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The Marginalization of People Living in French Banlieues: A Co-Cultural Analysis of Media Discourse in La Haine and Newspapers

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by

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B. A., University of Wisconsin-Superior, 2011

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RESEARCH PAPER APPROVAL

THE MARGINALIZATION OF PEOPLE LIVING IN FRENCH *BANLIEUES*: A CO-CULTURAL ANALYSIS OF MEDIA DISCOURSE IN *LA HAINE* AND NEWSPAPERS.

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Approved by:

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Southern Illinois University Carbondale
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Following the tragic events in the headquarters of *Charlie Hebdo*, where two men shot

eleven members of the satirical newspaper's editorial board, France is in turmoil (Fourest, 2015;

Walt, 2015). In the aftermath of the violent attack, political assessments of the situation

supported by media reinforced the sentiment of insecurity in France. For example, French

President Francois Hollande who condemned the attack as "barbaric," decided to increase the

security level at different public places, such as schools, mosques, churches, and synagogues.

(Moftah, 2015). The development of radical movements motivated by religious extremism,

which is how the Charlie Hebdo attacks are commonly perceived (Berdah, 2015), is represented

as a consequence of a fragile educational system in certain parts of France, and its incapacity to

impart the value of a united Republic (Geisser, 2015).[1] Subsequently, *banlieues* have become the

center of national attention with regard to the risk for and presence of religious fundamentalism

and communitarianism. This attention and mindset has reinforced the necessity to rationalize

politics of secularism, education, and censorship ("Les autorites," 2015).

It is vital to address varying interpretations of the term *banlieues* and the significance of

this socio-spatial construct in academic research. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary

online, *la banlieue* refers to the outlying residential area of a city. The *Larousse* dictionary

defines the term as an ensemble of administratively autonomous localities surrounding an urban

center and participating in its existence. The roots of the term, *ban-* and *-lieue*, trace back to the

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[1] Republic refers to the French government.

twelfth century. A *ban*[2] was a feudal law allowing sovereigns to take economic control over the

territory they owned. *La lieue*, originally a measuring unit, represents the territory expanding

outside the city. In practice, *la banlieue* becomes integrated into the city it juxtaposes and

designates the area where authority from the center prevails (Hamman, 2009). From a critical

intercultural standpoint, the literal translation of the term *la banlieue* as only a suburban area

does not take into consideration the politicized connotations associated with *la banlieue*—such

limited interpretations omit its social, historical, economic, and political meaning (Wacquant,

2008).

As a French citizen, I believe that the political decisions to protect France by increasing

terrorist vigilance coupled with calls for the revisions of *laïcité*[3] aims to maintain a Western-

centric, secular nation-state (Maret & Rousset, xx).[4] Referring to France as a Western-centric

secular nation-state highlights the resurgence of dominant discourses on and about *la banlieue*

and the people who live there. For instance, the social uprising symbolized by #JeSuisCharlie[5]

represents an example of solidarity among French citizens. Yet, its social implications are not

representative of all the people in France, because not everyone considers themselves to be

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[2] It is worth mentioning that *ban* refers also to the etymology of *bannir*, or to exile from a country.

[3] The term *laïcité* is challenging and not easily translatable. In a broad sense, it means that no individual should be distinguished based on their religion. Not to confuse the term with the Anglo-American model of secularism, which seeks to prevent the imposition of the state on religious affairs. In France, *laïcité* "actively blocks religious interference in affairs of state" (Hussey, 2014, p. 9).

[4] Maret and Rousset (2015) analyze the chain of reactions found in the public sphere post-Charlie Hebdo by using Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence and Turner's social drama analysis. Maret and Rousset more specifically highlight the symbolic repercussions of the popular mobilization post-Charlie, and how political and media discourses contribute to the strengthening of Republican institutions, such as *laïcité*.

[5] #JeSuisCharlie or #IamCharlie are the hashtags globally used on Twitter following the attacks of January 2015.

valued and treated equally (Rimbert, 2015). In relation to *la banlieue*, #JeSuisCharlie reveals a push towards the French government's *Vivre Ensemble*.[6] Despite resistance, the editorial choices of national news corporations often incite audiences to associate *la banlieue* with violence, delinquency, religious extremism and immigration, without commonly offering insight into *banlieues* as communities that are systematically marginalized and underrepresented in positions of political power.

The amount of research conducted on *banlieues* demonstrates the significance for people in positions of power to address the "problems" of urban spaces in France (Tissot, 2005).[7] *Banlieues* do not only signify the suburbs; they also coincide with people's imagination of "working-class housing projects" at the periphery of greater urban city centers "dominated by violence, unemployment, criminality, [and] social exclusion" (Higbee, 2007, p. 38). In this project, I focus on how "problematic" urban spaces such as *banlieues* shape the lives of people who have been marginalized at the intersections of race, class, and nationality as a consequence of dominant ideologies and discourses.

Drawing from the sociological comparison of urban spaces between the inner city of Chicago and the outskirts of Paris conducted by Loic Wacquant (2008), I interrogate how *banlieues* are constructed through media discourses to be interpreted by the public sphere as districts in which "urban outcasts of the turn of the century reside," where "deprivation and dereliction [is] feared, fled from and shunned because they are […] hotbeds of violence, vice and social dissolution" (Wacquant, 2008, p. 1). Breaking away from these dominant interpretations, I

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[6] *Vivre Ensemble* is a mission from the French government to help communities develop a sense of cultural experiences through language learning and insertion programs ("Développement culturel," 2016).

[7] I carefully use the term problems in quotation marks to avoid reproducing the dominant ideologies I aim to deconstruct.

address the stigmatizing effects imposed upon *banlieues* by a country haunted by its colonial past

(Bancel, Blanchard & Lemaire, 2005). For example, Rigouste (2014) demonstrates the role of

police brutality in *banlieues* as a tool to impose socio-economic relegations in a postcolonial

context. Also, focusing on the socio-historical construction of *la banlieue* allows me to highlight

the significant role of media outlets, such as cinema and newspapers, in producing narratives of

oppression and resistance.

The purpose of this project is to align two apparently dissimilar texts, cinema and

newspapers, and bring them into conversation by interrogating their significance in larger

discussions of racism, classism, sexism, and ethnocentrism in contemporary France. My aim is

not to reproduce geographic spaces being misconstrued as violent akin to "ghettos" or "barrios"

(Wacquant, 2008), nor do I base my analysis on observations and interactions with people from

la banlieue. Rather, I focus on my experiences in France consuming the representations provided

by media texts "that cannot just reflect or stand in for something else," but actually "give

meaning to the thing they reflect" (Warren & Fassett, 2015, p. 217).

To do so, I analyze the film *La Haine* (1995), written and directed by Mathieu Kassovitz.

La Haine depicts the lived experiences of three young friends from a housing project in a

banlieue of Paris who are trying to make sense of their day following riots that erupted after a

brutal confrontation between police officers and one of their friends. *La Haine* premiered during

the 1995 Cannes film festival, a festival in which Kassovitz received, among other prizes, *le prix

de la mise en scene*, which is an award for best directing achievements in a feature film (Bordier,

2012). The film became one of the precursors of what is now called *banlieue* cinema, a genre

that focuses on marginalized representations of everyday life in the suburban areas of

contemporary France (Moscowitz, 2009; Tarr, 2005). *La Haine* (1995) stayed in the top twenty

films of the year in 1995, surpassing international blockbusters of the time like *Batman Forever* (Schumacher, 1995) and *Die Hard 3* (McTiernan, 1995). The film generated global divergent criticism, ranging from positive to negative. For example, some people acclaim the film for its realism and the ingenuity of releasing a film in black and white (McKibbin, 2011). By comparison, the film was criticized for centering a male trio, therefore reinforcing patriarchal discourses (Tarr, 2005). It also became symbolic for right-wing politicians who used the film as a way to "berate the dangers of immigration and government failure," and to emphasize cinematography that does not "exaggerate the issue [e.g., violence in the suburbs]" (Vincendeau, 2005, p. 85).

Alongside deconstructing the film, I analyze media discourses from the three most popular newspapers in France today, *Le Monde, Le Figaro,* and *Le Parisien/Aujourd'hui en France* ("L'alliance Pour," 2015), to discern how each newspaper frames the film's prominent themes of violence and policing in *banlieues.* To conduct my film and newspaper analysis, I use co-cultural theory coupled with critical discourse analysis as method to deconstruct *La Haine* (1995) and news articles published between 1991 and 2005.[8] The analysis of news articles collected within this temporal frame allows me to thematize how newspapers participate in the marginalization of people living in *banlieues. La Haine* is situated not only as a symbol for generations of people in France, but also as an example of how counter-narratives circulate in newspapers (Bordier, 2012). This project offers a unique critical intercultural perspective on the

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[8] The range of time between 1991 and 2005 is significant because in February 1991, the journal *Esprit* published a set of articles in which the term exclusion intersected with the territorial dimension of a societal problem (Tissot, 2005). Then in 2005, social uprising in *banlieues* immersed France in a "state of emergency" (Leicester, 2005). This uprising lasted for days, and events led then Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy to declare a zero tolerance policy (Sahlins, 2006).

relationship between film and news discourses as they participate in a representation of the dialectical tensions between the oppressor and oppressed in contemporary France. In the section that follows, I provide an overview of *banlieues* and French colonial history to contextualize my deconstruction of news discourse and *La Haine*.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

An Approach to the Study of *Banlieues*

In her article "*Les Sociologues et La Banlieue: Construction Savante du Probleme Des 'Quartiers Sensibles,'*"[9] Sylvie Tissot (2005) addresses urban problems by unpacking the relationships between researchers, city officials, and the media in efforts to diffuse societal questions posed by social injustices in urban spaces such as unemployment and poverty (Tissot, 2005; Cortesero, 2012). According to Tissot (2005), changing the traditional field of urban research to be more inclusive coincides with Alain Touraine's (1991) theorization of the opposition between populations facing different socio-economic realities. Oppositions between *exclus* et *inclus*, which are terms used to describe the phenomenon of distanciation, relegation, or indifference imposed upon disinherited and marginalized communities (Tissot, 2005).[10] Tissot (2005) also questions the lack of importance afforded academics working on this societal issue and highlights the tension between empowerment and marginalization. This dialectical tension illuminates the marginalizing forces occurring within urban spaces in France and marks systemic oppression of impoverished and working class communities.

The systemic marginalization of people living in French *banlieues* occurs at different levels. In *Urban Outcasts: A Comparative Sociology of Advanced Marginality*, Wacquant (2008) offers a comparative analysis of "First World" (p. 2) metropolises between the inner cities of Chicago and a specific area located in a *banlieue* of Paris. According to Wacquant (2008),

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[9] The title of the article by Tissot (2005) translates as follows: "Sociologists and *la banlieue*: A Scholarly Construction of the Problem of 'sensitive districts'."

[10] *Exclus* means excluded; *Inclus* means included. Also, Tissot (2005) uses the term *déshérités* to refer to the territories in France disinherited from the modern part of society in which the issues faced by people are ignored and abandoned.

banlieues in plural is different than *ghetto* in singular because "French urban periphery is typified […] by a fundamentally *heterogeneous* population according to ethnonational provenance (and, secondarily, class position), whose isolation is mitigated by the strong presence of public institutions catering to social needs" whereas "the American hyperghetto is an ethnically and socially *homogeneous* universe characterized by low organizational density and weak penetration by the state in its social components and, by way of consequence, extreme levels of physical and social insecurity" (p. 5, italics in original).

Comparing U.S. American ghettos and *banlieues*, Wacquant (2008) offers the term "advanced marginality" to describe the "novel regime of sociospatial relegation and exclusionary closure" (p. 2), and highlight the similarities and differences of U.S. American ghettos and French *banlieues*. According to Wacquant (2008), marginalization in *banlieues* "is primarily the product of a class logic, in part redoubled by ethnonational origin and in part attenuated by state action" (p. 5). Therefore, *banlieues* constitute a socially constructed space in which the nation-state, "through its multi-sided action, shapes not only the markets for housing, employment and educational credentials, but also the distribution of basic goods and services, and through this mediation governs the conversion of social space into appropriated physical space" (p. 6). In this passage, Wacquant (2008) highlights how dominant discourses have shaped urban spaces, *banlieues*, to reinforce racism and classism in France.

In this study, I analyze the construction of race in urban spaces that "are preeminently multiracial sites, with local bases of solidarity conditioned by common social class rather than ethnic or religious similarity" (Silverstein & Tetreaud, 2006, para. 6). It is important to note that I aim to depart from the essentialist gaze objectifying people living in *banlieues* whose experiences are often described through the amalgams of "the immigrants of the *banlieues*," and

whose experiences "reveal the struggle to be part of the 'long war', just like those caught up in the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan" (Hussey, 2014, p. 404-5). This amalgam highlights many taken-for-granted assumptions about the construction of race and racism in France today. First, this assumption does not take into consideration how societies across the globe organize around religion (e.g., Iraq and Afghanistan). France is, supposedly, a secular nation-state. Second, describing the people living in *banlieues* exclusively as "immigrants" undermines the fact that "the dispossessed *banlieues* [emphasis added] are not monopolized by foreign families" (Wacquant, 2008, p. 154). Thus, a careful examination of France's history of colonialism illuminates systemic oppressions that are sociologically and economically intertwined to justify spatial discrimination, which shapes many cities in Europe today.

The Historical Construction of Race and Racism in France

Addressing the colonial past of France contextualizes the contemporary conflicting and/or revisionist accounts of history that have shaped the collective, even selective, memory of a nation-state. Disregarded for many years, France's colonial past is characterized by two sides of the public sphere: one aiming to extricate positive values out of colonization, the other shedding light on the darkest aspects of colonization still affecting society today (Dulucq, Coquery-Vidrovitch, Frémigacci, Sibeud, & Triaud, 2006). This tension revolving around colonial historicity, as Dulucq Dulucq, Coquery-Vidrovitch, Frémigacci, Sibeud, and Triaud, 2006 argue, is due to the decolonization process that interrupted an *imaginaire colonial*,[11] which was symbolically influenced by feelings of shame and nostalgia. Before entering the controversial terrain of such a loaded historical perspective, the process in which French

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[11] *Imaginaire colonial* literally translates into colonial imaginary to define the vision of colonialists at the time, European in general, and French in particular.

historians engage in today aligns with the current tendency of academics across the world to

restore knowledge erased as a result of a violent past based on systemic colonial domination

(Dulucq, Coquery-Vidrovitch, Frémigacci, Sibeud, & Triaud, 2006). Thus, an inclusive history

of colonization remains vital because it takes into consideration the colonial experience of

France, and it re-establishes a continuous narrative before and after the independence of

colonized countries (Dulucq, Coquery-Vidrovitch, Frémigacci, Sibeud, & Triaud, 2006).

In 2005, public discourses around the law of February 23rd (cf. *loi portant*

reconnaissance de la Nation et contribution nationale en faveur des Français rapatriés)[12] re-

launched the debate around the significance of France's colonial past. According to LegiFrance

(2005), a public portal of French legislation, the 2005-158 French law on colonialism mandates

teaching the positive values of colonialism in schools and provides amnesty for people who

served the interests of France in the colonies. Deputies of the French National Assembly

originally drafted this law to honor the value and recognize the contribution of *Harkis*[13] and

pieds noirs (LegiFrance, 2005; Dulucq, Coquery-Vidrovitch, Frémigacci, Sibeud, & Triaud,

2006).[14] The constant desire of policy makers to positively revise and preserve the history of

colonialism in France alarms historians who, according to Pierre Boilley (2005), fear an

oversimplification of colonial relationships and a reinforcement of binary opposition between the

sovereign and its people; the colonizer and colonized. After describing the egregious voting

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[12] Translates literally as "Law bringing recognition to the Nation and national contribution in favor of French returnees." This last term, "returnees," refers to French citizens who had to leave the French colonies during decolonization.

[13] An Arabic word referring to the people from Algeria who served, protected, and embraced French occupation of Algeria.

[14] French words referring to the people from France, or French people born in the colonies, who served in the colonies, sometimes for generations.

process enacting the law,[15] Boilley (2005) highlights how the law perpetuates a colonial system that fails to recognize the absurdity of a system in which citizens of a Republic are deemed sovereigns of Indigenous communities. Consequentially, this law implies that people who may have served under the French colonial regime, for example, during the Algerian war for independence, will not and should not face discrimination.

From a critical intercultural perspective, French law 2005-158 demonstrates how policy-makers continue to advance a neo-colonialist agenda to civilize the Other. This agenda was shaped by the ideals forged during the French Revolution, an era symbolized in part by the constitution of the *Declaration des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen*.[16] From 1789 onwards, the Republic was created based on "the utopian dream of a new society" (Bancel, Blanchard, Lemaire, Thomas, & Pernsteiner, 2014, p. 2). This document declares France the birth nation of *the rights of man* (sic) whose foundations lie, paradoxically, against ambitious conquest and advocate for the rights of all peoples in the principle of universality (Gauthier, 2014; Hussey, 2014). In *The Wretched of the Earth*, Frantz Fanon (1963) brilliantly highlights this paradox by stating that: "[t]he famous dictum which states that all men are equal will find its illustration in the colonies only when the colonized subject states he is equal to the colonist" (p. 9). Therefore, the constitution of a universal document advocating for the rights of men blurs the socio-political unrest of France following the revolution and neo-colonialism. Most importantly, Fanon (1963)

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[15] According to Boilley (2005), the law was promulgated in the Assembly "quasi déserte" (p. 132) and when the term "positif" was announced, no oppositional leader took a stand against the law. Boilley (2005) describes that neither the Senate nor the Assembly, during a second reading of the amendments, opposed the law (p. 132-133).

[16] *Declaration des droits de l'Homme et du citoyen* translates as the declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen in English. *L'Homme* stands for both human kind and man (*l'homme*).

describes how oppression shapes the intersectional identities of the colonized through the experience of colonialism.

The paradoxical relationship between colonialism, neo-colonialism, and declarations of human rights coincides with the creation of a nation-state imaginary based upon the decision to intervene abroad while social unrest in the metropolis prevails. The period from 1814 to 1830, known as the French restoration, refers to the desire to re-brand the French monarchy and to restore its military glory through the invasion of Algeria (Hussey, 2014). In *The Creation of a Colonial Culture in France: From the Colonial Era to the Memory of Wars*, Nicolas Bancel, Pascal Blanchard, Sandrine Lemaire, and Dominic Thomas (2014) inform us that the inheritance of territories from the *Ancien Regime*[17] differs from what is known as colonialism since inherited territories did not necessarily reflect the politics of the metropolis. In other words, only a few elites saw an invested interest in imposing rules and regulations on the colonies abroad. According to Bancel, Blanchard, and Lemaire (2005), there was a certain resentment toward the government for spending its resources and energy abroad instead of focusing on re-conquering Alsace and Lorraine, French regions ceded to Germany after the war of 1870. However, the different accounts provided by people who lived in the territories of France abroad fueled the image of France as a colonial power and participated in the political shift in favor of colonialism. This tension highlights the lack of political consensus in creating a universal ideal for the French Republic.

The lack of unity among decision-makers did not cease the catalyzing impact of the French presence abroad. Bancel et al. (2014) deconstruct the different stages of French

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[17] *L'Ancien Regime* refers to a period of monarchy in French history from the XV century to the late XVIII.

intervention overseas to trace the emergence of a "colonial culture" (p. 2). According to Bancel et al. (2014), the period prior to the Third Republic between 1830 and 1870 not only corresponds to a period of social unrest in France, but it also marks France's efforts to leap into foreign countries and conquer, for instance, Indochina, Algeria, Syria, and China to legitimize the renewal of the monarchy. The presence of French troops in Algeria served to commodify the colonized country. Algiers, the capital-city of Algeria, is an example of this commodification. Hussey (2014) says, Algiers:

> was gradually reconstructed as a mini-Paris on the Mediterranean. An army officer described Algiers in 1830 as a 'dazzling whiteness' made up of 'narrow and tortuous streets where two mules could not pass side by side', but after the conquest the military systematically drove straight lines through the labyrinth of the Arab city, for reasons of surveillance and control, blasting through streets and alleyways which had stood for centuries. (p. 112-113)

Bancel et al. (2014) further link "the appearance of overseas aspirations in official discourse, the creation of global policy and the existent tension between the colonial project and the fight against both slavery and the slave trade" (p. 75) to describe this period as the "model that would ultimately serve as a template for the promotion of France's colonial activity under the Third Republic" (p. 76). During the creation of the Third Republic, when colonies endured the emergence of a colonial ideology, colonizers responded to the discourse of universalism defended in the *Declaration des droits de l'Homme et du citoyen* (Bancel et al., 2014). The Third Republic, a period spanning from 1870 to 1940, symbolized the end of the Franco-Prussian war, the emergence of the Paris Commune, and the loss of Alsace and Lorraine territories among other important events (Andrew, 1976). During this era, French society largely expressed a lack

of sympathy for the outside world, and an accrued "sensitivity to French prestige" (Andrew, 1976, p. 153). Akin to Great Britain and Spain, colonization became a necessity for France to remain powerful and keep competing at the international level (Bancel et al., 2005; Bancel et al., 2014). Moreover, because the universal principles of the Republic are advertised as legitimate in accordance with imperialism, France felt compelled to fulfill the mission of civilizing the colonized (Bancel et al., 2005). Therefore, the principles of the Republic extended to the politics enacted in the colonies as a symbol of French superiority. Thus, the *mission civilisatrice* took form.[18]

According to Andrew Hussey (2014), the *mission civilisatrice* entered the public sphere as a means to justify the occupation of colonies in general, and Algeria specifically.[19] Accompanying the militarization of the colonized countries, the general consensus in the metropolis purposefully imposed economic and socio-political divisiveness among the colonies based on "a belief in the superiority of Western philosophy, religion, and culture" (Hussey, 2014, p. 112) which necessitated civilizing the inferior Other. This division emerged from the socio-economic decision to separate the colonizer from the colonized between separate geographical areas in the colonies, of which Fanon (1963) says that "[t]he 'native' sector is not complementary to the European sector […] The colonist's sector is a sector built to last […] The colonist's sector is a white folks' sector, a sector of foreigners" (p. 4). Fanon (1963) addresses

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[18] *Mission civilizatrice* literally means civilizing mission.

[19] In *Orientalism Once More*, Said (2004) describes this mission more generally as that of colonial power officially stating "that it is not like all the others, that its circumstances are special, that it has a mission to enlighten, civilize, bring order and democ- racy, and that it uses force only as a last resort" only to add that such empires are orchestrated by "willing intellectuals [who] say calming words about benign or altruistic empires, as if one shouldn't trust the evidence of one's eyes watching the destruction and the misery and death brought by the latest mission civilizatrice" (p. 873).

the consequences of territorial division by comparing and contrasting the economic realities shared by the lived experiences of the colonized. "The colonized's sector, or at least the 'native' quarters, the shanty town, the Medina, the reservation, is a disruptable place inhabited by disruptable people […] It's a sector of niggers, a sector of towelheads" (Fanon, 1963, p. 4-5).

In the above excerpt, Fanon (1963) highlights many components defining the oppressed reality of the colonized. France's colonial endeavors were more visible in Algeria because the reconstruction of the city of Algiers, for example, matched the Haussmanian model of city planning. Haussmanian city planning refers to a model that was used to design Paris at the same time (Hussey, 2014). This project aimed to build a cohesive ensemble with better means of transportation and sewage systems, which forced the popular masses to move away from the city (Alquier, 2011). The political decisions to dismantle the colonies by re-establishing a landscape mirroring France was supplemented by a sense of responsibility to maintain superiority, echoed in the metropolis by media. For example, a variety of newspapers transcribed the governmental mission in the colonies to build telegraphic lines and offices of public utility such as hospitals ("Revue Algerienne," 1860). In 1889, the *Exposition Universelle* displayed "human zoos," an attraction in which 400 Indigenous people were held in a "Negro village" (Bancel, Blanchard, & Lemaire, 2000).

The Impact of Media in Reinforcing the Image of Global Dominance

By critiquing the French geopolitical re-organization of Algeria, Fanon (1963) implicitly underlines the mission in concordance with the modern perception of materialist ideology (Hussey, 2014). For example, Hussey describes how the works of poets, philosophers, and artists participated in the *mission civilizatrice* (2014), that Bancel et al. (2014) further describe as the implication of "techniques of representations" serving colonial interests by contributing to "the

production of metaphors, rhetorical devices, and stereotypes" about the colonies (p. 91). In other words, imperialism flourished within French daily life thanks to the rhetorics emerging from the fields of science, literature, cinema, and press (Bancel et al., 2014). Moreover, expositions and exhibitions – platforms used for displaying the Other became popular because they fed the *imaginaire colonial*, justified economic and racial prejudices and discrimination, and warranted the expansion of the Empire (Bancel et al., 2014).

According to Bancel et al. (2014), the Empire reached its apogee in 1931 during the *Exposition Coloniale Internationale de 1931*, which exemplifies a colonial entertainment business favorable to the development of an "autarky" (Hussey, 2014, p. 18-19). Autarky, as the "exchange between the metropole and the colonies […] whether they were strategic or not," refers to a nation-state that sustains itself in terms of production and consumption (Bancel et al., 2014, p. 18-19). In other words, the presence of French political power in the colonies could justify decisions to cut any economic relations with other nations, including its colonies. However, the celebration of France's Empire blurred the reality of France's declining world power and the rise of anti-colonialism both in the metropolis and in the colonies (Bancel et al., 2014). The fracture emerging from "the disconnect between discourse targeting the overseas territories and concrete practices on metropolitan soil" was a consequential moment for national identity, one which shaped France for generations (Bancel et al., 2014, p. 21). The epoch in between the two World Wars from 1918 to 1939 marks the emergence of a French politics of immigration (Bancel et al., 2005). For example, Bancel et al. (2005) explain how colonial laws impacted immigration laws and procedures in France; procedures that reinforced the definition of French citizenship by imposing statuses such as *indigenes* and foreigners. Therefore, stereotypes of the "Other" prevailed (Bancel et al., 2005). Even though immigration into France is not solely

originating from the colonies, it demonstrates how fracturing operates in the Republic (Bancel et al, 2005). More specifically, it is important to distinguish colonial immigration to deconstruct the links between colonization and assimilation (Bancel et al., 2005). Colonial immigration occurs in the metropolis, and refers to when the colonized migrate to the colonist's metropolis (Hall, 1997).

Anti-Colonial Movements, Decolonization and Police Brutality

In the metropolis, the anti-colonial movement in response to the oppressive nature of colonialists raised alarming questions about the state of affairs maintained by the government in the colonies. Most importantly, efforts to silence resistant movements in France and in the colonies reflect the oppressive nature of French colonialism. For example, Messali Hadj, an Algerian anti-colonialist political figure in the 1950s, represented a threat to the nation-state (Blanchard, 2004). The Messalist movement of 1951 onward confronted police forces in a "street of wars" symbolic of anti-colonialist activism (Blanchard, 2004; Rigouste, 2014). Consequently, people with a stereotypical bias towards Algerians in France were appointed to positions of power. In Paris, on July 14th, 1953, members from the movement of Messali were brutally dispersed, some killed, by the police. This confrontation signified the creation of a *Brigade Nord-Africaines* (BNA) as part of the *Service de Surveillance et de Protection des Indigenes Nord-Africains* (SSPINA). The BNA was then reformed as *Brigade des Agressions et Violences* (BAV), and was populated by ancestors of the contemporary *Brigade Anti Criminel* (BAC) (Rigouste, 2014). The implementation of a service (BAV) aiming to frame, reprimand, and surveille the Algerians of France was originally created in 1953, under the supervision of the *Prefet de Police* (Prefecture of Police), a division of the French National Police. It is worth mentioning that Maurice Papon, appointed *Prefet de Police* in 1958, is "the same person who

organized the deportation of Jews from Bordeaux during the collaboration between French Nationalists of Vichy and Nazi Germany" (Rigouste, 2014, p. 173). These special units all reported to the same institution: *Prefecture de Police*, in charge of preventing criminality on French soil (Rigouste, 2014). Although the names of the institutional brigades changed, the racist, classist, and ethnocentric biases remained intact.

The violence used by police divisions targeting Algerians in France who protested for the independence of Algeria from France took different forms. Through raids and ideological "interpellation" (as cited in Althusser, 1971, p. 170; Warren & Fassett, 2015) based on racial profiling, police used similar strategies to oppress Algerians in France and in the colonies (Bancel et al., 2014; Rigouste, 2014). On October 5th 1961, the establishment of a curfew for all French Muslims from Algeria living in France symbolized the tension emerging as a result of decolonization. On October 17th 1961, the demonstration organized by the National Liberation Front saw thousands of protesters marching from shantytowns of the Parisian *banlieues* to the center of Paris ("Ici on noie," 2015). This protest for the independence of Algeria turned into a massacre. Hundreds were left dead on the streets of Paris or in the Seine river, thousands were arrested, and even expelled ("Ici," 2015; Rigouste, 2014; Valette, 2002). While the law of February 23rd claims to pay homage to the people who died (military or civil) as a result of the wars on independence (Legifrance, 2005), it also highlights the lack of accountability from a government that orchestrates violence and provides amnesty for criminal acts (Dulucq, Coquery-Vidrovitch, Frémigacci, Sibeud, & Triaud, 2006; Rigouste, 2014). Still today, past instances of police violence remain unquestioned and resonate in current political discourses focused on the positive aspects of colonization.

In France, different eras mark the socio-economic development of *banlieues* before they became constructed as a social problem. As previously noted, the Haussmanian project of the late XIX century that built a cohesive ensemble with better means of transportation and sewage systems forced the popular masses to move away from the city (Alquier, 2011). Shantytowns and overcrowded neighborhoods were pushed out of the city and replaced with high rise marbled apartment complexes erected alongside grand boulevards (Hussey, 2014). The post-War World II era saw the emergence of great ensembles (*grands ensembles* or *cites*) in the outskirts of cities in response to the pressing demand from the new immigrant working-class (Alquier, 2011; Sedel, 2013). However, the space that was supposed to foster a politics of assimilation and integration became the site of systemic social inequalities reinforced by the stigmas of social fracture and cataclysm (Alquier, 2011; Sedel, 2013). In other words, *la banlieue* signifies not only geographic space but also nation-state sponsored immigration, oppression, violence, and insecurity.

Sedel (2013) analyzes how mediated representations participate in constructing *la banlieue*. Hence, heavy media coverage of delinquency reveals the weight of the police in the social construction of *problemes de banlieue* (Sedel, 2013).[20] Despite its many stigmas, *la banlieue* abounds a pool of artists and cinematographers whose art deserve recognition. However, this recognition generates a plethora of terms that are often oppressive and offensive, such as *black, blanc, beur*[21] or *banlieusard*.[22] According to Aude Serra (2011), these terms coincide with clichéd representations produced and reinforced by media to further marginalize

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[20] The expression *problemes de banlieue* literally translates into: the problems of banlieue.
[21] The popular expression "*blacks, blancs, beurs*" translates into: Blacks, Whites, and Arabs. In France, this expression is used to qualify the diversity of the nation-state (i.e., the representation of France in international events).
[22] *Banlieusard* is a common term used to describe people living in the *banlieues*.

people living in *banlieues*. In the case of *beur* cinema, such terms obscure the voices of the filmmakers by either marking them as cinema de banlieue, itself a product of French cinema, or by defining and discriminating against them due to their origins. For example, a producer may very well be recognized for her or his performances as a person from the Maghreb, the region in Africa located North of the Sahara, rather than being recognized for her or his knowledge and talent (Tarr, 2005). From a critical intercultural perspective, imposing integration into the broader understanding of French cinema or separating artists and cinematographers who identify as descendants of former colonies "refuse[s] to recognize the specificity (or legitimacy) of cinematic perspectives generated by those whose hybrid or double culture makes them both insiders and outsiders in relation to dominant French culture" (Tarr, 2005, p. 73).

Banlieue Cinema: A Genre to Resist Oppression in France

The treatment of immigrants from the Maghreb and their descendants in France created a climate "in which the settlement and integration of the *beurs* remains precarious" (Tarr, 2005, p. 5). According to Tarr (2005), the participation of immigrants from Algeria in particular, and from other non-European countries such as Tunisia, Mali, or Turkey, in the construction of the French national identity has been limited because "[m]ainstream French cinema has been […] reluctant to perform a critique of France's role as an exploitative colonial or neo-colonial power" (p. 9). For example, the dynamics of mediated representations of "Arabs" in France highlight the remnants of a colonial imaginary defining the "Other" through discursive amalgams, denegation, and homogenization (Bancel et al., 2005). Tarr (2005) specifically mentions how mainstream media stigmatizes *la banlieue* through "sensationalist headlines," therefore re-creating an opposition between the center and the periphery in contemporary society similar to the colonialist's perspective of the Other. Current examplars of sensationalist headlines include "Les

Banlieues: Searching for the Seeds of Terror" (Ruffini, 2016) and "Paris Terror Attacks: Isolation Fuels Anger of Young Muslims in the Most Wretched Parisian 'Banlieues'" (Sengupta, 2015). By comparison, *banlieue* cinema aims to be transparent about the realities of living in *banlieues* (Tarr, 2005), and "counter[s] external (mis-) representations of the working- class banlieue and its inhabitants" (Higbee, 2007, p. 43).

In cinema, there are many different genres that directors and producers identify with at the release of a movie. As a medium, cinema offers the opportunity to depict stories by following specific genre norms aimed to attract the audience (Pramaggiore & Wallis, 2011). Maria Pramaggiore and Tom Wallis' (2011) articulation of conventions characterizing a genre allows for the recognition *banlieue* cinema as a genre via its distinguishing features. First, the characters in films of a similar genre share the same traits and follow the same plot (Pramaggiore & Wallis, 2011). *Banlieue* cinema revolves around the voices and experiences of people who have been systematically marginalized (Baxter, 2012) to "avoid the construction of mono-ethnic ghettos, emphasizing instead the multi-ethnic nature of the French banlieue" (Tarr, 2005, p. 18). For example, the late 1980s saw the emergence of French-Algerian filmmaker organizations, producing shorts to articulate "the exclusion and discrimination experienced by Maghrebi-French youth" (Higbee, 2007, p. 39). According to Tarr (2005), *banlieue* filmmakers feature a "combination of poetic realism and documentary approaches to filmmaking with which they address issues of marginality and otherness" (p. 18). A genre also corresponds to the textual structure of the film, which makes it analyzable by critics and scholars (Pramaggiore & Wallis, 2011). Therefore, *banlieue* cinema can be considered a resistant genre because it seeks to "contest the majority population's perception and control of the spaces in question" (Tarr, 2005, p. 18).

***La Haine*: An Exemplar of Banlieue Cinema**

On April 6 1993, the story of Makome M'Bowole, a young Zairian who died while in police custody, resonated with young director Mathieu Kassovitz (Vincendeau, 2005). The choice to include footage of the riots that took place in 1986 in the opening credits of *La Haine* (1995) exemplifies the directors' stance on police brutality, because these riots emerged following the murder of Malik Oussekine, a young student who died under suspicious circumstances after being a victim of a police raid (Deniau, 1986; Vincendeau, 2005). Alongside these and other stories of police brutality, Kassovitz directed *La Haine* to bring "representation of *la banlieue* [emphasis added] to the center of cinematographic experience" (Tarr, 2005, p. 74). Revolted by the absence of social protest in the wake of institutionalized police violence, Kassovitz and his cast decided to live in a *banlieue* of Paris prior to filming *La Haine* (Vincendeau, 2005). This two-month preparation as "outsiders within" (Collins, 1986, p. S15) situated the cast and directing crew closer to the standpoint of people living in a specific *banlieue* (Kassovitz, 2015; Vincendeau, 2005). The movie, one of the first using such an ethnographic approach to production, forefronts socio-cultural realities of urban spaces in France.

La Haine (1995) traces the day of three young friends, Vinz (Vincent Cassel), Said (Said Taghmaoui), and Hubert (Hubert Kounde), respectively Jewish, beur, and Black citizens of a housing project (Rossignon, 1995; Tarr, 2005; Vincendeau, 2005; Wakeman, 2013). None of the characters appear to be employed and their only visible means of revenue is through petty crimes such as selling drugs (Rossignon, 1995). The film chronicles the lives of the main characters for 24 hours, the day following a riot in the housing projects of 'Cite des Muguets' (Rossignon, 1995; Vincendeau, 2005). The three young characters participate in the riot erupting as a result of the assault on Abdel, their comatose friend who is the victim of police brutality (Moscovitz,

2009; Rossignon, 1995; Vincendeau, 2005). During the riot, Vinz found the gun of a police officer which left Said and Hubert unsettled by him stealing from the police. While Said is impressed by the idea of using the weapon for vengeance, Hubert shows hesitation towards his friend's attitude. The weapon causes tension among the trio (Rossignon, 1995; Vincendeau, 2005). Going against a police ordinance barring any visits to Abdel at the hospital, a local police officer prevents the situation from escalating and tries to talk to the trio to avoid another violent confrontation.

The audience is later introduced to Darty, a secondary character in the film, who talks the trio into going to Paris as money collectors. Vinz, Hubert, and Said embark on a journey to the city center of Paris and eventually their day is cut short when Said and Hubert are both arrested, and consequently humiliated by the police (Rossignon, 1995; Vincendeau, 2005). After a few hours in detention, the three characters meet again having missed the last train that would take them home and, while wandering through Paris, learn about Abdel's death (Rossignon, 1995; Vincendeau, 2005). Shortly after, Vinz threatens to kill a skinhead played by the film's director Mathieu Kassovitz, with the same gun he had found the day before to avenge the death of their friend, Abdel. As they make their way back home, Vinz gives the gun to Hubert seconds before being detained by the police. This police check-up turns sour when Vinz is shot by the police officer by accident (Rossignon, 1995; Vincendeau, 2005). Then, Hubert walks up to the scene and draws his the recently acquired weapon on the police officer, who reciprocates as Said watches in disbelief. The sound of a gunshot as an indication of another violent crime signals the end of the film (Rossignon, 1995; Vincendeau, 2005).

La Haine (1995) encountered a lot of success at its release. In addition to its influence on the emergence of a new genre of cinema, the film is described as "an explosion of scathing social

commentary and dynamic storytelling" (Papamichael, 2004) and "a blending of divergent styles

… settle[d] on an effective hybrid [that] moves gracefully" (Feeney, 2005). According to Tarr

(2005), it pushes the boundaries of beur cinema to offer critical cultural commentary as part of

the banlieue cinema experience. Additionally, the film offers "positive representation of an inter-

ethnic male bonding within an oppositional under-class youth culture" (Tarr, 2005, p. 268).

However, the success *La Haine* is contradicted by a considerable amount of criticism. For

example, Kassovitz' directing choice to track the day of the trio is described as a "template of

boredom and aimlessness" (Feeney, 2005). Initially, Kassovitz deliberately chose to present the

film to a limited audience - mainly people from the city where the film takes place. "Ce fut la

douche froide," states a news article voicing the opinion of a resident in Chanteloup (B., V.,

2015); this translates as taking a cold shower in reference to the reception of the movie.

Criticisms mirror the amount of acclaims the film received as an example of *banlieue* cinema

and representations of *banlieues* in French society. "[D]ue to the film's considerable commercial

success, its multiethnic "black-blanc-beur" trio of lead actors and the media controversy

generated by its (apparently) antipolice narrative," *La Haine* (1995) took the spotlight over other

movies in the same genre that represented people living in *la banlieue* (Higbee, 2007, p. 40).

Ginette Vincendeau (2005) is a key scholar in film studies who authored a book on *La

Haine*. Vincendeau (2005) takes a unique approach to the production of a film that "elicits

passion and provokes thought" (Vincendeau, 2012) by compiling interviews and providing an in-

depth analysis of the film's social impacts. Additional scholars have analyzed the emergence of

banlieue cinema, making references to *La Haine* (1995) as essential to the development of a

genre centering *banlieues* and representations of marginalized communities within *banlieues*

(Craven, 2013; Gott, 2013; Hensman, 2013; Higbee, 2007; Pettersen, 2014). In *An Iconography*

of Exclusion: Film in France, 1995, Peter Baxter (2012) focuses on the *La Haine*'s

representation of societal exclusion as a national theme in French cinema at the time. Baxter

(2012) pays particular attention to the context in which the film was released; thus elevating

films as "cinematic manifestations of a discourse on the nation that was occurring across the

popular media at the time" (p. 131). In alignment with critical consciousness expressed by

filmmakers and scholars, David Moscowitz (2009) contextualizes the film's critique of economic

and racial tensions in *banlieues*. In *"You Talking' To Me?" Mediating Postmodern Blackface in*

La Haine, Moscowitz (2009) explores the liminal space of Whiteness and Blackface by

analyzing the identity construction of the main character, Vinz. To contribute to academic

discourses focused on banlieues and *La Haine*, in the next section I position co-cultural

communication as my theoretical framework.

CHAPTER 3

CO-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION THEORY

Because of its cultural narrative and controversial significance, *La Haine* (1995) offers a

meaningful site for critical analysis through the lens of co-cultural communication theory, a

theoretical framework created by Mark P. Orbe (1998a). Orbe (1998a) uses the term co-culture

to humanize people who have been traditionally marginalized by oppressive systems. It is

through the prism of co-cultural theory that I engage in a critical discourse analysis of both the

film *La Haine* and national newspaper coverage to problematize representations of people living

in *banlieues* of France. Co-cultural theory is a theoretical framework that interrogates power,

privilege, and marginalization that exists based on the assumption that one culture "has acquired

the dominant group status in the major societal institutions" (Orbe, 1998a, p. 2). Orbe (1998a)

deliberately uses the word "co-cultures" to avoid reproducing a hierarchy of cultural experiences

(e.g., minority, inferior, subordinate, muted group, etc.) and other dehumanizing terms used to

describe the experiences of marginalized peoples and their interactions with dominant groups.

Orbe (1998a) argues that terms such as "minority" and "subordinate" essentialize the experiences

of people living at the margins in the United States of America because, "[a]lthough these co-

cultures exist all around us, their experiences are often made invisible by the pervasiveness of the

dominant culture" (p. 1).

Co-cultural communication theory theorizes how traditionally marginalized people

navigate through dominant and non-dominant structures (Camara & Orbe, 2010; Glenn &

Johnson, 2012; Lapinski & Orbe, 2007; Matsunaga & Torigoe, 2008; Orbe, 1996; 1998a; 1998b;

Orbe & Spellers, 2005). Rooted in standpoint theory (Hartsock, 1983) and muted-group theory

(Kramarae, 1978), co-cultural communication theory offers a unique perspective from the

standpoint of the Other (Groscurth & Orbe, 2006; Orbe, 1998a; Orbe & Roberts, 2012). Its

alignment with feminism highlights the asymetrical relations of power created by the hierarchy

of positionalities in society. (Ramirez-Sanchez, 2008; Bell, Hopson, Ross, & Weathers, 2014).

Because co-cultural communication theory is grounded in the experiences of the marginalized

peoples it centers, this framework examines communicative practices of co-cultural group

members navigating dominant structures (Buzzanell & Gabor, 2012; Orbe, 1998a). Therefore,

the methodological underpinnings of co-cultural communication theory are phenomenological

(Orbe, 1998a) which implies researcher subjectivity and highlights the potential to expand the

theory (Orbe & Robert, 2012; Orbe & Spellers, 2005).

The epistemological assumptions that shape co-cultural theory emerged after Orbe

(1998a) identified over 25 communicative practices used by co-cultural group members to

navigate dominant structures such as the workplace or university settings (Orbe, 1998a). These

communicative practices served as a starting point in drafting the theory's epistemological

assumptions. Most importantly, these practices "present specific communicative behaviors as

described from the standpoint(s) of co-cultural group members" (Orbe, 1998a, p. 14). For

example, co-cultural group members may be "involved in progroup rhetoric" to exemplify

strengths as "a necessary step to counter the pervasive myth that the country's success is the

result of dominant group members' contributions" (Orbe, 1998a, p. 59). As a communicative

strategy, progroup rhetoric describes the practice used by co-cultural groups to challenge the

hegemonic labor of dominant groups by focusing on the achievements of co-cultural groups.

"Although the accomplishments of co-cultural group members are often marginalized to the

point of insignificance" (Orbe, 1998a, p. 59), co-cultural group members unify and distance

themselves from dominant group members' rhetoric. Orbe (1998a) grounds the epistemological

assumptions of co-cultural theory in the communicative strategies, such as progroup rhetoric, that emerge from co-cultural groups.

At the core of co-cultural communication theory there are five epistemological assumptions (Orbe, 1998a, 1998b; Orbe & Spellers, 2005). According to Orbe (1998a): (1) a societal hierarchy privileges certain groups of people, (2) who, while occupying positions of power, (3) use their positions to control communication systems and exclude co-cultural groups from the processes that establish these systems (Orbe, 1998a). Although (4) co-cultural members share different worldviews, their position "renders them marginalized and underrepresented within dominant structures" (Orbe, 1998a, p. 11). Therefore, (5) co-cultural groups adopt a set of communication practices and implement strategies to humanize themselves in any given situation (Orbe, 1998a). These epistemological assumptions justify the use of the term co-culture to describe traditionally marginalized people as "outsiders within" (Collins, 1986, p. S15; Orbe, 1998c). Anchored in theorizing Black womanhood at the intersections of race and gender, Collins (1986) defines "outsiders within" as the position of marginalized people who navigate dominant structures.

The various concepts informing co-cultural theory provide critical insight into the communication practices of co-cultural groups within specific contexts; practices that Orbe (1998a) contextualizes as those:

> Situated within a particular field of experience that governs their perceptions of the costs and rewards associated with, as well as their ability to perform, various communicative practices, co-cultural group members will adopt various communication orientations – on the basis of their preferred outcomes and communication approaches – to fit the circumstances of a specific situation. (p. 15-18; Orbe & Roberts, 2012)

Interrelated factors such as preferred outcome and communication orientations influence the

communicative practices of co-cultural groups and contribute to the development of decisions

based on "the cyclical process of awareness-contemplation-implementation-evaluation" (Orbe,

1998a, p. 15).

According to Orbe (1998a), communicative practices are influenced by the desire for co-

cultural group members to impact relationships with dominant group members. Co-cultural

group members who assimilate with the dominant group's perspectives conform to the norms

that dominant society has institutionally established (Orbe, 1998a). Other co-cultural group

members accommodate and assert that dominant society adapts to co-cultural realities (Orbe,

1998a). Co-cultural group members who embrace an accommodation perspective essentially

develop communicative strategies that embrace diversity within dominant structures (Orbe,

1998a). In addition to assimilating and accommodating, co-cultural group members may adopt a

strategy of separation, and do so with dominant groups and other co-cultural group members as a

way to "create and maintain separate-group identities outside or in dominant structures" (Orbe,

1998a, p. 92). Consequential to co-cultural communication theory, other foundational factors

influence co-cultural group members and the strategies used to navigate dominant structures.

Co-cultural group members communicate with dominant group members, amid the power

dynamics impacting their everyday lives. In addition to the preferred outcomes and

communication approaches, four additional and foundational factors influence the

communicative practices of co-cultural group members (i.e., field of experience, perceived costs

and rewards, capability, and situational context) (Orbe, 1998a). The field of experience relates to

the co-cultural group member's standpoints, the positions taken in and about society, and values

and beliefs systems (Orbe, 1998a). What also informs co-cultural communication practices is the

co-cultural group members' ability to articulate the various communicative practices that are embedded in society (Orbe, 1998a). Co-cultural group members also take into consideration the situational context which influences the decision to effectively and appropriately navigate dominant structures (Orbe, 1998a). Co-cultural group members will assess the perceived costs and rewards of each communication strategy, which is oftentimes dependent upon one's lived experiences (Orbe, 1998a). These influential and interdependent factors characterize the complexity of communicative practices that co-cultural groups potentially draw upon to navigate differential power dynamics. Depending on the context in which interactions occur between people with power and people without power, co-cultural group members make strategic choices that affect their performances (Orbe, 1998a).

Orbe (1998a) depicts the co-cultural communication orientation on a table to map out the communication strategies used by co-cultural groups (Appendix). By crossing the communication approaches with the outcomes, Orbe (1998a) identifies the aforementioned strategies. The table displays the nine communication orientations adopted by co-cultural group members in relation to a preferred outcome (i.e., assimilation, accommodation, and separation) and a communication approach (i.e., assertive, nonassertive, and aggressive) (Orbe, 1998a). As a useful framework for intercultural researchers focusing on the experiences of marginalized groups who select how to communicate in various contexts, co-cultural communication theory has been used to analyze communicative strategies used by people of color, women, and those of lower and working-class status (Orbe, 1998b). Although co-cultural communication theory hones in on specific identity groups, such as African American men (Glenn & Johnson, 2012), international students attending U.S. American universities (Orbe & Urban, 2007), and Japan-residing Koreans (Matsunaga & Torigoe, 2008), each study anchors the epistemological

assumptions "inherent in co-cultural theory" (Groscurth & Orbe, 2006, p. 126) to highlight the communicative strategies of marginalized groups.

Although co-cultural communication theory has been applied to the communication strategies of various marginalized groups, there is very little research about the communicative practices of marginalized groups within larger socio-political institutions such as the media (Groscurth & Orbe, 2006). Moreover, co-cultural theory research rarely focuses on representations of co-cultural groups in film and newspapers (Ramirez-Sanchez, 2008). As one example of how to do so, Ramirez-Sanchez (2008) theorizes the Afro-American punk community in the documentary *Afro Punk* using co-cultural communication theory. This study expands the theory by using it to critically analyze media discourse and the politics of representation.

Expanding Ramirez-Sanchez (2008)'s use of co-cultural theory to deconstruct media, the following research questions drive this study:

1. How do co-cultural group members in *banlieues* negotiate voice and representation in *La Haine* and newspaper discourse about *banlieues*?

2. What do popular texts such as *La Haine* and newspaper discourses teach audiences about how co-cultural group members interact with dominant group members?

3. How do communicative strategies used by co-cultural group members in *La Haine* inform and challenge newspaper discourses in *banlieues*?

It is through the prism of co-cultural theory that I engage in a critical discourse analysis of both the film *La Haine* and national newspapers to problematize representations of people living in *banlieues* of France. In the next section, I describe critical discourse analysis as the method driven by co-cultural communication theory.

CHAPTER 4

CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

To deconstruct *La Haine* and newspaper articles from *Le Monde, Le Parisien/Aujourd'hui en France,* and *Le Figaro,* I employ critical discourse analysis (CDA)[23] to extricate the voices of traditionally marginalized people in media. Using critical discourse analysis allows for an interdisciplinary approach to deconstructing representations of power, privilege, and marginalization. In this section, I overview CDA as a continuously emergent method of inquiry in the critical paradigm, offer examples of how Discourse-Historical Analysis (DHA – a specific method within CDA) has been used, and describe the step-by-step process of deconstructing *La Haine* and articles from three major French newspapers.

The critical analysis of discourse is not only a method *per se*. It can be defined as: a program of study, a discipline, and/or a way of approaching discourse from a critical perspective (insert citations). A critical analysis of discourse is an interdisciplinary approach to studying complex social phenomena through the deconstruction of texts and discourses. Van Dijk (2001) describes CDA as a critical analytical tool used by researchers to study "the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context" (p. 352). According to Wodak and Meyer (2009), CDA is rooted in different fields of study including rhetoric, linguistics, anthropology, philosophy, socio-psychology, cognitive science, literary studies, sociolinguistics, and applied linguistics and pragmatics.

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[23] Originally identified as Critical Linguistics, the terms Critical Discourse Analysis and Critical Linguistics are often interchangeably used.

Critical discourse analysis offers emancipation from dominant ideologies via access to voice and reflexivity. Thus, critical discourse analysts are encouraged to employ a wide array of paradigmatic approaches to the study of discourse (Billig, 2003; Meyer & Wodak, 2009). Methodologically, though designed to illuminate the ideologies at work within power structures, CDA cannot be dismissed from operating within those very structures. For example, a critical analysis of racist discourses in media necessitates a praxiological approach to research that offers strategies to talk about the Other in more humanizing ways. In other words, CDA not only deconstructs but also suggests different ways to interpret, observe, and practice a more humanistic approach to communication. Essentially, the principles of CDA are not fixed and researchers cannot approach subjects of study holistically. Although broadly used by scholars, CDA is generally composed of a set of tenets designed to deconstruct discourses pertaining to social phenomena such as essentialism, generalization, privilege and marginalization. In addition to addressing social phenomena, CDA is based on the assumption that power relations are discursive. According to van Dijk (2001), "discourse constitutes society and culture," "does ideological work," "and is historical" (p. 353). Extending van Dijk's insight, Busch and Wodak (2009) assert that discourse is "a form of knowledge and memory" that differs from simple utterances that are constitutive of texts (p. 109).

For this analysis, I use a discourse-historical approach (DHA) as it aligns with CDA's core assumption that "context is mainly historical" (Meyer & Wodak, 2009, p. 26). The use of DHA in particular implies a step-by-step process. First, through DHA, I establish the text for my analysis by selecting the film *La Haine* and narrowing down the newspaper articles based on specific keywords (i.e., "*banlieue*," "police," "violence") to identify a specific discourse. Second, I closely examine the communicative strategies that emerge from my constructed text in

accordance with co-cultural communication theory. Finally, I highlight the communicative strategies employed by co-cultural groups in response to dominant discourses that are produced in media.

Discourse-historical analysis is an approach that considers different levels of interpretation when analyzing a corpus of texts (i.e., film and newspaper articles). The critical analysis of discourses via DHA requires a cyclical navigation between texts and theory which necessitates paying nuanced attention to context. Wodak (2001) suggests to first pay attention to the language used in the text. Then, the critical discourse analyst elevates themes from the text to analyze the relationship between texts, thus offering insight in the discursive practices at work (Wodak, 2001). Next, it is important to take into consideration the "sociological variables and institutional frames" of the formation of the discourse (Wodak, 2001, p. 67) which refers to the language variations articulated around race, class, gender, and nationality. Finally, DHA offers a broader perspective of the sociopolitical context in which the texts are discursively shaped (Wodak, 2001).

Due to CDA's interdisciplinary foundations, critical discourse analysts stress the importance of distinguishing the terms *discourses* and *texts*, as the method implies that discourses encompass different notions including but not limited to racist, classist, ethnocentric, heterosexist, and/or sexist terminology from different texts such as fliers, pamphlets, public debates, concerts, newspapers, and films (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). In addition, CDA interrogates the use of language by people in positions of power to highlight how "culture as an ideological struggle" is articulated through texts (Halualani & Nakayama, 2010, p. 6). Generally speaking, discourse refers to how language is verbally used to describe the contexts and institutions in which discursive events are produced (Wodak, 2001). For example, van Dijk (1992) interrogates

discursive practices at the interpersonal level to highlight how denials of racism function through face-keeping and positive representation. Discourses also shape the frame in which they occur, creating a dialectic that constitutes as well as represent society at the micro, meso, and macro levels (Meyer & Wodak, 2009; van Dijk, 2001; Wodak, 2001). This dialectical approach to discourse that distinguishes discourse from texts allows scholars to broaden the scope of the field (Meyer & Wodak, 2009).

Critical discourse analysts often use CDA to deconstruct newspaper articles. For instance, Van Dijk (1988) theorized news as discourse by offering a critical analysis of racism in the press focused on the coverage of squatters in Amsterdam (van Dijk, 1988; 2001, p. 360). For this study, I selected newspaper articles published in the three most distributed newspapers in France: *Le Monde, Le Figaro,* and *Le Parisien/Aujourd'hui en France*. Initially, I used LexisNexis and compiled 296 articles published from 1991 to 2005, limiting my results with the keywords: *banlieue*, police, and violence. Out of the initial 296 articles, I analyzed only 207 pertinent articles by eliminating the articles with 500 words or less, and the duplicates. To refine my analysis qualitatively, I created clusters and classified the 207 articles by chronological order of publication and selected the articles published in concentrated periods of time. As a result, 26 articles emerged from the larger data set of 296. To analyze the 26 articles and the film *La Haine* using the same theoretical criteria, I created a color-based codebook reflecting nine co-cultural communication strategies: (1) nonassertive assimilation, (2) assertive assimilation, (3) aggressive assimilation, (4) nonassertive accommodation, (5) assertive accommodation, (6) aggressive accommodation, (7) nonassertive separation, (8) assertive separation, (9) aggressive separation (Orbe, 1998a). In the following section, I analyze *La Haine* and newspaper articles to reveal the

mediated construction of dominant ideologies and the representation of co-cultural

communication practices.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS

The Mediated Construction of Dominant Ideologies.

This point of analysis deconstructs how dominant ideologies discursively set the cultural stage for marginalized people to navigate systemic oppressions including classism, racism, sexism, and xenophobia. I expose dominant ideologies by centering the voices and experiences of both privileged and marginalized identity groups in *La Haine* and national French newspaper coverage. The co-cultural communication strategies relevant to this point of analysis are: (1) aggressive assimilation, (2) aggressive accommodation, and (3) aggressive separation.

The theme of violence emanates in the newspaper articles and the film as a dominant discursive practice. In other words, the ways in which violence is mentioned and implied, often comes in conjunction with the term *banlieues* and police. In essence, there are recurrent ideological assumptions that inform how violence is framed in media. Pointedly, *banlieues* are often used in juxtaposition to violence, which conveys to audiences and readers that people living in *banlieues* are a threat.

Before analyzing the aggressive communication practices used by co-cultural groups in response to the assumption of violence employed by journalists and police, I interrogate how people living in *banlieues* are represented by dominant discourses. Dominant discourses juxtaposing violence and *banlieues* in newspaper coverage takes different forms and responds to different structures. Conducting a critical analysis of discourse necessitates examining language use that corresponds to the reinforcement of dominant ideologies. In the articles I selected for this analysis, the grammatical choices and overall organization of the articles are examined to highlight the marginalizing practices of dominant groups toward *banlieues*. I address how

newspapers: (1) use degrading metaphors from the medical discipline, (2) rely on the use of strategic adjectives that emphasize marginalization, and (3) use debilitating pronouns reinforcing "Othering" processes.

Dissecting Medical Metaphors: A Diagnosis of Social Fracture.

Medical metaphors are commonly used by newspapers eager to report on the proverbial war-like situation that people "fighting for the free world"[24] endure daily on "hostile" terrains. Breaking away from generalizations, I want to emphasize that these metaphors draw the attention of readers away from the description of the problem itself. In other words, contemporary newspapers diffuse the circumstances of domination that participate in the construction of discourses about the Other. Looking at these metaphors from a critical perspective, I selected three different passages that exemplify the way *le probleme des banlieues* is framed in newspapers*: (1) On est démuni devant cette fracture très profonde de la société* which translates to: "We are helpless in front of this very deep fracture in society" (Blanchard & Gurrey, 1998); (2) *La folie continue* which translates to "Madness continues" (Court, Decugis, & Puyalte, 1998), and (3) *Ils reprendront la démarche, engagée par les CLS, du diagnostic local de sécurité, permettant, après évaluation des problèmes d'un quartier ou d'un site, le lancement d'actions ciblées et la création d'emplois de médiation sociale* which translates to "They will resume the process, engaged by the local contract of security (CLS), of a local security diagnosis, allowing, after an evaluation of the problem of a neighborhood or a site, the launch of targeted actions and the creation of social mediation jobs" (S., 1999). These three passages, used by different authors at different times, are journalistic descriptions of urban violence occurring in very specific

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[24] This quote, and the following, both refer to personal observations based on interactions with people in France.

contexts. I chose these passages because they relate closely to the premises of co-cultural communication theory by exposing how people in positions of power maintain hierarchies in society and reinforce dominant ideologies through the appraisal of certain experiences over others.

The first example referencing a "social fracture" (Blanchard & Gurrey, 1998) is recurrent throughout the newspaper articles. The "social fracture" is an allegory used, in this case, by a school director who commented on student strikes. The meaning of "social fracture" varies depending on the context. It is rare for people in positions of power in France not to use this metaphor to build an agenda for election. For example, the article published by A. S. (1999) reinforces the discourse of a social fracture by using "diagnosis," a term often used within medical jargon. Here the journalist uses such language to describe a set of strategies used by local authorities to remedy the "problems" of security in *banlieues*. Additionally, this language use reflects how violence and the people described in association with violence are often assimilated as one entity. In other words, people in positions of power cannot dissociate a group of people from violence or acknowledge individual agency, thus essentializing the many people living in *banlieues* as violent. A fracture is unbearable, sudden, abrupt, and almost irreparable. It disrupts the social norms of liberty, equality, and fraternity.[25] These violent behaviors reflect "madness" (Court, Decugis, & Puyalte, 1998) and the social fracture, according to news coverage, further marginalizes the experiences of people living in *banlieues* while simultaneously reinforces dominant narratives about the Other.

More pointedly, the fracture in French society deepens because of "mad" people in *banlieues* who dis-identify with dominant norms. The term madness, *la folie*, emerges in

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[25] The French slogan: *Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité*.

newspapers after the student movements that took place in Paris and other major cities in France, mid-October 1998. These movements emerged in response to the student body protests and demands for inclusion in the decision-making process of academic restructuration. Associating student protests with *la folie,* contributes to the maintenance of dominant narratives pertaining to people living in "*quartiers sensibles*" (Court, Decugis, & Puyalte, 1998).[26] People in positions of power use the term madness to demonstrate and justify the hierarchies in society. "Mad" people have to be disciplined and taken care of, and people in positions of power know how to do so. This supposed and imposed "helplessness" conveys the need for dominant intervention deemed necessarily drastic to restore civilized order in French society.

Agents of the French government often define that "order" through enactments of law, political intervention, and punishment aimed to repair the social fracture in accordance with dominant ideology. Consequently, local political figures deem necessary to fulfill the responsibility to resolve the problems of violence in *banlieues* and diagnose the issues by targeting specific areas (S., 1999). In general, people who live in *banlieues* are deprived of employment access due to the violence occurring within those spaces. The state is deemed knowledgeable enough to address these issues because of the socio-political context in which it occurs. Committees such as the Local Contract of Security Committee are created to evaluate the situation. Articulating the purpose of this committee, A. S. (1999) says that the emergency resides in the betterment of relationships between inhabitants of areas and representatives of institutions.

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[26] *Quartiers sensibles* translates into "sensitive areas," and is used to qualify certain parts of the *banlieues* of Paris.

Quite problematic from a co-cultural communication theory perspective, within the corpus of the film and newspaper articles, the voices of the people living in *banlieues* were scarce, and often not inaudible. Now that I have described how dominant group members problematize the *banlieues* through the use of metaphors, I analyze how dominant group members qualify and differentiate co-cultural group members through the use of adjectives that lead to the reinforcement of hierarchies in French society. To do so, I will translate two passages in which the use of adjectives reinforce these hierarchies: (1)*Jeunes chômeurs pour la plupart, grands frères de ceux que Jean-Pierre Chevènement dénomment les sauvageons, ils vivent de petits trafics et de l'économie souterraine qui s'est développée dans toute la cite*, which translates to Mostly unemployed youth, older brothers of those Chevènement denominate the savages, they live off of small traffic and the underground economy that has developed throughout the entire city" (Constant & Psenny, 1999); and (2) *Farid, vingt ans, la casquette de l'olympique de Marseille vissée sur la tete, allure de petit caïd, bagues aux doigts, gourmette et montre plaquées or, attaque: Vous avez déjà vu des images de CRS en train de nous insulter? Jamais. Mais a propos d'Habib, ca, ils ont mis le paquet* which translates to "Farid, twenty, the Olympique de Marseille baseball cap screwed on the head, small and caid-like, with finger rings, a bracelet and gold plated watch, attacks: Have you seen images of CRS actually insulting us? Never. But about Habib, they put the package" (Constant & Psenny, 1999).

The term *sauvageons* or "savage," originally attributed to Jean-Pierre Chevenement, then minister of the Interior responsible for the security of the country within the borders of the nation-state, is used to describe the people who live in *banlieues*. This term also differentiated the colonized from the colonists during colonization, and is being deployed in contemporary French society, though under neocolonial opposed to colonial circumstances.

In addition, Constant and Psenny (1999) reinforces the essentialist gaze that dominant structures impose upon the people living in *banlieues*. In the first passage, they mention the underground economy that some co-cultural group members engage in as a means to survive. More problematically, the journalists do not mention the names of the people they are referring to; instead, the pronouns *ils*, or "they" is used to describe the "brothers" of "savages." From my perspective, the use of a masculine gendered pronoun, in juxtaposition with unemployment, underground economy, and "savage" behaviors, reinforces dominant perceptions people have about *banlieues*, which is amplified by the use of the adjective *toute*, translated as "all," or "entire." Thus, the journalists assume that the entire neighborhood is inclined to drug trafficking and other means of economic viability that are not deemed "normal."

The two examples from Constant and Psenny (1999) mentioned above are retrieved from a newspaper article in which co-cultural groups are interviewed about media representation of *banlieues*. I would argue that replying to a question with a question demonstrates the intelligibility of a co-cultural member accustomed to how newspapers edit and select the stories. Moreover, the co-cultural group member quoted also confronts the social institutions of the criminal justice ("CRS") via the platform created by the newspaper. This communicative practice represents a risk of isolation from inter and intra group relationships because other co-cultural group members choose to dis-associate with the institutions of the media (Orbe, 1998a). The hypervisibility that newspaper constitutes in the public sphere, and the mere presence of a journalist on site, may have triggered various communicative events that are not represented in the article. By responding to an interview with a journalist to call out wrongful practices of dominant institutions, the co-cultural group member implicates other co-cultural group members who choose to accommodate or assimilate with dominant norms.

Co-Cultural Communication Practices in Response to Mediated Domination

   Aggressive Accommodation. In this section, I depart from the interpretation of dominant

discourse to analyze how co-cultural groups communicatively navigate dominant structures. In

one of the articles by Mathieu and Motta (2001), a *banlieue* community member aggressively

accommodates the ways the social institution of media functions: *'Il faut protéger la pudeur, ne*

pas exhiber les parties intimes. Si le slip de bain cache les parties intimes comme un tamis le

soleil, et que les jeunes le refusent pour cela, ils n'ont pas tort. Sinon, il faut qu'ils s'expliquent'

translates to "We must protect modesty, not exhibit the private parts. If the bathing suit covers

the private parts like a sieve protects from the sun, and that youths do not accept it, they are not

wrong. Otherwise, they must provide an explanation" (Mathieu & Motta, 2001). In this passage,

Mathieu and Motta (2001) asked the interviewee whether wearing swim trunks goes against the

precepts of Islam. The risk of being isolated that comes from one's desire to accommodate

diminishes the possibility for institutional change. For example, co-cultural group members hold

important positions within dominant structure and often serve as "experts" on marginal

experiences. In this example, one co-cultural group member introduces to the audience to the

conditions co-cultural group members negotiate in order to interact within dominant structures,

and secure access to voice and agency. Though not as confrontational as the aforementioned call

to arms against police violence (Constant & Psenny, 1999), this co-cultural group member

challenges dominant structures by contextualizing the conditions, signified by the use of the

terms "si" and "sinon," which translates into "if" and "if not," or "otherwise." These

conjunctions introduce a conditional clause. By inviting dialogue, this co-cultural group member

speaks from a position of empowerment to gain an advantage (Orbe, 1998a). The news journalist

interviewed this co-cultural group member as a means to perhaps validate dominant structures'

understanding of Islam, but the response engages the audience to reflect on how dominant structures rely on normative ways of doing, which consequently marginalize those in *banlieues*.

A passage in the film mirrors what appears in the newspapers as aggressive accommodation communication practices used by co-cultural group members. Seventeen minutes into the film, the three main characters, Vinz, Said, and Hubert, climb on the roof of a building in their neighborhood to meet up with friends having a barbeque. One of the members calls out everyone present to observe a group of people on the ground walking by: the mayor of the city and other city officials, all surrounded by police officers. At the same time, the camera pans towards a heated argument that is taking place on the same roof between police officers and the group hosting the barbeque party. Addressing the group in an aggressive tone, the police officers ask to talk to the "chief" to convince everyone to leave: "Who's in charge here? Is that you, Nordine? What's going on here? Think you're in Disneyland?" (Rossignon, 1995) Nordine, Said's brother, then leads the conversation and confronts the officers. He says, "[w]e're causing no trouble," before suggesting: "Anyone who wants to stay, stay! Heat's off!" (Rossignon, 1995) Nordine then addresses Said who plans on staying, and orders him to leave: "You're going" (Rossignon, 1995) and insists despite Said's eagerness to stay. "What did I say?" Nordine asks, "You said go," replies Said (Rossignon, 1995). "So what do you do?" continues Nordine, "I go," concludes Said (Rossignon, 1995).

This short interaction between the two brothers illustrates the risk of being in a position of power within co-cultural groups. Both Nordine and Said understand the dangerous implications underlying a confrontation with police officers after the riots. In trying to accommodate both the police officers and his friends, Nordine risks being perceived by other co-

cultural group members as complacent with police officers. On the other hand, by complying fully with the officers' requests, Nordine threatens his credibility as a leader in the community.

From a critical perspective, newspaper coverage and the film reinforce the hyper-masculine space in which interactions between co-cultural groups occur. More precisely, I argue that violence, as it has been presented throughout this analysis either from dominant positionalities, or responses to domination, is a highly masculinized topic. Taking into consideration the foundational assertions of co-cultural communication theory, voices of women in general, and women of color more specifically, are invisible in both the news articles and the film. Women appear to play a secondary role in how violence is talked about and enacted, even though the experiences of everyone in the *banlieues* is affected by the assumptions and implications of violence. In the aforementioned scene in the film for example, not a single feminine voice is represented on the screen.

The coverage of violence through the eyes of journalists or a film director becomes much more than a representation of dominant ideologies. One could argue that it becomes a means of justification to intervene in and resolve the "problems" of *banlieues*. From my perspective, the representation of the violent *banlieues* constitute a strategy to reinforce the hierarchies between and within co-cultural groups and dominant structures. In newspaper articles, for example, these hierarchies are reproduced by people living in the *banlieues*. In the passage that follows from an article centering the voices of co-cultural groups, the hierarchies between co-cultural groups are reinforced through the use of language implying jealousy and competition. *Pour Larsen, 33 ans, 'les jeunes se font un coup de pub pour leur cité.' En témoigne son ami: 'Ce midi, on s'est vu a la télé. Ceux de la Cite d'Aulnay, y vont être verts'* translates to "For Larsen, 33, 'young people

are advertising for their city.' Evidenced by his friend: 'This afternoon, we were on TV. Those living in the City of Aulnay, they are going to turn green.'" (Geisler, 2001).

In this passage, a co-cultural group member mentions how much publicity the youths in *banlieues* are receiving for appearing on television in the wake of riots. This communicative strategy confronts the social institutions of the media and how the media benefits those in power. By associating news with advertisements, this co-cultural group member acknowledges, perhaps consciously or unconsciously, the strategy used by people in positions of power to maintain a hierarchy that is self-beneficial. In this comment, another co-cultural group member continues to fuel the inter-group differences by calling out a specific city and neighborhood in Aulnay. These inter-group relations highlight the diversity of perspectives that are representative of people living in *banlieues*. Consequently, the communicative strategies of co-cultural group members are diverse in language and purpose.

Aggressive assimilation. In the news articles and the film, another recurrent strategy being represented is aggressive assimilation. In this part of my analysis, I select specific passages that characterize the experiences of co-cultural group members who engage in self-promotion as a means to assimilate to dominant structures: (1) *Waadi, 14 ans, est loin de rêver aux tours de Manhattan. 'Ce qu'on veut faire, dit-il, c'est ce qu'on peut pas faire à Rillieux.' 'Et le matériel qu'on vous prête, réplique un éducateur, qui c'est qui le casse? Qui c'est qui choure?' 'Ah, c'est toujours pareil, proteste l'adolescent. Mais on n'est pas tous des cailleras'* translates to "Waadi, 14, is far from dreaming of the towers of Manhattan. 'What we want to do, he says, that's what we cannot do in Rillieux.' 'And the material that we let you borrow,' replicates an educator, 'who breaks it? Who steals it?' 'Oh, it's always the same,' protests the adolescent. 'But we are not all *cailleras*'" (Leclerc, J. M., 2001).

The term "cailleras" is a slang term used to describe the people who dress a certain way, with "*casquette […] vissée sur la tete, allure de petit caïd, bagues aux doigts, gourmette et montre plaquées or* (Constant & Psenny, 1999), and who are perceived to behave in a violent way. The term is comparable to the word "thug" for U.S. American audiences. From personal experiences, this term is often used in association with people from Arab origins, even though the same people are indeed French. In this passage, the co-cultural group member disassociates with co-cultural experiences and stereotypes associated with "cailleras." "We are not all cailleras" (Leclerc, J. M., 2001) characterizes the desire for this co-cultural group member to assimilate with the dominant group, distance from "cailleras" as cultural Others, and de-essentialize people who live in *banlieues*. Also in this passage, this co-cultural group member practices self-promotion by disassociating with the stereotypes of "cailleras." In response to a member of a dominant group's assumptions about stealing, the co-cultural group member says "[i]t is always the same […] But we are not all cailleras" (Leclerc, J. M., 2001) as a means to express how the rights and beliefs of "cailleras" are not shared by everyone in the community.

In the following passage from a newspaper, another strategy is used by a co-cultural group member to demonstrate aggressive assimilation. To comment on recent events that shook the neighborhood, a co-cultural member says: *'Ces événements sont complètement irrationnels. On ne comprend rien a ce qui se passe. D'ailleurs, personne ne sait vraiment ce qui les a déclenchés' soupire l'un des 8500 habitants de la cite* which translates to "'These events are completely irrational. We do not understand what is happening. Besides, nobody really knows what triggered them,' sighs one of the 8,500 inhabitants of the city" (Geisler, 2001).

By using the pronoun "On," this co-cultural group member automatically assimilates with the dominant group that defines the irrationality of certain co-cultural group practices. For

example, this co-cultural group member assumes that everyone in the area does not understand what is happening (in response to previous days' incidents). This passage poses greater challenges in the interpretation of co-cultural communicative practices because the person quoted may already be in a position of power. It is crucial to understand the use of certain words that appeal to an audience. Moreover, I argue that the language choice made in this news article engages the audience to empathize with the co-cultural group member. For example, *soupirer* means to sigh. It implies a certain exasperation with the daily life in *banlieues*. From my perspective, the juxtaposition of the co-cultural communicative strategies used aligns with the social institution of media to reinforce dominant ideologies that convey those who live in *banlieues* are always already subjugated to experiencing and instigating violence.

The film also depicts aggressive assimilation through the portrayal of a police officer who knows Vinz, Said, and Hubert personally. Thirty-one minutes and forty-five seconds into the film, the camera focuses on Said as he is exiting a room in the police department. Said was placed in custody after confronting police officers who wouldn't let the trio visit their friend Abdel at the hospital. On his way out of the room, a police officer suggests Said: "Never do it again!" (Rossignon, 1995) Cynically, Said responds to the officer with "Who writes your jokes?" (Rossignon, 1995) On the way out, Said's friend, another police officer in the department, addresses Said: "You ever trash me again, you go to central lock-up. Your brother can bail you out" (Rossignon, 1995). Said responds: "I didn't ask no favors," before his friend argues: "I did it for your brother. He'd rip you apart!" (Rossignon, 1995)

This short passage illustrates the intra-group communicative strategies of disassociating the self from other co-cultural group members. Co-cultural group members who engage in aggressive assimilation negotiate their positions within the dominant structures, in this instance

the police. This co-cultural group member's communicative strategy is also perceived negatively

from Said, Hubert, and Vinz. Shortly after, as they walk out of the police department, the trio

comments on the police officer who claims to know what they are going through. Vinz

specifically refuses to shake hands with Said's brother's friend, the police officer who bailed him

out, which signifies the position in which the police officer finds himself – distant from co-

cultural group experiences, even though the audience learns that he is from the same *banlieue* as

Vinz, Said, and Hubert.

      Aggressive separation. Finally, one of the most prominent communicative strategies

used by co-cultural group members represented in newspaper articles and the film is aggressive

separation. Orbe (1998a) cautions that communicative practices within this strategy may be the

result of co-cultural group members' vain efforts to navigate dominant structures by using any

means necessary to separate from dominant groups. Thus, I cautiously analyze various

aggressive separation examples found in the news coverage and film because the goal of my

analysis is not to apologize for violence in urban spaces, neither is it to justify its use in any

capacity. The theme of violence emerges as one of the core features of *banlieues* addressed in the

news coverage and film. By critiquing aggressive separation, I complicate how violence in urban

spaces is represented, and interrogate the role of media in the perpetuation of violent behaviors.

Most importantly, I rely on co-cultural communication theory to argue that stereotyping

masculinity as violent, at the intersections with race and class, is reinforced by dominant

structures.

      As mentioned above, the voices of co-cultural group members are scarce in news

coverage, which raises concerns about whose voices are actually represented. More specifically,

space to speak via newspapers is limited to a selected few whose commentary reinforces the

assumption of urban spaces, *banlieues*, as violent. From my perspective, dominant narratives strategically allow the voices of a few who are deemed violent to speak to an audience that may not understand co-cultural realities or power dynamics, especially in the *banlieues*. In other words, the overt presence and confirmation of violence emerges from the voices of those who are given the space to speak in newspapers because they confirm dominant ideologies about *banlieues*. Therefore, the agency to speak and be included in new coverage is political. For example, I question the necessity to cite the insults being used by this co-cultural group member in an article published by one of the most read newspaper in the nation, *Le Monde: Si on s'unit, on peut tout niquer, la police et l'armée* which translates to "If we all unit, we can all fuck the police and the army" ("Sans se comprendre," 1998)!

This co-cultural group member attacks the social institutions of the police and military by calling to action other co-cultural group members using profanity. The desire to completely dis-associate with the dominant group is discernable through the use of curse words. Appealing to solidarity between and within co-cultural groups, this co-cultural group member explicitly challenges dominant structures in a way that may reinforces and arguably justifies the repressive and retaliatory nature of these dominant structures. In essence, I believe this co-cultural group member's quotation was intentionally selected to "include" someone from a *banlieue* whose rhetoric affirms the need for "civilizing" *banlieues*.

Another example of aggressive separation strategy is through sabotage. In the example that follows, a co-cultural group member engages with a dominant group member and expresses the ability to make money in a way that counters systemic domination: *Quand tu proposes un stage, on te répond souvent: 'T'es malade, quand je peux me faire 500 balles en cinq minutes'*

which translates to "When you offer the opportunity to do an internship, many would answer: ' You're sick, when I can get 500 bucks in five minutes'" (Lombard, 1999).

This passage demonstrates the intensity by which aggressive separation by co-cultural group members becomes so visible that it is almost impossible to not acknowledge it. However, as Orbe (1998a) informs us, it is also these types of practices that render the voices of co-cultural group members unnoticed. For this co-cultural group member, it is unthinkable to contemplate doing internships because there are more beneficial ways of learning and making a living, practices that dominant structures aim to discipline. From a co-cultural communication theory perspective, the problem resides in how this co-cultural member's response was framed by the newspaper. This example reinforces the essentialist practices of newspapers who assume that many co-cultural group members in *banlieues* would answer the same way as this co-cultural group member when being offered an internship. It reinforces the dominant narratives about the Other by making the voice of one audible as a representation of the entire *banlieue* population, thus making other co-cultural group members inaudible and invisible.

This tension between audibility and inaudibility and visibility and invisibility corresponds to a passage in the film when the trio interacts with journalists collecting statements from people in the neighborhood. Nineteen minutes and twenty-seven seconds into the movie, the three characters are portrayed sitting around in a recreational park. Said tries to talk to Hubert and Vinz about his sexuality. Demonstrating a sense of pride, Said unapologetically tells his friends that: "Guy next door pounded the wall we were so noisy" before Hubert replies "You dreamt you fucked her!" (Rossignon, 1995) From my perspective, this short passage illustrates the hypervisibility of hypermasculinity and the invisibility of feminine voices in the film. Also, the woman who is absent from the frame is represented and talked about in a dehumanizing way.

The silencing of women in this passage, and the invisibility that surrounds women's experiences living in *banlieues*, is then symbolized in the same scene, by the presence of a female journalist who appears to be an outsider to the *banlieue*.

As Hubert finishes his statement, a car circles around in the background before stopping behind the fence delimiting the park. At the back of the vehicle, standing tall through the car ceiling window, a camera crew member points the camera towards Said, Hubert, and Vinz. The camera crew member and the journalist interpellate the trio from their car: "Hi, we're from TV," (Rossignon, 1995) the woman says. "What is this?" asks Vinz to his friends before the woman journalist continues the interrogation: "Were you in the riot last night? Did you break things, burn cars?" (Rossignon, 1995) Said responds by asking back: "We look like looters, lady?" (Rossignon, 1995) "I didn't say that," (Rossignon, 1995) responds the journalist. "So what do we look like?" asks Vinz before Hubert replicates: "Get out of the car! This ain't Thoiry," (Rossignon, 1995) referencing a zoo located near Paris. The conversation escalates until Vinz throws a rock towards the television crew, forcing them to leave.

This interaction between the journalist and the trio depicts an attack from co-cultural group members towards the dominant group. Nuanced by the conversation the three characters were having about sexuality, the objectification of women became prevalent in their interaction with the journalist. The analysis of this short passage through the lens of co-cultural communication theory shows that certain co-cultural group members use aggressive separation towards other co-cultural group members to assert their power. In this passage, the journalist may very well be seen as a co-cultural group member because she identifies as a female in a French patriarchal society. Yet, her position as a journalist reinforces the strategy of assimilation she may have embodied to access that position in the first place. From my perspective, alongside

the trio's reproduction of sexist objectification, the presence of the crew's camera also participated in the processes of objectification that people living in *banlieues* are subjected to when issues of violence break out.

Interrogating the role played by media institutions in the representation of co-cultural group members in association with violent behaviors, I argue that dominant structures strategically depict violent utterances to frame co-cultural group member's experiences and behaviors as only violent. In the following passage, a co-cultural group member is described in a way that emphasizes differences through language and translation. Starting by describing a co-cultural group member as a tall Black man, this passage continues by describing the people who surround this co-cultural group member as blonde without going into as much detail. From my perspective, this covert way of identifying and emphasizing Whiteness clearly sets the stage for the journalist to reinforce dominance over co-cultural group experiences, and indicates racist ideology: *Commentaire d'un grand lycéen, noir, entouré de lycéennes blondes: 'les babtous, aujourd'hui, ils ont mangé grave' (les toubabs français se sont bien fait frapper par les blacks et les beurs). Et d'ajouter, visage ferme: 'Y'en a qui vont voter Le Pen jusqu'à la fin de leur vie'* which translates to "Comment from a tall black high school student, surrounded by blond high school students 'the *babtous* today ate seriously' (the French toubabs were well hit by the blacks and North Africans). He added firmly: 'Some are going to vote Le Pen for the rest of their lives'" ("Sans se comprendre," 1998)!

In addition, the author renders the speech of a co-cultural group member incomprehensible and offers a translation for the audience (i.e., in parentheses). Even though the co-cultural group member may have been observing without showing any signs of participation

in the violence depicted in the story, the author reinforces the sentiment that this speech is not

good enough to be left as is, that it needs a translation to be audible, "normal."

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Since people living in *banlieues* are consistently under the spotlight following tragic

events in France, this project provides insight into how people living in *banlieues* navigate

dominant structures such as media. I conclude with the aforementioned example as a means to

highlight the broader implications of my analysis in Communication Studies. More specifically,

my conclusion is dedicated to mapping the potential directions co-cultural communication

analysis of media representation can take. First, I summarize responses to my research questions

before reflecting on the potential limitations of my analysis.

My first research question asks: how do co-cultural group members in *banlieues*

negotiate voice and representation in *La Haine* and newspaper discourse about *La Haine* and

banlieues? I started by locating the voices of people who are subjected to dominant group

members, such as journalists, city hall representatives, religious figures, and other social agents. I

focused on how they have been marginalizing people through a racist, classist, and ethnocentric

construction of society. I focused my analysis on how newspapers and film highlight the tensions

between privilege and marginalization in France, a reality that always already restricts the

possibility for co-cultural group members to participate in the meaning-making process. From

my perspective, illustrating how co-cultural group members negotiate voice and representation

necessitates a critical discourse analysis that critiques the position of the social agents with and

without access to systemic power. My analysis revealed that co-cultural group members in

banlieues negotiate voice and representation by accommodating, assimilating, and separating.

The second question asks: what do popular texts such as *La Haine* and newspapers teach

audiences about how co-cultural group members interact with dominant group members? The

analysis of news coverage and the film through the lens of co-cultural communication theory exposes how media representations of *banlieues* seem to be working in tandem with the reinforcement of masculine experiences of violence. Co-cultural communication theory fosters humanizing interpretations of media representations of marginalized groups. By triangulating standpoint theory, muted-group theory, and phenomenology, co-cultural communication theory broadens a field of possibility to analyze how media representation participates in shaping co-cultural experiences navigating dominant structures. From a critical perspective, co-cultural communication theory offers a unique perspective on media that challenges the marginalization processes co-cultural groups endure that are fueled by social institutions such as media. Based on my analysis, popular texts such as *La Haine* and newspapers teach audiences that co-cultural group members interact with dominant group members almost always aggressively.

Finally, my third question asks: how do communicative strategies used by co-cultural group members in *La Haine* inform and challenge newspaper discourses in *banlieues*? In representing aggressive communication strategies (i.e., assimilation, accommodation, and separation) employed by members of co-cultural groups, I revealed how the social institution of media participate, consciously and unconsciously, in the processes by which people in *banlieues* have been marginalized. Pierre Bourdieu (1996) describes this phenomenon as symbolic violence. According to Bourdieu (1996), journalists, news reporters, and other constituents of the journalistic realm participate in the depiction of violent behaviors. Doing so becomes a strategy for people in positions of power to maintain the status quo. Aligning with co-cultural communication theory and critical discourse analysis, this analysis advocates for continued critique of media from a critical perspective.

Overall, the purpose of this project was to deconstruct dominant ideologies by closely analyzing media for the reinforcement of and resistance to oppressive practices. My goal was to challenge domination by elevating the voices of people who are traditionally marginalized. Because violence continues to globally permeate society, social institutions such as the media and government should be: reflexive, consciously pedagogical, and purposefully include the voices of people who have been traditionally marginalized to humanize their communities rather than affirm dominant perspectives. In this sense, I follow Bourdieu, who says, "*Je livre tout ceci à la réflexion de ceux qui, silencieux ou indifférent aujourd'hui, viendront, dans trente ans, exprimer leur « repentance », en un temps où les jeunes Français d'origine algérienne seront prénommés Kelkal* (Bourdieu, "Ces « responsables »…," 2007)

Translated as "I give all this to the reflection of those who, silent or indifferent today, will, in thirty years, be expressing their "repentance" in a time where young French of Algerian descent will be named Kelkal," Bourdieu's sentiment reflect my own desire for further investigation of alternative ways that would humanize the people living in *banlieues*. Following the dramatic events in the headquarters of Charlie Hebdo specifically, and the more recent attacks of November in Paris, people in positions of power (i.e., politicians, journalists, film directors) perpetuate negative representations of people living in *banlieues*.

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APPENDIX

Co-Cultural Communication Orientations[27]

	Separation	Accommodation	Assimilation
Nonassertive	Avoiding Maintaining interpersonal barriers	Increasing visibility Dispelling stereotypes	Emphasizing commonalities Developing positive face Censoring self Averting controversy
Assertive	Communicating self Intragroup Networking Exemplifying strengths Embracing stereotypes	Communicating self Intragroup networking Using liaisons Educating others	Extensive preparation Overcompensating Manipulating stereotypes Bargaining
Aggressive	Attacking Sabotaging others	Confronting Gaining advantage	Dissociating Mirroring Strategic distancing Ridiculing self

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[27] This table can be found on p. 110 of the following reference entry:
Orbe, M. P. (1998a). *Constructing co-cultural theory: An explication of culture, power, and communication*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

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