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The Dilemma of the French Republican Model

—Towards a Multiculturalism Model?—

フランス共和国モデルのジレンマ

—多文化主義モデルを変えているか?—

WANG Ruifei

王 睿斐

概要

多文化主義をめぐる議論は多いが、実際統合モデルとして様々な国で用いられている。アメリカとイギリスが代表的であるが、多文化主義モデルはフランスの統合モデルとは完全に対立するとされる。フランス政府は、多文化主義がフランスの一体性とアイデンティティの揺らぎをもたらす恐れがあるため、事実上多様化しているフランス社会を無視して、共和国モデルを固守してきた。様々な議論がフランスの一体性と多文化主義の間の緊張をめぐって展開してきた。フランスがアメリカとイギリスのように多文化主義モデルとアフーマティブ・アクションを用いる可能性や、共和国モデルと多文化主義モデルの両立の可能性などが議論されてきた。本論文ではフランス共和国モデルのジレンマをめぐって、モデルの理想と現実の間の様々な矛盾を検討し、その上で、共和国モデルの理念が形成されてきた背景を分析し、フランス政府がときに多文化主義政策を用いた理由を明らかにした。

Keywords

French republican model, integration, multiculturalism, universalism, particularism, formal equality, concrete equality

Introduction

“Liberty, Equality, Fraternity”¹⁾ – the maxim of France, known by every French – is now questioned by many. The maxim originally meant universal liberty, universal equality, and universal fraternity, and its universality was supposed to adapt to every human being (not only French citizens), and thus all those who could accept the principles of republican universalism were welcome as French citizens. However, the motto now has different explanations, which can no longer be applied to everyone or even part of the French citizens, due to the increasing social diversity, visible ethnic minorities, and emerging minority communities in today’s French society. Mona Ozouf has termed “fraternity” as “xenophobic fraternity”²⁾, and I will term “liberty” and “equality” as “private liberty” and “racist equality” due to the fact that no religious symbols are allowed in public sphere and that discriminatory problems are occurring in French society. The paradox of the motto embodies the very dilemma facing by the French republican model of integration. There are various debates with respect to the dilemma of the republican model, mainly on contradictions between the ideals of integration model and the reality of integration. This paper focuses on one of the contradictions, which is the contradiction between the French republican model and multiculturalism.

In France, the relation between the republican model of integration and multiculturalism is seen as mutual exclusion. To the French governments, multiculturalism is a big threat to national identity and unity. Therefore theoretically as long as the republican model of integration is still in practice, multiculturalism will not be taken into account by the French government. Nevertheless, the reality is that multiculturalism model (insertion) and quasi-multiculturalism³⁾ policies were employed by French governments in some periods of the Fifth Republic. The reason “why French governments sometimes employed quasi-multiculturalism policies while in the meantime insisting on the French republican model and disavowing that the state would become multiculturalism” will be the main problematic to be addressed in this paper.

In order to address the question, the following questions will be examined accordingly.

- 1) What is the French republican model of integration? – Its tradition and principles.
- 2) What are the contradictions revolving around the republican model?
- 3) Why have the French governments of the Fifth republic insisted on the republican model though it has entailed plenty of contradictions and heated debates on itself?
- 4) How to explain the relationship between the republican model and multiculturalism is actually not mutually exclusive through the relation between universalism and particularism?

I argue that the relation between the republican model and multiculturalism is not

mutually exclusive and the ideas of welfare state give a push to the launching of quasi-multicultural policies in France. However, there is no salient evidence showing that France is on the way of changing to a multicultural model.

I Literature Review

In terms of the French republican model, researches of Jean Baubérot, Daniel Béland, Erick Bleich, Julien Jackson, Jeremy Jennings have examined the republican values – universal equality and liberty, laicity, and solidarity. These scholars cast a critical eye on the French Republic's attitudes toward and treatment of women, immigrants, people of colour, Muslims, and others. They also demonstrate debates over whether and how to integrate Muslims into French society and a republican political order supposedly blind to religious, ethnic, and racial particularities.

The French government has never admitted that it has employed multiculturalism in France, however, multiculturalism is, *de facto*, in practice in French society. The most well known example is the programme of ZEP (Priority education zones). ZEP was launched in 1981 but the first “ZEP promotion” goes out of Science Po (Paris Institute of Political Studies) in June 2006, thanks to the positive discrimination scheme according to which a quota of students of priority education zones in deprived neighbourhoods would access to the High school Science Po. Other multiculturalism in practice in France can be represented, for instance, in the creation of HALDE in 2004, the recognition of diversity in workplace in 2004 and in media in 2006, and the creation of minority associations in 2005. These are the evidence that the French government has implemented some policies in a multicultural way.

In Patrick Simon's research, he points out that French ethnic discrimination is a challenge to the French republican model. He argues that the French society has never viewed itself as a multicultural society, but since the 1990s, due to the emergence of the issue of ethnic discriminations and the growing demands for recognition by immigrants and their descendants, the management of immigrant diversity has been put on an important place on French political agendas, reflecting the changing ways in which French society views itself. He has showed part of the realistic reasons why the government has, in a certain degree, changed its attitudes toward multiculturalism, but has not demonstrated the ideational reasons why the government has actually adopted some multicultural policies, such as ZEP, which are supposedly opposite to the republican model.

Joseph Downing argues that multiculturalism is not dead in France. He has found that multiculturalism is in practice in Marseille and admitted by the local government. John R. Bowen in his research focuses on the possibility of the co-existence of French republicanism and pluralism. Martin A. Schain in his research demonstrates the

development of integration policies in France. He gives some outer factors or realistic reasons why sometimes the state has acted to reinforce multiculturalism. Similarly, they have not illustrated the ideational reasons why the central government has employed some multicultural policies while in the mean time keeps viewing multiculturalism as a big threat to the state.

Max Silverman in his research points out that France seeing multiculturalism as opposite to the republican model roots in its obsessively binary opinion on universalism and particularism. Ernesto Laclau in his research explains the relations between universalism and particularism and argues that the two are not necessarily opposite to each other as many scholars think. Their points of view can provide some new thinking when analysing the reasons, especially the ideational reasons, why the French government sometimes employed multicultural policies while in the meantime insisting on the French republican model and disavowing that the state would become multiculturalism.

II French Republican Model of Integration: Principles and Development

2.1 Principles of the French Republican Model of Integration

First of all, what is the French republican model of integration?

To put it simply, the model is commonly referred to as the “Creuset français” or the “French melting pot” (Bleich, 2001; Noiriel, 1988). The French model embodies the universal principles of liberty and equality (Jennings, 2011). Favell also shares the same opinion that France emphasizes the Universalist idea of integration and of transforming immigrants into full French citizens (Favell, 2001). In addition, the credo of French republican model is to ignore any differences and the strategy is to downplay the salience of cultural diversities in order to keep the national unity (Simon, 2010; Amiraux & Simon, 2006).

Four crucial elements summarized by Béland (2003) constitute the French republican model: 1) laicity⁴⁾ (laïcité); 2) separation between private and public spheres; 3) universalistic civic identity; 4) solidarity.

What do these elements represent actually? The first element “laicity” refers to “three phenomena all at once: freedom of conscience, the non-domination of any religion over state and society, and the principle of non-discrimination for religious reasons” (Baubérot, 2011). The 1905 law on the separation of church and state is grounded on the very concept of laicity. Former French president Chirac once explained in his speech the meaning of laicity to France. He said “laicity guarantees freedom of conscience. It protects the freedom to believe or not to believe... It allows men and women from all corners of the globe, from all cultures, to be protected in their beliefs by the Republic and its institutions... It is the neutrality of the public arena which permits the various

religions to coexist harmoniously” (Chirac, 2003).

When we talk about the second element “separation between private and public spheres”, it is better to discuss the idea of “the public”, along with the principle of laicity and the Declaration of 1789. If we look into the dictionary, the “public” can refer to as the concrete public space, such as school, café or on the street. It can refer to as people in general. And it can also refer to an abstract concept, such as common life, public interest, public order, or general will (Bowen, 2017). Article 10 of the Declaration of 1789 proclaims, “No one shall be disquieted on account of his opinions, including his religious views, provided their manifestation does not disturb the public order established by law”⁵⁾. It means that freedom of religions should give way or be sacrificed if the freedom may disturb the public sphere. This Article gives the government a lot of space to explain and justify the law on banning the veil in schools of 2004.

The third element “universalistic civic identity” can be explained from a constitutional angle. Article 1 of French Constitution proclaims, “France shall be an indivisible...public. It shall ensure the equality of all citizens before the law, without distinction of origin, race or religion...”⁶⁾ It means that all French citizens can only have one identity which is French national identity. And the principle of the indivisible public is about the indivisibility of the French people rather than French territory (Bowen, 2017). The purpose of the principle of “universalistic civic identity” is to ensure and strengthen French national identity and to shape a shared French peoplehood.

The fourth element “solidarity” emerged during the first three decades of the Third Republic as a political and philosophical compromise in order to solve the essential social question in terms of social and economic regulation (Béland, 2003). Léon Bourgeois was the first man who explained and defined the concept of solidarity in his book “Solidarité” published in 1896. According to him, the world is established on cooperation rather than the competition due to the universal law of “reciprocal dependency”, which is based on some biological scientific proof at the time. And thus everything is linked together and ready to cooperate and support each other (Béland, 2003; Bourgeois, 1902).

To summarize, the French republican model of integration abides by the principles of liberty, equality, solidarity, and laicity. It believes monoculturalism which is opposite to multiculturalism, and does not recognize any ethnic identities other than universalistic French identity for the purpose of national unity, nor are group rights granted due to its credo of indifference to differences. It values the strict separation between the public and private spheres and downplays the cultural diversities. Its aim is to make every immigrant Frenchman/woman who is supposed to accept all the republican values.

2.2 Development of the French Republican Model of Integration since the 20th Century

The French republican model of integration has experienced three stages of

development during the 20th century: the golden age (WWII – the early 1970s), the phase of decline (1974 – 1985) (Weil & Crowley, 1994), and the reaffirmation (since the late 1980s). I divided the periods according to different waves of immigration to France and French immigration and integration policies coping with the waves.

Assimilation – the golden age of the model (WWII – early 1970s)

France has a very long history of immigration and of integration of immigrants, which can be dated back to 1870. The French government had recruited labours from other European countries – most from Italy, Portugal, and Spain – since the late of the 19th century and lasted intermittently till the end of World War Two. It was after the Second World War that French immigration and integration policy was systematically constructed for the first time. Some scholars may argue that the French melting pot model functioned most effectively until the early of the 1950s and it began to decline since then due to the gradual decolonisation process on the French territory. However, it was still during the thirty glorious years of French economy (Trente Glorieuses) and thus immigrants and their integration status were not social problems at the time. Hence I decided to put the golden age in the period from WWII to the early 1970s.

During this golden age, the process of incorporation was officially called “assimilation”, indicating that immigrants had to unilaterally adapt to the laws and the culture of France and to renounce their original identities and cultures (Weil & Crowley, 1994). By the end of World War II, the European immigrants came to France had successfully assimilated into French society and so were their children. After World War II, new waves of an influx of immigrants into France due to the economic prosperity and decolonisation had gradually settled down in suburbs of cities. Most of the new immigrants came from North Africa and worked in factories located in suburbs. As a consequence, they were relatively invisible to the urban French citizens and had not yet posed a threat to French society. Hence, the republican model of integration was not challenged and quite successful at that time.

Insertion – the phase of decline of the model (1974 – 1985)

With the outbreak of the 1973 oil crisis, the French economy fell into the period of recession. Immigrants (especially non-European immigrants) were no longer welcome by both the government and French citizens. The French government decided to suspend the immigration immediately. While in 1974, the government brought up a new concept of incorporation called “insertion”. Insertion was employed to designate the right to refuse assimilation, to defend and to preserve collective identity, and to refuse to adapt to dominant French culture (Weil & Crowley, 1994). It indicated the idea that immigrants could be ‘inserted’ into the social fabric while still retaining a different cultural identity (Hargreaves, 1995). Insertion at the time seemed to be more multiculturalism than the American model of today. However, the purpose of insertion was to repatriate the new non-European immigrants more easily (supported by the

right-wing) on the one hand and to retain the culture of the immigrants (supported by anti-racist organisations) on the other. As a result, the unsuccess of deportation of non-European immigrants naturally led to the fail of insertion as well.

Integration – the reaffirmation of the model (since the late 1980s)

With the Waterloo of insertion, the French government soon found a substitute for it – integration. In order to better push forward the process of integration, the High Council for Integration (Haut Conseil à l'Intégration, HCI) was established in 1989. HCI was soon in action and conceived the most accurate definition of integration: “Integration is a way to obtain the active participation to society ... while overtly accepting that specific...features will be preserved and nevertheless insisting on the similarities and the convergence, ... Integration considers that differences are a part of a common project unlike either assimilation which aims at suppressing differences, or indeed insertion which establishes that their perpetuation is a guarantee for protection”⁷⁾ (Sala Pala & Simon, 2005).

The three stages of the French republican model of integration – assimilation, insertion, and integration – reflect the French governments’ attitude towards immigrants in different periods. During the period of French economic boom, the immigrants were welcomed by the government and rigorous incorporation policies were adopted due to the French cultural superiority. However, the increasing number of immigrants was not a threat or a social problem to the French society, in part due to the similarities between native French and European immigrants on the one hand, and invisibility of non-European immigrants on the other; and in part due to the French economic boom effect. During the period of recession, the increasing non-European immigrants became redundant and threats to French society in the ways of dividing French national unity and of claiming their ethnic identities. The government thought they were “inassimilable” without rational reasons simply due to their quite different appearances and exotic cultures. At first, the government adopted quite loose policies under the concept of “insertion” in order to deport these unwanted non-European immigrants more easily if they had not yet well mixed in French society. The support of insertion at the time can be seen as a symbol of the decline of the traditional republican model. Later, due to the failure of deportation and other political reasons, the government reaffirmed the traditional republican model under the concept of “integration”. The government has adopted a series of strict immigration policies, from Charles Pasqua’s “zero illegal immigration” to Sarkozy’s “selected immigration” (“immigration choisie”). National Front (National Rally)⁸⁾ also gave a hard push to amplify the so-called “immigrant issues” in the 1980s and 1990s (Schain, 1995; Guiraudon, 1996). Since then, immigration control and immigrants integration have become a stubborn tumour in French society.

III Dilemma of the Republican Model

There are a plenty of contradictions between the ideas of integration and social practices (especially institutional practices), which do not reflect the general principles of the model. As a matter of fact, the republican model has never been completely realized and it seems to have worsened the integration process instead of helping it since the 1970s. Therefore, in this part, I will examine the main contradictions with respect to the republican model and analyse the reasons why the French governments have been insisting on the republican model of integration though all these contradictions difficult to be solved.

3.1 Main Contradictions with Respect to the Model

Contradictions between French laicity and freedom of religious expression

Debates on the contradictions focus on various events such as 2004 law banning ostentatious religious symbols in the public sphere, the resistance of building mosques in French cities, and rejection of opening a Muslim school in Lyon in 2006 (Sala Pala & Simon, 2008). These debates or events embody the ambivalence of laicity itself defined by the French governments. Former president Chirac mentioned “the neutrality of public sphere permits the religious harmony” in his speech in terms of French laicity and Article 10 of Declaration of 1789 proclaims, “No one shall be disquieted on account of his opinions, including his religious views, provided their manifestation does not disturb the public order established by law”. However, there is no further explanation on in which ways the neutrality of public arena permits the co-existence of various religions harmoniously and on what kind of manifestation of religious views disturbs the public order or breaks the neutrality of public space. The ambivalence of definitions of laicity and freedom of religious expression gives the French government a lot of space to interpret both laicity and religious freedom according to its own interests. Hence, today’s debates on 2004 law or building mosques or opening Muslim schools are all relevant to whether some kind of religious action actually violates the principles of laicity, or whether the banning on some religious action infringes the human rights on free expression of religious views. As a matter of fact, the government has failed to fully comply with the principles of laicity in the ways of enlarging the meaning of “the non-domination of any religion over state and society” and violating the non-discrimination for religious reasons. The government interprets “the non-domination of any religion over state and society” as the “domination of state over all religions”. Christian seminaries can be allowed in France while opening a Muslim school was rejected in Lyon. Christian churches or even Buddhist temples can be built in French cities while building mosques was turned down by the government.

Contradictions between the principle of equality and the reality of social distinctions

According to Patrick Weil and John Crowley, social inequality is destructive to integration (Weil & Crowley, 1994). The social distinctions can be discrimination in terms of race, religion, and access to social resources such as employment, housing, and education. For instance, some forms of racial/ethnic discrimination do exist in French society and anti-discrimination policies have been implemented, though the principle of equality proclaims that every citizen has equal rights before the law regardless of race/ethnicity. When the government put anti-discrimination laws into effect, it is admitting that France is a racially diverse country but unwilling to say the word “race”. Therefore some scholars call this kind of situation as “anti-racism without race” (Amiriaux & Simon, 2006; Bleich, 2000; Ware, 2015). The problem is that anti-racism laws can only punish the perpetrators but not compensate the victims since there is no racial category officially distinguished in France.

Contradictions between French national unity and multiculturalism

Since the non-European immigrants became increasingly visible, the tensions between French national unity and multiculturalism have aroused various debates in the parliament, in the media, and in the academic arena. Especially when the US, the UK and some other European countries have adopted multicultural policies to incorporate immigrants and in the meantime French non-European immigrants have gradually become more aware of their rights on equality and freedom just as same as native French or European immigrants, the tensions between French national unity and the recognition of cultural diversity required by the immigrants have become more salient. Generally speaking, two opposite opinions held by opponents and proponents in terms of the implementation of multiculturalism in France. Opponents believe that multiculturalism cannot help the integration of immigrants but only sabotage the French unity or weaken the fabric of the national community (Schain, 1999; Bleich, 2000, 2001). While proponents believe that multiculturalism or at least some affirmative actions can deal with the realistic societal problems, such as social distinctions and ethnic segregation, and help to integrate immigrant communities (Simon, 2010; Schain, 1999; Ware, 2015).

3.2 Insistence on the French Republican Model

Since the French republican model contains so many contradictions, then why is the French government still insisting on the republican model? Many scholars have already analysed the question and illustrated their conclusions. Generally speaking, six reasons have been concluded to explain the question from both historical and theoretical angles.

- (1) The model is the legacy of the French Revolution of 1789 and the Declaration on rights of man and the citizen. Principles of equality, liberty, laicity, the separation between the private and public spheres, and universalistic civic identity all derived from the Revolution and the Declaration. Liberty, reason,

the Nation, and the civic virtues of the Republic are the Leitmotiv of the Revolution, which has been personified by Marianne, the imaginary young woman with a Phrygian cap. The leitmotiv and the Declaration founded the principles of liberty and equality of every citizen before the law. Principles of laicity and separation were established due to the separation between the Catholic Church and the state, and de-Catholicism in public schools (Baubérot, 2011). The principle of universalistic civic identity was relevant to the emancipation of the individual from social, religious, and cultural determinisms, and the loyalty to France (Laborde, 2011). Hence, a French citizen should delink his identity from social classes, religions, and cultures and show him/her allegiance to France through possessing the only identity – French identity.

- (2) Vichy Regime in the 1940s: In order to eliminate the so-called “anti-French elements”⁹⁾ (Jackson, 2011), Vichy leaders decided to categorize Jewish people¹⁰⁾ and sent them to concentration camps. Due to the similarity between the categorization of Jewish people and the recognition of ethnic minorities (in order to grant them special rights), the government is unwilling to distinguish immigrants by race/ethnicity or to collect ethnic/racial data, and insists on the principle of “no distinction of origin or race”, although racial discrimination has already become a societal issue in today’s French society.
- (3) Success in integrating European immigrants by using the republican model: As mentioned in previous part, during the golden age of republican model of integration, the European immigrants were successfully assimilated into the French society due to their similar cultural backgrounds and French economic boom.
- (4) Reaffirmation of the model due to the rise of FN/RN in the 1980s (Guiraudon, 1996; Bleich, 2001): During the declining period of the model, a series of pro-immigrant policies were adopted by the socialist party and some groups called for the same right to difference. However, the rise of FN evoked a wave of xenophobia and hostility towards immigrants and actually crafted a politics of exclusion. The FN “successfully” amplified the immigrant problems and caused the anxiety of the public, which resulted in the withdrawal from the lax attitude of incorporation and the reaffirmation of the republican model of integration.
- (5) French policymakers widely disagree with the model of American multiculturalism due to the cultural factor that French policymakers usually use the US as a “reverse exemplar”¹¹⁾ to justify the republican model. And they believe that the French republican model is superior to the American model that recognises minorities and cultural diversity (Bleich, 2001).
- (6) The governments see the multiculturalism as opposite to integration, which is deeply rooted in the Enlightenment binary opposition between universalism

(treating all people the same) and particularism (favouring certain groups and insisting that something unique is universal and impose it on everyone) (Silverman, 2007).

IV Quasi-multiculturalism Policies in France

Although multiculturalism has been criticised by many politicians and French scholars, it has not been completely excluded from the political agenda. Former president Nicolas Sarkozy is a proponent of so-called French-style “positive discrimination” (Sarkozy, 2005), a French neologism equivalent to American term of “affirmative action”. And there have been various intense debates since the 2000s on multiculturalism regarding, for instance, the introduction of ethnic statistics, the recognition of ethnic organisations, recognition of diversity in media and in working place (Sala Pala & Simon, 2005). Therefore, I have reason to believe that culturally diverse policies have been in practice in France if not in theory. And in this part, I will examine these quasi-multiculturalism policies/programs in France and try to explain the reasons that the French government adopted these policies while still insisting on the traditional republican model from realistic and ideational angles.

4.1 Quasi-multiculturalism policies since the establishment of the Fifth Republic

There have been some quasi-multiculturalism policies since the 1970s, which is in accord with the “insertion” period of the republican model. However, with the end of the insertion and the reaffirmation of the republican model, some new quasi-multicultural policies have been established and some former ones have been kept till now. In this part, I will briefly introduce these policies and illustrate the realistic reasons or the political context out of/in which the policies were launched at the time.

Table 1 Quasi-multiculturalism policies/programs under the republican model of integration

| Date | Policies/Programs | Outline | Actor |
|-------|--|--|--|
| 1970s | Return home policy: Arabic language and culture classes, immigrant housing | Aim at sending immigrants home – a pattern of dealing with immigrants in a multicultural way | Centre-Right government, Socialist and Communist local governments |
| 1980s | ZEP – Zones of Educational Priority | More resources to the schools in immigrant concentration areas | Socialist party |
| 1980s | FAS ⇒ FASILD | Support and fund a wide range of programs to aid immigrant | State: both the Left and the Right |

| | | | |
|------|---|---|---------------------|
| | | communities and to deal with integration and urban problems | |
| 2003 | CFCM – French Council for the Muslim Religion | An official intermediary between the state and the Muslim | State |
| 2004 | Diversity Charter in workplace | Ensure equal opportunities, ban discrimination in the workplaces, and work in favour of diversity | Companies in France |

After 1974 suspension of immigration of new labours, a return home policy was adopted by the Centre-Right government and some Socialist and Communist local governments, in order to send immigrants back to their countries of origin since large amounts of immigrants suddenly lost their jobs with the outbreak of oil crisis. Some programs were developed to encourage the immigrants to return, including Arabic language and culture classes, and immigrant housing program. These programs were failed in the end due to the few resources devoted to the programs as well as the corrupt practices (Schain, 1999). However, it was the first time that the state attempted to treat immigrant groups as ethnically differentiated collectivities, which was contrary to the principles of equality and universalistic civic identity of the republican model.

In 1982, a program called “Zones d’Education Prioritaire” (ZEP) was launched by the Socialist party, which used the ZEP as part of its political platform. ZEP program aims to cope with the high rate of school dropouts in economically disadvantaged regions (most are regions of immigrant concentrate), and it covers primary and secondary schools and a small number of high schools in the selected areas. The government allocates more resources, such as teachers, money, and experimental programs, to the chosen areas, in order to diminish the rate of dropouts, to raise academic results and to integrate immigrant children into the French society. Riots in 2005 make the government to search a new way to further promote equal opportunity in the areas of housing, employment, and education, which led to the expansion and reinforcement of the ZEP program¹²⁾.

FAS (Fonds d’action sociale pour les travailleurs immigrés et leur familles) was initially established in 1958 by the state, with the purpose of assisting Algerian immigrant workers but later of assisting all immigrant workers and their families. The name has been changed to FASILD (Fond d’action et de soutien pour l’intégration et la lutte contre discriminations) since 2001¹³⁾. During the 1980s and 1990s, FAS had played a key role in dealing with the immigrants, receiving a large number of funds from the state and funding a wide range of programs and associations. At that time, both the Left and the Right were supporting FAS to aid and serve immigrant communities. By 1993,

it had funded around 3,000 associations, among which 45 per cent are estimated as ethnic-type organizations (Schain, 1999). FAS functioned as an intermediate agency between the state and immigrant groups in order to facilitate integration, to strengthen the communication between the state and immigrant communities, and to prevent urban violence. In 2001, FAS was officially renamed FASILD, the purpose of which has been explicitly redefined to aid integration and to fight against any kinds of discrimination towards immigrants¹⁴).

CFCM (Conseil Français du Culte Musulman), the French Council for the Muslim Religion or the French Council of the Muslim Faith, a nationally elected body, was established by Nicolas Sarkozy in 2003, to serve as an official interlocutor with the state in the regulation of the Muslim religion¹⁵). CFCM is the first state-support council that recognized the Muslim religion in France after the French Councils for Jews, Catholics, and Protestants. Its purpose is to effectively regulate the Islam worship and ritual practices. The creation of CFCM is de facto a violation of one principle of laicity – no recognition of religious groups before a government. Nevertheless, the government considers the council as a form of reaching out French Muslims to increase mutual understanding and a better way to integrate the Muslim in France.

The Diversity Charter in Workplace (Charte de la diversité) was launched in 2004 by Claude Bébéar¹⁶). The idea is to ensure equal opportunities, to ban discrimination in the workplaces, and to work in favour of diversity. The company who signs the charter has to demonstrate that its workforce reflects the diversity of French society¹⁷). The charter was not created by the government directly but is supported by several governmental institutions, such as HALDE¹⁸) and ACSé¹⁹). The initiative of the charter extended to a more ambitious project, called “Diversity Label”. The program was created in 2008 and is state-recognized (Safi, 2017).

To summarize, if we analyse the reasons why the quasi-multicultural policies have been adopted by the government from a realistic perspective, it is probably due to different parties’ interests, the state intention of defining the immigration problem, better integrating immigrant groups (especially those in the areas of immigrant concentration), and maintaining social order (Schain, 1999), and also due to some principles regarding integration from the EU at some level²⁰). However, if we rethink about the policy choices from an ideational perspective²¹), we may have a more profound explanation on why the French government decided to use some quasi-multicultural policies under the republican model of integration.

4.2 Ideational Reasons

Since the French Revolution, the nation has considered an old France and a new France – Catholicism and laicity, industrialism and agriculture, left and right (Gowan, 2003), equality and difference, integration and multiculturalism as opposites due to the

Enlightenment binary opposition between universalism and particularism (Silverman, 2007). French republican model of integration has always been associated with universalism, and multiculturalism with particularism (Jennings, “Universalism” 2011). However, is it true that the relation between universalism and particularism has to be mutually exclusive (Laclau, 1992)? Is it possible that there is another relation between the two?

The Enlightenment built a sharp frontier between the irrational past – particularism and a rational future – universalism. This division has to contribute to Descartes’ dualism and Hegel and Marx’s assertion of total transparency of the real to reason in absolute knowledge (Laclau, 1992). Since the French Revolution and the Declaration of 1789, France has exalted the universalism to an extremely high position since it represents the pure rationality and universal equality and rights of human. France has also renounced any kind of particularism since it represents inequality and privileged groups with special rights, which was the situation before the Enlightenment and Revolution. However, the so-called French universal values are merely the French own culture and its own values that have been deemed as the universal to which the whole world (or at least the whole Europe) can be applicable (Jennings, “Universalism” 2011). Hence, French universalism is actually the universalization of its particularism due to the fact that the French value is a particular, not the universal (Laclau, 1992).

The universalization of French own particularism would not be a problem if there were no non-European citizens in France. And the non-European citizens would not be a problem as well if a total integration had occurred. According to Laclau, if total integration does not occur, it is because that “there remain unsatisfied demands concerning access to education, to employment, to consumer goods, etc.” We can see a total integration has not occurred in today’s French society and there are increasing claims of identity and demands in terms of access to housing, to education and to employment by French non-European citizens. Their demands cannot be satisfied not because that they want to be treated particularly but equally. Nevertheless, the equality defined by French universalism or republican model is “formal equality”, which cannot satisfy the “concrete equality” demanded by citizens (Schnapper, 2006).

Formal equality characterises the very French republican model or French universalism, while concrete equality characterises welfare states. France is no doubt a welfare state and welfare can be seen as a form of particularism since the welfare system requires governments to redistribute resources to some groups, which is exactly opposite to French universalistic values. Therefore, in order to achieve concrete equality or to meet the demands made by part of the citizens, the government under the welfare system has to take multicultural measures into account, with or without awareness of it.

The idea of universalization of French particularism breaks the traditionally

antagonistic relation between universalism and particularism, and thus between republican model and multiculturalism. Furthermore, the ideas of the welfare state have forced the government to adopt quasi-multicultural policies to reduce social inequality. These two ideational reasons can provide a new perspective when analysing the problematic of French republican model.

V Conclusion

The French republican model of integration has been undergoing various challenges, contradictions, and debates, mostly due to the reason that French governments have always counterposed one thing to another, such as equality to difference, religions to laicity, and universalistic values to multiculturalism. It is the very idea of bifurcation that has made an ossification of the republican model. Nevertheless, since the French universalism is de facto the universalization of its particularism, and the ideas of welfare state require the government to redistribute some social resources to particular groups, multiculturalism should not be utterly excluded from the policy-making process. On the contrary, multiculturalism should be conceived as a means to achieve the ideals of the French republican model of integration. The republican model of integration is a series of ideals that cannot be realised by itself but by some concrete measures such as laws or policies.

There is no salient evidence showing that France is on the way of changing to a multicultural model and in fact, there is no need to replace the republican model with a multicultural one, but there may be some ways to compromise the republican universalism with multiculturalism. For instance, Roman mentioned that the Republic should invent a middle path grounded on a relative pluralism and a plural universalism (Jennings, 2000). But for now, there still has a long way to go as long as the French government still links multiculturalism with particularism, communitarianism²⁾, ethnic quotas, and sees it as the biggest threat to national identity and republican values.

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Notes

¹⁾ French Constitution, Article 2,

<https://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/en/constitution-of-4-october-1958>

²⁾ See “The French Republic: History, Values, Debates”, Berensson, Edward (ed.), Cornell University Press, pp.151.

³⁾ I term “quasi-multiculturalism” instead of directly using the word “multiculturalism” due to the disavowal against any kind of multiculturalism by the French government.

- 4) I borrowed the term “laicity” from Arthur Goldhammer, who translated Jean Baubérot’s article «laïcité» into the English version. According to Goldhammer, it seems more accurate to translate the word “laïcité” to “laicity” rather than “secularism” since “laicity” has a broader meaning than “secularism”.
- 5) Declaration of Rights of Man and of the Citizen, 1789, Article 10,
http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/rightsof.asp
- 6) French Constitution, Article 1,
<https://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/en/constitution-of-4-october-1958>
- 7) See the report of Haut Conseil à l’Intégration (1993), *L’intégration à la française*, Paris UGE, 10/18.
- 8) The National Front (Le Front National) has been renamed as the “National Rally” (Le Rassemblement National) since June 2018.
https://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2018/06/01/marine-le-pen-annonce-que-le-front-national-devient-rassemblement-national_5308450_823448.html
- 9) Anti-French elements refer to Jews, Communists, and Freemasons.
- 10) See Bleich (2000) “The ordinance of 18 November 1940 defines the Jew according to the Vichy regime, saying that one is a Jew if one has one Jewish parent or two Jewish grand-parents.”
- 11) See Bennett, Colin J. (1991) *How states utilize foreign evidence*, Journal of Public Policy, Vol.11, pp. 31-54.
- 12) See Bénabou, Roland; Kramarz, Francis; Prost, Corinne (2009) *The French Zones d’Education Prioritaire: Much ado about Nothing?* Economics of Education Review 28, pp. 345-356.
- 13) See Hargreaves, Alec G. (2007) *Multi-ethnic France: Immigration, Politics, Culture and Society*, 2nd edition, p. 229, note 14.
- 14) For more information about FASILD, please see *Annexe 2 - FASILD*,
<https://www.senat.fr/rap/a04-033/a04-0338.html>
- 15) See Fernando, Mayanthi, *The Republic’s “Second Religion”: Recognizing Islam in France*, Middle East Report 235.
https://www.humanityinaction.org/files/578-M.Fernando_TheRepublicssecondreligion-recognizingislaminFrance.pdf
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<https://www.thenational.ae/world/mena/emmanuel-macron-to-tackle-france-s-troubled-relationship-with-organised-islam-1.735450>
- 16) Claude Bébéar is the founder and former CEO of insurance company AXA.
- 17) See Latour Vincent (2013) *The Sarkozy Years: Attempting to Define a New Paradigm for Diversity Governance in France*, Raymond, Gino (ed.) *The Sarkozy Presidency: Breaking the Mould?* Palgrave Macmillan.

- 18) La Haute autorité de lutte contre les discriminations et pour l'égalité
- 19) L'Agence nationale pour la cohésion sociale et l'égalité des chances
- 20) See *A Common Immigration Policy for Europe* (2008). One principle of the common immigration policy is that "Integration is the key to successful immigration", which indicates that "Integration as a 'two-way process' should be promoted, ... social cohesion and approaches to diversity in the host societies should be developed."
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM%3Ajl0001>
- 21) Regarding the importance of considering ideas when explaining policy-making, you may see Bleich, Erick (2002) *Integrating ideas into policy-making analysis: Frames and race policies in Britain and France*, Comparative Political Studies, Vol. 35, No. 9, pp. 1054-1076.
- 22) See Sala Pala & Simon (2005), pp.1. "Multiculturalism ... is tightly associated to a 'communitarianism'...constantly construct multiculturalism ... as a synonym of 'communitarianism'".

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