

Students faced with religious radicalization leading to violence. The more you know, the more you can prevent.

Research report presented as part of the 2015-2018 Government Action Plan, *La radicalisation au Québec : agir, prévenir, détecter et vivre ensemble*

IRIPI

Institut de recherche sur l'intégration professionnelle des immigrants

 Collège de Maisonneuve

Québec 

Partenaire financier



This research report is the first part of a research initiative funded by the Ministry of Public Security, Ministry of Immigration, Diversity and Inclusion and Ministry of Education and Higher Education. The second part will consist of a prevention guide for stakeholders in education.

The entire research initiative is part of the 2015-2018 Government Action Plan, *La radicalisation au Québec: agir, prévenir, détecter et vivre ensemble*.

RESEARCH TEAM :

Director : *Frédéric Dejean*

Collaborators : *Sarah Mainich, Bochra Manaï, Leslie Touré
Kapo*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The research team would like to thank every member of the Maisonneuve community — students, teachers and stakeholders — who agreed to participate in this research through interviews or focus groups.

The team would also like to thank the administration of the Collège de Maisonneuve, who facilitated this research by providing the material and internal communication resources we needed to recruit research participants.

Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge the material support and intellectual contribution at various stages of the research by the Carrefour languages, international, intercultural and community (Cliic) team at Collège de Maisonneuve.

Last but not least, the research team would like to acknowledge the commitment of Jérôme Champagne, a political science professor who acted as a key link between students, teachers, stakeholders and the research team.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

General Introduction	1
Background.....	1
"Radicalization": an enlightening or confusing concept?.....	1
The research project: examining the construction of student social identities	3
Tackling radicalization through the prism of social identity	6
Methodology and structure of the report.....	7
CHAPTER 1 : A ghost in the hallways.....	9
Introduction	9
Perception of the events: from surprise to fear	10
Events that have undermined Muslim students	11
When understanding is prevention	14
Chapter 2: The cultural peer groups at the heart of social dynamics.....	19
Students and their affiliations	20
Ethnocultural groups: the categorization process and vulnerable areas	21
Ethnocultural groups as tools of prevention.....	24
Chapter 3. Social identity and the student experience at Collège de Maisonneuve	27
Introduction	27
College, a space for personal transformation and growth.....	28
When a vulnerable area emerges from the relationship with the college	30
The classroom: a special space for prevention.....	32
CHAPTER 4 : The reconciliation of cultures: between negotiation and identity discomfort.....	37
Introduction	37
"Children in midstream"	38
Identity conflict and radicalization.....	41
Multi-cultural affiliations: from vulnerable area to comparative advantage	43

CHAPTER 5 : Students and religion.....	47
Introduction	47
Functions of religious practice in student life	48
Vulnerable areas related to the religious question	49
Negotiating the place of religion in educational environments as a form of prevention	53
CHAPTRE 6 : Being a Quebecer in 2016	55
Introduction	55
How can we be a Quebecer?	56
Problematic citizenship: a vulnerable area	58
Uncertain Quebec identity and the radicalization process	61
General Conclusion.....	65
Looking back.....	65
Vulnerable areas.....	66
Preventive measures and recommendations.....	67
References	71

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Background

In fall 2014 and winter 2015, Quebec faced a new and disturbing phenomenon: the departure of many young people to Syria, mainly to join the ranks of the Islamic State. — a phenomenon experienced by many other northern countries. At the beginning of 2015, according to the European Commissioner for Justice, there were about 1,500 French citizens out of the estimated 5,000 to 6,000 European volunteers departing for Syria. And 10,000 Europeans were expected to follow a similar trajectory by the end of 2015¹. In Quebec, the general public discovered this phenomenon when, in January 2015, the media reported that seven adolescents and young adults had left Canada to enlist in the Syrian theatre of operations. A few months later, a dozen others were intercepted at the very last moment at Trudeau Airport as they prepared to leave.

"Radicalization": an enlightening or confusing concept?

The term "radicalization" was probably one of the most used words by the media and politicians in 2015: it had only appeared 340 times in the Francophone Canadian print media during the 2010-2011 period and 740 times over the 2012-2013 period, when it increased to more than 5,000 times during 2014 and 2015². Mark Sedgwick showed in 2010 that this term was hardly ever used in the English press before 2001. There was a shift between 2005 and 2007, when the topic of "home-grown terrorism" arrived on the scene in Western Europe (Sedgwick, 2010). Arun Kundnani (2012) established a similar finding based on an analysis of articles published in 30 peer-reviewed scientific journals, between 1990 and 2011, and also highlights a shift around 2005. This rapid growth

¹ Interview with Vera Jourova in the journal *Le Figaro*, April 12, 2015: <http://www.lefigaro.fr/international/2015/04/12/01003-20150412ARTFIG00128-vera-jourova-pres-de-6000-europeens-sont-partis-faire-le-djihad.php>

² Based on a January 4, 2016 search on the Eureka.cc database, by entering the keyword "radicalization" for the three selected periods. It should be pointed out that the use of this term does not always refer to religious radicalization.

demonstrates a fact: overall social discourse³ is literally saturated with this topic, to the point that the use of the simple term "radicalization" has been defeated by its semantic depth — especially its positive connotation — and has become a synonym for "religious radicalization" (in its Islamic translation), leading to violence (Kundnani, 2012; Sedgwick, 2010). Under these conditions, individuals who identify themselves as "radical" would appear suspect.

The term "radicalization" has emerged in recent years (Ragazzi, 2014) to designate a social process where one of the most amazing aspects is the commitment of people — mostly young adults — mainly within the Islamic State group, either by departing to Syria or committing acts in their country in the name of an ideology advocated by the Islamic State. The term has also been widely adopted by politicians from all the countries concerned (Ragazzi, 2014). In Quebec, the City of Montreal has established Centre for the Prevention of Radicalization Leading to Violence⁴, (CPRLV), plus this research stems from the government action plan entitled *La radicalisation au Québec: agir, prévenir, détecter et vivre ensemble (Radicalization in Quebec: Acting, Preventing, Detecting and Living Together, in English)*.

As Francesco Ragazzi pointed out, the shift of the fight against "radical Islam" to the fight against "radicalization" reveals "[...] the expansion of anti-terrorism issues in a new field. No longer focused solely on suppressing the preparation, financing and commission of acts "aimed at seriously disturbing public order by intimidation or terror," the fight against terrorism now concerns a goal further upstream the stages of an individual's transition to political violence" (Ragazzi, 2014: 4). These lines are important because they reflect a paradigm shift in the fight against terrorism, which has repercussions for a number of public institutions, especially educational institutions. By focusing on the process of radicalization leading to violence — to be exact, the gradual transformation of a individual toward more extreme positions that can lead to violent acts — it puts forward, at the same time, the elements of "detection" and "prevention," which

³ Marc Angenot defines "social discourse" as "everything that is said, everything that is written in a given state of society (everything that is printed, everything that is spoken today in the electronic media)." (Angenot, 1984: 20).

⁴ Although the aim of the Centre is to prevent violent radicalization in all its forms — not only Islamic extremism — its creation is closely linked to the events of winter 2015.

are involved well before individuals go outside the law. This is, to a certain extent, the use of the "precautionary principle" in the fight against terrorism. It is necessary to link this paradigm shift to some ambiguity in the relationship between "radicalization" and "violent radicalization." In reality, prophylactic measures tend to overlook that radicalization does not necessarily — that is, need not or automatically — lead to violent radicalization. According to a TerRa Group (Terrorism and Radicalization) report, adhering to an ideology, ideas or a radical way of thinking do not lead to action (TerRa, 2013: 14).

Here lies is a significant challenge for educational institutions, a challenge that has also been clearly expressed by teachers and stakeholders who met during the research that provides the basis for this document: recognizing the need to act to prevent other young people from leaving for Syria, they expressed some concerns about the risk of stigmatization that could result from certain measures, even though this is not desired. In the same way that we distinguish between direct and indirect discrimination, would it be useful to distinguish between direct and indirect stigma? Concretely, this interest in "what goes on before the bomb goes off" places teachers and stakeholders in difficult situations: if a young girl begins to wear a hijab, is she becoming radicalized? Who has the legitimacy to place and move the precursor to radicalization? In interviews, some students, especially those of the Muslim faith, have expressed concern that prevention efforts can lead to forms of stigmatization. As you can see, addressing the issue of religious radicalization in a teaching environment must include precautions to protect students: some might perceive prevention efforts as a stigma of their religious group.

The research project: examining the construction of student social identities

Given what has been said about the media overexposure of Collège de Maisonneuve, it is easy to understand why the Government of Quebec has seen fit to conduct some research⁵. Members of l'Institut de recherche sur l'intégration professionnelle des

⁵ The research initiative conducted at Maisonneuve was built into Pillar 2, "Preventing," of the government action plan. Section 2.1 states: "Conduct research to better understand and analyze the phenomenon of radicalization leading to violence, namely: funding the research initiative in partnership with the Collège de

immigrants (IRIPI) received an exciting, yet difficult mandate: developing a research initiative on religious radicalization leading to violence in the Maisonneuve community. The college environment and research topic have led to methodological challenges: how should we approach this topic with students and convince them to participate in one-on-one interviews or focus groups? How should we clearly explain to them that this social science research is not a front for a large spy agency? How should we present the research to students, teachers and stakeholders, even though it is still a painful episode for some of them? And, above all, how should we, under these conditions, properly handle this topic with students who were not directly involved in the events of the winter?

To ensure the success of this research, the team chose to take a step sideways from the topic of radicalization — only to return there, for that matter — and question the construction of student social identities, particularly immigrant students. In fact, scientific literature shows that there is a strong link between radicalization and the difficulties of immigrant students in constructing their identity (Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2010; Hafez and Mullins, 2015; Silke, 2008). For example, the sense of cultural or social marginalization is cleverly exploited by jihadist propaganda that attracts some people, putting forward they will never be accepted by the majority culture. This obviously does not mean that all young people from immigrant backgrounds experiencing an "identity crisis" will be misled by the logic of radicalization leading to violence. However, it appears that the potential struggles along this path are what we call "vulnerable areas," which can lead to religious radicalization under certain conditions. Moreover, the experiences of Muslim students were put forward: in doing so, we are not suggesting a causal link between their religious affiliation and religious radicalization leading to violence, but we have shown that, for some of these students, social identity construction has been made more difficult.

This identity construction process should not only be understood in the psychological dimension, but more broadly where its social and psychological (or psychosocial) dimensions converge. In fact, individuals see themselves partly by how others see them and how they want to look to others. Moreover, the construction of identity is closely linked to the affiliations with which an individual identifies. As shown by Charles Taylor:

Maisonneuve to detect vulnerable areas in young people that could create a breeding ground for the radicalization process."(Government of Québec, 2015: 18).

"[M]y discovering my own identity doesn't mean that I work it out in isolation, but that I negotiate it through dialogue [...]. My own identity crucially depends on my dialogical relations with others" (Taylor 2009: 52).

The approach adopted by the research team is therefore from social psychological perspective. Social psychology is a discipline that seeks to understand and explain how the thoughts, feelings and behaviour of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined or implied presence of others⁶ (Allport, 1954). As part of this research, we chose to focus on the social identity⁷ of Maisonneuve students, particularly those from immigrant backgrounds. This approach emphasizes the ways that individuals are positioned within their peer group relative to other groups. An individual's social identity "is related to the knowledge of his or her affiliation with a certain social groups and the emotional and evaluative significance derived from this affiliation" (Tajfel, 1972: 291). In other words, the concept of social identity refers to two basic elements: (1) Individual identity is closely linked to affiliations and their internal dynamics and; (2) Group dynamics are based on the factors that differentiate the groups.

The mechanics behind our sense of belonging is decisive within the context of our research, since our central hypothesis is that there are vulnerable areas that constitute a breeding ground for radicalization. By "vulnerable areas," we mean negative social experiences for students that can lead to moral and psychological suffering. It is precisely this suffering that religious radicalization leading to violence can be built on. This obviously does not mean that there is a requisite causal link between psychological suffering and moral or religious radicalization; it's more of a correlation to explore. From this point of view, the "Social Identity Theory" is a useful tool, since it raises questions about social phenomena such as prejudice, discrimination, stereotyping, ethnocentrism and polarization, all of which are involved in the experience of many Quebecers with immigrant backgrounds.

⁶ Social psychology "is the scientific attempt to explain how the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined, or implied presence of other human beings" (Allport, 1954: 5).

⁷ The "Theory of Social Identity" is "a social psychological analysis of the role of self-conception in group membership, group processes and intergroup relations." (Hogg, 2006: 111).

Tackling radicalization through the prism of social identity

In recent decades, terrorism has been a subject of impressive literature in various fields, such as psychology, political science and sociology. In the field of psychology, there are two main approaches: the focus on the individual (acts of terrorism are explained by character) and the effects of an individual's social environment. This divide — between the psychological and socio-psychological approach — can also be seen within the scope of work on religious radicalization. Many authors have proposed models that explain the religious radicalization process (Borum, 2003; Moghaddam, 2005; Sageman, 2008; Silber and Bhatt, 2007; Wiktorowicz, 2004). These models occur most often in the form of a schematic linear process (scale, stairway, pyramid) that involves a number of stages and culminates in violent actions. For example, Fathali Moghaddam (2005 and 2006) has proposed a "staircase to terrorism" consisting of five levels. Although these models use the individual as a point of reference, they also agree on one fact: radicalization involves the transformation of a person based on psycho-sociological methods (King and Taylor, 2010). For this reason, social psychology — that is to say, the study of individuals in their social environment — offers an interesting approach to understanding the events of the winter.

Given its roots in the field of social psychology, our research fits into the perspective of authors who believe that these are the radicalization conditions to definitely consider. This way, there is no need for behavioural models (Hafez and Mullins, 2015). The conditions mentioned here touch upon the vulnerable areas around which we have developed our analysis. This notion of "vulnerable areas" is partly based on a series of studies that discuss situations of identity uncertainty with extreme forms of engagement (Hogg, Adelman and Blagg, 2009; Hogg, and Meehan Farquharson, 2010; Hogg and Adelman, 2013; Hogg, Kruglanski and van den Bos, 2013). The "Uncertainty–Identity Theory" tries to explain how feelings of uncertainty encourage individuals to identify with groups that help reduce this uncertainty (Hogg, 2007). However, groups that offer a strong sense of belonging are precisely the most effective to achieve this goal (Hogg, 2007), and the most radical and extreme groups are specifically those that offer this strong sense of belonging. In the field of radicalization leading to violence, individuals in

identity uncertainty situations are more susceptible to the propaganda of an organization like the Islamic State, which emphasizes the importance of the group and the place an individual can find within it (Bakker, 2006; Hogg et al., 2010).

As part of our research, we hypothesize that the identification and understanding of vulnerable areas should allow — within an educational institution — to develop tools and practices that address all students and staff members. This way, we believe it is possible to avoid the scientifically difficult and socially dangerous pitfalls of "detection" and "prediction" (Horgan 2008). However, it may be useful to identify a number of factors that may pose a radicalization risk (Horgan 2008).

Methodology and structure of the report

Composed of four members with a wealth of experience in social science research, our team conducted a total of 27 interviews with students⁸, 10 with teachers (in the areas of sociology, political science, psychology, philosophy, English, French and history) and six with stakeholders. It should be noted that the interviews with students, which had an average length of two hours (in some cases, nearly three hours), were special opportunities for them to express their views and share things that cannot be said in a casual conversation of a few minutes. In addition to these interviews, we conducted two focus groups (with students) on the construction of social identities and the events that took place at Collège de Maisonneuve during the previous month. These groups demonstrated how students debate and how individual views were likely to evolve within a group discussion.

In this report, we wanted to focus on the experiences of students. The statements of the teachers and stakeholders put into perspective what we were told by the students. To clarify the process, we have split the report into six chapters that refer to different aspects of a student's social identity, particularly for those from immigrant backgrounds.

⁸ One-third of students were composed of students (Quebecers for generations) and two-thirds consisted of students from immigrant backgrounds (second generation or born abroad). Although the 27 interviews do not cover the overall Collège de Maisonneuve situation, they nevertheless helped bring out the most important issues faced by students.

The research on the vulnerable areas was based on these factors. The report is structured as follows:

- Chapter 1 provides an introduction, including a look at events linked to religious radicalization leading to violence from the perspective of students.
- Chapter 2 focuses on group dynamics — including ethnocultural — within the Collège and their role for students.
- Chapter 3 focuses on "young people" as students and their interaction with the college.
- Chapter 4 addresses more specifically the "cultural negotiation" efforts of students from immigrant backgrounds, caught between Quebec culture and their culture of origin.
- Chapter 5 focuses on how religion fits into the lives of students.
- Chapter 6 examines the sense of belonging to Quebec and citizenship-building.

CHAPTER 1: A GHOST IN THE HALLWAYS

What to remember in this chapter

Highlights: The sense of panic students feel with the onslaught of international politics into their day-to-day CEGEP lives.

Vulnerable areas linked to radicalization: Muslim students voice fear of being perceived as potential suspects because of their religious affiliation or their

physical appearance. This fear can be exploited by recruiters for Islamist organizations who deftly capitalize on this unspoken distress.

Preventive measures: Set a time and place for reactions and fears to be voiced. The education community has all the tools it needs to provide a serene and respectful environment for these debriefings.

Introduction

"There's a more serious and colder atmosphere at school...It's like there's a ghost in the hallways."

(Student 53)

An event — whether it's a hockey game or a federal election — takes on a life of its own in the public arena when it receives media coverage and is widely discussed. Events, in a way, occur twice: once when the event actually takes place, when it exists outside the realm of debate or interpretation, and a second time in the many ways it's broadcasted, transformed and interpreted by the general public. Radicalization and the departure of some young adults to Syria are not exempt from this rule: intense media coverage and public debate on the topic entered the equation, influencing how individuals construct their views and opinions about this phenomenon.

In our research, a section specifically on the issue of religious radicalization and the events that affected Collège de Maisonneuve was incorporated into the interview outline. Students, on the one hand, were able to share their views and analysis of recent events and, on the other, offer their own definitions of radicalization and explain the process.

Moreover, these questions seemed important to us because we made the following assumption: the greater the actual radicalization, the more how it's treated can have a negative impact on certain students and create vulnerable areas. Therefore, the treatment of radicalization and the social consequences of this treatment can lead to a return of radicalization.

Perception of the events: from surprise to fear

When international politics burst into the day-to-day lives of students

Reactions were wide-ranging and most students stated they were surprised by events, because they did not think they could affect Collège de Maisonneuve: *"I did not see it at Maisonneuve"* (Student 40). Some were shocked, *"It shocked me because I did not think it existed"* (Student 21). For these students, a sense of surprise and incomprehension came mostly from the way international events suddenly burst into their daily lives. Even as the issue of the Islamic State, radicalization and terrorism remained remote subjects treated by the media and social networks, they suddenly appeared in their day-to-day college lives. Students that were interviewed knew, one way or another, some of their arrested or decamped classmates, which, with the latest news suddenly brought to life by their fellow students, led to a pall of uneasiness.

The stigma trap

Many students showed empathy for their Muslim classmates: *"There are lots of Muslims at school and I felt bad for them. I did not know what to say. I did not want to say the wrong things. I know they may be ostracized and the media laugh at them"* (Student 45). They spoke about the climate of mistrust and suspicion against Muslim Quebecers, *"Yes, there are certainly some who have been afraid. Along with racism, this will not improve their lot in life. There are consequences for me and my community in general"* (Student 21). The students tended approach the events from a Quebec perspective and from the standpoint of the debates that have punctuated the news the last few years. One student explained: *"Yes, there are people who will generalize. Muslim does something and everyone is a target. People discriminate and are a little racist. If a white man blew up a plane, we will not search all whites. Doubts lead to more discrimination"*

(Student 51). Plus: *"All Muslims are not terrorists. They are under pressure from all sides, and there's a lot of prejudice because of it"* (Student 56). The reactions of these students demonstrate the fear that some of them feel about the social consequences of the events.

Events that have undermined Muslim students

Being potential suspects

Arrested directly because of their religious affiliation, Muslim students are distinguished by their reactions. Beyond the surprise, they feel incomprehension and disappointment to the extent that they aspire only to be citizens like others, but they are in the news simply because of their religion. This is important because research on radicalization (CEIS, 2008; Hafez and Mullins, 2015; Khosrokhavar, 2014; Piazza, 2011) contends that the frustration and resentment of certain ethnocultural groups create a breeding ground for radicalization. If these feelings are rooted in cultural or socio-economic marginalization, the same process of radicalization and the consequences of this treatment on Muslim people constitute a vulnerable area. Simply put, the social consequences of radicalization generate radicalization.

Nevertheless, some students simply cannot relate to the events and maintain a distance from them. For these students, it is not Islam that is in question: *"I myself do not identify with the Islamic State and I don't know how they recruit or how they talk to these young Muslims and non-Muslims, but to me this is a machine that's up to no good"* (Student 71). They also added that young people who have left Quebec or who have been arrested are not representative of Islam: *"Radicalization is far away from us, but living at college makes it closer. It's here. We do not clearly understand it. You only realize this fact afterward"* (Student 53). Moreover, for some of them, it's a real shock (Student 49: *"For me, it was a like a massive shock to the system."*). Another added: *"I thought, that's it, here we go again [...] I tried to put myself in their place, but I could not define what they did"* (Student 11).

To explain these reactions, a question about the impact of the events on college life came up. Students felt that there's a new, tense atmosphere at Collège de

Maisonneuve. They also stated that there was this looming sadness caused by a climate of confusion, fear and uncertainty. *"It was difficult to hear stupid comments,"* said one student (Student 11). Another explained: *"Until today, I had no problems. I had friends everywhere. People expressed doubts, but friendship was enough for me. But with everything that has happened, the media really went the propaganda route. So you have to justify yourself all the time to be taken seriously. And suddenly, we, the Arab or Muslim community, must behave in a way that does not invite suspicion. This affects us. As humans, we always tend to generalize"* (Student 76). When asked how they live with these events every day, they responded that their day-to-day life can become difficult: *"On the street, it's impossible: on the street and on the bus, I get harassed. People look down on me. Sometimes I get pushed around. I get attacked"* (Student 73). Muslim students have voiced a fear of generalizations. One young person explained that *"many interpretations are based on appearances. All it takes is one guy with no more than a five o'clock shadow named Osama"* (Student 46).

The eyes of teachers and stakeholders

Stakeholders that were interviewed explained the consequences of the events — and their treatment by the media — on the students. One of them claimed that it *"results in a total loss of confidence in these young people, a climate of suspicion"* (Stakeholder 5). This can lead to a deterioration in the image of Islam, a rejection — or, at the very least, fear — of any form of cultural difference, prejudice or generalizations about any Muslim or Arab citizen. In other words, this stakeholder believes that there's a risk of polarization, which would lead to a simplistic view of reality, structured around the "us" and "them" distinction. Researchers have recently proposed to address the issue of radicalization by linking it to polarization, which can be defined as "strengthening the opposition between groups in society, which results or may result in (greater) tensions between these groups." (Noppe et al., 2015). Polarization dynamics can affect the entire society or institutions in which different groups live together. During the interviews, people expressed the fear that a media frenzy makes it difficult to take a peaceful approach to the problem, and polarization outweighs the discussion and dialogue.

The atmosphere described by those interviewed was seen in different aspects of college life, especially the classroom. Teachers noticed the negative impact on the atmosphere

in their classrooms and their teaching dynamics, particularly whenever students had to work in pairs or small groups: "*What happens is that it can prevent friendships with Muslim students*" (Teacher 8). This gradually helps validate prejudices that separate individuals in communities and contributes to the polarization movement.

Testimonials from Collège de Maisonneuve students and staff members show how the issue of religious radicalization leading to violence was experienced and, above all, how the consequences in terms of interpersonal relationships, have a direct impact on the lives of some students, especially those who are Muslim or who are considered Muslim. In the Muslim case, denominational identification is now based on visual or visible identification. This identification is not always based on objective signs (a hijab, for example) — it can also be based on skin colour or the appearance of a beard. This means that people who are not Muslim, or for whom this facet of identity is secondary, are confined to a label over which they have little control.

Many of our participants, Muslim or not, highlighted what appears to be a typical case of prejudice, the tendency to attribute certain characteristics — positive or negative — to individuals simply due to their affiliation with a particular group. In the case of our research, the Muslim students we interviewed displayed many fears: being associated with terrorists or being perceived not as individuals but mostly as members of a group reduced to a few traits or, even worse, being suspected of becoming radicalized simply because of their religious practices. These fears are not unfounded and touch upon a form of radicalization prevention-detection for identifying tomorrow's terrorist today, based on certain attitudes or practices, particularly religious ones. The main limitation of this approach is that there is no cause and effect relationship between a religious practice, even if it takes a rigorous form, and terrorist violence (Kundnani, 2014).

Given these factors, we would like to advance the idea that the problem of radicalization leading to violence, through its treatment by sectors of society and the concrete consequences on people of Muslim faith, can be identified as a vulnerable area. To put it concisely, the social consequences of this problem can be counterproductive and, in turn, constitute radicalization opportunities that, for certain people, lead to a situation of identity uncertainty, due to the systematic self-devaluation of their reference group. In

this context, the students we interviewed pointed out the need to understand the motives of those who had left for Syria, or were preparing to leave.

When understanding is prevention

"I think that once you're despised, you become contemptuous."

(Student 73).

The search for a group

For the respondents, the motives of the individuals who left or who wanted to leave are diverse. Jihad candidates join a group with the same values as themselves. Said one student: "They thought joining a group that shares the same values as themselves without realizing that they are joining a terrorist group, whose ideas can be close to their own, but are, in reality, are not the same" (Student 20). They may identify with this type of group *"and see themselves in those who recruit them"* (Student 46). When questioned about why the students who left for Syria chose the Islamic State, one respondent stated that *"Oxfam is not enough. There is no diversity in these radical movements, whereas Oxfam is too diverse. As a result, they see themselves in those who recruit them. If you do Oxfam, you're doing well, but the radicals say that Oxfam is not enough. They're going to say it's controlled. It's brainwashing"* (Student 11).

More than shared values, it is religious affiliation they seek, according to some people: "In those groups, it is the way to gain acceptance from each other. This religion is all about belonging. Your faith is for you. Sometimes I see young people reciting the Koran publicly. I'm not saying that this is unfortunate, but I think it has become a fashionable way to make yourself feel appreciated. They consider themselves cooler" (Student 76).

For some young people, rigorous religious practice can be considered a transgressive choice: it's about going against generally accepted standards and proclaiming this fact for all to hear. If the opportunity is available to them to band together or associate with other transgressive individuals, this leads to a sort of competition: *"There is, to a certain extent, an exodus from here: it's a one-way trip, they agree to abandon their home here. They are not 100% rooted. They are seeking somewhere else, where their religion*

reigns. Here, they are uncomfortable with religion" (Student 46). Although the adoption of a religious practice deemed "radical" does not necessarily lead to violence or a departure to Syria, social psychology studies show that within a homogeneous group, in terms of ideas and beliefs, members tend to harden their initial positions, so some extreme positions are made possible only by how intra-group relationships play out. As a result, groups end up thinking and doing things that individuals — on their own — would never have thought nor done (Sunstein, 2009).

Cultural, social and economic explanations

Other proposed motivations refer to the idea of deficits, gaps or shortfalls that may characterize the candidates at the outset: *"They depart on a complex [...]. The fact they left means that they do not see themselves in what they were doing at college every day. We cannot know what was happening at home. Maybe their parents overlooked a certain detail. They are not doing it for fun. It has more to do with a deficiency"* (Student 46).

In line with their recruitment, these candidates do not know how to keep a critical distance from events in the Middle East: *"Worse, they do not have any critical judgment. [This is] the rhetoric [they take] for the truth"* (Student 21) and they are no doubt vulnerable individuals: *"Somewhat vulnerable people, with little confidence, who are still trying to find themselves"* (Student 11).

The departure for Syria could also be motivated by a lack of a sense of belonging in Quebec (see Chapter 6 for this point) for young people who have broken ties with society and their families: *"They lack a sense of belonging, attachment or encouragement. They have nothing to lose. Worse, they are given something more attractive"* (Student 21). This idea is similar to the notion of self-esteem, status and recognition that we give these students: *"People who feel like Quebecers are deeply committed to their values and friends and will not leave"* (Student 49).

Students identify with a sense of rejection or socio-economic marginalization. In this area, literature provides various factors. In many models of radicalization leading to violence proposed, economic conditions or the conditions for exclusion are mentioned as a source of frustration or a sense of rejection. Social and economic uncertainty and

inequality and resentment are the basis of many radicalization models and studies (Borum 2003; King and Taylor, 2011). In a model proposed by Fathali Moghaddam (2005), these are the first two steps that can contribute to this debate on resentment that the author refers to as the "psychological interpretation of material conditions." Other authors show how the perception of growing anti-Muslim sentiment is fueled by discrimination against people (or the people around them) who are the victims (King and Taylor, 2011).

The radicalized: victims or offenders

The young people perspective qualifies radicalized individuals as a victim of a recruiting machine, although some stakeholders and teachers seem to find or crystallize motives within the family sphere. The attribution is external: the dynamics of families in conflict are alleged to be responsible and the lack of integration of immigrant parents explains the failure of children and the likelihood of radicalization (Stakeholder 3). Radicalized young people are not victims because they lied and are considered offenders: *"They are not submissive. They are delinquents"* (Stakeholder 5).

In this respect, another stakeholder stated that it is not a crime, but rather *"discontent, a hole in the heart, low self-esteem, a lack of love at home, but also drugs, sometimes crime. Although it must qualify as crime, because here [in crime] there is a financial gain, although for others [who are radicalized], it is a quest for absolute and occasional power, an encounter with God. In recruitment, we'll therefore see the promise to fill that hole"* (Stakeholder 4). The same stakeholder said that if, *"in high school, the young people in question were heavily supervised, they would otherwise be expected to be responsible and self-sufficient, so they make a firm decision. Deficit analysis is not an intellectual deficiency, but rather an emotional deficiency. The path to action will be gradual, but there is initially isolation and disintegration that occurs in rooms or spaces where young people meet in secrecy. The moment of vulnerability: age"* (Stakeholder 4).

In terms of isolation, one teacher concurs with this finding and emphasizes the major challenge of identifying cases where a student is isolated: *"Isolation is not apparent and ethnic groups are well integrated into college"* (Teacher 12). Despite the complexity of the profiles, age seems to be a common trait. In fact, it is less the age than the transition

from one status to another, with a change in individual and group expectations, responsibilities and requirements.

"But often young people are the ones who leave, even though they have not yet grown as a person. They are still trying to find themselves" (Student 11). If opinion is divided on the motives behind the departure, those interviewed agree on the fact that the departure (or the attempt to depart) reflects a general malaise. Teachers and stakeholders pointed out that it is important to tell students that the events have weakened, offering opportunities to express their discomfort. The fear is that buried and unexpressed feelings may make some students pervious to the rhetoric of Islamist recruiters.

CHAPTER 2: THE CULTURAL PEER GROUPS AT THE HEART OF SOCIAL DYNAMICS

What to remember in this chapter

Highlights: The diversity of Quebec society is reflected at Collège de Maisonneuve. Affiliations play a key role in the identity construction process and ensure that students can find their "place," both within Collège de Maisonneuve and Quebec society.

Vulnerable areas linked to radicalization: In cases where a group is socially devalued, individuals may be tempted to

join a more closed and "radical" subgroup to respond to the negative image. These exclusive subgroups can encourage these individuals to break ties with society.

Preventive measures: Encourage activities (times and places) that promote the exchange and flow of ideas between groups. Formal and informal connections are responses to the temptation to withdraw and break ties.

*"Each of these groups influences me, as much as family, allowing me to adopt new values."
(Student 77).*

Introduction

Even though an educational institution is a space that brings together adolescents and young adults who seek knowledge, and those who facilitate the transfer (teachers, professionals and support staff), it is also a space where different groups meet and live together, including ethnocultural affiliations. Within a diverse society like Quebec, educational institutions reflect this diversity. Interviews and focus groups have shown that belonging to an ethnocultural group plays a major role in constructing the identity of young people from immigrant backgrounds and may correspond to a vulnerable area. Research has shown that developing a student's ability to move between groups is a promising prevention practice.

Students and their affiliations

The importance of ethnocultural groups

The family migration experience puts young people from immigrant backgrounds "under a dual cultural influence," (Lafortune and Kanoute, 2007: 39) which makes identity development in adolescence complex. The end of high school and college are critical years in developing identity, particularly when individuals must deal with their family's cultural heritage. The authors note that, unlike childhood — where ethnicity and class interferes little with friendships — "this affiliation becomes important in adolescence, when individuals often gather to strongly assert themselves" (*ibid.*). Therefore, "adolescence and immigration are two turning points that, when combined, add a special dimension to the dynamics of identity" (*ibid.*)

Students from immigrant backgrounds share a number of traits with their ethnocultural groups: *"My group of North African friends is like me. My friends are me. This is my identity. We understand each other. We share the same life"* (Student 49). Interviews indicated that young Quebecers from immigrant backgrounds — and all adolescents (da Conceição Taborda-Simões, 2005) — are in a process of seeking consistency, especially during their college years. One student confided: *"When I arrived, I felt a sense of nationalism. I searched for people who looked like me. There were many new things — everything was new to me. I had to learn the language. So I spent a long time searching for people who spoke the same language as me — the Portuguese, to be exact"* (Student 42).

The role of affiliations in building the identity of students

Few students claim to be uninfluenced by any group. Most recognize that these groups affect their thinking and actions. The following excerpt sums up this idea: *"When you constantly rub shoulders with the same people every day, you end up thinking about the same things. We are a group. We think as a group, not individually. The actions of one person have an impact on all the others. The group is bigger than any individual"* (Student 50). This student has intuitively restored an important social psychology idea about group/individual dynamics: the group encourages a community of thought and, in situations of doubt and controversy, individuals in the minority within their group tend to

adopt the dominant position to conform to the majority. That's why this student can say that "we think as a group, not individually."

In fact, as seen above, groups are almost always described as a space that is both physical and psychological. Although, as we mentioned above, groups promote a form of unanimity or community of thought, it is also true — and can easily be seen in educational institutions — that members of the same group adopt similar outfits and codes of behaviour. These codes have an internal function (group members recognize each other) and an external role (demonstrating the group's existence and creating boundaries). Furthermore, peer groups are an important practical resource for students, who can find support and comfort there. In situations where individuals must form an opinion or take a position on an issue, they naturally turn to their peer group before making a decision. This group function is particularly important for adolescents and young adults who, as we pointed out above, are encouraged to make choices and comment on various topics.

Ethnocultural groups: the categorization process and vulnerable areas

Stereotypes — a catalyst for vulnerable areas

Diversity can be seen daily at Collège de Maisonneuve and is, to a certain extent, demonstrated in public areas and the way these spaces are used by individuals and groups. In interviews, students pointed out the existence of ethnic- and religion-based groups. Stated one student: *"This is something that I noticed upon arrival. Ethnic groups stand together. It was the same thing in the suburbs, but there were fewer groups"* (Student 21). Another believes that these groups can also be seen in areas where all students assemble: *"In the cafeteria, there is an Asian table, a white table and a Muslim table"* (Student 56). Finally, one student drew attention to the fact that *"there are black people, Haitians and Africans. There are Arabs on the 4th and 5th floors. There are Lebanese at the first table in the cafeteria. In the back of the library, there are the North Africans, divided by the neighbourhoods they come from. The Lebanese, a truly tight-knit group, marry each other. It is a somewhat closed community"* (Student 77). This testimonial shows that the view on ethnocultural diversity serves as an anchor for

different aspects of college life. It is underpinned by particular geography, characterized by places specific to each group, ensuring that social categorization doubles as spatial categorization. A little later, the same student acknowledged that "you see just Arabs. It's like the student association: from the outside, you think it's just white people, but when you go inside, you see people from immigrant backgrounds (not white) on the Board of Directors. There are also the hipsters in the student café and Asians in the study hall" (Student 77). During this interview, the student admitted that he oversimplified the situation and the dynamics within cultural groups are much more complex.

That said, this testimonial is particularly rich in information because it captures the realities of categorization, defined as "a psychological process that tends to order the environment in terms of categories" (Tajfel, 1972: 272). Categorization plays a role in systematizing the environment, its division and its organization — but not without simplifying reality: similarities and differences between categorized objects become more pronounced than they actually are. This simplification leads to stereotypes: considering that some people belong to the same category (culturally, for example), these individuals tend to share common traits. Like categorization, "stereotypes are simplifications. They help us define and characterize a group, cognitively describing its members quickly and efficiently" (Deschamps and Moliner, 2008: 25). In addition to a strictly cognitive dimension, prejudices have an evaluative component: stereotypes are loaded with value judgments that are, in most cases, negative in nature.

According to some students, the groups do not include every community. Said one of them: *"Yes. Especially the Arab groups. You see them in corridors, sitting in groups. Some ethnic groups are larger than others. Sometimes, there are a few Quebecers with them, but they are a minority"* (Student 26). Still, *"I don't think that all ethnic minorities congregate."*

It's the large groups or communities. Above all, the Middle Easterners and Latinos. The Asians less so. I don't think that the Europeans gather together" (Student 59). This excerpt is an opportunity to recall that the respondents did not give us an objective description of Collège de Maisonneuve's actual group dynamics, but they shared their views. Of course, it is a well-known fact that people's perceptions are related to many factors: their status in society, their biographical journey, even their values. What's interesting about the excerpt above is not so much that people belonging to a particular

community are more likely to congregate — one of the important lessons to remember here is that this student's perspective focuses specifically on this fact.

However, in Quebec, many debates (on issues such as reasonable accommodation, religious symbols, full-face hijabs and halal meat) have focused public opinion on Islam and Muslims. The Muslim students we interviewed voiced some discomfort and regret that the debate is focused on Islam, as if, deep down, the problem stems from Islam itself, not the groups or individuals who practise it. In the next section, we will show how the media treatment of Islam, in terms of the issues that its presence implies, has a negative impact on the image that Muslims have their own religion and simplifies the efforts of recruiters, who exploit this negative image to their advantage.

From vulnerable groups to vulnerable areas

Peer groups play a role in the identity and psychological stability of individuals. The fundamental principles of the "Social Identity Theory" point out that the positive social identity sought by individuals "is based largely on favourable comparisons between the relevant in-group and out-group: the in-group should be perceived positively differentiated relative to relevant out-groups. Whenever the social identity is unsatisfactory, people try to leave their current group and join a positively rated group and/or make their current group more favourably distinct" (Licata, 2007: 25). It follows that an individual's social identity is closely linked to the situation in his/her peer group and how it is perceived and rated by other groups and, more broadly, by the rest of the society. In other words, self-esteem is directly related to the peer group's rank relative to other groups.

Although there are no negative social consequences for groups subject to stereotypes, the stereotypes themselves may lead, in certain circumstances, to discrimination. Due to the tendency to attribute negative qualities to other peer groups, individuals may be subject to negative behaviour. However, the interviews showed that categorizations are accompanied by value judgments and misrepresentations about certain individuals or groups.

Given the general topic of our research — religious radicalization that can lead to violence — Muslim students expressed concerns that their image has been tarnished by

the events that occurred a few months earlier. To use a social psychology concept, these students fear the phenomenon of "illusory correlation" (Chapman and Chapman, 1967), which explains why the traits or behaviour, yet very rare for members of a group will be considered more common than they actually are. Here, Muslim people point to the fear of being falsely attributed tendencies to religious radicalization that can lead to violence.

Many studies have shown that Islam's deteriorating image in Western societies since the events of September 11, 2001 has had an impact on the Muslims themselves, whose in-group identification has been called into question by this pejorative process (Garner and Selod, 2015 Helly, 2004). As a result, they may have to face a uncertainty-identity situation (Hogg, 2007). According to Michael Hogg, the sense of uncertainty an individual feels could lead him to identify with more radical groups (Hogg et al., 2010), which provide a stable framework, well-defined standards and, most importantly, clearly defined boundaries.

It appears that Islam's negative image is a vulnerable area for some students, who can be attracted to radical rhetoric of recruiters, readily available on the Internet. This rhetoric is very attractive in two ways: it provides an interpretative framework — the West's war against Islam — for the debates in northern countries and projects a particularly close-knit community where individuals can find a place. The group's cohesive character comes from the absolute boundaries between the group and the rest of society. In the next section, however, we will show that one of the preventive measures that we plan to recommend is to encourage the movement of individuals between groups.

Ethnocultural groups as tools of prevention

Developing the ability of students to move between groups

Our interviews indicated that students do not always identify with the group to which they are connected permanently. Some move between different groups without completely belonging to them. One student confided: *"I don't identify with just one culture, not even with people in my own community. I share things with people who have the same background as me. I think that the clothes do not make the man, even if I wear a hijab. I*

don't frequently wear one. I love differences, diversity. Differences are what unite us" (Student 76). Plus, *"I like to move from one group to another. I don't like staying in one group. They themselves do not know. They have positive opinions or negative ones and stay with their stereotypes"* (Student 70). This short excerpt reflects the maturity of the student, who knows full well the limits and risks of too much individual identification with a particular group. He stressed that real individual autonomy is the ability to move between groups and, ultimately, maintain a pragmatic relationship with them. This propensity to move between groups has one virtue, perfectly expressed by one student: *"The values of others help us define ourselves and helps us have an open mind"* (Student 76). It is also the ability to forge a critical sense: *"When I doubt, I listen to various opinions and I build my own opinion"* (Student 70).

Build bridges between people

Research has shown that we should not overestimate the divisions and impermeability between groups. For example, religious affiliation is not necessarily a topic of discussion between individuals: *"With friends, you don't talk about it. I don't even know if they are religious, or they don't seem to be religious, or they just don't show it"* (Student 51). Friendships are not necessarily based on religion: *"No, because I care about it. It's something personal"* (Student 11). Another student explained that *"it opens me up a little more to all kinds of friendships. I have both religious (Christian) and atheist friends. My friendships are not based on anything religious"* (Student 56). Friendships are, in the words of these students, opportunities for intercultural exchanges and encounters: (Student 21). Even when friendship is not necessarily the goal, interaction between different faiths are endorsed, appreciated and sought after as a way to explore and discover each other. This is particularly apparent in the religious realm: *"To understand the views of others, I like to talk about religions very much. It really makes me think: I make a lot of connections. I ask myself many questions. I like to understand other people of faith — why they act a certain way. I like to understand them through their faith"* (Student 11). Movement between groups also allows individuals to qualify their convictions and steer away from extremes. Diversity makes you challenge yourself to question and nuance your own convictions or beliefs. *"Just having friends with different religions encourages you to take stock"* (Student 52). Another student felt the same way: *"Hanging out with people who are not Muslims opens your mind. Having gay friends*

makes me more open and changes my mind about stuff. I have more nuanced opinions" (Student 40). These testimonials clearly indicate that the ability of individuals to move between groups, be open, become more intellectually independent and develop a critical perspective. For many students, college diversity is "an opportunity" and should not only be limited to the coexistence of different groups, but should become reality through one-on-one relationships.

CHAPTER 3. SOCIAL IDENTITY AND THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE AT COLLÈGE DE MAISONNEUVE

What to remember in this chapter

Highlights: College is a decisive stage in identity building, in that it is the place where adult life and citizenship are learned. Students of immigrant backgrounds recognize they are living through pivotal years and Collège de Maisonneuve offers them identity-building resources.

Vulnerable areas linked to radicalization: While students give an important place to critical knowledge (particularly sociology or philosophy), some of them have difficulty with pedagogical

situations in which they feel personally offended by teaching sequences. This may result in a will to disengage from the teaching activity (passive listening strategy) and find alternative knowledge with radical groups.

Preventive measures: Make teachers aware of the effects of their remarks on some students, not to censor themselves but to ensure the inclusiveness of their pedagogical approach. It is also important to favour exchanges – formal and informal – between students and teachers.

Introduction

Most research that attempts to discern the role of the school with young people from immigrant backgrounds do so with common questions. First of all, how does the school contribute to the identity-building process of students in a pluralist society? Such a question postulates that the school and, more broadly, educational institutions, are not only places for acquisition of knowledge and disciplinary competencies, but also fundamentally spaces where individuals learn sociability. In this perspective, college is a tremendous tool for “living together”. But for this learning of sociability to work correctly in a context of cultural pluralism, the inherent plurality of individuals must be understood and taken into account (Verhoeven, 2006).

During interviews with the students, part of the discussions focused on their everyday experience at Collège de Maisonneuve, more specifically their interactions with teachers, practitioners and other students. Continuing in our social psychology

perspective, we wanted to understand how all the relationships students maintain have an impact on their identity building. As we had the occasion to mention in the previous chapter, the College presents itself as a collection of individuals who claim multiple affiliations, not all of which have the same degree of meaning and importance for them. In this chapter, our reflection is guided by the idea that the quality of interactions may have a strong impact on the creation of vulnerable areas. We also emphasize the role of the classroom as a preferred prevention space.

College, a space for personal transformation and growth

“But I also learned to be more sociable. I’m open. I learned to talk to everyone.” (Student 59).

How does college change young people?

For more young people, college, and particularly Collège de Maisonneuve, provides a concrete experience of diversity. Such an experience, the encounter with cultural diversity, is appreciated: *“Yes, in terms of cultural diversity, it has changed me, because it lets me be with really different people. This is the first time I’ve seen veiled girls. It’s OK. It allows me to sympathize with very different people”* (Student 2). This diversity motivated one young people to choose Collège de Maisonneuve, which he sees as an important public institution: *“Before, I was in a protected bubble, [...] but I chose a big public institution. I wanted to see more diversity in all its forms”* (Student 8).

The students experience all forms of diversity. Whether the student is a multi-generational Quebecers or from immigrant backgrounds, the new and varied composition of the college population may surprise him in some cases: *“I come from a secondary school and it’s a very multiethnic school. It’s the neighbourhood, normal life for me, but when I arrived at Collège de Maisonneuve, it was culture shock. Before, there was no difference among us in secondary school; here there are different people”* (Student 49). Some students even impatiently awaited this diversity. A female student explains it this way: *“I was in a private girls’ secondary school. I encountered the diversity of Arabs, from those who won’t shake a girl’s hand to those who dress like*

rockers. This broadened my environment. I met people from the South Shore, Saint-Michel, Montréal-Nord. I found what I was looking for at Maisonneuve" (Student 77).

In contrast with secondary school, new forms of socialization also operate: *"It also changed how I see my groups of friends. There are others who take a little more precedence. It wasn't like that in secondary school. My social relations are differentiated among groups"* (Student 61). While the number of students and the diversity of profiles favour encounters, some students may feel a little lost in the college environment: *"It was hard during the first sessions. I didn't have a lot of friends. I spent a lot of time alone. Afterwards, I met new people. From one session to another, sometimes people don't speak to you anymore. It's difficult to find friends"* (Student 74).

Being yourself at college

For students, "being yourself" means "being able" to live their multiple affiliations,⁹ whether they're immigrants or not. In this section, we considered it relevant to distinguish the students' point of view, depending on whether they are multi-generation Quebecers or Quebecers from immigrant backgrounds, because the answers may be different and thus inform us better about the possible vulnerable areas.

Without hesitation almost all the multi-generation Quebec students feel they are themselves at Collège de Maisonneuve: *"Yes, I mean, there are so many differences at Collège de Maisonneuve that... I mean, it doesn't bother anyone that I'm being myself. I have the impression that at Collège de Maisonneuve people are easy-going, while in secondary school, this would have been different"* (Student 21). However, some mentioned having some reservations, particularly when they have the feeling they don't fit into a standard: *"I don't feel comfortable sharing my privacy in public, for example. It's really sexual orientation that is difficult"* (Student 50).

Like a multi-generation Quebec student, an immigrant student can be himself, but on condition that he "change a little": "I think so. Of course, there are things you have to do at home, but mostly, yes, there are a lot of things you are obliged to give up, like your

⁹ This theme of multiple affiliations will be discussed at greater length in Chapter 4.

traditions, your habits... But it's true, when you're an immigrant, you change without even realizing it, if you really want to fit in" (Student 9); but on the other hand, he can't be himself due to fear of being judged: "I would say no. At Collège de Maisonneuve, not really. If it's to be curious, yes, but otherwise no. You beware of being judged. I have the impression the others are being themselves and aren't afraid of being judged" (Student 45).

It is difficult, even impossible for them to integrate with their cultural baggage into an affirmed Quebec society: "I had to get out of my comfort zone. I had to face other people's opinions. To accept that I was in another culture, I had to get out of my comfort zone. It was a threat, but I had to do it to continue my personal development" (Student 42). Being himself and integrating into the Collège de Maisonneuve community requires young people from immigrant backgrounds not only to get out of his comfort zone but to conform, to set aside part of his identity, his origins: "At Collège de Maisonneuve, I don't say 'No', not as such. I have to conform. My hands are tied and I don't express what I am. However, I'm much more myself in Quebec than I was in my country. There aren't really any ethnic problems, but you have to disappear a little..." (Student 53).

When a vulnerable area emerges from the relationship with the college

The immigrant family and its relations with the educational institution

In their encounters with young people from immigrant backgrounds who come to consult them, the practitioners often raise the question of values and prohibitions, such as sexuality, alcohol, dress and love relationships. These young people are dealing with all kinds of contradictions and their parents are described as providing little encouragement and not enough support. Quite often, the immigrant family is seen as *"rigid, because it is frustrated by immigration and sometimes by the professional disqualification of the parent (notion of sacrifice), who overinvest in the children's education, leading to a distortion between what is happening in life (social experience) and family requirements"* (Practitioner 1).

Parents are distant, far from the children's school and social experience, particularly allophone parents. From the point of view of some professionals interviewed, the immigrant family is described as sometimes exercising too much control over young people, who consequently would be *"very comfortable with lying; they don't tell the family everything"* (Practitioner 3). This perspective easily coexists with the nonetheless contradictory idea that parental authority is failing. One practitioner insisted on the type of approach to be valued: *"The job is in the field; it's in the sociocommunity function that it's happening. Maisonneuve has always tried to be avant-garde [...]. After the events, they held an activity that included a dance, and it went well, it was unifying. Unifying phenomena must be found. Some teachers – you wonder what their approach is. The attitudes of the teachers or some practitioners, who don't tolerate religious people. In my case, I listen to them. They think that I think like them. But I say: "Where can you find ways to adapt?" I'm caught in the middle"* (Practitioner 6). This clearly sets out the role of educational institutions concerning the paths of students from immigrant backgrounds, in which their parents invest heavily. As the research explains, the school is explained as one of the key institutions for social integration of these young people. However, according to Altay Manço, "its importance is not so much due to its role in transmission of knowledge as to its symbolic role: the school enables children to emancipate themselves from their affiliations and identifications of origin. But this emancipation cannot be against the environment of origin; it needs to be able to combine change and continuity, to be able articulate tradition and modernity" (Manço, 2006: 19). In this perspective, the educational institution must do its work while accounting for the families and the values they convey. In the next chapter, we show that "identity conflict" situations are vulnerable areas for young people, but we see here that the divergences between the educational institution and the family can also constitute such areas.

The classroom and religion

In Collège de Maisonneuve's classrooms, possible tensions exist between the conceptions and opinions of individuals regarding the place of religion in the educational space, and undoubtedly generational effects. While recognizing the importance of discussion and criticism, some students feel uncomfortable regarding the remarks some teachers may make about religion, particularly in courses of disciplines pertaining to the humanities and social services. While some are satisfied to state this feeling, others

point out that they prefer to opt for a strategy we could qualify as “passive resistance”, taking a low profile during the course and doing the minimum to obtain correct results. Such a situation is disappointing, because the teachers’ goal specifically is to lead students into areas where they didn’t think they could go, while respecting a balance between their student’s convictions and their own. Moreover, the literature on radicalization emphasizes the role of the school not in detection – a delicate and dangerous exercise –but in prevention (Pels and de Ruyter, 2012). Some authors suggest that inclusive approaches in a context of diversity, such as the creation of a sense of community through learning activities based on student cooperation, prevent the risks of radicalization (Davis and Cragin, 2009; Hansen 2001; Westheimer and Kahne 2004).

The classroom: a special space for prevention

Lessons that makes students think

The student matures and learns to know himself better, particularly in philosophy courses: “In the philosophy course, you learn a lot about life in general. For example, in that course I learned some really interesting things about a special subject concerning meditation on death” (Student 50). In general, students recognize that some disciplines, such as philosophy, sociology, but also literature or psychology, encourage them to ask themselves questions about who they are, their choices, and their social determinisms. Students from immigrant backgrounds also affirm that sometimes in these lessons they consider the meaning of their identity as Quebec citizens from immigrant backgrounds.

The students also point out that some courses sharpen their curiosity and help them develop their critical literacy and their critical sense: “I have always had a critical mind, but Collège de Maisonneuve sharpened it. Maybe this is related to my humanities program, but I think it’s important in life not to see things in black and white, to distinguish between the nuances” (Student 69). The different existing models (Borum, 2003; Moghaddam, 2005; Sagemam, 2008; Wiktorowicz, 2004) advance the idea that one of the signs of radicalization is the development in the individual’s mind of a simplistic vision of the world, a conception of social reality without nuances. Developing students’ critical sense and intellectual curiosity thus can be beneficial in terms of prevention.

Pedagogical practices

The teachers recognize the groups formed in their classes, but point out that these groups do not function as closed entities; on the contrary, discussions and exchanges occur. While these groups help students feel at ease, they nonetheless do not shut them in. The classroom thus appears as a special space: it reveals the intergroup dynamics observable in society as a whole, but at the same time it provides a unique opportunity, through teaching and the subject taught, to influence these dynamics directly. The entire tradition of intercultural education, specific to Quebec, emphasizes the virtue of the classroom in terms of intergroup relations (McAndrew, 2001). Pedagogical practices have major importance and the teachers interviewed readily adopt them. According to them, these practices make it possible to deconstruct the students' representations, undo stereotypes and prejudices, or develop critical sense. We have shown that the negative representations of which some groups are victims constitute vulnerable areas in terms of the risks of radicalization. The work of "deconstruction" of stereotypes is therefore an important practice. Moreover, researchers on radicalization stress the fact that one of the paths of prevention is to equip students so they are able to display critical sense (Difraoui et Uhlmann, 2015) when they receive propaganda messages.

These pedagogical practices are articulated with specific themes (related to ethnic and religious diversity) that especially interest the students: immigration, but not all approach it head on; local and international news; the question of indigenous people; religious symbols (the differences between the niqab, hijab and chador) and the status of women; Quebec history; reasonable accommodation; homosexuality, sexuality outside of marriage... more difficult topics, which disturb some people.

Nonetheless, the presence of people from different groups in the same space is not automatically enough to create exchanges; the teacher plays a determining role by imprinting his or her dynamics on the class. Concerning the treatment of topics such as religion, ethnocultural diversity or even radicalization, the interviews with the teachers showed that not all have the same attitude. Some prefer to avoid certain topics so as not to show themselves in contradiction with their students' convictions or beliefs. On the other hand, others emphasized the importance of not avoiding the most burning issues, because it is important to create regulated spaces in which these questions can be

raised. For these teachers, it is important to shake up the students a little, without going too far and ending up in rejection on their part. On the specific question of religious radicalization leading to violence, we distinguished three types of teachers: those who speak about it because the discipline they are teaching provides them with the opportunity and they have the ad hoc conceptual tools; those who would like to speak about it, but who do not feel equipped enough, and those who simply do not want to speak about it.

Interacting informally with teachers and practitioners

Apart from lessons and consultation periods, discussion with teachers and practitioners is rare, according to the students interviewed. The exchanges are only intended to discuss the subject in greater depth at the end of the class, or if the young people encounters a specific problem that requires discussion with a practitioner. On the question of whether he had discussions with his teachers, one student confided: *“No, not really. When I discuss with them, it’s mainly for work. It’s true that previously, in my country, I discussed a little more. Maybe the educational system is different here, but I don’t feel as close to the teachers. But they’re nice nonetheless, and that’s all right with me”* (Student 2).

But it is permitted and it happens that students discuss things with a teacher that have nothing to do with classes: *“Some are open and discuss other things. But generally, I stick to the course, except with those who discuss other subjects. There is one teacher with whom I have special affinities, because she talks to us about different subjects”* (Student 39). Even though these interactions outside the classroom are rare, the students want to have more of them: *“Concerning the teachers, yes, sometimes. Sometimes, we discussed things out of class. We had common interests. On this subject, I think we should be closer to the teachers”* (Student 69). Despite this, students can feel very intimidated. One female student confided: *“I’ve given myself a personal challenge: approaching the teachers more, even by email, is important”* (Student 52). They are sometimes suspicious of people who nonetheless remain authority figures. However, discussions outside teaching time and on subjects other than those addressed in the course can also have virtues in terms of preventing radicalization. We show in this research that the radicalization process is rooted in identity discomfort that cannot

always be verbalized to a trusted person. Recruiters will present themselves as an attentive ear who will listen to and understand the individual's malaise. In the college context, teachers sometimes appear to be trusted individuals students can address to share something private, even if they then refer them to practitioners. What is important is that dialogue can be established.

CHAPTER 4 : THE RECONCILIATION OF CULTURES: BETWEEN NEGOTIATION AND IDENTITY DISCOMFORT

What to remember in this chapter

Highlights: Students from immigrant backgrounds are “in midstream” and are building their own identity structured by at least two cultural systems. Multiple belonging is a requirement that matures them, but it is also a trial.

Vulnerable areas linked to radicalization: Some students go through the trial of an “identity conflict” and are unable to synthesize different cultural systems. Radical groups advocating violence in the name of religion rely on this malaise

to propose an alternative identity that offers certainties where there are doubts, and that gives the individual a sense of belonging where there is “identity marginalization”.

Preventive measures: Account for the multiple affiliations of individuals and propose activities in which this can be debated and shared.

Introduction

*“You can't wear two different masks without bearing the traces of the first mask”
(Student 72).*

We met young multi-generation Quebecers, as well as first and second generation immigrant students. Some are recent immigrants (less than 5 years), while others have been established in Quebec longer (10 years or more). They come from all continents: Asia (China, Vietnam), the Middle East (Lebanon, Turkey), Africa (Mali, Guinea), the Maghreb (Morocco, Algeria), Europe (France), and Latin America (Mexico, Brazil) and island countries like Tahiti and Haiti. Some of their parents are university graduates and very few of these immigrant families have other members present in Quebec.

“Children in midstream”

The culture of origin as a source of inspiration

Young second-generation immigrants have several types of connections with their family and country of origin. This results in a deep moral obligation and an emotional attachment to this country, so that the relationship with it – which the young people sometimes have never visited – is a central factor in building identity (Gallant, 2008). Nonetheless, the relationship to the culture of origin is subject to an individual reappropriation process: young second-generation Quebecers have perfectly integrated the individualistic values of society, so that the relationship with the culture of origin takes the form of a reconciliation between that culture and Quebec culture, the first being reinterpreted to function in accordance with the second. A certain accommodation thus develops between building an individual identity, fully rooted in today’s Quebec, and maintenance of the culture of origin (Gallant, 2010).

The negotiation between the society of origin and the host society is revealed to be more difficult for students who themselves are immigrants (and not only from immigrant backgrounds), and who had to leave their social network, their habits and their cultural references. One student points out: *“I watch television from my country of origin, but I have lost the taste for it because of my new life. I’m here; I’m not there. I am adopting a North American, Canadian lifestyle”* (Student 9). Sometimes a sense of loss and a certain melancholy could show through their remarks: *“I miss the food and I remember times when I’d get up and go eat by the seaside, with music (of the country). There is a distance that makes us think of what we loved there and we realize it here”* (Student 2).

Research on second-generation young adults (Benaïche, 2011; Tabet, 2011) reveals, in the loyalty relationship with parents, that a consciousness exists based on the parents’ migratory history and the language of the country of origin. However, some research points to intrafamily differences, particularly in the case of the identity of young people of Arab-Muslim origin (Benaïche, 2011): *“I give it less importance than my big sister; she is more attached to religion than me, undoubtedly because she is a woman and wears the hijab”* (Student 49).

Nonetheless, the students talk about a gap between the way they and their parents live the values and culture of origin: *“My parents are attached to their country. The children*

are in midstream. For the parents, it's more difficult. Sometimes they don't have the same interest as you do in growing roots here. In my family, everyone is attached to this culture, even though my mother is more religious than we are. We try to make choices from the best of the two worlds" (Student 53). This testimony is interesting, because it points out that the adoption of cultural values, norms and references calls for people to make choices that can be painful.

Young people from immigrant backgrounds also want to contribute to the maintenance, preservation and transmission of their culture of origin: *"Yes, this is a duty and I adhere to it, because it's part of me: the language, the history to be preserved, but without imposing it"* (Student 11). They think about this responsibility by projecting themselves into the future and imagining parents they may become one day: *"Yes, it's a responsibility! To maintain it, especially when I will have my own children in the future"* (Student 49). Contrary to what might be thought at first, this responsibility provides a feeling of pride and is not necessarily seen as a burden: *"Yes, I have a responsibility. This is a pleasure, but it isn't a burden. I feel special and I feel proud"* (Student 40). The culture for which they are responsible becomes to some extent a sign of distinction compared to the other students. The pride they derive from responsibility is possible only to the extent that their culture of origin, of which they are the repositories and the relays for the future generation, is not a hindrance to building their identity, but rather is a source of inspiration, as if the culture of origin offered the stable basis for building identity in Quebec.

Appropriation and management of cultural heritage

"I have become them without seeking to do so. It's difficult to go back" (Student 45).

Regarding the duty and ability to maintain one's culture of origin, it is appropriate to consider the appropriation of such a cultural heritage and the way young people manage it in everyday life. Conflicts of loyalty may lead to the development of strategies, particularly identity strategies. Gina Lafortune specifies that "identity strategies are used depending on the players' situation, ends and resources" (Lafortune and Kanouté, 2007: 41). The interviews allowed us to distinguish several strategies.

Management is easy... when the young people adapts and adjusts while respecting others: *“Yes, of course, but I’m open. I don’t impose anything on others. What defines us is ourselves and our behaviours. I can have affinities with someone who doesn’t have the same way of thinking, the same culture or the same tradition as me. What’s important to me is respect for the other person’s culture”* (Student 40).

Awareness of the sacrifices made by parents. Students from immigrant backgrounds are perfectly aware of the sacrifices made by their parents to ensure their success (Sweet et al., 2008): *“My parents definitely transmitted perseverance to me. My parents are university graduates, but they immigrated and started over from zero at the minimum wage, and then they made something of themselves. They taught me to achieve my goals. It’s more a heritage of values than a cultural heritage”* (Student 8).

Problem managing cultural heritage. It happens that reconciliation is difficult, even impossible, and that a choice must be made: *“It’s a little difficult. We have to remove a little of our own culture to take on the culture of the other”* (Student 42). We have shown that students negotiate their individual identity by associating cultural elements of the society of origin and other elements of Quebec society; however, for some students, this negotiation may prove to be a difficult dilemma – and even impossible – to resolve. A student explains it this way: *“I must say that I’m caught between two chairs; I feel this double affiliation, but I prefer to assert my values before my integration into the group. It’s like a two-edged sword, because I live with my parents and I don’t want to disappoint them”* (Student 49). This rift is all the more apparent when the student makes choices that seem to go against those of his parents: *“It must also be said that North American culture is very tempting. It tears me from the culture of my community, because my parents aren’t very well integrated here, they are isolated; and I grew up here with a great desire for openness and for moving toward the American world, but it’s uncomfortable. The question is how to reconcile the two”* (Student 52).

Abandoning the cultural identity of the country of origin

During an interview, a student explained as follows: *“There are things I’m obliged to deny, there are things I’m obliged to abandon to get ahead in Quebec society, to “fit in” better. But I still maintain my convictions”* (Student 9). Such a denial involves self-censorship: *“It’s difficult. I am not too sure where to position myself. I try to keep these things to myself as much as possible, in a Quebec context, and at the same time I’m not*

happy, because I'd like to give my opinion. It comes back to not being myself. So to keep the peace, I say nothing, I keep it to myself, in my mind; my personal opinion is kept silent" (Student 11); denial will be synonymous with frustration, and in some cases, distancing and misunderstanding within the family: *"The Quebec heritage is building my modern values of freedom. When I speak to my family, sometimes they don't understand. I understand them less and less. I associated with Quebecers. Sometimes I have difficulty, I'm afraid of being judged, but I have learned to speak like them. I have become them without seeking to do so. It's difficult to go back"* (Student 45). These testimonials express an ambiguity in the relationship immigrant families maintain with the host society's culture: they "only appropriate the educational project of the dominant class, without espousing its other sociocultural dimensions" (Manço, 2006: 20). Children then find themselves in a dilemma that is difficult to negotiate, "which could engender adolescent guilt and identity conflict" (Manço, 2006: 20).

Identity conflict and radicalization

Divided identity, an area of fragility

The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu evokes the "divided habitus" to designate the malaise that results from belonging to two sociological incompatible worlds, or at least worlds that require a heavy negotiating effort for the individual to reconcile. We could refer more simply to *divided identity* to account for the tensions and contradictions between family culture and values, on the one hand, and the culture of Quebec society, on the other. Several students from immigrant backgrounds used the terms "rift", "choice" and "dilemma" in the interviews, thus putting forward the difficulties experienced. The following excerpt is a good illustration of the existing tensions: *"My parents aren't whitewashers", they want to keep me, they don't want me to be too Western, they don't agree much with Western values"* (Student 59).

Social psychology talks about "identity conflicts" to evoke people who must operate within two cultures that each have their own norms and values. Several interview

excerpts express what is known as *cognitive dissonance*. Cognitive dissonance is the term used when a person must reconcile, in his everyday existence, cultural norms, values or traits that are contradictory but that he nonetheless would like to hold together. The following excerpt, which concerns girl-boy relationships, is a good example: *“In secondary school it was a shock to see how girls and boys, in their friendships and love relationships, behaved with each other. It was so rooted in me, in addition to the fact that the teachers were comfortable with this. So I tell myself that this was a way of life and that I shouldn’t judge, but at the same time I tell myself this is wrong. It’s cultural; that’s the way it is here”* (Student 11). These remarks denote cognitive dissonance that comes from the clash between two types of sexual morality. When an individual lives with such a situation, he develops strategies that seek to reduce tensions and live with them. In the excerpt cited, the student reconciles the two value systems by relativizing them: he recognizes that neither has universal and absolute value, and that their truth is relative to the context considered. Yet the tension is manifest, because the student reaffirms the primacy of one value system: *“But at the same time I tell myself this is wrong”*.

The question of strategies is essential, given that cognitive dissonance is untenable in the long term. It demands resolution. In the case of identity conflicts that engender such situations, the research proposes typologies to show how young people from immigrant backgrounds negotiate the tensions arising from double affiliation. The typology proposed by John W. Berry (Berry *et al.*, 2006) includes four categories (or identity strategies): (1) assimilation (strong identification with the host culture and weak identification with the culture of origin), (2) separation: (opposite of assimilation), (3) integration (strong identification with both cultures), (4) marginalization (weak identification, both with the culture of origin and with the host culture).

“Identity marginalization” as an area of fragility

Several authors recognize the effectiveness of this typology to describe the relationships young people from immigrant backgrounds maintain with the culture of origin and the host culture. Among these four categories, marginalization is presented as providing low well-being: it is therefore likely to put the individual in an identity conflict position. The weak identification both with the culture of origin and the host culture has the effect of opening the door to alternative affiliations, particularly religious. We deal with the religious question more specifically in Chapter 5, but let us remember that, in the

Muslim case, the children's religious practice is sometimes very remote from that of the parents: the children's Islam may be a break from the parents' Islam. Some authors have shown how the constitution of a global *Oumma* represented an alternative to the parents' Islam, instilled with local or national particularities (Roy, 2002). The British sociologist Arun Kundnani explains that identification with a global Islamic community (Oumma) constitutes an alternative, both to the assimilationist injunction and to the family requirement to maintain ethnoreligious traditions (Kundnani, 2014: 36). Jihadist propaganda is based especially on the supposition of a global Islamic community threatened on all sides, starting with Western societies. This generates a strong sense of solidarity and identification among individuals who have no ties.

The research on religious radicalization leading to violence, particularly the studies that propose "models" or "paths" of radicalization, emphasizes the identity "marginalization" (Berry *et al.*, 2002 and 2006). Thus, some suggest that radicalization finds fertile soil in the difficulties that some persons from immigrant backgrounds have in making these plural identities coexist (King and Taylor, 2011). Obviously, identity marginalization does not necessarily lead the individual to the ultimate stage of violence. However, it is fertile ground – or an area of fragility – cleverly exploited by the recruiters of Islamist groups.

Multi-cultural affiliations: from vulnerable area to comparative advantage

Multiple affiliations, a source of suspicion

The literature on second-generation young people, and the interviews conducted with the students, shows the importance of "multiple affiliations". In Chapter 2, we saw that some students stressed the importance to circulating among groups to confront points of view and put them in perspective. However, this multiple affiliation is not self-evident, because it can be poorly perceived by the host society: often it is considered a superficial affiliation. Moreover, maintaining – and especially demanding – the culture or origin can be interpreted as a refusal to integrate. For example, the research that addressed the presentation of the identity of young Arabs and Muslims reveals a sense of identity affiliation "mixed with shame and delegitimization" (Tabet, 2011). Indeed, "displaying one's affiliation and identification then can be a source of embarrassment

and arouse the fear of the interlocutor's judgment" (Tabet, 2011: 68). The regard of others, so important in identity building, then can provoke a sense of illegitimacy and stigmatization. Such feels can lead to frustration and resentment. It is known that jihadist propaganda with young people – particularly young people from immigrant backgrounds – cleverly relies on the resentment they may nurture regarding the host society. In the case of young Quebec Arabs, Paul Eid (2004) evokes an identity trap for those whose identity is "compromised", in a context where the "Arab" category is both socially compromised and compromising for those who "suffer" it or claim it, or both at once.

Stigma reversal as an identity strategy to affirm multiple affiliations

Every since Erving Goffman's work (1963), "stigmas" have been used to refer to elements of the individual (often a physical or clothing particularity) which are socially devalued and will have the effect of devaluation the individual who wears them. To take a well-known example, the hijab is a stigma for the Muslim women who wear it, for example, when they are looking for a job. It happens that the groups and individuals who are victims of these stigmas (i.e. the negative regard they receive) make them a source of pride. The term "stigma reversal" is used to refer to this operation, during which something that provoked a sense of shame instead becomes an object of pride.

This reversal process to some extent is a reaction to a negative regard: "The specifically identity character is the "Arab" category in North America is essentially reactive, namely it primarily arises under the effect of an anti-Arab racism that tends to be more or less virulent depending on the international climate" (Tabet, 2011: 76). In Quebec, some research emphasizes the fact that the culture of origin – or sometimes, religious practice – is a field in which young people have the feeling they possess a certain power of action. Nicole Gallant makes the connection between identity choice and structural constraints: "Although some structural and cyclical constraints influence these choices, young people have the impression they have the freedom to choose their affiliations, and demand this" (Gallant, 2008: 39). At the same time, this "stigma reversal" effort has a dimension of cultural over-assertion, in that the groups that operate it often react to an identity to which they are confined (Laroussi, 2000). Such a process is not univocal in that it can have both positive and negative consequences. It can be viewed as the capacity of individuals and groups to regain lost esteem while affirming their full legitimacy in the host society. From this point of view, it appears positive. However,

“stigma reversal” can be a moment in which the group separates and enters into dissidence with the rest of society. A radicalization process can emerge from this rupture.

Gallant recommends looking at duality as a starting point: “On the contrary, it is generally posited as a starting point or a datum, and the analyses serve to substantiate either the hypotheses that it raises considerable difficulties for individuals, or the idea that this duality confers advantages on them” (Gallant, 2008: 37). Hybrid identity seems to be the key concept, according to Gallant, because it positions the affiliations as 1) multiple and 2) conjoined: “Most often a single affiliation group is involved, which I will qualify as a “hybrid” group, situated at the junction of the two sets” (Gallant, 2008: 41). “The fact that an individual plays with several identities (I instead would identify affiliations) at the same time, making greater use of one or the other, depending on the situation” (Gallant, 2010: 42). Moreover, this hybridity is perceived positively by second-generation young people, because it allows them to expand the field of possibilities: “*We don't have a strict point of view. We are more open. I can adopt several ways of seeing things*” (Student 40). Another student says: “*It's multicultural. I have access to several facts of cultural life, Quebec holiday, holiday [of the country of origin]; I have a more global vision of society. I can make contact with more people in different ways. I have a more diversified vision*” (Student 59).

The students' attitude to the question of multiple affiliations is rarely univocal and they are perfectly aware of the effects of context and the situations of social life. One of them thus explains that “*multiple affiliations is rewarding, but reconciliation is difficult; It's easier to live with having a single culture, but this doesn't help understand a reality other than your own*” (Student 52). Another study also mentions the ambiguity of multiple affiliations: “*Multiple affiliations is an advantage. It provides several lenses to look at the world. You're lucky to have several. Sometimes, multiple affiliations make it difficult to grow roots. At the beginning, when I was speaking to old ladies, I wasn't well received. I had several anecdotes where I didn't feel well received*” (Student 53). To the extent that multiple affiliations are built and are particularly experienced at educational institutions, they can influence the way it is experienced by students – for example, by organizing activities that invite students to question their own identity-building process. This is a

way to intervene on this vulnerable area, the difficulty for some studies to live well with multiple affiliations. For example, some teachers Maisonneuve (in philosophy or sociology) have imagined classroom activities where the students are invited to reflect on a text that specifically addresses identity building.

CHAPTER 5 : STUDENTS AND RELIGION

What to remember in this chapter

Highlights: Religious practice fulfills social functions for many students. It offers a framework in which to develop and negotiate one's place in society. It is also a constituent of individual identity.

Vulnerable areas to radicalization: The degraded image of the Muslim religion gives some students the impression they are a problem for Quebec society.

Islamist recruiters capitalize on the rhetoric of the “clash of civilizations” and the war between Islam and the West to attract potential recruits. Furthermore, the adoption of stringent and “radical” religious practices can be a response to criticism.

Preventive measures: Collectively develop thinking on the place of religious in educational institutions.

Introduction

“Religion defines me. I need his aspect to live and persevere. It's like coffee at breakfast. We need it”
(Student 11).

The religious question is central in the literature on radicalization for the simple reason that almost all the research concerns religious radicalization in its Islamic version. We pointed out in the introduction that the use of the term “radicalization” was henceforth a shortcut to discuss Muslim religious radicalization leading to violence. In the current context, any religious manifestation – particularly if it is Muslim – will be viewed as potentially suspicious, so that, for the general public, religious practice in its stringent version is the first step that inevitably will lead to involvement in terrorist organizations. The interviewed showed that this type of reasoning, which is based on prejudice, has major negative consequences for Muslim students.

In the context of the interviews with the students, we are not so much interested in their beliefs as in the functions and place of religion in their everyday life. Some researchers have shown that young people is a decision period for religious choices and emphasize

the fact that religious engagement is one way – for young people from immigrant backgrounds – to ensure the maintenance of the cultural identity of the group of origin (Lefebvre and Triki, 2012: 208). For many young people, religious is a space of self-valorization. From this point of view, it is useful to remember that the religious quest of some is not necessarily the sign of religious radicalization leading to violence.

Functions of religious practice in student life

The role of religion in building identity

According to the authors of a study on the relationship with religion of second-generation adolescents and young adults, they are primarily distinguished by “individualization of faith” (Lefebvre and Triki, 2012), by “a reappropriation of the parental religion that is primarily characterized by subjective distancing from the religious institution” (Lefebvre, 2012: 208). Regardless of whether young people have a casual or more fervent relationship with religion, they make choices regarding religious authority or family practice. In the case of casual practitioners, Solange Lefebvre and Amina Triki indicate that “they are characterized by distancing from religious authority, even if they maintain the principles of their faith as the basis for the pursuit of their spiritual path” (Lefebvre, 2012: 208). In the case of young people with more regular practice: “The religious path of regular practitioner is marked for the most part by a period of doubt, introspection and reconsideration of their beliefs, a period accompanied by a personal search, a return to God and a strengthening of faith” (Lefebvre and Triki, 2012: 208).

For non-believing students, religion can be a burden, a pressure, and they have to adhere to the family’s religious practices by obligation: *“I believe that religion puts pressure on an individual. If your parents are Muslims, they oblige you to be Muslim; it’s a kind of stress. This removes the stress of adhering to beliefs in which I didn’t really believe”* (Student 21).

For young believers, religion is important, because it allows them to define themselves: *“I see myself as a whole. It’s part of me like my hair, my teeth. It’s in me and I find it sad to have to explain it. It doesn’t require an explanation. In Quebec, we nonetheless are in a space with few conflicts, less than elsewhere, but if this happens to separate people, it removes all the beauty of diversity; my religion is like saying I’m blonde. It isn’t any*

action by anyone. No religion requires you to do things like that" (Student 46). Not only does religious identity not necessitate explanation or justification, because it defines the young believer, but he will not accept any form of judgment or criticism of his religion, his beliefs or his practices. *"In no way will I set aside my religion. I don't accept anyone telling me that I'm another bad voice. It's everything for me, it defines me, it's my essence at the same time I am building my identity. It represents a lot. So when I'm attacked on this, I am hurt, because it represents me"* (Student 11).

Religion also has certain virtues. It is soothing, *"it helps me, it guides me, it's my alcohol, it helps calm me"* (Student 49). It helps the young believer *"determine what is right or wrong. It will allow me to hold the line"* (Student 74) and behave well: *"It helps me in my judgment. It prevents me from doing bad actions, stealing, lying or doing evil. It allows me to share, to respect. Everything is part of religion"* (Student 76).

Religious practice contributes to the acquisition of fundamental values, such as mutual aid: *"In my school, there was a tradition before Christmas. An event was organized to welcome disadvantaged children and a meal was organized for them. This was good. It taught us mutual aid. I believe this taught me mutual aid and kindness"* (Student 2) and the development of acceptable, praiseworthy behaviour, and staying away from risky behaviours: *"It's positive to act like a good human being and love others. Help others, avoid drugs and sexual encounters"* (Student 9).

Second-generation young people seem to maintain a relationship with religion that is illustrated by several modes, according to Benaïche (2011): critical identity renewal, practice with distancing from extremism, reference points, balance. Benaïche's research categorizes the relationship with religion as follows: non-reference to religion in identity; reinterpretation of religion while developing syncretic practices; reference to religion as the main pole of identity. According to Benaïche, we are seeing "a subtle interplay between social values and legitimization by the religious and cultural framework" (Benaïche, 2011: 100).

Vulnerable areas related to the religious question

Several times we have mentioned the fact that the negative image some people perceived of their cultural group in Quebec society constituted an especially important

vulnerable area. We mainly emphasize the perception that Muslim students have of the image of Islam in Quebec society, even though this does not mean this perception accurately reflects reality. By doing this, we situate our analysis in terms of the representations of the players. It is precisely these representations that constitute vulnerable areas. Nonetheless, not everything is a matter of the perceptions of Muslim citizens. In fact, research in Western Europe and North America has shown the rise of anti-Muslim feelings and acts (Asal, 2014; Mohammed, 2014; Pratt, 2015). While the term “islamophobia” is criticized in France and Quebec – it is particularly accused of being used by those who want to prevent any criticism of Islam –, it is widely used today in Great Britain and the United States (Asal, 2014).

The degraded image of Islam

Among all religions, there is one whose image is more negative than others. In Quebec, its image is “*negative, really negative. Whenever I say it (that I am a Muslim), I see changes [...] They don’t understand. Sometimes I felt pity, as if they associated me with terrorism, as if I didn’t know. Television, newspapers, they never show you the good aspects [...] now I pay more attention to what I say, it gets worse every day and I think of removing the hijab to have peace. People say “it’s college that radicalizes young people”*” (Student 11). This negative image of Islam in Quebec seems to be accentuating since certain events, such as the debates on the niqab and the conflict in Syria: “*I’m sorry, but Arabs are perceived poorly in Quebec. You can see it with the story of the niqab. They have a bad image. It’s very negative. Racism has developed*” (Student 21).

Managing criticism

Among these young believers criticized for their beliefs and their religious identity, reactions can be distinguished. The reactions of young Muslims fluctuate between intolerance and irritation: “*In the case of Muslims, we would say the whole world should bear the burden, but people always need a scapegoat. I react fairly badly to this type of thin. I get irritated easily. During the anti-Islam movement (in the country of origin), I told my friends and family that I didn’t want to see them there. I find that it’s revolting. I don’t see why someone should be deprived of his religion. It was gratuitous hatred. The demonstrations united them but it was equating and ignorance*” (Student 2).

They can also understand (or at least try to understand) these negative reactions, but they don't excuse them: *"I don't hold it against them, but it's always possible to deepen the discussion"* (Student 11). It also happens that they don't see the racism and try to explain this negative image of the religion in Quebec by a lack of knowledge: *"It isn't racism, it's a lack of knowledge, because sometimes they can learn and show curiosity"* (Student 72). Sometimes, dialogue is considered, on condition the other person is open to discussion: *"When I am faced with misunderstanding, I try to explain if I'm dealing with reasonable people, but otherwise I go on my way. If I see an opening for discussion, I am open to discuss and it must be understood why there is a problem or an opposition. When you encounter obstinacy, you have to go on your way"* (Student 53).

In response to ignorance, students may also resort to humour and feign indifference: *"I know it's because of a lack of knowledge [ignorance], for example, when you tell me "You don't look Muslim". I respond with indifference, but I contribute to undo this image by staying myself"* (Student 49). This use of humour is a strategy to overcome stereotypes and to mock the situation of duality that is not accepted by society, or by the family, especially by parents (Pelletier, 2010). It's less indifference than passivity: *"Jokes at work, at the beginning, when I don't know, I look strange and I make you uncomfortable. After that, you get used to a certain environment. I always say a joke is out of place, it's tiresome, sometimes I don't respond. I've learned to be passive. Sometimes it irritated me. I learned to stay calm. I'm indifferent"* (Student 11). One respondent rightly points out the risk of falling into indifference: *"I find it sad to become indifferent: you can't take it anymore. It's affected you so much that it no longer affects you, so you're reached your limit. The Christmas party, "we're going to get drunk", I don't say anything; I don't want to make them uncomfortable. [...] When I'm in a car with a friend who's a little bearded, we're always stopped, but when I'm in a car with a blue-eyed blonde, we aren't"* (Student 46).

More stringent religious practices as a response to criticism: a radicalization risk

In the first chapter, we showed that the students interviewed mentioned religion as one of the motivations for radicalization leading to violence. The link between religious practice and radicalization undoubtedly is one of the most controversial questions. While

the authors agree that there is no mechanical casual link, the nature of the link is the subject of debate. In the interviews, the students insisted that, from their point of view, it isn't religion in itself that arouses adherence to violent radicalization, but rather the certainty of having to defend one's religious group against repeated attacks.

The link between religious practice and violent radicalization is especially complex, and the research shows that stringent or "radical" religious practice is not a predictive indicator of a transition to violence (Aly and Striegher, 2012). The studies on the question explain that jihadists in the West are more easily radicalized if they have a narrow vision of Islam (Khosrokhavar, 2014) and if they engaged in a process qualified as "reislamization" (CEIS, 2008). According to some authors (Gartenstein-Ross and Grossman, 2009), religion plays a central role on the path to violent radicalization when it offers a legalistic interpretation of the faith, when individuals refer to charismatic authority figures, and when they postulate a conflict of civilizations between Islam and the West. From this point of view, it is well known that jihadist groups make the idea of the "clash of civilizations" one of the pillars of their propaganda: they know perfectly well that the resentment and frustration of certain individuals can be exploited to the benefit of their recruitment operations. There is thus a link between the rise of anti-Muslim feeling and acts and radicalization, to the extent that they offer opportunities for Islamist propaganda to insist on the insoluble conflict between Islam and the West, presented as two blocs.

Finally, this is known process involving individuals for whom religious commitment can serve as a framework in a situation characterized by strong identity, social or psychological malaise (Hogg *et al.*, 2009). Not only does identification with a religious group constitute an effective response, but the religious groups that are the most attractive are those that are the most stringent and the most "radical". Their success depends on their ability to offer their members clear and unambiguous rules for living, establish a clear boundary between the group and the rest of society, and more generally give meaning to the conflict the group can maintain with society (Hogg *et al.*, 2010).

Negotiating the place of religion in educational environments as a form of prevention

The virtues of an open, tolerant and inclusive environment

The question of the place of religious expression in Quebec society is often in the news. During the interviews, the students insisted that, from their point of view, all religions are accepted in Quebec, and especially at Maisonneuve; as proof: *“There are people with crosses and hijabs”* (Student 2). *I am for secularism, but not an extreme version like in France. Here it's perfect. Your practice is respected and religion has nothing to do with education or politics”* (Student 40).

Religious accommodation in Quebec and at Collège de Maisonneuve are appreciated by the students: *“I found it nice, at the beginning of the year, the syllabus integrates religious holidays into possible absences: that way, Fatima could be absent for a whole week for the sheep festival... Here, according to the way things are done, you can accommodate; they don't set religion aside [...] Everyone should find their place in society and just not be too intense”* (Student 39). The interviews with the students, especially those from immigrant backgrounds, showed that what they appreciated, more than mere tolerance on the part of the institution, was negotiation and discussion, so that all beliefs and all convictions coexist within Collège de Maisonneuve.

The parameters of an inclusive and respectful debate

Whether in the interviews or the focus groups, the students recognized the importance of democratic debate and discussion for the circulation and confrontation of points of view, ideas and convictions. Nonetheless, some mentioned that certain recent debates had harmful effects because they had allowed certain positions to find legitimacy and acceptability in the public space. On this question, the students agreed with the teachers and practitioners, who regretted a form of polarization during the discussions around the “Charter of Values”. According to one student: *“The tensions I had to experience outside during the debates I have never seen here. We certainly have the same debates, but I stick with people who understand me. I have never associated with extreme people. I was surprised. I had never seen this”* (Student 40).

The interviews showed that, while debate is an essential democratic tool, it nonetheless must respect a number of parameters to allow a real exchange and not lead to the formation of two opposing camps. Such parameters are contained in the principles of action of the inclusive approach, which “seeks to build a society in which all individuals, in and with their differences, can participate and contribute” (Potvin, 2013: 11). Such an approach endeavours to integrate social cultural issues and “vulnerable areas” (Conseil supérieur de l’éducation, 2010) specific to the different educational contexts. Moreover, because inclusive education seeks to eliminate the exclusion of certain individuals or groups, particularly in debates and discussions, it constitutes an important resource of prevention. We have shown that the marginalization of groups or individuals from institutions, particularly educational institutions, created an area of fragility that could lead to radicalization.

CHAPTRE 6 : BEING A QUEBECER IN 2016

What to remember in this chapter

Highlights: Students from immigrant backgrounds express difficulty in considering themselves as Quebecers. When they try to fit within the Quebec identity, they often feel that they are returned to their origins.

Vulnerable areas linked to acknowledgment: The problem of Quebec identity is linked to the return to origins, real or imagined, as well as experiencing discrimination and the lack of acknowledgement experienced by a

number of students. Literature on radicalization clearly shows that recruiters capitalize on these citizenship problems by offering attractive alternatives.

Preventive measures: Colleges are special places to build individuals' feeling of citizenship. To this end, it is important for this development to be discussed and debated calmly, especially when it is a problem for certain students.

Introduction

In the last section of the interviews made with the students, the discussion focused on the issue of citizenship and on the feeling of being a Quebecer or not. We were interested to know what this could mean to college students. This questioning of the Quebec identity and on citizenship appeared to be all the more relevant given the current context in which regular debate can be observed not only here but in other countries grappling with pluralistic societies. Moreover, this questioning must be included in any research project on religious radicalization leading to violence. It should put forth the idea that feelings of non-acknowledgement and economic, social and cultural marginalization of individuals from immigration backgrounds all favor the radicalization process even if this wasn't enough to explain it given the many cases where the person who was radicalized was not from an immigrant background.

How can we be a Quebecer?

Searching for the Quebec identity

From the point of view of one Quebec student with an immigration background, defining what is the Quebec identity is not an easy task: *“It’s vague. Historically, there are very few native-born Quebecers. We have all come from elsewhere. Diversity here has created the Quebec culture. But, there are those who identify with it while others change it. We’re all from immigrant stock. For me, my definition is it’s diversity. Coming from elsewhere. Coming from different origins, societies”* (Student 11). For some students, the Quebec identity is not so much dealing with cultural traits, rather on political aspirations and the worry of social justice. One student claims that, in addition to being a Quebecer, *“it’s not having any barriers to jobs, it’s not being discriminated against, it’s daring to apply and being treated fairly, it’s being included in what constitutes your life”* (student 11).

However, for most of the immigrant students we met, being a Quebecer is to fit a particular model: it’s being White, francophone and of Catholic culture. Therefore, *“it’s not just speaking Quebecois; otherwise everyone would be a Quebecer. I know that I don’t consider myself a Quebecer. I don’t belong to that mold but I can’t quite define it. There are people that make me feel a Quebecer and it’s right that I am here. But at other times, the look of others make me feel that to be a Quebecer is to be a white person”* (Student 40). Such testimony is particularly interesting as it shows that the look of others does impact on one’s building of an identity. For this student, to be a Quebecer is to be recognized by others as such. Let us add, that not everyone pays so much attention on the look of others: thus, a Quebecer of many generations (sometimes known as native-born), will not ask themselves the question of whether they are Quebecer or not. By contrast, for those individuals for whom belonging has to be built, the look of others is significant. This is all the more true for adolescents who are in a transition phase in terms of their identity building.

For some students, who shared with us their difficulty in feeling a Quebecer yet being themselves with their multiple belonging, being a Quebecer is *« a derogative term. It’s a White person who rejects religion, especially now, that the Church is gone »* (student 11). And, it’s *“being a separatist, speaking with an accent, a certain type of food”*

(student 49). Overall, a Quebecer is *“an atheist, with white skin, who eats tourtiere and who drinks alcohol. As soon as you eat something else, you're not a Quebecer. It's based on food restrictions”* (Student 46). Over the course of the interviews, we have been challenged by this rather negative view of Quebec attachment which contrasted sharply with the students' perception of the rest of Canada. Thus, according to one student in Quebec, *“it's stricter, more indoctrinated, a little egocentric. You demand a certain way of being as opposed to Canadians”* (Student 9).

Becoming a Quebecer: a long road

For some students that we met, identifying with Quebec society is premature, they do not yet feel a Quebecer; for others, this identity is definitely impossible. They have no sense of belonging to Quebec and explain the situation with the deskilling of parents, the migratory journey, rejection and exclusion: *“I don't consider myself a Quebecer, I took elements of my origins, and each time when I travel, I add something to my identity. There are things from this culture that I reject and others that I embrace. I don't reject Quebec culture completely”* (Student 11). The comments made by this student show a narrow-mindedness about Quebec culture as if being a Quebecer meant fulfilling a list of criteria. Moreover, certain students find it difficult to identify with the image they have of being a Quebecer: *“the Quebecer is peculiar, he is bipolar, he is reckless, he lacks compassion, he lacks social skills: 'You die? That's right.' They are individualists at times. People are little more closed”* (Student 9).

Rarer are the students who claim to be Quebecers and who demand a Quebec identity. Others do not feel a permanent rejection of Quebec identity, at different moments or depending on the look of others. *“It depends on the moments. Sometimes, I feel it too much, sometimes, not enough. With the family, I feel too much of a Quebecer. In society, I don't feel it enough. It's when I went on a trip that I felt different. I felt a Quebecer inside but in their look, I didn't feel one of them”* (Student 45). Overall, for someone with an immigrant background, to be a Quebecer remains a question, an uncertainty: *“I don't know what it means to be a Quebecer, so I don't know if I am one”* (Student 42). These different testimonies show that some students have a difficult

relationship with the concept of Quebec identity which can lead in certain cases to a vulnerable area.

Problematic citizenship: a vulnerable area

"Yes, they will always ask: 'where do you come from, with that accent?' even if I say I'm from Quebec..."
(Student 29).

Origins

Certain immigrant students we met during the interviews- and in particular those belonging to visible minorities – have told us of their efforts to be considered fully as Quebecers. Nevertheless, they are regularly returned to their origins, which makes them question their true Quebec identity: *"Where are you from? You always have to say that I am from X [...]. It's always one's appearance. I don't wear a hijab, but I am Muslim. Physically, I'm not a Quebecer and I am not perceived as a Quebecer. Yet, I feel a Quebecer"* (Student 45). This excerpt shows that, during our interviews, it was Muslim students who questioned most their Quebec identity. Put in the Quebec context, with its regular debates on the Muslim hijab, this finding is not that surprising.

Research done on immigrant youths highlights the painful experience of questioning their citizenship as reported by certain categories of people interviewed. Surveys conducted with « second generation » young citizens of Jamaican and Haitian origins, with first and second generation Arab citizens show the role of state and public categorization, the discrimination involved in profiling and the negative impact on a sense of belonging to Quebec society. Sociologist Micheline Labelle reminds us that many young people "lament the fact that they are not considered as true Quebecers, that they are constantly reminded of their difference or their origins, even though they were born in Quebec or socialized there. The discrimination, with racist overtones, they perceive to be subjected to represents a critical factor in the non-identification and non-belonging to Quebec society" (Labelle, 2007:59).

An experience of discrimination and racism

The feeling of a degraded or refused identity is reinforced by the experiences of discrimination and racism that youths are victims of. It should be stated that the forms of racisms vary, sometimes virtually invisible, and not done on purpose. Interpreting a student's behavior in light of his cultural background is one example. In research projects with immigrant Haitian youths (Lafortune, 2010), it has been reported that the majority of those questioned have experienced, either themselves or know of friends, who have been victims of racist incidents in public. Moreover, this is often associated with their illegitimate presence in Quebec: it's the feeling of not being in the right place. A student wearing a hijab said: *"in the street, it's impossible: for me, in the street, on the bus, I get harassed. They look down on me. Sometimes, they push me. They attack me"* (Student 73).

From research done on youths of Haitian origin, Maryse Potvin (1997) identifies four types of racisms that respondents have experienced: ideological racism (found in extreme-right groups), systemic or institutional racism (by the police and security forces), historical racism (by the White culture), market racism (daily, at school and at work). This classification reminds us that discrimination doesn't only exist in an obvious guise (for example, racism found in extreme-right groups) but that it comes in different forms, not always identifiable by people who are not the victims. Moreover, it is important not to focus only on racist acts but to take into account how individuals read certain interactions. One student explained it thus: *"I'm taking a course and I would like to cancel it because I got 62% because of the teacher. He says to do the work in two pages, but it's not enough; in the government exams, I got an average of almost 99%. In his class, I sit in the back with a Haitian friend and we were talking. Ever since, the teacher hounds us [...] My French friend wrote the same things as me and got 84%, while my Haitian friend got 38%"* (Student 75).

The impact of discrimination, real or perceived, is psychological as well socio-cultural (Berry and Sabatier, 2010), and the experience of discrimination (or simply the feeling of discrimination) has a strong impact on young people's ability to integrate in the host society's culture and on their chances of success (Berry and Sabatier, 2010). These elements create vulnerable areas in the youths' experiences. Among the latter, those

who experience a series of personal traumas, family and identity-related- to do with recent migration journeys or other factors coming into play, including young Muslim men and women- these could forge a reactionary identity issued from the accumulation of difficult interactions. It is precisely these missed interactions that feed the frustration in identity and feelings and causes radicalization (Amiriaux and Araya, 2014). From this standpoint, it is important to view religious radicalization leading to violence as the framework and the series of actions from which individuals act. Religious practice is not the trigger for radicalization rather it's the means available to deal with these identity frustrations.

"Acknowledgment" deficit, an important vulnerable area

"In your Canadian passport, it's written that you are a naturalized Canadian. It's quite clear."

(Student 72).

We mentioned in the introduction that individual identity is the result of a dialogic build: this means that my identity is partly based on the view of those I interact with on a daily basis. Analysis on the citizenship of immigrant youths shows that focus on the notion of "acknowledgement" is relevant as popularized by authors such as Charles Taylor (2009) and Axel Honneth (2002). For a person's identity to flourish, they must feel acknowledged by others, in other words, justified in who they are. If they expect acknowledgment from loved ones (parents, brothers and sisters, friends...) they will equally hope that society will acknowledge them in terms of cultural traits they possess. For example, a minority group will expect a majority group to acknowledge certain cultural differences as acceptable in the public sphere. Axel Honneth mentions the notion of acknowledgement with that of contempt to describe situations where individuals or groups are refused (or have the feeling of being refused) acknowledgment. He explains that « experiencing contempt is at the root of consciousness, emotionally marked, from where social resistance movements and collective uprisings are born: (Honneth 2002). He adds "negative feelings that accompany the experience of contempt could, in fact, become the emotional motivation in which the battle for acknowledgement takes root" (Honneth, 2002: 171).

Research by Jean-Pierre Zirotti, on young North Africans in schools in France, shows how they overcome, in their search for acknowledgement, negative concepts about

themselves: "they report on their ability for self-analysis that allows them to remove certain social properties in order to build practical reasoning" (Zlrotti, 2006). The author adds that « we can observe the use of skills outside of school, in other social contexts. "Arabs", they have mastered the battle against negatives categorizations" (Zlrotti, 2006). These references are interesting as they describe a way in which to turn the stigma that weighs on their identity.

However, one of the students mentioned: "*To feel that you belong, you have to be told it.*" The feeling of being left out is a recurrent finding in the literature on young immigrants with an Arab-Muslim identity (Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2010; Precht, 2007; Victoroff *et al.*, 2012). Belonging to Quebec, as a result of these feelings of exclusion, could be seen in a negative light. Accordingly, Nicole Gallant has shown how certain youths perceived the notions of "citizenship" and "nationality" negatively because they felt constrained by their multi-belongings. She indicates that "in the case of citizenship, the hesitation sometimes came from the fact that they see it as a barrier to what they consider to be their right, some even feeling they were "sub-citizens" in Canada. (Gallant, 2010: 120).

As the scientific literature on radicalization shows, the lack of acknowledgment felt by certain groups of citizens creates frustration and resentment, feelings that Jihadist recruiters exploit. They take advantage of what the authors on radicalization call the feeling of "relative deprivation » (Dawson, 2010; King et Taylor, 2011; Precht, 2007; Victoroff *et al.*, 2012), defined as the fact that a group feels at a disadvantage, especially on the socio-economic and cultural fronts and this disadvantage constitutes an injustice. In order to seduce some adolescents or young adults who have no personal experience of this deprivation, recruiters insist on the fact that must feel directly concerned in the context that these injustices affect all Muslims.

Uncertain Quebec identity and the radicalization process

The presence of Muslim communities has created in many countries a renewed interest in the theme of national identity, particularly within the cultural context. Without entering into too much detail in this resurgence of identity concern, suffice to say that national majority groups have felt the need to define who they are in order to better position themselves versus the values and cultural practices taking root. For example, in France,

the Ministry of Immigration, of Integration, of National Identity and Co-Development was created in 2007 during Nicolas Sarkozy's presidency. In Quebec, the "crisis of reasonable accommodation" or the lively debates around the "Charter affirming the values of secularism and the State's religious neutrality as well as the equality between women and men framing the demands of accommodation" were significant events where fundamental values were renewed, for example the equality of men and women. If it seemed important to collectively discuss these values, it's because, according to some people, they were being threatened.

This brief review is important because we have shown that one of the identified vulnerable areas was the lack of acknowledgement felt by a number of immigrant youths. Yet, the European example shows that a correlation exists between the themes of national identity and lack of acknowledgement. Indeed, the work of defining (and demarcation the identity of the majority group is done by not only including certain social or cultural traits but excluding others: it's a well-known fact that one group will often define itself in relation to other groups it excludes. However, we have shown that the process of social and cultural marginalization represents fertile ground for radicalization, ground on which Islamic propaganda can be found.

If the comparison to debates emerging from France and the U.K. is enlightening, we can nonetheless ask ourselves of its relevance to Quebec, on two fronts: firstly, Quebec does not have to deal with post-colonial issues like some European countries; secondly, the French-Canadian majority is also a linguistic and cultural minority within the North-American context. Equally, the recent debates on cultural and religious practices linked to immigration as well as those dealing specifically with sovereignty, all create a national insecurity which has implications on young immigrants' building of identity. Everything is happening as if the young people felt out of step with the Quebec identity which is searching for itself, even when, collectively, Quebecers are living a deep crisis on national identity.

This collective uncertainty will backfire against immigrant youths and jeopardizes their sense of belonging as well as their choice of citizenship. A student explains: *"the young immigrant who arrives needs an identity, there's a crisis, but that's normal because there's no real role model; for a Quebecer, it's easy because there are artists, role-models; for an immigrant, he needs a role-model. We're like the first arrived. We're like*

pioneers" (Student 45). Another says: *"it's all quite recent and the fact that we're mixed, we're not yet defined, it's all at the concept stage. We don't have clear points to define ourselves"* (Student 59). In these two interview extracts, the students outline the difficulty of building an identity in the Quebec of 2016, given this climate of collective identity uncertainty mentioned above. The interviews with young immigrants – particularly those of Arab-Muslim culture- have highlighted the fact that the debates on Quebec identity have affected them greatly. Everything was happening as if the creation of their individual identity was linked to Quebec's capacity to forge a new identity that was open and inclusive and with which they could identify.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Looking back

Through our research with Collège de Maisonneuve students, teachers and stakeholders, we have identified "vulnerable areas," a breeding ground for "religious radicalization leading to violence" that can be easily exploited by recruiters. However, there is no clear causal connection between these vulnerable areas and radicalization. We must therefore bear in mind that these areas promote radicalization without explaining or predicting this phenomenon.

These areas have been identified within an educational institution. For this reason, we fully realize that we do not have the answers to every problem that students, particularly those from immigrant backgrounds, face. Although we believe that educational institutions, especially colleges, have a role to play in terms of prevention, we must also stress that they cannot solve everything. To offer important insights into other local educational institutions, we have used Collège de Maisonneuve as a laboratory to develop a relevant analysis for other colleges and high schools.

The research was aimed at the social identity construction of students, particularly those from immigrant backgrounds. This allowed us to focus on two ideas: (1) An individual's personality cannot be shaped in isolation but in constant contact with his or her surroundings; and (2) An individual's station in society (or at college, which can be considered a "microcosm" of society) is closely related to the position of his or her peer group.

Although the vulnerable areas identified in the field are numerous and cover various aspects of student life (such as family, education, religion and citizenship), they can be divided into two lines of analysis: (1) Individuals and how they construct their system of norms and values; and (2) Ethnocultural affiliations and their position in Quebec society. These two lines of analysis intersect partially, since the social identity construction

process of individuals, as we have shown, relies on the dialogic relationship between their peer group and other groups.

Vulnerable areas

To offer an overall view of the research, we will present the main vulnerable areas related to religious radicalization leading to violence.

- In **Chapter 1**, which examines the student departures to Syria, we show how these events, in the media and the minds of the public, constitute a vulnerable area. In fact, some of the people we interviewed indicated that there is widespread suspicion of Muslims at Collège de Maisonneuve. This may prompt some students to withdraw or seek answers to their uneasiness from radical groups.

- **Chapter 2** focuses on group dynamics, particularly those of ethnocultural groups. Emphasizing the role that the peer groups play for individuals, we show how events that affect a group as a whole have a tangible impact on the social identity construction of its members. Accordingly, we explain that when peer groups are ill-treated or called into question, individuals face an "identity uncertainty" situation that can be easily exploited by recruiters.

- In **Chapter 3**, we focused on the relationship that students have with Collège de Maisonneuve. We show that it plays a vital role in their identity building, since, during their college years, they must consider their future and their place in society. We stress that the values, beliefs and convictions of students may find be at odds with certain lessons. This inner-conflict may constitute a vulnerable area if these students are not fully aware that these lessons do not aim to denigrate who they are, but to pique their curiosity and develop their critical judgment. This must be done in collaboration with their teachers. The risk is that these students may close down and become impervious to the plurality of viewpoints.

- **Chapter 4** focuses on the relationship of students from immigrant backgrounds with the culture of origin of their parents. We show that a vulnerable area can emerge from the tension between the culture of origin and their host society. We have used the terms "identity marginalization" and "split identity" to show how the identity conflicts faced by individuals are vulnerable areas that can lead to radicalization and be skillfully exploited by recruiters.

- In **Chapter 5**, we tackle the relationship to religion. We emphasize the social and identity functions of religious practices. We show that a negative image of certain religious groups in society constitutes a vulnerable area in light of its impact on students. One of the consequences is the temptation to respond to criticism by adhering to more rigorous — more "radical" and less "open-minded" — religious practices. We bear in mind, nevertheless, that religious practices do not cause radicalization leading to violence, but serve as a framework (through rigorous rhetoric and inflexible norms) for a violent political ideology.

- **Chapter 6** raises the question of "being a Quebecer in 2016" and what it means for students. It shows that students from immigrant backgrounds have a difficult time "feeling Quebec", partly because they are regularly returned to their origins. We explain that this citizenship deficit can be considered a particular vulnerable area for groups whose affiliation with Quebec is presented as illegitimate or problematic. Marginalizing the Quebec identity of these people encourages them to seek alternative affiliations, namely radical groups that largely capitalize on their sense of rejection.

Preventive measures and recommendations

To build upon our analysis of vulnerable areas, we would like to introduce preventive measures that emerged from our interviews.

- **Gather student feedback:** Provide a time and place for students to express themselves and share their views, feelings and reactions about the events of 2015. This is particularly vital for people of the Muslim culture and faith, who emerged vulnerable from these events and feel the need to put their experience into words. The college community has the educational and psychological tools to accommodate this feedback. In a more general way, an all-inclusive institution must integrate students into the way it operates. This goes beyond mere consultation, relying on the idea that students, to a certain extent, are "experts" when it comes to the student condition and, as such, would like to be heard and taken seriously.

- **Provide spaces of convergence:** Our interviews showed that the structure of the college (and probably any educational institution) is split between students ("young people") and staff ("adults"). This can cause many misunderstandings and prejudices on both sides, leading to polarized positions. "Spaces of convergence" can help meet the

need to go beyond the institutional roles of different stakeholders, putting forward what unites and binds every member of the college community.

- **Promote winning local initiatives:** All of our interviews showed that colleges have their own potential resources for rolling out an exciting and eclectic institutional dynamic. To this end, moments of crisis must also be opportunities for out-of-the-box action and experimentation in support of support local initiatives.

- **Embrace the permeable nature of cultural groups:** Our interviews indicate that movement between groups helps students acquire what we call "identity flexibility," preventing their group from becoming a closed system and providing them with the confidence to reach out to others. This movement is a safeguard against the temptation to withdraw. From this standpoint, classroom and extra-curricular educational activities that offer opportunities for exchange and encounters are useful. These dynamics mean that staff should be more aware of the fusion and interaction between groups. To a certain extent, this may prevent an "overethnicized" view of interpersonal relationships.

- **Make the classroom a hub:** The classroom is a special place and must be central to the prevention of religious radicalization leading to violence. Teachers must be equipped to calmly deal with the problem of radicalization and, in turn, steer clear of an avoidance strategy misinterpreted by students. Furthermore, it is important that they become familiar with the impact of their lessons or words on certain students. This should not be done in a spirit of censorship, but as an approach to understanding the personal experience and feelings of these students. Ultimately, such sensitivity should contribute to a crucial culture of trust between students and "frontline" staff. We have shown that teachers and stakeholders can serve as solid benchmarks for students.

- **Discuss the role of religious facts in any institution:** We have explained that religious practices serve as benchmarks for certain students — a framework for their action and development, both as individuals and citizens. Therefore, this is a matter of acknowledging this fact and ensuring that these students practise their religion — to the extent it does not conflict with the values of Quebec society and any institutional code of conduct.

Participate in civic training: Although the mission of CEGEPs is to educate students through the transfer of knowledge, they also have a civic training duty. For this reason, they must take into account the personal experience of certain students, for whom Quebec citizenship is problematic. Consequently, the prevention of radicalization leading

to violence also involves activities that serve as opportunities to debate what constitutes the Quebec identity. To this end, it is essential to provide activities that reach out to students where they congregate, keeping in mind that some do not wish to engage in activities too reminiscent of school culture.

To conclude this report, it should be noted that our research with students constitutes only the first part of a research, educational and extra-curricular action plan aimed at preventing religious radicalization leading to violence. Accordingly, a guide to radicalization prevention tools, which will extend the recommendations, will be available in the future. It will help teachers and stakeholders at colleges and high schools develop original activities that contribute to the collective effort to prevent religious radicalization leading to violence.

REFERENCES

- ALLPORT, Gordon W. (1954). *The Nature of Prejudice*, Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co.
- ALY, Anne, and Jason-Leigh STRIEGHER (2012). "Examining the Role of Religion in Radicalization to Violent Islamist Extremism", *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 35(12), p. 849-862.
- AMIRAUX, Valérie and Javiera Araya MORENO (2014). "Pluralism and Radicalization: mind the gap". In *Religious Radicalization in Canada and Beyond*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press.
- ANGENOT, Marc (1984). «Le discours social: problématique d'ensemble», *Cahiers de recherche sociologique*, 2(1), p. 19-44.
- ASAL, Houda (2014). «Islamophobie : la fabrique d'un nouveau concept», *Sociologie*, 1(5), p. 13-29.
- BAKKER, Edwin (2006). *Jihadi Terrorists in Europe: Their Characteristics and the Circumstances in Which They Joined the Jihad: An Exploratory Study*, The Hague: Clingendael Institute.
- BENAICHE, Rahabi (2011). *Identité et rapport à la culture arabo-musulmane, Enquête exploratoire auprès de jeunes adultes d'origine maghrébine résidant à Montréal*, UQAM.
- BERRY, John W., Jean S. PHINNEY, David L. SAM and Paul VEDDER (2006). "Immigrant Youth: Acculturation, Identity, and Adaptation", *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 55(3), p. 303-332.
- BERRY, John, and Colette SABATIER (2010). "Acculturation, Discrimination, and Adaptation among Second Generation Immigrant Youth in Montreal and Paris", *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 34, p. 191-207.
- BORUM, Randy (2011a). "Radicalization into Violent Extremism II: A Review of Conceptual Models and Empirical Research", *Journal of Strategic Security*, 4 (4), p. 37-62.
- BORUM, Randy (2011b). "Radicalization into Violent Extremism I: A Review of Social Science Theories", *Journal of Strategic Security*, 4(4), p. 7-36.
- CEIS (2008). *Les facteurs de création ou de modification des processus de radicalisation violente, chez les jeunes en particulier*, Paris, CEIS.
- CHANGE INSTITUTE FOR THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION (2008). *Study on the Best Practices in Cooperation between Authorities and Civil Society with a View to the Prevention and Response to Violent Radicalisation*, Change Institute for the European Commission.
- CHAPMAN, Loren J., and Jean P. CHAPMAN (1967). "Genesis of Popular but Erroneous Diagnostic Observations", *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 72, p.193-204.

- CONSEIL SUPÉRIEUR DE L'ÉDUCATION (2010). *Rapport sur l'état et les besoins de l'éducation 2008-2010. Conjuguer équité et performance en éducation, un défi de société*, Quebec, Government of Quebec.
- DALGAARD-NIELSEN, Anja (2010), "Violent Radicalization in Europe: What we Know and What We Do Not Know", *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 33, p. 797-814.
- DAVIS, Paul K., and Kim CRAGIN (2009). *Social Science for Counterterrorism Putting the Pieces Together*, RAND National Defense Research Institute.
- DAWSON, L. Lorne (2010). "The Study of New Religious Movements and the Radicalization of Home-Grown Terrorists: Opening a Dialogue", *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 22 (1), p. 1-21.
- DESCHAMPS, Jean-Claude, and Pascal MOLINER (2008). *L'identité en psychologie sociale: des processus identitaires aux représentations sociales*, Paris, Armand Colin. (Cursus Psychologie).
- DIFRAOUI, Asiem El, and Milena UHLMANN (2015). «Prévention de la radicalisation et déradicalisation : les modèles allemand, britannique et danois», *Politique étrangère*, Winter (4), p. 171-182.
- EID, Paul (2004). «Être Arabe à Montréal: réceptions et réappropriations d'une identité socialement compromise». In *Racisme et discrimination: permanence et résurgence d'un phénomène inavouable*, Quebec, Presses de l'Université Laval, p. 148-171.
- GALLANT, Nicole (2008). «Choix identitaires et représentations de l'identité», *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 40(2), p. 35-60.
- GALLANT, Nicole (2010). «Être ici et là-bas tout à la fois : réseaux sociaux en ligne et espaces d'appartenance chez les jeunes immigrants au Québec», *Lien social et politiques*, No. 64, p. 113-124.
- GARNER, Steve, and Saher SELOD (2014). "The Racialization of Muslims: Empirical Studies of Islamophobia", *Critical Sociology*, 41(1), p. 9-19.
- GARTENSTEIN-ROSS, Daveed, and Laura GROSSMAN (2009). *Homegrown Terrorists in the U.S. and U.K. An Empirical Examination of the Radicalization Process*, Washington, FDD'S Center for Terrorism Research.
- GOFFMAN, Erving (1963). *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*, New York, Simon & Schuster.
- GOVERNMENT OF QUÉBEC (2015). *La radicalisation au Québec: agir, prévenir, détecter et vivre ensemble*, Quebec, Government of Quebec.
- HAFEZ, Mohammed, and Creighton MULLINS (2015). "The Radicalization Puzzle: A Theoretical Synthesis of Empirical Approaches to Homegrown Extremism," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 38, p. 958-975.
- HANSEN, David T. (2001). "Teaching as a Moral Activity". In *Handbook of Research on Teaching*, Washington, AERA, p. 826-857.
- HELLY, Denise (2004). "Are Muslims Discriminated Against in Canada Since September 2001?", *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 36(1), p. 24-47.
- HOGG, Michael (2006). "Social Identity Theory". In *Contemporary Social Psychological Theories*, Stanford University Press, p. 111-136.
- HOGG, Michael A. (2007). "Uncertainty-Identity Theory". In *Advances in Experimental Social*

- Psychology*, 39, p. 69-126.
- HOGG, Michael A., and Janice ADELMAN (2013). "Uncertainty-Identity Theory: Extreme Groups, Radical Behavior, and Authoritarian Leadership", *Journal of Social Issues*, 69(3), p. 436-454.
- HOGG, Michael A., Arie KRUGLANSKI and Kees Van den BOS (2013). "Uncertainty and the Roots of Extremism", *Journal of Social Issues*, 69(3), p. 407-418.
- HOGG, Michael A., Janice ADELMAN and D. Robert BLAGG (2009). "Religion in the Face of Uncertainty: An Uncertainty-Identity Theory Account of Religiousness", *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 20(10), p. 1-12.
- HOGG, Michael A., Christie MEEHAN and Jayne FARQUHARSON (2010). "The Solace of Radicalism: Self-Uncertainty and Group Identification in the Face of Threat", *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 46, p. 1061-1066.
- HONNETH, Axel (2002). *La lutte pour la reconnaissance*, Paris, La Découverte.
- HORGAN, John (2008). "From Profiles to Pathways and Roots to Routes: Perspectives from Psychology on Radicalization into Terrorism", *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 618, p. 80-94.
- KHOSROKHAVAR, Farhad (2014). *Radicalisation. Interventions*, Paris, Éditions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme.
- KING, Michael, and M. Donald TAYLOR (2011). "The Radicalization of Homegrown Jihadists: A Review of Theoretical Models and Social Psychological Evidence", *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 23(4), p. 602-622.
- KUNDNANI, Arun (2012). "Radicalisation: The Journey of a Concept", *Race & Class*, 54(2), p. 3-25.
- KUNDNANI, Arun (2014). *The Muslims Are Coming!: Islamophobia, Extremism, and the Domestic War on Terror*, London, New York, Verso.
- LABELLE, Michelle, Anne-Marie FIELD and Jean-Claude ICART (2007). *Les dimensions d'intégration des immigrants des minorités ethnoculturelles et des groupes racisés au Québec*, Rapport présenté à la Commission de consultation sur les pratiques d'accommodement reliées aux différences culturelles.
- LAFORTUNE, Gina, and Fasal KANOUTÉ (2007). "Vécu identitaire d'élèves de 1^{re} et de 2^e génération d'origine haïtienne", *Revue de l'Université de Moncton*, 38(2), p. 33-71.
- LEFEBVRE, Solange and Amina TRIKI-YAMANI (2011). «Jeunes adultes immigrants de deuxième génération. Dynamiques ethnoreligieuses et identitaires», *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 43-44 (3-1), p. 183-211.
- LICATA, Laurent (2007). "La théorie de l'identité sociale et la théorie de l'auto-catégorisation: le soi, le groupe et le changement social", *Revue électronique de psychologie sociale*, 1, p. 19-33.
- MANÇO, Altay (2006). "Jeunes migrants ou issus de l'immigration dans l'espace scolaire européen / Présentation de cas". In *Quelle cohésion sociale dans une Europe multiculturelle?*, Belgium.

- McANDREW, Marie (2000). *Immigration et diversité à l'école le débat québécois dans une perspective comparative*, Montreal, Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal.
- MOGHADDAM, Fathali M. (2005). "The Staircase to Terrorism: A Psychological Exploration", *American Psychologist*, 60(2), p. 161-169.
- MOHAMMED, Marwan (2014). "Un nouveau champ de recherche", *Sociologie*, 5(1), p. 1-11.
- NOPPE, Jannie, Jo HELLINCKX, and Maarten Vande VELDE (2015). "Polarisation en radicalisation: une approche préventive intégrale", Brussels, Groupe de recherche Governance of Security.
- PELLETIER, Véronique (2010). *Construction identitaire de six filles d'immigrants maghrébins au Québec*, Thesis (M.A.), Montreal, UQAM.
- PELS, Trees, and Doret J. de RUYTER (2011). "The Influence of Education and Socialization on Radicalization: An Exploration of Theoretical Presumptions and Empirical Research", *Child & Youth Care Forum*, 41(3), p. 311-325.
- PIAZZA, James (2011). "Poverty, Minority Economic Discrimination, and Domestic Terrorism", *Journal of Peace Research*, 48(3), p. 339-353.
- POTVIN, Maryse (1997). «Les jeunes de la deuxième génération haïtienne au Québec : entre la communauté "réelle" et la communauté "représentée"», *Sociologie et Sociétés*, 29(2), p. 77-101.
- POTVIN, Maryse (2013). «L'éducation inclusive et antidiscriminatoire. Fondements et perspectives». In M. MC ANDREW, M. POTVIN and C. BORRI-ANADON (dir.). *Le développement d'institutions inclusives en contexte de diversité*, Quebec City, Presses de l'Université de Québec, p. 11-26.
- PRATT, Douglas (2016). "Islamophobia as Reactive Co-Radicalization", *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, 26(2), p. 205-218.
- PRECHT, Thomas (2007). *Home Grown Terrorism and Islamist Radicalisation in Europe*, Copenhagen, Danish Ministry of Justice.
- RAGAZZI, Francesco (2014). «Vers un "multiculturalisme policier"? La lutte contre la radicalisation en France, aux Pays-Bas et au Royaume-Uni», *Les études Du CÉRI*, Paris, CÉRI-CNRS.
- ROY, Olivier (2002). *L'Islam mondialisé*, Paris, Le Seuil.
- SAGEMAN, Marc (2008). *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press.
- SEDGWICK, Mark (2010). "The Concept of Radicalization as a Source of Confusion", *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 22(4), p. 479-494.
- SILBER, Mitchell D., and Arvin BHATT (2007). *Radicalization in the West: The Homegrown Threat*, New York, New York Police Department.
- SILKE, Andrew (2008). "Holy Warriors Exploring the Psychological Processes of Jihadi Radicalization", *European Journal of Criminology* 5(1), p. 99-123.
- SUNSTEIN, Cass R. (2009). *Going to Extremes: How Like Minds Unite and Divide*, Oxford, New York, Oxford University Press.
- SWEET, Robert, Paul ANISEF and David WALTERS (2008). *Les investissements des parents immigrants dans les études postsecondaires de leurs enfants*, Ottawa,

Fondation canadienne des bourses d'études du millénaire.

- TABET, Linda (2011). *Identifications, mémoires et appartenances chez les jeunes adultes québécois de «seconde génération arabe»*, Thesis (M.A.), Université de Sherbrooke.
- TABORDA-SIMÕES, Maria da CONCEIÇÃO (2005). «L'adolescence : une transition, une crise ou un changement ?», *Bulletin de psychologie*, 479 (5), p. 521-534.
- TAJFEL, Henri (1972). «La catégorisation sociale». In *Introduction à la psychologie sociale*, Paris, Larousse, p. 272-300.
- TAYLOR, Charles, and Amy GUTMANN (2009). *Multiculturalisme: différence et démocratie*, Paris, Flammarion.
- TerRa (2013) "A Review of Literature on Radicalisation; and What It Means for TerRa", TerRa-Terrorism and Radicalization.
- VATZ LAAROUSSI, Michèle (2000). «L'histoire des familles immigrantes : un enjeu pour l'intervention sociale dans les régions du Québec», *Nouveaux Cahiers de la recherche en éducation*, 7(3), p. 457-482.
- VERHOEVEN, Marie (2006) «Stratégies identitaires de jeunes issus de l'immigration et contextes scolaires : vers un renouvellement des figures de la reproduction culturelle», *Éducation et Francophonie*, 34(1), p. 95-110.
- VICTOROFF, Jeff, Janice R. ADELMAN and Miriam MATTHEWS (2012). "Psychological Factors Associated with Support for Suicide Bombing in the Muslim Diaspora", *Political Psychology*, 33(6), p. 791-809.
- WESTHEIMER, Joel, and Joseph KAHNE (2004). "What Kind of Citizen? The Politics of Educating for Democracy", *American Educational Research Journal*, 41(2), p. 237-269.
- WIKTOROWICZ, Quintan (2004). "Joining the Cause: Al-Muhajiroun and Radical Islam", Paper presented at The Roots of Islamic Radicalism Conference, Yale University.
- ZIROTTI, Jean-Pierre (2006). Les jugements des élèves issus de l'immigration sur les décisions d'orientation scolaire et les conditions de leur scolarisation, *Cahiers de l'Urmis*, 10(11), p. 2-10.