University of Dakar on the eve of independence performed a crucial function in this process: French-language higher education, he argues, ensured that

⁶⁰ Véronique Dimier, “Bringing the Neo-Patrimonial State back to Europe: French Decolonization and the Making of European Development Aid Policy,” *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 48 (2008).

⁶¹ Montarolo, *Eurafrique*.

⁶² Gérard Bossuat, “French Development Aid and Cooperation under de Gaulle” *Contemporary European History*, Special Issue: “Europe and the First Development Decade” (November 2003): 446-447.

⁶³ Guia Migani, *La France et l’Afrique sub-saharienne, 1957-1963: Histoire d’une décolonisation entre idéaux eurafricains et politique de puissance* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2008); Ankie Hoogvelt, *Globalization and the Postcolonial World: the New Political Economy of Development* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997); Robert H. Jackson, *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

francophone African elites would remain oriented toward France.⁶⁴ With the political and institutional mechanisms of Greater France and Eurafrika gutted, the promotion of French culture overseas took on new meanings and assumed different forms. The first international conference celebrating *la francophonie* was held in Niamey, capital of Niger, in 1969, opening a new chapter in Franco-African relations.⁶⁵

France, Africa and United Europe in the Social Sciences

The historical narrative I have presented here straddles distinct historiographies and disciplinary divides that share few lines of communication. The literatures on decolonization and the construction of Europe in particular lack sustained engagement with one another. That has begun to change in the past ten years with the transnational and global “turns” in the social sciences, which have spurred an emerging new field of research on Eurafrika in the postwar period.⁶⁶ This specialized literature offers an invaluable point of departure for thinking about postwar empire and European unity together, but its scope remains narrowly fixed on high politics, international relations, and economic institutional arrangements, which are, in turn, primarily conceived in terms of rational interests, geostrategy, and party politics. The cultural and civilizational frameworks that shaped contemporaries’ ideas, methods and goals in these negotiations have been largely ignored, as have any transformations these frameworks may have undergone as a result of the conjunction of the processes of colonial reforms, decolonization, and European integration.⁶⁷ In the analytical review that follows, I propose a two-pronged focus on shifting

⁶⁴ Chafer, *France’s Successful Decolonization?*

⁶⁵ M. Guillou, *Francophonie-puissance* (Paris: Ellipses, 2005).

⁶⁶ See Introduction, note 7.

⁶⁷ Matthew Connelly’s work is an important exception, which I discuss below. Cultural and civilizational questions do, however, figure in examinations of *Eurafrique* in the interwar and Vichy periods. See Ageron’s “L’idée d’Eurafrique” and Blanchard and Boëtsch, “La France de Pétain et l’Afrique.”

cultural frames and worldviews at the interstices of united Europe and postwar empire, as both determining factors in French policy toward its overseas territories and the construction of Europe, and as an overlooked terrain in which those policies and their repercussions were played out.

Europe. The marginal place of the dissolution of France's and other European empires in literature on postwar European reconstruction and integration is particularly striking given the literature's impressive breadth, bridging multiple disciplines and methodologies, temporalities and topics.⁶⁸ Several heuristic distinctions may be useful here to sketch the contours of this vast field. First, a distinction is drawn between "postwar" and "contemporary" Europe, typically demarcated by 1989 and the end of the Cold War.⁶⁹ This periodization privileges an East/West framework, in which the dynamics of the Cold War are construed as *the* defining features of the age—an approach that has compellingly been called into question by international historians for more than a decade (see below). I use the term "postwar" more narrowly in time to designate the roughly two decades following the Second World War when the after-effects of the war continued to be a significant factor in major historical developments.⁷⁰

It is important to distinguish between "postwar" and "contemporary" Europe because current issues in European society, politics, and institutional arrangements have proved more

⁶⁸ It should, however, be noted that two of the most prominent French historians of the construction of Europe, René Girault and Gérard Bossuat, have each written important articles on French-African relations in the context of a unifying Europe. See Girault, "La France entre l'Europe et l'Afrique" in *Il Rilancio dell'Europa e I trattati di Roma*, sous dir. Enrico Serra (Nomos, 1989) and Bossuat, "French Development Aid." They have not, however, incorporated these or related issues into their other works that sketch the overarching narratives of the construction of Europe, particularly regarding European identity formation. See Girault, *Identités* and Bossuat in Frank, *Les identités européennes*.

⁶⁹ Judt, *Postwar*; Anthony Giddens, *Europe in the global age* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2007); Jan Zielonka, *Europe as Empire: The Nature of the Enlarged European Union* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

⁷⁰ That said, I do use the term in order to signal the overarching significance of the WWII.

influential in shaping research agendas on postwar European integration than historical ones. These contemporary concerns include the establishment of a principled basis for European citizenship,⁷¹ the EU's "democratic deficit" and the elitism of EU institutions,⁷² the future of the "European Social Model,"⁷³ European enlargement,⁷⁴ and interlocking debates on immigration, multiculturalism and "European identity."⁷⁵

This marked presentist orientation in the sociological, economic, anthropological, and political science literatures is understandable and to be expected given their disciplinary methodologies, but it is problematic for historians, especially since most of the scholarship on European integration comes from these other disciplines. As early communal European institutions and agreements have now been superseded, reconfigured, or, in some cases, never really got off the ground in the first place, there has been a tendency to downplay the importance of European institutional developments in the 1940s and 1950s in forging a veritable supranational European political culture or influencing national politics and cultural debates in the original member-states of the EEC. It is unquestionably true that the "Europeanization" of key institutions (currency, law, broadcast and print media) and more robust European social and cultural policymaking did not gain force until the 1980s and 1990s,⁷⁶ and we should be careful

⁷¹ Etienne Balibar, *We the people of Europe? Reflections on transnational citizenship* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995); Girault, *Identités*; Frank, *Les identités européennes*.

⁷² Ulf Hedetoft, ed., *Political Symbols, Symbolic Politics: European Identities in Transformation* (Brookfield: Ashgate, 1998); Douglas R. Holmes, *Integral Europe: Fast-Capitalism, Multiculturalism, Neofascism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

⁷³ C-U. Schierup, Peo Hansen and Stephen Castles, *Migration, Citizenship, and the European Welfare State: A European Dilemma* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

⁷⁴ Berezin, Mabel, and Schain. *Europe without borders: remapping territory, citizenship and identity in a transnational age* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003).

⁷⁵ Aleida Assmann, "Europe: A Community of Memory?" *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute* (Spring 2007); Gérard Bossuat, "Des lieux de mémoire pour l'Europe unie," *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire* 61 (January-March, 1999).

⁷⁶ Kevin Featherstone and C.M. Radaelli, eds. *The Politics of Europeanization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Therborn, *European Modernity*; Gillingham, *European Integration*; Poulot, "Le

not to take the form united Europe ultimately took for granted. However, there is a danger in taking anti-teleological postures too far.

Sociologist and theorist Anthony Giddens, for instance, notes a marked indifference to the creation of the EEC in a 1961 book by world traveler John Gunther, a 600+ page tome in which the EEC took up a scant four pages. Giddens extrapolates from this anecdote that contemporaries viewed the EEC as a potentially interesting but ultimately marginal development.⁷⁷ Current work on European cultural policy reinforces this impression; anthropologist Cris Shore construes the Euro-federalists' interest in cultural issues as little more than a belated afterthought, which he dates to the 1980s.⁷⁸ And yet, the EEC became a flashpoint for intense political, economic *and* cultural debate precisely because of the possibilities and constraints it created regarding overseas France. As we shall see in subsequent chapters, an activist cultural platform was a central plank of the pro-Europe movements since their inception, which is part and parcel of what made the stakes of French participation in the EEC so high in the first place. Thus by honing in on the *interaction* between early European developments and the realities of postwar empire, an entirely different picture emerges of the historical significance of early European integration.

A second challenge relating to the presentist orientation in the literature comes from within the discipline of history itself and European historians' close ties to EU institutions. That closeness in the present has shaped research on the past. In 1982, the European Commission convened a colloquium in Luxembourg to promote research on the construction of Europe,

patrimoine culturel.” For France, see Drake, *French Relations*; Michel Gueldry, *France and European integration: towards a transnational polity?* (Westport: Praeger, 2001); Alain Guyomarch et al., eds., *France in the European Union* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998).

⁷⁷ Giddens, *Europe in a global age*: 199.

⁷⁸ Cris Shore “Inventing the ‘People’s Europe’: Critical Approaches to European Community ‘Cultural Policy,’” *Man* 28 (1993). Even Oriane Calligaro’s promisingly titled, *Negotiating Europe: EU Notions of Europeanness since the 1950s* (Palgrave, 2013), focuses on the 1960s and beyond.

which resulted in the establishment of the Groupe de liaison des professeurs d'histoire contemporaine auprès de la Commission des Communautés européennes. Since that time, French historians of Europe and their colleagues across the European Community/Union have become a significant instrument in the very process they study. Their research agendas have become institutionalized within the European framework, as have their venues for collaboration: the Groupe de liaison publishes a trilingual journal, *The Journal of European Integration*, and has regularly organized conferences since 1984.⁷⁹

A recent historiographical review of the literature on the construction of Europe characterizes the work of this transnational team of historians as “indispensable reading.”⁸⁰ And this is true in many ways. Most European scholarship now available and underway is authored by historians who belong to or maintain close ties with this group and/or others like it. Without this literature we would know drastically less about the history of European integration. Yet the extraordinary interpenetration of European institutions and the academic researchers who study them require disentangling the *ongoing* cultural politics of European integration and the production of historical knowledge about that process. Much of the current research on European institutions comes from work produced at the European University Institute in Florence—an institution that is the fruit of calls for the creation of a “European university” that date to the immediate postwar years and that are an object of study in this dissertation. Recently, prominent

⁷⁹ Guieu et al, *Penser et construire*: 21. The authors *do not* problematize this; their label, “the Birth of a Europe of historians of European integration,” is not ironic. Michael Geyer has derisively written off the EU funded cottage industry that is EU Studies. See his “The Subject(s) of Europe,” in Konrad Jarasch and Thomas Lindenberger, *Conflicted Memories: Europeanizing Contemporary Histories* (Oxford and New York: Berghahn Books, 2007).

⁸⁰ Ibid: 21.

French historian Michel Dumoulin was commissioned by the European Commission to organize a research team on the history of...the European Commission!⁸¹

Such studies are often useful resources, but one must confront their dual character as sources. This issue is common to any study in which the production of historical knowledge is itself an object of analysis, and contemporary historians are not blind to this fact. Indeed, the trope of a “Europe of Historians” runs throughout the literature on European identity.⁸² Scholars working on these themes are consciously aware that though the emergence of robust European political identities or a veritable European public sphere has remained elusive, the historical profession is one social milieu that seems to have been successfully “Europeanized.”⁸³ Many historians of the construction of Europe—particularly the top French scholars in the field, René Girault, Gérard Bossuat and Robert Frank—reveal through their tone and arguments that they are in fact ardent *partisans* of the European project. Their analyses are presented alongside endorsements of precisely the kinds of initiatives this dissertation examines: coordination in education policy, the promotion of “European holidays” and “European research.”⁸⁴ Italian historian Antonio Varsovi’s assertion that “Europe has the right to have its own history and its own identity” which “must be discovered in European history,” could have been taken straight out of the pamphlet literature of the European Movement in the 40s and 50s.⁸⁵

⁸¹ These findings were collected and published in 2007 as *La Commission européenne (1958-1972). Histoire et mémoires d'une institution*. Hansen and Jonsson make similar observations about the problematic nature of professional historians’ involvement with EU institutions in their *Eurafrica*, *op cit*.

⁸² Assmann, “Europe”; Bossuat, “mémoire”; Girault, *Identité*; Frank, *Les identités*.

⁸³ Brunello Vigezzi, “Histoire et historiens de l’Europe au XXe siècle” in Frank, *op cit*.

⁸⁴ Bossuat, “Des lieux de mémoire”: 64. Bossuat sounds exactly like the European activists who populate this dissertation: “Don’t we see that nation-states are too weak for the 21st century? This reality should be recognized by a European holiday when each head of state would present himself, as Mitterrand did before the European Parliament, ‘I, a European of France’” (67).

⁸⁵ Varsovi, “Les mers, frontières de l’Europe et leur rôle dans la formation de l’identité européenne,” in Girault, *Identité*: 166.

Yet as scholars working outside these tight-knit networks have suggested, rooting European identity and European citizenship in a common culture and shared past is out of step with social realities in contemporary Europe.⁸⁶ Such a move would be exclusionary *a priori*, and would, as Michel Debré forewarned over 60 years ago, undermine the claims of millions of women and men whose membership in a European *national* community may have been legally recognized in the postwar era. As anthropologist Talal Asad has shown, this is precisely the bind Muslims face in contemporary Europe.⁸⁷

The issue of European identity opens up onto another important fissure in the Europe literature between research on the political and institutional construction of Europe on the one hand, and work on the increasing convergence of European societies on the other. Political scientist Kevin Featherstone observes that these distinct historical processes are often confusingly lumped together in the notion “Europeanization.” He usefully distinguishes between minimalist and maximalist senses of this term: the minimalist sense denotes responses and national adaptations to the policies of European Union, while the maximalist usage designates “the diffusion of cultural norms, ideas, identities, and patterns of behavior on a cross-national basis within Europe.”⁸⁸ In its maximalist sense, then, “Europeanization” implies processes of both structural change and transnational cultural diffusion in which the life-worlds of populations in different European contexts become more alike and more closely identified with “Europe.” In this vein, sociologist Göran Therborn argues that as European demographic and sociological

⁸⁶ Etienne Balibar has evoked “the specter of apartheid” being formed at the same time as European citizenship in his *We the people*: 9. Balibar calls for a new model of citizenship based on shared political and social principles and objectives, as opposed to ethno-cultural values. I discuss this at greater length in the Epilogue.

⁸⁷ Talal Asad, “Muslims as a ‘Religious Minority’ in Europe,” in his *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam and Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003).

⁸⁸ Featherstone, “Introduction: In the Name of ‘Europe,’” in *Politics*: 3-7.

trends have converged—rising incomes and ageing populations, for example—the “distance to neighboring Africa and Asia has become more pronounced.”⁸⁹

Cultural historian Victoria De Grazia makes a similar point. She also detects a marked process of social leveling and cultural homogenization across European societies; however, she attributes this phenomenon to the methodical and unrelenting spread of American consumer culture across twentieth-century Europe. De Grazia argues that the logic of the market weakened older forms of European social relations and was instrumental in forging a “cross-Atlantic civilization in the making,” which she provocatively calls the “White Atlantic.” The conceptual vocabulary of the market principle, particularly the “standard of living” concept, De Grazia suggests, hitched Western Europe to the American model, detaching it from the “Third World” and fostering a new “way of life racism.”⁹⁰ Unfortunately, De Grazia does not deploy these concepts in the substantive chapters of her study; they remain tantalizing but ultimately undeveloped bookends to her analysis.

Nevertheless, the notions of a postwar “White Atlantic” and an emerging “way of life racism” are suggestive of the critical interplay between the end of empire, European unification, and American hegemony in world affairs. These notions are also important correctives to another trend in the Europe literature that frames the European project as a reflection of diminished European cultural chauvinism, racism, and virulent nationalism. Indeed, German historian Helmut Kaelble asserts that the collapse of European hegemony in the aftermath of the Second World War and the decolonizations that followed led to the end of Eurocentrism and European nationalisms. He identifies this newfound European “modesty,” in turn, as a key dimension of

⁸⁹ Therborn, *European Modernity*: 38.

⁹⁰ Victoria De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance Through 20th-Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, Harvard University Press, 2005): 11-13; 351.

cultural homogenization in postwar Europe.⁹¹ And yet, the notion that Eurocentrism disappeared along with European empires is complicated—if not wholly contradicted—by the history of European ideas, projects and relations with Africa from the late 1940s until the present day. The research in this dissertation reveals, moreover, that colonialism was a repeated *referent* in calls for European unity and provided a crucial basis for conceptions of European civilization and a common European culture throughout the 40s and 50s, which was then repackaged as a unique European vocation for “international development” in the 1960s and beyond.⁹²

This triumphalist portrait of a truly “postcolonial” Europe is now being called into question by the growing interdisciplinary field of Black European Studies, which includes exciting historical research from scholars on both sides of the Atlantic.⁹³ This new research agenda poses a set of interrelated questions that also animate this dissertation: What/where is Europe? Who is black in Europe and who is Black European? What are the politics of Black Europe? And how do responses to these questions vary over time, from one national European context to the next, and transnationally across the EU? Despite the pronounced transnational orientation of the field, most of its historical monographs remain nationally bounded.⁹⁴ Only

⁹¹ Kaelble, “L’Europe ‘vécue’ et l’Europe ‘pensée’ au XXe siècle,” in Girault, *Identité*: 39.

⁹² Dimier, “Bringing the Neo-Patrimonial State Back to Europe.”

⁹³ For a good introduction, see Darlene Clark Hine, Trica Danielle Keaton and Stephen Small, eds., *Black Europe and the African Diaspora* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009) and Eve Rosenhaft and Robbie Aitken, eds., *Africa in Europe: Studies in Transnational Practice in the Long Twentieth Century* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013).

⁹⁴ Work on Black Britain dates to the 1970s, but a recent burst of new monographs is part of the upsurge of interest in “Black Europe.” See Kennatta Perry, *London is the Place for Me: Black Britons, Citizenship and the Politics of Race* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); Marc Matera, *Black London: the Imperial Metropolis and Decolonization in the Twentieth Century* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015); Jacqueline Brown, *Dropping Anchor, Setting Sail: Geographies of Race in Black Liverpool* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005). I discuss the much smaller literature on “Black France” in the next section. Despite its comparatively small black population, Germany has been at the center of this burgeoning field. See Robbie Aitken and Eve Rosenhaft, *Black Germany: the Making and Unmaking of a Diaspora Community, 1884-1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Patricia Mazon and Reinhild Steingrover, eds. *Not So Plain as Black and White: Afro-German Culture and History, 1890-2000* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2009); Mischa Honeck et al., *Germany and the Black*

works on post-Maastricht Europe, typically from scholars outside of the historical discipline, approach the issue of blackness in Europe in explicitly “postnational” terms.⁹⁵ By tracing clashes between understandings of blackness and European postnationality to the postwar period, this dissertation adds historical depth to this thread in the Black Europe literature.

Postwar Colonialism, Colonial Reform and Decolonization. Scholarly interest in the history of colonialism came late in France, but the past two decades have seen an outpouring of French- and English-language scholarship on colonial topics.⁹⁶ There is now a vast body of work that recuperates the colonial dimension of issues central to postwar French history that had hitherto been buried or ignored: economic and technological modernization, national identity, immigration, multiculturalism, art and literature, republican secularism, among others.⁹⁷ This work demonstrates that colonial and postcolonial issues cannot be abstracted from the major

Diaspora: Points of Contact, 1250-1914 (New York: Berghan, 2013); Tina Campt, *Other Germans: Black Germans and the Politics of Race, Gender and Memory in the Third Reich* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009); Heide Fehrenbach, Geoff Eley, Rita Chin, *After the Nazi Racial State: Difference and Democracy in Germany and Europe* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009).

⁹⁵ See for instance critical theorist Fatima El-Tayeb’s *European Others: Queering Ethnicity in Postnational Europe* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011): Introduction. Though an historian, Geoff Eley’s chapter, “The Trouble with ‘Race,’ : Migrancy, Cultural Difference and the Remaking of Europe,” in *After the Nazi Racial State*, begins after the Iraq War.

⁹⁶ Indeed, this literature has become too vast to outline in full here. For an overview see Robert Aldrich, *Greater France: a History of French Overseas Expansion* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1996). For classic works on the nineteenth century, see Alice Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa, 1895-1930* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997); Patricia Lorcin, *Imperial Identities: Prejudice and Race in Colonial Algeria* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 1999). For the first half of the twentieth century, see Wilder, *The French Imperial Nation-State*; Eric Jennings, *Vichy in the Tropics* and *La France Libre*.

⁹⁷ Noticeably absent from this list is the construction of Europe. On modernization, see Kristin Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies: Decolonization and the Reordering of French Culture* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995). On multiculturalism, see Herman Lebovics, *Bringing the Empire Back Home: France in the Global Age* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004); Paul Silverstein, *Algeria in France: Transpolitics, Race and Nation*; Tyler Stoval and Sue Peabody, *The Color of Liberty: Histories of Race in France* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003); Maxim Silverman, *Deconstructing the Nation: Immigration, Racism and Citizenship in Modern France* (London: Routledge, 1992); Jean-Loup Amselle, *Affirmative Exclusion: Cultural Pluralism and the Rule of Custom in France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003).

narratives of modern French history. These insights have penetrated historical surveys, indicating that what was once a branch of specialist knowledge is indeed transforming more general conceptions of recent French history and contemporary France.⁹⁸

The literature on postwar French colonialism remains comparatively thin, however, often presented as part of the decolonization narrative rather than being analyzed in its own right.⁹⁹ This is especially the case for the reform and ultimate collapse of French colonial rule in sub-Saharan Africa, which has been overshadowed in both the French- and English-language scholarship by a persistent preoccupation with the violent ends of empire in Algeria and Indochina. Frederick Cooper has identified a parallel lack of interest in the middle years of the twentieth century in the African historiography. There is a tendency to draw causal relationships between the overtly racist colonial policies of the 1920s and 30s and the authoritarian politics and ethnic strife in Africa in the 1980s onward, without considering African political mobilizations and the “explosion of citizenship” in French colonial Africa in the 1940s and 1950s.¹⁰⁰ By skipping over these crucial intervening years, he argues, we miss the *politics* and the *process* of decolonization—the “possibilities and constraints”—which shaped the contours of postcolonial African states and political cultures as much if not more so than earlier colonial regimes.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ Michelle Zancarini-Fournel and Christian Delacroix, *La France du temps présent, 1945-2005* (Paris: Editions Belin, 2010).

⁹⁹ Pascal Cauchy, et al, eds. *La quatrième république et l’outre-mer français: Actes du colloque tenu au Centre d’histoire de Science Po, les 29 et 30 novembre 2007* (Paris: Société Française d’Histoire d’Outre-mer, 2009); Cooper, *Citizenship Between Empire and Nation*; Wilder, *Freedom Time*.

¹⁰⁰ Cooper, *Colonialism in Question*: 17-18.

¹⁰¹ This is a pitfall of the analytic purchase of the term ‘postcolonial,’ whose ‘post-’ structure indicates that the significance lies in some static conception of ‘the colonial’ without any way of recognizing the ways in which ‘the colonial’ was being transformed by the process that led to its end. I employ the term in a more capacious sense, to denote ‘after colonialism’ but also ‘after the process of decolonization,’ which had its own dynamics and consequences.

I suggest the same may be said for France itself. Though French territorial boundaries were dramatically redrawn in the wake of decolonization, subtler transformations in French politics and culture were determined more by the way in which the process of decolonization unfolded than the sheer fact of independence for France's former colonies. Todd Shepard's work on Algeria provides an illustrative example.¹⁰² He argues that the experience of the Algerian War and the rhetoric contemporaries used to comprehend that experience closed off more fluid notions of France and what it meant to be French. The naturalization of decolonization in rhetorical figures like a "wave," the "winds of change" or the "Tide of History" made it seem like common sense that Algerians—whether in France or in Algeria—were not and could never be French, even though the difficulty of explaining or making policy based on this supposedly obvious premise was what had made it so hard for French policymakers and the public at large to even consider the possibility of Algerian independence in the 1950s. Cooper echoes this argument and takes it a step further in his provocative assertion that France—long considered the first nation-state—did not in fact become a nation-state until Algerian independence in 1962.¹⁰³

Cooper's and Shepard's focus on the explanatory power of decolonization as a *process* is an important corrective to past historiographical practice. However, we must be sensitive to the blind spots that such an approach can produce—one can easily slip from emphasizing contingency to lamenting lost opportunities, and from there to various degrees of colonial apologetics. Shepard ultimately falls into this trap: in his quest to present the hardening of racial-religious boundaries as a consequence of the Algerian War, he elides the way racial and religious concerns mediated the whole series of events that led up to independence. Indeed, he goes so far as to assert—contrary to a vast literature that has established the importance of racial and

¹⁰² Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006).

¹⁰³ Cooper, *Colonialism in Question*: 22.

religious lines of demarcation in French colonial rule—that prior to 1962, “Algerian Muslim” was a mere legal category, a juridical status that had nothing to do with race or religion.¹⁰⁴

Naomi Davidson’s work in particular, which shows that the racialization of Algerian Muslims in France was an active, sustained process that developed over the course of the twentieth century, challenges that assertion.¹⁰⁵ Shepard could have acknowledged the importance of racial and religious difference in the history of French colonialism *and* the ways in which those conceptions were transformed in the run-up to independence. Instead he staked out a maximalist view that undermines his otherwise nuanced and compelling analysis.

The normative stance just below the surface of Shepard’s claim—that things were not so bad and were in fact moving in the right direction—speaks to two key debates in the decolonization literature: was decolonization a “success” and if so, a success for whom? Given the breadth of the field—countless articles, monographs, colloquia and edited volumes have appeared in just the last decade—it is no wonder that there is no consensus about such a fundamental issue as periodization, let alone the weightier interpretative questions of causation and normative evaluation.¹⁰⁶ One can detect, however, clear patterns in the way each of these issues are handled according to an author’s discipline, intellectual and biographical perspective, and preferred methodology.

¹⁰⁴ This formulation exculpates 130 years of French colonialism in Algeria as having nothing to do with race. Clifford Rosenberg makes a similar argument that police surveillance of Algerian Muslims in interwar Paris was based on their legal status as “colonial subjects” rather than race or religion, though the basis of that status was conceptions of racial and religious difference. See his *Policing Paris*.

¹⁰⁵ Naomi Davidson, *Only Muslim: Embodying Islam in Twentieth-Century France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012).

¹⁰⁶ Chafer, *End of Empire*; David Le Sueur, *Uncivil war: intellectuals and identity politics during the decolonization of Algeria* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001); Marie Demker, *Colonial Power and National Identity. Pierre Mendès France and the History of Decolonization*. (Santérus Academic Press Sweden, 2008); *Décolonisation, Décolonisations*, sous dir. Christine Lévisse Touzé et Romain H. Rainero (Editions Mémoires de Caen, 2002); Alexandre Gerbi, ed. *Décolonisations de l’Afrique ex-française. Enjeux pour l’Afrique et la France d’aujourd’hui*. (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2010). For a comparative history of decolonization, see Martin Thomas, B. Moore, L.J. Butler, *Crises of Empire: Decolonization and Europe’s Imperial States, 1918-1975* (London: Hodder Education, 2008).

French historians who write about colonial reform and decolonization tend to focus on metropolitan party politics, the role of French business milieus in shaping postwar colonial policy,¹⁰⁷ the role of Christian churches and intellectuals in the spread of anticolonial sentiment in the metropole,¹⁰⁸ and the personal role of Charles de Gaulle¹⁰⁹ in shepherding French decolonization to what most consider, if not a “happy ending,” at least an acceptable and necessary one.¹¹⁰ Though a handful of French researchers consider international factors such as the role of the United Nations, the influence of the United States, the Cold War and the increasing importance of international public opinion—which they tellingly refer to as “outside forces”—they ultimately conclude that the explanatory power of these factors has been severely overestimated, particularly with regard to sub-Saharan Africa.¹¹¹ French historians of both France and Africa also consider the role of African political parties and African leaders, though they tend to frame their analyses of African political mobilization in reference to metropolitan

¹⁰⁷ On political parties, see Danièle Domergue-Cloarec, “Le soutien de l’UDSR et de la SFIO aux partis politiques d’Afrique occidentale française (1951-1958)” in *L’Afrique noire française*. On French colonial business milieus, see Catherine Hodeir, *Stratégies d’Empire. Le grand patronat colonial face à la décolonisation* (Paris: Belin, 2003) and Jacques Marseille’s classic, *Empire colonial et capitalisme français, Histoire d’un divorce* (Paris, Albin Michel, 1984).

¹⁰⁸ Ageron, *La décolonisation française*; Claude Prudhomme, “Les Églises chrétiennes et la décolonisation” in *Décolonisation, Décolonisations*.

¹⁰⁹ Ageron, “De Gaulle et les indépendances des Etats d’Afrique noire et de Madagascar,” in Ageron and Michel, *L’Afrique noire française*; Ageron, *La décolonisation française*.

¹¹⁰ This is the tone struck by Ageron, a pioneer in French academic writing on colonialism and decolonization (whose thesis advisor Charles-André Julien was a representative in the Assembly of the French Union throughout the period under discussion in this dissertation). See Ageron’s “Les racines intérieures de la décolonisation” in *Décolonisation, Décolonisations*; his *La décolonisation française* as well as his contributions in Ageron and Michel, *L’Afrique noire française*. Though he acknowledges that decolonization was “painful” for repatriates and exiles, he puts forth the classic cynical view African intellectuals attribute to Europeans: “When we think about the expense and responsibilities of European metropolises and the wars without end that would produce a continuous stream of immigrants and refugees, we cannot but help thinking that the metropolises were also liberated by decolonization.”

¹¹¹ Marc Michel, “Les aspects internationaux de la décolonisation,” in *Décolonisation, Décolonisations*; René Girault, “Les indépendances des pays d’Afrique noire dans les relations internationales,” and Pierre Mélandri, “Les Etats-Unis et les indépendances africaines,” in Robert and Michel, eds., *L’Afrique noire française*; Ageron, *La décolonisation française*.

politics.¹¹² Thus the “Franco-French” scholarship on decolonization focuses on political, economic and intellectual developments in the metropole with little serious engagement with related developments in the international arena, and on anticolonial political mobilizations in France’s overseas territories without much consideration of related social and cultural issues in either metropolitan France or French Africa.

While some Africanists remain attached to triumphalist narratives of anticolonial resistance and national liberation, most African historians and intellectuals have progressively moved away from the nationalist historiography of the immediate post-Independence years.¹¹³ Independence and decolonization are increasingly seen as reckless abandonment on the part of the French—national sovereignty a disastrous imposition rather than the goal of African activists in the 1940s and 1950s.¹¹⁴ This position aligns with Cooper’s caution not to read the nation back into the narrative of African political mobilizations during this era of “imperial citizenship,” particularly as African leaders like Léopold Sédar Senghor, Modibo Keita (French Soudan/Mali) and Léon M’ba (Gabon) continued to push for federalist alternatives to national sovereignty, whether with France or other African states.¹¹⁵ In a similar vein, Cooper proposes reading Guinée’s historic “Non,” not as an unconditional refusal to remain in an institutional community with France, but rather as a refusal to do so without some modicum of input as to the terms of French-African relations within that larger communal structure. The upshot of this interpretation is not that things could have gone differently. Rather, by recuperating the real sense of possibility for contemporaries, we may see their successes and failures in a different light.

¹¹² Catherine Atlan, “Les leaders politiques de l’Afrique noire française et la décolonisation,” in *Décolonisation, Décolonisations*; J-R de Benoist, “L’évolution des partis fédéraux (RDA, PRA, PFA) vers l’indépendance (1957-1960)” in Robert and Michel, *L’Afrique noire française*.

¹¹³ For an excellent overview of these historiographical trends, see Cooper, “The Rise, Fall and Rise of Colonial Studies,” in *Colonialism in Question*.

¹¹⁴ Gerbi, *Décolonisations de l’Afrique ex-française*; Cooper, *Citizenship*; Wilder, *Freedom Time*.

¹¹⁵ Cooper, *Citizenship*; Wilder, *Freedom Time*.

Throughout this thesis, I argue that revisiting those successes and failures help illuminate the dynamics of postwar racial politics. Exactly how race worked in postwar Greater France and how it was reworked in the process of decolonization remains curiously understudied. Even as a growing body of work has broken entrenched French taboos about engaging questions of race, the extant literature follows the broader pattern in French colonial studies that privileges the nineteenth century and the interwar period and then jumps ahead to the 1980s.¹¹⁶ The same tendency to downplay the significance of developments in the late 1940s and 1950s holds true for the large literature on related questions about shifting configurations of French secularism and the racialization of Islam.¹¹⁷ And yet, in the wake of Vichy, norms about race, secularism, and religious diversity had to be actively remade in postwar Greater France. That process was certainly marked by the specificities of the French national-imperial context, but as Heide Fehrenbach's work on "racial reconstruction" in postwar Germany has shown, establishing new norms about race and diversity after World War II was a transnational European phenomenon that was profoundly shaped by the preponderant role of the United States in the new international order.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ See Herrick Chapman and Laura Frader, eds., *Race in France: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Politics of Difference* (New York: Berghahn, 2004); Sue Peabody and Tyler Stovall, *The Color of Liberty: Histories of Race in France* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003). Even new work in the "Black Europe" mold holds to this periodization. In a more recent volume, Gary Wilder's essay on Senghor's postwar thought is the only essay on the 1950s. See Trica Danielle Keaton, T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting and Tyler Stovall, eds., *Black France/France Noire: the History and Politics of Blackness* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012). For a longer discussion, see my "Obscuring Race," *op cit*.

¹¹⁷ Jean Baubérot, *Laïcité 1905-2005, entre passion et raison* (Paris: Seuil, 2004); Mayanthi Fernando, *The Republic Unsettled: Muslim French and the Contradictions of Secularism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014); Joan Wallach Scott, *The Politics of the Veil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007); Trica Danielle Keaton, *Muslim Girls and the Other France. Race, Identity Politics & Social Exclusion* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006). For a noteworthy exception, see Davidson, *Only Muslim*, Chapter 5.

¹¹⁸ Fehrenbach, *Race After Hitler*. Few studies approach race in postwar France in an explicitly transnational context. Two recent exceptions focus on French involvement in UNESCO antiracism: see the Epilogue in Alice Conklin's *In The Museum of Man: Race, Anthropology and Empire in France, 1850-1950* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013) and Todd Shepard, "Algeria, France, Mexico,

International History. French relations with Europe and Africa in this period engage an array of historical processes, geographies, themes, and methodologies that crisscross the disciplines of international and European cultural history. Studies of American political and economic hegemony and cultural “Americanization” are a crucial node in the international history literature. Any examination of French relations with Europe and Africa in this period must take into consideration the preponderant role of the United States in the establishment of the postwar international system, the modernization of the metropolitan French economy, the construction of Europe,¹¹⁹ and the initial restoration and ultimate denouement of French colonial rule overseas.¹²⁰ It also has to wrestle with the nature and extent of the spread of American culture in France and across Western Europe, with special attention to the impact of cultural Americanization on the relationship between metropolitan France and the empire as well as its European partners,¹²¹ and the mid-century rise of “development” as a powerful new international framework for interpreting and recasting Europe-Africa relations.¹²² Taken together, these literatures underscore the global, international, and transnational dimensions of these crucial

UNESCO: A Transnational History of Anti-Racism and Decolonization, 1932-1962,” *The Journal of Global History* 6:2 (July 2011), 273-297.

¹¹⁹ Bossuat, *La France, l’aide américaine*; Hogan, “The Search for a ‘Creative Peace.’”

¹²⁰ Bradley, *Imagining Vietnam and America*; Matthew Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution. Algeria’s Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Wall, *France, the United States and the Algerian War*. The British also shaped French views on empire and Europe. See John Kent, *The Internationalisation of Colonialism: France, Britain and Black Africa, 1939-1956* (Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1992).

¹²¹ Luc Boltanski, “America, America...le plan Marshall et l’importation du ‘management,’” *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* no 38 (1981); Richard Kuisel, *Seducing the French: the Dilemma of Americanization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies*; Penny Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).

¹²² Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard, eds. *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995); Hoogvelt, *Globalization and the postcolonial world*; Gilbert Rist, *The History of Development: From Western Origins to Global Faith* (London and New York: Zed Books, 2002); James Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine: Development, Depoliticization and Bureaucratic Power in the Third World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

developments in postwar French history. I signal engagement with these literatures here because I am convinced that any attempt to analyze the French experience of decolonization or European integration, let alone the connections in between, would not only be incomplete but profoundly distorted if approached from a narrow national perspective.

Consider, for instance, Eric Jennings' suggestion that Vietnamese anticolonial nationalism was largely the consequence of the short tenure of Vichy rule in Indochina, or Shepard's argument that representations of decolonization as a "tide" or "wave" were the "invention" of French politicians and commentators once the Algerian War was clearly lost.¹²³ Jennings' *Vichy in the Tropics* and Shepard's *Invention of Decolonization* are invaluable investigations of mid-twentieth-century French colonialism, but an international history approach to these political developments in Indochina and Algeria tells a different story. Mark Bradley has shown that Vietnamese nationalism had taken shape long before the fall of France in 1940, and that the Vietnamese looked to precolonial and American sources for revolutionary inspiration, not French ones.¹²⁴ Similarly, Matthew Connelly has identified the rhetorical naturalization of decolonization not only many years earlier, but primarily in the language of American policymakers in their more wide-ranging appraisals of the *global ferment* against Western domination during this period.¹²⁵ Connelly mobilizes this kind of language as evidence that the nature of the Algerian crisis made French administrators and American observers aware of larger, structural forces playing out in Algeria that were transforming the world around them—the paradoxical, simultaneous impulsion toward integration and fragmentation at the heart of the set of interlocking processes implied by the term "globalization." In Connelly's formulation, then, rhetorical figures like the "Tide of History" were not a political ploy, but rather reflected an

¹²³ Jennings, *Vichy in the Tropics*; Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*.

¹²⁴ Bradley, *Imagining Vietnam and America*, chapter 4.

¹²⁵ Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*: 91.

increasing self-consciousness on the part of contemporaries of the complete reordering of international relations of which the Algerian Revolution was a crucial part.¹²⁶ Significantly, Bradley observes the same sense of “time rushing forward” in American and French thinking about decolonization in Vietnam, which he also suggests is tied to the global forces that are constitutive of late capitalist modernity.¹²⁷

Read in this light, an international history approach offers a model not only for breaking out of narrow national perspectives, but also for connecting particular events to broader processes of structural change. Moreover, the internationalist perspective also helps the analyst to capture historical contemporaries’ own understanding of those forces. Indeed, throughout this thesis I argue that it was precisely an awareness of the shifting terrains of space and time that encouraged postwar leaders to focus so intensely on youth and embrace such a pronounced generational mindset as they contemplated new forms of Franco-African and pan-European federalism and integration.

Another common thread in the international history literature illustrates the decisive role ideas about race, religion and culture played in shaping American decision-making and foreign policy before and after, but also during, the Cold War.¹²⁸ Thomas Borstelmann has shown that longstanding preconceived notions about race held by individual presidents had a profound impact on American policy toward the Third World throughout the Cold War.¹²⁹ Penny Von Eschen’s work on the use of African-American culture in US Cold War cultural diplomacy

¹²⁶ Ibid: x, 4-5.

¹²⁷ Bradley, *Imagining Vietnam and America*: 105.

¹²⁸ For an overview to this shift in the international history literature on the Cold War, see Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

¹²⁹ *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001); *Apartheid’s Reluctant Uncle: The United States and Southern Africa in the Early Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

demonstrates the significance of domestic American race relations in how the US was perceived and represented itself in the international arena.¹³⁰ These works establish conceptions of race and culture as salient factors in the international relations between states, an important methodological intervention given the narrow conceptualization of diplomacy and geopolitics that predominates in the literatures on Europe and Eurafica.

Reconsiderations of the role of race in US policymaking during the Cold War have particular implications for how we understand American perceptions of and involvement in the decolonization of the French empire. As Bradley has shown in the case of Vietnam, American ideological anticolonialism was tempered by long-held beliefs in the political immaturity of the Vietnamese, which ultimately led the United States to support the French in their effort to reestablish French rule in Vietnam despite longstanding American criticism of French colonial policy. The combination of an indigenous American tradition of racist thinking and an elaborate Orientalism transmitted through French colonial administrators convinced American observers that the Vietnamese were not “ready” for self-government and that the Vietnamese nationalist movement must be the work of foreign communist agitators.¹³¹ By turning our attention to the decisive role these “perceptual legacies” played in the American approach to Vietnam, Bradley underscores that discourses of colonialism and race preceded, were profoundly implicated in, and ultimately *transcended* the dynamics of the Cold War.¹³²

Connelly pursues this same line of thought in the Algerian context. He compellingly argues that historians’ “Cold War lens” has obscured American and French decision-makers’ true motivations, which actually originated in the political and economic crisis of the colonial

¹³⁰ Von Eschen, *Satchmo; Race against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997).

¹³¹ Bradley, *Imagining Vietnam*: 70.

¹³² *Ibid*: 130, 8.

world. Connelly reinterprets reluctant US support for French colonialism in Algeria in the 1950s; like Bradley, he argues that though this policy was consistent with Cold war aims, it was not determined by Cold War logics. Rather, it drew on older representations of all-out racial and religious—indeed, *civilizational*—conflict, as postwar policymakers were not formed by Cold War bipolar strategy (in contrast, I would add, to the historians who write about them), but came of age during the interwar period when concerns about population decline and international race war were at their peak.¹³³ Connelly therefore suggests that the notion of the “clash of civilizations”—popularized by Samuel Huntington to describe the *post*-Cold War world—was in fact operative at the height of the superpower confrontation.¹³⁴

It is squarely in this context of multi-axial “civilizational conflict”—not only East-West but also *North-South*—that Connelly locates the appeal of a project like Eurafrica among top American statesmen. Indeed, he suggests the wellspring of civilizational discourse during this period was the conjunction of anticolonial movements and emerging coalitions of Communists in the late 1940s; bringing the two together, he argues, was precisely what was needed to turn “Western Civilization” into an operative geopolitical concept.¹³⁵ That American Secretary of State John Dulles viewed Eurafrica as a possible “reverse Bandung” underscores the extent to which race and religion—not political sovereignty, social justice, even Cold War non-alignment—were key interpretive frames for American observers for understanding an event like Bandung.¹³⁶ In this light, Connelly’s work provides a useful model for appreciating the

¹³³ Matthew Connelly, “Taking Off the Cold War Lens: Visions of North-South Conflict during the Algerian War for Independence” *AHR* 105, no 3 (June 2000): 742, 753.

¹³⁴ Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*: 12-13.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*: 70. Daniel Segal has argued that the “Western Civilization” concept really took off in the interwar period in the American academy. See his “‘Western Civ’ and the Staging of History in American Higher Education,” *AHR* 105, no 3 (June 2000).

¹³⁶ Cited in Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*: 96. On support for Eurafrica among other American champions of European unification, see 62-65, 91-96. Irwin Wall comes to the opposite conclusion,

significance of Cold War logics without occluding broader conceptualizations of civilizational conflict rooted in an entrenched political culture of “Western” imperialism, colonialism and racism.

And yet, that political culture was itself undergoing dramatic transformations throughout the 1940s and 1950s, and those transformations played out differently in the United States and Europe. In the chapters that follow, we shall see the emergence of a specifically European version of this civilizational framework, which included sustained attempts to differentiate Europe from the United States. Crucially, part of that differentiation was based on Europe’s history of colonization and its *ongoing*, however tenuous, colonial presence overseas. As France retained the most extensive and seemingly secure postwar empire among the remaining continental colonial powers, French politics and policymaking played a dominant role in the elaboration of this new European civilizational framework. French debates and policies in the domain of youth and education are particularly illustrative of this process. As the objectives of colonial and European youth and education initiatives—respectively, to implant “French civilization” in Africa and to locate France in a broader “European civilization”—collided and converged, new boundaries, both real and imagined, were created between republican France, francophone Africa, and the nascent European community in the postwar era.

locating de Gaulle’s signature policies of *grandeur* and *indépendance* squarely in an East-West framework. In his reading, de Gaulle’s support for *Eurafrique* and a “Europe of States” were both attempts to give France a leadership position within a NATO-led West in which the United States, Britain and France would be equal ruling partners: *op cit*: 192-196, 266. De Grazia also frames her notion of the “White Atlantic” as a Cold War development, as the contest between the superpowers provided the opportunity to forge American hegemony on European soil. See her *Irresistable Empire*: 11-13.

Chapter 2

Rebuilding France, Europe and Empire: Wartime Planning for Education Reform from London to Brazzaville, 1940-1944

After the Second World War, French leaders focused on youth and education initiatives as a crucial means of achieving colonial reform and European unity. These programs were considered part of the postwar project of national reconstruction, but they were also profoundly embedded in broader international developments that originated during the war years. This chapter examines the interaction among the national, colonial, and European registers in wartime planning discussions about postwar education reforms and youth initiatives. I identify and account for the emergence of a far-ranging constellation of individuals and institutions in wartime London, Algiers, Brazzaville and Dakar that would go on to shape and execute colonial and European youth and education policy under the Fourth Republic.

The rank and file who peopled the Free French institutions in London comprised an assortment of middle-aged jurists, politicians, academics and teachers who either had already been in London for their work or who fled after the French parliament transferred power to Pétain. Many of these figures became involved in the London planning bodies through their personal relationships with René Cassin, one of the prime coordinators of postwar planning in London. Free French institutions in Algiers after 1943 continued to attract an eclectic mix of intellectual, scientific, and cultural figures, as well as politicians and bureaucrats who had already achieved prominence before the war. Faculty at the University of Algiers, education officials, and teachers, who all had a background with the Ministry of National Education or national teacher training institutes, were also brought into wartime youth and education planning

in Algiers.¹ Officials involved in planning education reforms in Dakar and Brazzaville, on the other hand, were career colonial administrators who had risen through the ranks of the colonial bureaucracy over the course of the interwar period.²

All of these actors were grappling with what postwar France and, more broadly, the postwar world, would look like, but their field of vision was often site-specific; place mattered in shaping postwar planners' priorities and what was included or excluded from their proposals for youth programs and education reforms. French planners-in-exile in London had a different set of interlocutors and experiences than their counterparts in Algiers or colonial administrators in Dakar and Brazzaville. Liberated Paris was yet another distinct environment for wartime education planning, as we shall see in the next chapter. And yet, these architects of postwar youth and education initiatives were moving among these locales and bringing their ideas and perspectives with them. They were all part of an ongoing conversation about youth and education that was unfolding across metropolitan, European and colonial space.

In light of the specific issues raised by the formation of the young—personality, character, intelligence, moral instruction, and the transmission of culture between generations—this conversation entailed extensive, and unusually candid, reflections on how race and religion factor into the socialization of young people. In this chapter, I emphasize how and why those reflections came to be articulated in the language “civilization.” In their proposals for postwar youth and education reforms, wartime planners came to think about the substance and the contours of what it meant to be “French,” “European,” and “African” in new and sometimes

¹ For a more detailed collective biography of the Free French in London, see Jean-François Murraciale, *Les enfants de la défaite: La Résistance, l'éducation et la culture* (Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 1998).

² A collective biography for colonial administrators in AEF has yet to be written. On AOF, see the contributions of Martin Shipway, Tony Chafer and Alexander Keese in Martin Thomas, ed., *The French Colonial Mind, Volume 1: Mental Maps of Empire and Colonial Encounters* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011).

contradictory ways. Most importantly, the confluence of efforts to devise new colonial and European youth and education policies rendered these notions more intrinsically relational: Europe and Europeanness were coming to be defined against Africa and Africanness and vice versa, which raised troubling questions about France's place in a rapidly changing geopolitical landscape.

Curricular reforms and a more expansive approach to youth beyond the classroom quickly emerged as the central preoccupations of wartime planners from London to Brazzaville. In both the colonial and European contexts, primary and secondary school curricula in geography, history, literature, and civics were identified as fertile ground for changing how future generations would see themselves, who they would recognize as their compatriots, and their country's place in the world. Wartime planners were also convinced that reforms in formal education would not be enough to effect lasting change in young people's behavior and worldviews. Youth movements like the Scouts were singled out as crucial complements to curricular reforms.

Although we might not usually attribute much weight to youth organizations like scouts in times of war, even they were invested with geopolitical significance in the context of the rivalry between Vichy and the Free French. At the same time that Pétain's National Revolution ascribed a central national role to confessional scout movements in Vichy France, the Free French government-in-exile in London established its own scout organization, the *Éclaireurs français de Grande-Bretagne*.³ René Pleven served as the group's president and Charles de

³ Arnaud Baubérot and Nathalie Duval, eds. *Le scoutisme entre guerre et paix au XXe siècle* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2006); Jean-Jacques Gauthé, "La France Libre et le scoutisme," in Patrick Harismendy and Erwin Le Gall, eds., *Pour une histoire de la France Libre* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2010): 49-57. On the curious case of Vichy's support for Jewish scouts in the early war years, see Daniel Lee, *Pétain's Jewish Children: French Jewish Youth and the Vichy Regime* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

Gaule himself participated in their general assembly. Though this new scout movement did not have an official religious affiliation, it was decidedly not secular (*laïc*). Helmed by prominent leaders of both Catholic and Protestant scout movements, the Éclaireurs de Grande-Bretagne manifested an explicitly Christian “interfaith” orientation, with its own Catholic and Protestant chaplains—a clear indication that after the collapse of the staunchly anticlerical Third Republic, state support for confessional youth groups proved equally attractive to Vichy and de Gaulle’s shadow government in London.

Moreover, when the colonial leadership in French Equatorial Africa [AEF] rallied to de Gaulle, the Catholic Scouts de France in AEF severed ties with its metropolitan leadership that supported Pétain. In November 1940, Catholic Scouts marched alongside the Free French garrison in Brazzaville in a symbolic display of allegiance to de Gaulle, who was so moved by the gesture that he sent a personal note of appreciation to the head of the Catholic *Scouts* in AEF.⁴ State support soon followed. In October 1941, Félix Éboué, the Guyana-born governor of Chad who had been the first colonial governor to rally to de Gaulle, allocated a substantial subsidy to scouting in the Federation, half to develop the secular Éclaireurs de France movement—which at that time was virtually nonexistent in AEF—and half to the Catholic *Scouts*, whose presence had been established in the region since the late 1920s.⁵ Éboué’s support for Catholic scouting in AEF inaugurated a profound shift in the movement’s orientation, from almost exclusively serving metropolitan French youth in the Federation to developing local scouting for Africans.⁶ It also served as a harbinger of Éboué’s new “indigenous policy” for AEF, in which Christianity was explicitly figured as a crucial vector for bringing black Africans

⁴ Charles-Eduouard Harang, “Les Scouts de France en Afrique équatoriale française, 1940-1945,” in *Scoutisme entre guerre et paix*, 200.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 200.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 195.

into “French civilization.”⁷ This proved a momentous precedent for postwar colonial youth policy in sub-Saharan Africa: not only would Catholic and Protestant scout movements in both AEF and AOF receive millions of CFA in state subsidies by the mid-1950s;⁸ that this practice originated with a Free French regime gave the policy legitimacy and specifically *republican* imprimatur.

This brief tour of French scout movements that were aligned with the Free French during the war provides an introduction to the peculiar geography of wartime youth policy. It also reveals how concerns about youth became so deeply entwined with racial and confessional politics at the very outset of the war. We shall return to conflicts over scouting later in this and in subsequent chapters, but for now let us turn to initial French discussions about postwar reconstruction in London and how those first postwar planners came to focus so intensely on youth and education.

French Planning in Wartime London—Transnational Capital of Occupied Europe

French policymakers, intellectuals and educators who became involved in postwar education planning in London during the war found themselves in a unique environment. First and foremost it was perceived to be an “Anglo-Saxon” one, in which the French increasingly felt their diminished stature vis-à-vis the British in light of the deepening Anglo-American alliance. Wartime London was also marked by the presence of dozens of continental European governments-in-exile, with whom the French began actively collaborating. The confluence of these circumstances prompted French education planners to not only consider the role of

⁷ Félix Éboué, *La nouvelle politique indigène pour l'AEF* (Paris: Office Français d'Édition, 1945).

⁸ For AEF, see the dossier, “Scoutisme en AEF,” Archives Nationales d’Outre-Mer [ANOM] AEF GGAEF 5D/219. For AOF, see folders, “Scouts de France—subventions AOF—1950-1959” and “Éclaireurs Unionistes de France—subventions AOF—1946-1958,” Archives Nationales du Sénégal [ANS] 18G/214 (160).

education in postwar reconstruction in a pan-European framework, but also to meditate on what distinguished France, and certain visions of Europe, from their Anglo-American allies.

“Postwar” planning began incredibly early among French exiles. Immediately after the armistice with Nazi Germany in July 1940, the French Parliament dissolved the Third Republic and installed a new government in Vichy under the leadership of Maréchal Pétain. Many who opposed the armistice and rejected the legitimacy of the Vichy government fled to London where they quickly formed the French National Committee [FNC]. The FNC began contemplating postwar planning within a matter of months. In November 1940, FNC member Henri Bernard proposed putting together a team to study the political and economic reorganization of France, France’s empire, and continental Europe once the war was won. Bernard recognized that such a step might seem premature given that the Allies still had to actually win the war, but he maintained that the FNC must address all three of these issues immediately since he believed their collective stakes were nothing less than “the future of France.”⁹

By the end of the following year, de Gaulle had heeded Bernard’s appeal and formed a “Commission for the Study of Postwar Problems.”¹⁰ The Commission operated in London, but its creation was announced to Free French leaders throughout the empire, in Brazzaville, Beirut and Noumea, as well as French diplomatic missions elsewhere, to solicit their participation and publicize the commission’s work.¹¹ Responses to this announcement from overseas stressed that the commission should pay special attention to the reorganization of the empire, as French

⁹ Henri Bernard, “Les Forces Françaises Libres et les problèmes de la paix et de l’après-guerre,” 7 novembre 1940. Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères [AMAE], Guerre, 1939-1945/Londres-CNF: 172.

¹⁰ Décret no. 53, 2 décembre 1941. AMAE, Guerre, 1939-1945/Londres-CNF: 172.

¹¹ Télégram à MM. Haussaires Noumea, Brazzaville; DELFRANCE Caire; FRANCOM Beyrouth, 14 janvier 1942. AMAE, Guerre, 1939-1945/Londres-CNF: 172.

representatives on the ground were well aware that the war was challenging the old colonial order.¹²

At the same time, members of the Commission closely monitored conversations taking place within similar postwar study groups formed by the British and other European governments-in-exile in London. Summaries of these groups' activities were published in a bi-monthly *Journal of Postwar Questions* and circulated within the FNC.¹³ Members of the French Commission reached out to their European counterparts; they worked particularly closely with the Belgian group, which was led by one of the postwar "fathers of Europe," Paul-Henri Spaak. These Franco-Belgian conversations centered on possibilities for a political and economic federation between France and the Benelux countries after the war. Significantly, Spaak suggested past attempts at such cooperation had failed because they had been too "modest" and "limited to metropolitan territories," despite the fact that France, Belgium and Holland were all also "great colonial empires." If they extended their collaboration to their empires, Spaak urged, more robust and lasting European cooperation could be achieved.¹⁴

Thus at the very outset of the defeat, Free French leaders in London considered national-imperial reconstruction and France's place in the postwar international order as inextricably linked. Postwar planning could not be limited to metropolitan France; it would also have to focus on the reorganization of the empire and building new relations between France and its European neighbors. However, the London planners' initial recognition of the importance of colonial questions receded as time passed. Regular contact with their counterparts in the empire was difficult to maintain, and so the Commission's engagement with colonial problems proved

¹² Télégram de FRANCOM Beyrouth à CNF-Londres, 27 mars 1942. AMAE, Guerre, 1939-1945/Londres-CNF: 172.

¹³ *Revue bi-mensuelle des questions d'après-guerre. Les Faits, Les Opinions*. AMAE, Guerre, 1939-1945/Londres-CNF: 172.

¹⁴ Entretien entre M. Spaak et M. Dejean, 6 March 1942. AMAE, Guerre, 1939-1945/Londres-CNF: 172.

cursory and erratic.¹⁵ Conversely, the London planners' proximity to other European governments-in-exile and Allied institutions for postwar reconstruction, as well as their personal, everyday engagement with British culture, society and the press, inflected their national reconstruction efforts with a pronounced European orientation.

As the founding of the *Éclaireurs Français de Grande-Bretagne* indicates, youth quickly became central a central preoccupation among the Free French in London. The *Journal of Postwar Questions* devoted a large section to education and closely followed British discussions on the need for a “democratic reconstruction of education” after the war.¹⁶ The Commission for the Study of Postwar Problems likewise considered the renovation of French democracy and France's education system as intimately linked; the same subcommittee tasked with outlining the restructuring of French political institutions—the “Commission for Juridical and Intellectual Questions”—was also responsible for putting together a proposal for sweeping education reform. Rebuilding the French state, all of the commissioners agreed, necessarily raised the question of personnel: they were convinced that formal education and youth development had to be reconfigured if they were to produce a new class of political leaders and state employees to animate the democratic political regime they hoped to reestablish after the war.¹⁷ Thus in June 1942, the Commission formed a special “Section for Intellectual Issues and Education” [*Enseignement*] to put together a proposal for the reform of the French education system. This

¹⁵ This problem would only get worse after the London-based French National Committee merged with the Free French forces in Algeria to form the *Comité Français de Libération Nationale* (CFLN) in spring 1943 (see below). In the summer of 1943, René Cassin, National Commissioner for Justice and Education for the French National Committee in London, complained to Foreign Minister René Massigli that he still had not been able to establish any liaison between his service and that in Algiers. See Telegram from René Massigli to Charles de Gaulle (7 juillet 1943). AMAE, Guerre, 1939-1945 CFLN-Alger: 631.

¹⁶ *Revue bi-mensuelle des questions d'après-guerre. Les Faits, Les Opinions*. Bulletin no 30, 13-27 décembre 1942. AMAE, Guerre, 1939-1945/Londres-CNF: 172.

¹⁷ Note du Professeur Vaucher sur l'étude des problèmes d'après-guerre, s.d. AMAE, Guerre, 1939-1945/Londres-CNF: 172.

group worked under the leadership of René Cassin, National Commissioner for Justice and Education in the FNC, and it comprised a mix of his past associates, academics and secondary school teachers, many of whom already happened to be in London when the war broke out, and military and syndicalist figures who rallied to de Gaulle after the French defeat.¹⁸

The Section began work in the fall of 1942 on a comprehensive program of education reform, but its members struggled to reach a consensus on the fundamental principles behind the whole reform project. The one point on which the diverse members of the Section could unanimously and unceremoniously agree, however, was that the reforms they were envisaging should not be applied in the empire. The Section quickly passed a motion to rename their working proposal, “Project on the Reform of Education in *Metropolitan* France” (emphasis added). For this group of reformers in London, colonial education could not be based on the same principles as education in metropolitan France; indeed, this view seemed so obvious to its members that its rationale was left unsaid. Still, they did not deny the importance of colonial education reform. Secretary of the Section Pierre Maisonneuve noted that the leaders of the Commission for the Study of Postwar Problems were planning to create another subcommittee to deal exclusively with colonial questions, and that once formed, the two groups could work together to study education reform and youth policy in the empire.¹⁹

¹⁸ Note de M. Maisonneuve (Service d’Études, de Documentation et de Liaisons) à M. Grandin de l’Épervier (Dir-AFFPOL) a/s Commissions pour l’étude des problèmes d’après-guerre (9 juin 1942). AMAE, Guerre, 1939-1945/Londres-CNF: 172. René Cassin was of course one of the primary figures in the drafting of the UN Declaration of Human Rights. See Jay Winter and Antoine Prost, *René Cassin and Human Rights: from the Great War to the Universal Declaration* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

¹⁹ Compte-Rendu de la Section intellectuelle et de l’enseignement de la session du 27 novembre 1942. AMAE, Guerre, 1939-1945; Londres-CNF: 186. The colonial section of National Committee in London never got off the ground: see the dossier “Groupe Colonial – Secrétariat des Commissions d’après-guerre, 1943,” AMAE, Guerre, 1939-1945: Londres-CNF: 180.

The initial draft of the Section’s proposal for education reform defined the first fundamental principle of education reform as follows: “The goal of French education [*enseignement*] after the war will be to give to the French Republic, restored in its *grandeur* and faithful to its ideal of human freedom, a new spirit.” Surprisingly, the very mention of a postwar “Republic” proved controversial. Several members vehemently objected on the grounds that it was not their place to presume the kind of political system France would have after the war.²⁰ The authors of the initial draft responded that republican sentiments were so deeply felt by “the vast majority of French people,” it would be inconceivable *not* to refer to the Republic. Henri Hauck, advisor to de Gaulle on labor issues, protested that this would be an impossible omission, precisely because “one of the causes of the defeat is the fact that the republican and democratic ideal was not sufficiently revered among the French people.” The Section remained divided, however, and none of the alternatives proposed—replacing “French Republic” with “French nation” or “French youth”—garnered enough votes to be adopted at the time.²¹

Reservations about invoking a future republic in the group’s proposals for education reform were directly linked to reappraisals of the Third Republic’s policy of militant *laïcité* in matters of education. The goal of reform was the renovation of French democracy, but concerns over making French education both a mechanism of democracy and the embodiment of democratic values raised the question of the freedom of parents to choose what kind of education they wanted for their children, which had been severely curtailed by the Third Republic’s

²⁰ Compte-Rendu de la Section intellectuelle et de l’enseignement de la session du 16 octobre 1942. AMAE, Guerre, 1939-1945; Londres-CNF: 186.

²¹ Procès-Verbal de la réunion de la Section intellectuelle et de l’enseignement qui a eu lieu le vendredi 30 octobre 1942. AMAE, Guerre, 1939-1945, Londres-CNF: 172

staunch anticlericalism. The prewar republican regime had not only forbid religious instruction in public schools but also prohibited priests and nuns from serving as teachers.²²

The Section was well aware that the opposition between secular and religious education had profoundly divided modern France. Convinced of the “damages these battles have caused the *Patrie*,” the group insisted on the need to envision an “organic reform” of French schooling that could bring about the “union of all French people.”²³ Education reform would therefore have to promote democracy *and* national unity, but the tensions between these two objectives remained as polarizing as they had been for educators and policymakers at the turn of the century at the height of the battle over French schools between the Church and the anticlerical state.²⁴ In an attempt to break through the impasse, the group formed a five-man taskforce of figures on both sides of the issue to propose a compromise. Their recommendation called for a comprehensive education system that would 1) be independent of the state and administer itself; and 2) exercise a monopoly over French education (both public and private). However, in a concession to proponents of private religious education, they also recommended that moral and civic instruction occupy a greater place in the curriculum, and that religious instruction could in future be provided for children whose families request it in public school buildings but outside of official school hours.²⁵

²² Jacques Girault, *Pour une école laïque du peuple! Instituteurs militants de l'entre-deux-guerres en France* (Paris: Publisud, 2009).

²³ Rapport de M. le Professeur Cathala sur l'activité de la Section Intellectuelle et de l'Enseignement, 13 novembre 1942. AMAE, Guerre, 1939-1945, Londres-CNF: 172.

²⁴ Proximity to British wartime education planners here was key. One member of this Commission, Pierre Vangrèvelinghe, would later report back on the development of the Beveridge Plan. Philippe Jean-Hesse and Jean-Pierre Le Crom briefly discuss as putting added pressure on Vichy to make similar overtures toward social inclusion in their, *La protection sociale sous le régime de Vichy* (Rennes: PUR, 2015), 343.

²⁵ Texte proposé par M. Maisonneuve avec l'approbation de MM. Beuhror et Schaeffer, désignés avec lui pour étudier une modification à l'art. 3 de la note sur les principes fondamentaux, s.d. AMAE, Guerre, 1939-1945; Londres-CNF: 186.

Following the conciliatory propositions of the taskforce, the Section voted once more on the fundamental principles of French education reform. This time they adopted the principle (16-2) that the goal of French education was to “give to the Republic, restored in its *grandeur* and renewed by its challenges, a youth inspired by the French ideal of human freedom,” and to “give French youth, without distinction of class, philosophy or religion, a common formation.” To those ends, French education would be “a public service, nationalized and constitutionally autonomous, placed at the same time at the service of the child and at the service of the Nation.” All schools and universities, with the sole exception of seminaries, would be a part of this system. Though a handful of Section members opposed linking the issues of autonomy and monopoly, the majority accepted that any other arrangement would only create “an even greater division between the two youths [*laïque* and religious] than that which existed before the war,” which was precisely what they were trying to overcome. In their view, the combination of autonomy and monopoly was the only possible solution to the conflict between the Church and anticlericals over French schooling.²⁶

The taskforce’s proposals on moral and civic instruction, and the possibility of reintroducing religious education into French public schools, remained fiercely contested, but both were tied to another important issue that was ultimately included as a fundamental principle of their reform program: the need to complement formal education with youth development programs and cultural activities beyond the classroom.²⁷ To that end, the Section proposed the creation of a new “Ministry of Cultural Life” that would oversee all youth programming and continuing education to encourage the “blossoming of the personality” and prepare young people

²⁶ Procès-Verbal de la Section intellectuelle et de l’enseignement de la séance du 13 novembre 1942. AMAE, Guerre, 1939-1945, Londres-CNF: 172.

²⁷ Projet de Réforme de l’Enseignement dans la France Métropolitaine, s.n., 21 janvier 1943. AMAE, Guerre, 1939-1945; Londres-CNF: 186.

“to serve the national community.”²⁸ As the Section began debating the appropriate bases of the new ministry, the problems of autonomy, monopoly and *laïcité* were raised once more. An army lieutenant in the Section protested that youth programs should not be centralized in one institution. He also raised the question of how religious youth organizations would be integrated into a state-run “Department of Youth.”²⁹ Several Section members urged that the organization of youth activities should be more flexible than formal education; one academic in the section urged that if the national education system was to have a complete monopoly on all primary and secondary schooling, there should be total freedom in the realm of youth organizations. Their goal, he insisted, should not be to produce a “single youth” but rather a “united youth.” Others protested, however, that this contradicted all of the goals of the single school system [*école unique*].³⁰

Similarly, an economist in the Section declared that the taskforce’s recommendations on civic and moral education in youth programming, as well as the potential reintroduction of religious instruction in formal education, amounted to nothing less than the total suppression of *laïcité* in the false hope of achieving a more “homogenous national unity.” This move, he insisted, would provoke such widespread teacher protest that the whole education system would collapse and all the old divisions would reignite.³¹ What’s more, he felt that they were wading into dangerous territory with their call for a positive moral education. “To inculcate moral and civic duties in the spirit of a child as though with a waffle iron,” he declared, “is a danger both to the intellectual development of the child and in the uses certain authorities or teachers would

²⁸ Note sur le rapport intitulé ‘Les Bases d’un Ministère de la Vie Culturelle, s.d., s.n. AMAE, Guerre, 1939-1945; Londres-CNF: 186.

²⁹ Lt. Voisine, Note sur les questions de jeunesse, 6 April 1943. AMAE, Guerre, 1939-1945; Londres-CNF: 172.

³⁰ Procès-Verbal de la séance du 28 mai 1943. AMAE, Guerre, 1939-1945; Londres-CNF: 186.

³¹ Note de M. Vangrévelinghe, November 1942. AMAE, Guerre, 1939-1945; Londres-CNF: 186.

make of it.” He concluded, “If the Fourth Republic wants to renovate democracy, it will have to clear away the morass in which the clerical and anticlerical bourgeoisie has mired the school.”³²

These objections were ultimately not heeded. In December 1942, the Section voted 10-1 (with three abstentions) that religious communities as well as “free thinkers” would be allowed to give “religious or philosophical instruction” in school to children whose families requested it. The Section also approved the inclusion of civic and moral education as one of the fundamental principles of French education reforms. The language the Section used to define this principle clearly underscores their overarching concern to reconcile advocates of private religious education and militant *laïcité* in French education. It stated: “The common general education will include positive civic and moral instruction founded on the respect of the great traditions that form the spiritual patrimony of France: the Christian tradition of the dignity of the human person and the revolutionary tradition of the Rights of Man and Citizen—a tradition of human fraternity that is both Christian and revolutionary.” Significantly, this moral and civic instruction, it was added, should not be framed in narrow national terms; rather, it should teach young French people their responsibilities and their rights as future citizens toward the “national and international community.”³³

Section members were quick to relate the need to “internationalize” their outlook on education reform to their current situation in London. As one professor declared, it was their particular responsibility, “we, who live in contact with the Allies,” to ensure that France “does not close itself off after the war in intellectual isolation, in a petty nationalism,” since “the majority of the problems of education are common to all peoples who share the same

³² Note de M Vangrévelinghe sur l’enseignement, 7 décembre 1942. AMAE, Guerre, 1939-1945; Londres-CNF: 186.

³³ Procès-Verbal de la Section intellectuelle et de l’enseignement de la séance du 11 décembre 1942. AMAE, Guerre, 1939-1945; Londres-CNF: 186.

civilization.” He added that this perspective should take concrete form in international accords to standardize curricula—particularly in history and civic education—and ensure the equivalence of diplomas and facilitate exchanges of both faculty and students across national borders.³⁴

Such proposals were not unique to French planners for postwar education reform in London at this time. The question of “re-education” not only in postwar Germany, but across occupied Europe, spurred calls for Europe-wide curricular reforms, which circulated widely among European expatriate networks via the British press. The French Section was particularly interested in Julian Huxley’s writings on the subject, which were translated and distributed among Section members. Huxley insisted that they should form a transnational group of European experts to prepare a new series of textbooks to be used throughout Europe, with a “European outlook” so that neighboring countries would no longer receive “mutually contradictory” history instruction. He also called for a “truly European system of Universities” in which students and teachers would be free to move among universities in different European countries. More broadly, he envisioned an “international organization of European education” at all levels with the creation of an International Education Office, which he saw as a necessary complement to “whatever supranational political organization is set up for Europe” after the war. He forcefully concluded these proposals with an appeal and affirmation of the unity of European societies and cultures:

There is a reality behind the phrase, ‘European Civilization’; there are definite and inescapable trends that are now molding the development of the nations which are the inheritors of that civilization; in spite of divergences in method and fallings-short in practice... there is a real chance of an International Education Office making a solid and substantial contribution towards the development of a European system of education, and so towards that of a culturally and politically more unified Europe.³⁵

³⁴ G. Ungar, Remarques sur le Rapport intitulé ‘Les Bases d’un Ministère de la Vie Culturelle, 5 avril 1943. AMAE, Guerre, 1939-1945, Londres-CNF: 172.

³⁵ Julian Huxley, “German Education and Re-Education,” reprinted from *The Newstatesman and Nation*, February 13, 1943 (original emphasis). AMAE, Guerre, 1939-1945; Londres-CNF: 186.

When Huxley wrote these words, there were not yet any formal plans for European political integration after the war. His writings make clear, however, that ideas about European unity were gaining currency in intellectual circles in London already in early 1943, and that European cooperation in the domain of education in the service of “European civilization” was seen as key to that process.

Thus while the French Section was struggling to redefine the fundamental principles of French education and overcome France’s historic conflict between secular and religious education, it was also keenly attuned to France’s place within a broader “European civilization.” Indeed, just one month after the French formed their Section for Intellectual Issues and Education, British Minister of Education Richard Butler seized the unique opportunity presented by the fact that virtually all European governments-in-exile were based in London, and convened the Conference of the Allied Ministers of Education [CAME]. The CAME’s inaugural session, held on 16 November 1942 at the British Board of Education, brought together top education officials from the governments-in-exile of Belgium, the Netherlands, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Norway, Poland and Yugoslavia. As National Commissioner for Justice and Education, René Cassin attended this first CAME meeting as the representative of the FNC.³⁶

Those in charge of education within the governments-in-exile in London had already been in contact for some time with the British Council to arrange for their young nationals to attend British schools while they were in Britain. British Council president Malcolm Robertson opened the CAME proceedings by declaring that this was their chance to go beyond that initial collaboration and build an “educational fellowship,” which, he believed, “would be the solution to many of the problems of the future.” Attendees agreed that they should work together to

³⁶ Draft Report of a Conference held at the Board of Education on Monday 16 November 1942, in *CAME, London 1942-1945 vol 1: Records of Plenary Meetings*. UNESCO Archives.

combat the German occupiers' domination in European education and replace it with "the Allied outlook on life."³⁷

The CAME began meeting regularly—about once every six weeks—in January 1943 and would continue to do so for the remainder of the war. Cassin continued to be involved in the CAME's activities throughout the period, and several other members of the French Section for Intellectual Issues and Education also became active participants in the CAME's operations.³⁸ Over the course of 1943, the CAME concentrated its efforts and limited resources on restructuring how European history should be taught after the war. First, it set out to supervise the production of a brief history of the war that would "give some conception of the European civilization for which the Allies are fighting" to European schoolchildren.³⁹ Second, the CAME sought to produce a manual for teachers on how to teach contentious episodes in European history and, more broadly, to break out of the "diseased national megalomania" that had distorted the way European history had been taught before the war.⁴⁰ Third, it hoped to produce a textbook on European history to be translated into all the major European languages and used in all post-Liberation schools across the continent.⁴¹ None of these projects were ultimately completed during the war, but these initiatives were taken up by European unity activists in the immediate

³⁷ Ibid., 2-4.

³⁸ French Section members who participated in the CAME include Paul Vaucher, Andre Gros, Louis Gros, and S.A. Schaeffer (who had been part of the Section's taskforce drafting its fundamental principles). Other figures who would later serve in the Fourth Republic's Ministry of National Education, such as Pozzo di Borgo, were also regular participants.

³⁹ Draft Report of the Second Meeting of the Conference of Ministers of Education of the Allied Governments and the French National Committee, 19 January 1943. *CAME, London 1942-1945 vol 1: Records of Plenary Meetings*. UNESCO Archives.

⁴⁰ Olgierd Gorka, "Spirit of History in the Handbook of Suggestions for Teachers of History." *CAME, London 1942-1945, vol III: Books and Periodicals Commission: History Committees and Subcommittees*. UNESCO Archives.

⁴¹ Draft Report of the Fifth Meeting of the Conference of Ministers of Education of the Allied Governments and the French National Committee, 27 July 1943. *CAME, London 1942-1945 vol 1: Records of Plenary Meetings*. UNESCO Archives.

postwar years and would become a central plank of their proposals to “Europeanize” history education.⁴²

Over the course of 1943, the CAME expanded its initial group of European education officials to include representatives from the United States, the Soviet Union, China and the British Empire (Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and India all started sending delegates in July 1943). The CAME remained focused on developing “Europeanist” European history textbooks and the denazification of education in liberated Europe, but French postwar planners grew increasingly wary of the predominant roles played by the British—with their expanded delegation of representatives from their empire—and the United States, which provided the lion’s share of financial support for the CAME’s operations.

In April 1944, an American delegation led by J. William Fulbright came to London to propose broadening the CAME’s scope beyond Europe. Fulbright outlined the CAME’s ultimate transformation into a properly international organization for education and culture that would be affiliated with the planned United Nations Organization.⁴³ This American-led initiative particularly worried the French, who had hoped France would regain its leadership role in international cultural cooperation after the Liberation. Turning the CAME into an international organization would undermine the Paris-based International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation—which had been the premier League of Nations’ organization for European cultural cooperation during the interwar period—and consolidate the preponderant “Anglo-Saxon influence” that the French believed had already taken hold of the CAME. Well aware that the CAME “grew up in London during a period marked by the eclipse of France and continental

⁴² I discuss return to this issue in Chapter 4. See also my, “‘Europeanizing’ History and History Instruction in the French Union: Tensions of European Unity and Postwar Empire,” unpublished paper presented at the CES Symposium, “Shaping Memory and Identity in Europe – Countervailing Forces from Above and Below,” in Paris, July 8-10, 2014.

⁴³ Introduction, *CAME, London 1942-1945 vol 1: Records of plenary meetings*. UNESCO Archives.

Europe,” French planners tried to prevent the transformation of the CAME into an international organization from within.⁴⁴ When those attempts failed, French delegates to the CAME changed course and began lobbying for the new organization to be headquartered in Paris. This tactic proved successful: after the war, the Conference of Allied Ministers of Education was reborn as UNESCO, whose headquarters remain in Paris to this day. The French were unsuccessful in their efforts to get a Frenchman elected as UNESCO’s first president, however; that post ultimately went to Julian Huxley.⁴⁵

French education planners’ palpable unease with the changing composition of the CAME in 1943 was part of a broader anxiety and growing resentment that the Free French leadership was being excluded from top-level planning between Britain, the US and the Soviet Union. In June 1943, after the “liberation” of French North Africa, de Gaulle’s FNC in London officially merged with General Henri Giraud’s forces in Algeria to form the *Comité National de la Libération Française* [CFLN]. De Gaulle had hoped that this new entity would be recognized as the only legitimate government of France, but he was cruelly disappointed when the US continued its diplomatic relations with Vichy. Worse, in the fall of 1943, the British, Americans and Soviets formed a “European Advisory Committee” in London to begin planning for the occupation of Germany and Austria once the war was won, from which France was once again excluded.⁴⁶ After a year of angry protest from top French officials in London and Algiers, the CFLN was finally invited to serve as a full and permanent member on the European Committee

⁴⁴ Communication du Ministre de l’Education Nationale a/s d’un projet de création d’une organisation internationale de l’Education et de la Culture, élaborée par la CMAE à Londres, s.d. Archives Nationales de France [AN] F60/427.

⁴⁵ Denis Mylonas, *La genèse de l’Unesco. La Conférence des Ministres Alliés de l’Education (1942-1945)* (Brussels: Bruylant, 1976).

⁴⁶ Telegram Vienot (London) to CFLN-Algiers, 26 October 1943. AMAE, Guerre, 1939-1945: Alger, CFLN-GPRF: 657.

in November 1944.⁴⁷ Tensions remained high, however, as members of the CFLN continued to struggle to gain an equal footing with their Allied “partners” in postwar planning institutions.

It was in this atmosphere that some French leaders, members of the Resistance, and other commentators resurrected the idea of a French-led “Mediterranean Pact” or “Latin Union” as an alternative to Atlantic partnership or cooperation in northern Europe.⁴⁸ As one *résistant* put it, relations between the CFLN and its Anglo-American allies left no doubt, even to those most sympathetic to these great “Anglo-Saxon democracies,” that France must walk a careful line with Britain and the US. France must “recover its metropolitan and imperial sovereignty,” he insisted, but it would be foolish to think France could achieve this on its own. Rather, France should form a political and economic union with Italy, Spain, and Portugal—each with their own African colonies—to prevent France’s marginalization in a Europe “dominated by Anglo-Saxon capital.” Significantly, this union was put forth not only as a defensive maneuver, but also as an instrument of national reconstruction and reconciliation. By forging this union with “the other great Catholic nations of the Occident, Republican France would continue to integrate the most vibrant elements of Catholicism which are to be found among the popular masses...into the fight against Nazism, the defense of French freedoms and the project of national reconstruction.” It could thereby ensure the indispensable “political equilibrium of the country and the construction of a Republic that is at once social, human, comprehensive and audacious.”⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Letter from D. Cooper to Georges Bidault, 11 November 1944. AMAE, Y-Internationale, 1944-1949: 133.

⁴⁸ See Elisa Camiscioli, *Reproducing the French Race: Immigration, Intimacy and Embodiment in the Early Twentieth Century* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009) for French ideas about *latinité* in the interwar period.

⁴⁹ Jean Cassou, *Pour une Union Latine*, s.d. This treatise was sent from Jacques Soustelle (CFLN-Algiers) to M. Dejean (member of the Commission for the Study of Postwar Problems in London) for Dejean’s opinion in a letter dated 26 December 1944, though Soustelle mentions he had originally received it a few months before the Liberation. AMAE, Z-Europe, Generalités 1944-1949: 40.

Top French officials in London or Algiers never seriously entertained proposals such as this.⁵⁰ However, renewed French interest in a Latin Union at this time intersected with important broader trends that are worth underscoring here. First, it points to the general concern to reconceptualize the Republic in such a way that could not just accommodate but enthusiastically embrace France's Catholic identity and preserve the newfound alliance between republicans, socialists, Catholics and communists forged in the Resistance.⁵¹ Second, it captures the deep anxiety that France would never reclaim its former position among the Great Powers unless it pursued an aggressive foreign policy of its own elsewhere. Finally, the call for a "Latin" Union drew on one very particular vision of "European civilization," anchored around the Mediterranean, that had long occupied a central place in French colonial discourse.⁵² The resurgence of that vision at this time had significant reverberations in discussions about colonial education reforms in French Africa.

Free France in Africa: Postwar Planning in Algiers, Dakar & Brazzaville

The creation of the CFLN shifted the center of gravity of Free French institutions and postwar planning bodies from London to Algiers. Many of the institutions the French had set up in London continued to function in 1943-1944, but they were quickly superseded by the more robust state apparatus the CFLN established in Algiers. The Section for Intellectual Issues and Education virtually ceased its activities by mid-1944; henceforth, the only significant postwar

⁵⁰ Note pour M. Dejean a/s de l'Union Latine, s.n., 5 January 1945. AMAE, Z-Europe, Generalités 1944-1949: 40.

⁵¹ I discuss this at greater length in Chapter 3.

⁵² Camiscioli, *Reproducing the French Race*; Patricia Lorcin, "Rome and France in Africa: Recovering Colonial Algeria's Latin Past," *French Historical Studies* 25:2 (Spring 2002), 295-329.

planning in the domain of youth and education among French officials in London was conducted through the CAME.⁵³

Postwar planning for education reform in Algiers focused on the same issues with which the London planners had been chiefly concerned: the renovation of French democracy through education reform, the reconciliation of secular and religious schooling, and the expansion of the state's role in youth development beyond the classroom. But the view from Algiers looked different than the view from London, not only because Algiers was in a colonial territory but also because of the historical conjuncture. The timing of the move to Algiers dovetailed with increasing French frustration with France's Anglo-American allies; it also coincided with the decision of the leadership in French West Africa to break with Vichy and join the Free French camp. The confluence of these factors combined to heighten consideration of colonial issues in postwar education planning within the CFLN, though as we shall see, ideas about Europe and "Europeanness" continued to play a role in how postwar planners thought about what postwar colonial education should look like.

Like their predecessors in the postwar planning commissions in London, the leaders of the CFLN shared the conviction that France could not just resurrect the institutions of the Third Republic, which they too believed had been discredited by the French defeat in 1940. One of the first institutions CFLN leaders focused on was the Ministry of National Education (MEN) itself. In the spring of 1943, socialist André Philip, then Commissioner for the Interior in Algiers and future president of the socialist movement for European unity after the war (who was one of the prominent guest speakers at the gathering of European youth in Brest a decade later), sent a policy report to de Gaulle proposing to broaden the role of the state with regards to youth. Philip

⁵³ I analyze the CAME's deliberations in 1944-1945 in Chapters 3 & 4.

urged not only the expansion of the MEN's jurisdiction, but also the creation of a second ministry that would focus exclusively on youth beyond formal schooling. Similar to the London group's proposal for a "Ministry of Cultural life," Philip called for a "Ministry of General Education" that would be composed of two divisions, one for physical education and the other for "cultural" education. Interestingly, Philip did not shy away from using racial language in his argumentation in favor of physical education and its role in national reconstruction. He asserted physical education was indispensable to the recovery of French youth, to the revitalization of the Nation and the improvement of "the race," which would both increase national productivity and lead the whole population to a more "collective life."⁵⁴ Philip's explicit racial language would quickly disappear from official discourse on youth and national reconstruction as references to race became increasingly taboo in the postwar era.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that this rhetoric occupied such pride of place at this initial planning stage when the contours of postwar institutions dealing with youth were beginning to be put into place, and that it clearly continued to guide the thinking of such a prominent, leftist figure as André Philip.⁵⁶

Philip's call for a ministry devoted to youth and sports that would be separate from the ministry dealing with formal schooling was not heeded at this time.⁵⁷ The CFLN's Service for

⁵⁴ André Philip, Note pour Général de Gaulle (April 1943). AN F/1a/3802.

⁵⁵ See Chapter 4 and my "Obscuring Race: Franco-African Conversations about Race and Racism after World War II and the Making of Colorblind France," *French Politics, Culture & Society* 33, no 3 (Winter 2015).

⁵⁶ Philip became one of the most influential policymakers in virtually every narrative thread of this dissertation: on metropolitan political reforms and reevaluations of militant *laïcité*, youth development programs and European unity. He was considered one of the "fathers" of the Constitution of 1946 and led a postwar commission exclusively convened to resolve the conflict between public and private religious schools that I discuss in the next chapter. He was also a dominant figure in postwar youth organizations well into the 1960s; he co-founded the organization République des jeunes in 1944, which later became the Fédération Française des Maisons de Jeunes et Culture, for which he served as President until 1968. As mentioned above, Philip was also the leader of Mouvement Socialiste pour les Etats-Unis de l'Europe.

⁵⁷ State organs dealing with youth and sports would continue to be subsumed under those dealing with national education until the advent of the Fifth Republic.

Youth and Sports was officially attached to its Commissariat for National Education in February 1944.⁵⁸ The underlying concern, however, to broaden the state's involvement in youth development continued to be discussed. In those discussions there emerged a marked distinction between “*instruction*” or “*enseignement*,” referring to the transmission of knowledge, and “*éducation*,” which was more broadly conceived as the formation of the whole person. René Capitant, a prominent Resistance leader and law professor at the University of Algiers who was named the CFLN's Commissioner for National Education and Youth, clearly articulated this distinction in early 1944. “*Instruction*,” he declared, referred to the transmission of a certain sum of knowledge that constitutes the “scientific and intellectual patrimony of Humanity or the Nation,” while “*éducation*” was something altogether more elusive: “How to define *Éducation*? *Éducation* is essentially *instruction* not in knowledge, not science, not what ‘is’...but what ‘should be,’ that is to say, instruction not in scientific laws but in the laws of morality.”⁵⁹

Already in the late Third Republic, the Ministère de l'Instruction Publique had been renamed the Ministère de education Nationale to signal an extension of the state's involvement in moral education and youth development beyond the classroom, but this name change did not lead to a significant reorientation of MEN's activities in the late 1930s.⁶⁰ The soul-searching and institutional vacuum opened up by the war created an opportunity for more robust state activity in the domain of youth.⁶¹ The same wartime conditions that paved the way for the transnational European embrace of sweeping welfare reforms that brought issues of education, health, and other social concerns under the purview of the state led CFLN planners to put this expanded

⁵⁸ Ordonnance du 5 février 1944 portant rattachement au Commissariat à l'éducation nationale du 'Service de la jeunesse et des sports' (signed by de Gaulle, René Capitant and René Massigli). AN F/60/524.

⁵⁹ Procès-Verbal de la Commission de l'Education Nationale et de la Jeunesse de la séance du 13 mai 1944 (Assemblée consultative provisoire, Alger). AN C//15266.

⁶⁰ Conversation with Laura Lee Downs, April 2013.

⁶¹ Patricia Loncle, *L'action publique malgré les jeunes. Les politiques de jeunesse en France de 1870-2000* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003).

conception of *éducation* at the center of their plans for reconfiguring state institutions dealing with youth and education. As Capitant declared to the CFLN's Commission on Youth and Education, only *éducation*, not *enseignement*, could transmit "the ideal that is the basis of the French resurgence in the Resistance today and that will serve tomorrow as the basis of the French revival in the national reconstruction that must follow." Thus for Capitant, the stakes of "how to conceive of the organization that would be in charge of this necessity, of *éducation*," were nothing less than "the French soul and more broadly the soul of humanity."⁶²

Significantly, this conception of *éducation* established a basis for the CFLN to concede that religious groups had a legitimate role to play in the moral and civic education of French youth. Capitant upheld the notion that *enseignement* should be secular, but he insisted that *éducation* should be both less "statist" than *enseignement*, and also "less strictly *laïque*." He therefore proposed that the state should provide material and financial support to both secular and religious youth organizations. Capitant invoked scout organizations in particular as an exemplary youth movement in the way it served both secular and religious young people:

There is a secular movement: the *Éclaireurs de France*; a Catholic movement: the *Scouts de France*; a Protestant movement: the *Unionistes*; a Jewish [*israélite*] movement: the *Éclaireurs Israélites*. And tomorrow, I deeply hope and believe: Muslim Scouts... Thus we have a complete range, and it seems to me that this has a very great symbolic value, even if the size of the scouting movements are not yet very large.

Capitant added that he had met with Muslim scout leaders in the greater Algiers area to extend the reach of Muslim scouting and to increase Muslim scouts' interactions with non-Muslim scouts movements.⁶³

⁶² Procès-Verbal de la Commission de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Jeunesse de la séance du 13 mai 1944 (Assemblée consultative provisoire-Alger). AN C//15266.

⁶³ Ibid. On Muslim scout movements in Algeria in the postwar conjuncture, see Jean-Jacques Gauthé, "Quant le Scoutisme prépare à la guerre... Les Scouts musulmans algériens vus par l'armée française," in Baubérot et al., *Le scoutisme entre guerre et paix au XXe siècle* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2006).

Capitant's circumscribed vision of *laïcité* in matters of *éducation* echoed the London planners' overarching concern to overcome the rigid anticlericalism of the Third Republic. This position became the *modus operandi* of the Fourth Republic's approach to youth and education initiatives in both the European and colonial contexts, as we shall see in the next chapter. The close collaboration sought by the CFLN and religious youth groups, which was fully realized and upheld by the renovated republican state in the immediate postwar period, indicates that contrary to much contemporary discourse that construes *laïcité* as an unaltered, integral component of French republicanism going back to 1905—to some, even 1789—in the context of the war, religious education and confessional youth organizations were no longer deemed irrevocably incompatible with republican institutional support.⁶⁴

Capitant was responsible for planning the reorganization of the national infrastructure for youth and education in liberated France. However, his remarks on the imperative of developing Muslim scout organizations are an important reminder that at this time “national” reconstruction was envisioned in and for an *imperial* space, in which difference—in this case, religious difference—was, at least rhetorically, a fact to be celebrated, not combatted. Indeed, from the CFLN's founding in 1943 until the Liberation in August 1944, “Free France” was coterminous with the empire, and more specifically with French Africa.⁶⁵ It is therefore not without consequence that Capitant and the education planners working under him in Algiers embraced “the unity of France and its empire, across the rich diversity of its territories” as a guiding principle for postwar youth and education policy.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ For a more nuanced narrative of *laïcité*, see Jean Baubérot, *Laïcité 1905-2005, entre passion et raison* (Paris: Seuil, 2004).

⁶⁵ Eric Jennings, *La France libre fut africaine* (Paris: Perrin, 2014).

⁶⁶ Rapport au sujet du Centre d'Études et de Recherches sur l'Éducation, s.n., Alger 1943. AN F/1a/3802.

This brief sketch of wartime discussions on the reorganization of the MEN in Algiers reveals that even when thinking about “national” reconstruction, top education officials in the CFLN were keenly attuned to the colonial implications of metropolitan youth and education policy. Naturally, the CFLN’s central colonial authority and local colonial administrations in the AOF and AEF were also deeply concerned with the situation of education and youth; they too began discussing the importance of education reform and youth programming in late 1942-1943.

In the heightened context of the battle for legitimacy between Free French forces in Africa and the Vichy regime in the metropole,⁶⁷ the colonial administration in AEF specifically framed its commitment to colonial education in contradistinction to Vichy colonial policy. “What Free France wants,” declared a report from early 1943, is to “progressively adapt the *indigène* to the veritable upheaval that civilization brings, to initiate him so that he can participate in the government of his country.” The report continued: “The preparation of the *indigènes* for the colonial administration, which implies schooling, and a progressive adaptation to an urban standard of living—*that* is the indigenous policy of Free France.”⁶⁸ Though this rhetoric was not in fact much different from Vichy’s, or, for that matter, from prewar discourse about France’s “civilizing mission,” the intent was to draw a sharp contrast. This declaration presages French rhetorical strategies after the war that associated “colonialism” and all the negative connotations of that term in the postwar period with Vichy precisely to *dissociate* it from Republican France.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ The colonial leadership in AEF had rallied to de Gaulle in August 1940, a pivotal moment for Free French forces. Félix Éboué, the Guyana-born governor-general of AEF, was the first colonial governor to declare himself for De Gaulle; his devotion to *la France libre* would later be invoked as vindication of the colonial project and civilizing mission after the war. I discuss this at greater length in Chapter 1.

⁶⁸ *Les Réalisations coloniales de la France Combattante en AEF, Rapport de la Délégation du Commissariat à l’Intérieur d’Alger à Londres*, s.n. 6 January 1943: 17-23. AN F/1a/3731.

⁶⁹ See my “Obscuring Race,” *op cit.*

Despite the desire to distance itself from Vichy, the colonial administration in AEF did not see any difficulty reconciling Christian education and “Free French values,” even though the destruction of the republican *école laïque* was a centerpiece in Pétain’s National Revolution. This is perhaps not surprising, given that Free French leaders in both London and Algiers were all too ready to jettison the Third Republic’s model of *laïcité*. Indeed, this policy was quite in sync with discussions about *laïcité* in the national context during the war, contrary to the tendency to frame tolerance of missionary education in the empire as colonial exceptionalism.⁷⁰ The same 1943 report affirmed, “Though the Christian missions have practiced a policy that is based on the religious principles they teach, this policy is in perfect harmony with the indigenous policy that Free France has adopted in AEF.” Citing Governor-General Éboué’s open embrace of Christianity as a vehicle of French civilization in Africa, the report asserted that official schools and mission schools in the territories had the same goals and methods and so deserved the same state subsidies. Indeed, this had been official policy in AEF since 1941. Significantly, in the early war years, this state solicitude toward religious instruction was not limited to Christian schools. The administration in AEF prided itself on building an upper primary school in Ouddai (Chad) that would conduct classes in French and Arabic, for “in this domain as well, Free France demonstrates its concern to respect local customs. Islam, of which we are the protectors, predominates among the majority of Chad’s populations, with its austere rules, its own metaphysics and its own morality. And so we have brought Chad into the general scheme of France’s Islamic policy.”⁷¹ As we shall see in the next chapter and Chapter 6, French “Islamic policy” in sub-Saharan Africa would become a flashpoint of political contestation after the war.

⁷⁰ See J.P. Daughton, *An Empire Divided: Religion, Republicanism, and the Making of French Colonialism, 1880-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

⁷¹ *Les Réalisations coloniales*, 46-51. I return to this school in Chapter 6.

The report concluded with a section on youth and sports that attributed “a particular importance to the Scout movements for the *éducation* of the youth of AEF today and for French youth tomorrow.” Though there were then only 257 Éclaireurs de France (secular), 273 Scouts de France (Catholic) and 46 Unionistes (Protestant)—for a total of 579 scouts in all of AEF at this time—the report was optimistic that these numbers would surely grow. Echoing convictions about the limits of *instruction* and *enseignement*, it proclaimed: “The scout movements complete schooling. There is something particularly useful about this in our African territories, in that it will develop courage and the spirit of discipline—virtues that are all too rare.”⁷² The assertion that scouting would redress a particular absence of discipline and courage among African youth is indicative of the ways in which youth policy in the colonial context was refracted through a prism of pre-existing racialized notions of Africans that inflected colonial youth programs with particular valences. Such notions—about African bodies and hygiene as well as a supposed African deficit in values like “discipline” and “courage”—continued to inform the formulation and execution of French youth policy in sub-Saharan Africa throughout the late colonial period.



Fig. 5. Ceremony for two Senegalese scouts’ promotion to the rank of “Chief” in the Catholic Scouts de France, Ziguinchor, 1958. SOURCE, Archives Nationales du Sénégal, 18G/214 (160). Image has been removed due to copyright protection.

⁷² Ibid., p52.

Colonial administrators in AOF, on the other hand, were not so quick to paint a rosy picture of the progress of education in their Federation. They perceived a veritable “crisis of education” in AOF and stressed that this antedated the war: there had been virtually no new recruitment of “European” teaching personnel since 1930, though the number of students had increased 450% since 1920. To redress this situation, in August 1943 the General Director of Public Schooling for AOF called for massive investment in “indigenous” primary education. Significantly, he stressed that this would command the respect of foreign observers. Only the expansion of colonial primary education, he continued, “could present itself, externally, as one of the solid elements, as one of the successes of our colonization of these territories.” Thus already in 1943, colonial education reform was framed as an appeal to international opinion and a justification of continued French rule on African soil.⁷³

The different wartime experiences of AOF and AEF help explain the more modest assessment of the state of colonial education in AOF, where the situation of colonial education was more complicated in light of the Vichy interlude there.⁷⁴ The rulings that Vichy had put in place in AOF from 1940 to late 1942 had to be overturned. That entailed reorganizing the administrative apparatus of the Federation, and the transition left a gap in authority that colonial officials found particularly worrisome for African youth. After touring the Federation in October 1942-January 1943, chief of the Youth Service for AOF Rivet wrote of a “clear lethargy” that had taken hold in the territories. He attributed this not only to the war, but also to the fact AOF had been cut off from Vichy’s Secretariat for Youth, which he believed had been essential for the “preservation of order and faith in the *Patrie*.” If the administration wanted to restore calm in the

⁷³ Rapport au sujet des activités du Service de l’Enseignement AOF, préparé par M. Mus, Direction-Générale de l’Instruction Publique en AOF, 9 août 1943. ANS O/1 (31).

⁷⁴ Ruth Ginio, *French Colonialism Unmasked: the Vichy years in French West Africa* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006).

territories—indeed, if they were to keep the empire “and thereby save France,” local youth must “hear the pure and liberating voice of France.” Rivet therefore implored Pierre Boisson, Governor-General of AOF, to make the reorganization of the youth department his top priority: “only the Youth Service in Black Africa, with your total and continuous support, can wage the battle for the Soul, here as in France, and win it, step by step.”⁷⁵ This renovated youth department would run an information service, promote the formation of new *cadres* (“European or *autochtone*”), and encourage the development of youth movements and youth centers [*Maisons de jeunes*] throughout the territories.

Stability was the overriding objective of Rivet’s call for a proactive colonial youth service, but he suggested that youth programs for “the Blacks” [*les Noirs*] entailed something more. Youth activities, he wrote, could “turn the people away from their personal problems” and “allow them to understand the direction of their Evolution.”⁷⁶ The central administration in AOF heartily agreed with this assessment, insisting that “the influential and persuasive power of our youth organizations could have a profound impact on our colonial and French project, if adapted to African life.”⁷⁷ Accordingly, Boisson set about the reestablishment of the youth services throughout AOF in a series of missives to his colonial governors over the course of 1943.

The responses he received detailed the countless difficulties the reestablishment of the youth services would entail, but Boisson did not relent. He urged the governors to reconsider their hesitations, given that he personally believed “that at a time when so many perturbations are enflaming passions,” it is essential that “the youth feels itself to be taken care of.” The “productive and creative action” that a reinvigorated youth service would undertake, he

⁷⁵ Rapport de tournée, Rivet to Gouverneur-Général AOF, 17 février 1943. ANS O/87 (31).

⁷⁶ Conclusions générales, Rivet to Gouverneur-Général AOF, 17 février 1943. ANS O/87 (31).

⁷⁷ Note a/s le rapport général de M. Rivet (from the Direction-Générale des Affaires Politiques, Administratives et Sociales within Gouvernement-Général AOF to the Governor-General), 20 février 1943. ANS O/87 (31).

continued, would “give a demonstration of efficiency in local [*autochtone*] milieus,” and of “unity in the European ones.” He concluded, “We will thereby build the future.”⁷⁸

Once AOF officially “rallied” to the CFLN government in Algiers in 1943, the General Government of AOF itself began to receive similar directives from the CFLN’s Commissariat of Colonies. Orders from Algiers called on the colonial administration in AOF to promote and subsidize programs for both “French” and “indigenous” youth, stressing that this must henceforth be done “in a regime of liberty.”⁷⁹ Initial efforts to reorganize the Youth Service in AOF now had the force of the central colonial authority behind them. The CFLN’s Commissioner for Colonies Henri Laurentie stressed that the target of their attention was “the entirety of AOF youth, European and indigenous, ‘evolved’ and ‘non-evolved,’ male and female, school-educated and not, and especially those categories enumerated above that are the most backward [*attardées*].” It was the colonial administration’s responsibility, Laurentie continued, not only to promote “[youth’s] moral, spiritual, physical and intellectual development,” but also to prepare young Africans for the ever greater role they would play in both “imperial and French life.” Laurentie envisioned this promotion of African youth as combining traditional African social structures, an emphasis on work and productivity, and French values. He concluded that colonial administrators’ action in the domain of youth must proceed “according to ancestral tradition, profession, and the intangible principles of our civilization.”⁸⁰

With both AEF and AOF now under its control, the CFLN began contemplating comprehensive colonial reforms for French Africa. As we have seen, colonial administrators and

⁷⁸ Letter from Boisson to the Commissaire de France au Togo, 10 avril 1943. Similar remarks can be found in Boisson’s correspondance with the Gouverneur-Administrateur de la Circonscription de Dakar (Letter from 24 mars 1943) and the Governor of Senegal (Letter from 24 mars 1943). ANS O/87 (31).

⁷⁹ Letter from the Commissaire aux Colonies (Henri Laurentie) to the Gouverneur-Général d’AOF (Pierre Cournaire), 16 décembre 1943. ANOM 1AFFPOL/872.

⁸⁰ Note pour la Direction-Générale—Instruction Publique-AOF, 9 janvier 1944. ANS O/87 (31).

members of the CFLN considered the formation of the younger generations of paramount importance for the future of the empire—and, by extension—for the future of France. Thus when in late 1943 the CFLN began planning the Brazzaville Conference, a major summit for French leaders to determine the modalities of the reorganization of the empire, education reform and youth policy were given top priority.

In the run-up to Brazzaville, the CFLN's Commissariat of Colonies in Algiers and the General Governments of AOF and AEF compiled extensive reports on the situation of colonial education and youth programs to present to conference participants. From this material emerges a profound tension between two central objectives: 1) the expansion of primary education, basic training, and youth activities to reach "the masses," and 2) the production of a new generation of francophone elites who would be loyal to France. (The same tension between democratization and the production of new elites would also vex metropolitan and European youth and education initiatives after the war.⁸¹) This tension emerges in the kinds of youth initiatives Laurentie singled out as most promising for young Africans. On the one hand, he identified scout movements as the most important vehicle for the "*éducation*" of the masses, but he also praised sporting clubs, since he believed sports deliver "a beneficial effect, not only to fortify the body of the *indigènes*, but also to develop among them a sense of responsibility, loyalty, and team spirit." On the other hand, Laurentie called for the expansion of local educational circles and youth centers. As an extension of formal schooling, these institutions, he maintained, had gone the furthest toward the "cultural evolution of the race," thereby "enabling the *évolué* elite to develop

⁸¹ See Chapter 3.

its intelligence and especially its character and capacity for critical thinking.” He then concluded, “This *éducation* of the *évolués* constitutes the lynchpin of our colonial policy.”⁸²

These tensions resurfaced in Laurentie’s vision for formal schooling. He hoped to create a system of public schools at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Although he used the terminology of the three-tiered metropolitan educational system, Laurentie invested each order of education with radically different content. “Secondary schools” would prepare their students for low-level administrative positions or to serve as primary school teachers for other “*indigènes*,” and so would actually be closer to upper primary schools [*écoles primaires supérieures*] than to metropolitan middle schools [*collèges*]. As for African “higher education,” Laurentie declared unequivocally that it should have “nothing in common with metropolitan higher education” [*enseignement supérieur*]. Rather, colonial “tertiary” education [*du troisième degré*] should be confined to a small number of specialized institutions in technical fields such as medicine, agriculture and pedagogy. These traditional orders of *enseignement* would then be supplemented by other kinds of state-supported institutions that responded to local conditions—rural schools that would give practical education in agriculture to the peasantry, “*médersas*” that would provide education to the sons of Islamic chiefs and other Muslim notables—in addition to missionary schools, with whom he envisioned “the most fertile collaboration.” Thus although Laurentie affirmed that “one of the objects of the Brazzaville Conference will be to organize mass schooling,” clearly not all segments of “the masses” would receive the same *enseignement*.⁸³ Indeed, in this system only the tiniest fraction would have access to anything beyond the most basic education.

⁸² Note sur l’enseignement des Indigènes et les oeuvres de jeunesse indigène dans les colonies françaises préparé par Henri Laurentie, 12 décembre 1943. ANOM 1AFFPOL/874, dossier 3.

⁸³ Ibid.

Laurentie's narrow conception of schooling for Africans was seconded by the director of "secondary education" in AOF, E. Cabrière. In his report for the Brazzaville Conference he argued that their task should be to adapt formal education to the needs and capabilities of the local population, which he believed precluded any secondary schooling in the metropolitan sense of the term. Indeed, he strongly opposed admitting Africans to *lycées* and proposed for them instead a more limited educational project: "Before we *instruct* them, [our project] hopes to *educate* them: it hopes for the progressive elevation of the whole population, not the artificial culture of a few uprooted plants." Secondary education in French sub-Saharan Africa, he continued, should offer the same education to "European" youth in the territories as they would receive in the metropole, but precisely for this reason the administration should not envision significant recruitment of African students at the secondary level: for him, the "nature of this schooling" and the "character of the exams which it entails both forbid it."⁸⁴

Significantly, Cabrière did not justify the exclusion of Africans from secondary education with elaborate rehearsals of racial stereotypes of African intelligence, aptitudes and discipline; instead he offered an essentialist portrait of "Europeans."⁸⁵ Since secondary education owed its originality to "classical culture," he asked, "Who could doubt that young Europeans, conscious or unconscious inheritors of Mediterranean civilization, are more apt than the local population [*les autochtones*] to receive this culture?" He forcefully argued that secondary education could never be "adapted" to local conditions without perverting its very essence—that everything about

⁸⁴ Rapport à M. le Directeur-Général de l'Instruction Publique sur l'Enseignement secondaire et la question indigène (preparatory document for the Brazzaville Conference), signed E. Cabrière, Chef de la Section de l'Enseignement Secondaire (AOF), s/d. ANS O/171 (31).

⁸⁵ The use of the term '*Européen*' here instead of '*Français*' or '*Blanc*' is indicative of a nascent crisis of vocabulary that would become more acute after the war, in which 'European' became a kind of code word for both 'French' and 'white' once the use of these terms became politically problematic. See my "Obscuring Race," *op cit.*

it was “conceived for Europeans.”⁸⁶ In this formulation then, young “Europeans,” whether they were aware of it or not, were construed as members of a common culture and a common civilization, inheritors of specific qualities that made them uniquely fit for a certain kind of education. In this formulation, French education was rendered as profoundly particular, contrary to the tenets of republican universalism. Its particularity, however, did not refer to a narrowly defined French nation, but rather, as European unity activists would later argue, to a broadly conceived “classical culture” and “Mediterranean civilization”— to a certain vision of *Europe*.

While debate over colonial secondary education would persist for years to come, French colonial administrators and educators on the eve of the Brazzaville Conference agreed that primary education would have to reach the masses in order to develop “our civilization in Africa.”⁸⁷ The nature of this education, however, remained a point of contention. As one member of the local administration in French Soudan (contemporary Mali) noted, the particular challenge for “*l’école africaine*,” was to find a formula that could reconcile African “tradition” and “European civilization,” the two main “educative forces” operating on indigenous society. The school should “strive to establish an equilibrium between the two tendencies,” though exactly how to go about this was not specified. Indeed, though the ultimate goal was to balance tradition and transformation, the administration would have to accept that all education has an inherent emancipatory quality, and that their African students “have learned from us that schooling [*instruction*] is the key that opens all doors.” For this colonial administrator, the emancipatory

⁸⁶ Rapport à M. le Directeur-Général de l’Instruction Publique sur l’Enseignement secondaire et la question indigène (preparatory document for the Brazzaville Conference), signed E. Cabrière, Chef de la Section de l’Enseignement Secondaire (AOF), s.d. ANS O/171 (31).

⁸⁷ Notes sur l’enseignement primaire en AOF, sent from the Direction-Générale de l’Instruction Publique, Education Generale et Sports (AOF) to the Governor of Dahomey, 12 janvier 1944. ANS O/171 (31).

power of formal education was not something to be afraid of: he affirmed that schooling was perfectly suited to AOF—all they had to do was expand its reach.⁸⁸

Yves Aubineau, Director of Public Instruction, General Education and Sports for AOF, had a more cautious view. In his final report for Brazzaville, Aubineau offered a precise definition of French colonial education doctrine, which he felt could be captured in two words: “happiness” and “progress.” He added, “It is essentially about penetrating the masses, teaching them how to live better, to give them a life that is more productive, healthy and comfortable—in a word, a better life.” He cautioned, however, that they must recognize that their conceptions of “happiness” may differ from those of the “*indigènes*”: “Without a doubt, our European ideas, as seductive, honest and generous as they may be, have a totally different nature in the eyes of the Blacks [*les Noirs*].” French administrators and educators must therefore be careful not to lose sight of these differences, because even though education is central in every “work of social promotion,” it is also “a lever that can upset, and if we are not careful, totally destroy, the entire edifice of indigenous social and familial organization.” Aubineau therefore exhorted, “It is therefore with infinite precaution that it must be undertaken! It is the herald of emancipation, which could be a disaster.”⁸⁹ Thus though Aubineau thought that education was necessary to improve Africans’ material and “moral” circumstances, he recognized that it also posed inherent threats to both the traditional African social order and French colonial rule.

Aubineau thought it would be impossible to reorganize colonial education according to the guiding principles of education reform in the metropole because it would force the colonial administration to admit “the equality of all children to the right to schooling.” In theory, he conceded that it would not only be just but also in the French interest to provide all African

⁸⁸ Rapport sur l’Education pour la Conférence de Brazzaville (Soudan), s/d, s.n. ANS O/171 (31).

⁸⁹ Rapport a/s de la Conférence de Brazzaville, signed Yves Aubineau, Directeur-Général de l’Instruction Publique (AOF), 10 janvier 1944. ANS O/171 (31).

children with equal access to education “if we want to distill from the masses the true elites.” Since only a tiny fraction of children in AOF were school-educated, he continued, it would be ridiculous to think that the top students were actually the best and the brightest young people in the Federation. Nevertheless, given the paucity of schools, teachers, and financing for new buildings and hiring more personnel, Aubineau maintained that getting 100% of school-age African children into school was a pipe dream, especially with regard to secondary education. Indeed, he cited long passages from Cabrière’s report that secondary education was designed for “Europeans” and that they could not adapt it to African conditions without distorting it beyond recognition. Aubineau therefore set modest goals for the Brazzaville Conference: he proposed increasing the total number of African children attending schools in AOF to just 200,000 over the next ten years. If they lacked funds for significant investment in the building of new schools, he concluded, they should build fewer but more durable institutions, “so that our African school will be at the disposal of France of the future [*la France future*].”⁹⁰

The official program of the Brazzaville Conference was circulated within the CFLN in Algiers and the administrations in AOF and AEF in January 1944. The preamble of this document immediately situated the importance of colonial reform, of the work they were to do at Brazzaville, in an international context:

The world is watching us. We must respond to these enquiring looks not only with a presentation of our past successes, but also with a program...that will show that France is an active and methodical nation, a worthy steward of the Empire which it has under its care.⁹¹

By invoking the “past successes” of French colonialism alongside their calls for robust reform, the conference organizers were careful to avoid discrediting the prewar colonial administration,

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Programme général, Conférence de Brazzaville (janvier 1944), 2. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2201, dossier 5.

and thereby deferred a more meaningful reevaluation of French colonial practice. The preamble avowed that “the indigenous populations” had always been the *raison d’être* of the French presence in Africa; if this was not always evident in practice it was because colonial administrators had misunderstood the “real interests” of Africans. Framed in this way, the French administration could proudly affirm, “without waiting for the Atlantic Charter, France had already enshrined, if not in words, but more importantly, in deeds and in intentions, the principle ‘Africa for the Africans.’”⁹²

French insistence that henceforth “the respect and the progress of indigenous life will be the basis of our colonial policy,” put education front and center at Brazzaville. The preamble of the Brazzaville program declared, “The material and moral progress of the indigenous populations cannot proceed without adequate education.” The preamble posed the question of whether the education that France currently offered its African populations was sufficient, both in terms of its scale and its content, and responded that clearly the answer was no; the debate over whether they should focus on technical or a more “intellectual” education was futile at this point, since neither the one nor the other currently reached the masses. And therein lay the real objective of Brazzaville in matters of education: to devise “mass education” to give “the whole population a recipe for a more productive, more sanitary and a better life.”⁹³

The resolutions adopted at Brazzaville sought to do precisely that by focusing above all on raising rates of school attendance. They called for all colonial governors to submit a fifteen-year plan for the rapid construction of new teacher training institutes, primary schools, and upper primary schools for boys and girls in their territories by August 1944. These plans would then be reviewed for approval by a special committee within the Colonial Commissariat’s Department of

⁹² Ibid., 3.

⁹³ Ibid., 4.

Public Education in Algiers. This same committee would also begin preparations for recruiting new teachers and studying the possibility of creating new professional and secondary schools in the territories.⁹⁴

In addition to calling for the construction of new schools, the measures adopted at Brazzaville also weighed in on the content of the education these schools would dispense. In a general discussion of relations between the metropole and the African territories, several conference participants cited a Belgian ethnologist on the problem of education in the Congo at length to convey their own view of the goals of colonial education:

The goal of education is to secure better living conditions for the Bantus according to their reality, not according to our European conceptions of the twentieth century. The Bantus in the Congo are currently different from us [*autres que nous*]. It is therefore necessary that the education we give them is not in any way copied from the education we give to children in Europe, but that takes into account their own mentality, conceptions and needs.⁹⁵

In the Belgian ethnologist's view, the purpose of colonial education was to preserve and reproduce Bantu difference. Representatives of the administration in AOF forcefully agreed with this formula. They insisted their objective should be "the making of the Blacks" [*faire du Noir*] by which they meant to "protect the race, assure its harmonious development, in short, to make the *indigène* an *indigène* of quality."⁹⁶

Taking this view to its logical conclusion, the Belgian ethnologist had advocated that colonial education should only be conducted in local languages, but on this point, French officials gathered at Brazzaville disagreed. They viewed instruction in French as essential not only for the formation of an African elite loyal to France but also for solidifying ties between

⁹⁴ Execution des Recommandations: Enseignement, Brazzaville Conference, janvier 1944. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2201, dossier 5.

⁹⁵ Rapport relations metropole-colonies, Brazzaville Conference, janvier 1944. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2201, dossier 5.

⁹⁶ Rapport no. 1 sur la politique indigène en AOF, Brazzaville Conference, s.d. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2201, dossier 5.

metropole and colony. They even cited the Soviet Union as a model where education in a single language—a Stalinist policy—served as “a powerful means of realizing an aggregation of diverse nationalities.”⁹⁷ Accordingly, education reformers at Brazzaville mandated that in future, French would be the exclusive language of instruction in *all* African schools—whether public or private, in urban centers or in the remotest village.⁹⁸ This also meant that instruction in Arabic would no longer be officially permitted even in Muslim majority regions, a policy that would have significant repercussions after the war.⁹⁹

Despite the unanimous decision to insist on French-language instruction, the reasoning behind it remained murky; there was no real consensus on either the kind of African elites they sought to produce or what kind of “aggregation of diverse nationalities” they actually had in mind. Leaders in AOF conceded, “an autochthonous elite, very small at least at the outset, could integrate itself, in the fullest sense of the term, in the universal French community where they will join our Frenchmen of color from our oldest colonies.” This would only be possible, however, for those who had acquired a level of culture and “moral standing” comparable to those of “the most distinguished Frenchmen.” What’s more, they considered it desirable that this “incorporation” would occur elsewhere in the empire, not in their home territories.¹⁰⁰ That it was difficult for colonial administrators to imagine African elites’ integration into French milieus on the ground in the French African Federations suggests that the African territories themselves were exceptional spaces within this supposedly “universal” French community.

⁹⁷ Rapport relations metropole-colonies, *op cit*.

⁹⁸ Execution des Recommandations, *op cit*.

⁹⁹ I return to this issue in Chapters 3, 5 and 6. See also Rachel Kantowitz, “‘So That Tomorrow Would be Better for Us:’ Developing French-Funded Catholic Schools in Dahomey and Senegal, 1946-1975,” PhD Diss., NYU, 2015, Chapter 3.

¹⁰⁰ Rapport no. 1 sur la politique indigène en AOF, 51-52, *op cit*.

The official *Plan d'Enseignement* that emerged from the Brazzaville Conference did not resolve these tensions. It focused on primary education to avoid disturbing the existing social order too much, but it called for expanding the reach of primary schooling to facilitate a better selection of veritable elites. Primary education would last for six years, and those who completed the cycle would receive a simple *Certificat d'études*, a diploma that had no equivalent in metropolitan France. The education students received in primary schools would be modeled on the metropolitan system *and* “adapted” to local life, with large sections of the curriculum devoted to manual work, agriculture, household training, and physical education. The idea was for it to be “the least literary possible.” In this way, colonial education would instill “love and respect for France” among its young African charges without disturbing their traditional milieus. This was in perfect accord with the guiding principles of the “new” French colonial doctrine outlined at Brazzaville: “It is essential that peoples develop according to their own spirit [*génie*] and that Black France, firmly rooted in African soil, be an original, vibrant and fertile creation.” The Plan also recognized that “*enseignement*” must be accompanied by other youth initiatives. It called for four sections within the colonial administrations’ youth service to promote 1) youth centers, cultural centers, and libraries; 2) sports associations and the development of sports infrastructure; 3) scouts; and 4) social assistance programs—all of which would extend “contact between French and indigenous ways of life.”¹⁰¹

For all of its limitations and ambivalence, this modest plan required significant financial investment. In the months after the Conference, the Commissariat of Colonies requested an additional 675,000 francs for its 1944 budget to create and staff its own Department of Education [*Direction de l'Enseignement*]. To justify these extra funds, the request invoked the Brazzaville

¹⁰¹ Plan d'Enseignement-Conférence Africaine Française de Brazzaville, s/d, sn. ANS O/171 (31).

Conference's call to develop colonial education, which would require massive recruitment of metropolitan personnel to train African elementary school teachers and extensive study of how to adapt pedagogy, textbooks, and curricula to African milieus.¹⁰² This sum may seem substantial given the penury of wartime conditions, but it is worth comparing it to other funding requests for colonial projects at this time. Consider, for instance, a concurrent request for 800,000 francs to help complete the construction of a Catholic cathedral in Brazzaville, and another 500,000 to renovate a Protestant church in Douala (Cameroon). The Commissariat of Colonies considered the completion of the Brazzaville cathedral directly in line with French interests, since the curacy in Brazzaville had “fostered national sentiment which contributed profoundly to achieving a climate of national unity in AEF.”¹⁰³ As for the Protestant church in Douala, it was noted that the French Protestant mission there represented the beginning of “Christian civilization in Cameroon,” and that the mission had achieved great works ever since “as much from the point of view of evangelization as the penetration of French influence among indigenous milieus.”¹⁰⁴ Clearly the central colonial authority in Algiers considered Christianity—in both its Catholic and Protestant forms—as an important vector for the spread of French influence and French interests in sub-Saharan Africa. Since they requested almost twice as many funds for these projects as they did to create and operate the entire Direction de l'Enseignement, we may well wonder whether they considered formal schooling or Christian practice more effective.

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¹⁰² Commissariat aux Colonies (CFLN): Budget 1944. AN C//15268, dossier 2.

¹⁰³ Observations sur la subvention pour l'achèvement de la cathédrale de Brazzaville, s/d., s.n. AN C//15268, dossier 2.

¹⁰⁴ Observations sur l'église protestante du centenaire à Douala, s/d, s.n. AN C//15268, dossier 2.

Wartime planners, whether in London, Algiers, Dakar or Brazzaville, attributed a fundamental role to youth as they envisioned France's national, colonial and European futures, and they conducted their policy discussions on these issues in a pronounced civilizational idiom. The substance and referents of this idiom varied according to place, but these variations were all articulated within the same conversation. French attempts to think about youth and education across colonial and European contexts during the war produced a fundamentally new configuration of interlocking, and sometimes contradictory, civilizational discourses that would profoundly shape the design, implementation, and evaluation of colonial and European education reforms and youth programs in the late 1940s and 1950s. Wartime youth and education planning engaged with long-held notions about the essence of what it meant to be French, European and African, but wartime planners were also responding to the historical conjuncture, particularly shifting ideas about secularism and the role of religion in French society, politics and culture, and a changing international landscape with regard to race.

French officials had not yet excised racial language from their postwar planning completely, but they increasingly relied on "European" as a code word for "French" or "white" when debating what colonial education reforms should look like. This coded language was not wholly new in French colonial discourse, but its intensified usage at this time is significant in light of the fact that French leaders were simultaneously participating in a transnational effort to define what "European" actually meant—indeed, what "Europe" would actually be—in the project of European unification. The preoccupation with youth across metropolitan French, colonial African, and transnational European contexts brought ideas about Frenchness, Europeaness and Africanness—and racial and religious boundaries more generally—into more sustained, and often uneasy, contact with one another in the immediate postwar years.

Chapter 3

The Culturalization of Christianity in Postwar Youth and Education Policy, 1944-1950

The close relationship Free French leaders established with Christian scout movements from London to Brazzaville in the early war years set a powerful precedent for new kinds of public-private partnerships in postwar youth and education policy. De Gaulle's initial impulse to embrace and celebrate the allegiance of confessional youth groups like the Catholic Scouts de France anticipated widespread reappraisals of the Third Republican anticlericalism as more robust plans to reform the French national education system gathered steam in the run-up to the Liberation and its immediate aftermath. Determined to preserve the fragile alliance between secular republicans and Catholics forged in both the internal and external resistance, education reformers working under the CFLN in Algiers (1943-1944), and then under the Provisional Government back in Paris (1944-1946), tried to find new common ground on the divisive issue of *laïcité*.

There are two distinct dimensions to French *laïcité*. *Laïcité* connotes an institutional framework for church-state relations guided by the principles of "separation" and "neutrality," as well as a commitment to the promotion of a secular civic morality as the bedrock of a unifying national identity. The strong relationship between these two dimensions is key to understanding why *laïcité* has been so intimately bound up with youth and education policy in modern France: *laïcité* represents both a unique political culture borne of the history of conflict between the French state and the Catholic Church that dates to the revolutionary era, and a method of socialization into that political culture via the school that became institutionalized under the Third Republic. However, those particular church-state struggles were only one constellation of issues among many concerning religion, youth, and education that French officials confronted

across national, colonial, and European contexts in the postwar conjuncture. The restructuring of the post-Vichy French state and a renewed push for social democracy in the metropole, as well as political transformations in the empire and Europe, each entailed their own imperatives for youth and education reforms and engendered distinct formulations of *laïcité* that best aligned with those imperatives. The pursuit of those divergent objectives took earlier formulations of *laïcité* in multiple, often contradictory, directions, in which certain claims about *laïcité* became more powerful than others.

There is a vast interdisciplinary literature on the tensions and contradictions of *laïcité*. This work has shown that although *laïcité* is often hailed as a cornerstone of French republicanism, it has never been a stable formation.¹ As anthropologist Mayanthi Fernando argues, the very “unsettled” nature of *laïcité* does not diminish its power but rather enhances it, “through a continual process of reiteration, rearticulation, regeneration.” She continues, “because it remains inchoate and fragmentary...the secular formation called France must continually reconstitute itself as a cohesive entity, redrawing its boundaries.”² In the analysis that follows, I argue that the immediate postwar period was a crucial moment when *laïcité* was both reconstituted and fundamentally reconfigured as the projects of national reconciliation after

¹ For an incisive historical overview, see Jean Baubérot, *Laïcité 1905-2005, entre passion et raison* (Paris: Seuil, 2004) and Baubérot and Micheline Milot, *Laïcités sans frontières* (Paris: Seuil, 2011). There are large bodies of literature that focus on how *laïcité* has shaped the political and social experience of religious minorities in modern France. In earlier periods of French history, Jews functioned as the religious minority par excellence, but in recent years there has been a shift to a pronounced emphasis on Islam. For canonical works on Jews and French republicanism, see Pierre Birnbaum, *Destins Juifs. De la Révolution française à Carpentras* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1995) and his *Les fous de la République. Histoire politique des Juifs d’État de Gambetta à Vichy* (Paris: Fayard, 1992); Dominique Schnappeur, *Juifs et israélites* (Paris: Gallimard, 1980). On Muslims and Islam, see Mayanthi Fernando, *The Republic Unsettled: Muslim French and the Contradictions of Secularism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014); Naomi Davidson, *Only Muslim: Embodying Islam in Twentieth-Century France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012); Joan Wallach Scott, *The Politics of the Veil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007); Trica Danielle Keaton, *Muslim Girls and the Other France. Race, Identity Politics & Social Exclusion* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006).

² Fernando, *The Republic Unsettled*: 11-12.

Vichy, imperial renewal and European integration intersected. I contend the significance of this period in the historical evolution of *laïcité* has been underestimated, precisely because the critical interplay between national-metropolitan, colonial African, and transnational European developments remains obscure.³

In the first part of this chapter, I trace heated debates about to what extent the postwar republic should reprise its predecessor's model of *laïcité* in a series of special commissions and task forces that were set up by the CFLN and the Provisional Government in 1944-1945 to democratize the French national education system. I argue within their technical, often tedious, discussions of state subsidies and bureaucratic controls, a more expansive discursive and conceptual shift was actually taking place: the explicit coding of France and French values as culturally Christian. In their appeals to Catholic educators in the name of national reconciliation, ardent partisans of secular education not only conceded the Catholic roots of "French civilization"; they also affirmed that the social process of secularization and the political ideology of *laïcité* were themselves products of Christian theology, a formulation that subsumed both Catholicism and Protestantism in a single tradition.⁴

This culturalization of Christianity in the postwar conjuncture is a crucial corollary to what many US-based scholars have described as the racialization of Islam in contemporary France, an active process that has constructed French Muslims as an inassimilable Other in the body politic by virtue of the irreducible difference of Islam as both a faith and an embodied

³ The European dimension in what is typically understood to be a national-colonial story is particularly absent in the literature on *laïcité*. Fernando does take up issues relating to European integration but only briefly and in a much later period (1970s).

⁴ Although Protestantism was not widespread in metropolitan France, the promotion of a more inclusive "Christianity" rather than Catholicism articulated with imperatives in the European and colonial African contexts (where Protestants represented a significant proportion of Christians.)

practice.⁵ Many European scholars, who are often more averse to using race as an analytical category than their American counterparts, characterize this same phenomenon, not just in France, but across Europe, as part of a broader “culturalization of religion” that necessarily accompanies the secularization process underway in Europe today. Political scientists Christian Joppke and François Foret have both argued it is precisely the culturalizing of religion that authorizes secular European states to continue to identify with Christian symbols and practices while casting those of religious minorities as divisive and “political,” thereby marking the boundaries between “us” and “them.”⁶ While Joppke and Foret focus on the culturalization of the “majority” religion—which is of course Christianity in its various forms—anthropologist Talal Asad made a similar argument over a decade ago by exposing the very constructed-ness of the notion of Islam as a “minority” religion in Europe. That construction, he argues, was the product of a centuries-long tradition of European orientalism and a key foundation of what he calls “the myth of Europe.”⁷

The analysis in this chapter locates the consolidation of the postwar iteration of that myth and the culturalization of Christianity in transnational efforts to “Europeanize” formal education and youth initiatives in Western Europe in the late 1940s. I connect those efforts in the transnational European area to the referendum on *laïcité* in the national-metropolitan French

⁵ On the racialization of Islam in twentieth-century France, see especially Davidson, *Only Muslim*. On *laïcité* as a particular form of racism against French Muslims, see Muriam Haleh Davis’s review of Davidson, Fernando and Joan Scott, “‘A Distinctly French Universalism’: Translating *Laïcité* After Charlie Hebdo,” *Jadaliyya*, January 26, 2015.

⁶ Christian Joppke, *The Secular State Under Siege: Religion and Politics in Europe and America* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2015), 4; François Foret, *Religion and Politics in the European Union: the Secular Canopy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 4. Much like the historical actors in this chapter, Joppke also argues that secularization is a fundamentally Christian phenomenon, reifying the “civilizational” boundary between a secular-Christian West and the Islamic world. This same view can also be found in the work of René Remond, one of the preeminent French historians of religion in Europe. See his *Religion and Society in Modern Europe* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997).

⁷ Talal Asad, “Muslims as a ‘Religious Minority’ in Europe,” in his *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003).

context by showing that the actors involved in both efforts were literally in conversation with one another – that many of the same French officials and educators debating *laïcité* and metropolitan education reform were also participating in key European forums on what pan-European youth and education policies should like. Those forums became an important site where shifts in French political discourse about *laïcité* that originated in the specifically French context of national reconciliation after Vichy were naturalized and reinforced by transnational processes of European integration.

The timing here is key for appreciating the connections between processes of racialization and the culturalization of religion rather than seeing them either as mutually exclusive interpretative frames or wholly independent historical developments. I suggest that the culturalization of religion articulates with the “culturalization of race” that race scholars, philosophers, and intellectual historians have identified in Euro-American racial formations in precisely this period.⁸ The ambiguity of racial, religious and “cultural” lines of differentiation in this historical moment can perhaps best be appreciated in how the contestation over *laïcité* in metropolitan France, and reformulations of religion as culture in both French and transnational European discussions about youth and education, played out in French Africa. This chapter therefore concludes with an extended discussion of French officials’ views of *laïcité*, Christianity, and Islam in the colonial African context.

⁸ On the “culturalization of race” in a transnational European perspective, see Alana Lentin, *Race and Antiracism in Postwar Europe* (London: Pluto Press, 2004). The notion of the culturalization of race is also linked to Balibar’s notion of “racism without races” and David Theo Goldberg’s “raceless racism.” See Balibar, “Is there a Neo-Racism?” in Balibar and Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities* (New York: Verso, 1991) and Goldberg, *The Threat of Race: Reflections on Racial Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009). For a global take, see Howard Winant, *The World Is A Ghetto: Race and Democracy Since World War II* (New York: Basic Books, 2001).

***Laïcité*, National Unity, and the Renovation of French Democracy**

While top colonial officials and educators were gathering in Brazzaville to hash out colonial education reform, the CFLN convened a special commission in Algiers to prepare the overhaul of the French metropolitan education system after the liberation of France.⁹ The Commission was primarily composed of education officials and faculty from the University of Algiers. At its opening session, the CFLN's Commissioner for National Education René Capitant stressed the high stakes of the commission's task in no uncertain terms. He declared, "The interdependence of *enseignement* and the general political order is such that reform in this domain is a work of the utmost importance."¹⁰

Politicians and bureaucrats were not the only ones to link the *débâcle* to the total failure of the education system under the Third Republic. The CFLN's Commissariat of Education enlisted a wide array of advisers among the exiled intellectuals and professionals who had made their way to Algiers after the "liberation" of the colony in 1943. One such adviser was Dr. Arnault Tzanck, a prominent blood specialist of Russian-Jewish origin who had spent the first part of the war in exile in Chile. Famous for inventing multiple devices and procedures for blood transfusions, Tzanck was hardly an expert in pedagogy or education policy.¹¹ And yet, he shared the conviction that France not only needed to reclaim its territory but also "reconstruct its soul," so much so that he felt compelled to write his own treatise in 1944 that called on the CFLN to develop a bold new doctrine of education. He wrote, "We could make little Hitlerites, little Mussolineans, but we cannot make little Frenchmen, who would be real Men?" For Tzanck, the issue was both about unity and inclusion within the nation as well as the projection of French

⁹ Arrêté du 21 janvier 1944, *Journal Officiel du 29 janvier 1944*. AN F/17/13335.

¹⁰ Procès-Verbal de la Séance d'Ouverture de la Commission de la réforme de l'enseignement, 8 mars 1944. AN F/17/13335.

¹¹ On Tzanck's life and career, see William H. Schneider, "Pioneers and Pathfinders: Arnault Tzack (1886-1954)," *Transfusions Medical Reviews* 24:2 (April 2010), 147-150.

grandeur to the rest of the world. He concluded, “Educators must instill faith in the future of France among all segments of French youth so that France can reclaim the position it deserves in world affairs.”¹²

Resistance networks underground in the metropole ardently shared the sentiment.¹³ The same week that the Commission for Education Reform held its first session in Algiers, the resistance movements, syndicalist organizations, and political parties (grouped together as the Conseil National de la Résistance [CNR]), issued their own proposal for education reform.¹⁴ The CNR declared that their “combat mission” must not end with the Liberation. Much like Tzanck, the CNR linked power politics on the international stage and social democratization at home; it urged that they must continue to work together to build “a more just social order” in order to restore France’s “*grandeur*” and to demonstrate “proof of France’s unity” to the world. The CNR’s official program called for the restoration of liberal political rights, but it also proclaimed that true political rights required robust social rights. The CNR therefore championed a battery of social policies that would form the bedrock of the postwar welfare state in France and across Europe after the war: the right to work, the right to leisure, and a comprehensive system of social security and unemployment insurance.¹⁵

The CNR’s call for education reforms was part of this blueprint for postwar social democracy. Its program affirmed that they must assure the real possibility “for all French

¹² Dr. Arnault Tzanck, *Essai d’une doctrine de l’éducation* (Alger 1944). AN F/17/17539.

¹³ For in-depth analysis of the contrasts between the approaches of the internal and external resistance, see Jean-François Muracciole, “La Résistance, l’éducation et la culture,” *Vingtième Siècle, revue d’histoire* 58:1 (1998), 100-110.

¹⁴ Programme du Conseil National de la Résistance, adopté dans la clandestinité, le 15 mars 1944 par l’ensemble des représentants des organisations de la résistance, des centrales syndicales et des partis ou tendances politiques groupés au sein du CNR [electronic resource].

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 2ème Partie, Art. 5b. On the longer history of the French welfare state in comparative perspective, see Susan Pedersen, *Family, Dependence and the Origins of the Welfare State: Britain and France, 1914-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

children to benefit from education [*instruction*] and to gain access to the most developed culture,” regardless of the financial or social position of their parents. Only then would “the highest positions be really accessible to all who have the necessary capacities to fulfill them and thereby promote a true elite, not of birth but of merit.” The program concluded that only with the democratization of education, the restoration of a liberal political regime, and the guarantee of new social rights, “would a new Republic be founded that would sweep away the reactionary regime instituted by Vichy,” and bring into being “a unifying democracy.”¹⁶

The CFLN’s Commission for Education Reform in Algiers reprised the framework laid out in the program of the CNR, both in its conceptualization of education reform as part of a broader program of political renovation and social democratization, and in its negotiation (by way of avoidance) of the issue of *laïcité*. At the end of the Commission’s six months of work in Algiers, it collectively affirmed:

An ardent desire for renovation is inspiring all French people, outside as well as within France. The troubled years before the war, as well as the vile reaction that dresses itself up as a “national revolution,” have forged in us all a desire for real revolution and national rejuvenation. Neither a total return to the past, nor timid or partial reforms can satisfy us... This is even more true in the domain of education [*enseignement*] than elsewhere, as national politics and education are so intimately linked.¹⁷

The central problem with French education before the war, the Commission declared, was a total lack of “real equality in education [*enseignement*]” which amounted to an “*enseignement de caste*.” The Commission therefore called for the establishment of a system of secondary

¹⁶ Ibid, 2ème Partie, Art. 5d. Significantly, the CNR’s position on education never once touched on the issue of *laïcité*. This glaring omission presents a sharp contrast to an otherwise identical program for institutional reforms published by the French Communist Party [PCF] less than a year earlier (1943). Though the PCF was a dominant faction within the National Resistance Council, the imperative for unity and consensus among the leading political tendencies—communist, socialist but also Catholic—evidently trumped the PCF’s staunch *laïc* platform.

¹⁷ Marcel Durry, Rapport général des travaux de la Commission pour la réforme de l’enseignement, Alger, août 1944, 1. Reprinted in the *Bulletin officiel du Ministère de l’Éducation Nationale*, numéro special consacré aux travaux de la Commission pour la réforme de l’enseignement, réunie à Alger du mars à septembre 1944, 16 novembre 1944 (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1944). AN F/60/427.

education that would be free, obligatory and the same for all French children, girls and boys, until at least age 15 or 16. After that point, those who wanted to pursue further study in regular or technical high schools until the *Baccalauréat* could do so, but everyone else would also continue on with some kind of further training or apprenticeship; no one would be permitted to enter a profession until age 18. Only this revamped approach to secondary education, the Commission agreed, would ensure the equality of all citizens and reach “the whole Nation” to produce the true elites the nation really needed, “elites much more diverse and in greater numbers than in the past.”¹⁸

The Commission’s call for the dramatic expansion and diversification of secondary education for all French children raised the interrelated issues of *laïcité* and the state’s monopoly on education. The Commission affirmed, “The education [*enseignement*] provided by the State will be *laïc*.” It continued:

This principle of *laïcité*, which in France is traditionally linked to the issue of free and compulsory education, has inspired many members of the Commission to envision a state monopoly on education. The definitive fusion of the “two youths” that Waldeck Rousseau spoke about—the true single school system [*école unique*]*—cannot be achieved, they believe, unless the State takes control of the entire national education system so that the *esprit de caste* cannot find nooks and crannies where it could persist or be reborn.*

Despite this claim that “a good number” of them believed democratization, national unity, *laïcité* and the *école unique* necessarily went hand in hand, the Commission could not reach a consensus. The issue was too divisive, they maintained, for unelected bureaucrats and academics to decide themselves. Thus they deferred on making any concrete proposals, leaving the matter for the people’s representatives to resolve once the parliament was reestablished in Paris.¹⁹

¹⁸ Ibid., 14.

¹⁹ Ibid., 15.

The Commission also hedged on its position for state support for confessional youth organizations. Citing a range of *laïc* and religious youth programs that included sports clubs, youth camps, and scouting, the Commission declared that together these initiatives “form around public education a multitude of active and often fruitful good intentions,” and consequently that “the State should recognize this good will, and build on it.” In its final declaration on the “future of the renovated school [*l'école rénovée*],” the Commission once again sidestepped the tension between supporting confessional youth groups and *laïcité*. Without making any concrete proposals, it vaguely reaffirmed that the “educative character” and positive results of private, confessional youth organizations in the past justified government support.²⁰

Thus after six months of weekly meetings, the Commission in Algiers left no clear policy recommendations for their successors in Paris regarding *laïcité* in the domain of formal schooling or extracurricular youth programs. Fearful that the question of *laïcité* would continue to derail discussions of comprehensive education reform, the resurrected Ministry of National Education [MEN] under the French Provisional Government [GPRF] tried to disentangle these issues by forming two distinct task forces once the Free French government relocated to Paris in November 1944: a “Commission of Education Reform” and a “Commission for the Study of the Problem of Relations Between Public and Private Schools.” The former, which came to be informally known as the Langevin Commission, was composed exclusively of officials and educators in the MEN and was charged with determining the technical details of primary, secondary, and higher education reforms. The latter, on the other hand, brought together sitting members of parliament and educators and officials in the MEN *and* representatives of the Catholic Church, Catholic and Protestant private schools, and Catholic and Protestant youth

²⁰ Ibid., 31.

organizations in search of the consensus on postwar *laïcité* that had eluded the CFLN group in Algiers.²¹ Significantly, no Jewish or Muslim representatives were invited to participate.

The commission on public and private schools was put under the stewardship of André Philip and became known as the Philip Commission. From the outset, Philip, a Protestant and a Socialist who himself had been active in Protestant student movements in his youth, struggled to maintain a civil dialogue between the militant secularists and clerical members of the Commission. At its opening session, Philip declared that their overarching goal was to preserve the “spiritual union achieved in the Resistance,” in the hopes that the Commission, “rising above the ideological conflicts of the past, will achieve a synthesis of the diverse positions on the problem of public and private schools.”²² Despite his exhortation, the tenor of the conversation quickly turned combative. Indeed, in that very session several Catholic members protested that it was hopeless to debate relations between public and private confessional schooling without knowing exactly what reforms the Langevin Commission was planning. On the secularist side, several MEN officials vociferously objected to the government’s willingness to continue to pay Vichy subsidies to private Catholic education for the 1945 school year. The continuation of that Vichy policy, Director-General of Education Jean Bayet declared, constituted a poor start to diffusing tensions.²³

The issue of whether and to what extent the government should continue to fund private Catholic education in metropolitan France proved to be especially pressing as the 1945 budget came up for parliamentary review. The secularists in the Commission agreed to the renewal of

²¹ For an overview of the work of both of these commissions, see Isabelle Clavel, “Réformer l’École après 1944: du consensus au *dissensus* entre la SFIO et le MRP,” *Histoire@Politique. Politique, culture, société*, n° 18, septembre-décembre 2012. While this article provides important political context for the work of each commission, it remains narrowly focused on the role of education reform in electoral politics.

²² Procès-Verbal de la 1^{ère} séance de la Commission Philip tenue le 6 novembre 1944: 1. AN F/17/17539.

²³ *Ibid.*, 2-4.

Vichy subsidies to Catholic schools—over 700 million francs for the upcoming school year—but called for the suspension of the subsidies the year after and a return to the laws on the books in 1939 until they could agree on a general policy regulating state funding for private religious schools in future.²⁴ This stop-gap measure proved to be the only thing the Philip Commission could agree on; the Commission remained fiercely divided and in the end, never proposed a long-term policy.

Ultimately, then, the Philip Commission, like its predecessors in London and Algiers, did not resolve the problem of private religious education in metropolitan France. The Philip Commission's sister institution, the Langevin Commission, also failed to implement its plan for education reform. The Langevin Commission had indeed put together a comprehensive reform proposal, known as the *Plan Langevin-Wallon*, which outlined the total overhaul of French education through significant changes in curricula, selection criteria, diplomas, and teacher-training requirements. However, by the time the *Plan* was completed—in 1947 after thirty-one months of deliberations—the political winds had shifted so dramatically that it was dead on arrival. Both the Commission and the *Plan* had been the fruits of political *tripartisme*, the ruling coalition of Socialists, Communists and Christian Democrats [MRP] that had governed since the creation of the GPRF in 1944. That coalition collapsed in May 1947, when the Communists were excluded from the government for refusing to vote for funding to support the war in Indochina. Never even presented before parliament, the stillborn *Plan Langevin-Wallon* is framed in the scholarly literature as collateral damage of this political infighting and the onset of the Cold War.

²⁴ Procès-Verbal de la séance de la Commission Philip tenue le 25 janvier 1945: 3-4. AN F/17/17539.

Nonetheless, the *Plan* is often seen as the basis of the massive institutional reform of the French education system that was finally realized under the Fifth Republic.²⁵

Though the *Plan Langevin-Wallon* was never implemented, it is significant that its ambitious vision for the democratization of the French education system was first articulated in the immediate postwar context. Moreover, its apparently unequivocal endorsement of *laïcité* is less black and white in light of the debate over state funding for Catholic schools in the Philip Commission. Though the issue of *laïcité* was actually only raised twice in the entire thirty-five page *Plan*, it is noteworthy that the *Plan* construed *laïcité* as a system of positive moral values, not merely state neutrality vis-à-vis religion:

The public school, like the state itself, following the Constitution, is *laïque*, that is, open to all children. It cannot dispense any doctrinal, political or confessional teachings [*enseignement*].

The *laïcité* of the school does not mean that the school does not engage in a broader educational project [*projet d'éducation*]. If it is not the school's purpose to ensure the recruitment of this or that political or religious group, it nevertheless owes it to the Nation to prepare children to fulfill their role in social life and assume their responsibilities as citizens.²⁶

This vision of schools dispensing a positive secular morality reprised the dominant Third Republican interpretation of *laïcité*, which was clearly still ardently embraced by the old guard of MEN officials and the teaching corps in the Langevin Commission. Concurrent debates in the Philip Commission demonstrate, however, that this view was no longer hegemonic even within the MEN.

²⁵ See *Rapport Langevin-Wallon*, réédition commentée par Claude Allègre et al. (Paris: Mille et une nuits, 2002): 112-127, and Jeremy Ahearne, *Intellectuals, Culture and Public Policy in France. Approaches from the Left* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2010): 128-138. For the plan in a comparative European perspective, see Guy Neave, "War and Educational Reconstruction in Belgium, France and the Netherlands, 1940-1947" in Roy Lowe, ed., *Education and the Second World War. Studies in Schooling and Social Change* (London: Routledge, 1992).

²⁶ *Rapport Langevin-Wallon*, Part VI.

The Philip Commission's proceedings provide an instructive lens on the ways in which *laïcité* was being reconfigured in postwar French political culture. Indeed, the very fact that the commission never proposed any concrete policy recommendations because it could not arrive at a consensus between its secularist majority and Catholic minority is a clear indication that postwar education officials were no longer willing to forcibly impose *laïcité* on French Catholics. More importantly, the Philip Commission provided a novel venue for dialogue—however hostile—between state officials and Catholic educators within the state apparatus itself, which became a model for national councils on youth and education for the duration of the Fourth Republic.²⁷ And it was in the context of these novel conversations that even staunch secularists proved willing to concede that French culture and society—indeed, French “civilization”—was fundamentally Christian at its core.

Recognition of, and appeals to, France's “*Chrétienté*” became a recurring theme in the argumentation of the MEN officials in the Philip Commission. They repeatedly insisted on the neutrality of the *école laïque* and maintained there was nothing anti-religious or anti-Catholic about the education it would dispense. On the contrary, they argued “one can find God by different paths,” which would actually be encouraged by secular public education. The only difference between secular and confessional schooling, they maintained, was that “the spirit of the *école laïque* is not to define the essential things from the outset.”²⁸ When Catholic educators responded that they were not interested in mere neutrality, and maintained their right to actively promote Catholic doctrine and the Catholic faith to children whose parents desired it, proponents

²⁷ Representatives of Catholic and Protestant schools and youth organizations were included as permanent members of official youth and education councils and committees, which served as central advisory and policymaking organs within the MEN and coordinated French participation in international congresses. For the latter, see for instance Centre des Archives Contemporaine (CAC) 19880437/24. Significantly, no representatives of Muslim student and/or youth organizations were invited to join.

²⁸ Procès-Verbal de la séance de la Commission Philip tenue le 20 novembre 1944: 3-4. AN F/17/17539.

of the *école laïque* took a different tack. They argued that special Catholic instruction was unnecessary in light of the centrality of Christianity in French culture. A single school system dispensing a “humanist” education, they insisted, would unite all segments of French youth in a “common faith,” precisely because “all of our culture is in fact impregnated with Christianity.”²⁹ In this formulation then, even the secular morality public schools would transmit to future generations was cast as thoroughly Christian.

Arguments in favor of a state monopoly on education such as these were countered by Catholic members of the Commission with strikingly multiculturalist reformulations of what national unity ought to mean in “modern democracies.” Their unabashedly pluralist rhetoric is particularly noteworthy. Abbé Chéruef, a prominent figure in the Catholic resistance in Brittany during the war, forcefully declared that France was composed of “multiple and distinct spiritual families, woven together and communicating with one another,” which gave France its “vital unity.” France “is not their juxtaposition. It is their community.” Referring explicitly to Catholics, Protestants, communists, atheists, and even Jews, Chéruef continued, “In the great democracy our country wants to become again, and for the sake of national unity, there can be no question of refusing any one of these spiritual families the conditions they feel are necessary for them to thrive.”³⁰ Chéruef’s remarks are noteworthy not only because he insists the “right to difference” is essential for modern democracies to function—a notion that is pilloried on both the left and the right in French political discourse today³¹—but also for his reference to Jews.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Procès-Verbal de la séance de la Commission Philip tenue le 4 décembre 1944: 3. AN F/17/17539. On Chéruef’s activities in the resistance, see Jean-Claude Delbreil, *Centrisme et démocratie-chrétienne en France: le Parti Démocrate Populaire des origines au MRP, 1919-1944* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1990): 429-430; Alain Lozac’h, *Visages de la résistance bretonne: réseau et mouvements de libération en Côtes-d’Armor* (Coop Breizh, 2003): 300-301.

³¹ For the classic critique from the left, see Pierre-André Taguieff, *La force du préjugé: essai sur le racisme et ses doubles* (Paris: Gallimard, 1987).

Indeed, references to Jews were incredibly infrequent and abstract throughout the duration of the Commission's deliberations. Aside from Chéruef's vague comments, the issue of funding Jewish schools was never seriously posed. Engagement with Islam was even more conspicuously absent in the Commission's deliberations. In a noteworthy exception from an earlier session, one commission member, who had served as an *Inspecteur de l'Académie* in Algeria during the war, defended the compatibility of the *école laïque* and religious faith by using Algerian Muslims as an example. He declared that although "Islam defines and mixes God in all aspects of life, there has never been any difficulty and even the most pious Muslims have never hesitated to send their children to the *école laïque*." No one on the Commission directly responded to this point, however, and further references to Muslims were extremely rare.³² Even the issue of Protestant private schools was seldom mentioned. The scant attention paid to non-Catholic religious education underscores that for all of the members of the commission, the issue before them was really only about overcoming the conflict between the republican state and the Catholic church.

This narrow framing of *laïcité* encouraged frank acknowledgements of Christian influences in French moral and civic life in discussions about youth programs, even among ardent champions of the *école laïque*. Catholics were wary of proposals by their secularist counterparts to expand state support for confessional youth organizations. To MEN officials, this seemed a viable compromise that conceded a role to private Catholic organizations in the process of raising future generations without disturbing the "common formation" young people would receive in formal schooling. Catholics were wise to this strategy. Abbé Chéruef viewed the

³² Procès-Verbal de la séance de la Commission Philip tenue le 20 novembre 1944: 2. AN F/17/17539. While some Muslim children attended French public schools in both Algeria and sub-Saharan Africa, as I discuss in Chapter 6, many Muslim Africans refused to send their children to French public schools in the territories precisely on these grounds.

distinction between *enseignement* and *éducation* that postwar education reformers had been elaborating since the first commission for postwar education reform in London in 1942 as nothing more than a rhetorical ploy to force Catholics to abandon their claims to operate their own schools. “*Enseignement*,” Chéruef protested, was also “*éducatif*.” Thus if the state was prepared to acknowledge the role of youth programs in “*éducation*,” they were necessarily conceding the right to private religious schooling as well.³³

Responses to Chéruef’s argument did not dispute that formal schooling was also about young people’s cultural and moral formation, but rather seized the opportunity to assert once more that even in secular public schools this culture and morality would be inspired by Christianity. Director-General Bayet forcefully proclaimed, “The way in which *enseignement* [is] *éducatif*, is exactly the same in secular public schools and confessional private schools. We other [secular] French people, we are also necessarily immersed in a civilization that is Christian in its origins, Latin and Christian in its origins. It is absolutely impossible to detach ourselves from it.” To further illustrate his point, Bayet noted that even his “Jewish friends” recognize that as *French Jews*, they themselves were “thoroughly Christianized, at least in mentality. That is to say in terms of civilization, or if you prefer, in terms of general culture and thus education [*éducation*].” This unambiguous equation of French culture with Christianity enabled Bayet to dismiss any categorical difference between the general culture secular or Catholic schools transmitted to their students. He concluded there could not be any difference in the way Catholic and public schoolteachers would teach “the most Catholic parts of Bossuet” or “whatever page of Renan,” if each “wanted to remain faithful to the tenor [*tonalité*] of French civilization.”³⁴

³³ Procès-Verbal de la séance de la Commission Philip tenue le 26 février 1945: 14. AN F/17/17539.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 15-16.

It may be tempting to read these abstract depictions of French secular culture and “French civilization” as inherently Christian as nothing more than an attempt to appease the Catholic members of this commission without actually committing any institutional or financial support for private Catholic schools. However, the same assertions resurface in discussions with very different interlocutors about Franco-African and European youth and education policy. This continuity across metropolitan, colonial and European contexts suggests that such declarations represent something more than mere political expediency—that this was indeed a moment when French politicians and educators could simultaneously endorse *laïcité* as an official policy framework and publicly embrace conceptions of “French civilization,” and even *laïcité* itself, as thoroughly Christian. The emergence of Christianity as a legitimate referent for French civilization in public and political discourse at this juncture informed French visions of the Franco-African and trans-European communities they were trying to build and the concrete education policies they devised to realize those visions.

From Brazzaville to Bruges: Religion & the Civilizational Imaginary Beyond the Hexagon

The outbreak of war engendered extensive reflection about the past, present and future of the French Empire and Europe. In both cases, planning for new approaches to youth and education pivoted uncomfortably between the valorization of tradition and past practices and calls for sociopolitical transformation. Straddling these multiple temporalities, the architects of Franco-African and pan-European youth and education initiatives conducted their planning discussions in a pronounced civilizational idiom; for them, “civilization” provided a powerful framework linking past, present and future in a unitary whole. Moreover, the scalar plane of civilization provided a comforting sense of continuity, as postwar planners meditated on new forms of

socialization and effecting meaningful generational change. As they understood it, the respective objectives of these initiatives were to implant “French civilization” in Africa and to locate France in a “European civilization.” The simultaneity of these efforts forced postwar education reformers to think about the substance and the contours of what it meant to be French, European and African in new and sometimes contradictory ways, and, most importantly, rendered these identifications more intrinsically relational. In this sense, insistence by prominent MEN officials such as Jean Bayet that Christianity was a central feature of French civilization in the heated debates over education and *laïcité* in the national-metropolitan context raised the stakes of how religious identity and secular values figured in conversations about the cultural proximity and/or distance between France, Africa and Europe in the postwar French imaginary.

Competing formulations of French and European civilization had emerged out of discussions about youth and education policy in multiple venues in the early stages of the war—in London, in Algiers, and in the colonial administrations of French West Africa (AOF) and French Equatorial Africa (AEF). Mapping the continuation of these conversations into the late 1940s introduces important new sites, interlocutors and consequently, new elements in those conversations. Contestation over the meaning and the contours of “French civilization” informed discussions among French colonial administrators and educators on the ground in French Africa and officials in Paris—in parliament, in the central colonial ministry³⁵ and in the MEN— about how to implement the Brazzaville recommendations on education. As we have seen, no Africans were invited to participate in the Brazzaville Conference when those recommendations were first formulated. However, the conversion of the empire into the French Union in 1946 extended the franchise to unprecedented numbers of Africans in the French African Federations, and the

³⁵ The Ministry of Colonies was renamed the “Ministère de la France d’Outre-Mer” [MFOM] in 1946 in an effort to dissociate the postwar French Union from the negative connotations of colonialism.

dozens of African elected representatives they sent to all three houses of French Parliament made education reform one of their top priorities.³⁶ Thus from 1946 on, this first cohort of African deputies in Paris—which included several future African heads of state—inserted themselves into the metropolitan policymaking process. Hundreds more francophone African elites also entered local politics with the expansion of representative territorial and federal assemblies in AOF and AEF. Their interventions introduced different conceptions of what the expansion of education for Africans should entail and intensified the pressure to enact meaningful reforms.

Meanwhile, explicit discussion of the meaning and boundaries of “European civilization” continued in the Conference of Allied Ministers of Education [CAME]. Over the course of 1944-1945, the CAME concentrated on the challenges posed by denazification and re-education across occupied Europe and the need to move away from nationalist approaches to the instruction of European history. As we saw in the last chapter, the CAME brought together leading intellectuals, cultural icons, educators and politicians from France (including Raymond Aron and René Cassin), Britain (Julian Huxley) and across the continent in the paradoxical quest to both affirm to themselves and to the world that a thing called “European civilization” did indeed exist *and* to bring this civilization into being through their proposals for transnational reforms and new kinds of cooperation in youth and education policy.

The paradox of European civilization’s simultaneous existence and need to be created signals the deep existential crisis driving early appeals for European unity. Crafting an activist youth and education policy in service of European cooperation therefore depended first and

³⁶ The parliament of the Fourth Republic was composed of an upper house (*Conseil de la République*), a lower house (*Assemblée nationale*) and a special consultative body dedicated to ‘overseas France’ (*Assemblée de l’Union française* [AUF]). African representatives’ concerns over youth and education during this period can be seen especially in the transcripts of the Commission des territoires d’outre-mer in the National Assembly [AN C//15293 for 1945-1946; C//15407 for 1947-1949; C//15408 for 1949-1951] and the AUF’s Commission des affaires culturelles et de la civilisation d’outre-mer from 1947-1950 [C//16135; C//16236; C//16253; C//16274; 16279].

foremost on the problem of definition, of determining what European civilization had been, is and should/could be. Thus when the CAME set about its core task of preparing a new textbook on European history that would be translated into all European languages and used across Europe after the war, it first had to determine the “spiritual and intellectual factors” and the “manner of life” that made Europe a “single civilization.”³⁷ This proved no easy task; the CAME continued this conversation for over two years, and the textbook was not published until 1953.³⁸

The war’s end created yet more venues for French politicians, educators, and intellectuals to reflect on the essence of Europe and “European civilization,” from the education service in the French zone of occupation in postwar Germany (1945-1955),³⁹ to the French sections of the vast network of transnational movements for European unity that emerged in 1946-1947.⁴⁰ In 1948, these movements convened the Congress of Europe in the Hague, where top French government officials and pro-Europe activists joined over 700 delegates from across Europe to work out the modalities of European cooperation and give the rhetorical figure “United Europe” institutional form. The Congress is perhaps best remembered today for its work in outlining the future structure and role of the Council of Europe (which officially came into being through the Treaty of London the following year), but the delegates were no less concerned with promoting the “European idea” and fostering a European cultural identity, particularly among youth. Convinced that an activist cultural policy would be a necessary corollary to achieving greater political and economic European integration, the Congress proposed to reconvene within the year for a second

³⁷ Draft Minutes of the 22nd Meeting...7 June 1944 at the offices of the British Council. Collected in the manuscript volume: *CAME, London 1942-1945, vol III: Books and Periodicals Commission—History Committees and Subcommittees*. UNESCO Archives.

³⁸ I discuss the content of the book in the next chapter.

³⁹ Officially known as the Haut Commissariat de la République française en Allemagne.

⁴⁰ The largest and most significant being the European Movement (est. 1946) whose honorary presidents included Churchill, Blum, Spinelli, Spaak and Adenauer. Other significant players were the Socialist Movement for the United States of Europe (est. 1946), which was first presided over by André Philip, and the Christian-Democratic Nouvelles Equipes Internationales (est. 1947).

summit that would deal exclusively with questions of culture and education, which was ultimately held in Lausanne in 1949.

The Hague Congress ignited an explosion of pro-Europe activity, and so from 1948 on, as Alain Peyrefitte wryly observed from his post in the French occupation authority in Bonn, committees for a united Europe “are sprouting like mushrooms.”⁴¹ So too did youth and education initiatives. By the end of 1948, all of the major pro-Europe movements had created official youth sections within their organizations, a fact duly noted and applauded by the broader world of organized youth. According to a joint declaration of French, Belgian and Dutch youth leaders from a variety of political, confessional and student groups assembled at a *Journées d’Études Européennes* in Lille in December 1948, the creation of these youth sections demonstrated the European movements’ commitment “to give youth a proper role in the construction of Europe.”⁴² And indeed, in the years that followed, the pro-Europe movements expanded their internal youth sections and created a number of specialized transnational European cultural institutions that focused on youth and education initiatives in particular. Foremost among the latter was the College of Europe in Bruges, which reprised the CAME’s mission to “Europeanize” education and to give postgraduate students a “European formation” in view of producing future generations of pro-Europe elites.⁴³

Abstract meditations on the nature of the relationship between religion and civilization—and the place of Christianity in France, Europe and Africa in particular—represent recurring

⁴¹ Alain Peyrefitte, Note sur la jeunesse allemande et la jeunesse européenne, s/d. Ambassade au Haut-Commissariat à Bonn. Archives historiques de l’Union européenne (AHUE), ME-1920.

⁴² Motion de la Commission de la Jeunesse des Journées d’Études Européennes, Lille 17-19 décembre 1948. AHUE, ME-1920. French signatories included Maurice René Simonet, leader of the Équipes Jeunes of the Christian-Democratic MRP party, and Jacques Boissieras, vice president of the Union nationale des étudiants français, the largest student federation in France.

⁴³ Rapport sur la session préparatoire du Collège d’Europe tenue à Bruges du 20 septembre au 10 octobre 1949, par la Commission culturelle de la Section Belge du Mouvement Européen, presented to the Lausanne Conference on 9 December 1949. AHUE ME—526.

threads that unite this dizzying constellation of actors and institutions involved in postwar youth and education initiatives from Paris to Bruges, Brazzaville to the Hague. When top colonial education officials mobilized essentialized portraits of *Europeans*, rather than Africans, as a rationale for excluding most Africans from metropolitan-style secondary education at the Brazzaville Conference in 1944, they did so without invoking religion directly. Director of Secondary Education for AOF Cabrière had unequivocally declared that everything about secondary education was a product of “classical culture” and a particular “Mediterranean civilization” in his assertion that secondary education was only suitable for “Europeans.” Though these allusions conjure a certain vision of a “Latin” Europe that carries strong Christian overtones, Cabrière made no explicit reference to Christianity or religion more generally.⁴⁴ Such reticence is not to be found, however, in subsequent discussions of how to enact the Brazzaville recommendations.

Christianity featured prominently in discussions about the Brazzaville Conference’s decision that French should be the exclusive language of instruction in primary schools in French sub-Saharan Africa. Associations between language and religion were hardly new in the 1940s; there is a long French intellectual tradition linking language and religion (and race) that stretches back to nineteenth-century Romantic historiography and philology, perhaps best captured in the writings of Ernest Renan.⁴⁵ However, the reanimation of that link in colonial education policy in Africa in the postwar conjuncture adds another valence to the culturalization of Christianity in the metropolitan debates over *laïcité*.

⁴⁴ For complete citations, see Chapter 2, note 81.

⁴⁵ Maurice Olender, *The Languages of Paradise. Race, Religion and Philology in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992); Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).

The Brazzaville Conference’s recommendation to prohibit the use of African languages in primary education was put into effect by the CFLN’s central colonial authority in Algiers in May 1944. In a missive announcing the new policy to French colonial governors across Africa, René Pleven—then Commissaire aux Colonies—elaborated on the rationale for this decision. He explained that schooling [*enseignement*] is not only about learning but also constitutes “a veritable ‘socialization’ of the child,” in which children are imprinted with the ensemble of ways of thinking, behaviors and knowledge of their society so that they can become full participants in the community. French colonization, he went on, had already and would continue to produce such societal upheavals in “primitive societies that the educative action of the ‘elders’ of these societies is manifestly insufficient to ensure the adaptation of youth to their new modes of life. It is therefore necessary, at least provisionally, to substitute ourselves for those natural educators to promote the progressive integration of colonized peoples into the modern world.” Pleven concluded that indigenous languages were ill-suited for this task; only French could serve as an appropriate vehicle for the “new bases and new modes” of mass education required to build “a new intellectual and moral civilization” in French Africa.⁴⁶

When the central colonial authority returned to Paris in late 1944, it began publicizing this policy to metropolitan organizations involved in colonial education in Africa. That December, the head of the Colonial Ministry’s Department of Education, Delage, gave a presentation on the Brazzaville recommendations for education to the Comité de l’Empire Français, one of the most prominent colonial lobbies, which had formed its own “Education Commission” [*enseignement*].⁴⁷ Delage reprised much of Pleven’s language on the exclusive use

⁴⁶ Circulaire a/s français langue véhiculaire unique de l’enseignement colonial. Alger 16 mai 1944. Archives Nationales d’Outre-Mer (ANOM) 1AFFPOL/2256 dossier 3.

⁴⁷ The CEF had strong ties to the Church, to colonial financial institutions and, during the war, to Vichy. The CEF’s Commission de l’Enseignement included a diverse group—from specialists in colonial history

of French in primary schooling as necessary for the “socialization” of African children into what Pleven had called the “modern community,” but Delage offered a much thicker description of what Pleven meant by that latter term. Delage declared that the goal of French colonial education was to promote the integration of colonized peoples into “the community of modern white nations of western and Christian civilization.” He concluded that this new policy was a strong rejoinder to mounting African critiques that the colonial administration had not taught most Africans French as part of a deliberate strategy of perpetuating colonial domination. Delage argued the new language policy proved, on the contrary, “our generous desire to completely integrate African populations into the French community.”⁴⁸

These ideas are worth parsing carefully. According to the director of colonial education policy, the “French community” was part of a broader community of “modern white nations,” and that broader community was defined as fundamentally “western” and “Christian”—indeed, the two terms appear synonymous in this formulation. The French language was the sole conduit, but a conduit nonetheless, that could integrate black Africans into the French national community, and by extension, into “modern white and Christian civilization.” Whether this formulation refers to “the West” broadly defined or whether it implies a more narrow vision of Europe in this instance is unclear, but we find strikingly similar reasoning among key French figures in forums explicitly dedicated to youth and education policy in the service of European unity.

at the Collège de France to prominent heads of Franco-African investment banks. After 1946, going along with the general political winds of terminological change, the CEF renamed itself the Comité Central de la France d’Outre-Mer.

⁴⁸ Procès-Verbal de la Commission de l’Enseignement du CEF du 4 décembre 1944, audition du M. Delage, Chef de Service – Direction Enseignement aux Ministère des Colonies. ANOM 100/APOM/933.

Indeed, none other than the Philip Commission's Jean Bayet pronounced just such a view at the European Movement's "Cultural Conference" in Lausanne in 1949.⁴⁹ The explicit goals of the Lausanne Conference were to reawaken "the sentiment of our common belonging to a civilization to which we owe our *grandeur*," and to show that "our cultural forces can contribute to European unification, and in return, united Europe will preserve our cultures in their precious diversity." Participants were assigned to one of three commissions—exchanges, institutions and education—to study the twinned objectives: "culture in the service of Europe" and "Europe in the service of our cultures."⁵⁰ The French delegation comprised a cross-section of French political and intellectual elites, including Michel Debré, Raoul Dautry, Raymond Aron and Alexandre Marc, as well as education officials such as Bayet and Jean Sarrailh, then-Rector of the Académie de Paris and president of the council of the University of Paris.

Bayet delivered a presentation on behalf of the French delegation regarding the "Europeanization" of secondary and postsecondary education, proposing dramatic changes in pedagogy, curricula, language study, and textbooks.⁵¹ He noted, however, that European countries with colonies posed particular problems in this regard. Although he insisted, "For the future and even the radiance of the European Union," it behooved them to ensure that "that these diverse, faraway peoples have access to a culture that we know how to imbue with fundamental

⁴⁹ This conference was convened in response to several resolutions adopted by the Congress of Europe in the Hague in 1948.

⁵⁰ Bureau d'Etudes pour un Centre européen de la culture (Mouvement Européen): Conférence européenne de la culture à Lausanne 8-12 décembre 1949 (printed announcement) s/d. Archives de la Histoire Contemporaine [AHC] 1/DE/25.

⁵¹ Specific proposals included: the provision of travel grants for secondary-school teachers to seek additional training at European institutes like the College of Europe in Bruges to infuse their teaching with a "Europeanist" outlook; making the study of a second European language mandatory, as well as either expanded study of the culture of that language or elementary study of a third language; history textbook reform which would be overseen by "des autorités universitaires européennes"; and the equivalence of university diplomas across Europe, *inter alia*. Bayet, Rapport à la Conférence culturelle de l'Europe Unie sur l'Éducation, 9 décembre 1949. AHUE ME—540.

values”; as educators they should not seek to impose “a superficial equality [*une parité de surface*] with cultured Europeans.” He therefore recommended against implementing the same kind of pedagogical reforms he was proposing in support of the European project in colonial contexts. However, Bayet, a classicist by training, confidently asserted that these “fundamental values” would be imparted to colonial peoples by the very *language* of the European colonial powers. “Happily,” he declared, “the great European languages are carriers by their literatures and their very form, of the essential European values inherited from Greece, Rome and Christianity.”⁵² In Bayet’s view, then, colonial populations were essential to the “radiance” of a united Europe, but they should not receive the same Europeanized education as their metropolitan counterparts. If we apply this logic to the particular case of French Africa, Bayet was suggesting that despite not receiving a properly European education, Africans would still learn core “European values”—here defined by classical antiquity and Christianity—by virtue of the fact that their education was in French.

As many of the largest European unity movements were affiliated with Christian Democratic parties or had their own confessional affiliation, appeals to Christianity as a core element of “European civilization” were common in venues like Lausanne. It may appear more surprising that a representative of ostensibly secular France, who had worked in the Ministry of Education, would espouse such a view, but as we saw in the proceedings of the Philip Commission, Bayet remained ardently committed to *laïcité* as a framework for the metropolitan French education system. We may well wonder then to what extent affirmations of “Christian Europe” had any bearing on institutional configurations and practices.

⁵² Ibid. I will return to the idea of the French language as a carrier of fundamental Christian values and a broader Christian worldview in a discussion of colonial education policies that prohibited Arabic-language instruction in Muslim regions of French Africa in Chapter 6.

Indeed, as new transnational European educational institutions were getting off the ground towards the end of the 1940s, tensions between rhetorical depictions of Europe as essentially Christian and competing conceptions of whether such institutions should be religiously “neutral” rose to the fore. Debates at the founding of the College of Europe in Bruges, an elite postgraduate institution intended to provide “Europeanized” training for future leaders in politics, education, and business, provides a representative example. In the months before its grand opening in 1950, the transnational board of the College organized a month-long preparatory session, to which they invited leading political figures from the pro-Europe movements, academics, and postgraduate students representing over a dozen European nationalities. In a series of smaller seminars, this mix of future administrators, faculty, and students of the College debated the role of Christianity in the political project of Europe as they discussed both the content of the College’s curriculum and more practical matters such as whether or not the College would hold a common religious service. In the History Study group, under the direction of Oxford professor John Bowle, most agreed that bringing Catholics, Protestants and “others” together in a single religious service at the College would be impractical. The group voted against holding religious services 6-2 to the consternation of the dissenting minority: an Austrian academic, who forcefully protested on the grounds that he “supported united Europe because of his Christian conscience”; and Jean Bachelot, a French postgraduate student who later became actively involved with the College, who proclaimed that though he recognized European unity was a “a social and economic necessity,” he was motivated by “his duty as a Christian” to work toward achieving it.⁵³

⁵³ Report on the History Study Group under the direction of John Bowle, s/d. Collège d’Europe—Session préparatoire, Bruges, 20 septembre – 10 octobre 1949. AHUE—525.



Fig. 6 A group photo of the participants in the preparatory session. SOURCE, College of Europe Brochure (1950). Archives Historiques de l'Union européenne/MEF-186.

A clearer picture of just who the “others” referred to above were emerges in the proceedings of the preparatory session’s seminar on “general culture” led by another Frenchman, Henri van Effenterre, a professor at the University of Caen who became the College of Europe’s first Director of Studies (1950-1952). The goal of this seminar was to identify communal European traditions that would be “most effective” in the formation of a “European spirit,” and the three themes it concentrated on were classical thought, Christianity and state formation [*“organisation en cités”*]. In his summation of the seminar’s work at the close of the session, van Effenterre made four central points regarding Christianity. First, he affirmed that Christianity had been one of if not the most important “common factors” of what he referred to as “the European tradition,” and second, that the presence of Christians among all the European nationalities, “with the exception of Turkey,” constituted an element of unity. His third and fourth points,

however, stressed the limitations of Christianity as a unifying force in two senses. First, he insisted, “it is however important not to overestimate the current value of this element of unity, given the multiple forms and divisions in Christian thought.” He then added, “Europe today comprises a quite large number of non-Christians, most of whom no longer even feel the historical link between their liberal or Marxist philosophies and any tradition whatsoever.” These last two comments, and their juxtaposition with the passing reference to Turkey mentioned above, reveal the narrowness of van Effenterre’s vision of religious diversity in Europe, not as community of Christians and members of other faiths but rather as a collective of multiple Christian denominations and an ideologically diverse group of atheists, the latter of whom he associated historically, despite themselves, with Christian thought. Thus it was in the name of a pluralism limited to Christianity and secularism that van Effenterre concluded, “it seems prudent to consider Christianity, as a religion, as an element of diversification in European unification rather than a real factor of unity.”⁵⁴

However, this formulation left open other modes of rooting European unity in Christianity – not as a religious tradition but explicitly as “culture.” Van Effenterre declared that they can and should “analyze, beyond the religious domain, the many Christian legacies from which the European idea [*conscience européenne*] may develop, such as the domains of the family, morality, social life, art and philosophy.” By considering Christianity “outside of the religious domain,” van Effenterre proposed a cultural and secularized conception of Christianity that could be linked to all of Europe’s key sociocultural institutions. And so he could confidently assert, “European unity rests on a family structure directly inherited from the Christian tradition.” He continued, “The encounter between the Christian Revelation with classical

⁵⁴ Compte-Rendu des sessions du Séminaire ‘Culture Générale’ sous la direction de M. van Effenterre, s/d. AHUE, ME-525.

antiquity was the source of the spiritual development of Europe”—an encounter which he saw continuing in the present in the “relations between Christian thinkers in the diverse countries of Europe and modern, scientific thought.”⁵⁵

This line of reasoning was upheld by the College’s transnational board and duly reflected in the curriculum. All of the seminars in the College’s inaugural session (1950-1951) devoted considerable attention to the role of Christianity in European history, politics and culture,⁵⁶ despite the leadership’s explicit characterization of the institution as “secular.” In a commentary on the College’s first year of programming, its first rector Hendrik Brugmans, a Dutch professor of French literature, noted that he had had to turn down a generous offer from a French Catholic organization, the Comité International pour la Défense de la Civilisation Chrétienne, to endow a special Chair in Christian Civilization, since “that did not align with our conception of the College.”⁵⁷ And yet, Brugmans proposed that members of this group deliver three lectures at the College every year, and he suggested the topics for each: “Christianity and Tolerance,” “the Absolute,” and their perspective on “the Notion of *laïcité*.”⁵⁸ Inviting conservative religious figures from such an organization to the College was not a radical move; indeed, it was in lock step with the College’s regular programming.

The College of Europe, then, like the Lausanne Conference, served as a key venue for prominent French figures involved in the national debate on education and *laïcité* to further develop the culturalist conceptions of Christianity that we saw beginning to emerge in the Philip Commission—conceptions that rendered explicit identification with Christianity compatible with *laïcité*. Philip himself, a committed pro-Europe activist, gave a lecture at the College in its 1951-

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Brochure du Collège d’Europe (1950). AHUE, ME-801.

⁵⁷ Annexe par Hendrik Brugmans, Ibid.

⁵⁸ Letter from Hendrik Brugmans to Paul Lesourd, 24 March 1950. AHUE, ME-801.

1952 session.⁵⁹ Thus in both the French national and transnational European contexts, *laïcité* was increasingly understood as accommodating the diversity of Christian denominations and various types of “non-believers,” all of whom, it was implied, came from Christian backgrounds and could still be considered culturally and socially Christian. And as van Effenterre’s argumentation makes clear, *laïcité*, as a secular morality anchoring “the spiritual development of Europe,” was itself construed as part of an essentially Christian tradition.

***Laïcité* South of the Sahara?**

Culturalist conceptions of Christianity also informed French colonial administrators’ and educators’ approach to *laïcité* in sub-Saharan Africa, though often toward quite different ends. We have seen that the emergence of Christianity as a rallying point for unity in postwar metropolitan and European education planning had both antecedents and echoes in discussions about colonial youth and education policy. However, putting *laïcité* into practice in the French African Federations raised other questions in light of local demographic and historical factors on the one hand, and international concerns on the other. The issue of state funding for both Catholic and Protestant mission schools dominated conversations about *laïcité* in AEF, where missionary presence—both French and foreign—had long predated the French colonial state.⁶⁰ French infrastructure in central Africa remained so underdeveloped in the 1940s that the colonial administration claimed it *had* to heavily rely on French mission schools to provide education to as many African children as possible, as well as to prevent “outside influences” from gaining a stronger foothold in the territories that could undermine French control in the region.

⁵⁹ Léonce Bekemens, Dieter Mahncke, Robert Picht, eds. *The College of Europe: Fifty Years of Service to Europe* (Bruges: Europacollege, 1999).

⁶⁰ Virginia Thompson and Richard Adloff, *The Emerging States of French Equatorial Africa* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960).

Christian missions of both denominations also operated private schools in AOF, but the issue of missionary education in West Africa increasingly took a back seat to the colonial administration's growing preoccupation with Muslim religious education in this region with large, often majority, Muslim populations.⁶¹ The colonial administration pursued a set of conflicting objectives regarding Muslim African youth: they simultaneously sought to integrate Muslim West Africans into French colonial society through formal schooling, to control and limit new conversions to Islam, and to inoculate Muslim West Africans from the spread of political Islam and theological reform movements like Salafism. The complexity of the situation in the Federations therefore entailed both continuities and contrasts with the civilizational discourses and reformulations of *laïcité* developing in the metropolitan and European contexts. It is the particular arrangement of this new configuration of *laïcité* between metropole and colony that I aim to emphasize here.

At the close of the last chapter, we saw how France's civilizing mission in Africa was repackaged in the Brazzaville recommendations for postwar colonial reforms, which called for a dramatic growth in primary education for African children. However, we also saw the deep ambivalence of the colonial administration regarding the transformative power of formal schooling for Africans. Budget allocations for colonial education paled in comparison with funding for other projects; the completion of the Catholic cathedral in Brazzaville and the renovation of the main Protestant church in Douala received almost twice as much financial support as the expansion of the Colonial Ministry's Department of Youth and Education.⁶² Similarly, administrators at the Brazzaville Conference explicitly framed the spread of

⁶¹ With some notable exceptions: Dahomey, Ivory Coast and Haute-Volta had majority Christian populations. Conversely, there were significant Muslim populations in parts of AEF, in Chad and Oubangui-Chari (today the Central African Republic), and in Cameroun (which was not technically part of AEF but tied to it administratively).

⁶² For complete references, see Chapter 2, notes 97- 99.

Christianity as a crucial dimension of more firmly establishing “French civilization” in Africa alongside proposals for developing public, ostensibly secular, primary education.

In sessions devoted to “indigenous policy” at Brazzaville, Catholic clergy and French administrators alike called for the creation of a new “Christian civil status” for African Christians in the hopes of bringing African social organization—particularly concerning marriage, property, and inheritance—closer in line with French social practices. Paul Biéchy, a top official in the Catholic hierarchy in the French Congo, protested to fellow conference participants that it was prejudicial that “fetishist” converts to Islam obtained a “Muslim civil status,” whereas converts to Christianity received no such recognition. He lamented, “In the current French colonial legislation, Islamism is king, fetishism less so, and Christianity nothing at all.”⁶³

The colonial administration in AOF responded to this reproach with its own strong endorsement of a special legal status for African Christians. Its spokesmen at Brazzaville affirmed that such a status was eminently desirable precisely because, “Our civilization is, in effect, essentially Christian. Consequently, any legal regime that is inspired by Christianity will constitute for the *indigène* a step towards a civilization closer to ours.” Conversion to Christianity, he continued, “creates a way of life and fosters certain conceptions that do not have a place in local custom.” To illustrate this point, he offered the example of an hypothetical Christian Baga couple living in Conakry (Guinée), for whom “The household lives, if not *à l’européenne*, at least, *à la chrétienne*.” In the absence of a Christian legal status, if the husband died, the widow, her children and their property would be drawn back into “the patriarchal community.”⁶⁴ Though such a status was never formally put in place, similar criteria did

⁶³ Mgr Paul Biéchy, Note sur le statut de la famille chrétienne, 2 février 1944. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2201.

⁶⁴ Opportunité d’un statut chrétien – Rapport de l’administration [AOF], s/d, s.n. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2201.

ultimately figure into voting eligibility and the fate of Africans' applications for full citizenship for many years to come.⁶⁵

The quasi-equation of “European” and “Christian” in discussions about the African family at Brazzaville anticipates the rhetorical moves of figures like van Effenterre to code family structures across Europe as essentially Christian. And yet, the triadic opposition between Christianity, Islam and “fetishism”—the latter clearly conceptualized here less as a religious faith or body of religious rituals than as a catch-all for all African customary practices—raised the stakes of the culturalist conceptions of Christianity being articulated in metropolitan France and transnational European institutions, and helped shape a set of conflicting institutional approaches to *laïcité* and education in the French African Federations.

While the specificity of the colonial context may seem to align with a long scholarly tradition of considering the empire as the exception to the rule of French republican *laïcité*, the postwar conjuncture recast what made the colonial context unique. J.P. Daughton has shown that Third Republican colonial policy underwent a profound shift around the turn of the twentieth century from a platform of “Anticlericalism in not for export” that accommodated significant state funding for Catholic missions, to increasingly restrictive policies on missionary work and missionary education in particular just prior to World War I. This in turn precipitated a shift within the missionary movement away from evangelizing and toward a new focus on “civilizing” and “colonizing,” which more closely aligned the missions with republican goals and rhetoric. Daughton underscores this history of conflict, interaction, and ultimately, *rapprochement*, between secular republicans and Catholics in the empire to argue that French colonial ideology

⁶⁵ See Cooper, *Citizenship*. See also Emily Lord Fransee, “Without Distinction: Gender and Suffrage in the French Empire, 1943-1962,” PhD Dissertation, University of Chicago (forthcoming 2017).

and practice cannot be defined as exclusively republican or Catholic, but rather combined the two.⁶⁶

As the discussion about a Christian civil status makes clear, this was very much still the case moving into the postwar period, but there is a crucial difference between the two moments: in the late 1940s, this “colonial” blend of republican and Catholic civilizational discourses no longer looked so different from conversations about *laïcité*, civilization, and education reform in either the metropolitan or European arenas. Nor did “colonial” accommodations toward confessional private schools. On the contrary, the issue of public versus private schooling in AEF was often posed in the same terms as in the commissions tasked with addressing the problem in the metropole. As the Inspector-General for Education in AEF put it in 1946, the colonial administration must absolutely avoid “the danger, given the delicate political conjuncture we are experiencing, of letting the schools become once more the field of political battles.”⁶⁷ Thus the specifically postwar imperatives of national unity and reconciliation that had precipitated a turn away from militant *laïcité* in the metropole reframed policy decisions in AEF as well.

Of course, this was not the only consideration underwriting the postwar colonial administration’s financial support for and close cooperation with mission schools in AEF. Material conditions on the ground and new approaches to “indigenous policy” formulated during the war also played an important role. In 1944-1946, the question of state funding for confessional schooling in AEF, as in the metropole, became a matter of deciding whether or not to continue subsidies that had been introduced during the war. However, unlike in the

⁶⁶ J.P. Daughton, *An Empire Divided. Religion, Republicanism and the Making of French Colonialism, 1880-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006): 17-24. Significantly, Daughton approaches the whole question of *laïcité* in the empire as solely a matter of the conflict between the Catholic Church and the republican state; the question of the state’s approach indigenous religions does not figure as part of his story.

⁶⁷ Rapport de l’Inspecteur-Général de l’Enseignement au sujet de l’ouverture d’une école des cadres par la Société de Marie, Brazzaville, 1 octobre 1946. ANOM GGAEF 5D/219.

metropole—or in AOF, where this policy originated with Vichy—the wartime extension of subsidies to mission schools in AEF had been enacted by a republican, “Free French” administration.⁶⁸ Initially, this decision may have stemmed from practical considerations. With the missions cut off from their traditional sources of funding in the metropole and Rome, administrators feared the schools would be forced to close without state aid.⁶⁹ However, this circumstantial need was quickly transformed into a substantive policy reorientation in a series of circulars in 1941 by Governor-General Félix Éboué, who envisioned an expansive role for mission schools as an “extension” of official French schools.⁷⁰ Éboué’s prescription that “as the education [*enseignement*] provided in public schools and Christian schools have similar goals and methods, they both should receive equal support from the government,” was constantly cited in administrative correspondence after the war in defense of the subsidies for the remainder of the 1940s and continued well into the 1950s.⁷¹

⁶⁸ That the colonial leadership in AOF remained aligned with Vichy until late 1942/early 1943 colored debates about *laïcité* and *enseignement privé* in AOF in the immediate postwar years. Though the issue was not as central a concern as it was in AEF, conflict between Catholic leaders and colonial education officials erupted, often publicly in the local press, from time to time. Since it had been the Vichy-allied administration in AOF that ordered extending subsidies to private education in the Federation, the handful of militant secularists in the postwar administration attempted to delegitimize proponents of the subsidies both as individuals and their cause more generally as “vichyste.” See the exchanges of Père Bertho, Directeur-Général des Écoles Catholiques de l’AOF and Charles Cros, Inspecteur des Ecoles du Sénégal in 1944-1945: Archives Nationales du Sénégal (ANS) O/11 (31); and between Bertho and Lucien Paye, Directeur de l’Enseignement at the central colonial ministry: ANS O/9 (31). See also note 69.

⁶⁹ V. Fournier (Inspecteur-Général de l’Enseignement –AEF), *Note pour le gouverneur-général*, 3 May 1946. ANOM AEF GGAEF 5D/219.

⁷⁰ Félix Éboué, *La nouvelle politique indigène pour l’AEF* (Paris: Office Français d’Edition 1945).

⁷¹ Christian Merlo, *Note pour le directeur du cabinet au sujet de la subvention à l’enseignement privé*, 9 May 1946. ANOM AEF GGAEF 5D/219. Significantly, Éboué’s policy of increasing subsidies to *enseignement privé* in AEF was also cited by Catholic leaders in AOF as a rebuttal to accusations of their “vichysme.” As Bertho wrote to Cros in 1944, Éboué, who had been the first colonial governor to rally to de Gaulle, was clearly motivated by “the cause of the evolution of the *indigènes*” since he of all people could not be “suspected of having been influenced by Vichy.” In a stunning reversal, Bertho proceeded to comparing militant *laïcisme* to Nazism: “French people, those who knew how to die for their Patrie, want Catholic schools. How can you suppress Christian schools if you want France to be a liberal and just Republic, and not a dictatorship along the Nazi model?” Letter from Bertho to Cros, Dakar, 7 novembre

Some key figures in colonial education did protest this policy in the name of a more strict interpretation of *laïcité*, but the subsidies introduced by Éboué remained in full effect in AEF until the dissolution of the Federation a decade later.⁷² For some proponents of the subsidies, continuing the policy was a sheer necessity. They professed AEF simply did not have the resources or personnel to make schooling available to the vast majority of African children in the Federation on its own. In 1946, of the mere 30,000 *Aéfiens* who had been to primary school—which represented a scandalous 1/100th of the total population—fully half had attended mission schools.⁷³ Many colonial officials lamented this situation, but this was often based more on the grounds of the demonstrably inferior quality of mission schooling rather than a principled commitment to *laïcité*. Administrators often noted that though total student enrollment in AEF was split evenly between public and private schools, 455 of the 657 students who succeeded in obtaining a *Certificat d'études* had attended public ones. Nevertheless, administrators in AEF remained optimistic about the potential value of mission schooling as a key means of integrating Africans into the French community, noting that seven of the eight *Aéfiens* standing for election to the Constituent Assembly then being convened in Paris had attended mission schools.⁷⁴

1944. ANS O/11 (31). This rhetoric strikingly parallels the argumentation of Abbé Chéruef who repeatedly invoked republican liberty in the Philip Commission.

⁷² Fournier was a particularly vocal opponent. He declared in 1946, “Alas, at the very moment when the Metropole is once again struggling to reestablish *laïcité*, it strikes me as inopportune to transform the principle of subsidies in AEF into a veritable *prise en charge* of all private [Christian] schooling.” See note 67. *Laïque* organizations in the metropole also protested the practice in AEF and AOF, but these objections were cast aside by top colonial officials. See for instance a letter from Paul Coste-Floret (then Minister of Overseas France) to the Ligue Française pour la Défense des Droits de l’homme et du Citoyen, 10 juin 1948. ANOM 1AFFPOL/238.

⁷³ Enquête sur les Missions Religieuses en AEF, s.n. (1946). ANOM 1AFFPOL/3349.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* Of the three *Aéfiens* ultimately elected to the Constituent Assembly, two had attended mission schools, Abbé Barthélémy Boganda (Oubangui-Chari) and J-H Aubame (Gabon). Boganda and Aubame continued to represent their territories in the National Assembly and became key figures in pushing for robust colonial reform for the remainder of the Fourth Republic. The overrepresentation of mission school alumni in francophone African elite milieus meant that the local African assemblies often championed state funding for private Catholic education (see below).

As state subsidies to private Catholic and Protestant schools in AEF became regularized, the colonial administration made its financial support conditional on the missions' acceptance of state supervision of curricula, pedagogy (such as the Brazzaville Recommendations' injunction to only teach in French), exams, certification requirements for teaching personnel, and the right to authorize or refuse the construction of new schools.⁷⁵ Indeed, recognition that unlike in France, "here private education [*enseignement*] constitutes a significant part of the work of educating the country [*oeuvre de scolarisation du pays*] and supports the work of the public schools," led French administrators to consider private Christian education as a "public service." That designation justified both the massive financial support mission schools received and the extensive surveillance those schools were subjected to.⁷⁶ With the distinction between public and private increasingly blurred, administrators described the relations between the two types of education as "unity" rather than cooperation, affirming "both are French and both provide an education that is exclusively in French that follows the official curriculum."⁷⁷

It follows that representatives of private mission schools were brought into the policymaking process and given permanent seats in AEF's Conseil Supérieur de l'Enseignement.⁷⁸ While this move would have been inconceivable under the Third Republic—in either metropole or colony—this inclusivity was also underway in similar councils in the metropole, from the Philip Commission on. Significantly, francophone African elites in the new local and territorial assemblies in AEF, who, given the educational landscape in the territory, were disproportionately Christian and mission-school educated, did not object to this situation.

⁷⁵ Compte-Rendu du Conseil Supérieur de l'Enseignement- session 1947, s.n., s/d. ANOM AEF GGAEF 5D/217; Letter from Haut Commissaire AEF to Gouverneurs, Chefs de Territoire a/s formalités d'ouverture des établissements privés d'enseignement, 22 juin 1949. ANOM AEF—GGAEF 5D/27.

⁷⁶ H. Cormary (Inspecteur-Général de l'Enseignement), Note pour M. le directeur AFFPOL, Brazzaville, 22 janvier 1949. ANOM AEF GGAEF 5D/27.

⁷⁷ Christian Merlo, Note a/s la politique scolaire en AEF, 13 mars 1948. ANOM AEF GGAEF 5D/219

⁷⁸ Compte-Rendu du Conseil Supérieur de l'Enseignement - session 1947, *op cit*.

On the contrary, members of the Representative Council of Gabon, a territory where the state paid for 80% of mission schools' total costs, made direct, urgent appeals to both the administration and Catholic and Protestant missions to open more schools in half a dozen departments in the territory where the dearth of schools meant that most children there received no formal education whatsoever.⁷⁹

The changing international landscape of the postwar conjuncture further encouraged the administration in AEF to support French missionary education. The election of Africans to postwar representative bodies such as the Constituent Assembly in the metropole and local assemblies in the territories was a direct response not only to internal African demands for the democratization of the empire but also to mounting international “anticolonial” pressures. In this highly charged political context, colonial education came to be seen as a barometer of France’s commitment to meaningful colonial reform more broadly. As Christian Merlo, a top administrator in AEF, argued in defense of the subsidies, if they did not take advantage of every resource at their disposal, including French missions, “the African citizen and the international powers will not hesitate to give us grief about the shortcomings of our school policy.”⁸⁰

French leaders looked on with trepidation as the United States stepped up its anticolonial rhetoric to match that of the Soviet Union, and the creation of the United Nations seemed to threaten the possibility of the “internationalization” of France’s African colonies.⁸¹ Significantly,

⁷⁹ Voeu no. 15 du Conseil Représentatif du Gabon s/d (1947); Christian Merlo, Note pour M. le Chef du Cabinet a/s réponse à Conseiller Durand-Reville, 27 septembre 1947. ANOM AEF GGAEF 5D/219.

⁸⁰ Merlo, Note pour M. le Chef du Cabinet, *op cit.*

⁸¹ French leaders were particularly disturbed by the creation of the UN’s Trusteeship Council as a international supervisory body overseeing the administration of France’s African League of Nations mandates, Togo and Cameroun, which, France persisted in considering an integral part of the French Union contrary to the original mandatory agreements. Colonial administrators were also quick to highlight that the UN Charter upheld a convention the French signed as part of the Paris peace negotiations of 1919 that required France to “protect and favor, without distinction of nationality or of religion,” missionary works in colonial territories “which aim at leading the natives in the path of

French colonial officials believed growing American interest in French Africa stemmed primarily from American religious congregations. As a result, colonial officials obsessively monitored American missionary incursions into AEF and increasing American press coverage of the problem of mass education in French Africa, both of which they interpreted as direct attacks on French colonial rule. On the heels of the San Francisco Conference (1945) that founded the UN, Minister of Colonies Paul Giaccobi sent a secret missive to all territorial governors and governors-general in AEF and AOF to not only tolerate French missionary activity but to actively support it in order to stave off the “internationalist” and “anticolonial” assault of American missions. Indeed, Giaccobi declared they would have to harness this “great religious movement” by developing their own “proactive religious policy,” which became a common refrain among officials in AEF for years to come.⁸² As the Governor-General of AEF declared in a 1947 request for more funds for French missionaries in AEF, “In a Black Africa where all foreign influences converge (Arab League, North American anticolonialism, Soviet propaganda) each French missionary, by his very presence in the bush and his ministry of education, maintains, to a certain degree, our prestige.”⁸³

progress and civilization.” Cited in Elizabeth Foster, “A Mission in Transition: Race, Politics and the Decolonization of the Catholic Church in Senegal,” in Owen White and JP Daughton, eds., *In God’s Empire: French Missionaries and the Modern World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012): 263. Christian Merlo, a key official at the IGE-AEF, invoked the Saint-Germain-en-Laye convention continuously as added justification for supporting mission schools. See note 73 and also his Note pour le Gouvernement-général—Inspection Générale de l’Enseignement a/s ouverture 2 écoles privées au Moyen-Congo, 26 avril 1947. ANOM AEF GGAEF 5D/219: “The UN Charter reaffirmed the Convention of Saint-Germain-en-Laye of 1919, which makes it our duty...to promote the material, intellectual and moral well-being of the autochthonous populations. We will be judged by our educational efforts. Will we respond that we refused to open a private [mission] school because we did not want to stifle public education?”

⁸² Paul Giaccobi, Circulaire à MM les Gouverneurs Généraux et Gouverneurs des Colonies a/s Missions Religieuses, 7 novembre 1945. ANOM 1AFFPOL/3349.

⁸³ Gougal-AEF à MFOM-AFFPOL a/s voyages des missionnaires et ‘politique religieuse positive,’ s/d. (1947). ANOM AEF GGAEF 5D/219.

Competition between Anglo-American and French missionaries had always been an important factor in imperial rivalries in sub-Saharan Africa, and in AEF in particular.⁸⁴ However, the political imperative to imbue continued French colonial rule in Africa with democratic legitimacy assigned a novel, central role to mission schools in the Fourth Republic's broader project of postwar colonial reform. Though increased opportunities for political participation for Africans heralded by the conversion of the empire into the French Union were in fact quite limited, in the minds of colonial education officials, the "democratization" of the empire added new urgency to providing Africans with formal education. As the head of education in AEF proclaimed to a room full of representatives of both public and private education in the opening session of the Conseil Supérieur de l'Enseignement in 1947: "For two years a prodigious juridical revolution has occurred in the French Union. We are passing from a regime based on authority to a regime of democracy. Democracy is incompatible with illiteracy and superstition." He continued, "By the massive extension of rights and all the forms of democracy to the overseas territories, [our country] is also undertaking a massive transformation of the nature of those societies, that is, by education [*instruction*], which, in truth, if we had had the time, should have come first." He concluded it was the "common task" of the administration *and* the missions to accelerate the opening of more schools to "reestablish the harmonious order of things" and "adjust realities to rights."⁸⁵

The relationship between illiteracy and "superstition" evoked here and the incompatibility of both with the rights and responsibilities of French citizenship was posed more explicitly in subsequent defenses of state support for private Christian education in AEF.

⁸⁴ White and Daughton, eds. *In God's Empire*. Historically, concern over American, and Protestant missionaries more generally, reflected French officials' belief that both would favor the position of the British in sub-Saharan Africa.

⁸⁵ *Compte-Rendu du Conseil Supérieur de l'Enseignement- session 1947, op cit.*

“Illiteracy,” Merlo declared the following year, was a “social evil that encourages superstition and fetishism and is incompatible with the exercise of a real democracy and French citizenship extended to all.”⁸⁶ In other words, illiteracy encouraged social practices that distanced Africans from the French (culturally and as political subjects), practices that had been explicitly coded as non-Christian in discussions on the Christian civil status five years earlier.

By 1948, subsidies to mission schools, which entailed new forms of state control over the kind of education these establishments dispensed, had effectively transformed private Christian schooling in AEF into a “public service,” thereby concretizing the equation of Christianity and “French civilization” in postwar colonial social policy. Indeed, it was the very real incorporation of private Christian schools into the system of state-run education in AEF that enabled administrators to forcefully reject the most common criticism of the subsidies policy: that funding Christian schools would force the administration to start funding Muslim schools as well.⁸⁷ To this charge, defenders of the policy repeatedly insisted that only private institutions that teach “the official curriculum, in French” were approved and subsidized, which excluded traditional Qur’anic schools a priori.⁸⁸ Thus as the opposition between public and private/Christian education was rendered moot in French Equatorial Africa, only Islamic education remained excluded by the strictures of “republican *laïcité*.”

In AOF, with its substantial Muslim populations, discussions about *laïcité* after Brazzaville were even more centered on concerns about Islam. The preoccupation with Islam had many sources: international developments, emboldened demands from Muslim Africans for

⁸⁶ Merlo, Note a/s la politique scolaire en AEF, *op cit*. Despite the assertion that “French citizenship” had been extended to all in 1946, Africans were technically “citizens of the French Union” and *not* “citizens of France,” and continued to be deprived of full equal rights.

⁸⁷ See for instance, Fournier, Note a/s répartition des subventions à l’enseignement privé pour le 1er semestre 1948, Brazzaville, 9 mars 1948. ANOM AEF GGAEF 5D/219.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

proper Muslim religious education, and French ideas about the peculiarities of African Islam. Confrontations between Catholics and militant secularists over subsidies to mission school in AOF—even seemingly abstract, principled arguments for or against *laïcité*—were filtered through these concerns. As Catholic educators and secularists in the administration sparred, often publicly in the local press, over continuing subsidies to mission schools in 1944-1945, they accused each other of seeking to “incite” local Muslims.⁸⁹ For both camps, state support for Muslim religious education, either by subsidizing Qur’anic schools or by authorizing Muslim clerics to provide religious instruction in public schools outside of regular school hours—a benefit enjoyed by Catholics—was an eventuality to be avoided at all costs.

The prospect of state support for Muslim youth programs in AOF was likewise deemed inappropriate and potentially dangerous. Though such concerns were most often couched in universalist language that framed all confessional youth organizations as a “factor of division” that threatened “national cohesion,” upon closer inspection it becomes clear that Muslim youth groups were understood to be more divisive and more threatening to national unity than others. In a 1945 policy note on subsidies to confessional scout movements in AOF, head of the Service of Social Affairs Charles Brun first posed the issue as an opposition between a positive secular morality and “Catholic, Protestant, Muslim and Jewish morality” that taught “young French” [*jeunes français*] to identify with their faith more than their *patrie*. However when Brun arrived at his actual policy recommendation, this portrait of religious diversity narrowed markedly. He insisted that if they were to fund Catholic and Protestant scout movements in AOF, they could not *not* authorize Muslim scout troops, lest “we be accused of bias and all the incidents that would cause.” He then concluded even more forcefully that since they all agreed that “from a

⁸⁹ See notes 68 and 71 in this chapter for a longer discussion of these disputes and archival references.

national point of view,” it was “necessary to restrict Muslim scouting in AOF,” they would have to adopt a firm policy against funding any religious scout organizations whatsoever.⁹⁰

It is crucial to note that this resolute opposition to Muslim scouting in late 1945 was historically contingent on geopolitical concerns as much as religious ones. Just a year earlier, the CFLN’s Commissioner of Education René Capitant had endorsed the principle of providing financial and material support to develop Muslim scouting throughout the empire.⁹¹ The colonial administrations’ views changed, however, when the Scouts musulmans algériens, an organization that had been founded before the war (1930), played a large, visible part in nationalist demonstrations in Sétif, Guelma, and elsewhere in Algeria in May 1945 that were brutally suppressed by the colonial regime. French officials believed that Salafist ulemas and other foreign *provocateurs* had transformed the Algerian Muslim scout organization into a nationalist training ground.⁹² This was a turning point in the Colonial Ministry’s and local administrators’ position on the potential benefits of Muslim scouting not just for Algerians but for all Muslims in the empire. The Ministry urged colonial governors in both AEF and AOF to determine if there were any Muslim scout organizations in their territories, and if so, to put them under heavy surveillance and disband them if they were found to be engaged in any political

⁹⁰ Charles Brun, Note a/s scoutisme, 26 octobre 1945. ANS O/2 (31). It is worth noting that in 1945, there were no Muslim scout troops in AOF.

⁹¹ Procès-Verbal de la Commission de l’Education Nationale et de la Jeunesse de la séance du 13 mai 1944 (Assemblée consultative provisoire-Alger). AN C//15266.

⁹² See Jean-Jacques Gauthé, “Quant le Scoutisme prépare à la guerre... Les Scouts musulmans algériens vus par l’armée française,” in Arnaud Baubérot et al., *Le scoutisme entre guerre et paix au XXe siècle* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2006).

activity.⁹³ The governors reported that happily there were no Muslim scout movements in their territories, so at least for the present, they had nothing to fear.⁹⁴

A formal ban on Muslim scouting was never actually put in place, but the administration did not stop funding Christian scout groups either. In the end it proved much easier for the administration to be inconsistent in this matter as Brun had feared. The administration in AOF began providing financial support to the Catholic *Scouts de France* as well as the Protestant *Éclaireurs Unionistes* in 1946; by the mid-1950s, Christian scout movements in AOF had received tens of millions of CFA,⁹⁵ whereas no funding was allotted to develop Muslim scouting in the territory. Indeed, top administrators in AOF were not only hostile to creating Muslim scout organizations but feared introducing scouting to Muslim West Africans at all. As the head of public education in AOF put it in 1946, scouting in Muslim countries posed such serious risks that “the only territories in AOF where scouting would have a chance of fulfilling its educative and moral role, are those in which Christianity can take root: Dahomey and Côte d’Ivoire.” Invoking the recent incidents with Muslim scouts in Algeria, he concluded they must do everything in their power to limit scouting to these “Christian territories” and prevent as much as possible scout movements from “spread[ing] among populations steeped in Islamism.”⁹⁶

Thus Muslim scouting was officially discouraged by the colonial administration insofar as it was *Muslim*, whether individual arguments on that score appealed to *laïcité* or not. This position proved consequential for the evolution of scouting in AOF. In 1947, the administration agreed to provide financial support for a delegation of scouts from AOF to represent the

⁹³ See correspondance from 1947-1948 between the MFOM, the Governor-General AEF, and territorial governors in Oubangui-Chari, Congo, Chad and Gabon in dossier on scouts and nationalism ANOM AEF GGAEF 5D/219.

⁹⁴ Ibid.; Charles F. Brun, Note a/s scoutisme, 26 octobre 1945. ANS O/2 (31).

⁹⁵ See folders, “Scouts de France—subventions AOF—1950-1959” and “Éclaireurs Unionistes de France—subventions AOF—1946-1958.” ANS 18G/214 (160).

⁹⁶ Letter from Berlan [DG-APAS] to DG-Instruction Publique, 14 mai 1946. ANS O/2 (31).

Federation in the 6th annual International Scout Jamboree, which that year happened to be held in Moisson, France. Of the 112 members of the delegation, just under half were secular *Éclaireurs de France* [EDF], about a third were Catholic *Scouts*, and the rest were Protestant *Éclaireurs Unionistes*.⁹⁷ Some West African Muslims did attend the Jamboree as part of the EDF contingent, but that participation was predicated on the subsumption of their Muslim-ness in the explicitly secular scout movement, since the colonial administration's policies had made *laïque* and Christian identifications the only permissible options. And so despite the small Muslim presence in its ranks, the delegation—which was intended to “represent” the youth of AOF, close to 50% of whom were Muslim, to metropolitan France and the world—officially comprised only *laïcs*, Catholics, and Protestants. African Christians were recognized and included in the Franco-African community as such, while Africans Muslims were deliberately denied such recognition.

However, around this time (c.1947-1949), the colonial administration in AOF was beginning, albeit reluctantly, to contemplate a more proactive “Franco-Muslim” youth and education policy. As Muslim West Africans became more involved in the policymaking process in France and in the local assemblies, and African elites' expectations for democratic reform rose, the colonial administration received increasingly aggressive petitions for state support for Qur'anic schools, the inclusion of Muslim religious instruction in public schooling, and, in Senegal, Niger, Mali and Mauritania, instruction in Arabic as well.⁹⁸ Initially, most colonial administrators justified denying these requests by invoking *laïcité*, which they persisted in

⁹⁷ R. Braem [Commissaire de province des *Eclaireurs de France* en AOF], “Le Jamboree de 1947,” s/d. ANS O/2 (31).

⁹⁸ I will discuss this issue at greater length in Chapter 6. For general discussions of Muslim education in the region, see Louis Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge. Religion, Power and Schooling in a West African Muslim Society* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001); Christopher Harrison, *France and Islam in West Africa, 1860-1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); Ousman Kobo, *Unveiling Modernity in Twentieth-Century West African Islamic Reforms* (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishing, 2012); David Robinson, *Paths of Accommodation: Muslim Societies and French Colonial Authorities in Senegal and Mauritania, 1880-1920* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2000).

presenting as a non-negotiable, bedrock French republican value. In a typical response to the question of teaching Arabic, one official wrote that while he recognized the importance of Arabic to the Muslim faithful, any Arabic instruction would have to come from the community itself, “in light of the very principles at the heart of the republican regime which interdicts any state intrusion in matters of religion.”⁹⁹ The Governor-General of AOF himself declared, in response to demands for state support for Muslim religious instruction by the federal assembly of AOF, the *Grand Conseil*: “It is impossible for us given the principles of *laïcité*...to promote Qur’anic education [*enseignement*] and notably to introduce it into the curriculum.” He continued, it was crucial “not to consider Islam an official religion, thereby breaking the traditional position of republican and *laïque* France.”¹⁰⁰ If we read these declarations alongside official policy toward Christian schooling and youth organizations in both Federations, as well as contemporaneous shifts in metropolitan France, we see that this invocation of strict interpretation of *laïcité* was no longer in step with practices on the ground in French Africa or with evolving conceptions and practices of *laïcité* in the metropole. Instead, it was selectively applied to a single faith: Islam. And yet, despite these lofty declarations, the sheer volume of protest, coupled with growing concerns to insulate West African Muslims from broader currents rippling through the Islamic world, administrators in AOF did begin to seriously entertain the idea of developing their own “Franco-Muslim” school policy in the late 1940s.

Subsequent debates on why this shift was deemed necessary and appropriate, and what exactly “Franco-Muslim” education in sub-Saharan Africa would entail, hinged on racialized

⁹⁹ Letter from Mérat to Prof. Ibrihima M’Bodj [of the Grande Mosquée de Saint Louis], 28 mars 1947. M’Bodj had written a letter on behalf of the Muslim community in Saint Louis to the president of the Republic calling for the inclusion of Arabic instruction in public schools in Senegal. He must have been disappointed to receive a response from a low-level administrator in Dakar. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2131.

¹⁰⁰ Letter from the Governor-General AOF to the MFOM—Inspection-Générale – Enseignement et Jeunesse, 25 november 1949. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2131.

understandings of Islam in West Africa, which French colonial administrators tellingly referred to as *Islam Noir*. In their eyes, African Muslims were more “African” than “Muslim”—a belief that was duly registered in the terminology they most commonly employed to denote Muslim-majority regions and populations: “Islamicized” [*islamisée*] rather than “Muslim” [*musulmane*]. In this sense, Muslim Africans were seen as still “in play”—as more receptive and open to adopting French social and cultural practices than Arabs, and possibly, even eventually converting to Christianity.¹⁰¹ The framework of *Islam Noir* simultaneously justified the colonial administration assuming responsibility for Muslim religious instruction—if *Islam Noir* was as pliable as administrators and educators thought, they could mold it to suit their own purposes—and aggressively curtailing the opening of new Qur’anic schools and Arabic language instruction, which were often framed as “foreign imports” without deep roots in African spiritual, social or cultural life. As the Governor-General of AOF declared in 1949, “The juridical customs of the Islamicized populations really do not derive from the precepts of the Qur’an.” Indeed, he argued that “Arab culture” had had a “destructive influence on Negro-African civilizations,” which “have become bastardized and even disappeared in certain regions.”¹⁰² As colonial administrators, then, he concluded it was actually their job to protect “black African civilizations” *from* Islam.

* * *

¹⁰¹ Robert Coquereaux, *École Franco-Arabe ou École Franco-Musulmane dans le Nord du Cameroun? Mémoire présenté à M. le Directeur du Centre des Hautes Etudes d’Administration Musulmane*, s/d. [1950]. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2256.

¹⁰² Letter from the Governor-General AOF to the MFOM, *op cit*.

The confluence of postwar attempts to reconfigure national-metropolitan, Franco-African and pan-European youth and education policy engendered extensive reflection on the role of the Christian tradition in French society, the colonial project, and “European civilization” more broadly. This emerging discursive framework had tangible effects on education policy and its implementation across these contexts. The quest for national unity after Vichy and Catholic participation in the Resistance created an opening to reconcile Catholicism and republicanism in metropolitan France and Francophone Africa, and one of the key strategies education officials adopted in trying to reach out to Catholic educators was to characterize French culture, even *laïcité* itself, as culturally Christian. At the same time, French participation in European forums on youth and education offered a new venue and new impetus for recognizing the centrality of Christianity in French culture and social life. Indeed, reflecting on the relationship between Christianity and culture on a transnational European scale rendered such recognition more acceptable and more commonsensical in French republican political discourse than it had been before the war.

Moreover, the postwar conjuncture altered the stakes of that recognition. By moving away from a version of *laïcité* that had sought to dissociate French national identity from religion at the same time that France was attempting to establish a veritable “Franco-African community,” non-Christian religious difference was explicitly recast as a new boundary between republican France and the nascent European Community on the one hand and French Africa on the other. This boundary was both conceptual and institutional. As French leaders, educators and activists considered to what extent France’s and Europe’s “Christian inheritance” should guide education reform across metropolitan, colonial and European contexts, they developed substantively different policy approaches to religion, youth, and education depending on the

religion, even though they continued to issue those policies within an undifferentiated rhetorical framework of “republican *laïcité*.”

Despite the discursive continuity that most postwar French officials established in their invocations of *laïcité*, the cleavages created in this period belie contemporary constructions of *laïcité* as a totalizing, unitary principle of French political culture and republican practice since WWII, let alone since 1905, 1882 or 1789. While recent scholarship has emphasized the “unsettled” nature of French *laïcité* throughout modern French history, this chapter has shown that the specific contours and contradictions of postwar *laïcité* were produced at the intersection of national reconstruction, colonial education reform, and early European integration. The critical interplay between the culturalization of Christianity, racially-inflected ideas about African Islam, and concrete institutional arrangements across metropolitan, colonial African, and transnational European contexts in the late 1940s located France more firmly in a Europe that was *both* secular and Christian, which produced new patterns of exclusion in French Africa.

Chapter 4

Youth, Education and the Making of Postwar Racial Common Sense, 1944-1950

Just as the wartime situation had prompted soul-searching regarding religious identity, secularism, and civilizational boundaries, the ideological battle between the Allies and the Axis called into question long- and widely-held assumptions about the meaning of race. By 1944, as Allied victory in the fight against Nazism loomed on the horizon, both European leaders and francophone African elites began to hope for a postwar order in which racism would be eliminated. The postwar conjuncture was not the first time that francophone Africans in France's colonies made explicit appeals for racial equality, but Allied rhetoric against Nazi racism raised African expectations that those appeals might no longer fall on deaf ears. There had also been many European critics of racism prior to the war, however it was not until the Nazi regime took racial logics and racial violence to such extremes that the overwhelming majority of postwar European leaders felt compelled to publicly condemn racism and distance themselves from the concept of race altogether.

This chapter examines the efforts of French, francophone African, and European elites to turn this rhetoric into practice in their respective campaigns for substantive colonial and European education reforms. I show that these efforts did not in fact overcome the problem of race, but rather produced new racial logics and racial arrangements in postwar Greater France. These include the redrawing of racial boundaries between Europe and Africa; new structures of domination and social reproduction in the colonial African context; and new geopolitical pressures and international norms against racism. Building on the model of "racial formation" developed by theorists Michael Omi and Howard Winant, I suggest that taken together, these

developments helped consolidate a specifically postwar racial common sense.¹ I use “racial common sense” to connote the mutually reinforcing interplay between new ways of thinking and talking about race, and the concrete forms and institutional arrangements to which they gave rise. I suggest postwar racial common sense was forged in the encounter of competing conceptions of race, racism, and equality among French, European and francophone African elites, in which some interpretations of what those concepts meant proved more powerful than others. I then show how dominant conceptions of race and racism were institutionally instantiated in colonial and European education initiatives, which helped naturalize what were once fiercely contested ideas and practices. In so doing, this chapter historicizes how certain racial codes and forms came into being in the postwar conjuncture.

The first two sections of this chapter juxtapose African and European perspectives on race, education, and equality. Francophone African elites’ conscious strategy to frame their demands for education reform as part of a larger struggle for racial equality, though powerful and effective in some respects, was also turned against them, reanimating an older repertoire of racial stereotypes about Africans that hinged on more cultural and less biological conceptions of race. At the same time, European education planners relied on the language of “civilization” to replace the discredited language of race, but their civilizational discourse both produced and contained racial logics that widened the distance between Europe and Africa. In the final section, I show how those stereotypes and civilizational discourses shaped how the French went about the reorganization of education in the French African Federations.

¹ Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States from the 1960s to the 1980s* (New York: Routledge, 1994). My notion of “racial common sense” combines their concept of “racial formation” and other observations they make about race and “common sense” throughout the book.

Racial Expectations at the End of World War II

African Expectations: Education Reform for Racial Equality

“The man who wrote that blacks are monkeys is dead.” This is how Léopold Kaziendé, a schoolteacher who would later serve as a top government minister in independent Niger, remembers feeling upon hearing the news of Hitler’s suicide, huddled around a radio with a group of friends and fellow teachers in Niamey in spring 1945.² Like so many French-educated African elites, Kaziendé understood Hitler’s death not only as signaling the end of Nazism in Europe, but also as a devastating blow to antiblack racism the world over, with real consequences for Africans’ everyday lives in postwar Greater France. Africans in AOF had, after all, experienced the ideological dimensions of the war first hand during three long years of repressive, openly racist, Vichy rule.³ As Abdourahmane Konaté, who had been a student in Senegal during the war, later recalled, “We were living through the great contest between the Allies and the Axis powers, which here took the form of the Gaullists and the *Vichystes*. We Africans were deeply embroiled in these grave conflicts.” Indeed, Konaté describes the everyday racist indignities he suffered during the Vichy interlude, even as he and his fellow African classmates were forced to sing the Pétainist hymn “Maréchal, nous voilà” on holidays and other special occasions in school.⁴

² Léopold Kaziendé, *Souvenirs d’un enfant de la colonisation*, vol 4 (Porto Novo: Editions Assouli, 1998): 45-46. Kaziendé was born in 1912 in the Kaya region of Upper Volta, which was later folded into the French colonial territory of Niger. A Catholic of Mossi background, he attended the École Primaire Supérieure in Ougadougou and then the École Normale William Ponty in Gorée (Senegal). He held a number of school director posts across Niger in the 1930s, 40s and 50s before entering the Nigérien government in the independence era.

³ On the Vichy interlude in AOF, see Ruth Ginio, *French Colonialism Unmasked: the Vichy Years in French West Africa* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006).

⁴ Abdourahmane Konaté, *Le cri du mange-mil. Mémoires d’un préfet sénégalais* (L’Harmattan, 1990): 57. Konaté was born in 1931 in Saint Louis, Senegal. A prominent figure in syndicalist youth movements in Dakar in the 1950s, he also worked in the financial and administrative services division of the federal

Indeed, francophone African elites interpreted the Allied victory as one in a series of promising internal and international developments heralding the coming of a new era of racial equality in French Africa in 1944-1946. In January 1944, the Brazzaville Conference on colonial reform and the colonial administration's promise to end forced labor had presaged the "equality of whites and blacks before French law" to Kaziendé and his friends.⁵ Expectations among French-educated African elites rose further still in late 1945 as Africans were elected to the constituent assembly charged with drafting a new constitution for what would become the Fourth Republic and French Union, and two of these newly-minted African deputies lent their names to the bills that formally abolished forced labor (*Loi Houphouët-Boigny*) and the distinction between French citizens and colonial subjects (*Loi Lamine-Guèye*) in spring 1946.⁶

Kaziendé describes how the passage of these laws inspired joyous celebration in both city and countryside, as young people organized "neighborhood dances to the sound of tam-tams to celebrate the new era." Moreover, he notes that these laws prompted a real change in how francophone African elites, most of whom were either low-level colonial administrators or teachers like himself, carried themselves and expected to be treated by the metropolitan French in France's African territories. No longer excluded from the category, "man and citizen," these men—and they were virtually all men—would no longer accept being "conspicuously *tutoyer*-ed⁷ the whole length of the day" by their white colleagues. On the contrary, with their new status

administration for AOF during that time, where he developed close ties with some of the leading figures in higher education in AOF. He remained in government administration after independence.

⁵ Ibid., 31.

⁶ On the first cohort of African deputies to the Constituent Assembly and the passage of these laws, see Frederick Cooper, *Citizenship between Empire and Nation. Remaking France and French Africa, 1945-1960* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), Chapters 1-3.

⁷ In French, *tutoyer* means to address someone with the informal "tu" as opposed to the polite "vous" form. "Tu" is typically only used between close friends, or by adults speaking to children, but it was commonly used by whites in the colonies to assert their authority over Africans (even educated African adults working within the colonial administration or the corps of teachers).

as “freedmen” [*affranchis*], “they reacted vigorously to all acts of disrespect in their offices, in the street, in public places,” and demanded equal pay for equal work for Africans in the colonial bureaucracy and teaching corps. Kaziendé was quick to stress, however, that they were not “provocateurs”; they simply considered themselves and the French as equals and were eager for colonial society, not just the law, to follow suit. On the heels of the Allied victory, in what so many Africans understood to be an ideological battle against Nazi racism, this did not seem too much to expect.⁸

Crucially, Kaziendé hoped that racial equality would be realized within the framework of a renovated Franco-African community, not by way of national independence. While Kaziendé and his circle closely followed and welcomed the news that France officially recognized Syrian sovereignty (January 1944) and growing international support for self-determination coming out of the San Francisco Conference that founded the UN (spring 1945), none of them saw total separation from France as a viable or attractive option for French Africa.⁹ Important recent work by Frederick Cooper and Gary Wilder show that this view was far from marginal – that most francophone African elites at the close of the war and in the early postwar years ardently sought “decolonization” *without* independence. In this alternative vision of decolonization, the deep structures of colonial domination in French Africa would be dismantled, Africans would obtain full citizenship and greater political autonomy for their territories, but they would nonetheless remain within a non-imperial and democratic Franco-African political entity.¹⁰

To proponents of this other form of decolonization—from local teachers like Kaziendé to the most prominent African leaders of the time such as Senegalese poet-turned-politician

⁸ Kaziendé, *Souvenirs*: 49-50.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 31.

¹⁰ Cooper, *Citizenship Between Empire and Nation*; Gary Wilder, *Freedom Time: Négritude, Decolonization and the Future of the World* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015).

Léopold Sédar Senghor—legal measures like the new constitution or the Houphouët-Boigny and Lamine-Guèye laws alone were not sufficient to achieve these goals; only robust social reforms and a new kind of cultural politics, particularly the expansion and improvement of African education, would thoroughly “decolonize” the empire. Senghor, who like Kaziendé, was a teacher by training, was convinced that his political vision of “association in interdependence” required both increasing Africans’ access to educational opportunities as well as inventing a fundamentally new kind of education for Africans rooted in “cultural *métissage*” and “symbiosis.” Neither a sterile copy nor a watered down version of education in the metropole, such an education, Senghor argued, “while grounding the student in the values of Negro-African civilization [*la civilisation négro-africaine*], would also initiate him in French values [*la francité*], to produce an indigenous elite *equal* to the French.”¹¹ Only then, he insisted, would colonialism truly end and the new era of egalitarian Franco-African relations begin in earnest.

Senghor was not alone in this view. With each passing year, African politicians, educators, and students looked to concrete realizations in the domain of education (or lack thereof) as a benchmark of the progress of colonial reform and racial equality in postwar Greater France more generally. African demands centered on the expansion of primary education, the development of secondary education, and the creation of African universities, and, in the interim, more scholarships for African students to pursue their secondary and postsecondary educations in France. As to the general administration of education in the territories, French-educated Africans resented that education remained under the jurisdiction of the central colonial ministry and called for the Ministry of National Education to assume full control over all levels of education in the territories. By the end of the 1940s, these issues had become lightning rods in

¹¹ Léopold Sédar Senghor, “Préface,” in Jean Capelle, *L’éducation en Afrique noire à la veille des Indépendances (1946-1958)* (Paris: Editions Karthala, 1990): 7-9. My emphasis.

African attempts to force the French to make good on the promise of an egalitarian French Union that had been so triumphantly announced in the preamble of the 1946 Constitution, in which all inhabitants of the Union were supposed to be equal “without distinction of race, religion or creed.”¹² In a rousing speech decrying stalled colonial reforms before a gathering of youth leaders in Montpellier in 1949, Congolese teacher Jean Dadet characterized the abysmal education statistics for AEF as a deliberate “racial politics” on the part of the French to “maintain the black man in an animal state.” How else, he asked, could one explain that after six decades of French rule, in his Federation of more than four million people, only *five* Africans obtain the *baccalauréat* each year?¹³

Dadet’s invective lambasted the French colonial administration for both the scandalously low rates of schooling for Africans and the poor quality of the education they received. He declared that the paucity of schools in France’s African territories amounted to a “politics of illiteracy,” while he derided the schools that did exist as mere “caricatures,” built reluctantly and in bad faith. He did not mince words in his overall assessment of this situation: the current state of colonial education, he argued, was at the root of the multifaceted “racial discrimination” Africans continued to experience in the French Union.¹⁴

¹² Preamble to the Constitution of 27 October 1946, Art. 1. The constitution became an important rhetorical tool for African deputies in the National Assembly as they relentlessly pressed their metropolitan counterparts on these issues in the Assembly’s special commission on overseas territories in the late 1940s. See especially the commission’s transcripts for 1947-1950: Archives Nationales [AN] C//15406, C//15407.

¹³ According to statistics compiled by the French central colonial authority, in 1946 six inhabitants of AEF obtained the *baccalauréat*; by 1949, that number had risen to 29. It is not clear, however, what percentage of these *bacheliers* were actually African. *Bulletin de l’Inspection-Générale de l’Enseignement et de la Jeunesse du Ministère de la France d’Outre-Mer* (décembre 1950): 40. Archives Nationales d’Outre Mer [ANOM] BIB AOM/20205/1950.

¹⁴ *Note d’Information a/s la ‘Journée Mondiale Contre le Colonialisme,’* Service de Liaison avec les Originaires des Territoires d’Outre-Mer, 22 février 1949. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2400. This event was organized by a communist international youth organization (the World Federation of Democratic Youth that will be discussed in Chapter 6), but Dadet’s “anticolonialism” did not call for an abrupt rupture with

French educators in the African Federations, colonial administrators, and national political figures in the metropole usually dismissed such allegations of racial discrimination out of hand, at best as deeply misguided, or worse, as political grandstanding.¹⁵ Even the most liberal and otherwise sympathetic French observers felt provoked by this rhetoric. Jean Capelle, who served as the head of education in AOF from 1946-1949 and whom Senghor considered as one of his closest allies in the struggle for education reform, derisively recalls that many Africans “accused us of a Machiavellian plot to reestablish a system based on racial discrimination.”¹⁶ Capelle’s allusion to a “Machiavellian plot” construes this position as paranoid and delusional. Moreover, his use of the term *reestablish* implies that systemic racial discrimination in the territories had been effectively dismantled before he assumed his position, even though Capelle’s own experience battling what he considered to be a recalcitrant, “colonialist” central authority to effect meaningful education reform in AOF suggests quite the contrary.¹⁷

Though French colonial administrators refused to accept African characterizations of the sorry state of colonial education as “racist,” they were nevertheless well aware that they had to build more schools in the African Federations. In 1946, the French government allocated billions of francs for social and economic development in the overseas territories, and a significant portion of these funds, known as FIDES, was supposed to be devoted to new school construction

France, but rather closely resembled that of Senghor. As Dadet declared earlier in his speech, “If today colonial peoples are rising up in protest...it is because there is something that is threatening the very foundations of that great institution that we want to build called the French Union.” For biographical background on Dadet, see Claude-Ernest Kiamba, *Construction de l'état et politiques de l'enseignement au Congo du 1911 à 1997. Contribution à l'analyse de l'Action Publique en Afrique Noire*, Thèse de Doctorat, Université Montesquieu-Bordeaux IV, 2008: 44, 93.

¹⁵ I will return to this point below. For a longer discussion of French reactions to African accusations of racism in the late 1940s, see my “Obscuring Race: Franco-African Conversations about Colonial Reform and Racism and the Making of ‘Colorblind’ France, 1944-1950” *French Politics, Culture and Society* 33, no 3 (Winter 2015).

¹⁶ Jean Capelle, *L'éducation en Afrique noire à la veille des Indépendances (1946-1958)* (Paris: Editions Karthala, 1990): 49.

¹⁷ Idem. I briefly return to this below but will expand on this more in the next chapter.

and expanding the capacity of existing schools in French Africa.¹⁸ With the help of the FIDES program, the prewar rate of primary school attendance in the African Federations effectively doubled by the end of the 1940s, but since the rate in 1939 had been infinitesimal, overall percentages remained extremely low. In 1950, only 5.7% of the 2.25 million school-age African children in AOF attended school; in AEF, the rate was 7.57% for a school-age population of just under a million. In both federations, the percentage of the total population who had any formal schooling whatsoever hovered around 1%.¹⁹

While most French and African observers attributed this situation at least in part to the sheer lack of schools, they disagreed considerably as to why Africans who did have the opportunity to go to school might actively choose not to do so. Their divergent interpretations reflect how differently French and francophone African elites were conceptualizing racial equality at this time. Capelle understood African hostility to French schools as a holdover from the early days of the *Indigénat*, when the colonial administration employed traditional chiefs to conscript local people for the *corvées* and forcibly send a small number of children to colonial schools to provide the administration with clerks and translators. Capelle believed that because

¹⁸ Rachel Kantrowitz, “‘So That Tomorrow Would be Better for Us:’ Developing French-Funded Catholic Schools in Dahomey and Senegal, 1945-1975,” PhD Dissertation, New York University, 2015. The overwhelming majority of FIDES funds, which excluded Indochina, went to the African federations, however allocations for education comprised only a fraction of available FIDES funds. In the 1949 FIDES budget for AOF, education spending totaled 8%, less than half of funding for roads and bridges.

¹⁹ *Eléments de rapport sur le développement de l’Enseignement dans les TOM*, 7 avril 1950. ANOM 1AFFPOL/1015. Capelle provides slightly different figures in his memoir: 4.2% for AOF and 8.5% for AEF. See his *L’éducation en Afrique noire*: 56. The higher rate of school attendance in AEF was largely attributable to the older presence and higher volume of mission schools (which FIDES helped fund). In 1950, there were 889 public schools and 237 private schools in AOF; in AEF, the figures were much closer: 327 public schools compared to 275 private ones. I discuss state funding for mission schools in Chapter 3. Rates of school attendance in French-controlled Togo and Cameroon, which had been under international supervision since the League of Nation mandate system, were noticeably higher—20% and 22.9%, respectively—a strong indication of just how important international pressure was in determining education reform outcomes in the French Union.

this schooling was compulsory, sending children to French schools had assumed an indelible social stigma.²⁰

The legacy of forced schooling may have been a contributing factor to some Africans parents' wariness of French education, but many Africans who had attended French colonial schools framed ambivalence to French schooling quite differently, in a way that harks back to Senghor's critique of the spirit of prewar colonial education. Abdourahmane Konaté recounts how his father reacted when the local teacher in his village in rural Senegal proposed that Konaté come to his school: his father said, "I must admit, I am not thrilled with colonial education. It produces strangers in our midst, supplanting the education the child has received from his parents and above all, attachment to the land and to our way of seeing the world."²¹ Konaté insists that this view was widely shared; he forcefully contends that weak attendance figures for French schools in the late 1940s were due to "popular resistance to the alienating content in these schools." For Konaté, what made this content "alienating" was not just the cultural deracination that his father (and so many colonial administrators) feared; rather, he characterized the curriculum itself, particularly in history instruction, as an instrument of racial domination. Konaté lamented that the curriculum still in place in the late 1940s was marked by "the derisory treatment of ancient African history," which "does its best to paint African chiefs of the resistance as 'savage and bloody tyrants.'" Konaté argued that this view of African history produced a racial inferiority complex in African schoolchildren that helped maintain the colonialist status quo of racial *inequality*. Curricular reforms were therefore a fundamental

²⁰ Ibid: 79.

²¹ Konaté, *Le cri du mange-mil*: 53.

prerequisite and would be the foundation of the broader “cultural, political and social revolution” he and his compatriots sought for postwar French Africa.²²

As the views of Senghor, Kaziendé and Dadet clearly indicate, a broad swath of French-educated Africans emerged from the war convinced that the “revolution” Konaté described had to begin with education. They demanded not just more schools or better schools but fundamentally different kinds of schools, with wholly different objectives. Colonial education had been designed to produce a specifically colonial African elite to uphold the colonial order.²³ If they were going to thoroughly “decolonize” the empire, African education would have to provide Africans with cultural confidence to match that of the French and prepare them to formulate their own priorities for the development of African societies and African relations with France.

The emphasis elite Africans placed on race and education is largely overlooked in the literature on postwar colonialism. In their works on decolonization without independence, Cooper and Wilder concentrate on political forms and institutional arrangements—citizenship and federalism, respectively—as the central battlegrounds of competing visions of how to reform the empire, ignoring the way African politicians, activists, and educators invested so much of their time and energy agitating for education reform in France’s African territories.²⁴ This is a missed opportunity to analyze exactly how ideas about race influenced policy negotiations between French and African leaders in this period more broadly, for the connections Senghor

²² Ibid: 67-68.

²³ For a similar argument in the Algerian context, see Fanny Colonna, “Educating Conformity in Colonial Algeria,” in Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

²⁴ This lacuna is especially surprising since Senghor figures so prominently in both Cooper’s and Wilder’s work; they each identify Senghor as the most influential champion of decolonization without independence and examine his political thought in painstaking detail, yet neither takes up Senghor’s unyielding campaign to expand African access to education and redesign the substance of the education they would receive throughout his tenure as deputy in France’s National Assembly (1946-1958).

and his less prominent comrades-in-arms like Kaziendé, Dadet and Konaté were making between the particular challenges and stakes of education reform and broader political, social and cultural transformations engaged race head-on.²⁵

The circumstances of the war and its aftermath emboldened African elites to demand racial equality and created a new climate, both within the French sphere and internationally, in which those demands carried newfound currency. French-educated Africans expected the racial scaffolding of the old empire to be rapidly dismantled and that racial equality would soon be a lived reality for all Africans in the new French Union. The kind of racial equality they sought—social and cultural as well as legal and political—focused their efforts on education. In turn, they framed their demands for substantive education reform in explicitly racial terms: if racial equality depended on their success, failure to enact such reforms amounted to racial discrimination. The postwar conjuncture heightened the power of this rhetoric as more Africans began to participate in the policymaking process in both French parliamentary bodies in the metropole and local representative assemblies in the territories.²⁶ Henceforth, French lawmakers, administrators and educators would have to reckon with African insistence that colonial education reform was about race, whether most French figures agreed with that characterization or not, as well as Africans' conceptions of racial equality, racial discrimination and what a truly egalitarian French Union would actually look like. However, for every action there is a reaction. As we shall see in the final section of this chapter, caught in a double bind, Africans' insistence

²⁵ Inattention to race is a common shortcoming in the scholarship on postwar colonialism and decolonization, as well as postwar France more generally. For a longer discussion, see Chapter 1.

²⁶ Since *écoles normales* – or teacher-training institutes – had been one of the few opportunities for Africans to obtain a post-elementary education before the war, a significant proportion of Africans who ran for office in the postwar opening were themselves teachers and intimately familiar with the colonial education system and bureaucracy. Seven of the eight African deputies in the National Assembly's Commission on the overseas territories had come from the teacher's corps, a point they themselves often made when pushing for the urgency education reform. See for instance the Procès-Verbal de la Commission des territoires d'outre-mer de la séance du 6 décembre 1950. AN C//15408.

on race and racism produced new racial stereotypes about Africans that became an important part of postwar racial common sense.

European Expectations: Racial Reeducation for European Unity

African formulations of racial equality were not the only racial expectations with which the French had to contend. The prospect of an Allied victory over Nazi Germany produced a different set of racial expectations among European elites, whose prewar conceptions of race and racism were challenged by the close association of race and Nazism during the war. Those conceptions were channeled into Europeans' self-understanding as Europeans and pro-Europe activists' postwar aspirations for a united Europe. To those on the Allied side—whether in the resistance on the continent or in exile elsewhere—opposition to Nazi racism was a powerful rallying cry and potential unifying force for greater European cooperation once the war was won. Nazism's mixture of racism and authoritarianism was framed as intrinsically anti-European, a frontal assault on supposedly fundamental European values of democracy, universalism and individualism.²⁷ And yet, European postwar planners were well aware that state racism had become part of everyday life for most Europeans living under Nazi rule, and they feared that many, especially the young, were being indoctrinated with Nazi racial theory. Thus as the war started drawing to a close, the daunting prospect of the “denazification” of occupied Europe put questions of race and education front and center in transnational European discussions about postwar reconstruction.

Gathered together in the London-based Conference of Allied Ministers of Education [CAME], a transnational group of European political elites, intellectuals and educators began

²⁷ On postwar conceptions of democracy as a specifically European form, see Martin Conway (forthcoming).

contemplating the “racial reeducation” of an entire generation of European youth that had come of age under Nazi occupation.²⁸ Members of the CAME were quick to characterize the “Nazi doctrine of Man” as “rubbish,” “pseudo-scientific” and “insane.”²⁹ However these discussions remained remarkably abstract: no one made explicit references to Nazi eugenics, racial antisemitism, the Final Solution, or antiblack Nazi racism, nor did they seriously consider the extent to which racial theory and racism in Europe before the war were not unique to Nazi Germany.³⁰ Nevertheless, the discussions about race and education within the CAME in 1944-1945 inaugurated a broader international effort to debunk scientific racism after the war that culminated in a pair of influential “Statements on Race” issued by the CAME’s successor organization, UNESCO, in 1950 and 1951. Though scholars continue to debate their legacy and

²⁸ I discuss the creation of the CAME and French involvement in this institution at length in Chapter 2. Key French participants included prominent intellectuals René Cassin and Raymond Aron, as well as top-level officials from the Ministry of National Education and educators in secondary and higher education.

²⁹ For “rubbish,” see Dr. Alf Sommerfelt, “Education and Racial Tolerance,” London, 12 February 1945, UNESCO Archives, CAME/Correspondance/I/12623; for “insane,” see K. Eydziatowicz, “Notes on Educational and School Broadcasting,” London, 15 February 1945, CAME/Correspondance/I/12623. For “pseudo-scientific,” see “Notes on the Draft Resolution on the Enquiry into the Theory of Race,” Appendix I, London, 19 March 1945, *CAME, London, 1942-1945, vol III: General Series Documents II*.

³⁰ Indeed, it is worth noting that after combing through the transcripts of the CAME, I encountered almost no references to Jews. Two exceptions were a reference to Jewish children as a distinct subset of children in a list of youth populations in liberated Europe who would need special “education ‘treatment’” after the war, and discussion of removing all “Jewish books” to Jerusalem. In the case of the former, Jewish children were listed alongside “children of quislings,” “backwards children,” and “children and young people who have been deliberately perverted by the enemy,” in light of the “the effects of race persecution [and] statelessness” (see the unsigned, undated report, “Human Rehabilitation of Children and Young People,” in *CAME, London 1942-1945, vol II: General Series Documents I*, UNESCO Archives). In late 1945, the CAME’s Books and Periodicals Commission considered a Danish proposal to remove all “Jewish books” to Jerusalem. Sir Ernest Barker, Chairman of the Commission, and French representative Louis Gros virulently opposed this proposition, and the Commission did not ultimately endorse the measure: “The Chairman said that he felt the Jewish collections should be kept in Europe and not removed to Jerusalem. M. Gros said that if it were suggested that French libraries should give up their Jewish collections, the idea would most certainly be rejected.” The debate ended on a more ominous note: “After some discussion, it was agreed that it was not wholly desirable to concentrate all Jewish collections in one library.” See “Draft Minutes of the 54th Meeting of the Books and Periodicals Commission...29 November 1945,” in *CAME, London 1942-1945, vol III: Books and Periodicals Commissions*, UNESCO Archives.

the ambiguous reformulations of race they contain, the Statements both reflected and enshrined new international norms about the need to combat “racial prejudice.”³¹

While the authors, audience, and scope of the UNESCO Race Statements were truly international, the CAME’s deliberations were conducted exclusively by Europeans who were working within an explicitly European framework. For Norwegian delegate Alf Sommerfelt, the basic problem was that after so many years of exposure to “Nazi” race theory, most Europeans—even those in unoccupied lands—were utterly misinformed about what race really was, all too often confusing what he called “anthropological type” with national and linguistic groups. Sommerfelt recounted with dismay how he had recently encountered a British couple who, having adopted an orphaned French infant, began teaching themselves French so they could communicate with the child as it grew up. As members of the CAME, he argued, their main task was to develop pedagogical tools and recommend curricular reforms for all levels of European education to combat such gross misconceptions about the nature of race. Noting the CAME’s project to produce a handbook for schoolteachers and a new textbook on European history to be distributed across the continent after the war, Sommerfelt insisted that these and whatever other efforts they might pursue in future to retrain teachers and redesign school and university curricula must provide teachers and students with the “basic facts” about race. He listed these as:

The difference between race, language and nation, an elementary survey of the different anthropological types (in Europe and the countries of European civilization with a summary treatment of the rest of the world), the problems of the inter-relations between

³¹ On the particular contribution of French anthropologists to the UNESCO Race Statements, see the Epilogue in Alice Conklin, *In the Museum of Man: Race, Empire and Anthropology in France, 1850-1950* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013). On the transformation of the CAME into UNESCO, see Denis Mylonas, *La genèse de l’Unesco. La Conférence des Ministres Alliés de l’Éducation (1942-1945)* (Brussels: Bruylant, 1976). For a critical reading of the Race Statements and the specific UNESCO tradition of postwar European antiracism, see Alana Lentin, *Racism and Antiracism in Europe* (London: Pluto Press, 2004).

civilization and “race” and the question of “racial superiority,” some notions of the European languages and the “origin” of the European peoples.³²

As the passing remark about “the rest of the world” indicates, to Sommerfelt, the primary objective of their educational initiatives was not a refutation of racial thinking *tout court*, but rather to correct spurious notions of racial divisions within Europe.

This view predominated within the CAME. The representative of the Ministry of National Education of the Polish government-in-exile affirmed that to counteract Nazi racial theories, they must “establish fundamental theses of education common to all the peoples of the continent,” so as to instill them with the consciousness “that they all belong to the same European civilization.”³³ Several British academics involved in preparing recommendations for the history textbook likewise stressed that they must downplay the “principle of race” as a significant factor in Europe’s past in order to promote an historical narrative that clearly portrays Europe as a “single civilization.”³⁴ The CAME was a unique venue where such views converged and flourished, an incubator for an emergent postwar consensus that the diversity of European peoples and cultures was not a question of race at all.³⁵

That race would no longer be considered an appropriate category for interpreting intra-European difference was a significant departure from the elaborate racial frameworks undergirding so much political and social-scientific discourse and public policy in the interwar

³² Sommerfelt, “Education and Racial Tolerance,” *op cit.*

³³ Eydziatowicz, “Notes on Educational and School Broadcasting,” *op cit.*

³⁴ Draft Minutes of the 22nd Meeting of the History Committee, 7 June 1944. *CAME, London 1942-1945, vol III: Books and Periodicals Commission, History Committees and Subcommittees*. UNESCO Archives.

³⁵ For an interesting take on racelessness in postwar Europe, see David Theo Goldberg, *The Threat of Race: Reflections on Racial Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2009), Chapter 5, “Precipitating Evaporation (On Racial Europeanization).”

period.³⁶ It was also a departure from earlier European efforts to refute Nazi racism in the 1930s, which sported such titles as *The Equality of the European Races and the Ways to Improve Them*.³⁷ The proceedings of the CAME suggest that championing the “racial equality” among Europeans was fast becoming moot in the postwar conjuncture; as conceptual registers shifted, there no longer seemed to be multiple “European races,” but rather one unitary “European civilization.”

The evolution of the history textbook the CAME was preparing provides an illustrative example. Though the CAME officially withdrew its sponsorship of the project in late 1945 to ensure the academic integrity and “independence” of the scholarship, all three editors of the three-volume work had sat on the CAME’s History Committee, including French representative Paul Vaucher. The title of the work, which was ultimately published in 1954, aptly captures the conceptual shift away from race: *The European Inheritance: A History of European Civilization*.³⁸ This is not to say that long-held notions about the distinctiveness of northern versus southern Europeans, east versus west, or racial-religious categories like ‘Slavs,’ ‘Latins,’ ‘Anglo-Saxons’ and ‘Germanics’ disappeared from the postwar European imaginary, for they

³⁶ On the racial categorization of Europeans in the interwar period, see, *inter alia*, Elisa Camiscioli, *Reproducing the French Race: Immigration, Intimacy and Embodiment in the Early Twentieth Century* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009).

³⁷ This was the title of the findings of a group of scientists at the Academy of Science in Prague that Masaryk commissioned to refute Nazi racial theory in the early 1930s. Edited by K. Weigner, the volume was published (in Czech) in 1935. Though members of the CAME cited this work, as I show below, their own language struck an entirely different note. See “Notes on the Draft Resolution on the Enquiry into the Theory of Race,” *op cit*. CAME member (and future head of UNESCO) Julian Huxley co-authored an important work in 1937, *We Europeans*, debunking Nazi racial policy and scientific racism more generally, though the work also did not unequivocally disavow racial categories.

³⁸ Barker et al., *The European Inheritance: A History of European Civilization*, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954). I have found no evidence that the work was translated into all major European languages and used across the continent as originally intended.

most certainly did not.³⁹ Indeed the third volume of *The European Inheritance* uses this terminology, but its authors made a special point to dissociate these terms from race: “Each of these names is linguistic, and not a name or term of race. None of them signifies breed or blood, or any of the physical facts which are studied by anthropologists: each of them indicates a language, and in it the culture contained in and carried by that vehicle.”⁴⁰

Once these historically racialized distinctions had come to be framed in non-racial terms, it became possible to actively celebrate and valorize Europe’s cultural and linguistic diversity in a new way, not only as a cultural asset or an abstract moral value, but as a defining feature of Europe and “European civilization” itself. By the end of the 1940s, Europe’s cultural diversity had become a common slogan among pro-Europe activists, and indeed, was figured as both a means and a motivation for European integration. As the European Movement put it in their promotional materials for the Cultural Conference in Lausanne, the variety and breadth of Europe’s cultural resources could be mobilized to help achieve European unity, just as “only a united Europe could preserve our cultures in their precious diversity.”⁴¹ This sentiment became a fixture of European unity discourse of the era, both in France and elsewhere in Western Europe. As the announcement of the French-led Union of European Federalists’ first youth congress in

³⁹ In fact, many French commentators proposed the French form a “Latin Union” with Italy, Spain and Portugal as an alternative to institutional cooperation with Britain and/or the countries of northern Europe. These proposals, however, were quickly dismissed by highranking French officials. See for instance, Jean Cassou, *Pour une Union Latine* s.d. (c.1944), a proposal that was quickly discredited by Jacques Soustelle (CFLN-Algiers) and M. Dejean (member of the Commission for the Study of Postwar Problems in London). Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères [AMAE], Z-Europe, Generalités 1944-1949: 40.

⁴⁰ Ibid., vol III: 311. The very term “inheritance” in the volume’s title points to the deep ambiguity of such assertions and point to the ‘culturalization’ of race in postwar discourse. Lentin identifies UNESCO as the key agent of this process. See her *Racism and Antiracism*, Chapter 2.

⁴¹ Announcement (n.d.) for the Conférence Européenne de la Culture (Lausanne, 8-12 December 1949), Bureau d’études pour un Centre européen de la Culture. Archives Historiques Contemporaines [AHC] 1/DE/25. The Lausanne Conference was the first major European conference devoted exclusively to cultural and educational issues. I discuss this event at length in Chapter 3 and will return to it below.

1949 proudly declared, “Europe is a mediating force of 280 million people formed by a common culture and belonging to a single civilization, rich in its diversity and in its unity.”⁴²

Despite its veneer of inclusivity, there was an implicit racial oneness underpinning this rhetoric that can be clearly traced in more explicit declarations of Europe’s “civilizational” unity within the CAME in 1945. This racial undercurrent has been obscured (or more often entirely ignored) in the literatures on the postwar movements for European unity, early European integration, and postwar European identity formation, which do not critically interrogate the explosion of European civilizational discourse in the postwar conjuncture.⁴³ Civilization talk was clearly beginning to replace the discredited language of race; but precisely for that reason the postwar civilizational idiom both absorbed many of the assumptions of older racial paradigms and produced new racial meanings.⁴⁴

Participants in the CAME made a clear distinction between correcting racial misconceptions about Europeans and issues of race outside of Europe; the very way that they framed the issue constituted the problem of race differently across a presumed “civilizational” divide. As Sommerfelt noted at the end of his proposal for racial reeducation in liberated Europe, “The instruction envisaged in this memorandum will be of importance not only in combating

⁴² Gilbert Giraudon, *Jeunesse Européenne Circulaire C*, 19 mai 1949. Archives Historiques de l’Union Européenne [AHUE] UEF—178.

⁴³ This is especially true in the French scholarship on these questions. See, among others, René Girault, ed., *Identités et consciences européennes au XXe siècle* (Paris: Hachette, 1994); Jean-Michel Guieu, Christophe le Dréau, Jenny Raflik et Laurent Warloutzet, *Penser et construire Europe au XXe siècle. Historiographie, bibliographie, enjeux*. (Paris: Belin, 2006); Robert Frank, ed., *Les identités européennes au XXe siècle. Diversités, convergences et solidarités* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2004); Gérard Bossuat, “Des lieux de mémoire pour l’Europe unie,” *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d’histoire* 61 (Jan-Mar, 1999).

⁴⁴ I do not mean to suggest that race had not been connected to the notion of “European Civilization” previously— it surely had. But there were also important countertrends, i.e., the concept of civilization was mobilized *against* “German” notions of racial community. As race was purged from postwar discourse, however, I propose this opposition faded away as race and civilization became tacitly intertwined in the both transnational European and French imaginaries.

Fascist and Nazi ideas but also in furthering a more tolerant and comprehending attitude toward people of non-European civilization.” He then added, “With the growing industrialization of Asiatic and African countries and the poisonous effects of Japanese propaganda it is of the utmost importance to exterminate racial prejudice.”⁴⁵

There are several assumptions in this brief comment that are worth considering in some detail, as they were widely shared by Sommerfelt’s colleagues in the CAME and informed transnational efforts to craft European education policies in the years that followed. First, Sommerfelt doubly externalizes the phenomenon of “racial prejudice” as a “Fascist and Nazi” imposition in Europe and a Japanese import elsewhere, effectively absolving Europe – the *true* Europe – of complicity in the development of modern racism. Contrary to the claims of several prominent historians that the experience of the war shattered Europe’s “superiority complex,”⁴⁶ formulations such as these implied that Europe had vast moral and intellectual resources that could be mobilized to fight prejudice throughout the world—which, not incidentally, would provide Europe with a new global vocation as colonial empires seemed to teeter on the brink. More importantly, in the context of Sommerfelt’s broader intervention, his reference to “people of non-European civilization” carried novel racial overtones that go beyond the common postwar practice of European policymakers developing coded language to avoid increasingly taboo racial terminology; Sommerfelt was helping to infuse this phrase with fundamentally new content.⁴⁷

Having dismissed the application of racial categories to differentiate Europeans from one another without disavowing the category of race altogether (what he referred to as “anthropological type”), Sommerfelt recast race as existing somewhere else beyond Europe’s

⁴⁵ Sommerfelt, *op cit.*

⁴⁶ For a longer discussion and complete references, see the Introduction, note 25.

⁴⁷ On the excision of explicitly racial discourse in French policymaking in the period and the consolidation of what I refer to as a “postwar speech regime” of colorblindness, see my “Obscuring Race” *op cit.* See also note 30.

borders, and as such, effectively produced a new boundary between Europeans and non-Europeans: race itself. His suggestion that the pedagogical and curricular reforms he was proposing would foster a “more tolerant and comprehending attitude” among Europeans toward non-Europeans accentuates rather than diminishes the presumed difference between the two populations, further reinforcing and naturalizing that boundary as common sense.

It should not necessarily be surprising that a transnational group of European elites tasked with the postwar reconstruction of education on the continent would insist on the racial unity and equality of all Europeans but only racial tolerance for non-Europeans.⁴⁸ However, this kind of conceptual framework would be woefully ill-suited to satisfy francophone African elites’ expectations for an egalitarian French Union. Senghor, Konaté, Kaziendé and Dadet were not interested in “tolerance” and “mutual understanding”; they were demanding equality between whites and blacks, French and Africans, Africans and Europeans – the same equality that members of the CAME and European unity activists now took for granted to occur naturally among Europeans. In the colonial African context, that kind of equality could not be achieved solely by changing young people’s and future generations’ outlook or knowledge of the “basic facts” about race. Rather, it required deep structural changes to the entire edifice of the colonial educational system. In the special circumstances of the late war years, French leaders, colonial administrators and educators seemed to acknowledge as much; we shall now turn to an examination of the nature of France’s commitment to, and strategies for, enacting such changes, as well as the extent to which African and European expectations affected that process.

⁴⁸ For an interesting comparison, see Heide Fehrenbach’s discussion on the limitations of the notion of tolerance in what she calls West German “postwar racial liberalism” in her *Race After Hitler. Black Occupation Children in Postwar Germany and America* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2005).

Educating Africans in Postwar Greater France

In addition to negotiating African and European expectations, the architects of French colonial education reform were also responding to a new international climate that was hostile to formal colonialism and, at least rhetorically, opposed to “racism.” The contours of education reform in the French African Federations were first laid out in de Gaulle’s landmark summit on colonial reform in Brazzaville in January 1944. However, the Brazzaville Conference was as much a tool for political propaganda as it was an occasion for rigorous policymaking. Its key goal was to justify continued French rule in Africa to an international, primarily American audience. As the French Minister of Colonies reminded the Governor-General of AOF regarding the implementation of the Brazzaville recommendations in 1945:

If the head of the government takes pains to repeat that our colonial policy has definitely taken a new orientation, it is because it is indispensable to affirm our position vis-à-vis international opinion. The Hot Springs Conference clearly showed American interest in colonial territories... We are no longer in 1939, when we could regulate our own affairs among ourselves without the international observer casting his glance over the wall into our backyard.⁴⁹

To a lesser degree, the Brazzaville Conference was also intended to shore up morale among the African population of France’s empire, and its convocation was publicized widely on local African radio. The fact that Kaziendé had interpreted the news of the Conference as a turning point in the march toward racial equality in French Africa was no accident—this was exactly the message the French had hoped to convey to francophone African elites like him. And yet, a close reading of the conference proceedings reveals that both old and new notions of African racial difference suffused the general outlook of its organizers, which were duly reflected in their proposals for education reform and subsequent education policy and practice in French Africa.

⁴⁹ Ministre des Colonies à GOUGAL-AOF a/s application recommendations Brazzaville, s/d (1945), ANOM 1AFFPOL/2201, dossier 5.

Moreover, the kind of equality envisioned by figures like Kaziendé or Senghor was not a predominant theme at Brazzaville, which would also have lasting effects on the form and the character of education in France's African territories for years to come.

The Conference's dual imperatives to justify continued French colonial rule in Africa and to dissociate that rule from unsavory practices of colonial domination and racism created a rhetorical predicament for conference participants. Though racial categories and racial logics continued to guide their conversations and proposals, they were more sensitive to the impropriety of *appearing* racially prejudiced against Africans in light of the historical conjuncture. Many participants—though as we shall see, by no means all—tried to shed explicitly racial terminology from their discourse and they relied on the rhetoric of “civilization” to do so, just as the members of the CAME were doing back in London at this time. Crucially, policymakers and colonial administrators at Brazzaville used “European civilization” more and more frequently in their discussions about the differences and the distance separating Africans from the French. If the racial underpinnings of this concept might have appeared ambiguous in the proceedings of the CAME, in the colonial context of the Brazzaville Conference they were laid bare. “European civilization” emerged as a key conceptual referent in a new racially coded language that was beginning to take shape at Brazzaville and that subsequently became the medium through which postwar colonial education reform was instituted.

The point of departure of the Conference was to outline a new colonial doctrine and give the empire a political form that would be “constitutional, republican and democratic.” While African elites like Senghor and Konaté might have appreciated the implicit acknowledgment that existing colonial arrangements did not meet these standards, the rationale behind French colonial administrators' understanding of the failures of past colonial practice surely would have proved

less palatable to them. As Louis Delmas, an administrator in Guinée and one of the conference organizers put it:

Why, we ask ourselves, did what worked for the Romans not work for us? The barbarians surrounding Rome, including our ancestors the Gaulois, as the old saying goes, were much closer to the Roman than the Frenchman is to the savage of the black continent. There were greater racial affinities between them... The formula for the assimilation of the barbarian is not the same as the formula for the assimilation of the savage. And it should go without saying that I do not mean to be offensive with this word, which, in seventeenth-century parlance, had a connotation of being pleasant [*un parfum de bonne compagnie*].⁵⁰

The analogy with Rome is not incidental—this was another way of highlighting the racial unity of Europeans in explicit contrast to the gulf separating the French from Africans, here represented by the well-worn figure of the “the savage.” Their task at Brazzaville, according to Delmas, was precisely to specify what the appropriate formula for assimilating “the savage” would entail.⁵¹

This mindset informed discussions at Brazzaville on education reform, even when explicit racial language such as this was replaced with a civilizational idiom. One of the key reports on education under consideration at the conference, prepared by the education service of French Soudan (contemporary Mali), presented the challenge of colonial education as finding a way to balance the two “educative forces” operating on African society, which the report identified as African “tradition” and “European civilization.” These forces were understood not only to be different but diametrically opposed, as Africans’ customs, family structure, and traditional authorities were thought to constitute a seemingly “insurmountable barrier against the aspirations our civilization naturally awakens [in them].” However, the report cautioned against

⁵⁰ Louis Delmas, *Contribution à une doctrine de politique impériale* (1944): 15-16. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2201 dossier 6.

⁵¹ The disclaimer on this term at the end of the passage is significant, indicating that even colonial administrators who used what we would consider inflammatory racial language were not wholly unaware of the dissonance between the practical and the propagandistic goals of the Conference.

overestimating the extent to which they could contain the interplay between these forces through education policy alone, since so much of the “civilization” the French brought with them was transmitted to the local population unconsciously, for instance “the tidal wave of hopes and dreams inspired by the sight of a passing truck.”⁵² In a similar vein, another report, wary of the unintended consequences of the French presence on African society, cautioned that “Europeans” should behave self-consciously when around “*indigènes*,” who were all too often inclined to “imitate” them. The report continued, “The *indigène* observes the European...the smallest gesture of the white man is watched, commented on, and retold to others and interpreted according to some logic that escapes us. The European should be on his guard against this continual observation by the *autochtone*.”⁵³

The sense that Africans had an innate proclivity for imitation carried over into discussions about how Africans *learn*, and shaped how colonial administrators and educators interpreted African aptitudes for academic subjects and extracurricular activities throughout the postwar period. Sometimes this could take a positive form: for instance, in 1949 the head of the education service in Bobo-Dioulasso (the second largest city in contemporary Burkina Faso) wrote, “Endowed with a keen sense of observation and imitation, the Black instinctively detects the smallest particularities of human comportment.” He therefore suggested that Africans had unique “theatrical aptitudes” that the colonial administration should actively develop.⁵⁴ More often, however, especially with regards to formal schooling, such characterizations were tied to negative assessments of Africans’ innate intellectual abilities. Administrators frequently remarked on Africans’ supposed “capacity for assimilation by simple memorization,” but, they

⁵² Rapport a/s enseignement, Colonie du Soudan, s/d., s.n. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2201 dossier 6.

⁵³ Rapport a/s relations métropole-colonies, s/d, s.n. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2201 dossier 6.

⁵⁴ Gaston Piolet, “Dans l’Union Française: créations de foyers de culture et d’amitié franco-africaine,” in *L’Information Pédagogique*, no 4 (septembre-octobre 1949): 163. AN F/17/17539.

stressed, “this did not forcibly imply comprehension.”⁵⁵ This supposedly acute African ability to learn by rote, they believed, explained why so many African students excelled in languages and literature, and, once more Africans began entering higher education in the 1950s, why so many of them pursued the law.⁵⁶

This scenario was precisely what administrators at Brazzaville had wanted to avoid. The Conference’s “Education Plan” began with a question: “What are *our* needs?” The answer was, unsurprisingly, the same as it had been before the war: low-level functionaries and technicians on the one hand, and rural artisans on the other. Thus the Brazzaville Education Plan stipulated that public schools in the territories should teach Africans French, but otherwise the curriculum should be devoted to handicrafts, agricultural techniques, household training, and physical education—in sum, it should be “the least literary possible.” This education would enable Africans “to develop according to their own special genius,” and ensure that “Black France, firmly rooted in African soil, will be an original and fertile creation, full of life.”⁵⁷

Indeed, there was a consensus among those gathered at Brazzaville that Africans were unfit for metropolitan-style secondary and university education. E. Cabrière, one of the fiercest opponents of secondary schooling for Africans, relayed how his own experience overseeing secondary education in AOF had proven that Africans were unfit for this kind of schooling. He insisted that though he had seen several Africans obtain the *baccalauréat* “with great discipline and memory, few give the impression of having truly internalized this culture or of being able to

⁵⁵ Rapport des deuxième et troisième trimestres, Affaires Politiques Musulmanes-AOF (1948). ANOM 1AFFPOL/2259.

⁵⁶ Colonial administrators and metropolitan politicians would lament the “overenrollment” of Africans in law programs throughout the Fourth Republic, a formation which they believed did not correspond to the needs of local society. See for instance Marcel Merle, Rapport sur l’Ecole Supérieure de Droit de Dakar, novembre 1954. AN F17/17641.

⁵⁷ Conférence Africaine de Brazzaville, Plan d’Enseignement. ANOM1AFFPOL/2201, dossier 6.

pursue further studies.”⁵⁸ This report was widely circulated both within the education services of AOF and at the Brazzaville Conference, spreading the notion that secondary education was made for “Europeans” only.⁵⁹

This opinion endured among administrators in the education services on the ground in the French African Federations, even as political expediency encouraged the central colonial administration to actively solicit African candidates for secondary studies in France. In late 1944, the French Provisional Government’s Minister of Colonies René Pleven sent several missives to the governors-general of AOF and AEF announcing the availability of several scholarships for Africans to study in the metropole. He was disturbed to receive a steady stream of negative responses informing him that there were no “suitable” African candidates in the territories. One response reported that AEF did not have any candidates at the time: three “Europeans” who might have benefited from the offer were still mobilized, and their eight best “*indigènes*” had been sent to the École Normale William Ponty.⁶⁰ (This teacher training school had been one of the only institutions of higher education open to Africans in the interwar period; both Kaziendé and Senghor, and so many other African elites of their generation, were alumni.) A year later, Pleven’s successor was still receiving the same replies, which he found “highly regrettable.” He reminded the governor-general of AOF that “The entirety of our current colonial policy consists in strengthening the French community by putting its different members on the same level.” He continued, “The first step is to elevate the intellectual level of our overseas populations and

⁵⁸ E. Cabrière (Chef de la section de l’enseignement secondaire, AOF), Rapport à M. Directeur-Général-Instruction Publique sur l’enseignement secondaire et la question indigène. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2201, dossier 6.

⁵⁹ Yves Aubineau (Directeur-Générale de l’Instruction Publique), *Rapport a/s de la Conférence de Brazzaville*, 10 janvier 1944. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2201, dossier 6.

⁶⁰ Telegram from René Pleven to GOUGAL Dakar, Brazzaville, Madagascar et al., 18 November 1944. Telegram received 23 November 1944 from Dakar (Digo). Telegram received 28 December 1944 from Brazzaville (Bayardelle). ANOM 1AFFPOL/3408. Similar responses were received from Togo.

thereby bring them closer to the population in the metropole. Secondary education plays a vital role in this, and will help identify an indigenous elite from the general population of schoolchildren.”⁶¹

As Dadet’s admonition that only five Africans obtained the *baccalauréat* in AEF in 1949 indicates, Africans’ access to secondary and postsecondary education, whether in the territories or the metropole, had not improved much by the end of the decade. Given the course set by the Brazzaville recommendations, this should not come as much of a surprise. One initiative in this domain was the renovation of the *Écoles des Cadres Supérieurs* in Brazzaville in 1946, which was intended to serve as the premier institution of “higher education” in AEF. In a general assessment of the state of education in the federation in 1947, AEF’s Inspector-General of Education V. Fournier cited Booker T. Washington as an inspiration for the *École des Cadres*.⁶² The “soul” of this institution, Fournier wrote, “should be the laboratory. The era of exclusively literary and discursive education is outdated, just as theological and dogmatic education became outmoded during the Renaissance.” Fournier then proceeded to quote another prominent black American who shared Washington’s educational philosophy, George Washington Carver, on white teachers needing to be “patient” with their black pupils. Fournier added in his own words that what was needed for the *École* to succeed was “much docility on the part of our *autochtone* students, [and] much devotion on the part of their white teachers.”

Despite Fournier’s clear endorsement of a Tuskegee-style education for Africans in postwar AEF, he nonetheless insisted that their overarching goal was certainly not to produce “technicians without culture,” which would not be in keeping with the “great French humanist

⁶¹ Lettre de Ministre des Colonies à GOUGAL-AOF, 12 mai 1945. ANOM 1AFFPOL/3408.

⁶² For an earlier instance of the cross-fertilization between the politics of race and education in colonial Africa and the American South, see Andrew Zimmerman, *Alabama in Africa: Booker T. Washington, the German Empire and the Globalization of the New South* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012).

tradition.” Some study of the French language and French literature would teach their African students “how to think well.” However that would be only one part of their broader development, which would also include physical education “to harden their will [*volonté*] and form their characters,” and participation in youth movements like the Scouts to “endow them with a simple but solid moral code.” In this way, he continued, they would “contribute to the formation of an African citizen worthy of the Great French Union, fraternal and just,” and, he could not resist adding, “possibly the ultimate realization of the ideals of the Revolution which have been transforming the world since 1789.” This grand rhetoric aside, Fournier remained committed to his pragmatic vision for the *École des Cadres*, which he hoped would soon be valued more than a traditional *lycée* education and the *baccalauréat*, neither of which corresponded in his view to the real needs of “Black Africa.” The practical education the *École des Cadres* would dispense was specifically designed to avoid the disquieting prospect of increasing numbers of what Fournier referred to as “those monsters that carry around overly ambitious brains atop restless and malnourished bodies.”⁶³

Fournier’s discussion of what the formation of the whole African person would entail helps us to reconstruct what many French colonial administrators really thought about Africans and their defining traits, or more precisely, the qualities they were perceived to naturally *lack*: the ability to think well, physical fortitude and solid character, and a strong moral compass. These were considered crucial failings indeed, as Fournier’s subsequent comment that these qualities were necessary for Africans to be “worthy” citizens of the French Union indicates. Moreover, according to Fournier, these supposed deficiencies were precisely what made educating Africans uniquely difficult; the challenges of education in Africa, he argued, were

⁶³ V. Fournier, “L’Enseignement en AEF en 1947,” in *Nos Écoles. Bulletin de l’Enseignement de l’AEF*, no 20 (octobre 1947). ANOM 1AFFPOL/2135 dossier 5.

unknown in the metropole and other “countries of old civilization.” This reference was to Europe: “In Europe,” he continued, “each nation has its own school tradition; the culture has deep roots that plunge into the past,” whereas in Africa, the situation was “entirely different,” in that educators’ task was one of “wholesale creation.”⁶⁴ In Fournier’s estimation then, metropolitan France and the rest of Europe had diverse educational traditions but they all shared the same fundamental relationship to the past that ensured an enriching cultural continuity across generations. Africans, on the other hand, not only lacked key personal qualities as individuals; their whole society seemed devoid of historicity and deep cultural roots.⁶⁵

Fournier’s depiction of the “overeducated” African as a grotesque was also a common representation of francophone Africans in the late 1940s, which only became more frequent as more and more Africans were admitted to modern middle schools [*collèges*], *lycées* and universities moving into the 1950s. The “uppity” educated African became a prevalent trope invoked not only by colonial education administrators but also by French leaders in the metropole, who, after 1946, found themselves face-to-face with a significant number of Africans making claims as their ostensible equals for the first time. As African political elites, educators, and student and youth leaders became more aggressive in their campaigns for meaningful reform and racial equality, the image of the “arrogant” educated African prone to verbal demagoguery became a powerful weapon to delegitimize and dismiss African demands for reform in general, and African accusations regarding the persistence of systemic racial inequality in the French Union in particular.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ This was of course an old colonial trope. For a classic analysis, Eric Wolf, *Europe and the People Without History* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982)

⁶⁶ I discuss this at length in my “Obscuring Race,” *op cit*.

Indeed, Fournier's views were widely shared by administrators in AOF and in the central colonial authority back in Paris. As the number of Africans in secondary education started to rise ever so slightly over the course of the 1940s,⁶⁷ central colonial administrators began to worry that too many young Africans were being admitted into secondary schools. These concerns were exacerbated by the fact that centralized directives to orient secondary school curricula in the direction outlined at Brazzaville were not always followed by individual school directors and teachers. In a presentation to the education committee of a prominent colonial lobby in 1949, the central colonial administration's Inspector-General of Colonial Education Gaston recounted how he had recently learned of a class of 17 young Hellenists in a "modest middle school" in some unspecified corner of "Black Africa." While he was "certainly moved" by the thought that the study of Latin and Greek was perhaps enjoying a renaissance in Africa even as it seemed to be dying out in France, he nonetheless questioned the utility of such an education for young Africans:

Our young black Hellenists are learning French, Latin and Greek in French schools! I would prefer, for my part, less languages and more math, physics and natural sciences. The immense landscapes of Africa, where man has yet to make his mark—it is not with eloquent speeches that we will transform them; great rhetoricians are not needed for this task, but men who have received a practical education.

The key challenge they now faced, Gaston continued, was that Africans were demanding *more* metropolitan-style education not less, which would only exacerbate the supposed overproduction of *bacheliers* when what Africa really needed were *techniciens*.⁶⁸ In Gaston's formulation then,

⁶⁷ According to figures compiled by the central colonial ministry, in AOF there were 3,951 students in secondary schools (which included *collèges* [middle schools] as well as *lycées*) and another 623 in AEF in 1946. Those figures rose to 5,480 and 1,161, respectively, by 1949. It is, however, unclear what percentage of these students were actually African. *Bulletin de l'Inspection-Générale de l'Enseignement et de la Jeunesse du Ministère de la France d'Outre-Mer* (décembre 1950): 38. ANOM BIB AOM/20205/1950.

⁶⁸ Procès-verbal de la Commission de l'Enseignement du Comité Central de la France d'Outre-Mer, 8 juin 1949. ANOM 100APOM/933.

Africans' preoccupation with racial equality was itself an impediment to African development and "racial progress."

To put all of this in perspective, it is worth noting that the same year that Gaston delivered these remarks only a few dozen African students obtained the *bac* in AOF and AEF combined.⁶⁹ The overreaction verging on panic that these paltry figures produced underscores not only the intensity of French hostility toward well-educated Africans, but also their deeply ambivalent position on African equality more generally. As one member of the audience put it in response to Gaston's presentation, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity—that signifies for [Africans] the freedom to do whatever they want and equality with those who know better than they do." He continued, "There is nothing wrong with having *indigènes* who will make their own way, participate in businesses and be our associates, our friends; but what are we seeing now? *Évolués* who are our rivals, who are not even grateful for the education they have received and who speak badly of France, their benefactor and educator."⁷⁰

This blatant paternalism did not go unchallenged in the session, however there were significant differences between responses depending on whether or not one was French or African. Émile Moussat, a French academic on the committee, generalized the problem, noting that the pursuit of certain kinds of studies for social advancement was not a uniquely African phenomenon; in France, he asserted, "The desire to socially reclassify oneself is identical. We are in the process of becoming a nation of *cadres*." They should therefore not be surprised to find that they have transmitted this sense of social ascension through a particular course of education

⁶⁹ *Bulletin de l'Inspection-Générale de l'Enseignement et de la Jeunesse du Ministère de la France d'Outre-Mer* (décembre 1950): 40. ANOM BIB AOM/20205/1950.

⁷⁰ Procès-verbal de la Commission de l'Enseignement du Comité Central de la France d'Outre-Mer, 8 juin 1949. ANOM 100APOM/933.

to the populations in the overseas territories.⁷¹ Guinean youth leader Antoine Lawrence, on the other hand, focused on the suggestion of African ingratitude, which he framed as a particular colonial problem rooted in a longer history of French racism. He declared, “To this I respond that the initial fault lies with certain metropolitan French who imported their opinions and doctrines to the overseas territories.” Though Lawrence defended this African behavior as a reasonable response to white racism in the territories, he nevertheless insisted that Africans who possessed such a “disagreeable attitude” were exceptions to the rule. The majority of Africans, he reassured everyone, thought as he did: “We do not hate France, we love her.”⁷²

In the late 1940s, assurances such as these increasingly fell on deaf ears as African nationalist movements gained momentum in reaction to the slow pace of colonial reform, and the specter of armed and possibly Soviet-backed anticolonial uprising loomed larger and larger in the minds of French colonial administrators.⁷³ From this perspective, the trope of the bitter and ungrateful educated African became entwined with the trope of the overly “political” African. As Jean Capelle noted after one of his many “tours of the bush” during his tenure as head of education in AOF at this time:

Mid-level positions are filled by Africans who have attended upper primary school or teacher training institutes; they are, in general, devoted and good at their jobs. However, some are embittered by a damaging feeling of inferiority, which gives rise to *expressions of vanity and irritability and vicious criticism of Europeans*...they feel themselves to be

⁷¹ Ibid. Indeed, Moussat was not the only one to make this analogy. Fournier also characterized the overvaluation of the *baccalauréat* as an obstacle for France, and cited Edouard Herriot—a key figure in the interwar critique of the overly intellectual and elitist nature of French education—on this subject at length: “Qu’elle parait pauvre notre conception actuelle de l’humanisme, même de la philosophie, qui pousse notre adolescence française vers ce stupide examen du baccalauréat...En souhaitant cette transformation de l’humanisme, que nous estimons nécessaire à la survie de la France, nous croyons même, non pas briser la tradition, mais la retrouver dans sa pureté.” Fournier, *op cit*.

⁷² Procès-verbal de la Commission de l’Enseignement du Comité Central de la France d’Outre-Mer, 8 juin 1949. ANOM 100APOM/933.

⁷³ On the Cold War in francophone Africa, see Elizabeth Schmidt, *Cold War and Decolonization in Guinea, 1946-1958* (Columbus: Ohio University Press, 2007). I return to the Cold War in Chapter 6.

stuck on the margins of two societies—the black and the white. Political extremism finds in them an ideal group of followers for blind and sometimes violent opposition.⁷⁴

By linking criticisms of “Europeans” to Africans’ purported “vanity” and “irritability,” Capelle implicitly construed that criticism as emotional and irrational. This encouraged the French to interpret African hostility to “Europeans” as a form of *prejudice* rather than as a legitimate political grievance. Capelle’s concluding remark extended this motive to undesirable African political engagements in general, which channeled older stereotypes of African irrationality and hot-headedness into depictions of the swelling ranks of educated Africans and African politicians.

This logic resonated widely among colonial administrators and political elites in the metropole and colored how they perceived the most vocal African politicians and activists of the time. Indeed, shortly thereafter we find the first instances of French figures accusing African leaders and activists of “anti-white racism.”⁷⁵ Such accusations proved a powerful and enduring rhetorical strategy for French policymakers and colonial administrators to dismiss African demands for more meaningful reforms, especially their calls for more secondary schools and a proper university in the territories that would grant the same degrees offered in the metropole, and, until those eventualities actually came to pass, more scholarships to send Africans to France

⁷⁴ Capelle, *L'éducation en Afrique noire*: 100 (my emphasis).

⁷⁵ *Rapport du Procureur-Général AEF à M. le Ministre de la France d'Outre-Mer*, 24 mars 1951. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2254. In this instance, the accusation of “*racisme anti-blanc*” was leveled at Abbé Barthélemy Boganda, deputy to the French National Assembly for Oubangui-Chari (what is today the Central African Republic and which at the time was part of AEF). Boganda was one of the most outspoken critics of racial discrimination and continuing racial segregation in AEF. Subjected to extraordinary surveillance, he nevertheless persisted in filing formal complaints whenever he learned of instances in which an African was denied access to public services or public places, as well as the more violent forms of abuse they continued to suffer, which often resulted in death. Boganda was elected leader of Oubangui-Chari under the institutional reorganization that dissolved the French Union and created the French Community with de Gaulle’s return to power in 1958. He was primed to be the Central African Republic’s first head of state, but he died in a mysterious plane crash in 1959 shortly before the territory acceded to full independence. A political assassination with French backing has long been suspected but never proven.

for higher education. The ease with which those demands could be dispensed with by invoking “anti-white racism” became another key component of postwar racial common sense.

Francophone African elites were keenly aware of the new constellation of French feelings and resentments towards them, which they identified as part of the reason racial tensions after the war seemed to be mounting, rather than abating. To cite but one example, relations between white and black teachers in Côte d’Ivoire deteriorated in 1945-1946 when African teachers began to protest the unequal lodging provided to them and their white counterparts. In the midst of the dispute, Nazi Bony, an *école normale* graduate who had taught in Abidjan, wrote to a (white) fellow teacher that the tensions there were so vicious because “the white educator sees his black colleague as a big child who does not understand the subtlety of his words and gestures, and as a rival rather than a collaborator.” After hitting so precisely on the tropes we have seen circulating in French circles in both the territories and the metropole, he added, “The white teacher is refusing to evolve in a country that is evolving.” Bony recalled one particularly upsetting remark he heard one of his white colleagues make to a group of fellow teachers: “Don’t believe the Black [*le Noir*] understands chemistry – he doesn’t understand it like we do.” Clearly exasperated, Bony wrote in response: “The Black [*Le Nègre*] – do I really have to say it? – possesses the full range of human qualities, and the laws that govern the human spirit change neither with the degrees of latitude nor with the skin.”⁷⁶

When reports of the kind of unabashed racism encountered by Bony reached the colonial administration, French officials were quick to condemn the individuals involved for their

⁷⁶ Letter from Nazi Bony to Joseph Eyraud, Tenkodogo, 2 décembre 1945. ANOM 1AFFPOL/3408. This letter was forwarded to the Youth and Education Department of the Ministry of Overseas France in Paris. Officials there affirmed that unequal lodging “formally contradicts the principles of our colonial policy, which will only provoke terrible resentment.” However, they also characterized Bony and his eloquent letter as exceptional, evidence of “a singular level of culture and clarity of mind.” Note pour le Directeur AFFPOL, s.n., 19 février 1946. ANOM 1AFFPOL/3408.

“retrograde” attitude, but that did not lead them to change their discriminatory policies. That same year, when the federal administration in AEF proposed providing scholarships to a mere eight African students to attend a middle school class in Brazzaville that had previously been reserved for “Europeans,” several white parents threatened to withdraw their children from the school. As a result, local officials decided to send the African students to schools in other territories.⁷⁷ Minister of Colonies Giacobbi reproached the parents: “We can only regret this kind of thinking and the hostility of certain Europeans—a minority, I can only hope—who seem unable to appreciate the political consequences of their attitude.” In Giacobbi’s view, those “consequences” had less to do with local African reactions than with how the affair would play out in the international press. It was with that international audience in mind that he urged the Governor-General of AEF to personally intervene, to bring “the interested parties to a clearer understanding of the interests of the colony and their duty as Frenchmen.” Nevertheless, Giacobbi did not order him to forcibly desegregate the school.⁷⁸

In light of the official French positions on secondary schooling for Africans versus “Europeans” discussed above, this outcome is not surprising. Giacobbi had found it particularly deplorable that this incident occurred in Brazzaville, where less than a year earlier they had held their great African Conference announcing France’s “new,” ostensibly more progressive, approach to colonial policy to the world. But the proceedings of the Brazzaville Conference make clear that French officials remained at best ambivalent, and often openly opposed, to

⁷⁷ Extrait du rapport no 514 I.G.E. du 26 juin 1945 sur la situation de l’enseignement secondaire en AEF, s.n. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2136.

⁷⁸ Letter from Giacobbi to GOUGAL-AEF a/s admission d’élèves indigènes en classe de 6ème des établissements secondaires, 27 septembre 1945. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2136. On the international press, Giacobbi wrote: “Il est évidemment regrettable qu’au moment même où un effort considérable, que traduisent maints articles parus dans la presse mondiale, est fait précisément dans le domaine dont il s’agit par les nations étrangères, des éléments de la population métropolitaine de Brazzaville, centre de la Conférence Africaine, fassent preuve d’aussi peu de compréhension de notre politique coloniale.”

providing young Africans with the same secondary education they offered to metropolitan French students in the territories.

That ambivalence stymied efforts to establish the first university in French sub-Saharan Africa in the late 1940s. The Brazzaville Conference's Education Plan had called for the immediate creation of an "African university" in Dakar. However, in contrast to its extensive exchanges on secondary education, the Conference did not outline clear guidelines for this massive undertaking.⁷⁹ In 1945, the Colonial Ministry sent instructions to the federal administration in AOF that this institution should open its doors by the fall of 1946. French officials in both Dakar and Paris urged that they should wait until the Langevin Commission made its official recommendations for metropolitan education reform so that their institution would be in line with the new regime they expected to be instituted in France.⁸⁰ As concrete preparations for the university stalled in this bureaucratic limbo, colonial administrators based in Paris nevertheless began publicizing the "African University of Dakar" on African radio, which they proudly announced would open its doors in October 1946. This publicity campaign struck Pierre Cournarie, governor-general of AOF, as dangerously premature. He feared the risks of raising Africans' expectations were far greater than a long delay. He was fully aware that African students would no longer accept special "African diplomas"—that they wanted diplomas "that would give them absolute parity with Europeans," a position Cournarie claimed to find "perfectly legitimate." He therefore considered making their "African university" a *real* university "vitaly important."⁸¹

⁷⁹ Conférence Africaine de Brazzaville, Plan d'Enseignement. ANOM1AFFPOL/2201, dossier 6.

⁸⁰ Letter from Cournarie to Direction-Enseignement et Jeunesse, MFOM, s/d; Dépêche 6.900/EJ, 5 novembre 1945; Telegram 125/EJ, 10 janvier 1946. ANS O/574 (31).

⁸¹ Letter from Cournarie to Direction-Enseignement et Jeunesse, MFOM, 30 mars 1946. ANS O/574 (31).

In the end, the opening was indeed postponed, but the colonial bureaucracy did everything in its power to infuse the new institution with old colonial logics. For the next three years, colonial administrators, French educators, and African representatives in Paris and Dakar debated the organization of the Dakar institution. The colonial administration wanted to retain full control of the school, but most French educators supported African politicians' demands that the new institution be integrated into the metropolitan education system and be placed under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of National Education [MEN].⁸² This campaign was led by Léopold Senghor and supported by Jean Capelle. In his impassioned speeches on the subject before both the French parliament in Paris and the Grand Conseil, the federal representative assembly of AOF, Senghor explicitly linked race and education in his aspirations for far-reaching generational change. Affiliation with the MEN, he argued, "by facilitating the formation of state workers and elites worthy of the name, would lay the foundations of a Négro-French culture." At the same time, Senghor insisted that the university should emphasize African issues and African needs; the school should not "produce 'average French people' [*des français moyens*] but rather black French people [*des négro-français*], modern men."⁸³

Despite Senghor's and Capelle's efforts, the French colonial administrators jealously guarded their jurisdiction over every order of colonial education, including the future institution in Dakar. Ultimately, it was increasing international pressure that forced colonial officials to at least partially relent. The UN Trusteeship Council, which technically oversaw the French administration in Togo and Cameroun, had long been fiercely critical of the French for failing to

⁸² On the intense jurisdiction battle between French colonial and MEN officials, see Harry Gamble, "La crise de l'enseignement en Afrique occidentale française (1944-1950)" *Histoire de l'éducation* 128, (Octobre-Décembre 2011): 129-162.

⁸³ Rapport de Senghor a/s Projet du Décret portant création d'une Académie de l'AOF; Projet du Décret portant création d'un Institut Universitaire à Dakar, Commission des Affaires Sociales, Grand Conseil de l'AOF, Séance plénière du 3 juin 1949. AN F17/17641.

develop higher education in France's African territories. When the British and the Belgians jointly proposed creating a university for African territories under UN trusteeship, the French opposed it on the grounds that France was in the process of creating its own university in Dakar. In light of the combination of that international pressure and the campaign of the African deputies, the colonial administration finally agreed to share responsibility for the institution in Dakar with the MEN so as to ensure that classes would be open for the 1949-1950 school year.⁸⁴

The terms of joint jurisdiction stipulated that the Dakar institution would be affiliated with a university in the metropole, where students would complete the full cycle of their studies until capacity was built up in Dakar. Colonial officials, who were deeply suspicious of African students spending time in Paris, lobbied hard for that affiliation to be with the University of Bordeaux. Senghor adamantly opposed the choice of Bordeaux, a city that had a long history of profiting from colonial exploitation.⁸⁵ Jean Capelle, who had by this time resigned his post as education director in AOF in protest over the obstructionist attitude of the colonial administration and resumed his position as rector of the University of Nancy, lobbied the MEN to respect Senghor's position and affiliate the Dakar institution either with his own university in Nancy or with the University of Paris system. However, Capelle's personal view of Senghor's opposition reveals the same paternalist and resentful attitude we have been tracing throughout this chapter. In a letter urging Jean Sarrailh, rector of the University of Paris, to support Senghor's bid for an affiliation with either of their universities, Capelle explained: "The city of Bordeaux represents for African *autochtones* the logic of the Colonial Pact," a point of view that he characterized as "both sentimental and unjust." Nevertheless, he continued, that argument had

⁸⁴ Letter from Gaston, MFOM Inspection-Generale de l'Enseignement et de la Jeunesse, to Donzelot, MEN, dir-Enseignement Sup, 18 aout 1949. AN F17/17641.

⁸⁵ In the same speech before the Grand Conseil cited above, Senghor exhorted: "In every case, we must refuse the tutelage of Bordeaux. It is enough that economically, this city continues the tradition of the old Colonial Pact." *Op cit.*

made an impression on the Grand Conseil, and so, they ought to take it into consideration.⁸⁶ The outcome of all this bureaucratic wrangling mirrored Capelle's ambivalent effort to take African positions seriously. When the Institut des Hautes Études de Dakar [IHED] officially opened its doors in 1950, it was formally affiliated with both the Universities of Paris and Bordeaux. The IHED did not grant the same degrees as those delivered in the metropole, and the curriculum remained largely under the discretion of the colonial administration.⁸⁷ These half-measures not only failed to deliver on the promise of racial equality that Senghor held so dearly; they also reflected a potent combination of older forms of racially-inflected paternalism and new racial resentments in response to both African and international pressures for racial equality. That toxic mixture of ambivalent feelings and unequal institutions is the essence of postwar racial common sense.

* * *

Toward the end of the Second World War, European leaders and francophone African elites had begun to hope for a postwar order in which racism would be eradicated. However, their aspirations assumed radically different forms that were diametrically opposed in significant ways. Europeans in organizations like the CAME approached race as if it were a primarily discursive and conceptual—as opposed to a social and political—problem, concentrating their

⁸⁶ Letter from Capelle, recteur de l'Université de Nancy to Sarrailh, Recteur de l'Académie de Paris, 3 October 1949. AN F17/17641.

⁸⁷ The IHED finally became a proper French university that was fully integrated into the MEN's national system on the eve of Senegalese independence. On the neocolonial logics of that institutional arrangement, see Burleigh Hendrickson, "Imperial Fragments and Transnational Activism: 1968(s) in Tunisia, France and Senegal," PhD Dissertation, Northeastern University 2013; and Tony Chafer, *The End of Empire in French West Africa: France's Successful Decolonization?* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2002).

efforts on expunging race as a salient category from the European political lexicon and cultural repertoire, though their hierarchical views about non-Europeans did not necessarily change. Francophone African elites had a very different view; their focus on the need for robust education reform in France's African territories grew out of an understanding of race as deeply woven into the social fabric and institutional arrangements of postwar Greater France. Thus as Europeans' turn away from racial language and conceptual categories seemed to make race disappear in Europe, francophone Africans' tireless campaign for racial equality was a constant, unwelcome reminder that race—as a logic of social relations and sociocultural and political arrangements—not only continued to exist but remained a dominant feature of everyday life in French Africa.

This foundational tension between European and francophone African understandings of race contributed to the consolidation of a new racial common sense in postwar Greater France in two key ways. First, the narrowing of race to refer only to non-Europeans in venues like the CAME turned race itself into a boundary between Europe and Africa. This hardening of the binary opposition between Europeans and Africans surfaced at the Brazzaville Conference and influenced how the French thought about African intellectual aptitudes and the suitability of Africans for secondary and higher education. These views then became part of the framework the French put in place for postwar colonial education reform, as is clearly reflected in the limited scope of French financial investments in expanding and enhancing Africans' educational opportunities after the war. Secondly, francophone African elites' conscious rhetorical strategy to frame their demands in racial terms struck a particularly discordant note at a time when the French and other Europeans were deliberately trying to avoid any and all references to race. This tonal clash reinforced an older repertoire of racial stereotypes about Africans as presumptuous

and irrational, which further strengthened the notion that Africans were naturally ill-suited for more advanced levels of education. Thus while Dadet had accused the French of purposely instituting a “politics of illiteracy” that structurally reproduced racial inequalities in France’s African territories, postwar racial common sense encouraged French policymakers and administrators to attribute the abysmal situation of colonial education to supposedly natural incompatibilities between Africans and “European”-style education rather than to French administrative practices, material investments, and policy choices. As we shall see in the next chapter, the same logic conditioned how the French responded to African complaints about the lack of funding for African students to study in France, as well as how the French interpreted the performance of the growing population of African students who were finally able to attend *lycées* and universities in France the 1950s.

Chapter 5

Encountering Difference in “Eurafrica”: Francophone African Students in France in the 1950s

Between the founding of the French Union in 1946 and the 1949-1950 academic year, rates of schooling steadily, if slowly, rose in French sub-Saharan Africa. By 1950, over 100,000 more Africans from AOF, AEF, Togo, and Cameroun were enrolled in some kind of school. The majority of these gains were in primary schooling, but the total number of Africans in secondary or technical schools and higher education also increased from 5,819 in 1946 to 8,414 in 1950. Of those, over 1,200 were studying in France on state scholarships.¹ The number of those students, known as *boursiers*, continued to climb over the course of the 1950s and reached over 4,000 by the end of the decade. A growing slate of state-sponsored youth programs and special *stages* for African agriculturalists, teachers, and youth leaders regularly brought hundreds more young Africans to France during school breaks and summer holidays.

There was also an increase in the number of African students who went to France to pursue further study without state aid. The precarious financial situation of the *non-boursiers* was a constant concern of French administrators and African politicians. However, French officials had no legal recourse to prevent young Africans, now “citizens of the French Union,” from enrolling themselves in any metropolitan school that would have them. The *non-boursiers* were often able to secure reluctant state aid after their arrival, which incentivized parents and students to take the risk.² By the end of the 1950s, the number of *non-boursiers* almost equaled

¹ Tableaux statistiques, Première Partie, *Enseignement Outre-Mer. Bulletin de l'Inspection-Générale de l'enseignement et de la jeunesse du Ministère de la France d'Outre-Mer*, décembre 1950, p 37-41. ANOM BIB AOM 20505/1950.

² The risks for poor African students were not just academic failure – often their physical health was at issue. An alarmingly high number of African students required extended stays in sanatoria and many did not survive their illnesses. Student death became such a regular occurrence that students from AEF

their state-funded counterparts, bringing the total number of African students in France to more than 8,000.³

Despite its relatively modest size, the African student population in France in the 1950s has generated considerable scholarly interest.⁴ The literature focuses on how African students and youth leaders inserted themselves in the process of decolonization by founding their own networks of associations, publications, and syndicalist movements. Politically organized and passionately committed to playing their part in building Africa's future, this cohort of African students pursued a more radical anticolonial politics than the older generation of francophone African elites who were working for colonial reform from within the French government.⁵

African students grouped themselves along multiple axes, forming student organizations by both territory and by religion. However, they also transcended these divisions by integrating their associations into a larger black African student union, the Fédération des étudiants africains noirs en France [FEANF]. Scholars have stressed the pan-African ethos of the FEANF—despite very real differences in the material situation and respective sizes of student populations within

organized an annual memorial service at the Maison de la France d'Outre-Mer on November 1 in honor of their comrades who died that year while pursuing their studies in France. For a description of this practice, see "Premier Novembre," s.n., in *Bulletin Mensuel de l'Association des Étudiants Congolais*, no. 7, décembre 1954. ANOM AEF GGAEF 5D/280.

³ For an overview of statistics and demographics, see Fabienne Guimont, *Les étudiants africains en France (1950-1965)* (L'Harmattan, 1997): Chapter 2.

⁴ In addition to Guimont's monograph, see also Michel Sot, ed., *Étudiants africains en France, 1951-2001. Cinquante ans de relations France-Afrique, quel avenir?* (Karthala, 2002); Françoise Blum, "L'indépendance sera révolutionnaire ou ne sera pas. Étudiants africains en France contre l'ordre colonial," *Cahiers d'histoire. Revue d'histoire critique* 126 (2015), 119-238; and Louisa Rice, "Between Empire and Nation: Francophone West African Students and Decolonization," *Atlantic Studies* 10:1 (2013). Africanists Hélène d'Almeida-Topor and Cathérine Coquéry-Vidrovitch also consider African students and youth leaders in France in their *Les jeunes en Afrique*, 2 vols (L'Harmattan, 1992).

⁵ Amady Aly Dieng, *Les premiers pas de la Fédération des Étudiants d'Afrique noire en France (1950-1955): de l'Union française à Bandoung* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003); Pierre Nkwengue, *L'union nationale des étudiants de Kamerun. Ou la contribution des étudiants africains à l'émancipation de l'Afrique*. (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2005). For a broader view of youth mobilizations and decolonization in postwar France, see Denis Bancel et al., *De l'Indochine à l'Algérie. La jeunesse en mouvements des deux côtés du miroir colonial* (Paris: La Découverte, 2003).

and across AOF and AEF—and the FEANF’s increasingly militant support for African independence. The existing literature also details French responses to the FEANF and African student politics more broadly, particularly the constant surveillance of African youth and the occasional censorship of their journals. These tactics are typically presented as forms of political repression in a highly charged Cold War context that fed French paranoia that all African political mobilizations in France were instigated by communist provocateurs.

In this chapter, I propose an alternative reading of encounters between French officials and African students in France in the 1950s that departs from the established scholarship in three key ways. First, I approach those encounters not as a terrain of clear-cut anticolonial politics of national liberation but instead as points of entry of a significant cohort of francophone African students into the conversations about youth, pluralism and sociopolitical change that French, African, and European leaders had been having for the past decade as they debated their competing visions for postwar empire and united Europe. African students were not equal participants in these conversations, and their actions and interventions did not necessarily achieve their intended effects. Nevertheless, the presence of a vocal African student population moving back and forth between French Africa and metropolitan France—a population that was, in a way, bringing into being the new pluralist Franco-African society that French and African officials had so ardently championed in the 1940s—changed the terms of those conversations. By focusing on administrative rather than police surveillance of African students, I show that surveillance was not about monitoring potentially subversive political activity alone. It was also a way for French officials to get to know a group of people that was relatively unknown to them, despite the fact that contemporary French leaders, in their grand political oratory, forcefully insisted that African youth were part of the French family. In the analysis that follows, I

emphasize that this “sizing up” was not a one-way street. I put French administrators’ and educators’ scrutiny of African students’ comportment and mindset in dialogue with African students’ views about their French peers, French society, and African identity. French observation of African youth in the metropole, but also young Africans’ observation of the French, generated new ways of thinking about diversity and the viability of a democratic Franco-African polity.

Second, I situate those Franco-African encounters in a French Union that was becoming integrated in an expanding network of European institutions. In 1950, the Schuman Plan outlined the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community, the first properly supranational European organization. Soon after, European leaders proposed the European Defense Community [EDC], which would have also established a formal European political apparatus. In 1951, the European Movement launched its “European Youth Campaign” to promote those institutions to the rising generation of European elites. Headquartered in Paris and under French leadership, the Campaign was particularly committed to the success of the EDC.⁶ And yet, of all of the potential members of the EDC, France was the most conflicted over joining in large part because of the threat the EDC seemed to pose to the integrity of the French Union. When the French parliament voted against ratification and effectively killed the EDC, the European Youth Campaign [EYC] was forced to reconsider its tactics and its priorities. The post-mortem of the EDC encouraged pro-Europe activists and the EYC’s leaders in particular to make a more concerted effort to reach out to African youth in France and contemplate how best to extend the EYC’s activities to French Africa.

⁶ Norwig, “A First European Generation?”

With the rout of the EDC, pro-Europe activists narrowed their focus to economic and technical integration as a way forward. This led to the creation of the European Economic Community [EEC] and the European Atomic Energy Community [Euratom] in 1957. Those entities reinvigorated the activities of the European Youth Campaign and inspired new initiatives, including efforts within the Council of Europe to create transnational European universities that would emphasize modernization and technical and scientific innovation. The new European Communities also reset the terms of the debate on the relationship between French Africa and European institutions and the role that youth would play in that process. Ultimately, the French successfully negotiated the association of its African territories with the EEC, which not only revived but also seemed to be instantiate the old notion of “Eurafrica.”⁷

The existing literature on African students in postwar France completely ignores these European developments. However, I argue that European institution building reframed the urgency of educating Africans—whether in France or French Africa—as a fundamental building block in the construction of Eurafrica. The success of colonial youth and education initiatives was no longer just a question of France’s relationships with its African colonies; francophone African youth, along with their metropolitan and non-French European counterparts who would be the future leaders of tomorrow, now seemed to hold the future of Europe-Africa relations in their hands. Moreover, European leaders’ efforts to elevate pluralism and equality as bedrock values of the new Europe-in-the-making, and to dissociate postwar Europe from its colonial and racist past, the raised the stakes of France successfully democratizing its empire and fully integrating its African citizens.

⁷ For details on these negotiations, see Montarsolo, *Eurafrique*; Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrika*.

The growing salience of the idea of Eurafrika in the 1950s meant that French leaders were not just trying to keep French Africa in the “Western fold” or an amorphous “Atlantic civilization” as some Cold War political histories suggest.⁸ Rather, French leaders were trying to link French Africa to a geographically, institutionally, and culturally delimited *European* space within the larger construction of “the West.” I argue that the “Eurafrika” framework added new valences to France’s old civilizing mission in its African territories. The focus on Eurafrika prioritized education and professional training geared toward technical advancement and economic integration in both European and African France. These concerns differed from the more humanistic understandings of cultural *métissage* that had long been a hallmark of French republican colonial discourse, including the colonial education policies of the postwar Republic just a few years earlier.

The Eurafrika shift also dovetailed with two major upheavals in French-African relations in the late 1950s. In 1956, the French “framework law” (*loi cadre*) devolved more local autonomy to the African territories and prioritized the “Africanization” of the colonial bureaucracy and local institutions.⁹ The following year, the Institut des Hautes Etudes de Dakar, long a target of African derision and a symbol of the third-rate education the French provided for Africans, was finally converted into a proper degree-granting university. French officials hoped that most Africans would attend the new “University of Dakar” rather than universities in France.¹⁰ Then in 1958, the Algerian crisis precipitated the dissolution of the Fourth Republic and the French Union; their successors, the Gaullist Fifth Republic and the new “French

⁸ Odd Orne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

⁹ On Africanization, see Michelle Pinto, “Employment, Education and the Reconfiguration of Empire: Africanization in Postwar French Africa,” PhD Dissertation, New York University, 2013.

¹⁰ Tony Chafer argues that the hasty transformation of the IHED into the University of Dakar on the eve of African independence was a cynical move to keep francophone African elites in the French orbit and the beginning the postcolonial politics of francophonie. See his *France’s Successful Decolonization?*

Community” further deepened the “Africanizing” tendencies of the *loi cadre*. Thus by the late 1950s, it was expected that young Africans would both remain culturally “African” and physically in Africa as they assumed more responsibilities in their home territories. However, it was also hoped that they would learn “European” technical competency to develop African economies along a European model within a looser Franco-African community that was itself part of a larger Eurafrikan trading bloc.

Most francophone African students and youth leaders denounced the idea of Eurafrika. However, the third point I propose in this chapter is that despite their firm opposition to Eurafrika as a political and institutional project, young Africans in France were themselves helping to create a kind of “Eurafrikan” intellectual space in the 1950s. They drew on the same ideas and vocabulary about youth, pluralism, and global transformation that was being deployed by the European movements in their initiatives for young Europeans. French officials, French-educated Africans, and pro-Europe activists forged this space together as they meditated on young people as agents of sociopolitical change amidst global forces that they were all still struggling to comprehend. Indeed, they all seemed to be facing the same problems: the tension between elite and mass education, inventing new kinds of universities and other forms of higher education to respond to the imperatives of technical modernization and multi-scalar economic integration, and redesigning curricula to promote social solidarity in pluralist communities. In the final part of this chapter, I explore how African students and pro-Europe activists alike turned to French historian Daniel Halévy’s notion of the “acceleration of history” to make sense of the rapid-fire pace of historical change in this eventful decade.

From *Brassage* to Race Relations

From the close of the Second World War to African independence in 1960, francophone Africans seeking middle school, high school, and university educations came to France because local opportunities for post-primary schooling were exceedingly rare and local opportunities for advanced degrees virtually non-existent. As the French colonial administration scrambled to build more schools in the territories in the late 1940s, receiving African students in the metropole was a pragmatic stopgap measure. A decade later, travel to France remained the surest way for Africans to pursue advanced studies, and African students did not disguise their frustration with this state of affairs. In a 1957 interview in the French press, when asked why he had decided to study in France, one African student candidly responded: “We come to France because the education here is much more complete than in the overseas territories. France, it is often said, does a lot for its territories. In reality, it has not done all that it could do, period.” He continued, “By coming to France, the African student is asserting himself. For him, it’s an initial victory, that of moving from third-rate circumstances to a universal situation.”¹¹

Such feelings of resentment were precisely what French officials wanted to stave off by providing education of higher quality to Africans in the territories, but the necessary resources and political will to make that happen never materialized. French officials tried to put a positive spin on the fact that African students were coming to France out of sheer necessity by emphasizing that their sojourns in France opened up new opportunities for metropolitan French and francophone African young people to get to know one another better. By enrolling in French schools and universities, African youth would learn to mix and mingle with their French peers, and the rising generation of French and African youth would develop genuine admiration and

¹¹ “De Jeunes Africains Parlent,” propos recueillis par Lena de Faramond, in *Pensée française-fédération* no 3, 15 janvier 1957, numéro spécial: “Jeunesses d’Afrique Noire,” p 27. ANOM BIB SOM C/BR/3324.

mutual respect for one another. By the early 1950s, French officials and African politicians alike had come to refer to that process as *brassage*, which can mean either intermixing or amalgamation and incorporation.¹² French and African leaders championed *brassage* as a foundational mechanism to overcome the legacies of racism and colonialism and forge true bonds of solidarity between French and African youth. However, the celebration of *brassage* served different purposes for French and African politicians. On the French side, commitment to *brassage* was offered up as proof of France's good will toward its African citizens and an unequivocal rejection of racism. For African politicians, *brassage* justified increasing financial and material support for young Africans to study and train in France.¹³ *Brassage* also became a prominent theme in metropolitan media coverage of African students and in African students' own reflections on their experiences in France.

Official promotion of *brassage* meant that administrators in both the Ministry of Overseas France [MFOM] and the Ministry of National Education [MEN] had a vested interest in monitoring how French and African students were interacting. This entailed fastidious surveillance of, and seemingly endless commentary on, African students' activities, behavior and overall comportment while in France and when they returned to the African territories. French officials obtained their information from various sources. They solicited reports from local educators and youth facilitators who worked with the African student population.¹⁴ French

¹² The two meanings of *brassage* underscore the profound ambiguity of understandings of what exactly that would entail; would African students become less African through that process and/or would French youth become less French? There were no easy answers to these questions, and responses varied widely. "Symbiosis" became a common refrain of administrators, politicians, and educators, but this was typically construed as a profoundly unsymmetrical process as we shall see in the pages that follow.

¹³ *Brassage* was a recurrent theme in Houphouët-Boigny's ultimately successful campaign to expand youth exchange programs for Africans during school breaks and summer holidays. See for instance his letter to the Minister of National Education, 7 December 1956. AN F17/15727.

¹⁴ Présidence du Conseil, Haut Comité de la Jeunesse de France et d'Outre-Mer, Groupe de travail 'Contacts entre jeunes de France et d'Outre-Mer,' janvier 1957. AN F17/15727.

officials even commissioned the polling agency IFOP to survey African students about their experiences in France.¹⁵ That administrative scrutiny was inflected with racial preconceptions about the “the African personality” that proved incredibly difficult to dislodge. Longstanding colonial tropes and racist stereotypes about Africans—especially regarding African sexuality, intelligence, and temperament—withstood evidence to the contrary year after year.¹⁶

The novel situation of larger numbers of young Africans in postwar France also produced new nodes of racial conflict and modalities of racialization, particularly regarding scholarships and housing. State aid to the *boursiers* bred frustration and resentment among many metropolitan French. French officials and the colonial press complained that the state should not financially support students who were openly critical of France. Rather than engage with the substance of African students’ critiques, most colonial administrators and commentators dismissed African claimmaking as intolerable ingratitude and an undeserved sense of entitlement, qualities that became increasingly common in characterizations of Africans more generally.¹⁷

¹⁵ See for instance, “Les Etudiants d’Outre-Mer en France,” IFOP, novembre 1960. Centre d’Archives Contemporaine [CAC] 19771275/28.

¹⁶ An especially common trope among French officials was that African students had an irrational penchant to study the law rather than pursue more “useful” professions that were in urgent demand in Africa in the sciences, medicine, and engineering. This perception was rehearsed year after year, even though this was not the case. Throughout the 1950s, the vast majority of African students in higher education in France were enrolled in programs in the sciences, medicine, pharmacy, dentistry and engineering. See the Tableaux Statistiques in the *Bulletin de l’Inspection-Generale de l’Enseignement et de la Jeunesse du Ministère de la France d’Outre-Mer*. ANOM BIB AOM/20505/1950-1958. In 1958, the largest French student union (UNEF) weighed in on the issue, noting that the pervasive stereotype that African students flocked to the law “out of their love of controversy and endless debate” was false. However, they did not dispute the perception that Africans were disproportionately going into law. That false idea stuck. See “Le Logement des Etudiants d’Outre-Mer” s.n., *UNEF Informations – Outre-Mer* 1958. Bibliothèque Nationale de France [BNF].

¹⁷ Both the MFOM and the MEN received constantly received reports from local educators and youth facilitators that fixated on the theme of entitlement. For instance, the lead organizer of a program that send African *boursiers* and *non-boursiers* to summer camps across France in the early 1950s wrote to the colonial ministry that the pilot program in 1951 did not go smoothly because of the bad attitude of the African students. He reported derisively that they treated the staff at the camps “as if they were their domestic servants” and that they mistook the fact that they were on vacation for “absolute freedom.” His solution was to hire “black personnel” the following year, which he reported went much better. Comité

In a series of articles on African students for the pro-empire magazine *Climats* in 1952, Annie Gacon offered scathing critiques of young Africans in both the metropole and in the African territories, many of whom she refused to recognize as “real students.” As part of her research for the series, Gacon wrote to officials in the MEN for information. She was particularly keen to know about the funding structure of African students’ scholarships, whether African students in France were marrying “Europeans,” and how mixed marriages were working out. She also asked about African students’ relations with French women more generally, other “distractions” affecting their studies, and, somewhat sarcastically, “this famous ‘*brassage*’ that we hear so much about.” Finally, she demanded to know what happened when they returned to Africa, a question she posed in both sociocultural and political terms: did they resume their traditions or customs, she inquired, or did they bring “our European habits” back with them? Were they “our advocates” before the local population or “the opposite”?¹⁸

Gacon received a full report from an official at the MEN that focused on demographics and details about students’ aid packages. Shortly thereafter, Gacon decided to go to Senegal to see for herself how the *boursiers* spent their time when they were back in the territories. In a piece for *Climats* later that fall, she relayed her outrage at what she found. She affirmed, “We are here *FOR* the real overseas students, those who work and live loyally among us by trying to assimilate the habits and culture of our country; we are resolutely *AGAINST* the agitators and troublemakers, against those African vagrants [*clochards*] who deceitfully call themselves students but who are not.” She was particularly incensed by the tone and tenor of a gathering she sat in on at a movie theater in Saint Louis. Gacon was incredulous that virtually all of the

d’Accueil des Élèves des Écoles Publiques en Voyages d’Études, Rapport a/s Journée d’Études, 28-29 décembre 1953, Paris, Lycée Saint-Louis. AN 70/AJ/24.

¹⁸ Letter from Annie Gacon to M. le Chef de Cabinet de M. le Ministre de l’Éducation Nationale, 14 mai 1952. AN F/17/17768.

students in attendance, who she accused of peddling “lies and hypocrisy,” were all *boursiers* on paid vacations from their studies in France.¹⁹ In the final lines of the article, she drew a sharp distinction between the “unruly” *boursiers*, whose diatribes she found laden with “all the clichés of the communist dialectics,” and the older generation of francophone African elites who she praised for their moderate views and steadier character. Despite assertions to the contrary, her depiction of African students remained virtually undifferentiated and one-dimensional as ungrateful and potentially dangerous recipients of “generous” state aid.

Whether or not to build special dormitories and student centers to house the African student population in France was another contentious issue. In 1951, a designated pavilion for students from “overseas France” was created at the Cité Universitaire Internationale in Paris. The Cité U, as it is commonly called, was founded in the early 1930s as a residential village for international students in the spirit of promoting international intellectual and cultural cooperation.²⁰ The new “Maison de la France d’Outre-Mer” built on that tradition but significantly broadened its purview by including students from the empire, the largest contingent of whom came from sub-Saharan Africa.

The idea for the Maison dates back to shortly after the Liberation when it was first proposed in response to unambiguous perceptions of racial threat. In the spring of 1945, the Governor-General of AOF Pierre Cournarie wrote a panicked missive to the Colonial Ministry in Paris regarding a letter his surveillance service in Dakar had intercepted from a young African medical student in Montpellier. In the letter, the student, Emmanuel Franklein, described his life

¹⁹ Annie Gacon, “La Propagande communiste en Afrique Noire. Choses vues et entendues à un meeting ‘d’étudiants’ à Saint-Louis-du-Sénégal,” *Climats*, 30 octobre–5 novembre 1952. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2199.

²⁰ Akira Iriye links the founding of the Cité Universitaire to the League of Nation’s Eurocentric initiatives in international intellectual cooperation in the interwar period. See his *Cultural Internationalism and World Order* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1997).

in France to a friend back in Senegal. “*Les toubabesses abondent à gogo*,”²¹ he wrote, “all one has to do is go outside and you can pick them up in the street.” Franklein went on to say that he had been too busy with his classes to think about the *toubabesses* of late, but he reassured his correspondent: “Don’t worry, I will have them during the break, and then we’ll see: vengeance.”²²

Here was the quintessential colonial nightmare coming home to roost: angry black men following the colonizers back to the metropole and pursuing sexual relations with white women.²³ The AOF security service had informed Cournarie that Franklein wrote often to a wide circle of friends and that all of his letters were of the same genre, always returning to the idea of “vengeance.” In Cournarie’s note to the Colonial Ministry, he suggested that this letter provided a unique view into the mindset of young African students in France. He urged that Franklein be put under strict surveillance, but Cournarie also wanted to be kept abreast of the behavior of all *Aofiens* in the metropole. Indeed, this incident convinced Cournarie of the need for special centers to house African students. Cournarie insisted such centers were “the only effective way to ensure that [young Africans] do not become perverted by contact with a civilization that they do not understand, of which they are always prone to take up the worst parts.”²⁴

Administrators in Paris, however, were not terribly alarmed by Franklein’s aggressive rhetoric. In their internal correspondence they suggested it should probably just be chalked up to “the impetuosity of youth.” They did recommend writing to the head of Franklein’s residence hall for more information on him, as well as a general assessment of the mood among other

²¹ This is a playful way of saying “white women are everywhere.” The term *toubabesses* combines the Wolof word designating ‘foreign white person’ with a French feminine ending. In Wolof, ‘toubab’ would be used to describe both men and women, thus this hybrid neologism is noteworthy in and of itself.

²² Letter from Emmanuel R. Franklein to unknown recipient, 3 avril 1945. ANOM 1AFFPOL/3408.

²³ Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault’s History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995).

²⁴ Letter from Cournarie to Ministre des Colonies, 17 mai 1945. ANOM 1AFFPOL/3408.

African students in Montpellier, but they did not agree with Cournarie's endorsement of special dormitories for African students. Such a move, they believed, would further isolate young Africans from their metropolitan peers and French ways of life.²⁵

Minister of Colonies Henri Laurentie himself responded to Cournarie regarding this matter. Laurentie reiterated his staff's position that Franklein's remarks seemed to reflect a certain brashness common to all youth that was not a particularly African problem. However, he did see something specifically African in Franklein's allusion to "vengeance," though not in the sense Cournarie had indicated. Laurentie did not think the sentiment stemmed from any "perversion" provoked by culture shock; the sheer fact that Franklein was pursuing such advanced studies seemed to indicate to Laurentie that he must have been well acquainted with "French civilization." Rather, Laurentie inverted Cournarie's logic, reading the sentiment as "a form of that resentment that francophone African elites [*évolués*] often feel from not always being treated by us, in the colonies, as social equals."²⁶

This was an unusually candid admission coming from the top administrator of the French Empire. Taken to its logical conclusion, Laurentie's remark implies that it was precisely Franklein's *intimacy* with French culture and values that enabled him to perceive the incongruence of French republican ideals on the one hand, and his social reality as a French colonial subject on the other. That incongruence, in turn, encouraged *évolués* like Franklein to be resentful, "overly sensitive," and to "act out," further worsening relations between francophone Africans and metropolitan French. In this light, Laurentie's reasoning came shockingly close to openly engaging some of the central contradictions of a system of French colonial rule rooted in

²⁵ Note a/s interception postale de Franklein, 8 juin 1945. ANOM 1AFFPOL/3408.

²⁶ Letter from Laurentie to Cournarie, 29 juin 1945. ANOM 1AFFPOL/3408.

racial domination at a time when the French were eagerly trying to rebrand their empire as democratic, inclusive, and egalitarian.

Following the story of French administrative surveillance of francophone African students into the 1950s offers a “worm’s eye view” into the evolution of French views about francophone Africans and the challenges of forging a multiracial polity in a changing domestic and geopolitical context.²⁷ Cournarie’s subtle move from thinking about the individual case of Emmanuel Franklein to African students writ large became standard practice in the 1950s. The resulting generalizations about Africans were then reproduced and circulated not only among colonial administrators, but also among bureaucrats in the MEN, educators and youth organizers on the ground, and other civil society actors who worked directly with young Africans studying or training in France—like Franklein’s residence hall head—with whom state officials established permanent contacts.

The issue of interracial dating and interracial marriage illustrates the stickiness of those stereotypes. According to an IFOP poll, by the end of the 1950s, only a tiny fraction (4%) of African young men living in France had married French women.²⁸ Interviews with African students revealed that they had mixed views on interracial marriage, but most believed they were not a good idea for social and political reasons. As several (male) students put it in a group interview from 1957, “Since they are duly rejected by European society and African society, such unions are best avoided at all costs.”²⁹ Moreover, African students in France consistently criticized what they considered to be the “loose morals” of young French men and women in

²⁷ On this approach, see Fehrenbach, *op cit*.

²⁸ “Les Etudiants d’Outre-Mer en France,” IFOP, novembre 1960. CAC 19771275/28. None of the female African students polled had married French men.

²⁹ “De Jeunes Africains Parlent,” 30. ANOM BIB SOM C/BR/3324.

their student journals, memoirs, and other writings from the period.³⁰ Nevertheless, reports from both French officials and local educators continued to assume that young African men were obsessively pursuing relationships with French women. They constantly registered how “surprised” and “impressed” they were by the “propriety” of African students’ behavior toward French girls.³¹ Despite the fact that this was repeatedly proven to be a non-issue, commentary of this kind just would not go away, its premise would not be dispelled.

The tenacity of such stereotypes may partially be explained by the way African students in France were written about as an anonymous mass, rather than as individuals. Unlike the back-and-forth over the Franklein intercept, as the ranks of African students in France swelled from a few dozen in 1945 to several thousand in the 1950s, administrative correspondence rarely identified African students by name. This depersonalization was reproduced in the media, even in articles whose express purpose was to better acquaint the French public with the African student population in France. In a six-page feature entitled “Young Africans Speak” from 1957, the author/interviewer never identified her five African student interlocutors by name. Instead, the reader only learns of their territory of origin and their course of study: a Togolese and a Dahomean both studying law, two Guineans interning as radio technicians, and another Guinean studying gynecology. The anonymity of her interviewees is particularly jarring in light of the ostensible object of the piece, which she sets up in its very opening line: “For most metropolitans, the young Africans they cross in the street or stare at distractedly in the metro or on the bus remain rather foreign. Why?” She responds that this is due to most French people’s willful indifference to the historic changes underway in French Africa, though she also admitted

³⁰ See for instance Ivorian writer Bernard Dadié’s description of French women and sexual mores in his fictional memoir set in 1956, *Un nègre à Paris* (1959): 183.

³¹ See for instance the testimonial of Lamy Roger, who oversaw an exchange program for African youth in summer of 1957. Rapport du M. Lamy Roger sur les stages ruraux 1957, s/d. CAC 19860445/2.

that many French continued to hold political, social and racial prejudices of which they themselves are only dimly aware.³² By not naming her interlocutors, the author missed an opportunity to humanize and demystify francophone African students to the French public. More egregious, however, is the sole image accompanying the piece (Fig. 7). The subjects of the article are postgraduate African students living in Paris, but the image on the title page is of an African child in traditional dress, naked from the waste-up, with a bicycle in a desolate field.

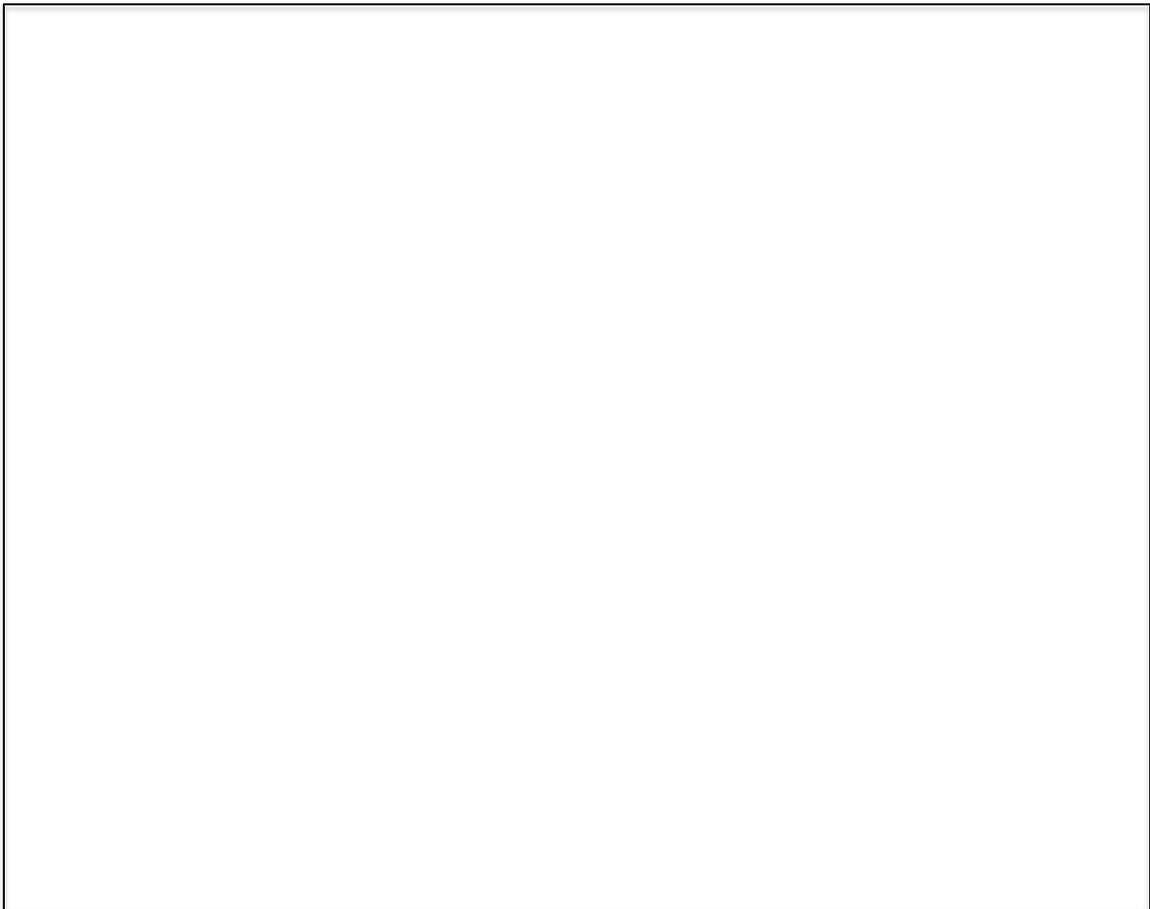


Fig. 7 Title page image of the article, “De Jeunes Africains Parlent.” SOURCE, Archives Nationales d’Outre-Mer SOM/c/br/3324. Image has been removed due to copyright protection.

³² “De Jeunes Africains Parlent,” 25. ANOM BIB SOM C/BR/3324.

The profound contrast between this stock colonial imagery and the intent of the article is all the more remarkable given the author's own description of the everyday exoticization that African students endured in France. She insisted that African students' wariness of metropolitan French is totally understandable: "All it takes is to listen to the amused reflections of pedestrians when they pass an African in the street to realize that a good number of French people still view a 'black' as an object of curiosity, a 'savage,' a 'big child' taken straight out of the exotic imagery in which the call of the tam-tam blends into the mysterious sounds of the bush at night." She added that those views had tangible consequences: "One can also cite an incalculable number of cases in which a landlord refuses to house an African student because of prejudice and retrograde ideas. Most of all, what most offends the young African who arrives in France, is to be considered as someone who has everything to gain and nothing to give."³³

In her final remarks, the author drew two conclusions from her conversation with these five African students. The first spoke directly to stereotypes about African intelligence and Africans' supposed illogical reasoning. She affirmed, "The positions of these young Africans can sometimes seem unnuanced, brutal and impassioned, but they are resolute, stable and coherent." To further drive home the point, she added, "None of them contradicted themselves at any point in the discussion. And when they gave an opinion, they justified it straightaway." Her second impression spoke more to the issue of why *brassage* did not seem to be working. Unlike many an administrator, she did not put the blame on African students' shoulders. Although she acknowledged that their distrust of metropolitan French was strong, she did not find that it was based on any kind of inherent bias. With interlocutors they trust, she reassured her readers, they

³³ Ibid., 29.

are quite capable of warm and thoughtful exchanges of views. The difficulty for them, she concluded, was to find “true interlocutors.”³⁴

The reserve of African students was a common refrain among local educators and youth facilitators who worked with African youth in France throughout the decade. In 1960, officials in the Ministry of National Education urged all of the rectors of French universities with large contingents of African students to designate special faculty mentors to work with those students more closely. The responses the MEN received varied widely: some rectors believed there was no need since their African students did not seem to have any particular issues; some opposed the idea on principle, arguing that integration should proceed “naturally” without signaling anyone for special treatment; and others replied curtly that they had more important priorities.³⁵ But several reported that members of their faculty had already taken it upon themselves to reach out to African students—that they had been inviting them to dinner or to their summer homes for years.³⁶ The Rector of Bordeaux forwarded along several letters from faculty detailing the activities they had already undertaken and their impressions of the students. One law professor wrote that in his ten years of experience, African students were usually intimidated and withdrawn at the beginning, but found that “they open up very quickly and are glad to have personal contacts with French families.”³⁷ Another law professor similarly reported that at first they were quite reserved and in their reserve “one could detect a kind of fear.” However, once the students realize that “we do not have a segregationist attitude [*esprit ségrégatif*], they open

³⁴ Ibid., 30.

³⁵ Dossier “Réponses au circulaire ministérielle du 15 janvier 1960.” CAC 19770181/6; Letter from Recteur Clermont-Ferrand to HJCS, 9 mai 1960. CAC 19860445/6.

³⁶ Letter from Doyen de la Faculté de Médecine to the Recteur de l’Académie de Bordeaux, 19 février 1960. CAC 19860445/6. See also the response from the Rector at the University of Nancy in the Dossier “Réponses,” *op cit.*

³⁷ Letter from Jean Brethe de la Gressaye to Doyen Garrigou-Lagrange, 27 février 1960. CAC 19860445/6.

up and bloom and offer a lot of trust, deference and attachment.” He then concluded, “I believe it is a duty—a duty of charity in the good sense of the word—to try to liberate them from their fearful reserve which certainly causes them pain.”³⁸ By portraying African students as suffering from a debilitating inferiority complex that was only vaguely linked to their concrete experiences of oppression, their attitudes and dispositions were naturalized as intrinsic to the African personality.

Significantly, those characterizations informed how French officials structured subsequent programming for African youth in France. Planning documents often referred to “what we know of the African temperament,” or warned that they must “beware of the well-known distrust of the students of any kind of programming that seems too official.”³⁹ Those observations often led program organizers to focus even more on fostering personal contacts between young Africans and the local French population rather than organized educational activities. *Brassage* became the *raison d’être* of these initiatives, even as the meticulous monitoring of African students was hardening conceptions of African difference which made *brassage* all the more difficult.

French officials continued to invoke *brassage* throughout the decade as a distinctly French approach to postwar empire, but administrative discourses about African youth laid the groundwork in France for the “race relations” model of postwar liberalism that scholars have typically associated with Britain, Germany and the United States.⁴⁰ That model places the onus on the racialized to integrate into the dominant society without expecting the majority population

³⁸ Letter from Lucien Martin to Doyen Garrigou-Lagrange, 15 février 1960. CAC 19860445/6.

³⁹ Note à l’attention de M. le HCJS a/s projet d’établissement de contacts entre des étudiants africains et la population de Villefranche de Rouergue (Aveyron) s/d; Directeur de l’Office des Étudiants d’Outre-Mer à Délégué Académique, Dir-BUS, 3 mai 1960. CAC 19860445/5.

⁴⁰ On Germany and the US, see Heide Fehrenbach, *Race After Hitler*; on Britain, see Gilroy, *There Ain’t No Black in the Union Jack*.

to change from those encounters or fully addressing the structural bases of inequality. Through *brassage*, French officials hoped that racial distinctions would simply fade away as a new hybrid culture developed. This did not happen. Young Africans' reactions to French society and the racism they encountered in both France and their home territories further encouraged French officials to frame Franco-African encounters as a question of "race relations."

Selective representations of Africans' views on racism were circulated in administrative correspondence about state-funded youth exchange programs.⁴¹ Visitors in month-long *stages* seem to have had very different impressions of France than African students who became long-term residents. However, even the most gushing testimonials from participants in these programs addressed the problem of race in no uncertain terms. Unlike the African student population in the metropole who spoke out about racism *in France* (see below), the participants in short-term youth exchanges and *stages* focused on racism in the African territories. An evaluation of youth exchanges that took place in 1956 cited one young Mauritanian teacher at the conclusion of his *stage* with the youth organization *Francs et Franches Camarades*, on the stark contrast between his experience in France and life at home. He declared:

We leave filled with emotion...from the open friendship we found among the metropolitan French. And before such personal contact, that sincere fraternity, we cannot help but ask ourselves: why don't the Whites in Africa work together with the Blacks? What must we do to breach that barrier of hate and contempt that spreads day by day between the two races?⁴²

Many facilitators of youth exchanges in France expressed distress upon learning of this state of affairs in the territories. Lamy Roger, president of the Fédération Départementale des Foyers

⁴¹ Although the French state funded a smattering of Franco-African youth exchanges in the early 1950s, those programs dramatically expanded and became regularized in 1956 under pressure from Félix Houphouët-Boigny, who, as a member of the Présidence du Conseil, was then the highest ranking African official in the French government. (He would later become the first president of independent Ivory Coast.)

⁴² Présidence du Conseil, Haut Comité de la Jeunesse de France et d'Outre-Mer, Groupe de travail 'Contacts entre jeunes de France et d'Outre-Mer,' janvier 1957. AN F17/15727.

Ruraux de la Côte d'Or, which hosted a few dozen African *stagiaires* in the summer of 1957, reported to the MEN that the *stagiaires* were stunned that the local population was not “racist,” “for the only reason (I am only quoting them) that ‘the French here are not like the French there.’” He continued, “It is a disconcerting report for us, we French of the Metropole.”⁴³

These sentiments were affirmed in the *stagiaires*' own words and communicated widely to the population in the region, in a letter they sent to local press outlets (which also made its way into the hands of officials in the MEN). Addressed to their “*amis bourguignons*,” the letter professed their profound shock at the warm welcome they received. Upon returning home, when asked about their impressions of France and what they took away from the experience, they indicated they will respond to the first by insisting on how surprised they were to find that France is a country of “humanism and civilization,” and to the second, that they have “heard and seen the beating of the French heart, so little and poorly understood in the overseas territories.” And in the spirit of mutual comprehension, they entreated the population to be patient with them: “If, on our side, one day by accident we offended one of you or made a mistake, some blunder, please forgive us, because though we are animated by similar souls as you, it is undeniable that we have different customs and a different way of life.”⁴⁴

African students' uncomfortable insistence that racism remained an intractable part of their everyday lives did occasionally compel some French officials to acknowledge enduring structural inequalities—in the subpar educations Africans received prior to coming to France and in housing discrimination once they got there—but many French officials reacted defensively.

⁴³ Rapport du M. Lamy Roger sur les stages ruraux 1957, s/d. CAC 19860445/2.

⁴⁴ Annexe II: Les Stagiaires d'Afrique Noire disent au revoir à leurs Amis Bourguignons, s/d., signed Bagouro Noumansana. CAC 19860445/2. It is not insignificant that the signatory of this letter, Bagouro Noumansana, went on to become one of the top agronomists and agricultural engineers in independent Mali. As in formal schooling, the exchanges were indeed producing a new African elite who would assume leadership positions in post-independence governance in ex-French Africa.

Often this entailed shifting the blame back onto Africans' supposedly "irrational" hostility toward the French and a distinctly African "inferiority complex." However, as in the Cournarie-Laurentie exchange, consensus on these issues remained elusive. Cournarie had interpreted Franklein's objectionable behavior as a consequence of his encounter with an "alien" culture, while Laurentie saw this as a reflection of Franklein's intimate knowledge of French values. Colonial administrators were wary of building special centers for African students out of fear of deepening their isolation and segregation from mainstream French society, while Cournarie saw such an endeavor as helping to keep them grounded in their own cultural and moral values (and providing an ideal opportunity to keep close watch over them). Cournarie remained silent on the issue of race while Laurentie acknowledged—however briefly—that francophone African elites' hostile attitude toward the French was profoundly shaped by the racial discrimination they faced in the colonies.

That all of these questions were so fiercely contested among the individuals involved in educating and overseeing young francophone Africans in the metropole makes it all the more striking that certain depictions and tropes about African students and the administrative procedures to which they gave rise ultimately proved much more powerful than others.⁴⁵ Despite widespread agreement within the Colonial Ministry that Franklein's musings did not pose any serious political threat, Cournarie's call for more surveillance of African students was heeded. As more African students began arriving in Paris and the provinces in the late 1940s and throughout 1950s, they were put under rigorous administrative surveillance by the MFOM and local colonial administrations, both during their time in France and when they returned to their

⁴⁵ Ann Laura Stoler makes a related argument in her study of the epistemologies of Dutch imperial rule in the nineteenth century. See her *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

home territories.⁴⁶ Similarly, special student centers and dormitories for Africans were not only created in Paris but at all the provincial universities with large contingents of African students.⁴⁷

Support for these institutions remained ambivalent throughout the period. By the mid-1950s, officials in both the MFOM and the MEN grew increasingly anxious that African students were becoming ghettoized in the Maison de la France d’Outre-Mer and the *foyers d’étudiants africains* in the provinces. As more and more African students arrived in France, they seemed to mix with metropolitan students less and less. Despite official misgivings about the Maison and the provincial *foyers*, both received substantial funding from the Ministry of Education as well as from the overtaxed budgets of the French African Federations. The passage of the *loi cadre* in 1956 made it more difficult for French officials in the metropole to change course; once the territories were in control of their own budgets, they were free to purchase designated residences for their students on their own. When the territorial assembly in Côte d’Ivoire decided to buy a building in Paris to house students from its territory in 1956, administrators in Paris found their hands tied to their great consternation.⁴⁸ The MFOM and the MEN ultimately felt compelled to

⁴⁶ See, among others, multiple dossiers in the Archives Nationales du Sénégal [ANS]: 17G/269 (111), 17G/604 (152), O/666, O/668 and O/669 (31), 21G/210 (178); and from the Archives Nationales d’Outre-Mer: 1/AFFPOL/2265, 1/AFFPOL/2395, 1/AFFPOL/2398.

⁴⁷ About half of the African student population in France was dispersed throughout the provinces, while the other half was concentrated in Paris. For the founding documents of the *Maison de la France d’Outre-Mer* at the Cité Universitaire in Paris, see ANOM 1/AFFPOL/2265. On local *foyers des étudiants africains*, see ANS 18G/211 (160). For heated exchanges between the French Ministry of Education and the Central Colonial Authority on the creation of the *foyers* in the early 1950s, see Archives Nationales [AN] F/17/17768.

⁴⁸ Just before the passage of the *loi cadre*, an official at the MEN wrote to Gaston Defferre, Minister of Overseas France and author of the law, protesting Ivory Coast’s plan to buy a *hôtel particulier* for students in Paris. He stressed that the Rector of the Academy of Paris and the head of the Office of Overseas Students agreed that they should avoid attracting more African students to the capital, who should be dispersed in universities throughout the country to be “mixed [*brassé*] with metropolitan students, and not grouped together in a center that is more or less closed, where particularisms grow stronger.” Defferre responded that he wholeheartedly agreed that it would be preferable for these students to be split up to facilitate their “*brassage* with metropolitan students,” but since the purchase was authorized by the territorial assembly, there was simply nothing he could do, noting that his opposition would be particularly inappropriate “at the very moment when I’m trying so hard to get the *loi cadre*

continue to support for these centers, which outlasted the end of empire and became an important part of the educational infrastructure for receiving African students in the postcolonial era.⁴⁹

Laurentie's modest candor about racism in the territories back in 1945 did not survive long under the crushing weight of the contradictions of postwar republican empire. The Constitution of the Fourth Republic and the French Union (1946) enshrined racial equality and non-discrimination as fundamental republican values at the same time that it codified different citizenship statuses and other social and political rights for metropolitan French and the "overseas" inhabitants of the French Union. Unwilling to confront those contradictions, postwar French leaders devised an array of rhetorical strategies to deflect accusations of systemic racial inequality, and by the late 1940s, the tactic of attributing the persistence of "racial prejudices" to a handful of misfits and bad apples to sidestep the issue altogether had become the norm.⁵⁰

These deflections are crucial for understanding how French officials interpreted and evaluated African students' experiences in France. Motivated by the belief that *brassage* was the solution to all their troubles—that personal prejudices would simply evaporate as young Africans and French people formed personal bonds—most French officials and private individuals involved in these programs were utterly dismayed that racial tensions did not in fact wither away in light of their efforts. Their ostensible "failures" served to further essentialize African difference and Africans' seemingly intractable inability to fully integrate into French social and cultural life. Indeed, already in 1956 many French officials and educators, especially in Paris, openly called for receiving fewer African students in their jurisdictions and establishments, and

passed to give more autonomy to the territories." See the Billères-Defferre correspondence of March 20 and April 5 in AN F17/15727.

⁴⁹ For multiyear correspondance, administrative reports and budgets, see the dossier, "Maison de la France d'Outre-Mer—subventions AOF—1953-1958," ANS 18G/211 (160). For the postcolonial era, see various dossiers on the Office de Coopération et d'Accueil Universitaire, the successor organization of the Office des Etudiants d'Outre-Mer in CAC 19780596/42. See also Sot, *Étudiants africains en France*.

⁵⁰ See my, "Obscuring Race," *op cit*.

these calls only became more insistent by the end of the decade.⁵¹ One of the most forceful proponents of discouraging more African students to come France was Lucien Paye, an education official in Paris who would later become the first rector of the University of Dakar.⁵² Ironically, despite Paye's opposition to receiving more African students in Paris and special African student residences, the Maison de la France d'Outre-Mer at the Cité U was renamed "La Résidence Lucien Paye" in 1972, which remains its name today.

*The African Perspective: "C'est bien un pays de Blancs."*⁵³

While young Africans in France in the 1950s were subjected to extensive surveillance and stereotyping, they also turned the "colonial gaze" back on the colonizers as they took stock of French people, culture, and society during their time in France. They judged them in light of their own cultural values, social norms, and lifestyle preferences. In student publications, personal correspondence, and literature, young Africans pronounced critical judgments not only on French politics, French racism, and the lack of material support for them to pursue their studies, but also on French ways of life more generally.

Responding directly to French caricatures of "ungrateful" Africans, African student journalists refuted the notion that they were "anti-French." In an editorial in the FEANF's journal, *L'Étudiant d'Afrique Noire*, R. Mawlawé turned this accusation on its head. "Logic, truth, justice – we have been taught that these are quintessentially French qualities. Why when we avail ourselves of them do you find us anti-French? A surprising truth!" He continued, "As

⁵¹ André Boulloche, Ministre de l'Éducation Nationale, à MM. les Recteurs et les Inspecteurs d'Académie a/s Admission des élèves de la Communauté Française, originaires d'Outre-Mer, dans les Établissements du premier degré, du second degré et de l'enseignement technique, avril 1959. CAC/19770508/6.

⁵² Lucien Paye, Note à l'attention de M. Silvereano, chargé de mission du Cabinet du MEN, 27 décembre 1956. AN F17/15727.

⁵³ Bernard Dadié, *Un nègre à Paris* (Paris: Éditions Présence Africaine, 1959): 25. Translation: "This really is a white country."

paradoxical as it seems, it is the colonized who are reviving the authentic tradition of France, of the true France whose vocation surely is not to stifle black consciousness, but to arouse their initiative, to help them realize their freedom as men.”⁵⁴ As Laurentie had feared a decade earlier, francophone Africans had indeed become well-acquainted with the French values, which became a powerful weapon in their fight for equality and social justice.

In the same issue, Isabelle Tevoedjre, a literature student from Dahomey (who later would become a celebrated anti-female circumcision activist), authored a piece entitled, “‘Metropolitan’ Students and Us.” She framed African students’ contacts with their French peers in a highly charged political and racial context.⁵⁵ She found that since France had lost its war in Indochina (1954), French students had clearly staked out their own “positions.” Some of their French peers opened themselves up to learn about African students’ concerns, while others distanced themselves even more. In describing her experiences, she detailed a constant stream of what we would recognize today as “micro-aggressions.”⁵⁶ In the lecture halls, she wrote, it is easy to read the faces of their French comrades and to slot them in one camp or the other:

By instinct, we can perceive straightaway the hostility that animates their looks, gestures, vocal inflections. That hostility affects us so profoundly that we also suffer when our comrades are nothing more than indifferent, cruelly indifferent.

Even in Paris, she continued, “that supposedly cosmopolitan city—I could not ignore those stares looking me up and down, those glances that would follow me, inquisitive, ironic, disdainful, distrustful, scared.” For Isabelle Tevoedjre, perhaps the most frustrating part of those encounters was how woefully ignorant her French peers were of the two poles of racial discrimination she

⁵⁴ R. Mawlawé, “Sommes-nous Anti-Français?” *L’Étudiant d’Afrique Noire*, nouvelle série, no 3, avril 1956. ANS 21G/209 (178).

⁵⁵ Isabelle Tevoedjre, “Les étudiants ‘métropolitains’ et nous,” *L’Étudiant d’Afrique Noire*, nouvelle série, no 3, avril 1956. ANS 21G/209 (178).

⁵⁶ For a lucid analysis of these dynamics today, see Derald Wing Sue, *Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Race, Gender and Sexual Orientation* (Wiley, 2010).

and other African students faced, which took different forms in France and in the territories. She lamented that metropolitan French have no idea that “still now, in certain cities like Brazzaville, for a Black to enter the ‘White’ quarter would be a sacrilege,” just as they also do not know that when African students are sent to organizations that find students housing, they are presented with listings “that carry that atrocious line, unworthy of the French who are supposed to be against racial discrimination: “No Blacks, No Arabs!” In such a situation, she found it especially intolerable that African students, as a group, were constantly accused of “ingratitude.” In her view, those accusations stemmed from old colonial stereotypes of docile, sycophantic blacks. She concluded, “they claim to know us,” but they could not be more mistaken. This genre of critique often proved too much for French officials, who seized multiple editions of *L’Étudiant de l’Afrique Noire* that year. African students aggressively protested this move to their political representatives in Paris and made appeals to international opinion, which eventually led to the journal’s reinstatement.⁵⁷

Isabelle’s husband Alfred, in addition to serving as an editor of *L’Étudiant de l’Afrique Noire*, was also a frequent contributor to the publication of the Association of Catholic Students in Dakar. In his writings for that publication, he framed his experience of racism in Toulouse, where he was studying, in explicitly Christian terms. He opened with the thought that Christian colonial students in France were “doubly Catholic,” in that they participated in the life of the church and because they were, “in and of themselves, a symbol and living proof of the universality of Jesus’ teachings.” As Christians, he wrote, they found their isolation in metropolitan France especially painful. Like so many African students, Alfred Tevoedjre affirmed that trying to find lodging was particularly traumatic. He asserted, “We have all felt the

⁵⁷ Lettre ouvert à Guy Mollet du Bureau exécutif du Bloc Populaire Sénégalais: “Laissez Paraître *L’Étudiants d’Afrique Noire*,” s.n. 18 mars 1957. ANS 17G/596 (152). I discuss African protests on French censorship in international youth forums at greater length in Chapter 6.

pathological distrust that certain sons of France harbor towards people of color.” But even finding acceptance in Christian congregations in France proved challenging. In his piece, Tevoedjre noted that he was excited and grateful that a special parish for “overseas students” had recently been created at the Catholic Institute in Toulouse. If they could not feel welcomed in French churches, they would form their own.⁵⁸

Religion could have been a factor of internal division among African students, but they embraced their own religious diversity. As Catholic Senegalese student Thomas Diop wrote in a special issue of the French political magazine *Pensée-française fédération* in 1957, African youth included Christians, Muslims, communists and “traditionalists,” but he insisted they all shared a commitment to working for Africa’s future. Indeed, he emphasized that African Christians and Muslims in particular not only held many common views and spiritual principles, but also that they were not really distinct populations. Most Muslim families, he wrote, had Christian relatives and vice versa. Diop defended Muslim African students who traveled to Cairo to pursue higher Islamic education – a group who the colonial administration maligned as “Wahhabi” fanatics.⁵⁹ Indeed, the internal diversity of the African population, as well as the very real differences separating them from their French counterparts, led Diop to think more expansively about how to forge lasting bonds of solidarity within and across these divides. He urged that in order “to think globally” [*penser planétairement*] they should root their identity in *goals* and *objectives* rather than religion or ideology. He powerfully concluded, “Identity of

⁵⁸ Albert Tevoedjre, “Un echo des étudiants africains catholiques de France--Discours adressé à son excellence Mgr. Garronne, Archeveque-Co-Adjuteur de Toulouse au nom des Étudiants d’Outre-Mer,” *Jeunesse d’Afrique. Organe mensuel de l’Association des Étudiants catholiques de Dakar*, no 3, juin-juillet 1955, 8. ANOM BIB SOM POM/b/275.

⁵⁹ Thomas Diop, “Problèmes philosophiques et religieux,” *Pensée française-fédération* no 3, 15 janvier 1957, numéro spéciale, “Jeunesses d’Afrique Noire,” 20-21. ANOM BIB SOM C/BR/3324. I discuss this at length in the next chapter.

goals would promote tolerance, not only between diverse groups of young Blacks, but also between black youth and metropolitan youth.”⁶⁰

The everyday racism that African students recounted in their publications was also a recurrent theme in African literature of the period. In his moving fictional memoir, *Un nègre à Paris*, Ivorian writer Bernard Dadié subversively turned the colonial-administrative French gaze on its head.⁶¹ Written in 1959 but set in 1956, his narrator keenly observes everything around him, channeling the tone and mood of the colonial travelogue as he meticulously scrutinized *the French*: “What we share with this people makes us more sympathetic towards them. I even found here fairytales just like ours.” He continues, “And when I see a French father take his child by the hand, smiling at him and telling him stories, I say to myself, ‘but they act just like blacks’; they are just like us! They too love their children.”⁶²

The narrator of *Un nègre à Paris* dwells on the isolation he feels in the city, the fast pace of city life, and what he views as the lax moral behavior of young French men and women. These observations provide the context for his extended reflections on race and the nature of diversity: “I watch the people come and go. I am aware of my color that distinguishes me at a distance, day and night. And I ask myself: didn’t God create men of different colors so that we would have to study each other? Is color the only barrier that men free themselves from so difficultly?” He continued, “We speak of different customs, colors, countries, cultures, but aren’t men all the same?”⁶³ However, in the end, his take on Franco-African relations was deeply

⁶⁰ Ibid., 23. This anticipates Etienne Balibar’s conception of a non-identitarian form of postnational citizenship in *We the People of Europe?* (2004).

⁶¹ Nicole Cesare develops this line of thinking in reference to Dadié’s *Un nègre à Paris* (1959) in “An African in Paris...And New York and Rome: Bernard Dadié and the Postcolonial Travel Narrative,” MA Thesis, Villanova University, 2007: Chapter 4: “Reversing the Gaze and Rewriting History: Dadié’s Subversive Humanism.”

⁶² Bernard Dadié, *Un nègre à Paris* (Paris: Editions Présence Africaine, 1959): 30.

⁶³ Ibid., 183.

ambivalent. He noted not only how exoticized Africans were made to feel in France but also how there was a new *performative* aspect to French encounters with Africans:

These Parisians still have that affection for us that their ancestors had for us back in the days when everyone had their own little Negro [*Négrillon*]. It's truly a pleasure for them to have us. What's more, those who, [at home in the territories] would never dare invite us to their table, here, they are the first to do it. They want to publicly prove their generosity of spirit and dupe everyone.⁶⁴

Significantly, the narrator explicitly framed his reflections about race and diversity in France in the context of European integration. He marvels and admires the prospect of European unification, at least for its universalist aspirations. As the narrator tells of his rambling walks through Paris, he pauses for a moment's reflection on European integration at the Place de l'Europe in the 8th arrondissement. He muses, "The Parisian believes that men will be able to unite themselves... The Place de l'Europe imagines that each nation, with its history and its monuments will let go of its victories which were defeats for others. History will no longer be the history of killing fields, but rather of man *tout court*."⁶⁵

Youth and Eurafrica

Dadié's narrator may have been moved by the idealism of the European project, but pro-Europe activists struggled to generate widespread enthusiasm for European integration throughout the 1950s. However, that was not for want of effort. With the founding of the European Youth Campaign [EYC] in 1951, European activist networks and nascent European institutions made educating young people about the benefits of European integration and how European institutions work a top priority. The preponderance of French officials in the EYC, which was based in Paris, introduced a pronounced European dimension to the way French colonial

⁶⁴ Ibid., 182.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 206.

administrators were thinking about African youth and the issue of *brassage*. They developed an explicitly “Eurafrican” discourse that pointed beyond the French Union to a dramatically grander, intercontinental spatial frame. As we shall see, the dominant position of French leaders in the European movements also fostered a Eurafrican perspective within pro-Europe circles and institutions.

French Colonial Officials and Eurafrica

Eurafrica figured prominently in the rhetoric of Dr. Jean-Paul Aujoulat, the top education official in the MFOM from 1949-1953, especially in his vision for regular *stages* and youth exchanges for Africans beyond formal schooling.⁶⁶ Aujoulat was instrumental in creating one of the earliest examples of this kind of program, a summer *stage* at the National Teacher Training Institute [ENS] at Saint-Cloud in the western suburbs of Paris. Beginning in 1951, this program provided additional pedagogical training for a mixed group of young African and metropolitan schoolteachers who would soon assume teaching posts in the African territories. Aujoulat celebrated the inaugural program at Saint-Cloud as one of the colonial administration’s shining achievements of the year, alongside the ostensibly more significant opening of the Institut des Hautes Études de Dakar and the inauguration of the Maison de la France d’Outre-Mer.⁶⁷

Aujoulat himself participated in the proceedings of the second *stage* in Saint-Cloud in 1952, which he used as a platform to promote his Eurafrican vision for French-African relations. He gave a long presentation to the *stagiaires* entitled, “The Orientation of Our School Policy in the Face of the Evolution of the Overseas Territories,” in which he articulated the

⁶⁶ A devout Catholic and member of the Christian-Democratic MRP, Aujoulat also represented the electorate of French citizens in Cameroon from 1945-1955.

⁶⁷ Paul Aujoulat, “Avant-Propos,” *Bulletin de l’Inspection-Generale de l’Enseignement et de la Jeunesse du Ministère de la France d’Outre-Mer*, no 3, avril 1952. ANOM BIB AOM/20505/1952.

administration's goals for colonial education in a new spirit and a new vocabulary. First, he forcefully declared, "It is time for us to listen to what Africa and Madagascar wants."⁶⁸ Second, he spoke of building "a new Eurafrican civilization." Aujoulat alluded to Léopold Senghor's well-known support for Eurafrica and insisted that Senghor was not the only "black intellectual" to hope for the "Eurafrican symbiosis." He warned that this would not be easy: "It concerns the inevitable conflict between two conceptions of life and of the world, the instability between the old equilibrium of yesterday and the new equilibrium of tomorrow." Crucially, he insisted that they must not force Africans to choose between "Europe" and "Africa," rather it was a new synthesis that they must seek to achieve:

Even if the African elite demonstrates a remarkable receptivity to Latin culture and European values, they are well aware that they should not renounce their origins nor lose touch with their ancestral patrimony for any price. [The African elite] shares the aspirations of all non-European countries that hope to benefit from the West's technical secrets without losing their own personalities, to assimilate [those techniques] into their values in pursuit of a human universal.⁶⁹

He then concluded with a further reflection on African aspirations and he identified his position with those of several prominent African figures: "We must reject both the cultural imperialism that presumes Africa is a blank slate and a systematic filtering of the kinds of knowledge and disciplines offered to black children: that seems to me to be the position of African teachers and thinkers like Senghor, Hazouné or Alioune Diop."

Aujoulat distilled three courses of action that they would need to pursue to realize his "Eurafrican symbiosis": 1) to develop elite and mass education at the same time and reject the notion that this was an either/or proposition; 2) to no longer fear Africans obtaining advanced

⁶⁸ "Conférence donnée le 8 juillet 1952 devant les Stagiaires de Saint Cloud par Dr. Aujoulat," reprinted in *Bulletin de l'Inspection-Generale de l'Enseignement et de la Jeunesse du Ministère de la France d'Outre-Mer* no 4, décembre 1952, (emphasis in original). ANOM BIB AOM/20505/1952.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

degrees; and 3) to overcome the false opposition between “*l’esprit*” and “*la technique*.”⁷⁰ On this last point he added, “Africans are the first to declare that we are living in a technical age, and that countries cannot thrive or modernize without technicians.” He continued, “If the blacks reject assimilation by force, they are nevertheless eager to participate in the great advances of modern civilizations.”⁷¹

Aujoulat’s Eurafrican discourse drew on the resurgence of the idea of Eurafrica that accompanied the burst of European institution building in the early 1950s.⁷² In his presentation at Saint-Cloud, Aujoulat mobilized the framework of “Eurafrica” as a new way to think about the function and design of education for Africans in a French Union that was in the process of deepening its ties to its European neighbors. Eurafrica was therefore not only gaining currency as a way of thinking about institutional arrangements between united Europe and European-controlled parts of Africa; it was also becoming a new scalar frame for considering the social and cultural work of educating Africans in France’s African territories. Aujoulat’s insistence that Africans must be consulted about their own goals and aspirations should also be understood in light of European developments. The propaganda campaigns in support of the European institutions French leaders hoped French Africa would join – not least in European youth and education initiatives – hinged on aggressive assertions of Europe’s liberal, tolerant values. Those campaigns therefore created added pressure for France to make the French Union a genuinely inclusive, democratic society – a non-colonialist France within a larger non-imperialist Europe.

⁷⁰ Indeed, I will suggest in the concluding section of this chapter that these were becoming increasingly intertwined, even synonymous, in reflections on the essence of Europe in this period.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Montarsolo, *L’Eurafrique*; Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrika*; Bitch and Bossuat, *L’Europe unie et l’Afrique*; Davis, “Producing Eurafrica.”

This was a new register in the cultural repertoire of France's historic civilizing mission.⁷³ In prewar colonial parlance, "Eurafrican" designated mixed-race people (*métis*).⁷⁴ It was not a common feature of either "assimilationist" or "associationist" colonial education policies. But in the 1950s, the geopolitical situation reframed the problem of difference in France and French Africa. In this era of rapid political change, many French officials were wary of *over-identifying* with Europe and Europeanness at the same time that some African leaders proudly declared themselves committed "Europeans" – if not ethnically, at least by political conviction. Just a few months after the *stage* at Saint-Cloud, as the debate over the EDC was heating up, officials in the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs insisted: "France is not a European power," for "her interests, her aspirations and her destiny have long extended beyond the continent... a great future may yet await her in Africa."⁷⁵

The older generation of African elites in French parliament in the 1950s was well aware of French ambitions in Europe, and they used their support for European integration as leverage to secure more robust democratic reforms in the French Union. Yves Montarolo and others have concentrated on Senghor's enthusiasm for "Eurafrica" in the early 1950s, but Senghor was certainly not alone in this respect. His African colleagues in Paris continued to champion Eurafrica throughout the 1950s even as the prospect of a truly democratic Franco-African polity dimmed. They found a ready welcome in the pro-Europe movements, whose interest in Eurafrica

⁷³ Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize*; Duke-Bryant, *Education as Politics*; Wilder, *The French Imperial Nation-State*. Wilder takes up Senghor's vision of Eurafrica in the 1950s in his contribution to the edited volume *Black France/France Noire*.

⁷⁴ Saada, *Les enfants de la colonie*; Owen White, *Children of the French Empire: Miscegenation and Colonial Society in French West Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Rachel Jean-Baptiste, "Miss Eurafrica: Men, Women's Sexuality, and Métis Identity in Late Colonial French Africa," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 20:3, September 2011, 568-593.

⁷⁵ Direction Générale-Affaires Politiques, Direction-Afrique, "Note sur la position des territoires françaises d'outre-mer dans la question de l'intégration européenne, 14 octobre 1952,"). AMAE K-Afrique, 1944-1952-Généralités, 53.

peaked in the second half of the decade. Indeed, by the mid-1950s, virtually all of the European movements had created special committees to study Europe-Africa relations. In 1958, Hamani Diori, a former schoolmaster in Niamey, longstanding deputy and vice-president of the French National Assembly, and the first president of independent Niger, delivered a speech to the European Movement's "Europe-Africa Commission." In this appeal, he affirmed, "We [Africans] are Europeans, because we are facing the same problems." However, he qualified the terms of that identification as contingent and political: "I am telling you that we are resolutely Europeans on the strict condition that the juridical and political reform of the Franco-African Community precedes our definitive entry into the construction of Europe," adding:

In the face of imperialist threats, the theory of independence needs to be revised. Based on shared circumstances and similar reasoning, European nations and the French African territories have arrived together at the same idea of a communal association at the appropriate scale for the modern world: Eurafrica.

Hamani Diori then offered a long reflection on the need for more mutual understanding among European and African youth, with each other and with their elders. Africans young and old, he concluded, "we are not presenting ourselves to European Nations as beggars, whatever our social needs may be. We come to Europe with France and through France in the hope of becoming what you have taught us to want to be: free citizens." These remarks resonated with the French leaders of the European Youth Campaign. They, in turn, circulated these ideas among other European youth leaders by reprinting Hamani Diori's remarks in their entirety in the EYC's main publication, whose print run was in the tens of thousands.⁷⁶ Thus as global pressures converged with European institution building to link Africa, through France, to the new Europe-in-the-making, old questions about cultural *métissage* and cultural pluralism in French youth and education policy for Africans took on this added "Eurafrican" valence. In turn, "Eurafrica" also

⁷⁶ Hamani Diori, "Le Pari du Siècle: France—Europe—Afrique," *Les Cahiers de Jeune Europe* no 4 (Supplément au *Jeune Europe* no 7, 1 mars 1958): 13-16. BNF.

became a framework for organizing competing ways of thinking about African racial and religious difference in the context of an evolving “modern,” “technical,” and “interconnected” society.

These elements can be traced in the thinking of Roland Pré, another prominent French colonial administrator at the height of interest in “Eurafrica” in the mid-1950s. Pré’s career perfectly captures just how entangled colonial and European concerns had become in this period. A former colonial governor of Gabon and Guinée, in 1953 Pré became a founding member of the Union of European Federalists’ study group for “overseas” issues. The following year, he oversaw the allocation of the second installment of FIDES, the French development fund that financed virtually all of the administration’s youth and education initiatives in Africa. In late 1954, he returned to the territories as the new chief administrator in Cameroun.⁷⁷

Like the European Movement, the Union of European Federalists was a transnational European political action group with strong Catholic overtones and its own youth wing. At the first session of its “Europe-Overseas Commission,” Pré tried to convince other members of the group that they should promote more than just narrow technical and economic cooperation between Europe and Africa. Pré forcefully argued that they must pursue “political integration” as well if they were going to get Africans to embrace Eurafrica:

African opinion will soon be torn between two poles: Eurafricanism (the integration of Africa into Europe by way of technical arrangements) and Pan-Africanism (the integration of African countries amongst themselves by way of political arrangements). In this way, the victory of Eurafricanism risks being compromised if the issue is solely approached from a technical perspective without consideration of political questions.

⁷⁷ In Cameroon, Pré acquired a reputation as a fanatical crusader against African nationalists. The “massacre of May” in Cameroon 1955 occurred under his tenure. Indeed, Ruben Um Nyobè, secretary-general of the UPC, singled out Pré (and, incidentally, Aujoulat) by name in his condemnation of French violence against the UPC and the Cameroonian people and French “machinations” to subsume Cameroon into the French Union, which was a questionable legal move in light of Cameroon’s status as a “territoire sous tutelle” by the UN. See Martin Atangana, *The End of French Rule in Cameroon* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2010): 53.

This argument did not convince everyone. Cornelius Van Rij, a Dutch member of the Commission, protested Pré's vision of political integration for Europe and Africa on explicitly *religious* grounds. He insisted that the Netherlands did not envision integrating any overseas territories into the EEC precisely because "religious issues will accentuate the many difficulties" such integration raised.⁷⁸ Nonetheless, the UEF, like the European Movement, did ultimately embrace Pré's Eurafrican vision and began planning to reach out to Africans in Europe.

Pré and his French colleagues in charge of deciding how to allocate FIDES moneys to develop African education had a very different idea of how the question of religion might factor into the project of Eurafrica. They did equate Eurafrica with a "civilizational choice" between "the West" and the Islamic world, but they maintained that African Islam, if the French administration played its cards right, could easily be integrated into Eurafrica in light of what the French viewed as the peculiarities of *Islam noir*. Pré and the other FIDES planners did not heed Aujoulat's call to turn the page on the old colonialist way of thinking about Africa as a blank slate. Instead, they framed black Africa's "civilizational choice" in a vacuum:

Unlike the populations of the Middle East and Asia, our populations in French Africa cannot claim a civilization of their own. Rather, they are looking to fill the void with external elements that they can adapt to their own tendencies. This is a unique opportunity we must seize, for the Eurafrican bloc, the cornerstone of this 'great entity *Metropole-Outre-Mer*' that we are so intently trying to build, can be realized by a solid foundation: a common civilization, which is to say, western civilization, which is nothing other than French civilization *tout court*.⁷⁹

In their view, millions in sub-Saharan Africa were awaiting "an orientation toward new forms of civilization." That orientation would determine the future of the "Eurafrican bloc."

⁷⁸ PV des débats de la Commission Europe-Outre-Mer, Union Européenne des Fédéralistes, Paris, 3 et 4 juillet 1953. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2314, dossier 1.

⁷⁹ Commission Roland Pré, "L'Afrique à la recherche d'une civilisation: orient ou occident?" février 1954, s.n. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2260.

Crucially, Pré and the FIDES planners believed that “black Islam” had not yet taken on the “totalitarian forms that are incompatible with our civilization” that it had in the Arab world. Indeed, they considered conditions in Africa quite favorable to Westernization and that African Islam would not be an obstacle in that evolution. As we shall see in the next chapter, this outlook significantly shaped French responses to African demands for state funding for private Muslim schools and incorporating Arabic and Islamic religious instruction into public school curricula in the territories.

Eurafrica and the European Youth Campaign

The EYC had energetically promoted the European Defense Community in many of its youth and education initiatives in early 1950s. The failure of the EDC was therefore felt not only as a devastating blow to overarching project of European unification; it also raised doubts about the efficacy of the EYC’s tactics and strategies. This prompted real soul searching about whether or not the elite focus of the EYC contributed to the EDC’s failure at the same time that it seemed to increase the importance of the EYC’s work. In the first years of the Campaign, its leaders wanted to draw a sharp contrast with Soviet-style, “totalitarian” mass youth rallies,⁸⁰ so they focused on small-scale educational programming for politically engaged youth like the gathering of European youth at Brest. In 1955, however, a showier display of young people’s support for European integration seemed urgently needed, which required transforming the EYC from an elite movement of *cadres* to a mass movement for all. According to EYC officials, “The rejection of the EDC signifies for many Europeans the failure of the European idea. In light of the dejection in European milieus, a powerful show of youth’s support for Europe takes on a new

⁸⁰ Norwig, *op cit.*

importance.” To reach larger numbers of young people, they needed to focus even more on regional and local activities, “to reach out to young people where they live, work, and learn.” Organizing youth at the local and regional level, they believed, would make transnational European dialogue easier since consideration of local preoccupations, which they believed were quite similar across the continent, would naturally lead to “European solutions.”⁸¹

At the same time that the EYC sought to pivot to more local and regional organizing, it was also trying to redefine its objectives in light of the global reordering underway in the process of decolonization. French officials working within the EYC were particularly quick to focus on how the upheavals wrought by Asian decolonization and the failure of the EDC put European youth in a double bind in the midst of “all of this chaos.” On the one hand, the young generation in Europe was still dependent on the older generation; on the other hand, they were expected to be the continent’s future leaders. In this contradictory situation, EYC officials feared that young people were confronting “a heritage of failure” and “such weighty obligations” that they were already resigning themselves to withdrawing from those responsibilities entirely. According to Jacques Eugene, one of the French leaders of the EYC, the Campaign needed to get young people involved in finding a role for united Europe in world affairs, to encourage direct civic participation in the process of European integration, and to clearly outline young Europeans’ responsibilities with regard to “under-developed countries and the associated territories.”⁸²

In pursuit of the latter goal, the French section of the EYC created its own “Groupe d’outre-mer” the following year. This body was presided over by Antoine Lawrence, a prominent Guinean youth leader who sat on the Youth Councils of Guinée and the French Union,

⁸¹ “Note sur les objectifs et méthodes des ‘Etats-Généraux de la Jeunesse d’Europe’ 1957,” s.n., 19 janvier 1955, 1. AHUE ME-1458. This foreshadowed the “regionalist” turn in European integration in the 1970s. There is a vast literature on this: for a good introduction to the field, see Michael Keating, ed., *Regions and Regionalism in Europe* (Edward Elgar, 2004).

⁸² Jacques Eugene, “Declaration-Programme,” 19 janvier 1955. AHUE-1458.

in addition to serving as the president of the American-backed World Association of Youth for most of the 1950s.⁸³ The founding of the “Overseas Group” was a first step toward elevating the idea of Eurafrica to one of the top priorities of the French section of the EYC.⁸⁴ By 1957, the section’s official program identified its two principle objectives as creating a democratic representative European assembly elected by universal suffrage and formally instituting a “Europe-Africa Community.”⁸⁵ Subsequently, Eurafrica became a key theme in the EYC’s journal *Jeune Europe*, which published a series of studies on the *loi cadre* as well as a steady stream of reflections on the political, economic and “ethnic” issues raised by the prospect of forging closer ties between Europe and Africa.⁸⁶

The French section of the EYC was certainly at the forefront of the Campaign’s “Eurafrican” turn. They called for the creation of “European committees” in France’s African territories to engage African youth on the question of Eurafrica and including Africans in the metropole in their ongoing initiatives in both France and the other five member-countries of the EEC. By the end of the decade, fully a quarter of summer *stages* and youth exchange programs organized by French youth organizations who received state funding had added a European dimension to their initiatives. Examples from state-funded programming in 1959 include: the

⁸³ It is important to note that Antoine Lawrence was sharply criticized in African student and youth milieus as a lackey of the French colonial regime as well as the Americans. On the eve of the dissolution of the French Union, Kane Ali Bokar, president of the Federal Council of Youth of AOF, both denounced the work of the Youth Council of the French Union and described Lawrence’s position as president of the WAY as “pure demogaguery...It was just necessary to hire a *nègre* to prove that the WAY was not racist.” Extraits du Rapport moral de Kane Ali Bokar concernant le Conseil de Jeunesse de l’Union Française, *UNEF Informations – Outre-Mer* 1958, Annexe II, p 73. BNF.

⁸⁴ In yet another instance of associating youth initiatives with the broader politics of united Europe and Eurafrica, members of this group, in turn, represented the EYC to the French section of the European Movement’s new “Commission Europe-Outre-Mer,” which was presided over by René Pleven. On relations between the two groups, see Jacques Eugene, “Rapport Général,” Comité National d’Action Jeune du Mouvement Européen, Secrétariat Français de la Campagne Européenne de la Jeunesse, 28 juin 1957: 24. AHUE EN-2703.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 60.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 55-56.

Confédération Nationale de la Famille Rurale designated five places for African *stagiaires* to attend its study sessions in the Netherlands and Germany; the Fédération Française des Maisons de Jeunes et de la Culture [MJC] reserved five spots for Africans in a study mission on rural life in Italy and another ten spaces for Africans to attend a six-month training session for directors of MJCs in France, Italy and Germany; the Organisation Centrale des Camps et activités de jeunesse [OCCAJ] arranged for several Africans to go on a cultural study mission to Italy on “Roman Civilization,” as well as an open invitation to reserve spots for young Africans upon request in the 180 camps of the OCCAJ across Western Europe.⁸⁷ Whereas earlier European youth initiatives like the gathering in Brest had focused on getting French youth and other young Europeans to envision French Africa as part of Europe, political developments like the *loi cadre* and the founding of the European Economic Community refocused EYC officials’ attention on making sure young Africans participated in these efforts directly.⁸⁸

Engaging African youth was of paramount importance to EYC officials, who effectively viewed Eurafrica, much like united Europe and the French Union, as a *generational* project:

It is distressing to note that until now these projects [of associating Europe and Africa] have practically only been studied by metropolitan French, or at best, by Africans of the preceding generation who have been thoroughly assimilated [*francisés*]. The reactions of the younger generations, of more modest cultural development, remain to be properly studied. If this work is not done, we should fear Eurafrican projects will appear to them as a hypocritical new form of colonization. In that case, it would be a total failure.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ See the folder, “Dossier Echanges France Outre-Mer, 1959,” CAC 19860445/2.

⁸⁸ The EEC created its own “Bureau Liaison France-Afrique-Europe,” which was also headquartered in Paris. On the activities of the Bureau, whose activities really picked up in the mid-1960s, see AHUE BAC003/1965-28. It is worth noting that several of the “faculty mentors” discussed in the first part of this chapter received funding from the Bureau to take their African mentees on educational trips other EEC countries. For instance, one of the Bordelais law professors received support to take his students on a five-day trip to Berlin. Letter from Lucien Martin to the HCJS, 31 mai 1960. CAC 19860445/6.

⁸⁹ Eugene, “Rapport Général,” 26 (emphasis in original).

In November 1957, the French section of the EYC convened a three-day conference in Troyes on the theme, “The Responsibility of Youth Toward Europe,” where issues relating to Eurafrika rose to the fore. In the opening session, Eurafrika was presented as a new horizon, part of a larger turning point in European integration. On the heels of the creation of the EEC and Euratom, Eurafrika would be a technical and economic institutional community that European and African youth would bring into being together. To that effect, the organizers urged that they must get young Africans in the metropole involved in the EYC’s activities, to exchange views with them, to organize colloquia, and to establish permanent “Europe-Africa committees” in the territories.⁹⁰

The event in Troyes itself began this work by including Africans in its proceedings. Nabi Ibrahima Youla, a Guinean former teacher, former director for education for the *Rassemblement Démocratique Africain* [RDA, by then the largest African political party] and member of the Social and Economic Council of the EEC, gave an impassioned speech in which he elaborated his vision of the role of youth in this process. Crucially, he declared that in order for their efforts to succeed African youth must first be truly welcomed in metropolitan France—they must finally achieve *brassage*. He cited the youth exchanges and *stages* described in the first part of this chapter as noteworthy past efforts to that end. However, he insisted that that kind of programming would only get them so far. *Brassage* required all metropolitan French people to make more of an effort to reach out and get to know young Africans. He exhorted his audience that it was wholly up to *them* to take on this responsibility themselves: “*You* can do it,” he urged, “reach out to them, create contacts, overcome the difficulties.” He concluded that if his talk

⁹⁰ Rapport d’orientation, “Éléments pour une nouvelle étape,” *Les cahiers de Jeune Europe*, no 1, “La responsabilité des Jeunes face à l’Europe,” 6 (Supplément au *Jeune Europe*, no 1, nouvelle série, décembre 1957). BNF.

inspired even just one of them to make the effort, it would be a real turning point. “By multiplying contacts,” he concluded, “we will create new horizons.”⁹¹

Youla’s presentation in Troyes was incorporated in the final recommendations of the EYC’s Groupe d’outre-mer. The group agreed that their overarching challenge was to dispel the impression that France wanted to substitute a new supranational “European colonialism” for the old national-French model. The group also agreed on the importance of developing more contacts with African students in the metropole. On this point, their observations and proposals reprised the same tropes and tactics we saw being pursued by French officials in the MFOM and the MEN. Their first course of action was to write to the leaders of student associations, as well as school directors and university faculty who may have contact with African students. However, the main challenge would be what they referred to as the “psychological difficulties” of working together with African youth, which they listed as both the “mentality of overseas youth” and the “appeal of communism.” On the latter point, they believed that Africans were naturally drawn to communism, which resembled the “structure of the African world, with its hierarchy, taboos, and the disappearance of the individual in the group,” rather than reasoned ideological, political, or social commitments. In light of these considerations, they would have to be extremely careful in how they approached and “managed” contacts with African youth.⁹²

⁹¹ Nabi Ibrahima Youla, “L’Eurafrique, une communauté librement consentie,” in *idem.*, 13. His remarks are worth quoting at some length, for he gives a nice snapshot of the issues raised in the first part of this chapter: “Nous avons essayé plusieurs moyens pour favoriser les contacts. Je citerai ce qui a déjà été fait dans le cadre d’échanges de jeunes il y a deux ans. Par ailleurs, des stages organisés par les différentes institutions ont amené d’autres personnes, jeunes et d’un certain âge, à avoir des contacts avec la métropole. Mais le plus facile, et peut-être aussi le plus difficile, c’est le contact que vous pouvez avoir avec ceux qui vivent actuellement en France. Certains de nos jeunes, qui sont sortis de leur société habituelle et se trouvent dans un pays de démocratie libérale, sont souvent découragés ou désorientés par le langage qui leur est tenu. Mais vous rencontrerez des jeunes conscients que le chemin à suivre est avec vous. Il faut savoir dès à présent réaliser ‘l’ouverture’ à ces jeunes et vous pouvez le faire.”

⁹² “Rapport de la commission ‘outre-mer,’” in *idem.*, 14.

Over the course of the following year, the Groupe d'outre-mer regularly organized conferences and "dinner-debates" on Eurafrika across France. According to one of the group's leaders, Louis Planchais, their priority was not only to facilitate contacts between young Africans and metropolitan French but also contacts with youth in the other five countries of the European Communities.⁹³ However, Planchais was quite candid about the difficulties they encountered at their events, including a two-day "Franco-African Colloquium" in Noisy-sur-Oise that brought together more than fifty French and African participants. Shortly after the colloquium, Planchais reflected at length about the challenges of frank exchanges between "young people who come from the most diverse political and religious backgrounds" in an article in one of the EYC's monthly publications entitled, "A Letter to an African Friend." Exchanges like that held at Noisy-sur-Oise, he wrote, were useful and important, but quite "painful" for young metropolitans. Their African comrades are wary of them, he wrote, and it was difficult for them to break through that barrier of distrust.

Much like Laurentie a decade earlier, Planchais acknowledged that that distrust stemmed from legitimate grievances: "We know that French action in Africa has not always been positive," he admitted. Only in 1958, on top of longstanding practices of discrimination and the racism of much of the white population in French Africa, Planchais added years of failed promises of reforms, "endlessly postponed and distorted in application." However, in a direct appeal to his (hypothetical) African reader, Planchais launched into a vigorous defense of France's good intentions towards Africa and Africans, citing the *loi cadre*, as imperfect as it was, as well as France's "generous" colonial youth and education policies, as "proof" of France's commitment to African autonomy and development. He insisted, "We believe that your very presence in metropolitan universities and the Grandes Écoles, the scholarships you receive,

⁹³ Louis Planchais, "Bilan des activités de la CEJ," s/d. AHUE ME-185.

which are often much higher than those of French students, and the freedom of expression that you enjoy that allows you to openly criticize the action of the metropole, can be considered as so many proofs that French actions in the overseas territories are not entirely negative.”

Planchais admitted that these remarks may seem to be infused with some “bitterness,” but he entreated his African interlocutors not to see that as a reproach, but rather a symptom of the “painful shock” occasioned by their encounter. He hoped that their discussions at Noisy-sur-Oise demonstrated French “good faith,” and that not all French people endorsed the injustices raised by the African participants. He concluded that it was now up to Africans to decide Africa’s future, but he hoped that they would freely chose to enter into a Franco-African community, and eventually, a “Eurafrican” one as well.⁹⁴

Youth, Eurafrica, and Globalization

It is perhaps sadly ironic that Daniel Halévy’s little book, *Essai sur l’accélération de l’histoire* (1948), is seldom remembered today. The epitome of a timely reflection on the changing pace of historical time, Halévy’s *Essai* did not earn a mention in Gary Wilder’s work on the importance of temporality in, and the un/timeliness of, Senghor’s and Aimé Césaire’s postwar thought.⁹⁵ If the phrase “acceleration of history” strikes the reader as familiar today, this is most likely due to its appropriation by Pierre Nora as the point of departure for his groundbreaking theory of *lieux de mémoire* in the 1980s.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ Louis Planchais, “Lettre à un ami africain,” *Les Cahiers de Jeune Europe*, no 3, “L’espace Europe-Afrique” (Supplément au *Jeune Europe*, no. 5, nouvelle série, 1 février 58): 13-14, BNF.

⁹⁵ Wilder, *Freedom Time*.

⁹⁶ Pierre Nora, “Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de Mémoire*,” *Representations* 26 (Spring 1989), 7-24. This seminal essay opens: “The acceleration of history: let us try to gauge the significance, beyond metaphor, of this phrase.” François Hartog acknowledges that the provenance of the phrase is Halévy’s *Essai* in Hartog’s discussion of Nora in his *Regimes of Historicity: Presentism and the Experience of Time* (Columbia University Press, 2015): 123-124. More than a decade before Nora,

Halévy's *Essai* was an explicit meditation on modernity and what we would now call globalization – but it was also an *aperçu* on “Europe” and what distinguished Europe/ans from other “peoples” and civilizations. Laden with orientalist tropes of the immobility of Eastern societies – both Chinese and Islamic – the *Essai* defines Europe as a fundamentally “youthful” civilization that grows, invents, and innovates. Halévy, a devout Catholic, linked those qualities to the development of western Christianity. Indeed, he characterizes Christian Europe as the very motor of history. He writes, “It was in Europe that the idea to change the world originated.”⁹⁷

Halévy's tone and style is reminiscent of the romantic historiography of the nineteenth century.⁹⁸ In fact, the *Essai* begins with an extended quotation from Michelet: “The pace of time has totally changed,” Michelet wrote in 1872, which he relayed in explicitly generational terms: “In the average man's lifespan (typically 72 years), I have witnessed two great revolutions, which in the past, would have likely been separated by a thousand years' interval.” This reflection, Halévy argues, was worth revisiting in 1948, a time when “the ground has disappeared beneath our feet; in fact there is no more history, just an obscure movement of peoples.”⁹⁹ Halévy grappled with how ineffable forces seemed to be driving history along, faster than ever before, even if he still attributed those forces to more conventional ways of conceptualizing history, namely via wars, revolutions, and technological change. In that way, Halévy's *Essai* can be read as a theoretical bridge between a very 19th-century way of thinking

Reinhardt Koselleck also took up this issue in a 1976 essay, “Gibt es eine Beschleunigung der Geschichte?” An English translation can be found in Harmut Rosa and William E. Sheerman, eds., *High Speed Society: Social Acceleration, Power and Modernity* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009).

⁹⁷ Daniel Halévy, *Essai sur l'accélération de l'histoire* (Paris: Editions Self, 1948): 45, 60.

⁹⁸ On this literature, see my “Locating *Latinité*: Race, Religion and Historical Consciousness in 19th-Century France,” unpublished paper, 2009.

⁹⁹ Halévy, *Essai*, 1, 12.

about historical acceleration and late twentieth-century theories of the shifting terrains of temporality and the diffuse and impersonal “forces” associated with globalization.¹⁰⁰

For Halévy, more than anything else, wars and mechanization drive the “acceleration of history.” He distinguished between tools – extensions of the human person that only work when wielded by someone – and machines that assume a force of their own and are completely independent of human agents once they get going. Mechanization then, works as one of the “excessive forces shaking the world,” forces that are no longer fully human in origin. The *Essai* raises the question of how people could regain the reins of those forces, but Halévy did not propose a clear course of action or direct response to the disorienting speeding up of historical time. Nevertheless, he gave his readers a new vocabulary. For the younger generation, as well as those concerned with education and the formation of youth, that vocabulary resonated strongly.

The theme of the “acceleration of history” cut across African and European meditations on the role of youth in charting a new future for Europe and Africa in the 1950s. The appeal of this idea was rooted in the sense that the quickening pace of historical change meant that the younger generations would henceforth be the main drivers of history – the generation upon whose shoulders it fell to remake a changing world.¹⁰¹ Alioune Diop organized a conference on this theme in Saint Louis, Senegal in 1950. The forty-year old Diop was then representing

¹⁰⁰ Zygmunt Bauman, *Globalization: the Human Consequences* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998); Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997); Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996); Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: the Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996); Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990); David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1989).

¹⁰¹ French colonial administrator Paul Lota offered a clear pronouncement to this effect while pondering the new global order: “Between the Russo-Asian and American continents, there is the continent Europe-Africa, there is a massive population, there is a force. This force must balance the scales. That equilibrium is nothing less than Euro-Africa. The foundation of Euro-Africa is the French Community. The future is in the hands of the youth of today.” Paul Lota, Note a/s Problèmes concernant la Jeunesse de la Communauté, s/d. CAC 19770181/6.

Senegal in the French Senate, but he remained particularly close to African student and youth milieus in both Paris and Senegal. As a professor in Paris, where he founded the influential journal *Présence Africaine* in 1947, Diop regularly participated in student mobilizations and the cultural life at the Maison de la France d’Outre-Mer. In his talk in Saint Louis, Diop ruminated on Franco-African relations in the French Union, which he explicitly framed in racial terms. And he located the problem of race in the context of a worldwide “acceleration of history,” explicitly citing Daniel Halévy’s *Essai*.¹⁰²

Diop opened his presentation with an extended reflection on what separates “Blacks and Whites.” He asserted, “Whites and Blacks do not understand one another” for two main reasons—one was economic, the other “psychological.” Regarding the latter, Diop’s characterization of “the European” echoed Halévy’s: “For the European, the universe is an equation of forces endlessly put in play by the militant and constituent will of man.” Diop continued, “the European” seeks a permanent revolution in given institutions and constantly strives to transcend them. Whereas “for the Black,” the purpose of life is to prosper within and through extant institutions, religion, natural laws, and “the heritage of our ancestors.” And so, Diop asked, “Our aspirations are not constituted in the same way, or in the same style. What can remedy this incomprehension?”

At that point, Diop exclaimed, “Pluralism, is what they propose to us!” But in that very concept Diop found yet another layer of “misunderstanding” between whites and blacks. “In fact there has never been pluralism without assimilation,” and it was always Africans who were expected to forfeit their particularity, not the other way around. And yet, rather than reject

¹⁰² Alioune Diop, “Pour que Noirs et Blancs se comprennent,” résumé d’une conférence organisée à Saint-Louis par la Ligue des Droits de l’Homme, 23 décembre 1950. ANS 21G/172 (144).

genuine pluralism as a pipe dream, Diop insisted it was imperative to find a new balance, precisely in light of quickening global integration. He declared,

This pluralist association concerns the equilibrium of the world. History, in its turbulent trail, demands and awakens urgent reflection in both groups. For history is moving fast. Following Michelet, Daniel Halévy outlined the theme of the acceleration of History...[Today] wars and revolutions have more weight and more reverberations in our souls. Life is relentless, pitiless in its uncertainty.

Diop's concluding exhortation was that Africans had to confront this reality. To do so, they must liberate themselves from older, colonial ways of thinking about preparing Africans to take control of their own destinies. Africans must be "equipped" [*équipé*] – rather than "educated" [*éduqué*] – with the same acuity and frenetic energy as that cultivated in young people in Europe. Diop was optimistic that African youth could make this happen, and he ended in a cheer for young Africans and their aspirations.¹⁰³

Diop's message resonated among African students in Paris. The same theme and vocabulary were picked up by Joseph Ki-Zerbo, a prominent Catholic student leader in France from Dahomey who frequently published in the Catholic African student journal, *Tam Tam*. In a piece entitled, "Pioneers or Mandarins?" Ki-Zerbo reflected on the crucial role African students in France would play in building Africa's future, not only by returning to their home territories to contribute to the development of the local economy but also in forging links between Africa and the rest of the world.

Ki-Zerbo anchored the recent history of "encounters between Europe and Africa" in the mobilization of African troops in World War II, when "black heroes [*héros noirs*] went to die on the 'front of liberty' to defend the world, all of the world, against a Racism elevated to a state religion." He continued, "Then crowds of young blacks [*jeunes nègres*] were given access to

¹⁰³ He declared, "Il est honnête et sain de s'en réjouir avec les jeunes."

Universities and Schools in the metropole—a second encounter, and those who find themselves in that position have a special responsibility.”¹⁰⁴ Ki-Zerbo stressed that it was their compatriots back in Africa who had sent them to France, that subsidize their studies; African students in France therefore owe it to them to master a profession that would be “useful” for Africa. However, Ki-Zerbo also had a broader view of the historical significance of growing numbers of African students in France. He declared, “It is up to us to make this influx of African students to Europe a historic phenomenon, that is, a turning point in the development of the black world [*monde nègre*], rather than a random bit of miscellany [*un quelconque fait divers*].”

According to Ki-Zerbo, that would depend on whether they chose to be “pioneers” or “mandarins,” that is, what they chose to do with their new educations. Ki-Zerbo framed the urgency of that choice specifically in the context of historical acceleration. He wrote, “In an era when airplanes allow the colonizers to streamline their commercial operations and to gain ever more time, can we convince the colonized that this ‘acceleration’ is made for them? Technology is a shortcut that we too can seize.” However, Ki-Zerbo insisted that technological prowess was not only insufficient but also threatened to annihilate “all that remains of black culture.” On this point, he added, “Human progress has accelerated also for moral, ideological and spiritual discoveries that we must also draw inspiration from... We cannot build Africa if we bring the virus eating away at western civilization back with us.” In a prescient critique of technocracy and over-specialization, Ki-Zerbo continued: “Whoever today proposes a five-year plan for African development will be handicapped tomorrow by the blinkers of his ‘specialty’... We must be vigilant in opposing the spirit of profit and egotistical individualism that is already infecting

¹⁰⁴ Joseph Ki-Zerbo, “Pionniers ou Mandarins?” *Tam Tam*, deuxième année, no 5 (mai 1955): 5. BNF. Elizabeth Foster discusses Ki-Zerbo and *Tam Tam* in her, “‘Entirely Christian and Entirely African’: Catholic African Students in France in the Era of Independence,” *The Journal of African History* 56:2 (July 2015): 239-259.

Africa.” In Ki-Zerbo’s concluding passage, he appealed to Africans of his generation to imagine, to invent, and to create. The task of his generation, he exhorted, was not to continue “to ruminate in the abstract on theories about Négritude,” but rather “to get to work, without delay.”

This sense that there was no time to lose also animated the pro-Europe movements. Writing for one of the publications of the youth wing of the Union of European Federalists in 1954, Max Richard, editor of the most popular postwar Catholic journal *La Fédération*, invoked “‘the acceleration of history’ that Daniel Halévy speaks of,” to remind his readers that progress cannot be taken for granted. On that point, Richard saw a great convergence of European thinkers, left and right, Christian and humanist, who he believed were all in agreement about the need to rethink the very meaning of democracy and freedom. Young Europeans, he argued, must define their own values and build their own future, which Richard explicitly opposed to succumbing to the forces of Americanization. He affirmed, “It is out of the question to adopt an *American way of life*, to become American colonies. We will conserve, we will elaborate our own European way of life if we learn to unite as Europeans.”¹⁰⁵

This quest to preserve the distinctiveness of European lifeworlds in the face of global change became a rallying cry to create transnational European universities. A year after Richard’s *cri d’alarme*, Michel Mouskhély, the French delegate to the cultural committee of the Council of Europe, elaborated on this theme in a special session of the European Consultative Assembly in Strasbourg. In a presentation on “the Europe of the future,” Mouskhély urged that proper European universities would prepare future generations of Europeans to tackle new situations as they arise. He declared, “With the acceleration of the rhythm of history, every day we will see ourselves confronted with unexpected challenges.” He lamented what he saw as an

¹⁰⁵ Max Richard, “Justice et reconciliation dans la transformation de la société,” *Jeunesses européennes fédéralistes*, 15 septembre 1954 (English and italics in the original). AHUE UEF-176.

“intellectual laziness” that looked to “nineteenth-century solutions” to address twentieth-century challenges. That same intellectual laziness held them hostage to the nation-state, “even though current realities are brutally pushing us toward international and supranational entities.” European universities, Mouskhély forcefully concluded, would provide Europe with the “spiritual infrastructure” united Europe needed to forge ahead into an uncharted future.¹⁰⁶

Proposals to create a transnational European university stalled in the mid-1950s, though “Institutes of European Studies” were established in the Franco-German heartland, at the University of Nancy in Lorraine and the University of Saarbrücken in the Saarland. When the project to create a European university was revived a decade later, the theme of historical acceleration was even more pronounced. In a report for the Council of Europe that was widely circulated among French and other European officials, French youth specialist and former head of the Protestant scouts Jean Jousselin identified “the acceleration of history” as the determinant factor that produced “youth” as a distinct social category and turned young people into a new social and political force.¹⁰⁷ He wrote, “Technical civilization is a civilization of youth and it will be so ever more with each passing day. Henceforth, the young person knows and even understands more... than his elder, for the obvious reason that, more and more, the new, inventions, constitute the essence... of our work and our mores.” In this sense, Jousselin insisted, “The effect of the acceleration of history is the source of a rupture in the dialogue between adults and young people, and consequently, a radical transformation of youth.” Thus youth required new institutions and the structural transformation of European societies, an assessment that was

¹⁰⁶ Michel Mouskhély, “Les Universités et la communauté spirituelle de l’Europe,” Rapport présenté au 2ème réunion spéciale a/s universités européennes, Assemblée consultative du Conseil de l’Europe, Commission des Questions Culturelles et Scientifiques, 11-13 juin 1955. AN 70/AJ/27.

¹⁰⁷ Jean Jousselin, Comité de l’Education Extrascolaire, Conseil de l’Europe, “L’Organisation de la Jeunesse en Europe,” Tome 1, Strasbourg, 12 janvier 1965. CAC 19780596/66.

borne out just a few years later in the May '68 student uprisings that occurred in both Europe and ex-French Africa.¹⁰⁸

The generational conflict between youth and their elders in Europe opened up by “the acceleration of history” may not have been exactly the same as that between French-educated African youth and the traditional African gerontocracy, but contemporaries stressed their commonalities more than their differences. In the late 1950s, colonial officials considered these parallel challenges as a further unifying force linking French and African youth. In a 1957 article entitled, “From the Africa of Yesterday to That of Tomorrow,” veteran colonial administrator Robert Delavignette pinned Africa’s prospects on the alliance between French and African youth. He wrote, “Eight and a half million children and adolescents are returning to class in European France...It is banal to say that this youth constitutes the great hope of France.” He continued, “[That youth] is charged with building a world less inhuman than that which we are currently struggling with. Who doubts that [that youth] is already interdependent with another youth, which does not always have schools, and yet has its own ways of being and its own aspirations. Who dreams of that beautiful and necessary common future of which metropolitan youth and the youth of black Africa, both carriers of hope, are the key elements?” Much like Ki-Zerbo, Delavignette opposed an obsession with *négritude* and the precolonial African past with a more future-oriented outlook. He conceded that he did not doubt the power of recuperating

¹⁰⁸ For a transnational, Franco-African perspective on May '68, see Henderson, “Imperial Fragments.” The “acceleration of history” was also a common refrain in the Association of European Teacher’s meeting to draft a “Charter of European Education,” which was held in Brussels just weeks before the May '68 uprisings. On April 9, Raymond Georis, official representative of the European Cultural Fund, declared before the participants, “the systems of education in all European countries are in crisis: they are miles behind the world that is coming into being.” Georis concluded, “The number of interactive forces, their speed doubled as a result of acceleration, means that in a Europe that is trying to unite but has not yet achieved its unity, no single country is capable of keeping up with the pace of change.” Allocution de Raymond Georis, représentant de la Fondation européenne de la culture, session académique, 9 avril 1968. AHUE, AEDE-23.

Africa's rich past, but he hoped it would not "lock African youth in an impasse, in which it would *lose time*, at a moment when *there is no time to lose* if men of all colors and all races want to learn to live together."¹⁰⁹

Delavignette concluded his piece with a forceful affirmation that Africans themselves must deal with Africa's problems, but he also insisted that their problems were also French and European problems. Indeed, he declared, "In sum, these are problems of human relations within a universal civilization that is more and more mechanized, these are problems of psychological equilibrium amidst disruptive technologies." He concluded,

We are all equal before the unknowns [these problems] bring. We all must study them and free ourselves of old superiority and inferiority complexes. Neither Europe nor Africa holds the solutions. But the youth of Europe and the youth of Africa must work together to humanize the atomic age that has descended on us.¹¹⁰

Postscript: From Student-Citizens of the French Union to Foreign Students in Europe

While private French initiatives and the pro-Europe movements had been eagerly promoting a European dimension to programming for Africans studying or visiting France since the early 1950s, official initiatives in this domain launched by European institutions did not really gain steam until the 1960s. Indeed, an ambitious European cultural policy at the highest levels in bodies like the Council of Europe, began in earnest in 1960 with the launching of the Council's "European Cultural Fund." Crucially, the first resolution of the Fund's executive board, which was formally adopted by the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe in September 1960, focused on the centrality of youth and education as platforms for further European

¹⁰⁹ Robert Delavignette, "De l'Afrique d'hier à celle de demain," in *Pensée française-fédération* no 3, 15 janvier 1957, numéro spéciale: "Jeunesses d'Afrique Noire": 4-8. ANOM BIB SOM C/BR/3324.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 8.

cooperation. It also identified the “Presentation of Europe to non-Europeans” as one of their crucial responsibilities, and they underscored the connections between these two objectives.¹¹¹

The board acknowledged that the exact parameters of European cultural cooperation still needed to be worked out. Nevertheless, they affirmed, “There is no doubt that one of our main tasks must be to make quite clear the part Europe must play in a world in which its former supremacy is giving way to cultural pluralism.” This global “cultural pluralism” was characterized by “the great difficulties that arise from the inevitable conflict between our liberal and technical culture and the traditional cultures of Asia, Africa and the Middle East.” In this formulation, there was a singular “Europe” and there was the rest of the world: “European civilization should be presented to the outside world as a single unit embodying national variations. There can be no point of contact between French, English or Italian national culture and a completely different civilisation such as that of India or Mexico. Europe as a whole must be presented as a single entity to the rest of the world.”

The board considered this issue of particular importance with regards to Africa, not least because France had embroiled European institutions in providing technical aid to its newly independent former African colonies.¹¹² The European Cultural Fund’s board believed in no uncertain terms that those countries had “acquired premature and perhaps somewhat precarious independence.” Nevertheless, they urged that the Council of Europe promote training European technicians to send to Africa. However, they looked beyond the presentation of European cultural unity to Africans by way of European development workers in Africa; they also focused

¹¹¹ Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe, 12th Ordinary Session, Resolution 186 (1960) in reply to the First Report of the Administrative Board of the Cultural Fund. CAC 19770181/1.

¹¹² Véronique Dimier, “Bringing the Neo-Patrimonial State back to Europe: French Decolonization and the Making of European Development Aid Policy,” *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 48 (2008).

on presenting European unity to African students and trainees already in Europe, and to do so on an explicitly transnational, European scale:

Although such countries as Great Britain and France have long been aware of the problems raised by the presence of temporary residents from distant countries, the general situation has changed considerably in recent years, and responsibility towards these visitors is no longer national but European; they no longer come to France, Germany or Italy, but to Europe, and they must be given an opportunity to gain a true picture of Europe as a whole.

Moreover, the board contended that a pan-European cultural campaign geared to students from former colonies would help overcome the legacies of colonialism. Since the “overseas peoples” had obtained independence,

They tend to hold hostile prejudices to their former masters. Only by encouraging the peoples of the new States to consider Europe as a whole will this uneasiness be dispelled. Here, too, if Europe does not continue to attract this elite, we may be sure that determined efforts will be made to entice them to countries of Marxist ideology, and we shall see more and more African students receiving university training in communist countries.¹¹³

These affirmations make clear that the issue of receiving African and other students from France’s former empire had been reframed in a transnational European perspective by 1960. That process continued to unfold in a series of colloquia organized by the Council of Europe over the next several years. The third colloquium in the series was held in Paris over the course of five days in January 1964, and its goal was to “distill a sort of ‘European philosophy’ of the question.” The French reports for this colloquium concentrated in particular on the need to reorient French thinking about students from ex-French Africa: “A Senegalese, an Iranian, a Cambodian, a Moroccan, an Algerian—they are all foreigners, even though the French are reluctant to apply that term because they all speak French.” The authors conceded that it was true that a Tunisian or Vietnamese might speak French even though they have their own national languages, while French was the national language everywhere in post-independence sub-

¹¹³ Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe, 12th Ordinary Session, Resolution 186 (1960) in reply to the First Report of the Administrative Board of the Cultural Fund. CAC 19770181/1.

Saharan Africa. But the authors insisted, “Despite these nuances, it is necessary to speak of ‘foreign’ students and trainees for francophone Africans, like for Americans or Latin Americans.”

The same report also considered percentages of foreign students in different European national contexts. In both Britain and France, the authors noted, approximately 2/3 of all “foreign students” came from their former empires. In France, the vast majority of those students were North and sub-Saharan African: 45% of all “foreign students” in France were listed as coming from Africa, whereas only 21% were listed as coming from Western Europe (with an added qualification that 18% came from Council of Europe member states). These statistics were followed by concerns that there appeared to be a noticeable decline in the percentage of European students “in favor of Africans.”¹¹⁴

The commentary these students’ attitudes and social milieu noted a latent hostility among former colonial students toward their ex-metropoles. Consequently, the authors suggested that countries without colonies like Germany were attracting students from developing countries precisely because they were not a (recent) colonial power.¹¹⁵ That said, the report noted with regard to Africans in France in particular, “despite a certain reluctance,” they have been welcomed in France and “only very rarely” have shown a real hostility toward the French. And yet, the report also acknowledged that racism among host populations was a reality. This phenomenon was both externalized as a particularly acute problem in Germany and totally naturalized—as if the mere presence of more diversity explained in and of itself hostility and aversion. They suggested that since there were few students of color in Germany before 1950,

¹¹⁴ Accueil et Séjour en Europe des Étudiants et Stagiaires Etrangers: Étude comparative sur leur accueil et leur orientation du point de vue social, linguistique, pédagogique et technique dans les pays membres du Conseil de l’Europe,” s/d, s.n. CAC 19771275/28.

¹¹⁵ On students from the ex-colonial world in Germany in this period, see Quinn Slobodian, *Foreign Front: Third World Politics in Sixties West Germany* (Durham and Oxford: Duke University Press, 2012).

the “reserve” but also the “curiosity” that these students inspired in the German population was an “obvious, natural reaction.”¹¹⁶ As Heide Fehrenbach has shown, the presumption of conflicts between “races” anchored a particular variant of racial liberalism that took root in postwar Germany under US influence.¹¹⁷ Thus shifting the register of this discussion from a Franco-imperial context to the transnational European plane further encouraged the abandonment of the rhetoric of *brassage* to the framework of “race relations.”

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Fehrenbach, *Race After Hitler*.

Chapter 6

Global Horizons with Civilizational Boundaries: Cold War Youth Politics, Third Worldism, and *Islam Noir*, 1945-1960

At the close of the Second World War, the French Commission for National Education Reform in Algiers had identified youth as crucial agents in securing a peaceful global order. It maintained that international youth exchanges would foster “mutual comprehension of peoples based on familiarity and respect,” and that a “Union of peoples through youth, through the elites of the future, is the surest guarantee of peace between nations.”¹ That optimistic rhetoric persisted as international youth mobilizations and educational exchanges proliferated throughout the late 1940s and 1950s, even as the prospect of world federation and global solidarity dimmed with the onset of the Cold War and as violent wars of decolonization swept the Global South.²

French organizers of international youth conferences and exchanges were often cruelly disappointed by proceedings that seemed to be widening, rather than bridging, the divisions between East and West, North and South. In 1948, the non-Marxist, Socialist Movement for the United States of Europe, convened a “Congress of European, African and Asian Peoples” in the Parisian suburb of Puteaux. The Congress welcomed close to 200 participants, bringing together members of pro-Europe movements from across the continent, and African and Asian politicians, syndicalists, and youth leaders. Almost all of these latter groups were from the French Union.³

¹ Robert Prigent, Rapport au nom de la Commission de l'Education nationale, annexe au procès-verbal du 17 mai 1944. Archives Nationales [AN] C//15255.

² Nancy Snow has characterized the Cold War period as the “Golden Age of international educational exchanges.” See her “Valuing Exchange of Persons in Public Diplomacy,” in Snow and Taylor, eds., *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy* (New York and London: Routledge, 2009).

³ Congrès des Peuples d'Europe, d'Asie, et d'Afrique, Puteaux 16-21 juin 1948: Liste des délégués et des observateurs. Archives Historiques de l'Union Européenne [AHUE], ME—704. Noteworthy participants included Hendrik Brugmans and Alexandre Marc (Union of European Federalists), Guy Mollet, Alain Savary, and Léopold Senghor (French parliamentary delegation), André Basdevant (French Ministry of National Education), Émile Zinsou (Union Progressiste Dahoméenne, who would later serve as president

The goal of the Congress was to find common ground between the pro-Europe movements and indigenous movements for colonial emancipation. The final resolution of the Congress affirmed the interconnectedness and complementarity of those political projects in light of the looming Cold War, which appeared to be both reviving the old imperialism of colonial powers and spawning new forms of economic imperialism and dependency on the United States and the USSR. It declared, “A Socialist United States of Europe and the liberation of dependent peoples are two stages toward the reordering of the global economy within the framework of political, economic, and social democracy.” The resolution then concluded with a particular appeal to youth: “We, the youth, must be the vanguard of this action. [] We appeal to the conscience of all young people to resist the stultifying indoctrination of which they are the first victims. We must rise up against all forms of chauvinism, imperialism, racism, and sectarianism.”⁴

While this declaration might appear to align perfectly with the stated objectives of the Congress, many of its mostly French organizers were profoundly disillusioned with this final declaration and with the proceedings of the Congress more generally. In a debrief that was held the day after the Congress ended, the organizing committee lamented that the “European” and “indigenous” delegations had arrived with “diametrically opposed dispositions,” and that what had begun as a gathering to promote international democratic socialism had ended under the sign of national liberation. The organizers were particularly disappointed that the “*indigènes* with a European education” had not acted as mediators as they had hoped and expected, and instead allowed the discussions to be overtaken by “demagoguery” and a “primitive political consciousness.” Henri Frenay, president of the Union of European Federalists and one of the

of independent Bénin), large delegations from Algeria, Néo-Destour and UGT-Tunisia, Istiqlal (Morocco), Cameroon, Madagascar, and Indochina, as well as observers from the West African Student Union (British West Africa) and the Pan-African Congress.

⁴ Rapport Politique, Congrès des Peuples d’Europe, d’Asie, et d’Afrique, Puteaux 16-21 juin 1948, s.n. AHUE, ME—704.

chief French promoters of the Congress, relayed his shock and dismay that he could not even support the majority of the motions the Congress passed. In their final analysis, the organizing committee concluded that the proceedings ended up being much more about “the colonial education of the French delegates than addressing the questions at hand.”⁵ That “education” evidently consisted of realizing that the “*indigènes*” at the Congress of Peoples showed themselves to be simple-minded demagogues, who, by virtue of those traits, had foreclosed meaningful dialogue with their European counterparts.

This dispirited post-mortem transposed the repertoire of racial stereotypes about francophone Africans and ideas about the limits of *brassage* we saw developing in the French national-imperial context in Chapters 4 and 5 into a transnational European register. In this instance, distinctions were not made between different colonial populations. It is important to recognize that those tropes were not exclusively applied to Africans in this period, especially as movements for Afro-Asian solidarity gained steam and Africans came to be seen as a part of a larger “Third World” bloc. However, as more francophone African students and youth leaders began participating in the wider world of international youth forums beyond both the French and transnational European spheres in the late 1940s and 1950s—in youth and student movements affiliated with the opposing Cold War blocs as well as south-south cultural and educational exchanges—a distinct constellation of racial, religious, and geopolitical preoccupations with black Africa imbued those tropes with particular meanings about the African citizens of the French Union. Indeed, the international arena became another venue for French officials to monitor and interpret the actions and behaviors of young Africans, thereby broadening the contours and the purchase of postwar racial common sense.

⁵ Comité d’Études et d’Action pour les États-Unis Socialistes d’Europe, Rapport sur le Congrès des Peuples, s/d, s.n. AHUE, ME—704.

Throughout this thesis, I have emphasized how geopolitical concerns and international pressures profoundly shaped youth and education policies in postwar France, French Africa, and transnational European forums and institutions. In the realm of geopolitics, my analysis has centered on French anxieties about American hegemony, Soviet communism, and global Islam. In the realm of political ideas, I have focused on French responses to new international norms against racism, religious discrimination, and empire. This final chapter delves more deeply into that broader global context through an investigation of international youth mobilizations and educational exchanges beyond the France-Europe-Africa nexus.

I begin with a discussion of the impact of Cold War youth politics on French thinking about European unity and the French Union as generational projects. By the end of the 1940s, youth had become a crucial front in the United States' and the Soviet Union's global rivalry. The World Federation of Democratic Youth [WFDY], founded in London in 1945, quickly became aligned with the Soviet Union; in response, the United States promoted the World Association of Youth [WAY], which was formally established in 1949, as an anticommunist alternative for youth internationalism. The WFDY and the WAY anchored sprawling networks of international youth movements and student associations aligned with the opposing Cold War blocs that held annual conferences, congresses, and festivals not only in the US and the USSR, but across Western and Eastern Europe, Africa and Asia.⁶

The WFDY and the WAY aggressively courted European youth. The Cold War contest to fold European youth into Soviet or American spheres of influence added an extra impetus for French officials and European unity activists to create European youth movements and

⁶ Christopher Sutton has described this as the “Cold War youth race” in his recent study on the interplay between British imperial ideology, colonial youth, and Cold War cultural politics in the late 1940s. See his “Britain, Empire and the Origins of the Cold War Youth Race,” *Contemporary British History* 30: 2 (2016).

educational exchanges that would promote a distinctly European identity and European independence in the postwar international order. This compelled French officials and pro-Europe activists to reflect on what distinguished their aspirations for Europe from both Soviet Russia and the United States. By looking at youth and education policy in the French zone of occupation in postwar Germany, where these Cold War dynamics were particularly laid bare, I show that the vision French officials promoted in response to those Cold War pressures was both culturally Christian and secular, and tacitly raceless.

Conversely, Cold War youth politics put racial issues front and center in the colonial African context. In their competing for the allegiance of colonial youth, organizations like the WFDY and the WAY openly championed, at least rhetorically, the principles of self-determination and racial equality. However disingenuous those commitments may have been, the vast scope of American- and Soviet-backed youth and student movements helped elevate those principles to powerful international norms that postwar French officials had to reckon with. Those movements also dramatically expanded opportunities for young francophone Africans to step onto the international stage to advance their claims for particular rights, to protest continuing discrimination and new forms of oppression, and to embarrass France in the court of international opinion at a time when French leaders were trying to project an image of the French Union as a model multiracial democracy to the world.

French fears of communist and American influence on African youth reinforced racial stereotypes about Africans' supposed simple-mindedness and susceptibility, which also informed French concerns about Islam in French Africa. The French colonial administration was desperate to insulate *Islam noir*—which they viewed as more compatible with French cultural values than Arab Islam—from “outside” influences. In the second part of this chapter, I juxtapose French

officials' paranoia about African participation in youth forums aligned with the opposing Cold War blocs to their outright panic as young African Muslims, who had long been denied access to Islamic education in the French African Federations, took advantage of new opportunities to pursue religious study elsewhere, particularly at al-Azhar University in Cairo. Building on Matthew Connelly's work on Algeria, this discussion reframes French anxieties about decolonization in sub-Saharan Africa as part of a general North/South, as well as East/West, global conflict.

In the concluding section of the chapter, I analyze the impact of those anxieties on colonial education policy in the French African Federations. The French preoccupation with African Muslims heading to al-Azhar obscured new social and religious forces originating from within colonial African society, many of which were direct responses to French colonial practices. Because the French viewed those endogenous developments through the racial-religious and geopolitical lens of *Islam noir*, the colonial administration missed a crucial opportunity to work with African education reformers to create a new kind of Franco-Muslim education in its African colonies. Instead, French actions severely inhibited the development of education in regions with Muslim-majority populations, which had long-term consequences for postcolonial African societies.

Youth Internationalism During the Early Cold War

Youth and European Unity in French-Occupied Germany

In 1949, the French ambassador to Britain sent a celebratory note to Raymond Schmittlein, head of public education in the French zone of occupation in Germany. Schmittlein had rallied early to de Gaulle and quickly ascended the military ranks during the war. He first began engaging

questions of education and cultural renovation as a member of the Commission of National Education Reform in Algiers in 1944, shortly before he assumed his post as education director in the French military government in Germany in 1945. The missive from London congratulated Schmittlein for the praise his work was receiving in the British press.⁷ Enclosed was the full text of an article in the foreign affairs publication *Time and Tide*, entitled “Hitler’s Lost Generation.” The piece, written by army veteran, British peer, and BBC scriptwriter Sir Basil Bartlett, commended the French occupying authority for its “imaginative realism” in its approach toward German youth. Bartlett detailed French initiatives to introduce a more expansive view of culture and education into the rigid German secondary school and university systems, and he effusively lauded concerted French efforts to establish personal contacts with German students, administrators, educators, and youth leaders. Significantly, Bartlett characterized this French approach to youth and education in its occupied zone as distinctly “European.” Bartlett proclaimed, “The Russians think as Asiatics, the Americans as Americans, the British, in their more enlightened moments, as citizens of the world. Only the French think as Europeans. And, not unnaturally, it is this European approach that has the most appeal for young Germans.”⁸

Schmittlein had indeed actively promoted European unity as the overarching framework for the reeducation of German youth. Under his stewardship, the French zone of occupied Germany became a crucial site for the articulation of a vision of Europe and European values in explicit contradistinction not only to Soviet communism, but also to the United States and Britain within the larger frame of “the West.” During his tenure, Schmittlein helped found several institutions that still operate today, including a school to train interpreters in European

⁷ Ambassadeur de France en Grande Bretagne to Raymond Schmittlein, Baden-Baden a/s appréciation britannique sur notre politique culturelle en Allemagne, 21 septembre 1949. Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères/Archives Diplomatiques [AMAE], Série HCRFA, Affaires Culturelles, Cabinet: 1AC/168/3.

⁸ Sir Basil Bartlett, “Hitler’s Lost Generation,” *Time and Tide*, September 10, 1949.

languages in Germersheim and the Institute for European History in Mainz.⁹ However, like so many other postwar education reformers, Schmittlein prioritized fostering lasting personal bonds between French and German young people as much as pedagogical reforms in formal education. To that end, he organized a series of regular *rencontres*, conferences, and exchange programs for French and German students, youth leaders, and schoolteachers.

Like the European youth gathering in Brest, Franco-German youth programs in the late 1940s were not “mass events” – they typically brought together no more than 100 participants, almost all of whom were already members of organized youth movements. Prominent European leaders such as Hendrik Brugmans, a Dutchman who had also helped organize the Congress of Peoples in Puteaux and who would go on to be the founding director of the College of Europe, were brought in for plenaries to make the case for European federalism, and participants attended break-out sessions over the course of a week, sometimes even a month, to discuss the historical bases of European unity, Europe’s place in international affairs, and “the responsibility of youth in remaking the world.” The history sessions for German participants typically included expositions on both “French civilization and religion” and “the evolution of secular rationalism” [*les voies du rationalisme laïc*], as well as presentations on the French Union. Race and racism, however, were conspicuously absent topics in these programs year after year.¹⁰

⁹ His other achievements included the founding of several modern middle schools, Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz, and what is today the Deutsche Universität für Verwaltungswissenschaften Speyer. On Schmittlein and French youth and education policy in occupied Germany more generally, see Jérôme Valliant, ed., *La Dénazification par les vainqueurs: la politique culturelle des occupants en Allemagne 1945-1949* (Lille: Université de Lille, 1981).

¹⁰ For a typical program of the Franco-German *rencontres* of the period, see the schedule of the Centre d’Action Culturelle de Spire, Session d’études du 16 août – 16 septembre 1949: “L’Europe à la recherche de l’unité. Ses éléments constitutifs dans l’Histoire, Perspectives d’avenir.” AHUE ME—1920. For a description of Brugmans’ involvement, see Letter from André Decamps, Consul de France à Francfort to M. Tarbe de Saint Hardouin, Ambassadeur de France à Berlin, 26 mai 1948 a/s Commémoration des événements de 1848. AMAE Série HCRFA, Affaires Culturelles, Cabinet: 1AC/168/3.

Rather than tackle Nazi racism or the historical articulation of race and nation head-on, Schmittlein and his administration excised the vocabulary of race and racism from their efforts to dismantle “German nationalism,” even though the specter of racial logics continued to inform their thinking. Schmittlein saw his mission as getting young Germans to cease believing that conflict with France was “something natural that they inherited from their fathers, their grandfathers, and even their oldest ancestors. It is essential that they stop believing this, first because it simply is not true, and second, because even if it was once true, it can no longer be so.” He drew a sharp contrast between the sustained educational programming and international exchanges they were then organizing in the French zone, and the “sentimental” and ultimately ephemeral internationalism of the interwar period. He felt that unlike “the preceding generation,” French and German youth were now, in their real desire to get to know one another, becoming conscious of their “common origin and common civilization.” He insisted that a “United States of Europe” would certainly strengthen those bonds, but only if the appropriate groundwork was properly laid. The exchanges and Franco-German youth gatherings his department was organizing, as well as developing new approaches to history instruction in German schools, would provide that foundation. To that end, Schmittlein created programs to send German primary and secondary school teachers to French teacher training institutes in addition to exchange programs for German high school and university students.¹¹

French officials in the central High Command in Bonn lauded the spirit of these efforts, but they criticized their limited reach. Alain Peyrefitte, a young attaché in Bonn who would later have the misfortune to serve as the French Minister of Education during the 1968 uprisings, lamented in 1950 that the vast majority of German youth did not have the opportunity to

¹¹ Raymond Schmittlein, Note pour M. le Général d’Armée, Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne, 24 décembre 1948. AMAE Série HCRFA, Affaires Culturelles, Cabinet: 1AC/168/2.

participate in Schmittlein's exchanges, and so remained "lost at sea." He saw the same hopelessness and indifference among youth across Europe, albeit to a lesser degree. Peyrefitte urged that what both German and European youth needed was a higher ideal to inspire them at a time when nations and nationalisms were increasingly seen as "outdated," and the war itself had "broadened young people's mental horizons." However, he forcefully rejected leaving European youth to their own devices only to be swept into the youth movements aligned with the opposing Cold War blocs. He insisted that only the idea of Europe itself could truly energize European youth in a productive direction. Consequently, he ardently called for a European mass youth movement for both boys and girls, from all class backgrounds, ages 15-25, to rival both the communist WFDY and the American-backed WAY.¹²

The following year Peyrefitte would see his dream partially realized with the founding of the European Movement's European Youth Campaign [EYC], even if in practice that organization proved more limited and elitist than many had hoped. Christina Norwig's work on the EYC underscores how the "myth of youth" encouraged early pro-Europe activists to approach European integration as a generational project.¹³ Peyrefitte's reports from Bonn reveal just how deliberate and self-consciously that myth was mobilized. In his plea for a European youth movement, he declared: "Europe – a cultural, historical, artistic, and spiritual entity as well as a political one – appears to be becoming the 'myth' of the twentieth century, just as nationalities were the myth of the nineteenth: if the seeds of Liberty were planted in the name of national independence in 1848...in 1950, they are being planted in the name of European independence." Peyrefitte's clear articulation of this conceptual shift demonstrates that it was not just elder statesmen and established politicians who were framing European unity as a

¹² Alain Peyrefitte, Note a/s jeunesse allemande et jeunesse europeenne, s/d [1950]. AHUE ME-1920.

¹³ Christina Norwig, "A First European Generation? The Myth of Youth and European Integration in the Fifties," *Diplomatic History* 38:2 (2014), 251-260.

generational project, but elite European youth themselves. (Peyrefitte was only twenty-five when he penned this position, which, according to his own rubric, classified him among the youth.) Moreover, despite the fact that Peyrefitte came from a strong secular-republican background – he was the son of two schoolteachers and a graduate of both the *École Normale Supérieure* and the first class of the *École Nationale d'Administration*—he nonetheless defined the principles and goals of assembling European youth in explicitly Christian terms. Only a properly European youth movement, he argued, would “mobilize the energy and enthusiasm of [European youth] according to the values of western, democratic, and Christian civilization.”¹⁴

*African Youth on the World Stage: “The Call from Cairo, Bandung, New York or Moscow”*¹⁵

Just two months after the German surrender that ended the Second World War in Europe, the French Provisional Government [GPRF] began meditating on the fragility of the French position in sub-Saharan Africa. As a July 1945 security briefing put it, Africa had been “folded in on itself, morally separate from the rest of the planet...for millennia,” but now found itself, “in one sudden stroke, integrated into the rest of world.” Given Africa’s “extreme permeability” to “new ideas and the great spiritual movements of the age,” it was no longer clear if the old colonial powers could continue to control the social transformation and “spiritual progression” of the continent. Significantly, the report noted that those external forces were emanating from both North and South, East and West, and included “American anticolonialism,” “Soviet humanitarianism” and “Islamism” as the most dangerous among them.¹⁶ The underlying French attitude in the security briefing—that the most serious threats to continued French rule in the

¹⁴ Peyrefitte, *op cit.*

¹⁵ Letter from Paul Chauvet [gouverneur-général AEF] to the Directeur-Affaires Politiques, MFOM, 6 juin 1955. Archives Nationales d’Outre-Mer [ANOM] AEF GGAEF 5D/269.

¹⁶ “Bulletin de renseignements: Étude a/s Islam et Afrique Noire: les grands courants politiques dans le monde islamique et en Afrique Noire,” 25 juillet 1945. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2260.

region came from outside rather than from within African societies—informed French interpretations of all of these international developments, and significantly shaped French approaches to postwar colonial education reforms.

The same forces that made French leaders wary of the international situation also induced them to cater to international opinion. France was not alone in that bind. From 1945-1948, French colonial education officials participated in a string of meetings and study sessions with their British and Belgian counterparts to discuss new forms of cooperation in colonial education in Africa.¹⁷ This postwar push for international cooperation in colonial education was largely a defensive response to the founding of UNESCO in 1945, which made guaranteeing basic education in sub-Saharan Africa one of its top priorities.¹⁸ As an arm of American Cold War cultural diplomacy, UNESCO's interest in Africa reflected the broader pressures of American and Russian international public opinion. At a Franco-British study session on colonial education that was held at Oxford in 1946, French colonial official Paul Henry characterized those pressures as the most significant factor—more than those coming from the colonies themselves or metropolitan public opinion—that was “accelerating the rhythm of political evolution” in

¹⁷ D.R. Rees-Williams (Colonial Office) to governing officers in Nigeria, Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, Gambia, 25 février 1948; Commissaire de la République à Togo, J. Noutary to MFOM, dir-enseignement et de la Jeunesse, 20 juillet 1946; MFOM-DEJ à MM Chefs de Territoire, c. juin 1946 a/s collaboration et échanges culturels franco-britanniques en Afrique Noire; MFOM (Laurentie) to Haussiares AOF, AEF, Cameroun, Togo, 3 juin 1946 a/s Collaboration et échange de vue franco-britannique en matière d'enseignement dans nos territoires africains; Conference Franco-Britannique sur l'Éducation aux Colonies, MFOM 12-14 mars 1946; Letter from Laurentie (dir-AFFPOL) to MFOM, 29 avril 1946; Note a/s Organisation des centres pour étudiants coloniaux en GB, et particulièrement à Londres, s/d, par M. Henry; Colonial Office to Paul Henry, copy of 'savingram' from Secy-State Colonies to Chief Secy, West African Council, re: 'Anglo-French educational discussions' 6 février 1947. ANOM 1AFFPOL/1296. Note sur les conversations coloniales franco-belges qui ont eu lieu à Bruxelles le 27-29 janvier 1947; Note pour AFFPOL, 25 janvier 1947. Textes des Conclusions des Conversations Anglo-Belges de Londres, Juin 1946. ANOM 1AFFPOL/1388.

¹⁸ For a Cold War perspective on the UNESCO campaign for universal education, see Charles Dorn and Kristen Godsee, “The Cold War Politicization of Literacy: Communism, UNESCO, and the World Bank,” *Diplomatic History* 36: 2 (April 2012).

colonial Africa. As we saw in the last chapter, awareness of the increasing pace of change encouraged observers to frame the problem in generational terms. Henry underscored the “profound rift in the thinking of administrators who have been pursuing a more traditional approach for the past ten years and those who are developing new colonial policies in response to the pressures of global opinion.”¹⁹

However, the generation gap separating old and new guards of colonial administrators was perceived differently than generational divides within the colonial African population. In the late 1940s, metropolitan French leaders began actively promoting the inclusion of African parliamentarians in French delegations to the UN and other international bodies in an effort to convince the world of the French government’s commitment to robust colonial reform and racial equality.²⁰ Colonial officials supported this strategy because they felt comfortable with the older generation of French-educated African elites—the Senghors, M’bas, and Houphouët-Boignys. By contrast, they were alarmed as younger Africans started to take part in the continuous cycle of congresses, conferences, and festivals associated with the WFDY and the WAY, even though they recognized they could not ban African participation in such activities outright with the democratic legitimacy of the new French Union on the line.²¹ Colonial administrators from Dakar to Brazzaville were intensely suspicious that both of these international youth forums were hotbeds of anticolonial propaganda that would radicalize African youth. Consequently, Africans with connections to either movement were put under rigorous surveillance, their every move and every contact closely monitored and recorded.

¹⁹ Paul Henry, Note sur les Sessions d’études coloniales, Oxford, 17 avril 1946. ANOM 1AFFPOL/1296.

²⁰ On this strategy of tokenism in the international arena, see my, “Obscuring Race: Franco-African Conversations About Colonial Reform and Racism After World War II and the Making of Colorblind France,” *French Politics, Culture & Society* 33, no 3 (Winter 2015).

²¹ For a broader discussion about colonial youth and these organizations in this period, see Akira Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1997): Chapter 4.

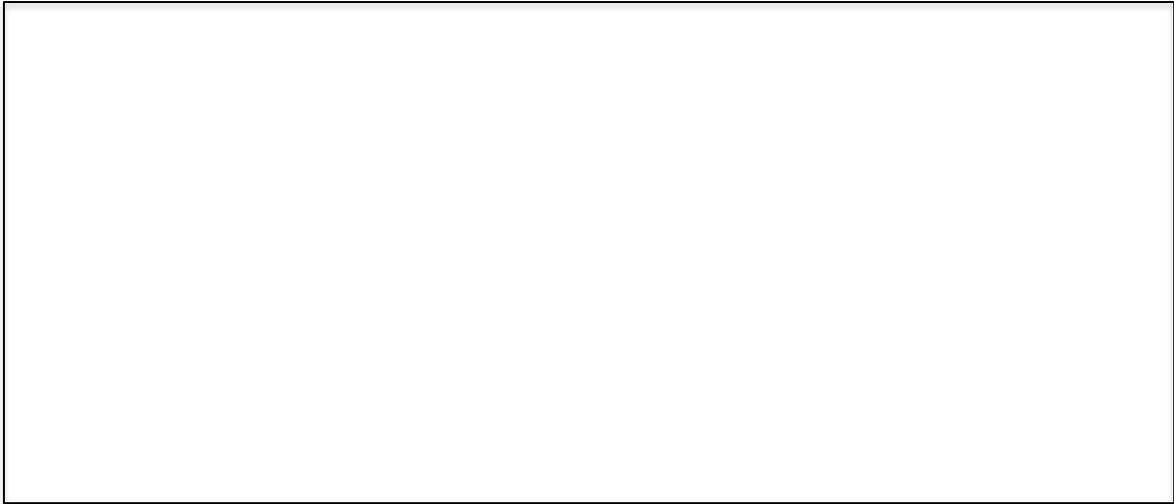


Fig. 8 Logo of the WFDY. SOURCE, Archives Nationales du Sénégal O/668 (31). Image has been removed due to copyright protection.

From its inception, the WFDY had championed the rights of colonial peoples to self-determination, which made the organization an unambiguous threat to French ambitions to hold on to its African empire after the war. The WFDY took outspoken positions against global racism and used multiracial imagery to appeal to colonial youth (Fig. 8). Despite French efforts to deter francophone African participation in the movement, young African elites began finding their way to WFDY festivals behind the Iron Curtain in the early 1950s.²² The youth wing of the largest African political party in AOF, the Rassemblement des Jeunes Démocratique Africaines, aligned itself with the WFDY as its parent organization gave up on colonial reform and took a hard line in favor of independence in the mid-50s.²³ As a result, African participation in these forums grew significantly and became a part of the political and international formation of many postcolonial African elites. The French security apparatus in AOF took note when

²² Odile Goerg notes that a young Sékou Touré was among a small contingent of francophone Africans at the WFDY festival in East Berlin in 1951. See her “Les mouvements de jeunesse en Guinée de la colonisation à la constitution de la JRDA, 1890-1959,” in d’Almeida-Topor and Goerg, *Le mouvement associatif des jeunes en Afrique noire francophone au XXe siècle* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1989): 35.

²³ The views of the leaders of this youth movement can be found in their journal, *La Voix des Jeunes. Bulletin officiel du RJDA*. ANOM BIB SOM POM/d/174. On the RDA and Cold War politics in French Africa, see Elizabeth Schmidt, *Cold War and Decolonization in Guinea, 1946-1958* (Athens: Ohio State University Press, 2007). See also, d’Almeida-Topor and Goerg, *Le mouvement associatif des jeunes*.

Abdoulaye Wade (future president of Senegal), and Ousmane Sembène (celebrated Senegalese filmmaker), headed to the World Festival of Youth in Moscow in 1957 as part of a delegation of close to 350 young francophone African men and women who marched under the banner of “Black Africa under French domination.”²⁴

However, those same forums also became a key venue for Africans to protest the extraordinary surveillance they were subjected to. Earlier that year, an FEANF delegation traveled to Prague to denounce French efforts to stymie the movement before the executive board of the WFDY’s sister organization for students, the International Union of Students [IUS]. They protested the withdrawal of the colonial financial support and multiple seizures of its journal, *L’Étudiant d’Afrique Noire*. Their trip was successful; the IUS issued a resounding condemnation of France’s “flagrant violation of the most basic democratic freedoms of African students in France” and affirmed the IUS’s “unflinching support for FEANF in the anticolonial struggle.”²⁵ The following month, the colonial administration in AOF resumed providing financial support to the FEANF.²⁶

While the conflicts between French interests and the ideological stance of the family of Soviet-backed international youth and student movements were clear-cut, the French position with regard to the American-backed WAY was more complex and changed significantly over the course of the 1950s. Initially, French officials viewed the WAY as a critical platform to shore up France’s international prestige. In 1950, the French national member council of the WAY registered its dismay that at recent meetings, other national delegations arrived armed with

²⁴ Bulletin de renseignement, SDECE, 30 novembre 1957. Archives Nationales du Sénégal [ANS] 17G/604 (152). The French security services also tracked French communist youth affiliated the WFDY who traveled to the African Federations. See for instance multiple dossiers in ANOM 1AFFPOL/2265.

²⁵ Letter from Dir-Services de Sécurité AOF to Chefs des Services de Police a/s Resolution sur la FEANF par le Comité Exécutif de l’UIE, 23 juillet 1957. Archives Nationales du Sénégal [ANS] 21G/210 (178).

²⁶ Haut Commissaire AOF — Décision du 27 août 1957. ANS 18G/210 (160).

impressive printed materials while the French were forced to give oral presentations due to lack of funds. The council decried, “France cannot do less than England, Holland or Belgium.” It requested millions of additional francs from the Foreign Affairs Ministry, and urged that they should try to host an upcoming international meeting somewhere in southern France, convinced that “the arrival in France of some 400 foreign delegates would be a unique occasion to impress upon them the cultural radiance of our country.”²⁷

One way to assert French dominance within the WAY was to organize additional member councils in France’s African territories. In 1950, the colonial administration established the Youth Council of the French Union to serve as an umbrella organization to align local African youth movements with the WAY.²⁸ By 1952, the French national council had 50 delegates and another 50 represented France’s overseas territories. The French national council cheered that the sizable delegation from the French Union “has enabled the French perspective to maintain the preponderant place it has always occupied in the international arena regarding questions relating to youth.”²⁹ That “preponderant” influence helped the French in their bid to host one of the WAY’s international congresses later that year, but it was ultimately Dakar rather than Toulouse or Marseille that French officials decided to showcase. Hosting the WAY in Dakar served a dual purpose: the decision sought to celebrate what the French had achieved in

²⁷ Budget du Conseil Français pour l’Assemblée mondiale de la jeunesse, 1950. Centre des Archives Contemporaines [CAC] 19880437/24.

²⁸ For a longer discussion, see H el ene d’Almeida-Topor, “Les associations de jeunesse en AOF (1946-1960):  volution d’ensemble et particularit es locales,” d’Almeida-Topor and Goerg, *Le mouvement associatif des jeunes*: 61-2.

²⁹ Conseil Fran ais pour l’Assemblée mondiale de la jeunesse, Expos  des motifs (1952). CAC 19880437/24.

French Africa and to promote the French Union, but it was also a response to British lobbying for the next conference to be held in the Gold Coast (contemporary Ghana).³⁰

The central topic at the WAY congress in Dakar was the role of youth in the fight against racial, religious, and gender discrimination. That theme was in fact a continuation of the proceedings of the previous WAY conference that was held in Ithaca the year before. Two representatives from French Africa, Étienne Nouafo of Cameroun and Émile Zinsou of Dahomey (contemporary Bénin), co-authored with the American Eleanor Landy (of the NAACP Youth Council), the final resolution on racial discrimination produced in Ithaca.³¹ Like so many proposals we have seen throughout this dissertation, theirs called for curricular changes and youth exchanges to combat racial prejudice – particularly new textbooks and “interracial summer camps” – but they also championed the social promotion of racial minorities and *autochtones* by calling on public administrations to hire young people from those backgrounds.³²

French officials found the WAY’s early emphasis on racial discrimination less threatening than the more overtly anticolonial position the WAY began to assume in the mid-1950s. Indeed, many French observers felt that France had nothing to be ashamed of with regards to racial matters, especially in comparison to the US. French administrators registered their incredulity as the Americans at the Ithaca conference tried to convince their francophone African interlocutors that the reports they were reading in the foreign press was a communist ploy to make the racial situation in America out to be much worse than it actually was, just to

³⁰ Conseil Français pour l’Assemblée mondiale de la jeunesse, Exposé des motifs (1953). CAC 19880437/24.

³¹ Another noteworthy participant in Ithaca was Joseph Ki-Zerbo, a prominent Catholic student leader from Dahomey who I discuss briefly in Chapter 5. Zinsou was also a participant at the Congress of Peoples in Puteaux in 1948.

³² Atelier 1: Discrimination Raciale, Texte Définitif. Congrès de la WAY, Ithaca, August 1951. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2265.

make the US look bad.³³ By the end of the decade, however, the WAY's emphasis on combatting racism had been largely displaced by a focus on ending formal colonialism, and French officials became as suspicious of the WAY as they were of the WFDY. In 1958, the French security service concluded, "The WAY is thoroughly anticolonialist in two senses – as much by the natural vocation of its sponsors on the other side of the Atlantic, as out of concern not to leave the field open, with regards to the dependent peoples, to the WFDY. It has consequently pursued a politics of one-upmanship and interference towards the youth of those peoples."³⁴

Odile Goerg, an historian of African youth politics in this period, suggests quite a different interpretation of the WAY's anticolonial politics. She argues that the WAY's growing anticolonial militancy in the late 1950s was in fact a response to francophone African youth leaders' decision to withdraw from both the WAY and the Youth Council of the French Union in 1955, a move that was largely motivated by the WAY's close association with the French colonial administration.³⁵ Interestingly, the increasingly militant anticolonialism of the WAY also coincided with Immanuel Wallerstein's tenure as vice president of the movement from 1954-1958, when he was still just a promising American doctoral student in sociology. His incendiary speeches at youth rallies in his frequent visits to French Africa attracted the attention of the French security services, which tracked his movements as closely as they did those of African youth, and that characterized him as "a systematically anti-French anticolonialist" and an "intransigent enemy" of France.³⁶ An observer who heard Wallerstein speak on behalf of the WAY at the Festival of African Youth that was independently organized by francophone West African youth in Bamako in 1958, which was attended by more than 3000 people, reported that

³³ Note d'Information a/s reunion de la WAY, 16 janvier 1952. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2265.

³⁴ SDECE, Notice d'Information—La WAY, 18 aout 1958, s.n. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2398.

³⁵ Goerg, "Les mouvements de jeunesse," 27.

³⁶ Ibid. The SDECE also tracked French communist youth affiliated the WFDY who traveled to the African Federations. See for instance multiple dossiers on individuals in ANOM 1AFFPOL/2265.

Wallerstein had declared, “The WAY ardently hopes that the mobilization of African youth will lead to the ultimate goal – the independence of the continent.” The observer then noted that even the WFDY was more discrete than that.³⁷

French fears of both Soviet and American anticolonialism drove French colonial authorities to try to prevent as many African students as possible from attending American and Soviet universities throughout the period, with mixed results.³⁸ But as the GPRF had anticipated already in 1945, American and communist international youth forums, and higher education in the US and the USSR, were not the only foreign poles of attraction for African youth in French sub-Saharan Africa in the late 1940s and 1950s. African students were also looking elsewhere in what was then just starting to be known as the “Third World.”³⁹ The Afro-Asian Conference in Bandung, Indonesia in April 1955 is typically held as a “watershed” in that regard.⁴⁰ The Bandung Conference’s Final Communiqué condemned European colonial powers’ efforts to deny “their dependent peoples basic rights in the sphere of education and culture,” and it explicitly called for Asian and African countries with more advanced educational facilities to provide admission for students and trainees from colonial territories in Africa where access to higher education was denied.⁴¹

³⁷ De la Fournière, Note a/s Festival de la Jeunesse d’Afrique, Bamako, 6-12 septembre 1958 (16 septembre 1958). ANOM 1AFFPOL/2189, dossier 2.

³⁸ On the US, see the dossier, “Envoi d’étudiants camerounais et africains aux USA” in ANOM 1AFFPOL/2199; see also Louisa Rice, “Cowboys and Communists: Cultural Diplomacy, Decolonization and the Cold War in French West Africa,” *Journal of Colonialism and Colonialism History* 11:3 (Winter 2010). On the USSR, see Monique de Saint Martin, Grazia Scarfò Ghellab, and Kamal Mellakh, eds., *Étudier à l’Est. Expériences de diplômés africains* (Paris: Karthala, 2015).

³⁹ This line of argument mirrors a broader shift in the Cold War literature to consider North-South, as well as East-West conflict at the height of the superpower confrontation. See for instance Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge University Press, 2005).

⁴⁰ For some of the best recent work on Bandung, see Christopher J. Lee, ed. *Making a World After Empire: The Bandung Moment and Its Political Afterlives* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2010).

⁴¹ Final Communiqué of the Asian-African conference of Bandung (24 April 1955), pt B, 2 & 4.

The Bandung Conference helped Gamal Abdel Nasser, president of the newly formed Egyptian Republic, consolidate his power and elevate his international stature. Nasser's domestic position was still fragile following the 1952 coup that brought him to power, but his leading role at Bandung helped solidify his authority. Bandung also inspired Nasser to pursue a more aggressive foreign policy, in which he sought to make Egypt the dominant regional power on the African continent.⁴² This had significant consequences for France's African Empire both north and south of the Sahara. Nasser's financial, material, and moral support to independence movements in French North Africa in the second half of the 1950s, especially his ties to the Algerian National Liberation Front, have been well-studied, as have French and American reactions to that support.⁴³ Less attention has been paid, however, to Egypt's bid for influence in sub-Saharan Africa from the mid-50s onward and French responses to that campaign.

Nasser's Africa policy focused on youth and education on several fronts. In 1956, he convened a "Conference of African Youth" in Cairo, which was attended by representatives of almost all of the African student associations in France.⁴⁴ Shortly thereafter, Nasser founded the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organization, which concentrated on reaching out to sub-Saharan African youth associations and hosted regular conferences in Egypt from 1958-1965.⁴⁵ At the same time, he also intensified the activities of the Islamic Congress, which he had co-founded in 1954 with King Saud and Ghulam Mohammed (Prime Minister of Pakistan), whose platform

⁴² Nasser's push for dominance in Africa may be read as one aspect of the conflict between Nasser's Egypt and Saudi Arabia, c. 1957-1962, which Reinhard Schulze has called, "an inter-Arab Cold War." See his "La *da'wa* saoudienne en Afrique de l'Ouest," in René Otayek, ed., *Le radicalisme islamique au sud du Sahara. Da'wa, arabisation et critique de l'Occident* (Paris: Karthala, 1993).

⁴³ See Fathi Al Dib, *Abd El Nasser et la révolution algérienne* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1985); Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*.

⁴⁴ Note a/s la "Conférence de la jeunesse africaine," 11 janvier 1956, s.n. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2265.

⁴⁵ Christopher J. Lee, "Introduction: Between A Moment and An Era: the Origins and Afterlives of Bandung," in *Making a World*: 12-17; and James R. Brennan, "Radio Cairo and the Decolonization of East Africa, 1954-64," in *ibid.*: 175.

included strengthening cultural relations and educational cooperation in the Muslim world. After Bandung, the Congress began awarding a significant number of scholarships to foreign students to come to al-Azhar University in Cairo, one of the most prestigious centers of Muslim learning since its founding in the tenth century.

Despite Nasser's secularism, as a venerable Islamic institution, al-Azhar provided him with an effective tool to reach out to Muslim youth in general and sub-Saharan African youth in particular.⁴⁶ This was especially true in the French African Federations, where French colonial authorities had actively suppressed the teaching of Arabic and higher forms of Islamic education in the territories since the early days of colonization.⁴⁷ By the mid 1960s, the Egyptian state had increased stipends for foreign students to come to al-Azhar from around 400 to over 2500 and spent over two million pounds on a new residential village for foreign students. Al-Azhar's student rolls swelled and included Africans from 32 countries, and the University placed over 200 religious scholars around the world, many of them in Africa.⁴⁸ To take but one example of the success of al-Azhar's outreach campaign in francophone Africa, in postcolonial Niger, all

⁴⁶ Tareq Y. Ismael, "Religion and UAR African Policy," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 6, no 1 (1968): 52-53. See also Ali A. Mazrui, "Africa and the Egyptian's Four Circles," *African Affairs* 63, no 251 (April 1964). On Nasser's nationalization of Al-Azhar in the early 1960s and the position of the University in modern Egyptian religious politics, see Malika Zeghal, "Religion and Politics in Egypt: The Ulema of al-Azhar, Radical Islam, and the State (1952-1994)," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 31, no 3 (Aug 1999).

⁴⁷ Louis Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge. Religion, Power and Schooling in a West African Muslim Society* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001); Christopher Harrison, *France and Islam in West Africa, 1860-1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); Lansiné Kaba, *The Wahhabiyya: Islamic Reform and Politics in French West Africa* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1974); Ousman Kobo, *Unveiling Modernity in Twentieth-Century West African Islamic Reforms* (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishing, 2012); David Robinson, *Paths of Accommodation: Muslim Societies and French Colonial Authorities in Senegal and Mauritania, 1880-1920* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2000).

⁴⁸ Ismael, "Religion and UAR African Policy," 56; Brennan, "Radio Cairo," 187.

Nigériens who studied at an Arab university, whether at al-Azhar or elsewhere, came to be known colloquially as “the graduates of Cairo” [*les licenciés du Caire*].⁴⁹

Bandung, Nasser’s attendant rise to prominence, the allure of al-Azhar—these represent important points of reference for broadening our conception of the contours of the international stage Africans were stepping onto well beyond the Cold War framing that dominates the literature on francophone African youth and student mobilizations in the postwar era.⁵⁰ Over a decade ago, Matthew Connelly reframed French anxieties about the decolonization of Algeria as part of a general north/south, as well as east/west, global conflict.⁵¹ This brief sketch of the development of formal south-south cultural relations and educational exchanges demonstrates that Connelly’s insights apply to sub-Saharan Africa as well.

Educating Black African Muslims: Race, Religion and Geopolitics

The French colonial archive contains an endless stream of frenzied missives, reports, and administrative correspondence from the 1950s on the “exodus” and “flood” of Muslim Africans to al-Azhar, primarily in AOF and Chad.⁵² The prospect of al-Azhar alumni returning to their home territories and bringing pan-Islamism, Salafi doctrines, or other “anti-French” Islamic movements with them put colonial administrators in a perpetual state of panic. Indeed, many colonial administrators considered political Islam and the theological reform movements to be

⁴⁹ Abdoulaye Niandou Souley, “Les ‘licenciés du Caire’ et l’État au Niger,” in Otayek, *Le radicalisme islamique*.

⁵⁰ Odile Goerg’s and Hélène d’Almedia-Topor’s work, which dominates the field, rarely touches on Muslim youth milieux.

⁵¹ See Connelly, “Taking Off the Cold War Lens,” and *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria’s Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

⁵² It would be impossible to cite all of these references here. For some of the most concentrated documentation, see the following boxes in Aix: 1AFFPOL/2256; AEF/GGAEF 5D/269; 1AFFPOL/2260.

the worst possible import into French Africa—worse even than communism—as they feared those “Arab” influences would corrupt *Islam Noir*.

Muslim elites in France’s African colonies had been drawn to al-Azhar long before Bandung and Nasser’s Africa policy, for the same reasons then as they were drawn to it afterwards: they wanted to pursue advanced religious study and learn Arabic, which the French had deliberately prohibited them from doing in their home territories. Prior to World War II, the few African Muslims who had the means or opportunity to embark on the Hajj would sometimes stop in Cairo on their way back to study at al-Azhar, in some cases, for many years.⁵³ After the war, the French colonial and military officials consciously attempted to manage the pilgrimage to Mecca, providing African pilgrims with financial and logistical support in order to propagate an image of the French Union that was favorable and open to Muslim interests and at least certain forms of Muslim religious practice.⁵⁴ As more African pilgrims went to Mecca, more passed through Cairo and ended up at al-Azhar. And so postwar French colonial reformers themselves, in their contradictory quest for a more inclusive “democratic empire” after the war, facilitated the rise in African enrollment at al-Azhar in the late 1940s that haunted colonial administrators in French Africa throughout the 1950s. Indeed, earlier flows of Africans to al-Azhar encouraged French officials to interpret the Bandung Conference as a specifically *Muslim* threat to French rule south of the Sahara,⁵⁵ and colored their reactions to Nasser’s subsequent bid for influence in both North and sub-Saharan Africa.⁵⁶

⁵³ Kaba, *The Wahhabiyya*: Chapter 3; Harrison, *France and Islam*: Epilogue.

⁵⁴ Gregory Mann and Jean Sébastien Lecocq, “Between Empire, Umma and the Muslim Third World: the French Union and African Pilgrims to Mecca, 1946-1958,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 27, no 2 (2007).

⁵⁵ Letter from Pierre-Henri Teitgen (then Minister of Overseas France) to Governor-General of AEF a/s des affaires musulmanes et Bandoeng, 8 avril 1955. ANOM AEF GGAEF 5D/269.

⁵⁶ Nasser’s financial, material and moral support to independence movements in French North Africa in the second half of the 1950s, especially his ties to the FLN, have been well-studied, as have French and

The French obsession with African Muslim enrollment at al-Azhar underscores the French colonial regime's consistent inability or unwillingness to recognize and respond to social and religious change originating from within colonial African societies. This misrecognition is crucial for illuminating the complex interplay between local and international forces in postwar colonial education policy in French Africa. French observers failed to see the effects of their own policies and the dynamism of African society; instead they attributed any African reformist impulses to foreign meddling, which is why they became so obsessed with African enrollment at al-Azhar.

Contrary to the overheated rhetoric conjuring up images of floods and tidal waves, the number of Africans who went to al-Azhar in the late 1940s and early 1950s, though more significant than in years past, nonetheless remained quite small. Even by French accounts, the figures were modest: colonial administrators claimed that by 1952, there were 105 students at al-Azhar from AOF (out of a population of over 16 million), and another 90 black Africans from Chad.⁵⁷ Oral interviews with al-Azhar alumni in Mali in the 1960s conducted by Lansiné Kaba indicate that even those paltry figures were exaggerated; Kaba's informants recalled that there were around 20 African students from AOF at al-Azhar in the late 40s.⁵⁸ The French preoccupation with what was in fact a *trickle* of African Muslims to al-Azhar indicates the

American reactions to that support. See Fathi Al Dib, *Abd El Nasser et la révolution algérienne* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1985); Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*. Less attention has been paid, however, to Egypt's bid for influence in sub-Saharan Africa from the mid-50s onward or French responses to that campaign, a subject deserving of future research.

⁵⁷ "L'Islam en Afrique Noire," s.n., 27 avril 1954. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2260. Though this report counted 200 Chadians at al-Azhar, other reports put the figure at 150. See for instance G. Medina, "Les Étudiants tchadiens de l'Azhar ou contribution à l'étude de l'enseignement franco-arabe au Tchad," Fort-Lamy, janvier 1953. ANOM AEF GGAEF 5D/269. The administration actually counted 150 Chadians at al-Azhar, but 60 of them were categorized as "Arabs."

⁵⁸ Kaba, *The Wahhabiyya*: 77, fn. 13.

centrality of the French conception of *Islam Noir* in French strategies for maintaining French colonial rule in Africa indefinitely.

French officials in both federal administrations embraced the theory of *Islam Noir* despite the considerable differences in the political and demographic situations of AOF and AEF. West African Islam was predominantly organized in Sufi brotherhoods, which was one of the central institutions that Islamic reformers in the early and mid-twentieth century condemned as “innovation” (*bid’a*), or distortions of the “true” Islam from the time of the Prophet. West African Muslim reformers particularly denounced the leaders of those brotherhoods, who the French called *marabouts*, for associating themselves individually with God (*shirk*), which they believed was contrary to fundamental Islamic principles.⁵⁹ For decades the colonial administration had cultivated relationships with *marabouts* to secure French control in the region.⁶⁰ As a result, the French viewed any challenge to the *marabouts’* authority as a direct assault on one of the foundations of French colonial rule in its West African territories with majority Muslim populations.

The theological reform movements then spreading across the Middle East, particularly Salafi doctrines, were exactly the kinds of “new ideas” and “spiritual movements of the age” that the GPRF had feared so intensely in 1945. French colonial policymakers viewed the reform movements—which they tended to indiscriminately lump together under the label, “Wahhabism”⁶¹—as fanatical, “xenophobic,” and fundamentally incompatible with French

⁵⁹ Kobo, *Unveiling Modernity*: 1-3.

⁶⁰ David Robinson, *Paths of Accommodation: Muslim Societies and French Colonial Authorities in Senegal and Mauritania, 1880-1920* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2000); Cheikh Anta Babou, *Fighting the Greater Jihad: Amadu Bamba and the Founding of the Muridiyya of Senegal, 1853-1913* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007).

⁶¹ “Wahhabism” refers to followers of the religious doctrines attributed to Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, (1703-1792). This form of Islam was officially adopted by kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1932. Crucially, most African Islamic reformers did not self-identify as “Wahhabi” and many were not familiar

culture and French values. By contrast, they construed *Islam Noir* as pliable, syncretic, and “tolerant,” based on the widely held belief that black African Muslims had only a rudimentary understanding of the central precepts of Islam and so were not *really* Muslim.⁶² Thus in the French official mind, all reformist impulses in Muslim African milieus were necessarily “based on Middle Eastern ideas.”⁶³

It was precisely this understanding of *Islam Noir* that had motivated the administration in AOF to vigilantly prohibit Arabic-language instruction in local Qur’anic schools for decades (except in Mauritania where Arabic was recognized as a vernacular language). As a result, pupils in those schools spent years reciting the Qur’an and memorizing key prayers without ever learning the meaning of the words. Thus in a certain sense, we might say that colonial education policies were turning the French theory of *Islam Noir* into a reality. It follows that colonial administrators focused on the potential threat to “traditional” Qur’anic education as one of the greatest threats posed by al-Azhar alumni returning to the territories.

In 1951, the colonial administration in French Soudan (contemporary Mali) shut down a private Muslim school that four graduates of al-Azhar established in Bamako the year before. The Azharists’ vision for their school was to teach Arabic and the Qur’an in addition to the French secular curriculum. The administration rejected the Azharists’ proposal to hire French-educated personnel to teach French and other subjects, which would have obliged the administration to provide the institution with financial support as it did for mission schools that taught the French curriculum. Nonetheless, the school was a smashing success during its brief

with the teachings of al-Wahhab; rather this label was leveled at them by both the French and traditional Sufi leaders as an epithet to discredit their projects of reform.

⁶² Paul Marty developed the theory of *Islam Noir* in the early 1920s, which guided the regime’s Islamic education policy throughout the colonial period. Colonial administrator Marcel Cardaire reinvigorated the notion in the early 1950s, particularly with his treatise, *L’Islam et le terroir africain* (1954).

⁶³ Haut-Commissaire AOF Cornut-Gentille au MFOM, *Rapport confidentiel*, 1 février 1954. ANOM 1AFFPOL/1014.

existence. When it opened, it had 60 pupils from the Bamako area; when the administration closed the school the following year for exceeding the maximum number of hours of Arabic instruction the French administration had agreed to, the “École Coranique Supérieure de Bamako” had over 400 pupils from across AOF. The school clearly appealed to an important segment of the urban Muslim bourgeoisie who wanted their children to be raised in their faith but also to acquire the skills they would need to be able to participate in the modern colonial economy.⁶⁴

Significantly, returning al-Azhar alumni were not the only West African Muslims seeking to open new schools with more modern pedagogical methods and curricula in this period. Others, like Ousman Saada Touré, who opened a Qur’anic school in 1946 in Ségou (also in French Soudan), had never left their home territories. Rather, they were motivated by their own educational experiences in *French schools* to modernize Islamic education.⁶⁵ In fact, the Bamako school appears to have been the only school opened by local Muslims trained at al-Azhar throughout the 1950s. But it was the Azharists’ school that became the ultimate cautionary tale for French colonial administrators and prompted a major shift in French colonial Islamic education policy. The colonial administration not only made sure that no more such schools were opened, but under the leadership of colonial administrator Marcel Cardaire, they launched their own “counter-reform movement” in Qur’anic schooling, and opened new “traditional” Qur’anic schools that would conduct lessons in African vernacular languages in urban centers where pedagogical innovation or reformist tendencies seemed to be on the rise.

As more African Muslim students gained access to post-elementary education in the early 1950s, they inserted themselves into the debate about Islamic education in AOF and vocally

⁶⁴ Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*: 55-59; Kaba, *The Wahhabiyya*: Chapters 3 & 5.

⁶⁵ Touré’s school proved equally attractive to local parents—by the early 50s, it had over 300 pupils.

condemned the administration's policies. In the summer of 1956, the Association Musulmane des Étudiants d'Afrique Noire [AMEAN] brought together Muslim African students studying locally in AOF and abroad in France for a five-day conference in Dakar. In their Manifesto, they denounced French efforts "to isolate us from the Muslim world by all means necessary." The AMEAN also called out their own African representatives in local assemblies and in Paris for supporting subsidies to private Catholic schools while refusing to defend Islamic education, either because they themselves were not Muslim or because they were acquiescing to French pressure.⁶⁶ Most importantly, the group passionately protested how the French had construed Islam as a foreign import in black Africa and offered a stinging refutation of the theory of *Islam Noir*:

Looking back at history, we Muslim students attest that the diffusion of Islam in Black Africa goes back a millennium, and that black writers expressed themselves exclusively in Arabic until the last century.

Our Congress denounces as particularly pernicious and offensive all publications in European languages by Africans or others that neglect, obscure, or willfully ignore Islamic culture and the fact that Islam represents an important common sociological and political influence in Black Africa.⁶⁷

In this spirit, the AMEAN's formal resolutions called on the administration to reverse course on virtually every aspect of its policies towards Muslim schooling, and thereby dismantle the infrastructure of *Islam Noir*. Its five motions stipulated: 1) the inclusion of Arabic instruction in the official curriculum in primary schools; 2) that young Africans be taught "the true history of African pioneers"; 3) the inclusion of some religious instruction in public secondary schools; 4) that high school graduates be permitted to pursue higher Islamic study in universities in the

⁶⁶ There was indeed a disproportionate number of Catholics among the first cohort of African political leaders, a direct consequence of colonial education policy that had relied on and actively promoted mission schooling.

⁶⁷ AMEAN, Manifeste, juillet 1956. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2256, dossier 3.

Muslim world; and 5) that the administration cease promoting Qur'anic education in vernacular languages.⁶⁸

These positions were echoed in the platform of the Muslim Cultural Union [UCM], an organization of reform-minded Muslim Senegalese founded by Cheikh Touré in Dakar in 1953 in response to the French administration's Islamic education policies.⁶⁹ Two weeks after the AMEAN conference in Dakar, the UCM held its own assembly in Thies that was attended by some 300 people. In its final resolution, the UCM called for the creation of modern Arabic-language schools that would teach a secular curriculum – precisely the kind of school the Azharists had tried to open in Bamako. Such schools, they argued, would not be “religious schools” and therefore would be perfectly in line with *laïcité*, providing the population with a “valuable, modern education.” The UCM then called on all Africans in the French parliament, local religious leaders, and syndicalist organizations to join them in denouncing “the maneuvers taken by the administration in Senegal that aim to curb the right of African citizens to educate themselves in the language of their religion.”⁷⁰ Though the UCM and the AMEAN were comprised of primarily French-educated elites, the population at large evidently shared these sentiments. The French “counter-reform” schools never attracted a significant student body and most had disappeared by the time of independence.⁷¹

The issue of Arabic-language instruction also dominated the debate about Islamic education in AEF. Most of the Muslim population in AEF resided in northern Chad, where large communities of Arab merchants had been established for centuries and Arabic was often used as a vernacular language. There were also Muslim communities in the southern regions of the

⁶⁸ AMEAN, Motions, 15 juillet 1956, Dakar. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2256, dossier 4.

⁶⁹ On the founding of the UCM, see Kobo, *Unveiling Modernity*, 123.

⁷⁰ Motion des membres de l'UCM réunis en Assemblée générale le 28 juillet 1956, Thies. ANS 17G/596.

⁷¹ For a more detailed discussion, see Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*.

territory, but the majority of the population there was either Christian or animist. After Bandung, the head of AEF Paul Chauvet urged Chad's governor, Ignace Colombani, to support more Christian schools in the southern regions to prevent conversions to Islam. Colombani replied that he did not think it mattered whether they created public schools or private Christian ones, for in his view the issue was not really about religion; rather, it was about language and culture. New conversions to Islam, he argued, were not the result of some "metaphysical anguish"; rather, it was the growing use of Arabic that held such appeal, and attached to the language, "the seduction of rules for everyday life, a way of dressing, certain attitudes – a form of dogmatic thought that is more concerned with the preoccupations of this earth rather than those of the heavens." This clear reformulation of Islam as culture rather than religion, led Colombani to a corresponding culturalization of Christianity:

To this seduction, we are continually countering with the use of French, and, without always realizing it ourselves, a form of Cartesian thought that rests on a Christian substratum, a material way of life that extends from what we eat to how we dress, which is the same in public schools and private ones.⁷²

In light of pressures from the teachers' corps to uphold *laïcité* locally, Colombani concluded that expanding the network of public schools in Chad would be the most politically expedient course of action.⁷³

In response, Chauvet rejected any opposition to his proposal on the grounds of *laïcité*, insisting, "to be concerned with passive neutrality in religious matters, at a time when Islam is bringing anti-French political propaganda to our door – and has already brought it among us – would only further work to its favor." Chauvet elaborated on why he thought Christianization was the most effective weapon in their arsenal:

⁷² Report from Ignace Colombani to Paul Chauvet, 24 juin 1955. ANOM AEF GGAEF 5D/269.

⁷³ On French teaching personnel's opposition to funding mission schools in AEF, see Adolphe Baillet, "L'école libératrice. La législation scolaire française bafouée en AEF," 7 mai 1954. AEF GGAEF 5D/234.

Whether we intended it or not, in animist regions, western influence is wearing away at traditional beliefs that are linked to a social and political system that is disintegrating. If he is not tormented by ‘a certain metaphysical anguish,’ the Black nevertheless has religious needs...perhaps elementary needs, which, in their very simplicity, Islam can satisfy.

Chauvet concluded by reiterating that Christianization constituted a viable alternative that would help staunch the spread of an Islam “that is more and more political and aggressive” by the day.⁷⁴

If Chauvet and Colombani disagreed on how to stop processes of Islamicization in Chad’s southern regions, they nevertheless shared the same views of *Islam Noir*, with dire consequences for African Muslims’ educational opportunities in the territory. Just as Chauvet had emphasized an Africans’ innate simplicity in his exposition on why black Africans might be drawn to Islam, Colombani characterized the vast majority of the one million Muslims in his territory as “illiterate *islamisés* of the bush, for whom a rudimentary, superficial Islam that incorporates properly African customs, constitutes above all a simple and convenient assortment of rules for collective life and a small spiritual comfort, free of complexities.” He added that this kind of Islam “is perfectly suited to these latitudes and these populations.”⁷⁵

That stark racial paternalism governed Colombani’s approach to educating Muslims in Chad. He believed the piecemeal Qur’anic schools that dotted the countryside were wholly “sufficient” for the “*islamisés* of the bush,” both in terms of their religious instruction and their general education. For the “handful” of Chadians who aspired to higher religious study, Colombani cited the creation of a new Muslim middle school in Ouddaï. He also conceded that they would begin offering a course in modern Arabic in the lone middle school in Chad’s capital, Fort Lamy, in order to discourage black African Muslims in the territory from heading to al-Azhar. To Colombani, the offerings in these two middle schools and elementary Qur’anic

⁷⁴ Response from Chauvet to Colombani, 12 août 1955. ANOM AEF GGAEF 5D/269.

⁷⁵ Chef du Territoire du Tchad Ignace Colombani à Gougal-AEF Paul Chauvet, 23 mai 1955. ANOM AEF GGAEF 5D/269.

schools in rural areas would “surely suffice” for educating Chad’s one million “Islamicized” Africans.⁷⁶

* * *

On the eve of the Bandung Conference, the Minister of Overseas France, Pierre-Henri Teitgen, wrote to Chauvet to increase surveillance of potential “Islamist” agents and political movements in AEF. At the same time, he also insisted that they must find a way to “retain our Muslim co-citizens within the French community by emotional ties, freely accepted.” In that vein, he urged Chauvet to devise a new kind of education that would appeal to Muslim youth. Following the “theory of the specificity of *Islam Noir*,” they should devise “adapted” religious instruction that would “attract children and adolescents to our culture, our techniques, and more generally, our civilization.”⁷⁷ The Colombani-Chauvet exchange was a response to that directive. Like the ill-conceived “counter-reform” campaign in AOF, their correspondence illustrates how international pressure from Bandung to Cairo strengthened French officials’ investment in *Islam Noir* to devastating effect.

The theory of *Islam Noir* simultaneously accentuated ideas about African racial difference and deepened the culturalization of religion that we have been tracing across metropolitan French, colonial African, and transnational European contexts throughout this dissertation. This chapter has highlighted the ways that international pressures to at least *appear* democratic and egalitarian, non-racist and religiously inclusive, were embedded in and became a driving logic of those processes.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Pierre-Henri Teitgen à Paul Chauvet a/s affaires musulmanes et Bandoeng, 8 avril 1955. ANOM AEF GGAEF 5D/269.

The consequences of this shifting terrain of racial and religious differentiations were not just discursive and conceptual. That repertoire of difference had a profound and lasting impact on schooling and social reproduction in French Africa, which in turn, shaped the longer trajectory of postcolonial African societies. French colonial education policies had long discouraged Muslim parents from sending their children to French schools. In the postwar period, French officials did seriously reconsider their approach to Muslim education in the French African Federations, but ultimately the colonial administrations prioritized trying to “protect” *Islam Noir* from “external influences” rather than responding to local demand to combine modern pedagogy, French curricula, and Islamic teachings. Those actions further alienated African Muslims from the educational offerings in the territories, which had a significant impact on school attendance and widened the disparity in rates of attendance between Muslim-majority and Muslim-minority regions. In 1956, only 8.4% of school-age African children in Muslim regions attended primary school, versus 31.8% in regions where Muslims were the minority.⁷⁸ If we “take off the Cold War lens” — as Connelly suggests, this complex mixture of geopolitics and racial and religious dynamics come more clearly into focus, and the oft-neglected late colonial period emerges as a key turning point for postcolonial African social history.⁷⁹ The vacuum in proper Islamic schooling did not remain empty for long. Ultimately it was Saudi Arabia, rather than Nasser’s Egypt, who stepped in to fill the void after independence.⁸⁰ Though there was hardly any substance to French colonial discourse about

⁷⁸ Note a/s le développement de l’Enseignement primaire dans les TOM et le problème de la langue arabe, s.n., 1956. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2256.

⁷⁹ Frederick Cooper has drawn attention to this lacuna in many of his works. See especially his *Citizenship Between Empire and Nation. Remaking France and French Africa, 1945-1960* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014); *Colonialism in Question. Theory, Knowledge, History* (University of California Press, 2005).

⁸⁰ Mamadou Diouf and Mara Leichtman, eds., *New Perspectives on Islam in Senegal: Conversion, Migration, Wealth, Power, and Femininity* (New York: Palgrave, 2009); René Otayek, *Le radicalisme*

“Wahhabism” in francophone Africa in the 1940s and 1950s, French colonial education policies created the social conditions for the Saudi-funded spread of Wahhabism to become a significant sociopolitical force in the region since the end of empire.

islamique au sud du Sahara: Da'wa, arabisation, et critique de l'Occident (Paris: Karthala, 1993);
Ousman Kane and Jean-Louis Triaud, *Islam et islamismes au sud du Sahara* (Paris: Karthala, 1998).

Epilogue

In July 2007, Nicolas Sarkozy made his first presidential trip to sub-Saharan Africa as part of a highly-publicized campaign pledge to take Franco-African relations in a new direction. The tour concluded in Senegal, where Sarkozy spoke before hundreds of students at the University of Dakar. After exhorting his young African audience to recognize that French colonialism in Africa had not been wholly bad, Sarkozy outlined the “new” paradigm in Franco-African relations that he envisioned. He declared:

What France wants to embark on with Africa, is to prepare for the coming of Eurafrica, that great common destiny that awaits Europe and Africa... What France wants to build with Africa is an alliance, an alliance between French youth and African youth so that the world of tomorrow will be a better world.

International reaction to these remarks was swift as critics denounced this speech as rank neocolonialism. Ivorian senate president Mamadou Koulibaly’s stinging rejoinder—“To *Eurafrigue*, no. To *Librafrigue*, yes!”—dominated the headlines of the francophone African press. Nevertheless, French media presented Sarkozy’s Eurafrica as something new, heralding the transfer of responsibility for African development and Africa’s relations with the wider world from a postcolonial French nation-state to a mature institutionalized Europe.¹

Though in recent years several scholars have used Sarkozy’s Dakar speech as a point of departure for thinking about the geopolitics of Eurafrica in the 1950s,² none have considered the

¹ Reuters, “Nicolas Sarkozy propose aux Africains de faire ‘l’Eurafrigue,’” July 7, 2007.

² Gary Wilder, “Eurafrigue as the Future Past of ‘Black France’: Sarkozy’s Temporal Confusion and Senghor’s Postwar Vision,” in Trica Danielle Keaton, T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting and Tyler Stovall, eds., *Black France/France Noire: The History and Politics of Blackness* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 57-60; Muriam Haleh Davis, “Producing EurAfrica: Development, Agriculture and Race in Algeria, 1958-1965,” PhD Dissertation, New York University, 2015, 103-104; Louisa Rice, “Anticipating the Neo-Colony? French and West African Understandings of the (D)evolution of Empire, 1945-1960,” paper presented at the University of Wisconsin-Madison African Studies Symposium, New Perspectives on Postwar Empires in Africa, April 10-11, 2014.

significance of the venue—a university that the French hastily created on the eve of independence and that remained officially integrated in the French university system until 1968³—or the fact that Sarkozy was addressing a group of francophone students, a distinct social milieu in contemporary Senegal which has particular relationships to France and Europe that are not widely shared by the majority of Senegalese or young people in other parts of ex-French Africa. Indeed, as many social historians of postcolonial francophone Africa have argued, one of the greatest effects of the French colonial education system was the creation of new forms of social inequality and political domination in African social relations. As Louis Brenner has written of postcolonial Mali, “The bureaucratic bourgeoisie who inherited the mantle of state power and authority when Mali achieved its independence belonged to an educated social class that was invented during the colonial period primarily through the process of western schooling.”⁴ The concentration of political, military, and economic power in this small cadre of francophone elites, who have continually been supported by French interventions since 1960, has proved disastrous for postcolonial African democracy.⁵

This dissertation has shown that investment in the idea of “Eurafrica” as a way for France to negotiate its position between Europe and Africa, and Sarkozy’s particular appeal to youth in charting that Eurafrican future, has a long and complicated history that dates to the postwar conjuncture. I have argued that postwar French officials approached imperial renewal in Africa

³ Tony Chafer has argued that the creation of the University of Dakar in 1958 was a desperate bid on the part of the French to keep postcolonial African elites oriented toward France. See his *The End of Empire in French West Africa: France’s Successful Decolonization?* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2002). The University of Dakar ultimately broke with the French university system in the wake of massive student uprisings in spring 1968. See Aboulaye Bathily, *Mai 68 à Dakar, ou la révolte universitaire et la démocratie* (Paris: Editions Chaka, 1992) and Burleigh Hendrickson, “Imperial Fragments and Transnational Activism: 1968(s) in Tunisia, France and Senegal,” PhD Dissertation, Northeastern University, 2014.

⁴ Louis Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge. Religion, Power and Schooling in a West African Muslim Society* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001): 13-14.

⁵ Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

and European unity as generational projects that enlisted youth as critical agents in the establishment of new kinds of pluralist, democratic, and postnational polities. To overcome colonial domination in the empire and national division in Europe, French politicians, administrators and educators—in dialogue with francophone African and western European elites—proposed a vast array of education reforms and youth programs in the hopes of stimulating European integration and imperial renewal from the ground up. Their proposals shared a good deal in common, despite the radically different political and material situations of postwar French Africa and Western Europe. In both contexts, policymakers focused on making curricular and pedagogical changes to primary and secondary schooling, revising history textbooks, building new institutions of higher education, and developing youth and student exchange programs to unite diverse populations. Indeed, French colonial reformers and European unity activists alike hailed the slogan “unity in diversity” as the mantra of their respective projects.

These entangled initiatives to turn African subjects into French citizens and national citizenries in Europe into “Europeans” in the 1940s and 50s did not produce their desired effects. Implemented unevenly and on a small scale, they provided formative experiences for a small cohort of future French, francophone African, and west European leaders, but the majority of French people and other Europeans who came of age during this period did not develop a strong European political identity, just as most French and African youth did not forge a shared sense of common destiny. This thesis has shown that concerns about holding on to France’s African empire initially restrained French support for robust political union in Europe, and that transnational campaigns for European unity helped consolidate an exclusivist vision of Europe that limited the scope and effectiveness of French education reforms and youth initiatives in

Africa. From today's vantage, it might seem obvious or commonsensical that these two projects were intrinsically at odds, but in the dramatic, albeit brief, opening of the postwar conjuncture, the boundaries between the French Republic, French Africa, and the nascent European Union were not yet firmly fixed. This was in fact a pivotal moment when French leaders seriously asked themselves whether black Africans, and black African Muslims in particular, could be French and European, and what that might mean for the identity of republican France and Europe more broadly. One of the central objectives of this thesis has been to analyze how and why the incompatibility of a Franco-African polity and united Europe became so naturalized—at the very moment when there was an apparent global renunciation of racism and religious discrimination and an embrace of pluralism—that it now seems like common sense.

Part of that explanation can be teased out in the profoundly unsymmetrical long-term consequences of the failures of postwar colonial and pan-European youth and education initiatives. In Chapters 2-4, I demonstrated that the definitions of Europe and “European civilization” that crystallized in youth and education initiatives of the period construed Europe as raceless (read: white) and culturally Christian. Those definitions helped locate France more firmly in Europe and provided a basis for future European integration, even as concrete efforts to create supranational European political institutions in the 1950s faltered. At the same time, those definitions contributed to the hardening of conceptions of African “racial” difference and older oppositions between French and European identities and Islam, thereby widening the distance between France and Africa. In the postwar period, then, what it meant to be “African” and “European” came to be defined against one another in new powerful and enduring ways.

In Chapters 4-6, I showed that that new cultural repertoire encouraged French administrators to interpret the “disappointing” results of their youth and education initiatives for

Africans in metropolitan France, the African Federations, and the wider international arena as confirmation of the incommensurability of African difference and “civilizational” boundaries, rather than as the result of their own misguided policies or the lack of political will to make the kind of material investments those initiatives would have needed to succeed. And so despite the fact that French imperial governance was indeed becoming more democratic in certain ways, administrators’ negative evaluations of their own programs and policies for African youth contributed to a growing fatalism in the mid-50s that France’s postwar empire was destined to dissolve along racial and religious lines. The critical interplay between colonial and European youth initiatives is therefore key to explaining why, despite France’s efforts to strengthen ties with its African colonies in the 40s and 50s, France became both more French and more European during precisely those years.

The divergent fates of the “unity in diversity” rhetoric that had been a hallmark of postwar youth and education policy in both the colonial African and pan-European contexts bring the legacies of that interplay into focus. Even now as the fallout of the 2008 financial collapse and the ongoing refugee crisis at Europe’s borders are throwing the very foundations of the European project into doubt, “United in Diversity” remains the official motto of the European Union. The motto has perhaps lost some of its potency in these increasingly unsettled, post-Brexit times. Nevertheless, that rhetoric still exercises a powerful grip on the political imagination of most mainstream politicians and intellectual elites on the continent today, who continue to believe that “Europeans united in their diversity” is both possible and eminently desirable.⁶ And while frustration with, indifference to, and, in some cases, outright contempt for,

⁶ On the contemporary cultural politics of European integration, see Ekavi Athanassopoulou, ed., *United in Diversity? European Integration and Political Cultures* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2008); Monica Sassatelli, *Becoming Europeans. Cultural Identity and Cultural Politics* (London: Palgrave

the EU power structure in Brussels continues to rise, the enduring success of the ERASMUS student exchange program indicates that young people's disenchantment with political Europe has not turned them off from participating in and continuing to build a transnational European civil society.⁷ In 2013-2014, more than half of the 30,000 UK students who studied abroad did so through ERASMUS,⁸ which perhaps helps explain why fully three-quarters of Britons under 24 voted to remain in the EU in the Brexit referendum.⁹ Since its creation in the late 1980s, more than five million students have participated in the ERASMUS program.¹⁰ In 2014, the EU committed another 14.7 billion euros to the new ERASMUS Plus initiative, which will provide the opportunity for four million more European university students to study abroad within the EU by 2020.¹¹

As this dissertation has shown, the postwar movements for united Europe were already envisioning just this kind of program in the late 1940s, in addition to the creation of transnational European universities. As Michel Mouskhély put it before the Council of Europe in 1956, student exchanges and European universities would endow Europe with its own "spiritual infrastructure," a necessary corollary to economic integration in order for rising and future generations to "feel European."¹² Though a proper European university did not come into being in the immediate postwar years, the pro-Europe movements did succeed in establishing the

Macmillan, 2009); Michael Bruter, *Citizens of Europe? The Emergence of a Mass European Identity* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

⁷ In classic Eurocratese, ERASMUS stands for the European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students, as well as evoking the early modern Dutch philosopher.

⁸ Aisha Gani, "UK Students Increasingly Opting to Study Abroad," *The Guardian*, May 27, 2015.

⁹ A majority of Britons aged 25-49 also voted to stay. For a complete breakdown of the Brexit vote by age, see Hortense Goulard, "Britain's Youth Voted to Remain," *Politico – Europe Edition*, June 25, 2016.

¹⁰ By contrast, only 325,000 foreign students have participated in Fulbright exchanges worldwide since 1946. <http://us.fulbrightonline.org/fulbright-community>.

¹¹ http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/discover/index_en.htm

¹² *Les universités et la communauté spirituelle de l'Europe, Rapport présenté par Michel Mouskhély, Assemblée consultative du Conseil de l'Europe, Commission des questions culturelles et scientifiques, 2ème Réunion Spéciale a/s universités européennes, 11-13 juin 1956. AN 70AJ/27.*

College of Europe in Bruges that continues to train top EU personnel today. They also laid the groundwork for the European University Institute [EUI] in Florence, which opened its doors in 1971, an institution that has played a central role in producing transnational European networks of academics, researchers, and students who have helped define a distinct European intellectual space.¹³ ERASMUS, the College of Europe, and the EUI—as well as an increasingly robust EU information policymaking apparatus that has developed since the 1960s¹⁴—are all continuing the work of “uniting Europeans in their diversity” in the present.

By contrast, we would search in vain for a similarly optimistic framework for Franco-African cultural relations today. Sarkozy’s maladroit resurrection of “Eurafrica” is a testament to that effect. The collapse of formal institutional relationships between postcolonial France and ex-French Africa in the 1960s has rendered the slogan “unity in diversity” meaningless in that context. However, that rhetoric has also been abandoned with regards to diversity *within* France, even as the number of Africans and children born in France of African descent has risen into the millions. While the multicultural ethos of “unity in diversity” had always been rejected by the French Extreme Right, since the 1980s, a growing cadre of ultra-republican intellectuals have assailed those values with equal vehemence, charging that identity politics, what they call “communitarianism,” is eroding the foundations of the French Republic.¹⁵ This is a stark contrast from the postwar visions of and aspirations for a pluralist republic examined in this thesis.

¹³ As Jean Palayret has shown, a European University had been one of the earliest demands for European intellectual and cultural cooperation from the European movements. See his *Une université pour l’Europe: préhistoire de l’Institut Universitaire Européen de Florence, 1948-1976* (Présidence du Conseil des Ministres de l’Union européenne, 1996).

¹⁴ Oriane Calligaro, *Negotiating Europe: EU Promotion of Europeanness since the 1950s* (New York: Palgrave, 2013).

¹⁵ Pierre-André Taguieff and Alain Finkelkarut are key examples. For an excellent analysis of the evolution of Taguieff’s thought, see Chris Flood, “Nationalism or Nationism? Pierre-André Taguieff and the Defense of the French Republic,” *South Central Review* 25 (2008).

For the past three decades, the debate about cultural pluralism has largely centered on the supposed failure of the republican school to integrate the descendants of France's ex-colonial populations into French society and culture. Recent events have forced France's leadership class to confront a starker reality. In the wake of the Charlie Hebdo and Hyper Cacher attacks in January 2015, French Interior Minister Manuel Valls defied a deep-seated French taboo against explicit references to race in his characterization of the spatial segregation between wealthy and poor, "native" French and communities of "immigrants" and their descendants, as a state of "geographic, social and ethnic Apartheid."¹⁶

While Valls' blunt allusion to Apartheid stunned French pundits and cultural commentators, the analogy had in fact been put forth a decade earlier by prominent leftist theorist and philosopher Etienne Balibar in an important essay, "*Droit de cité* or Apartheid?" In that piece, Balibar reflected not only on the ethnicization and "recolonialization" of immigrants in France, but also on the ways in which the stipulations in the Treaty of Maastricht (1992) that restricted "European citizenship" to citizens of EU member states created a fundamentally new register of exclusion for non-citizen residents in Europe. That situation, he argued, is favoring the development of a specifically "European racism" that produces an amorphous category of "less than white," which includes populations who are not white, Christian, or secular. The danger, Balibar warned, is that those populations would become a permanent underclass, which would amount to a system of "European Apartheid."¹⁷

Balibar's reflections are part of an ongoing conversation among political theorists, sociologists, and anthropologists about how the evolving juridical framework of the European Union and revived efforts to define Europe in civilizational terms has and will continue to shape

¹⁶ Cited in Sylvia Zappi, "Manuel Valls, l'apartheid et les banlieues," *Le Monde*, January 26, 2015.

¹⁷ Etienne Balibar, *We the People of Europe? Reflections on Transnational Citizenship* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004): 44.

the possibilities and constraints of former colonial subjects and their descendants to claim political and cultural membership in the national communities of their ex-metropoles.¹⁸ This conversation has centered overwhelmingly on Islam. In an important essay originally published in 2004, anthropologist Matti Bunzl argued that Islamophobia has replaced anti-Semitism as the dominant logic of exclusion in contemporary Europe as Europe has transitioned from a national to a postnational order. If Jews once represented the archetypical Other of European nation-states, Bunzl claims they now constitute the veritable embodiment of European postnationality, whereas observant Muslims are construed as an existential threat to a secular, liberal “European civilization” that is presumed to anchor the supranational EU.¹⁹ Bunzl bases this argument on the evolution of the explicit politics of exclusion peddled by Extreme Right movements across the continent that have abandoned outright anti-Semitism in favor of attacks on Islam as fundamentally incompatible with Europe’s “Judeo-Christian humanist culture.”²⁰ However, if we shift our focus to the evolution of the aspirational politics of *inclusion* in the European mainstream, as this thesis has done for the postwar period, the deeply ambivalent position of the “Judeo” in that formulation is brought into view.

Jews occupy a strange place in the narrative of this dissertation, a kind of present absence. If reason and common sense lead us to assume that the attempted destruction of European Jewry must have been a key subtext of postwar efforts to combat racism and religious persecution, the analyst is nevertheless confronted with historical actors’ near-absolute silence on

¹⁸ See for instance, Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam and Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003); Douglas Holmes, *Integral Europe: Fast-Capitalism, Multiculturalism, Neofascism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

¹⁹ Matti Bunzl, *Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia: Hatreds Old and New in Europe* (Chicago: Prickly Pear Press, 2007).

²⁰ Bunzl cites Dutch nationalist Pim Fortuyn’s use of this phrase as an example. *Ibid*, 38.

the matter.²¹ How Jews might fit in a united Europe, or the place of Jews and Judaism in European history, was simply not discussed in transnational European forums on youth and education after the war. To the contrary, “European civilization” was explicitly defined as both Christian and secular, and secularism itself was construed as a Christian invention. In the French case, in one of the rare instances that actual Jews were mentioned in the debate about state funding for private religious education, Jean Bayet insisted that French Jews had been “Christianized” precisely insofar as they had become French and secular.²² It follows then that as Jewish religiosity has experienced a dramatic revival in France in recent years, the place of Jews in the Republic has been thrown into question once more.²³

The legacy of the culturalization of Christianity in the postwar era detailed in this study is an unambiguous double standard in how Christianity and other faiths are treated in both contemporary France and Europe more broadly. In 2004, the French legislature passed a law banning students from wearing “ostentatious” religious symbols or religious dress in public schools. As many observers have noted, this law disproportionately affects, and indeed intentionally targeted, Muslim schoolgirls who wear the *hijab*, or Islamic headscarf.²⁴ The successful passage of this law was the culmination of fifteen years of heated public debate after a principal in the suburbs of Paris dismissed two Muslim students for wearing the *hijab* in his

²¹ Sam Moyn has famously explored this issue with regards to postwar human rights. See his *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Cambridge, MA and Oxford: Belknap Press, 2010).

²² See Chapter 3. This dovetailed with many surviving French Jews’ own sublimation of their Jewish identities in the immediate postwar era. See Alain Finkelkraut, *The Imaginary Jew* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994). We might then say that postwar French Jews were doubly disappeared from within and without.

²³ For an excellent discussion of racial and religious identity among Jewish youth in private schools in contemporary France, see Kimberly Arkin, *Rhinestones, Religion and the Republic: Fashioning Jewishness in Contemporary France* (Stanford University Press, 2013).

²⁴ Tricia Danielle Keaton, *Muslim Girls and the Other France. Race, Identity Politics & Social Exclusion* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006); Jane Kramer, “Taking the Veil,” *The New Yorker*, November 22, 2004.

establishment in 1989. This incident proved to be the first of a series of so-called “Headscarf Affairs,” in which a specifically Muslim religious practice was construed as incompatible with the bedrock republican principle of *laïcité*.

And yet, another controversy over questions of religion and education in France seemed to point to significant countervailing trends in public sentiment just a few years earlier. In 1983, Alain Savary, then-Minister of Education in the government of socialist president François Mitterrand, proposed a law that would have forced all religious schools to adopt the public school curriculum and require teachers in religious schools to have the same credentials as their public-school counterparts. Catholic leaders, educators, and parents vociferously denounced this proposal. The bill sparked massive grass-roots mobilizations across the country, with between one and two million people participating in demonstrations in Paris alone.²⁵

The postwar culturalization of Christianity helps explain the radically different representations of opponents to these two measures in the French public imagination. While those who defend the rights of Muslim girls to wear the headscarf in public schools were and continue to be subject to attacks that question their patriotism and their identity as truly French, the national loyalties and “Frenchness” of opponents to Savary’s law were rarely challenged in mainstream public debate. Indeed, the government not only retracted the bill, but Mitterrand himself went on French national television—on Bastille Day no less (14 July 1984)—to publicly request Savary’s resignation. During this unusually public and symbolic dismissal of a cabinet member, Mitterrand declared his decision was motivated by the overwhelming opposition to the bill; the protests had made clear to him that a significant segment of the French population did not approve of the measure, and he did not want to go against the wishes of “*le peuple*.”²⁶

²⁵ *Le Monde* (archive) : <http://charts-datawrapper.s3.amazonaws.com/QdQTZ/fs.html>

²⁶ The presidential address can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JECJemPrYRo>.

A similar pattern has emerged at the European level in recent decisions handed down by the European Court of Human Rights [ECHR]. In July 2014, the ECHR upheld a 2010 French law that banned women from wearing the *burqa* and the *niqab* in public. The Court found that there had been no violation of individuals' rights to family and private life (Article 8 of the European Convention) or respect for freedom of thought, conscience and religion (Article 9). The Court also ruled that the prohibition of discrimination (Article 14) had not been violated with regards to either Article 8 or 9. While the Court acknowledged that the ban clearly "interfered" with individuals' rights to privacy and freedom of religion, it nevertheless declared that those infractions were justified in view of the higher purpose of the law "to ensure the conditions of living together." Specifically, the ECHR decision cited "public safety" and "the protection of the rights and freedoms of others" as legitimate concerns relating to that end.²⁷

Three years earlier, the ECHR upheld an Italian law that requires crucifixes be displayed in public school classrooms.²⁸ The law had been challenged by secular Italian parents in Abano who protested that the crucifixes violated Italy's own secular laws, as well as their rights to freedom of conscience (again, Article 9) and to educate their children according to their own convictions (Article 2, provision 1). The Court ruled that there was no violation to either Article because there was no evidence that the presence of crucifixes in classrooms had any influence on pupils. Consequently, it was not the Court's place to overrule the decisions of national member governments. In this instance, the Italian government's position was that the crucifix was indeed a religious symbol, but it was a symbol of Christianity, not Catholicism, and so it served as a

²⁷ Press Release issued by the Registrar of the Court, ECHR 191 (July 1, 2014). Available electronically at: hudoc.echr.coe.int/webservices/content.

²⁸ For a slightly different juxtaposition and interpretation of the politics of Muslim garb and crucifixes that focuses on France and Germany in the 1990s from a transnational European perspective, see Leora Auslander, "Bavarian Crucifixes and French Headscarves: Religious Signs and the Postmodern European State," *Cultural Dynamics* 12:3 (2000), 283-309.

point of reference for other creeds. Moreover, the Italian government maintained that the crucifix was also more than a religious symbol; it was an historical and cultural symbol that had “identity-linked value” for “the Italian people,” insofar as it “represented the historical and cultural development characteristic [of Italy] and in general the whole of Europe.” The crucifix, it concluded, was “a good synthesis” of that development.²⁹

Political scientists Christian Joppke and François Foret have pointed to these court cases and others like them as indications of a broader “culturalization of religion” that they see unfolding in contemporary Europe.³⁰ However, by dating that process to the present moment, they, perhaps unwittingly, perpetuate an historical narrative that presumes that postwar Europe had indeed successfully turned the page on the most unsavory aspects of its colonial “past” and overcome racial and religious discrimination in the late 1940s and 1950s; and that what we are seeing now is a fundamentally new, dangerous retreat from a well-established, institutionally instantiated European pluralism. The study of postwar youth and education initiatives across metropolitan French, colonial African, and transnational European contexts reveals, on the contrary, that although French and European officials did denounce both religious and racial discrimination rhetorically, in their practices and policy choices they laid the groundwork for the processes of exclusion and the structural inequalities that organize politics and social life in France, ex-French Africa, and the EU today.

²⁹ ECHR, Judgement in the Case of Lautsi and Others v. Italy, Strasbourg, 18 March 2011.

³⁰ Christian Joppke, *The Secular State Under Siege: Religion and Politics in Europe and America* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2015); François Foret, *Religion and Politics in the European Union: the Secular Canopy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

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EU-Europe, 1949-1955: Conseil de l'Europe

Guerre 1939-1945/Londres-Alger

Haut Commissariat en Allemagne: Service de l'Enseignement; DG-Affaires Culturelles

Nations Unies et Organisations Internationales [NUOI]: Secrétariat des Conférences

Relations Culturelles, Scientifiques et Techniques [DGRCST]: Enseignement, 1945-1961;

Échanges culturels

Y-International, 1944-1949

Z-Europe, généralités, 1944-1949

[AHC] Archives de l'Histoire Contemporaine – Paris, France

1-2/DE Fonds Michel Debré

1-3/SV Fonds Alain Savary

UEF Fonds Fédéralistes Européens

EN Fonds Étudiants Nationalistes

[AHUE] Archives Historiques de l'Union Européenne – Florence, Italy

AEDE Association européenne des enseignants

CENYC Council of European National Youth Committees

CIFE Centre international de formation européenne

JEF Jeunesse européenne fédéraliste

ME Mouvement européen

MFE Mouvement fédéralist européen

OFME Organisation français du Mouvement européen

UEF Union européenne fédéraliste

[AN] Archives Nationales de France – Paris, France¹

AJ/69 Office du sport scolaire et universitaire

AJ/70 Office national des universités et écoles français

C// Assemblée Nationale, Assemblée de l'Union française; Assemblée consultative provisoire (Alger; Paris), 1er/2ème Assemblée nationale constituante

¹ These materials were consulted at the Center Historique des Archives Nationales in Paris. They have since been moved to the new archival center in Pierrefitte-sur-Seine.

F1a Cabinet du Ministre de l'Intérieur / Commissariat de l'Intérieur (Londres; Alger)
F17 Éducation Nationale
F41 Information
F44 Jeunesse et Sports
F60 Secrétariat Général du Gouvernement et Service du Premier Ministre, GPRF

[ANOM] Archives Nationales d'Outre-Mer – Aix-en-Provence, France

1AFFPOL/ Affaires politiques et sociales
100/APOM/ Comité Central français pour l'Outre-Mer
AGEFOM/ Agence économique de la France d'Outre-Mer
AEF GGAEF Afrique équatoriale français

[ANS] Archives Nationales du Sénégal – Dakar, Senegal

G/ Politique et Administration Générale
O/ Enseignement - AOF

[CAC] Centre d'Archives Contemporaines – Fontainebleau, France²

DOM-TOM
Éducation Nationale
Jeunesse et Sports
Premier Ministre

European Commission Archives – Brussels, Belgium

CEAB 1 Service juridique de la Haute Autorité de la CECA – Politique d'information et
publicité
CEAB 2 CECA / Conseil de l'Europe
CEAB 5 CEE / Pays et territoires d'outre-mer et états associés

² These archives have since moved to Peyrefitte. At Fontainebleau, the cataloging system was organized by the year the material was deposited rather than the competent institution, i.e., 197701981/1.

Periodicals

Annales de la propagation de la foi
Bulletin de la Direction de l'enseignement et de la jeunesse du MFOM
Cahiers de Jeune Europe
Courrier de France et d'Outre-Mer. Bulletin mensuel de liaison et d'information de la Région d'Outre-Mer des Scouts de France.
Dakar Étudiant. Journal de l'Association générale des étudiants de Dakar
L'éducation africaine: bulletin officiel de l'enseignement en AOF
Education européenne
L'Étudiant de la FOM: chronique des foyers
L'Europe en formation
Festival d'Afrique. Organe du 1er Festival de la jeunesse d'Afrique
Jeunes d'Europe. Bulletin d'Information – Jeunesse Européenne Fédéraliste
Jeunesse d'Afrique. Organe mensuel de l'Association des étudiants catholiques de Dakar
Jeunesse. Organe du progrès de Dakar. Théâtre-Sports-Musique.
Mer et outre-mer des jeunes. Revue des jeunes de la Ligue maritime outre-mer
Nous les jeunes. Mouvement jociste.
La nouvelle revue française d'outre-mer
Pensée française
Peuple européen / Evoluzione Europa / Europäische Volk
Rythme et Clarté. Bulletin mensuel de la jeunesse féminine catholique d'AOF-Togo
Scout AOF
Tam-Tam
Tropiques
UNEF Informations Internationales. Bulletin international de l'Union Nationale des Étudiants de France
Vers l'Islam. Bulletin mensuel de l'Association Musulmane des Étudiants d'Afrique Noire
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