Religion and Negotiation of the Boundary between Majority and Minority in Québec: Discourses of Young Muslims in Montréal CÉGEPs

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Abstract: In Québec, tensions between youth immigrants' identification and the perceived identity of the "majority group" is evident in greater Montréal-area schools, where a plurality of ethno-cultural or religious affiliations often converge and where racism and Islamophobia are becoming major social issues (Benhadjoudja 2014; Baubérot 2014; Bilge 2013). This paper aims to explore the discourses of "minoritized" Muslim youth pertaining to their perceived boundaries with respect to the majority group, considering the power relations at play. Ten qualitative interviews with Muslim youth born to immigrant parents and studying in colleges (CEGEPs) of the Montréal region will be analyzed. A typological analysis will reveal their main positions with regard to the majority group, which encompass ways of negotiating the border between the "Us" and "Them," influenced by the process of secularism, arising from acceptance, contestation, or even a sort of exacerbation of racializing categorization. In conclusion, the social and political implications of these findings will be discussed.

Keywords: religious minorities; secularism; Muslim; youth; immigration; social boundaries; identification; college; Québec

1. Introduction

Several studies conducted since the 1990s have highlighted the fluidity and complexity of self-identification, notably in relation to religious markers, among young people with an immigrant background in Québec and elsewhere, often at odds with the identity, real or imagined, of the "majority" group [1]. In the case of Québec, this estrangement is particularly evident in schools in the greater Montréal area, where there is often a concentration of a plurality of ethnocultural or religious affiliations, such as Roman Catholicism and other Christian churches, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Judaism [2]. In a recent context of tension, even polarization between Québec majorities and minorities fixed mainly around religious identity, the question of racism and Islamophobia has become a major social issue, visible in the debates on secularism at schools and in research [3–5]. It is necessary to explore in a more specific way the discourses and representations of "minoritized" Muslim youth regarding perceived or created boundaries in relation to the majority, as it impacts their schooling experiences, the conditions of learning, and their overall chances of educational success. In this perspective, we propose to explore the experiences of young people attending several colleges in the Montréal area. In Québec, the term "college" is synonymous with CÉGEP, the French acronym for College of General and Professional Education. The college level is the first level of higher education in Québec. College education has

a prescribed duration of two years for a general diploma, which gives access to university, and three years for a technical degree, which can lead to the labour market as well as allow access to university. Recent literature shows that the difficulties experienced by young people during this pivotal stage can create "zones of fragility," as defined by Dejean et al. (2016) [6], or as a risk factor potentially linked to identity tensions or even to various forms of "radicalization," religious or ideological [6,7]. As Crettiez (2016) [8] points out, radicalization has become a new buzzword in both the academic and scientific world, while the term is often confused and subject to various epistemological and ethical criticisms. In deference to the latter, in the context of this article, we will consider radicalization as: "the progressive and evolving adoption of a rigid thought, absolute and non-negotiable truth, whose logic structures the worldview of the actors, who use it to give voice to a violent repertoire of action, most often within clandestine structures, whether formalized or virtual, in which they isolate themselves from ordinary social referents and adopt a grandiose view of themselves" (p. 712). It is through a critical analysis of ethnic relations that we discern the perception of this boundary between young Muslim college students and the majority group, considering the power relations at play between minority and majority groups [9,10]. We thus analyze 10 qualitative interviews conducted with young Muslim college students born to immigrant parents in Montréal or who came to Québec during early childhood. A typological analysis will make it possible to identify the main positioning regarding the majority group, which expresses the many ways of negotiating the boundaries between Us and Them.

2. Context

2.1. Secularism and "Majority" Identity in Québec

Secularism, both as an issue of sociopolitical debate and as an object of scientific reflection, is part of a relatively new niche in Québec. Indeed, the emergence of a lexical field of secularism dates to the end of the 1990s and initially concerned only the school sector. It was in 1999, following a major government commission on education aimed at targeting priority projects for the renewal of the education system [11], that the challenge of the "de-confessionalization" of public schools emerged as a priority. For the first time since the creation of a public education system in the 1960s, a political will was expressed to open the education system to a new diversity of beliefs, under the pressure of massive immigration and of a process of religious disaffection of the majority Catholic population. Since its creation, the public school system in Québec had been denominational, Catholic or Protestant, with corresponding school boards, and the church was organically linked to each of its components. Following a parliamentary debate on the issue, in which more than 250 briefs from various individuals and organizations were tabled, the government proposed re-establishing the school system based on "open secularism" [12], culminating a few years later in the implementation of a new cultural education program on religions [13]. This orientation, defined around individual rights and the principle of equality, became the first real reference available to social actors to think about secularism in Québec. Although valued by the large majority of social groups, it triggered dissatisfaction from some groups, mainly Catholics. The latter, adhering to a more "communitarian" concept of rights, believed the state should protect Québec's majority Christian heritage [14]. Over the next few years, so-called "open" secularism, i.e., receptive to religious manifestations in public life, came under criticism by stakeholders who had previously supported the secular shift in schools, including the Mouvement laïque québécois, which called for a tightening of rules regarding the public expression of religious diversity ("closed" secularism). Under this new positioning, social and political stakeholders increasingly grouped themselves around the "open" and "closed" polarities of secularism, which was broadened to include all social institutions and not just schools, sometimes giving rise to major tensions, especially concerning the wearing of religious symbols, requests for religious holidays, or the practice of prayer at school or at work. Some of these conflicts, which were widely publicized, even extended into the judicial process [15], which invoked the concept of reasonable accommodation to assess the acceptability of such requests. As Woehrling [16] (p. 44) 2008, states: "In

all cases, for there to be an obligation of legal accommodation of reasonable accommodation, (whether imposed by a court, accepted voluntarily by friendly agreement, or recommended by a human rights commission), there must first be infringement of freedom of religion or discrimination based on religion" under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (for more details, see: Woehrling (2008) [16]). Between 2006 and 2008, these focal points of controversy multiplied to such an extent that several authors wrote of a "crisis" of "reasonable accommodation," even if, in fact, not all the cases raised were subject to the very specific legal meaning of this term [17]. This crisis led to the creation by the government of the Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural Differences. The mandate given by the government to this commission was primarily to demystify the public's dissatisfaction with what has been called "reasonable accommodation." After illustrating from solid evidence that it was mostly a crisis of perception, the "Bouchard-Taylor" report (from the names of the two commissioners, Gérard Bouchard and Charles Taylor) interpreted this debate as a symptom of a deeper malaise about the model of cultural integration within Québec society. More specifically, it stressed that:

> Among some Quebecers, this counter-reaction targets immigrants, who have become, to some extent, scapegoats. What has just happened in Québec gives the impression of a face-off between two minority groups [Québec francophones in Canada and immigrant-background minorities in Québec], each of which is asking the other to accommodate it. The members of the ethnocultural majority are afraid of being swamped by fragile minorities that are worried about their future. [18] (p. 18)

Despite the nuanced analysis from Bouchard and Taylor, the social controversy blending immigration, reasonable accommodations, and secularism continues to grow. In response to these grievances, in 2010, the Liberal government introduced Bill 94, An Act to establish guidelines governing accommodation requests within the Administration and certain institutions, which was ultimately abandoned in 2011. After the *Parti Québécois* took power in 2012, it returned to the charge with a more polarizing version of the same bill, commonly called the *Charter of Values for secularism* or the "*Charter*". The Charter aimed at affirming the values of State secularism and religious neutrality and of equality between women and men and providing a framework for accommodation requests. In the information documents accompanying the political initiative, for the first time, we move from the legal notion of secularism (separation of church and state, neutrality of the state, fundamental rights, etc.) to the notion of "values" (equality between men and women, religious neutrality) to which one attributes a "sacred" character. In addition, acceptable and unacceptable religious symbols for persons in state employment are visually identified, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Examples of unacceptable (**left**) and acceptable religious symbols (**right**) for state employees according to the *Charter of Values*. Credit: Radio-Canada [19].

This brought secularism to the unprecedented terrain of its "narrative" dimension [20]. In this way, secularism is seen as a value and performative, often conflated with a specific way to express beliefs [3]. In the view of several analysts, even though the *Charter* was not adopted because of new provincial

elections, it represented a real sea change that left marks. From that point, we observe that specific "incidents" were no longer necessary to put the issue of secularism on the political agenda [21]. Since then, a new and similar law, Bill 62, was adopted by the Liberal government to accentuate the religious neutrality of the state and to strengthen the power of the narrative dimension of secularism. Bill 62, "An Act to foster adherence to State religious' neutrality and, in particular, to provide a framework for requests for accommodations on religious grounds in certain bodies," was intended, in particular, to regulate requests for religious accommodation in certain organizations. Nevertheless, this law has been widely criticized since it came into force due to the vagueness and complexity of its practical application [22]. Thus, secularism is still not the subject of a precise legal formalization, but that has not prevented it from acquiring a concrete existence in common usage as well as in the political arena. Indeed, secularism is becoming more and more the organizational pivot in political debates concerning Québec identity, nationalism, and the integration of newcomers. At the same time, the classifications of secularism have branched out over the past 10 years and have crystallized new schools of thought, whether civic republican or communitarian, seeing secularism as the glue of social, civic, or moral bonds, or even liberal thinking, reaffirming the operative link between secularism and individual rights (equality/freedom) [23] (p. 120). From a conceptual viewpoint, these ideological families thus arise from an asymmetrical conceptual framework of secularism, the former preferring institutional principles of separation of the church and state and state neutrality, the latter relying more on the protection of individuals that ensues [24].

The evolution of the meanings attached to the concept of secularism is thus inspired by the political agenda of "living together" and the prominent markers are the relations between the majority and minority groups. Before the end of the 1990s, the integration of minorities into Québec society was mainly thought of in terms of cultural exchanges in the crucible of a francophone public identity, framed by the model of "interculturalism" [25]. During the same decade, more and more immigrants started coming from the North African Maghreb because of linguistic affinities with Québec built on French as the official language, as per the the Charter of the French Language (commonly known as Bill 101), adopted in 1977, and, above all, Québec immigration policies that prioritized knowledge of French. The increased visibility of this new religious difference, combined with the globalized impacts of the events of 11 September 2001, in the political imaginary, probably contributed to a hardening of the dominant conceptions of secularism, more and more defined in relation to Muslim "otherness." As Eid (2016, pp. 86–87) [26], also points out, Islam and "Muslims" thus went from being an external enemy in the Western imaginary, associated with Islamism in the Gulf countries or with inherited images of the Iranian Revolution, to an internal enemy following the attacks on the United States. In this new context, the border between Them, Muslims, and Us, the majority, was built around two markers: The overdetermination of the first by religion, understood as "an omnipotent and timeless force that, like a 'second nature,' overdetermines all social relationships" [26] (p. 86) and Islam's alleged opposition to equality between women and men. These arguments, largely inspired by the French model of secularism [27], became a major force in the debate on reasonable accommodation, and even more so at the time of the announcement of the *Charter of Values* [5]. As we will see throughout the analysis, the young people interviewed refer often at this time to a significant break in their relationship to the majority group.

There was also a hardening of the media discourse regarding Islam and Muslims, a rise of far-right groups (e.g., "La Meute," a far-right group founded in 2015 in Québec by two former members of the Canadian Armed Forces. The organization had 16,000 members on its Facebook page in 2018), and a shift to the political right within society as a whole [28]. Among the common discursive categories used to defend more restrictive conceptions of secularism, we also note the recurrence of the arguments of "security," particularly in the context of "radicalization" and the threat to identity or to "acquired rights" [29]. Muslim communities in Québec have also been the target of several types of assaults, including a deadly attack at a Québec City mosque in 2017, the delivery of hate messages to the same mosque, and a false television report that a mosque had reportedly requested exclusion

of women on a construction site. Despite this accumulation of worrying facts, the various levels of government are still reluctant or hesitant to speak of "Islamophobia".

2.2. Immigrant-Background Youth, Boundary Negotiation, and Islam

Several studies on the self-identification of second-generation youth have been conducted in European countries, including France, Belgium, and the Netherlands, and in the United States [30–33]. These studies generally show that youth use a variety of categories to self-define, including multiple, hyphenated, shifting, and context-specific identifications [30–33]. Research on boundary negotiation in schools also shows a tendency for these young people to focus on relationships with other youths with an immigrant background rather than those of the majority group [34]. In Québec, research has led to similar findings: Young people from immigrant backgrounds identify themselves less with so-called "old stock" (de souche) Quebecers than with those who belong to a racialized group [1,35], as is often the case for young Muslims. Studies also show that many young people from an immigrant background have experienced exclusion [36] and discrimination, sometimes leading to the perception of an insurmountable barrier, especially in disadvantaged districts [37]. Mc Andrew (2002) [38] observes in the same sense that religious and racial boundaries are crucial in whether intergroup relations are established, especially in the Montréal area. The study by Magnan and Larochelle-Audet (2018) [39] illustrates more recently that in the post-9/11 context of Bill 60 (the *Charter*), membership in the Muslim religion (real or presumed) has become a significant marker in the construction of the "border" in the school milieu [40]. Finally, Magnan et al. (2016) [40] observe that young people from an immigrant background in Québec have little interaction with members of the majority group, with whom they sense a certain estrangement, as observed elsewhere [33].

In this tense context, new studies are looking at the perception of recent political events by young people from immigrant backgrounds. Some have shown that the conflict dynamics of intergroup relations in Québec society have significant consequences for young people. First, the feeling of exclusion and stigmatization associated with the *Charter* debate have directly affected the psychological well-being of some young people, particularly those who identify with a religious or cultural minority. A study by Hassan et al. (2016) [41] illustrates that the negative attributions assigned to the collective identities associated with these young people (e.g., Arabs, Muslims, etc.) can be internalized and compromise their sense of belonging to society. Another study by El Hage (2013) [42] conducted in a Montréal college reveals that a majority of students from an immigrant background (17/24) reported having experienced stressful incidents in social interactions from the beginning of the 2013 *Charter* debate, such as inappropriate remarks or bullying, both inside and outside school. The *Charter*, and the discussions that followed, may also have contributed to making students more aware of such behaviours, and possibly gave them the means to name and make sense of such experiences.

These results also correspond to those of other Québec studies conducted on college students' perceptions of religious radicalization. Dejean et al. (2016) [6] note that the feeling of exclusion or stigmatization experienced by young people of Muslim faith may in many ways represent a "zone of fragility" linked to religious radicalization (leading or not to violence). Several youths said they felt there was a climate of suspicion around all Muslim students in the school, particularly related to the media uproar over Islam and radicalization. This study also highlighted that the "marginalization of identity" felt by some young people, who feel torn between their culture of origin and the host society, could represent a raw nerve that could be skillfully exploited by recruiters of radical groups of all kinds. On the other hand, this study illustrates, as have others [43], that for many young people, religion plays a positive role in their identification, especially in a context of intergroup tensions where it can reassert a strong social identity.

In a context marked by strong identity polarization involving, in particular, distorted perceptions of Islam and Muslims, it is necessary to examine the discourses of young Muslims in order to better understand their identity positioning and their perception of the boundary.

3. The Analytical Framework: Rapport with the Majority Group, the Boundary, and Identification

Our conceptual basis is inspired by the Weberian approach of ethnic communalization and ethnicity [10,44] in that it considers ethnicity as a social construct largely shaped by the subjectivity of individuals and the relations between groups. Our analysis focuses on how individuals describe their relationship to the majority group and therefore how they negotiate the boundary. It is thus a question of studying the meanings attributed by individuals to certain markers that form the Us/Them categories: "What comes under the domain of ethnicity is not the empirically observable cultural differences, but the conditions in which cultural differences are used as symbols of differentiation between in-group and out-group" [45] (p. 141). Thus, our analysis does not focus on the cultural or religious content itself, but on the construction of the boundary and the categorizations that result from it.

Following Juteau (2015) [10], we situate the Us/Them categories in the power and domination relations between majority and minority groups. Special attention will be given in this article to what Juteau [10] calls the "external face" of the boundary, which is created within social relations themselves. It is therefore constituted in the relationship to otherness, between Us/Them. For Juteau [10], markers used to delimit boundaries can vary greatly depending on contexts; they can refer sometimes to language, religion, skin colour, or country of origin. In the same way, in this conception, minorities are not designated in an essentialist manner, but rather refer to a sociological status. The dynamics of the external face of ethnicity can also be reflected in the "internal face" of the boundary, that is, on the construction of identity as perceived and lived by an individual relating to a group in the name of historical, cultural, or religious continuity. Danielle Hervieu-Léger speaks of a "believer lineage" to designate "the reference to the legitimacy of an authorized memory (of a 'tradition') [...] without prejudging the content of the beliefs that are at issue" [46] (p. 19. The "[...]" indicates elisions in original quotes or verbatim, here and below). We will see that the young people interviewed often draw the outlines of such an internal face or believer lineage in response to or in parallel with their negotiation of the boundary with the majority group.

To examine young people's view of their own sense of belonging in this context, like Brubacker and Junqua (2001) [47], we prefer the concept of "identification" to that of "identity." Brubaker and Junqua [47] propose this term since it implies "a process and an activity" in addition to being "devoid of the reifying connotations of the term identity" [47] (p. 75). They point to a dynamic process moving away from the essentialist tendencies of the term, identity. The terms, "identification" and "categorization", imply an intrinsic relationship to social life, without which it is impossible to study the phenomenon, since this is the study of the relation of self-identification as well as external identification of oneself by others (categorization). Being inseparable from social life, Brubaker and Junqua (2001) [47] see identification as a situational phenomenon, which can vary according to context. Our analysis considers the fact that "identity" is not given, and is rather a process we call "identification." Identification is a process marked by multiple social and individual factors, but for the aim of this paper, we will focus our analysis on the religious aspect of our participants' identification. Other identification factors have been addressed in a previous publication. See Magnan et al. (2017) [48].

This analytical framework will allow us to examine the interrelationship between the internal and external faces of ethnicity from the perspective of young people's perception of their relationship to the majority group (boundary) and their identification categories.

4. The Methodological Approach

The secondary data presented in this article come from a qualitative study of youth born to second-generation immigrant parents attending a Montréal college (*n* = 60). They are taken from a study of the scholastic experience and orientation logic of young college students from an immigrant background. Once the analysis of the orientation process of young people with an immigrant background was completed, we chose to carry out a secondary analysis of the retrospective school

narratives of young Muslims in the corpus. Indeed, the analyses have inductively highlighted the importance of the religious marker in negotiating boundaries with the majority group. Participants include nine female and one male student, born in Québec (seven out of 10) or arrived during early childhood (three out of 10, generation 1.5). Participants had in common that both parents are immigrants, they belong to the Muslim religion, they studied in French in the Montréal area, and they were 18 to 20 years old at the time of the interview. This study being qualitative, our objective was not to obtain a representative sample of a population in the statistical sense of the term. We sought to diversify the corpus to document individual experiences and to bring forth different voices and perspectives on the issues being addressed while highlighting those aspects that are shared by the participants. A limit to the diversification of our sample lies in the inclusion of only one male subject. The results, however, do not appear to have been affected, since the issues raised by that participant were consistent with those raised by the female subjects. Thus, the youths interviewed identify with different countries, including Algeria (3), Afghanistan (1), Guyana (1), Ghana (1), Iran (2), Morocco (1), and Pakistan (1). They are members of "visible minorities" or not. *The Employment Equity Act* defines visible minorities as people, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour. Participants attended French-language (3) or English-language (5) public colleges, or private French-language (1) or private English-language colleges (1). It should also be noted that the interviews were conducted in 2013–2014, when the *Parti Québécois* government announced the *Charter of Values*, which is echoed in many declarations. The public debate around the *Charter of Values* became a turning point in the negotiation of the border between the majority and the minority groups in Québec, as will be discussed further in the analysis. For reasons of ethics and confidentiality, the names used in the analysis are pseudonyms. All testimonial excerpts have been translated from French to English. The transcriptions are faithful to the participants' speech. We respected orthographical norms except to showcase individual expression.

In the project underpinning this study, the semi-directed interviews were conducted in depth [49]. They lasted between 90 and 150 min each. This data collection technique was designed to highlight the sensitivity and experience of young people in their storytelling. They were invited to tell their story, describing in particular the migration path of their parents, their school experiences, their categories of identification, and their relationship to Québec society. The interview guide used for this study is available in Appendix A. The interviews were recorded and transcribed in full. To carry out the analysis, we first conducted a "horizontal" codification of the data around the themes structuring our conceptual framework (break with the majority group, boundary formation stages, pivotal moments). The detailed categories of the content analysis are available in Appendix B. This first step made it possible to identify pivotal moments in the set of individual trajectories in terms of formation and solidification of the boundary. Next, we created a synoptic table for each participant in the study to identify the specificities of the individual profiles with respect to the boundary. This "vertical" analysis then led to the construction of a typology of rapport to the majority group and negotiation of the boundary. The results of this double perspective are revisited in the next section.

5. Rupture with the Majority Group

5.1. Boundary Infancy, Elementary School

While several studies on the integration of young people with an immigrant background [50–53] identify the period of adolescence as the first pivotal moment in the construction of the intergroup boundary, our analysis highlights that, from childhood, many young people experience situations that lead them to become aware of their "difference" to varying degrees. This is what we call the infancy of the boundary. For some (Taika (Female, Algeria), Leyla (Female, Guyana), Daline (Female, Pakistan), and Amilda (Female, Ghana)), the transition to elementary school takes place without incident, and no difficult episodes are reported. This is the case of Taika (Female, Algeria):

I really liked the teachers, I found that they seemed passionate about their work and everything, especially one that I had in Grade 3 and 4, since this one in particular made us do like a lot of enriching activities and he really helped to enrich our French, you could really see that it was close to his heart.

5.1.1. Awareness of Stigma

For others (Neda (Female, Iran), Bahar (Female, Afghanistan), and Rihab (Female, Algeria)), the same period was marked by certain "critical incidents" [54], involving teachers or peers, that created a first outline of the boundary. These incidents involved, for example, mores (e.g., modesty issues in a course on anatomy) or the wearing of religious symbols. This is the case of Bahar (Female, Afghanistan), who reports that when she started wearing the hijab (headscarf) in Grade 4 (age 9), she received several unpleasant comments at school:

They didn't really understand it, but they said, for example, what are you wearing? And so I told them I was wearing the hijab and that's part of my identity. People thought it was strange because they were not really used to it. For sure, when you're little, it's like a little difficult because we don't have, we lose self-confidence more easily.

Finally, three young people had difficult, even traumatic, experiences in elementary school or kindergarten. These situations involved a teacher, inherently someone in a position of power. This is the case of Fahim (Male, Iran), who recalls that he was physically assaulted by a teacher:

Yes, really from students, I do not remember too much, but I remember from the teachers, my preschool teacher, there was an episode where once she hit me on the head with a big book, I do not know, for sure she was a bit racist, it showed, my brother and sister already knew, I think my mother already knew.

In the same vein, another participant (Bouchra (Female, Algeria)) confided that some of her elementary school teachers acted in discriminatory ways, especially toward young Muslims:

When I spoke in class and stuff, her reactions were a little disproportionate. She sent me to the principal's office for having, I don't know, for not having put away my book at the right time, when the reading period was over, or because she thought my answers were inappropriate.

Bouchra (Female, Algeria), like others, indicated she experienced the events of September 11th as a real tipping point during elementary school. She felt a perceptible change in people's attitudes towards her:

It's crazy for me that an event that happened in the United States could have affected my life like that, but on 11 September 2001, from that moment on... When the attacks there happened, the effect wasn't felt right away, but in the years that followed, it was at that moment that the attitude of the people changed.

At the mention of her Algerian origin, Bouchra tells us that the reaction of others could become downright negative, provoking in return a defensive attitude on her part. This shame attached by the other to her identification, then transformed into a stigma, often pushed her, she told us, to reflect the identification by which she felt excluded back at the other, notably by resorting to dark humour:

I did not have to be ashamed to be Muslim, I reacted in a way that was pretty [...]. I tended to make pretty inappropriate jokes about the subject, from the age of 8, I started making jokes about terrorists when someone reacted like that, to make comments like, "What? Are you afraid I'll blow up your house?"

In his sociological analysis of stigma, Goffman (as cited in [55]) writes "the stigmatized individual defines himself as no different from any other human being, while at the same time he and those

around him define him as someone set apart." (p. 26). While the difference is constructed in the social relation, it nevertheless acquires a structuring force in reciprocal relations and perceptions, since it refers to a perceived difference on both sides with respect to a "normality" in terms of identity. Goffman [55] explains that stigmatized individuals are thus confronted by two strategies: Become "masters in the art of pretending" by masking their difference, or using a "blanket" to minimize their impact in social interaction [56]. The defensive use of dark humour by the girl of Algerian origin seems to be part of such a stigma blanket strategy, which, by caricaturing the label, reveals its absurdity.

5.1.2. Silencing the Experience of Racism?

Among young people who experienced discriminatory incidents with elementary school teachers, there is a tendency to doubt themselves to explain away or to minimize the difficulties experienced, attributing part of the responsibility to their own embarrassment or personal temperament. For example, Fahim (Male, Iran) said this when talking about his elementary school experience:

> There were some with whom I got along really well, there were some with whom I did not get along so well, but I don't think it was racism, I think more that it's I was new, and I was a little different, a little quiet, but after I came out of my shell, it went well.

Another (Neda (Female, Iran)) adds:

> In kindergarten, they adored me, I was really adorable to them. But in elementary school, they didn't like me much, I was a little bit the difficult child, I was in my corner, my own world, yes.

These internal attributions used by young people who have experienced incidents where they were alienated by teachers seem to show a strategy of concealing stigma, which, by removing the hypothesis of racism or discrimination from these situations, is perhaps aimed, more broadly, at erasing it from the lived experience. However, more research is needed to validate this hypothesis.

5.2. Boundary Solidification, High School

While boundary construction not only occurs in adolescence, but is often built gradually from early childhood, the high school stage is a pivotal moment for most of the youths interviewed. Indeed, it is in high school that many of the turning points in the individual biography occur, in terms of relationship with parents or religious affiliation, but also in relation to a heightened awareness of racialization at school by peers or teachers. This solidification of the boundary operates both on the symbolic level, through the projection of a Québec identity from which many feel excluded, as well as in concrete attitudes and behaviors, attesting in different ways to a difference between Us/Them.

5.2.1. The Narrative of the Québec Identity at School

On the symbolic level, history classes and debates on secularism are often depicted as the main markers of a collective identity promoted by the majority group to assert the "internal face" [10] of its national boundary while distancing itself from immigrants (external), especially Muslims. This demarcation operates both inside and outside the walls of the school.

At school, history classes are firstly described by eight out of 10 participants as a monotonous and repetitive subject, from elementary to high school, in which they do not really recognize themselves:

> Me, I think it was mostly repetitive because, since elementary school, you learn about Amerindians, after that you learn a little of the history of Québec, we learned that in elementary school it's the same thing in high school. (Amilda (Female, Ghana))

Some go even farther, denouncing the ethnocentric nature of the history taught in French-language schools, particularly in the marginalization of Indigenous peoples. One student explained, for example, her irritation with the story of "colonized" Quebecers because of the position of "colonizer" that they themselves had in relation to the First Nations:

> There are many of us whose peoples were colonized by the French, by the English, so our first reaction was not "poor little francophones," but it was more "weren't there already people here when the French arrived? So why should we be so sad that the French were conquered when they themselves had conquered the Amerindians?". (Bouchra (Female, Algeria))

5.2.2. The *Charter of Values*, a Flashpoint

Outside school, a political event in Québec has had a major resonance in the discourses of all the young interviewees who see it, after September 11, as a second sea change in the evolution of their relationship to the majority group and in Québec in general: The *Charter of Values*. While for some, the word, "racism", would not have been uttered before this event, it entered the language and representations of several of the young people who felt betrayed by this political gesture that, in their view, directly targeted Islam and Muslims.

Some support their challenge to this bill based on the same legal principles that serve to define secularism in Québec (equality, freedom of conscience and religion, separation of church and state, neutrality) [24] but also by criticizing the erroneous or paradoxical interpretation proposed in the *Charter*. For Amilda (Female, Ghana), Fahim (Male, Iran) Bouchra (Female, Algeria), and Bahar (Female, Afghanistan), this is the case:

> I like secular [...] secularism, it's not... I don't know, but in my view, it's not against all religion [...] so it would be stupid to say, right, you allow the cross, but you do not allow the hijab and you call yourself secular. Secularism is not an attachment to being against religion, it is detachment from religion. (Fahim (Male, Iran))

Others saw it as direct discrimination against Muslims, largely related to the "national question" and Québec's quest for independence: Neda (Female, Iran), Taika (Female, Algeria), and Malika (Female, Morocco).

> I think it's aimed too much at Muslims, it's really about Muslims, because a Christian is never going to wear a cross so huge it sticks out, and the majority is already secular anyways. (Neda (Female, Iran))

Yet another explicitly referred to the *Parti Québécois* initiative as a "racial posture" that involves more than just religion, and that frightened her:

> That's the next step and that's what's happening with the *Charter*, we can see it. You can say it's a question of religion, but there are many, many racial stereotypes that are starting to emerge. And we start to see the real face of people, the real opinion that they have of the people around them, and it's scary. (Malika (Female, Morocco))

This last declaration suggests that the *Charter* lifted a taboo in public discourse or opinion by liberating racist speech that had previously been more censored or hidden. This reading of the situation was also put forward by several analysts of secularism in Québec, who showed both a rise in far-right rhetoric in the wake of the *Charter* episode [5], and demonstrated that, unlike the previous bills, the *Charter* was placed on the political agenda without being triggered by any specific incident in the public space [21], as if beliefs preceded facts.

5.2.3. Representation by Deeds: Lived Racism

Although all participants reacted negatively to the *Charter*, those who seem to be most personally affected by the repercussions of the proposed bill were no doubt young women who wear the hijab and whose stigma is therefore visible. Two of them spoke to us of an increase, in the context of the *Charter*, in racist incidents and hate crimes experienced daily, not only in school, but also in the street and in the labour market. The first, Rihab (Female, Algeria), said:

> Especially since the *Charter* business. [...] Then yeah, the worst thing is that people look at you like you're an idiot because you follow that. As if I were a submissive woman and all.

It even created new barriers for her to enter the job market. In the street and in various public places, she was also insulted by strangers:

> I remember, I was out and there was one woman who said: Hey! Do you have a bomb in your bag? [...] At one point, I went into a small shop and the woman shouted Lord! She looked at me and she shouted. (Rihab (Female, Algeria))

A second interviewee, Daline (Female, Pakistan), was the target of the same kind of gratuitous aggression because of her religious affiliation:

> I was with my friend, she was parking her car [...] there was another car [...] and a man came with his wife and he told us: go back to your country, you do not belong here, f--- you.

Another young woman who does not wear the headscarf explained that, regardless of the imperative to adopt the "Québec identity," they frequently feel an often-insurmountable barrier in relations with other Quebecers. In these cases, the most salient marker of difference does not seem to be religion, but ethnic origin. However, in both situations, the result is the same. Bouchra (Female, Algeria):

> They wanted us to speak French, to have their values, their ideals, to have the same vision of what it meant to be in a democracy, to be liberals, to be independent and autonomous [...], but when the time came to interact with us, most of the time we felt clearly that we were not Quebecers, that they themselves always saw us as immigrants and as people from our country of origin.

The same young woman added that, in her view, the moment they discover her stigma, many of her interlocutors change their attitude, as if their conception of a "true" Quebecer was collapsing and the facade of the social interaction shattered:

> I look white, so people when they meet me assume that I was from one of these countries, either from France or something because I look like a Quebecer, I don't look Algerian, and when I tell them, I immediately see a change in their personality, in how they treated me.

In college, most students still observe this separation, but in a less marked way than in high school:

> Now, here everyone... You go to the cafeteria, everyone is with everyone, here it's much more mixed. (Amilda (Female, Ghana))

> People mix more I would say because we don't know each other. You have a class with 30 people [...] so you're never with the same people. (Amilda (Female, Ghana))

5.2.4. A Negative Representation of "Québec Culture"

Certainly, the boundaries that solidify in high school are mostly experienced by young people who feel excluded from a Québec identity defined by history or the issue of secularism. The results suggest, however, that a backlash effect seems to lead most of these young people to develop a negative representation of "old stock" Quebecers and their "culture," as one of them points out:

> I believe that by forcing children, especially children of immigrants, to shun their own culture for the benefit of Québec culture, they disgust them. [...] We were above all tired of being taken for idiots, to be told that our culture was less important, that our culture was not part of the Québec community as such. (Bouchra (Female, Algeria))

The first categorical attribution mentioned by our participants related to the Québec view as being ignorant and closed-minded:

They wonder afterward why people treat them as ignorant, they don't budge, they do not want to see. And that's something I noticed in Québec culture, these are not people who like to look beyond the tip of their nose. 'This is what happens here, nothing else; what happens elsewhere we don't care and it's not important, it's not here'. (Malika (Female, Morocco))

This representation is accompanied by the depreciation of certain symbols associated with Québec culture, such as poutine, hockey, and the *Québécois* accent. The same goes for Québec history, considered in many discourses as less rich or interesting than that of other nations or countries:

Then, with my parents, we joke, we ask 'what's their culture, poutine, beer, hockey,' what is their culture, really? (Neda (Female, Iran))

One of the participants articulates this devaluing image by using the expression "white-washed" to describe the state of a person who is too immersed in Québec culture:

I call it the white-washed world, becoming *Québécois* in your head. (Neda (Female, Iran))

These categorical attributions show that the boundary is built both by the majority group and by the minority group formed by the young people interviewed. This negative representation could be correlated with the exclusionary attitude felt by young people vis-à-vis the majority group, particularly in the context of the tenser discourse on secularism in the political and media world since the *Charter* episode.

Although Québec culture seems daunting for most of the young people interviewed, many admit having been influenced by "Québec values", which moderate their way of being and acting and even their relationships with their parents.

5.3. Respecting "Québec Values": From Criticism to Support

Among the young people we met, most of whom were born in Québec, some offered a rather critical point of view regarding the so-called Québec liberal values, such as individualism or freedom, which they considered excessive:

More freedom at home, that's a big deal. At my house, you come home, you didn't have a good grade on the exam, you do not go out for a week; while at their house, it's neoliberal, I would say, in the sense that the parents let them do what they want. (Leyla (Female, Guyana))

At the same time, many of them feel they have internalized some of these values, such as open-mindedness. This is the case of Taika (Female, Algeria):

Québec values, it's above all open-mindedness, always freedom, but above all I find that, in Québec especially, it's openness of mind they teach us.

This mix of values causes some young people to conflict with their parents in terms of morals, as one of them put it:

My father, he's very religious, very conservative on that. For him, people's roles are very rigid, there is a way for women to act, to dress, to interact with others. [...] For me, it's something that makes no sense, quite honestly; gender roles, it's ridiculous. (Bouchra (Female, Algeria))

In cases of disagreements with their parents, these young people seem to draw a clear line between what comes from "true" religion, the one they interpret independently, and the culture of their country of origin, which is marked by injustice:

Since I grew up in a more Western culture, and I know more about my religion, I know the difference between culture and religion. Over there [in Algeria], they mix them up and then it annoys me because they act unjustly, things that are not right [...] and religion condemns that. But they, because it's cultural, they say it's okay. (Rihab (Female, Algeria))

This distancing from family culture, coupled with the individualization of the relationship with Islam, seems to show in this young woman a pronounced reflexivity in relation to her own values, her choices [57]. However, interestingly, this proximity to "Québec values" is not necessarily accompanied by cultural affinities. In the case cited above, for example, despite the liberal attitude of the interviewee in terms of a diversity of morals, a clear boundary is drawn on the cultural level in relation to other Quebecers.

5.4. A Typology of Boundary Negotiation

The analysis led to the identification of an ideal view typical of three types of rapport with the majority group, as seen in Table 1: A harmonious rapport, a tense rapport, and an indifferent rapport. With each type, boundary bargaining modes were identified. It should be noted that these young people often used more than one boundary negotiation strategy over time, as individual positioning is often manifold depending on the situation, the interlocutors, and the context. We find, however, that this typology represents the main strategies described by participants.

Table 1. Typology of boundary negotiation.

Rapport with Majority Group	Boundary Negotiation
Harmonious rapport	Cross the boundary Straddle the boundary
Tense rapport	Be assigned the boundary Escalate the boundary
Indifferent rapport	Break the boundary

5.4.1. A Harmonious Rapport

The young people who mainly match this type (six cases) developed a fairly harmonious relationship with the majority group. They do not seem to experience, as exhibited in their own discourses, a conflicting relationship, nor do they feel excluded or in a relationship of domination vis-à-vis the majority group. These subjects negotiate the boundary by "crossing" it, i.e., by designating themselves as members of the majority group, or by "straddling" it, to identify themselves at times as Quebecers, and, at other times, by their own country of origin. This is not imposed positioning: They choose it, showing flexibility in their positioning process.

Only one subject within the corpus, Fahim (Iran), self-identifies as a Quebecer, reflecting what we call a crossing of the boundary. This young Iranian, who was born in Québec, describes himself as atheist. Although he feels attached to his country of origin and wants to travel there one day, he feels closer to the Québec identity, including a Canadian allegiance:

> When I say Quebecer, it's not that I don't call myself Canadian, but it's more that I associate myself with Québec. I also like the Canadian identity.

Fahim (Male, Iran) is also one of the few young people in our corpus to have become friends with "old stock" Quebecers. Although he says he has never observed any separation or difference between immigrants and Quebecers at school, he tells us he experienced discrimination in elementary school by a teacher. He asserts, however, that it was not racism.

The other five subjects who are part of this harmonious rapport group straddle the boundary, often opting for multiple and situational identifications with their home country, Canada or Québec. This is the case of Taika (Female, Algeria), for example, who is a good illustration of this relatively comfortable straddling of the Algerian and Québec identity:

> The reality of being a second-generation immigrant is to have some cultural baggage that others do not have, it's more things to share, it's like having two cultural suitcases, we have the Québec baggage, we have the one from our own country.

For the others, this overlap implies a positioning as a Canadian immigrant and a distancing from Québec, without this relationship being perceived as conflictual. This is the case of Amilda (Female, Ghana) who describes her identity this way:

So far, I consider myself African-Canadian, not a Quebecer; yes, I live in Québec, it's been a long time, but the country is Canada.

These young people also tend to be less likely to hang out with "Quebecers" at school, where they are instead often found among "immigrants".

5.4.2. A Tense Rapport

Three young people in this category, including two who wear the hijab, developed a tense relationship with the majority group. According to their testimonies, they experienced in different forms of conflict experiences, situations of exclusion, or discrimination with the majority group.

The example of Bouchra (Female, Algeria) demonstrates well a boundary assignment by the majority group:

When it came time to interact with us, most of the time, we felt very clearly that we were not Quebecers, that even they saw us as immigrants.

Here, the perceived boundary does not seem to be articulated around the religious marker as such, but rather around the status of immigrant. This feeling of exclusion does not prevent Bouchra (Female, Algeria) at other times from avoiding other forms of assignment by describing herself mainly as a Montrealer or "from everywhere in the world":

When we say we are Montrealers, it can mean that we come from all over the world, but we identify with the values and dreams that are born in this city.

Another participant, Rihab [Female, Algeria], seems instead to fight against the perceived assignment by escalating the boundary with the majority group via the marker from which she feels excluded: Religion. This is particularly apparent in her way of talking about her choice to wear the veiled niqab rather than an "ordinary" headscarf:

You know why I don't wear a normal little headscarf like girls with jeans and everything? Because I told myself that I'd wear it like that. Whether I wear the niqab or a little scarf, there will always be... They will know that I am different. So while I'm at it, I'll go with what I like [...] they will never accept us.

This young woman, who calls herself Muslim first and foremost, has had experiences of racism not only at school, but also at work and on the streets. She added that she began to wear her veil the moment the *Charter* played a major role in her perception of the "line" that separates her from others:

It's since I put on the veil that I felt [...] it draws a line; it makes you not one of us. [...] I have been disgusted since the *Charter* affair.

For her, it was religion that saved her:

I'm going to be honest, it's the only thing that pulled me back from suicide [...] it's the only thing that makes me want to live every morning [...], it's the only thing that consoles me, that keeps me together.

(Rihab (Female, Algeria))

This testimony is in line with the results of the study [6] (p. 53) that illustrated that religious practice among young college students often provides "a framework in which to develop and negotiate one's place in society" and that, in that sense, it plays a key role in individual identification.

5.4.3. An Indifferent Rapport

Finally, one young person in the corpus is in a relationship that we describe as indifferent to the majority group insofar as she does not refer to it directly, either positively or negatively. Neither does she seem to sense the boundary or even try to break from it or free herself from it by identifying most closely with the city of Montréal, as we saw earlier with Bouchra (Female, Algeria):

> My sense of belonging is not with Québec, it is with Montréal, I love Montréal, I love the diversity of Montréal.

Among the 10 young people interviewed, an observation emerges from most discourses (except that of Fahim (Male, Iran)): There is a certain discomfort, even a distancing, from the Québec identity or identification with Québec culture. We have seen previously that several factors could come into play in this reluctance to consider oneself a Quebecer, including discomfort with a nationalist vision of history, with French, or a with the conception of secularism held by the majority group, which excludes several forms of religious expression, predominantly Muslim, from the understanding of what is publicly acceptable. Others have experienced racism or exclusion that may have fueled this estrangement. In addition, several are more inclined to identify themselves, often concurrently, with their country of origin, the Canadian identity, and with the anglophone culture, which is considered more open to diversity. This is what Bouchra [Female, Algeria] says when talking about her English-language college:

> They [anglophones] were more interested in knowing our cultures [...] they wanted to learn. Which is what I think was lacking with francophones because they had preconceived ideas about our religions, our cultures, our values.

6. Discussion and Conclusions

The analysis of the results highlights the salient role of the religious marker in the discourses of the young people interviewed. These young college students have in common growing up in a Muslim family from an immigrant background and, despite the variability of their religious practices, they refer in one way or another to this heritage, often amalgamated with the culture of their country of origin. As a result of their social and academic experiences from elementary school to college, the youths adopt different positioning in relation to the majority group. Labile over time and according to particular situations and contexts, these positioning often transit their religious affiliation, inherited or re-appropriated, if only because this marker permeates the perceptions of other Quebecers toward them. While most of the young people have a harmonious relationship with the majority group, they are no less estranged in terms of identification and their discourses refers, with the exception of one, to an Us/Them boundary. This delineation of the difference in relation to the majority group centres mainly around a cultural identity—defined through the French language, history, or secularism—from which these young people feel excluded.

Our results show that, as early as elementary school, some of these young people report having experienced school-based situations that contribute to shaping the first experiences of the boundary with the majority group. At the high school level, this boundary is then often consolidated, even crystallized, through negative experiences or a perception of rejection, a fortiori by the *Charter of Values*. For many young people, as suggested by the testimony of our participants, the *Charter* debate has indeed emerged as a tipping point in their journey and the negotiation of their place in society that is characterized by its normative interpretation of secularism. As we saw earlier, this concept of secularism has created a majority representation of Islam and Muslims as excluded from the "imagined community" because of a perception they are as dominated by their religion and reluctant to support gender equality. Despite their positioning in a harmonious relationship with the majority group, some felt targeted as Muslims and excluded for this reason, whereas this marker was not necessarily significant in their own vision of themselves. Others report that, from that moment, they began to be afraid and think about leaving Québec. Some have since experienced verbal aggression on the street or

in public places. These young people seem to then opt for identification with Canada, often coupled with identification with their country of origin.

We formulated the hypothesis that negative representations, as described by these young people, are part of a kind of political myth that characterizes in their eyes the collective psyche of "Quebecers." This myth, projected in history or French courses through the affirmation of certain liberal values and especially of secularism, would thus play a key role in the normative expectations of identity as perceived by the majority and therefore imposed on "others." The stigma felt, borne, or contested by several of these young people is therefore closely linked to the action of this myth. The latter, which is increasingly embodied in a secular "narrative" [28], would become for the members of the majority group, a symbolic and cognitive field of vision, "which also exerts an explanatory function, providing a certain number of keys to the understanding of the present, constituting a grid through which the disconcerting chaos of facts and events may appear to be ordered" [58] (p. 40). The vision of secularism proclaimed in the *Charter* was revealing for several young people interviewed in the eruption of this national myth of Quebecers who aim to exclude difference. For many, regardless of their degree of adherence to Québec values or ideals, they will always remain immigrants and will always be treated as such by the majority group. It is this latent closure of the national community that the *Charter* would have made explicit by creating a problem that did not exist—a threat to the majority identity—as several young people pointed out. In this sense, whether it was adopted by the state does not prevent the repercussions it may have had on mutual perceptions.

However, as we have seen in several interviews, the perceived exclusion may have a high individual and social cost. The example of Rihab [Female, Algeria], who tells us that religion saved her from suicide, is eloquent in this respect. This young woman mentioned, as did others, not being recognized by the majority group. As Jenkins (2008) [59] notes, in some cases, categorization by the majority group may invalidate the self-identification of an individual. Not surprisingly, she does not describe herself as a Quebecer. Rather than identifying with the country of birth of her parents, as many do, this young woman reappropriated her religious identity after "a period of doubt, introspection, and questioning about [her] beliefs, a period accompanied by a personal search, a return to God, and a strengthening of the faith" [57] (p. 208). If in the case of Rihab [Female, Algeria], religion seems to play a positive role, the depreciated image of the Muslim religion could represent a "zone of fragility" for identity for her as well as others. As noted [6] (p. 56), "Islamist recruiters capitalize on the rhetoric of the clash of civilizations and the war between Islam and the West to attract potential recruits." It would be interesting to continue this study by exploring the representations of the religious and of Islam in particular among young people of the majority group to observe another facet of the boundary and to cross-reference the perspectives and viewpoints on identification.

This estrangement from the Québec identity does not prevent young people, as in the case of many of our respondents, from adopting moral or ethical values that they regard as *Québécois*, such as openness, freedom, and equality (especially between the sexes). When attachment to these principles causes conflicts of values with their more conservative parents, some young people will develop their own interpretation of the religion, distinguishing it from that of the parents or the culture of origin and by expressing the need to understand it for themselves. Unlike the identity boundary, the "in-between" identifications in terms of values, which we find traces of in many discourses, is essentially manifested positively as a form of individualization of faith and autonomy in relation to both their family and other Quebecers. It also seems to contribute, as evidenced by the testimonies, to an intersecting attitude of openness to diversity.

It must be borne in mind, however, that the social and academic experience reported by the young people interviewed reveals lived and perceived discourses. One cannot thereby assume the objective nature of racism and discrimination experienced. Be that as it may, the testimonies of these young people invite us to reflect on the mandate of the school in Québec, a school that advocates learning "living together" and socialization from an intercultural approach. There remains much work to be done, especially since it is the public space where the tensions pop up. In terms of academic discourses,

there is a need to better address inter-group power relations and domination in a context marked by new tensions between the discourse and concepts of secularism. In practical terms, there is a need to think about ways to ensure a better formal and informal socialization process among groups of students, with a particular focus on religious markers.

Appendix A. Interview Guide

Individual interview—English version.
Interview questions—CEGEP students from immigrant backgrounds who have attended a French primary school and a French high school in Montréal.

Themes guiding the interview:

1. Family experience during childhood and adolescence.
2. Primary and High school experiences in Montréal (in French schools).
3. CEGEP experience in Montréal.
4. Linguistic, cultural and territorial identification.
5. Future plans.

To read to the respondent before beginning the interview:

During this interview, you will be asked to tell your personal life story, pertaining to your family and school experiences, your vocational choices, and your sense of belonging.

You will not be asked to answer a list of survey questions, but to answer general questions about specific themes pertaining to your individual life course.

Thus, while doing the interview, I will ask you to tell me about your personal experience concerning these general questions. You will be free to answer it as you wish. Do not hesitate to tell me what you think might be interesting and pertinent and this, without feeling embarrassed.

Finally, I re-ensure that obviously all the testimony and personal information you will share with me, as well as my personal notes, will never appear on research publications. Nevertheless, if you are not comfortable to share some information, please feel free not to answer.

We are now ready to start the interview!

I—Family experience during childhood and adolescence.

1. To start with, I would like you to tell me about your family:

   - Family members;
   - Language(s) spoken at home;
   - Schooling and work of your parents in their country of origin;
   - Work of your parents in the province of Québec;
   - Migration pathway (parent's country of origin, reasons for migrating, acculturation, and integration process, etc.);

- Travels in your parents' country of origin?
- Why those travels? Attachment to the country of origin?
- Family social networks in Montréal;
- Parents' and sibling's ways of relating to languages (namely French and English); and
- Parents' and sibling's ways of relating to Bill 101, education and French public school

II—Experiences in French primary schools and French high schools in Montréal.

2.   What are your memories of your experience at a French primary school?

- School(s) attended and parents' rationale for explaining their school choice;
- Ways of relating to school, teaching, pedagogy, curriculum (course contents);
- Academic record (success, difficulties, etc.);
- Teachers' attitude toward diversity (especially linguistic diversity);
- Have you witnessed or been victim of linguistic, cultural or religious conflicts? Unfavorable treatments directly related to linguistic, cultural, and religious diversity?
- Ways of relating to different school employees (teachers, principals, etc.);
- Ways of relating to peers (languages spoken with peers, interactions, intergroup categorizations, experiences of discrimination, etc.);
- Ways of relating to the French language and to Bill 101; and
- Senses of belonging (to language, culture, territory, etc.).

3.   What are your memories of your experience at a French High School?

- Schools(s) attended and rationale behind the choice of the school;
- Ways of relating to school, teaching, pedagogy, curriculum (history, language courses, ECR—éthique et culture religieuse—courses, etc.);
  - ○ First question: Are there any course that had an influence on you during high school? Why?
  - ○ What do you think of the history courses that you had in high school?
  - ○ What place do you feel you have in this history and toward the groups portrayed (mention the three groups if respondents do not know what to answer: Francophones, Anglophones, Aboriginals).
- Academic record (success, difficulties, etc.);
- Teachers' attitude toward diversity;
- Ways of relating to different school employees (teachers, principals, guidance counsellors, etc.);
- Ways of relating to peers (languages spoken with peers, interactions, intergroup categorizations, experience of discrimination, conversations about CEGEP vocational choices, etc.);
- Ways of relating to the French language and to Bill 101; and
- Sense of belonging (to language, culture, territory, etc.).

III—Postsecondary experience in Montréal.

4.   Tell me about your school pathway at the CEGEP level:

- First registration (date, year); and
- Different programs attended?

5.   What led you to choose your current program?

- For the curriculum content?
- For career opportunities?
- Importance of social network?
- Influence from parents, guidance counsellors, friends, teachers, school principals, etc.? and
- Linguistic reasons explaining your choice?

6.　Could you describe me how you came to choose your CEGEP?

- Influence from parents, guidance counsellors, friends, teachers, school principals, etc.?

7.　What are your memories of your CEGEP experience?

- Day-to-day experience;
- Ways of relating to CEGEP, teaching, pedagogy, curriculum (courses content);
- Ways of relating to different CEGEP employees (teachers, principals, guidance counsellors, etc.);
- Teachers' attitude toward linguistic, cultural, and religious diversity;
- Ways of relating with peers (languages spoken with peers, interactions, intergroup categorizations, etc.);
- School integration, social integration, linguistic integration (French, English, or Allophone friends, Friends' ethnic origins, process of integration over time);
- Ways of relating to the CEGEP official language: In the courses, with friends, with the administration, etc. (Does your way of relating to the CEGEP official language has changed over time?);
- Sense of belonging (to language, culture, territory, etc.); and
- Ways of relating to languages.

IV—Linguistic, cultural and territorial identification.

8.　If I simply ask you 'Who you are?', what would you answer spontaneously?

- Importance or not of language(s)?
- Importance or not of culture(s)?
- Attachment to Canada, to the province (or territory), to a town, to a specific place, etc.? and
- Importance of several characteristics such as age, sex, social class, etc.?

V—Future plans.

9.　What do you plan to do once you have graduated from CEGEP?

- To start university? Which program? In which language? In which city, province, country?
- To start working? In which languages? In which city, province, city? and
- Geographic mobility

Appendix B. Categories of Content Analysis

Axe 1: Tensions between the religious minorities and the majority group.

(A)　Schooling experiences:

- Schooling choices and trajectories;
- Welcoming and inclusion;
- Value strife in schooling context;

- Cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity at school; and
- Relationships with teachers and principals

(B) Religious practices at school:

- Curiosity and exploration of religions and religious practices;
- Religious practices in Québec;
- Experiences of religions in school; and
- The teaching of religions in school (ECR).

(C) Experiences of racism:

- Experiences of discrimination;
- Experiences of exclusion;
- Feeling of unfairness;
- Prejudices, stereotypes; and
- Experiences of colonialism, assimilation.

(D) Rapport to country of origin:

- Experiences of migration;
- Family network with country of origin;
- Representations of country of origin; and
- Experiences in the country of origin.

(E) Rapport to Québec and its population:

- Québec values representations;
- Immigrant values representations; and
- Experiences and relationships with Québec populations.

(F) Identification:

- Identity categories adopted and positioning; and
- Identity categories assigned or contested.

(G) Social networks and friends:

- Groups fluidity or separation;
- Choice of friends and social networks;
- Peer pressure;
- Isolation, exclusion, invisibility;and
- Relationships with the opposite sex.

Axe 2: The negotiation of the boundaries:

- Creation of the boundary;
- Straddle the boundary;
- Cross the boundary;
- Maintain or escalate the boundary;
- Question, refuse or contest the boundary;
- Be assigned the boundary;
- In between boundaries; and
- Being free of boundaries.

Axe 3: The pivotal moments:

(A)　In relation to family life:

- 　Teenage years and forbidden activities (going out, drinking, smoking, dating); and
- 　Experiences of Ramadan (emergence of a religious conscience).

(B)　In relation to the majority group:

- 　9-11 attacks in the USA;
- 　Charter of Values for secularism;
- 　Schooling experiences at elementary level (racism, discrimination);
- 　ECR course during secondary level studies—(prejudice, racism, feeling of unfairness);
- 　Imposition of French as the schooling language (feeling of unfairness, discrimination);
- 　Schooling experiences at secondary level (ethnic and migrant identities resurgence, groups separation, distance from the Quebecer identification); and
- 　The adoption of the veil.

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