



Cultural and Environmental Education

History

Race relations in France in the 1980s: exploring causation with students as a means to developing understanding of the central issues of the case study

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Note: Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the historical data contained herein.
Any inadvertent errors are regretted.

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Race relations in France in the 1980s: exploring causation with students

In exploring the case study, “Race relations in France in the 1980s”, unlike other case studies such as “British withdrawal from India, 1945-1947”, there is not a clear narrative of events for students to follow. Rather there is a set of developments of varying significance that have a cluster of underlying causative factors, some short-term and others with longer historical roots. Students need to be helped to see the significance of long-term historical factors in provoking racial tensions as well as considering more immediate political and other (social, economic and cultural) ‘triggers’. In exploring issues of causation and significance with students, we have a great opportunity to develop their ability to think critically, which is one of the stated objectives of the syllabus, and an increasingly cherished aim of senior cycle education.

At previous history in-service sessions, it has been argued that one of the best ways in which students’ critical thinking can be developed is through the use of the enquiry-focused approach. The approach is drawn on in the following exploration of the case study.

The enquiry-focused approach

The enquiry-focused approach involves organising a set of lessons around an enquiry question on which the teaching and learning activities are focused. It aims to give a clear focus to a series of lessons, to clarify for all concerned what the learning purposes are and to ensure that the sequence of lessons is leading to improved understanding on the part of the students.

In her book, *The Twentieth Century World* (The Historical Association, 1997), Christine Counsell outlines the rationale behind the approach. The following is an edited extract:

Choosing a sequence of interesting historical enquiries gives a clear focus to any scheme of work. This approach has a number of advantages:

- (i) It prevents a superficial run through the content and leads pupils into deeper levels of historical understanding.
 - (ii) It allows students to engage in real historical debate. Historians usually begin with a question.
 - (iii) It motivates students by giving a clear focus to their work. Identifying key questions is a powerful way of ‘sharing clarity with learners’. Teachers are thus reinforcing that the whole point of a sequence of lessons or activities is to build towards some attempt at answering the question. Some teachers who use this approach will refer to such a question in every single lesson. Pupils are constantly reminded of what they are trying to do and why.
 - (iv) Key questions can shape and limit an otherwise sprawling content.
 - (v) It encourages pupils to produce more substantial and significant outcomes at the end of a section of work.
- (pp.30-31)

N.B. Much of the material in the pages that follow is provided for reference purposes and to facilitate teacher understanding of some of the key issues involved. The proposed enquiry provides a helpful ‘pathway’ through the case study: the lists of ‘relevant factors’ and the selection of source materials should be adapted to meet the needs of different class groups.

Topic 5: European retreat from empire and the aftermath, 1945-1990

Perspective	Elements	Case studies
<i>Politics and administration</i>	<p>Implications of World War II for European role in Asia; independence struggles and the reactions of the European powers (with particular reference to India, Indochina and East Indies); post-independence relations with the colonial power.</p> <p>British withdrawal from Palestine and origins of Arab-Israeli conflict; the Suez Crisis, 1956.</p> <p>Africa – the “winds of change” (with particular reference to Algeria, Nigeria, the Congo, Tanzania and Angola); post-independence relations with the colonial power.</p>	British withdrawal from India, 1945-1947
<i>Society and economy</i>	<p>Economic consequences of the process of de-colonisation; the Lomé Conventions; trade, aid and famine in post-colonial Africa; Julius Nyerere and the policy of <i>ujamaa</i>. Immigration patterns and policies in different European states – Britain, France.</p>	The secession of Katanga, 1960-1965
<i>Culture and religion</i>	<p>Tensions between indigenous culture and colonial culture; the spread of Islam and Christianity in Africa; the Islamic faith in Europe; cultural diversity in multi-racial Britain and France; English as a world language; post-colonial literature.</p>	Race relations in France in the 1980s

In their study of the topic, students should become aware of the role of certain key personalities.

Another “key” to developing understanding will be learning to identify the main issues through a familiarity with certain key concepts.

Key personalities
<p>Students should be aware of the contribution of the following to the developments listed under the elements above:</p> <p><i>Mohandas Gandhi; Ho Chi Minh; Achmad Sukarno; David Ben-Gurion; Gamal Abdul Nasser; Charles de Gaulle; Sese Seko Mobutu; a development worker in Africa; Nadine Gordimer; Chinua Achebe.</i></p>
Key concepts
<p><i>Colonial rule; assimilation; de-colonisation; Zionism; terrorism; tribalism; racism; (British) Commonwealth; (French) Union and Community; IMF; World Bank; transnational economy; NGO (non-governmental organisation); cultural diversity; identity.</i></p>

France's experience of colonialism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: an overview

Defeat at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815 represented a significant blow to the prestige and status of France as a major power. Yet, paradoxically, or perhaps as a direct response to such a setback, France signalled a determination to regain its colonial and imperialist status. In **1830, Algeria** was conquered - thus beginning a relationship that would have a profound impact on French concepts of nationality in later decades. Tahiti and the Marquesas were annexed in the 1840s, French control of Senegal was expanded in the 1850s and the conquest of Indo-China commenced in 1858-9.

As the nineteenth century wore on, developments in European technology, commercial trade and industrialisation quickened the pace of European expansion in Africa and Asia, which was also fuelled by growing imperialist rivalries between the major European powers. By 1914, Europe had assumed control of 90% of the African continent as well as large tracts of Asia. As in 1815, French military defeat in 1870 - this time at the hands of the Prussians - seemed to add impetus to France's desire for imperialist conquests in an effort to restore prestige. At the outbreak of World War I, the **French empire** had grown by nearly 10 million square kilometres and 47 million people.

Despite her traumatic experience during the 1914-18 conflict, France's colonial holdings were bolstered after the war by the acquisition of former Ottoman and German dependencies in the form of League of Nations mandates. France assumed control of Syria and Lebanon, and shared trusteeship with Britain over Togoland and German Cameroon. However, in the early 1920s, the imperialist powers began to face challenges from within their territories by emerging nationalist movements. While such nationalist sentiment challenged British rule most notably in India and Ireland, the **growth of nationalism** in French holdings was also pronounced in Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco.

However, the severe impact of the Wall Street Crash in 1929 and the onset of the resultant Great Depression provoked severe domestic political and economic crises in France. Harsh social and economic reforms triggered much unrest and sparked the radicalisation of communist and anarchist groups. Despite such domestic upheaval, France firmly suppressed nationalist unrest in Indo-China in the 1930s, but could not eradicate anti-imperialist feeling, realised most dramatically in the formation of the guerrilla organisation, the Viet Minh, by Ho Chi Minh in 1941. The upheaval of the Second World War added further impetus to the nascent nationalist groups emerging in the colonised world prior to the outbreak of conflict. Wartime Anglo-American occupation of French colonies revitalised independence movements, culminating in **French retreat** from its Far Eastern colonies in Vietnam and Cambodia following its humiliating defeat in 1954 to Vietnamese communists at Dien Bien Phu after a long and costly war.

This defeat heralded the decline of French colonial influence globally. Tunisia and Morocco secured independence in 1956 following violent resistance to French rule; in the same year, French credibility was severely damaged in the Suez crisis. The process of French disengagement from **Algeria**, which culminated in 1962 following eight years of bloody conflict involving the French army, Algerian nationalists, French settlers and Islamic insurgents, even threatened civil war in France itself and led to the return to power of de Gaulle. The chastening experience of Algeria also precipitated France's sudden withdrawal from its other African colonies in 1960.

By the beginning of the 1970s, the age of European empire was effectively over. However, the impact of European imperialist intervention would be long lasting, with the nature of the historical relationship between coloniser and colonised evolving over succeeding decades. In particular, tensions caused by increased **immigration** of people from former colonies to their erstwhile mother countries in Western Europe raised profound questions about the very definition of nationhood and citizenship. Such tensions were particularly acute in France in the 1980s and are the subject of the enquiry that follows: *Why did the issue of race relations spark controversy and violence in France in the 1980s?*

How France is governed

- France is governed according to the constitution of the Fifth Republic which was approved by referendum in 1958.
- This constitution established a semi-presidential system of government whereby the executive branch is divided into two parts: the President (head of state) and the Prime Minister (head of government).
- In 1962, Charles de Gaulle secured an amendment to the constitution whereby the president would be directly elected by the citizens of France and not by an electoral college. This means that the president must obtain a nationwide majority in the first or second round of balloting.
- In the 1980s the president was elected for seven years. (Since 2002, this has been reduced to five years.)
- The president appoints the prime minister and the various government ministers. When the president's political party is also the largest party in parliament, this places the president in a particularly dominant position where his or her political agenda dominates.
- The Parliament of France, which is the legislative branch, is made up of two houses: the National Assembly and the Senate.
- The National Assembly is the principal legislative body. Its 577 deputies are directly elected for 5-year terms in local majority votes, and all seats are voted on in each election.
- The prime minister and his cabinet are necessarily from the dominant party or coalition in the assembly. In the case of a president and assembly from opposing parties, this leads to the situation known as cohabitation. Under this arrangement, the power of the president is more restricted, as the prime minister and other ministers must be from the dominant party and can therefore try to implement a different agenda to that of the president.
- The Constitutional Council examines legislation and decides whether or not it violates the Constitution or France's international treaties. The Constitutional Council may declare acts to be unconstitutional, and can determine if they contradict the principles of the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen or the European Convention on Human Rights

France's secular tradition

- France's tradition of separation of church and state dates from the French Revolution and has been a tenet of political thought in the country since the eighteenth century, advocated also by such Enlightenment thinkers as Voltaire, Diderot and Montesquieu.
- The separation of church and state was laid down in formal law by the Third Republic in 1905.
- The French concept of citizenship may be understood as the individual pledging allegiance to the nation, which in turn does not recognise ethnic or religious groupings. It was in this context that in 1937, head teachers were instructed to keep all religious signs out of French schools.
- However, for many second and third generation immigrants in the 1980s and 1990s, the wearing of headscarves and other religious symbols became a means of expressing a separate identity and indeed anger and disaffection from the state.
- In September 2004, backed by President Jacques Chirac, ministers approved a law banning all obvious religious symbols from schools - including headscarves, Christian crosses and Jewish skullcaps.

Political developments in France in the 1980s: an overview

As presidential elections beckoned in France at the beginning of the 1980s, a sense of unrest was evident in French politics. An oil crisis in 1979, just six years after a similar crisis led to a global depression, triggered a further erosion of living standards and worsened unemployment, placing immense pressure from the *Partie Socialiste* on the liberal president, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. On the right, Jacques Chirac's Gaullist RPR party exploited public unhappiness at the perceived diminution of France's national sovereignty and standing in the superpower-dominated Cold War world, directing particular criticism at France's increased collaboration with NATO and moves towards closer European co-operation. Consequently, although Giscard d'Estaing overcame Chirac's challenge in the first round of voting in the **presidential elections of 1981**, he was defeated by François Mitterand of the Socialists in the second round on 10th May, thus conceding the Elysée Palace to the left for the first time in 25 years. The Socialists also won the parliamentary elections in that year.

Mitterand had already established himself as a significant political figure long before his accession to the presidency, serving as a minister eleven times under the Fourth Republic. He had become de Gaulle's major political opponent, declaring the establishment of the Fifth Republic to be a *coup d'état permanent*. Although his political background placed him on the left of French politics, he did not join the PS until 1971. Many considered him to be ideologically part of the French radical tradition, concerned with social justice and fairness, and wary of the excesses of Marxism and capitalism. A more critical viewpoint was that Mitterand was a cunning strategist whose achievements in making the PS electorally successful depended not just on galvanizing left wing support, but also presenting himself through political marketing as attractive to right wing voters disillusioned with the Giscard era.

The perception of Mitterand as opportunistic was lent further credence by his toughening of immigration policies in response to the **rise of Jean Marie Le Pen's right wing Front National**. After the oil crisis of 1973, the legal entry of immigrant workers had been severely restricted and Giscard designed a policy of voluntary repatriation. FN gains after 1983 led Mitterand to further restrict immigrants' entry into France, with the introduction of a new *Code de la nationalité* making it increasingly difficult for immigrants to obtain asylum status and for immigrants' children to acquire French nationality. In 1985, Mitterand tried to exploit the rise of the FN to his own advantage by introducing proportional representation for parliamentary elections. He reasoned that this would allow the FN to win enough seats in 1986 to scupper Chirac's chances of a parliamentary majority. However, this tactic failed as Chirac won a small majority anyway while the FN won 35 seats, thus forcing Mitterand to appoint Chirac as prime minister and setting in train an unprecedented and uneasy period of **cohabitation** between left and right.

The nature of the contending roles of president and prime minister in this new dispensation was constitutionally uncertain, but as Chirac saw himself as Mitterand's rival in the 1988 presidential election, he was reluctant to challenge Mitterand's assumption of authority over foreign affairs and defence policy, even though nothing in the constitution declared such matters to be presidential domains. Chirac instead concentrated on dominating the domestic agenda while Mitterand was perceived as the elder statesman on the international stage. As the 1988 elections approached, it was clear that the nomination of the right would be strongly contested. Jean Marie Le Pen's strong showing forced Chirac into a dilemma: if he attacked him too strongly, he would alienate potential second ballot supporters but if he did not tackle Le Pen's policies, he might lose moderate conservatives who abhorred le Pen's extremism. **Le Pen performed very strongly in the 1988 first ballot, indicating the extent to which the race issue had become so contentious.** However, Mitterand enjoyed a comfortable victory over Chirac in the second round.

As the decade came to a close, it was evident that the race issue would endure as a sensitive one into the 1990s as the '**headscarf affair**' placed traditional French secularism under scrutiny. Continuing violence and disaffection in the *Maghrebi* suburbs allied with the consolidation of FN support would test France's adherence to the principle of assimilation and integration.

GLOSSARY

France's political parties in the 1980s

- **UDF:**

The Union for French Democracy (*Union pour la Démocratie Française*, UDF) was a centrist political party. It was founded in 1978 as an electoral alliance to support President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. The party was intended to challenge Gaullist domination of the right. The party ceased to exist in 1997.

- **RPR**

The Rally for the Republic (*Rassemblement pour la République*, RPR), was a right-wing party. It was founded by Jacques Chirac in 1976 and presented itself as the heir of Gaullism.

- **Communists**

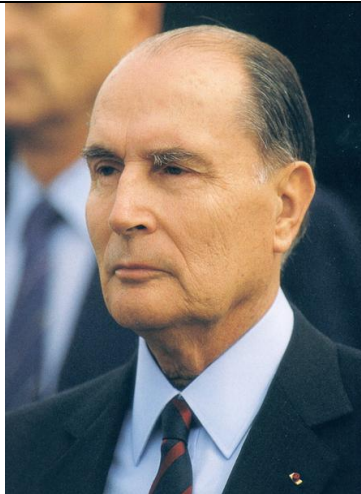
The French Communist Party (*Parti Communiste Français*, PCF) was founded in 1920 to promote communist principles in France. The party was involved in government in 1981 when Mitterand became president.

- **Socialists**

The Socialist Party (*Parti Socialiste*, PS) was the largest centre-left political party in France in the 1980s. The party won power in 1981, when François Mitterrand was elected president. The party won a majority in the National Assembly from 1981 to 1986 and again from 1988 to 1993.

- **Front National**

The National Front (*Front National*, FN) was a far-right, ultra-nationalist political party founded in 1972 by Jean Marie Le Pen. The party enjoyed some electoral success in the 1980s due to its exploitation of the issues of race and immigration at a time when France was experiencing economic and unemployment problems. Le Pen himself emerged as a controversial figure due to his statements on these issues and his views on the Algerian crisis and the Holocaust.



<http://savoir-plaisir.pages>

Francois Mitterand



<http://www.enjoyfrance.com/>

Jacques Chirac



<http://www.topnews.in>

Jean Marie Le Pen

Left Wing _____	Centre _____	Right Wing _____
Socialist Party Mitterand	RPR (Rally for the Republic) Chirac	
Communist Party	Union for French Democracy, Giscard D'Estaing	Front National Le Pen

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Assimilation	The term refers to the process whereby immigrant groups gradually adopt the customs and cultural values of the host nation. At the level of state policy, <i>assimilation</i> anticipates the adherence of immigrants to French republican values and to the secular nature of the French state. Thus, assertions of religious identity which seem to contradict French republican values sometimes lead to controversy and increased societal tensions. French <i>assimilation</i> is often contrasted with British multiculturalism.
Banlieues	Suburbs. The term is often associated with those public housing projects in the suburbs of Paris and other French cities where inter-racial tensions sometimes resulted in violence.
Beurs	This term identifies a distinctive group of young French men and women who emerged in the 1980s, in the context of rising racial tensions. The <i>Marche pour l'égalité et contre le racism</i> [March for equality and against racism] from Marseilles to the centre of Paris in 1983 was a key moment in the <i>Beur</i> generation gaining nationwide visibility. In cultural terms, the 1980s and 1990s witnessed the emergence of <i>Beur</i> music and radio stations as well as fiction, cinema and other forms of cultural expression. The <i>Beurs</i> are typically children of North African immigrants (mostly Algerian, but also Tunisian and Moroccan).
Bidonville	Shanty town
Cité	Whilst literally meaning 'city' or 'town', the term is frequently used to describe the high-rise, public housing projects built in the suburbs of many French towns and frequently the focus of inter-racial, as well as class, tensions.
Cohabitation	In the history of the French Fifth Republic, the term denotes the arrangement that applies when the President and the Prime Minister come from different parties. This usually results in the Prime Minister having more power and the President's power being confined to foreign policy and defence. Throughout the <i>cohabitation</i> between Mitterand and Chirac, the President focused on his foreign duties and allowed Chirac to control internal affairs.

Gaullist	Inspired by the policies of Charles de Gaulle, president of the Fifth Republic, 1959-1969, Gaullists put strong emphasis on what de Gaulle (in his war memoirs) called the “certain idea of France”. Gaullists favour a strong state based on a strong economy and a stable society, in a position to strongly influence the world’s future. In the 1980s, the Rassemblement Pour La République (RPR) was the political party that wore the mantle of Gaullism.
Harkis	The term derives from the Arabic word for ‘movement’. The term was used to refer to Muslim auxiliaries raised by the French army between 1954 and 1962. Many of their number were treated brutally in Algeria following independence as they were seen as collaborators with the occupying French. Of those who escaped to France after the Algerian war, most were housed in shanty towns in the south, with many nurturing deep feelings of resentment towards the French establishment over succeeding decades.
Laïcité	This is the French term for the principle of secularism as applied in French life and society. In the context of education for example, it denotes the intention to maintain the non-religious nature of the education system.
Les Trente Glorieuses	The (‘thirty glorious’) years between the end of World War II in 1945 and the onset of the Oil Crisis from 1973, a time of economic prosperity and population growth
Maghrebi	Immigrants of North African origin, mostly Algerian, Tunisian and Moroccan.
Métis	Half-castes or half-breeds. <i>Métissage</i> is the French term for interbreeding between people of different racial origin
Pieds- Noirs	Originally the name given by the native population in Algeria to French soldiers from the nineteenth century who wore black shoes. The name was taken over by later generations of French settlers, most of whom returned to France in 1962 when Algeria became independent. The majority of the <i>pieds-noirs</i> settled in the south of France following their return, with large numbers voting for the <i>Front National</i> .

Biographical notes

Key figures

Francois Mitterand

Francois Mitterand was born in Jarnac, France, on 26th October, 1916. He fought against the Nazis and although initially a supporter of Petain, he joined the French Resistance, working with de Gaulle in London. Between 1947 and 1958 he held ministerial posts in 11 short-lived centrist governments. He opposed the decision by Charles De Gaulle to create a Fifth Republic, which resulted in him losing his seat in the 1958 elections. His political views now became more radical and in the 1960s he began to build up a new, left of centre, anti-Gaullist alliance. Mitterand returned to the National Assembly in 1962. In 1965, he lost the presidential election to de Gaulle but won 32% of the vote. In 1971 he became the leader of the Socialist Party, which he built up while forging strategic links with the Communist Party. In 1981 he was elected president while his party won a parliamentary majority. However, after the 1986 elections the Socialist Party lost its National Assembly majority and he was forced to work with a right-wing coalition government in a cohabitation arrangement. He was re-elected president in 1988 for a further seven year term. In 1992 the Socialist Party suffered a severe electoral defeat. Three years later, Chirac took back the presidency for the Right. Francois Mitterand died in Paris on 8th January, 1996.

Jacques Chirac

Jacques Chirac was born in Paris on 29th November 1932. Having served as an officer in the French army in Algeria (1956–57), he rose through the ranks of the civil service before being elected to the National Assembly as a Gaullist in 1967. He was appointed prime minister by newly elected President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing in 1974. However, personal and professional differences with Giscard led Chirac to resign from office in 1976. He then set about re-organising Gaullism under the Rally for the Republic (RPR) party, which became firmly under his control. He was elected mayor of Paris in 1977 and developed his profile as a leading conservative. Chirac's first campaign for the presidency in 1981 split the conservative vote with Giscard and thereby allowed the Socialist Party candidate, François Mitterand, to win. In parliamentary elections held in 1986, the coalition of right-wing parties won a slim majority of seats in the National Assembly, and Chirac was appointed prime minister by Mitterand. This power-sharing arrangement between the two posts was the first of its kind in the history of the Fifth Republic, in which previously the president and the prime minister had always belonged to the same party or the same electoral coalition. Under this unusual arrangement, known as cohabitation, Chirac, as prime minister, was responsible for domestic affairs, while Mitterand retained responsibility for foreign policy. As the candidate of the centre-right RPR, Chirac ran for the presidency against Mitterand and was defeated in run-off elections in May 1988, whereupon he resigned the post of prime minister. Remaining mayor of Paris, he made his third bid for the presidency in May 1995 and this time defeated the Socialist candidate, Lionel Jospin. He remained president until his retirement in 2006.

Jean Marie Le Pen

Jean-Marie Le Pen was born on 20th June, 1928, in Brittany. In 1954, he joined the French Foreign Legion, serving as a paratrooper in Algeria and in French Indochina. In 1956 he was elected to the National Assembly as its youngest deputy. In 1972 Le Pen formed the *Front National* political party. From the outset, Le Pen's party stressed the threat to France posed by immigration, particularly of Arab immigration from France's former colonies in North Africa. The party also opposed European integration, supported capital punishment, and sought prohibitions on the building of additional mosques in France. He was found guilty of violating France's law prohibiting Holocaust denial for comments made in the 1980s describing the Holocaust as a mere "detail" in the history of World War II. Nevertheless, Le Pen's style and policies attracted significant support, particularly from the working class, which suffered from rising crime and high unemployment during the 1980s and 1990s. He became an MEP in 1984. He ran several times for the presidency and though he won less than 1 percent in 1974, he won some 15 percent in 1988 and 1995. In 2002, Le Pen sensationally defeated Socialist Prime Minister Lionel Jospin in the first round of the presidential election, winning 18 percent of the vote. However, with nearly the entire French political establishment - including the Socialist Party and the French Communist Party - endorsing conservative President Jacques Chirac, and with mass demonstrations against Le Pen throughout the country, he was easily defeated in the second round. He remains a controversial and divisive figure in French politics today.

The following biographical notes are presented for reference purposes and relate to two political figures whose policies and actions are part of the 'backdrop' to this case study.

Charles de Gaulle

Charles de Gaulle was born in Lille, France, on 22nd November, 1890. Minister for War in the French government in 1940, he tried to unite French resistance to Petain's pro-Nazi Vichy government. Basing his leadership of the resistance struggle in Algeria, he joined the US army's triumphant entry into Paris in August 1945 and was elected head of the French government in November. He formed the right-wing group, the Rally of the French People (RFP) which, after initial success, declined in popularity. However, he dramatically returned to power in 1958 when he was elected president during the Algerian crisis at a time when the republic itself was threatened. The power of the office of president was enhanced in the constitution underpinning the Fifth Republic, which came into being in 1958. He granted independence to all 13 French African colonies but the Algerian War continued until 1962. His actions alienated the French military and white settlers who had supported him. He pursued a foreign policy that stressed French independence from American and British influence - he twice opposed British entry into the EEC - and also invested heavily in developing an atomic bomb for France. Following student riots against his government and negative results in a referendum, de Gaulle resigned from office in April, 1969. In retirement he completed his memoirs. He died on 9th November, 1970. He remains an iconic figure in French politics and society today.

Valery Giscard d'Estaing

Valery Giscard d'Estaing was born in Germany on 2nd February, 1926. Educated in Paris he joined the French Resistance during the Second World War, for which he was awarded the Croix de Guerre. He served in a variety of ministries. Although he served under Charles De Gaulle, he remained outside the Gaullist movement. In 1974 Giscard d'Estaing defeated Francois Mitterrand to become President. A strong supporter of the European Economic Community, while in office he played a crucial role in several international initiatives including the creation of the European Council and the European Monetary System. During his period in office the French economy performed badly and he was defeated by Francois Mitterrand in the 1981 presidential elections.

Timeline of important developments

Important background factors	
1954 – 1962	Algerian War brings France to brink of civil war and leaves lasting scars on French society
October 1973	Huge rise in oil prices have grave consequences for French economy
May 1974	Valéry Giscard d'Estaing is elected president
June 1974	Jacques Chirac becomes Prime Minister for the first time.
1974	Restrictions on citizenship imposed
December 1976	Gaullist RPR party is created by Chirac; seen as to the right of Giscard.
February 1978	UDF is established to support Giscard
March 1978	Right wins elections
July 1979	A second oil crisis places further strains on the French economy.
Important developments in the 1980s	
May 1981	Socialist candidate François Mitterand defeats Valéry Giscard d'Estaing in the presidential elections
June 1981	Socialists win parliamentary elections
March 1983	Government introduces harsh austerity measures to combat economic crisis as racist tensions increase.
October-December 1983	March of the <i>Beurs</i> against racial discrimination
17 June 1984	<i>Front National</i> wins over 10% of vote in European elections
July 1984	<i>SOS Racisme</i> is founded.
March 1986	Right wins legislative elections. Chirac becomes Prime Minister again. Mitterand is thus obliged to govern in <i>cohabitation</i> with the right
8 May 1988	Mitterand wins second term as President, defeating Chirac, who is replaced as Prime Minister by Michel Rocard. Le Pen also performs very well.
November 1989	Three girls expelled from school in Creil for wearing Islamic headscarf. FN enjoy further electoral success.
1993	Further restrictions on immigration imposed.

***The Irish Times* digital archive**

In the enquiry that follows, substantial use is made of *The Irish Times* digital archive. The primary reasons for this are as follows:

- No other newspaper archive is so readily available to teachers and users of public libraries.
- In its role as the “paper of record”, *The Irish Times* gives extensive coverage to episodes such as *Race relations in France in the 1980s*, reporting on the views of a wide range of political opinion. Thus, it can contribute significantly to the development of critical thinking in the teaching of this and other case studies.

The advice below is an adapted version of that published in the History In-Service Team booklet, “Exploration, Enquiry and Evidence: Applying the Three Es in Practice”, 2008.

***The Irish Times* digital archive [<http://www.ireland.com/search/archive.html>]**

The Irish Times digital archive is a valuable resource for all teachers and students of history. It offers access to all issues of the newspaper from the first edition in 1859 and a search facility that enables users to research specified areas of interest across the full history of the newspaper or within specified dates. Editions are added to the archive seven days after publication date. *The Irish Times* digital archive is available free of charge to schools that have access to the NCTE broadband network. Please check with your school authorities to confirm that your school is connected to the NCTE network. Access is also available free through the public libraries, thanks to the involvement of the Library Council.

To carry out a search, enter a keyword or keywords in the “Keywords” search box. Then, pick a date range choosing from one of the following: “Past 30 days”, “Past year”, “All”, or “Date range”. Where “Date range” is chosen, a start date and finish date must be entered. For the purpose of identifying items relevant to this case study, one approach would be to enter the term ‘racial tensions’ and a date range such as 1st January, 1980, to 31st December, 1989.

You can also browse a calendar for the relevant issue (click on “Browse by date”) if you know the date on which a particular article or news item appeared, or want to examine the newspaper headlines in the days or weeks before and after a significant event, such as the *Front National*’s success in the 1984 European elections. For example, clicking on Monday, 18th June, 1984, gives access to extensive reporting of the detail of Le Pen’s success in that election and the reactions thereto.

To open (and save and/or print) a copy of the selected text from the page view displayed:
* click on “Download Article” (or “Print” to print directly).

Note: All material from *The Irish Times* used with kind permission.

Race relations in France in the 1980s: possible lines of enquiry

If students are to come to understand the issues and events of the case study, they need to explore the reasons why race relations came under strain in France during the 1980s. The following four-step enquiry is proposed as a way of helping students understand the major causative factors and consequences of difficulties in race relations:

Enquiry question: Why did the issue of race relations spark controversy and violence in France in the 1980s?

Step 1: What background factors underlay the emergence in France in the 1980s of race relations as a contentious issue?

Step 2: What developments in the 1980s caused race relations to become more tense and, on occasion, violent?

Step 3: What were the main political responses during the 1980s to the issue of race relations?

Step 4: What was the ‘headscarf affair’ and what impact did it have on race relations in France in the 1980s (and beyond)?

Q. What are the potential benefits of using these questions to focus on the subject matter of the case study?

In the pages that follow, a list of significant points for each prong of the enquiry is followed by a selection of linked primary source extracts and some secondary source extracts.

Page 44 contains some historians’ judgements on the broader significance of race relations in France in historical perspective.

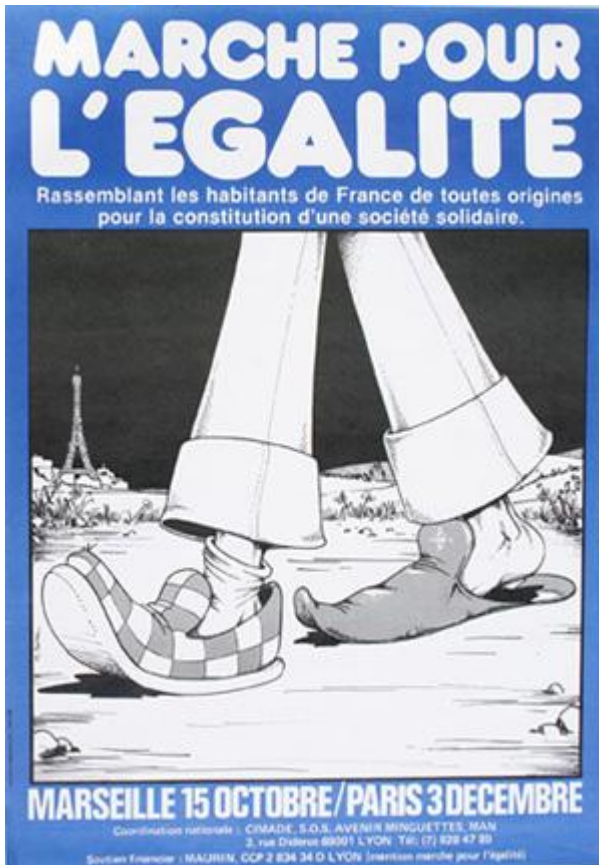
The ‘Postscript’ on page 45 highlights the on-going reverberations of issues that first came to a head in the 1980s. (Since the issues referred to are outside the date parameters of the topic, it is **NOT** intended as an indication of the likely range of ‘Contextualisation’ questions in the Documents-based Question.)

A possible ‘hook’

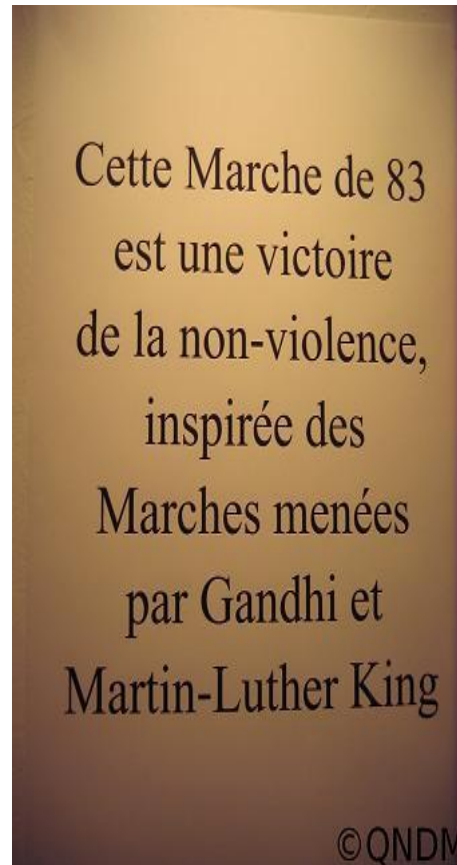
To begin the enquiry, a potentially engaging ‘hook’ for students would be to focus on the extraordinary “Marche des Beurs” of October to December, 1983 from Marseilles to Paris, which was advertised as a march for (the great Republican ideal of) equality and against racism. A selection of images relating to the march is presented on the next page; the page following contains a worksheet that may be used to interrogate the images. The march will be explored more fully in Step 2 of the enquiry.

Marche des Beurs, October-December, 1983

Source A



Source B



Source A: <http://lyonroyal.over-blog.com/article-30434554.html>, downloaded 3-11-10

Source B: <http://quineditmot.free.fr/index.php/2009/10/27/la-marche-des-beurs-de-1983-sexpose-a-lyon/>, downloaded 3-11-10

Source C



<http://www.politis.fr/La-Marche-des-Beurs-25-ans-apres,5017.html>

***Marche des Beurs* worksheet**

Translations:

Source A (top of poster): March for equality, gathering the inhabitants of France of all origins for the constitution of a society based on solidarity

Source B: This march of 83 is a victory for non-violence inspired by the marches led by Gandhi and Martin-Luther King

Source C (banner): March for equality, Marseille, 15 October – Paris, 3 December

Questions on Sources A, B and C

1. In Source A, why is the walking figure shown wearing different footwear on either foot?
2. In Source A, what landmark is shown in the background on the left? Why is this landmark included, in your view?
3. What can we learn from the caption on Source A about (a) the purpose for which the march took place and (b) the people who went on the march?
4. Why does Source B mention marches led by Gandhi (in India) and Martin Luther King (in the United States)? Explain your answer.
5. In Source C, what evidence is there about the types of people who took part in the march?
6. In Source C, what evidence is there about the purpose of the march?
7. In Source C, what evidence is there about the dates of the march?
8. The full title of the march was *March pour l'égalité et contre le racisme* (March for equality and against racism). Do any of the sources give clues that race relations was a significant factor in the organising of the march? Explain your answer.

Enquiry, Step 1: What background factors underlay the emergence in France in the 1980s of race relations as a contentious issue?

Relevant circumstances, political and economic:

- Faced with the growth of strong nationalist sentiment in its colonies after World War Two, France established the French Union in 1946, by which it hoped to preserve its influence and power by granting a certain degree of self-government to its colonial holdings. Arrangements included free movement of peoples from the colonies into France in a bid to arrest the growing movements towards self-determination. In 1947, unrestricted freedom of movement between Algeria and France was established.
- However, the strength of nationalist feeling in the colonial world after the war forced France to acknowledge the reality of decolonisation. Defeat at the Battle of Dien-Bien-Phu in 1954 led to the loss of French power in Indo-China. This was followed by independence for Tunisia and Morocco in 1956.
- The emergence of the French Community in 1958, which replaced the French Union and tried to formalise economic and political links between France and her former colonies, continued to allow for immigration from the former African colonies.
- The policy of free and unregulated entries of immigrants from Algeria continued with the signing of the Evian Agreements which ended the Algerian War. New arrivals included former French colonists resident in Algeria (*pieds noirs*), as well as Algerians who had sided with France during the war of independence (*harkis*). The number of Algerians rose to 470,000 in 1968.
- During *Les Trentes Glorieuses* , large numbers of immigrants from the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia) provided cheap labour. Between 1946 and 1975, the number of Maghrebi immigrants grew from 2.3% of foreigners in France to 32.3%.
- As Arab states cut back on crude oil production in response to western sympathy for Israel in the Yom Kippur War, France's strong dependency on oil imports meant that it was severely and rapidly affected (Oil Crisis 1973).
- The recession caused by *la crise* of 1973/74 meant that in France, unemployment increased to 900,000 in 1975, along with reduced growth and rising inflation. Heavily industrialised regions of France in the east and south-east were particularly affected.
- In 1976, Prime Minister Raymond Barre introduced austere fiscal policies, including pay freezes. However, inflation continued to rise while unemployment reached 1.5 million by 1980, as a second oil crisis in 1979 impacted severely on Barre's policies.
- Immigrant workers in the *cités* were particularly affected by the economic downturn, as they were disproportionately employed in low paid jobs in manufacturing industry which was damaged by the recession. Unemployment among young immigrants in the *cités* grew above 30 per cent.

Relevant circumstances, social and cultural

- In the late 1940s and 1950s, many Algerian immigrant families set up home in one of the *bidonvilles* (shanty towns) of Nanterre in the north-west suburbs of Paris. Such *bidonvilles* - lacking in sanitation and running water - emerged throughout the 1950s on land close to the industries where immigrants worked, and in the suburbs of other major cities such as Lyon and Marseilles, which were already overcrowded with poor housing.
- The proprietors of some hostels and cafés exploited the needs of immigrants for self-profit by arranging planks and corrugated tin roofs on adjoining land so as to provide immigrants with somewhere to sleep
- Some companies that employed immigrant labourers set up hostels close to the shanty towns, while the SONOCOTRA, the national society for the construction of workers' housing, set up hostels for immigrant families but strictly controlled their private lives, fearful of the potential social danger of allowing immigrants too much autonomy. Consequently, many immigrants preferred the poverty of the *bidonvilles* as at least they had more freedom.
- The *bidonvilles* emerged as bastions of North African religious and cultural practice but were also seen by the police as an acceptable form of ghettoisation of the Maghrebi, a potentially subversive social grouping. Official figures in the 1960s put the population of *bidonvilles* at 75,000, probably just a third of the real number.
- However, as well as the poor sanitation and hygiene conditions, residents also had to endure theft, violence and the threat of fire.
- In the 1970s, the shanty towns were gradually replaced by vast high-rise tower blocks commonly known as *cités*.
- Racial tensions were exacerbated by the economic crisis. Articles in the *Le Monde* newspaper warned about the growth of racist abuse against Arab workers after the Algerian government decided to nationalize its oil production in 1971.
- By the beginning of the 1980s, a new generation of Maghrebi emerged: *les Beurs*.



<http://www.pointsdactu.org/IMG/jpg/r778-018.jpg> <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/15/magazine/15elections.t.html?ref=magazine>

The Algerian War: an overview

The Algerian War took place between 1954 and 1962, when Algeria became formally independent from France. This war was more complex than a colony obtaining independence from its colonial master. The National Liberation Front (FLN) launched a military campaign in which many French civilians were killed and tried to unite Algerian opinion behind their campaign for an independent Muslim state. As the FLN's activities quickly escalated into a bloody guerrilla campaign in which European settlers (*pied noirs*) were targeted, the French population began to demand a much sterner response against what they perceived as FLN terrorism. The French Army, sent to conduct a "pacification" campaign in what was considered French soil, quickly became embroiled in a full-scale war as Algerian public opinion seemed to harden behind the independence movement.

The turmoil also rocked France itself, with the French people divided on how the issue of Algeria could be resolved and army hardliners and settlers angrily insisting that Algeria should remain an integral part of France. Charles de Gaulle was restored to power as the Fourth Republic was dissolved in the belief that his iconic status was required to restore stability to France. De Gaulle came to realise that a political rather than military solution was required and in a referendum, the Algerian people chose independence. De Gaulle opened talks with the FDLN which led to the Evian Accord, by which Algeria secured independence. This accord was accepted by the French people in a referendum, but was greeted with outrage by army dissidents and settlers, who formed the *Organisation de l'armée secrete* (OAS), which carried out bombing campaigns in France and Algeria and tried to assassinate de Gaulle.

Although independence was now seen as inevitable, the consequences for France were profound:

- Roughly one million *pieds noirs* were forced to return to France. Many came to be supporters of the *Front National* in the 1970s and 1980s.
- The Algerian population in France increased hugely, among them several hundred thousand *harkis*, who were Muslim auxiliaries in the French army during the conflict. As thousands of their number were massacred in Algeria after independence, those who found refuge in France harboured deep resentment against the French state as they set up shanty towns predominantly in the south.
- The descendants of the *harkis* were among those who comprised the disaffected *beurs* who played a significant part in the worsening race relations of the 1980s.
- Although three million French soldiers fought in Algeria, the term 'war' was not officially used to describe the conflict till 1999. The traumatic effects of the conflict were significant in the tensions evident in race relations in France in the 1980s.



Image: www.emersonkent.com

Cartoon: Vicky (Victor Weisz), *The New Statesman*, 23 March 1962: www.cartoons.ac.uk

Relevant sources

Immigration

Source 1A

Since the right of immigration to France was ended in 1974, about 400,000 people have arrived as political exiles or to join their families, according to official figures. But it is estimated that there are as many as 500,000 more clandestine immigrants, many of them brought in by employers to provide cheap labour. © *The Irish Times*, 7th December 1989

Source 1B

Between 1962 and 1982, the proportion of North Africans and black Africans rose from under 20 per cent to 43 per cent. Immigrants from black Africa - mainly Senegal, Mali, Cameroon and Ivory Coast - increased from 18,000 to 158,000 during that period ... There is more unemployment among immigrants than among native French, largely because the automobile and construction industries which traditionally give them jobs are in crisis ... The great debate concerns “integration”- to what extent can immigrants merge themselves into French society? © *The Irish Times*, 6th March, 1986

Source 1C

It was just as well for my wife and children to come and join me as be shunted about under military guard to who knows where. It was the lesser evil.
An Algerian immigrant to France, recalls his concerns about leaving his family in Algeria while he left for France to find work. Cited in:
Abdelmak Sayad, *Un Nanterre algérien, terre de bidonvilles*. (Paris: Autrement, 1995, p.36)

Source 1D

The garment trade...lends itself particularly to clandestinity since work can be subcontracted out to small-scale enterprises operating on premises not officially declared for business. The shutters remain closed over the windows to keep down the giveaway noise of the sewing machines - over which 12 hours a day toil a handful of foreigners. They are pathetically grateful for a chance to be so exploited - seven Francs to stitch a dress that will be sold for 300. No payslips, no social security, no collective bargaining... © *The Irish Times*, 29th March, 1980

Source 1E

The killing last week of a nine-year old Algerian boy in the [Paris] suburb of La Corneuve has re-alerted French opinion to the problems created by an immigrant population now estimated at 4.5 million ... After a two day investigation during which police were assaulted by angry young North Africans who also smashed up two shops and damaged cars, the murderer was arrested...the complex known as “the 4000”, inhabited by 15,000 people the majority of them North African...is one of some twenty low cost developments in and around the capital run by the Paris municipality which are regarded as high risk for just this type of incident. A plan to make the vast bleak concrete complex more human has been in existence for some years ... Whether or not the motivation for such violence is purely racist, immigrants in general, and North Africans in particular, tend to be the victims. © *The Irish Times*, 15th July, 1983

Secondary Source 1

They were condemned to gradual clearance by a government decision in 1964, but even as their destruction began it was clear just how far the *bidonvilles* were a form of social control: the police were content to see the families from the Maghreb corralled into distinct areas, even if there was no official policy of ghettoization.

Rod Kedward, *La Vie en Bleu: France and the French Since 1900* (London: Penguin, 2006, p.411)

The Emergence of the Beurs

Secondary Source 2

The word 'Beur' had emerged in the 1970s with the second generation of immigrants from the Maghreb (mainly Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia). It was an assertion of identity, a backslang corruption of the pejorative term 'Arabe'. Projected in 1981 by Radio Beur, one of the first few radio stations legalised by the Socialist government, the youthful Beur culture had entered politics through struggle against deportations The initial surge of popular sympathy for Beur equality and presence reflected the enthusiasm in 1981 for an expansive and inclusive cultural identity for modern France ... allowed the Beurs to be seen as a youthful distillation of two cultures, eager for integration into French society but bringing their own infusion of Maghrebi origin.

Rod Kedward, *La Vie en Bleu: France and the French Since 1900* (London: Penguin, 2006, p.503).

Questions on the sources

1. In Source 1A, what is meant by "clandestine immigrants"? Suggest two reasons why the number of such immigrants increased in the 1970s?
2. According to Source 1B, why was unemployment so high among African immigrants?
3. What does the writer of Source 1B mean in saying "The great debate concerns 'integration' ..."?
4. Explain the view of the Algerian immigrant to France as expressed in Source 1C.
5. According to Source 1D, why were immigrant workers in the garment trade in particular danger of being exploited?
6. In Source 1E, what evidence is there about the living conditions of North African immigrants in Paris?
7. In Source 1E, what general point does the writer make about murders such as that of the nine-year old Algerian boy?
8. In Secondary Source 1, what does the writer say about the police attitude towards the *bidonvilles* or shanty towns?
9. According to Secondary Source 2, with which group of French people did the term 'Beur' originate?
10. According to Secondary Source 2, what were the origin and intended meaning of the term 'Beur'?
11. According to Secondary Source 2, why was there an initial surge of popular sympathy for the Beurs?
12. According to Secondary Source 2, were the Beurs seen as people who rejected or accepted French culture? Explain your answer.

Enquiry, Step 2: What developments in the 1980s caused race relations to become more tense and, on occasion, violent?

Relevant circumstances

- The *Front National* and its leader, Jean Marie Le Pen, with its strongly anti-immigrant policies, attracted considerable support during the 1980s. Other, more extreme, right-wing groups were also active.
- In 1983, young *Beurs* organised marches across France, demanding civic and political rights for immigrants and their children and better access to the jobs market.
- Between October and December of 1983, the *Marche des Beurs* (also known as the March for Equality or the March against Racism) took place, beginning in Marseilles and going from town to town across France before finishing in Paris, where the marchers were greeted by President Mitterand himself and an estimated 100,000 supporters.
- The pressure group *SOS Racisme* was launched in 1984 by Harlem Désir and others in response to the growth of the *Front National* and to fight racism. It represented the Beurs' desire to be part of the republic and was associated with the Socialist Party. The movement's anti-racist slogan was 'Touche pas à mon pote' ('Hands off my mate'), carried on an outstretched, hand-shaped badge which sold in millions. A concert on 15 June 1985 was attended by over 300,000 people in the Place de la Concorde in Paris.
- A second newly-created anti-racist organization, *France Plus*, was founded in 1985 to encourage young people of Maghrebi origin to take part in local politics. It succeeded in gaining several hundred town council seats for such candidates in March 1989.
- Despite the anti-racist campaigns, violent attacks on immigrants continued.
- Islamist terror attacks also struck Paris in the 1980s. Six people were shot dead at a diner on Rue des Rosiers in 1982, while two people were killed and 28 injured when a bomb exploded at a shopping mall on the Champs-Élysées in March of 1986.
- Second generation North African immigrants began to turn more towards the Islamic faith, with a sharp rise in the number of mosques.

Relevant sources

Rise of the far right

Source 2A

“L’Oeuvre Francaise”, a nationalist organisation with anti-Semitic undertones, has been going for some years but its audience was shrinking, at least until recent events brought the movement back into the limelight. The National Revolutionary Movement has its roots in the Algerian secret army (OAS) which fought against that country’s independence. It is primarily anti-American. Others, with names such as “Lynx Club” and “Association for the Defence of Western Civilisation”, number only a few dozen militants. But no-one knows how wide and how insidiously their influence may be spreading. As unemployment takes an ever deeper grip, particularly on younger age groups, potential support for such extremist, racist bodies grows proportionately.

© *The Irish Times*, 18th August, 1980

Source 2B

The National Front may have persuaded a certain number of people that immigrants are responsible for their economic woes, unemployment in particular. That does not mean that there is a significant measure of approval in the country for the more overt and appalling acts of racism. Three drunken recruits to the Foreign Legion who beat up a young Algerian and threw him off an express train to his death represented no-one but themselves....There is good deal of loose talk about how immigrants, meaning coloured immigrants, should be sent back home but few people would condone violence. Mr. Jean Marie Le Pen and his not-so-merry men in the National Front use subjective statistics, i.e. make them up, to frighten people. The suggestion is that immigrants in general and North Africans in particular are robbers and muggers and are getting the lion’s share of family allowances and unemployment benefits. The argument relies on people’s unreasoning fears to disguise the absence of evidence to bear it out.

© *The Irish Times*, 6th March, 1986

The *Marche des Beurs*

Secondary Source 3

A hunger strike in Lyon in April 1981, co-organised with the immigrant communities by Catholic priest Christian Delorme and Protestant pastor Jean Costil, caught the public’s imagination and forced Raymond Barre to suspend the planned expulsions. The march for equality, confronting the racism of the Front National, stepped up the momentum....Its success led much of public opinion to give a positive message to interbreeding, *le métissage*, recast as a creative mix of races and cultures through a consciousness of past and present French origins in all parts of Europe and the Mediterranean. Over 700 artists, intellectuals and political personalities backed the march with a statement indicating the ethnic pluralism of France. The popular youth slogan, ‘We are all *métis*’, echoed the inclusive student slogans of 1968, and in 1984 *Le Nouvel Observateur* imagined the future as one of “la France multiculturelle”. It was a vision and a use of words which became the most bitterly contested issue in the last two decades of the century and well beyond.

Rod Kedward, *La Vie en Bleu: France and the French Since 1900* (London: Penguin, 2006, p.503).

Source 2C

A well meant marginal endeavour turned into a triumph at the weekend when 60,000 Parisians turned out to welcome 40 young immigrants who had participated in a 750 mile anti-racist march from Marseille... The young organizers were seeking to ignite a spark of genuine interest and sympathy at a time when racism seems to be on the upsurge... President Mitterand promised to replace the present system of residence and work permits of varying duration by a single 10-year card but said opinion was not yet ripe for fulfillment of his pre-electoral pledge to give immigrants the vote in municipal elections. More severity has however been promised for perpetrators of racist offences.

© *The Irish Times*, 6th December 1983

Source 2D

I was present to see the cortege of 100,000 arrive in Paris -- it was the Franco-Arab equivalent of Dr. Martin Luther King's 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Justice. The *Marche des Beurs* was organised from Lyon's horrific, enormous suburban high-rise ghetto, *Les Minguettes*, with the help of a charismatic left-wing French Catholic worker-priest, Father Christian Delorme, and its central theme was the demand to be recognized as French "comme les autres" - like everyone else ... a demand, in sum, for complete integration. But for the mass of Franco-Arabs, little has changed since 1983 and the integrationist movement of "jeunes beurs" created around that march petered out in frustration and despair.

Edited extract from "Why is France burning?" by Doug Ireland.

<http://www.zcommunications.org/why-is-france-burning-by-doug-ireland>, 6th November 2005

SOS Racisme v. the Front National

Source 2E

Coinciding with Mr Le Pen's planned demonstration today a group known as "SOS racism" is hoping to hold an hour-long teach-in in every school in France on the dangers of racial hatred. The group was formed a couple of years ago and is the only group with Jewish and Arab members in France. It intends to engage in dialogue with the children about terrorism.

© *The Irish Times*, 22nd September 1986

Attacks on immigrants

Source 2F

The resurgence of the far Right in France has produced a mounting series of incidents culminating in the suspension of a police inspector for political activities ... the man's superiors had been aware for some time of his militant membership in a major right-wing group ... FANE (Federation for National and European Action) ... which operates openly at an office where black-shirted young toughs are prominent among the visitors.

Members of the organization appear to be behind recent racist incidents, including attacks on young immigrants in the suburbs of Bundy, bomb attacks on memorials to members of the Resistance against the Nazi occupation of France, and neo-Nazi marches throughout the country... FANE's leader, Mr. Mark Frederiksen, a 44 year old bank employee, launched a major recruiting campaign this spring. Talking to prospective members, his militants employed such phrases as "we are in favour of dialoguing with iron bars."

© *The Irish Times*, 18th August, 1980

Source 2G

A controversy has been raging over the extent to which France's 1.5 million foreign workers are a threat to the indigenous population. It was sparked off by the Communist mayor of the suburb of Vitry (who) took a bulldozer to flatten a newly built workers' hostel in which 300 workers from Mali were due to be accommodated. The episode was particularly shocking because of the Communists' traditional self-appointed role as protectors of the workers no matter what their skin, colour or origin... The mayor attempted to persuade the hostel's occupants they would be taking housing away from Frenchmen. The municipality had tried to transfer it to occupation by young indigenous workers.... But his show of force set off an anti-Communist backlash in the Moslem community in France which organised a day of "imprecatory prayer" against his municipality.

© *The Irish Times*, 12th January 1981

Source 2H

The Communist mayor of the district of Lyon last year called for expulsion of hardened delinquents and their families, mostly North Africans. This followed the stoning of four policemen by a band of young immigrants, and preceded the overturning of the car of another policeman who was making a friendly visit to an elderly person. Lyon's urban sprawl counts 140,000 emigrants, one tenth of the population. But half live in only three communes. As the chief component (50%), North Africans come in for the brunt of local hostility.

© *The Irish Times*, 12th January 1981

Source 2I

The syndrome of immigrant populations living in sub-standard housing near industrial centres, slum situations and high delinquency rates, produces racialism both latent and overt wherever it occurs. Such, for instance, is the situation in several housing developments north of Marseille, where the vicious spiral of poverty, underemployment, hooliganism and racial enmity was the underlying cause of the death of a young Moroccan last year. Against the background of broken streetlights, rusting hulks of abandoned cars and obscene graffiti scrawled on grimey walls, he was shot dead during a routine police identity check.

© *The Irish Times*, 12th January 1981

Source 2J

President Mitterand yesterday denounced the violence which is gaining ground in France after three immigrant workers were killed and eight injured in two separate incidents at the weekend. The president spoke after visiting the Paris morgue to view the body of one of the victims, Ozgun Kemal (20). In one of the incidents a man fired a sporting rifle through the window of a tea shop in Chateaubriant frequented almost exclusively by Turks. Two men, fathers respectively of six and two children, died. Five others were injured, four of them seriously. Police immediately arrested Fredric Boulay, (22), who is unemployed. He said he did not like foreigners, a gendarme said, and appeared to feel no remorse. In the other case, a Turkish worker died and three others were wounded in a conflict between owners and workers at a factory... The proprietors had stopped paying wages in July, since when each employee has received a total of only £182.... The shooting occurred when the workforce arrived at the factory to begin a hunger strike designed to call the authorities' attention to their plight.

© *The Irish Times*, 13th November, 1984

Source 2K

The undercurrent of racial intolerance in France has again surfaced in the seaside town of Menton, where a Moroccan man was killed by two young white men because he was talking to a young white girl. The main anti-racist organisations in France have called for a national protest today to show their indignation at this latest episode of racial violence. Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger, the influential Archbishop of Paris, said on Sunday, "I am afraid I may become ashamed of my own country" because of the worrying growth of racial intolerance... The gunmen later told police they had shot the immigrants because they were talking to the white girl and that they "did not like Arabs". The economic recession, the rise of unemployment and a growing feeling of insecurity has fuelled the rise of racial intolerance over the last two years. In turn, this has been a key factor in the spectacular rise of the extreme-right National Front as a political force in the country.

© *The Irish Times*, 26th March, 1985

Source 2L

The Pope delivered an hour-long sermon in the course of which he spoke movingly of the poor, and made a firm appeal on behalf of immigrants. Banging on the wooden lectern with one hand, he said: "The Church will not resign itself to any failure of respect for people with different cultural roots, nor to a lack of respect towards them, their needs and those of their families."

© *The Irish Times*, 6th October 1986

(From a report on Pope John Paul II's open air mass in Paris on 4th October 1986 during a two day visit)

Growth in popularity of Islam

Source 2M

No fewer than 1.5 million of the faithful observed the July Ramadan fast this year. This is a time when the frayed tempers of those deprived of food or drink from sunrise to sunset make community relations equally frayed. Significantly it was during the fast that an epidemic of shooting incidents broke out. The mosques and prayer rooms which sprout like mushrooms in unlikely premises in the country's industrial suburbs bring their own frictions. Ringing out in mixed neighbourhoods, the call to prayer has aroused some resentment. The Paris office of the Mecca-based World Islamic League says there are now 410 mosques in France - including 23 in Paris, 127 in the capital's outskirts, 16 in Lyon and 15 in Marseille.

© *The Irish Times*, 3rd November, 1983

Source 2N

... the faith of Mohammad is spreading. It is estimated that for two years now a new mosque or place of prayer has been opened each day in France. Most of the missionary work is directed at second generation North African immigrants, hitherto little drawn to the beliefs and practices of their fathers. Perhaps because economic recession and the rising tide of racialism makes more attractive a community cemented by religion, the converts are trickling in. Some 30,000 are believed to have been recruited so far-not on the face of it an impressive figure, but there has also been an upsurge of pious practice among what could be termed lapsed Muslims.

© *The Irish Times*, 3rd November, 1983

Source 2O

...a religious revival...seems to be a spontaneous movement generated among the least favoured status of immigrant workers. Its genesis has been dated to 1974, when a mass rent strike by inhabitants of immigrant hostels extracted from the authorities an undertaking to provide prayer rooms. The marriage between religion and industrial protest had been consecrated. Today, without subscribing to the verbal abuse indulged in by the extreme right, it is true to say that immigrants - sometimes whipped into fighting spirit by Muslim extremists - have constituted the backbone of strikes that have crippled the motor industry.

© *The Irish Times*, 3rd November, 1983

Questions on the sources

1. What characteristics of some of the far right movements in France are identified in Source 2A?
2. According to Source 2B, how has the *Front National* “persuaded a certain number of people that immigrants are responsible for their economic woes”?
3. What view is expressed in Source 2B about the attitude of most French people towards racist violence?
4. According to Secondary Source 3, what role was played by local Christian leaders in Lyon in 1981 in drawing attention to the issue of race relations? What was the impact of these actions on the planned expulsion of immigrants by the government?
5. In Secondary Source 3, what do you think the marchers meant by the slogan “we are all *metis*”?
6. What was the aim of the organisers of the *Marche des Beurs*, according to Source 2C?
7. According to Source 2C, what was the reaction of President Mitterand to the *Marche des Beurs*?
8. How does source 2D suggest the significance of the *Marche des Beurs*?
9. According to Source 2E, what was the aim of *SOS Racisme*?
10. What has the resurgence of “the far Right” in France led to, according to Source 2F?
11. According to Source 2G, why are the actions of the Communist mayor of Vitry “particularly shocking”?
12. What response does the mayor’s actions provoke in the Moslem community, according to Source 2G?
13. How does Source 2H suggest that racial tensions are running high in the city of Lyon?
14. What were the underlying causes of the death of a young Moroccan in Marseille, according to Source 2I? How was the youth killed?
15. How does Source 2J show that violence against immigrants is gaining ground in France in 1984?

- 16.** In Source 2K, how do the references to Cardinal Lustiger and the main anti-racist organisations in France suggest that tensions over racist violence in France are running high?
- 17.** What factors does Source 2K identify as the causes of racial intolerance in France in the 1980s?
- 18.** According to Source 2L, what is the attitude of Pope John Paul II and the Catholic Church towards discrimination against immigrants in France in the 1980s?
- 19.** In Source 2M, what is significant about the timing of the shooting incidents that are referred to?
- 20.** Why do you think that the new mosques built in France in the 1980s, as mentioned in Source 2M, were often located in the industrial suburbs of cities? Why did the growth in the number of mosques cause resentment and friction in such neighbourhoods?
- 21.** According to Source 2N, why is the Muslim faith growing in France in the 1980s?
- 22.** In 2O, what did a mass rent strike by immigrant workers in 1974 lead to?
- 23.** What does Source 2O suggest about the role of immigrants in strikes in the motor industry in the 1980s?

Enquiry, Step 3: What were the main political responses during the 1980s to the issue of race relations?

Relevant circumstances: the successes of the *Front National*

- Continuing high unemployment together with middle class voter concern at media reporting of criminality in immigrant areas contributed to the successes of the extreme right-wing *Front National* in the 1980s, led by Jean Marie Le Pen.
- Le Pen's focus on immigration as the cause of unemployment (his slogan was "3 million immigrants = 3 million unemployed") attracted many voters. His party was associated with racist language as he called for the repatriation of immigrants.
- The *Front National* won 11 per cent of the vote in the 1984 European elections and 9 per cent in the local elections of the following year.
- Mitterand responded to this threat from the right by pressurising parliament to change electoral law and introduce proportional representation in April 1985, thus increasing the possibility that small parties would win seats in the National Assembly. Mitterand calculated that this would allow the FN to win sufficient seats to deprive the right of a majority, believing that the Gaullist right could not ally itself with the FN. Mitterand gambled that the right would then have to seek support from the centre left, and therefore be unable to push its more radical proposals through parliament.
- However, on 16th March 1986, the right gained a slender majority (291/577 seats) while the FN won 35 seats, gaining a new legitimacy. Chirac became prime minister.
- Le Pen performed well in the 1988 presidential elections, winning 14.4% of the vote.

Relevant circumstances: government responses

- Mitterand's government in 1981 initially improved immigrants' rights and even contemplated giving immigrants the right to vote in local elections, though this was not implemented.
- However, the growth of le Pen's *Front National* compelled governing parties to make immigration a national issue and to toughen their policies. In 1986, new measures were introduced to restrict immigrants' entry into the country, to facilitate the expulsion of illegal immigrants and to make it more difficult to obtain asylum status.
- The *code de la nationalité* stipulated that all children born from French parents were French (*droit du sang*) and that all children born on French soil were French (*droit du sol*). However, changes introduced by Interior Minister Pacqua in 1986 restricted the *droit du sol* and made it more difficult to obtain French nationality.
- Revisions to this code also meant that children born in France to immigrant parents would have to wait till the age of eighteen to declare that they want to be French, meaning that through their school years they were classified as "foreigners".

Relevant sources

Front National gains in Dreux 1983

Source 3A

An opposition alliance led by the extreme right National Front Party won the municipal elections in Dreux, northern France, yesterday on a policy of repatriating immigrants which the National Front claims will restore the fortunes of the ailing right wing in France. The opposition, led by...a Gaullist, and comprising the National Front, the neo-Gaullist RPR and the centrist UDF, polled 55.33 per cent of the votes against 44.67 per cent for the left wing candidates. Riot police used tear gas to disperse some 1500 anti-right demonstrators who tried to climb over metal barriers outside the town hall chanting "Stirbois, fascist assassin". (Mr Jean-Pierre Stirbois was the National Front candidate)...The National Front, whose main campaign platform has been the repatriation of immigrants, polled only one per cent of votes in the last general election, but earlier this year polled ten per cent in municipal elections in the Belleville area of Paris, which has a large immigrant population ...

© *The Irish Times*, 12th September 1983

Source 3B

National leaders of the French right wing have in various ways refrained from explicitly condemning or applauding the "unnatural alliance" entered into in the Dreux municipal by-election last week between Gaullists and Giscardians, and the extremist National Front. The silence has been taken to imply assent. Politically this could prove less than an asset. The Gaullists' leader, Mr Jacques Chirac, is the most vulnerable to accusations of guilt by this particular association, and the formula he chose for not committing himself came the closest to a commitment. The left wing, which had allied itself with the Communists, he said, was on shaky ground in criticising other electoral alliances...The soul searching to which this pact has given rise springs from the National Front's long history of involvement in causes popularly regarded as "fascist".

© *The Irish Times*, 15th September 1983

The 1984 European Elections

Source 3C

The prevalent mood during the weekend get together of the extreme Right National Front in Paris was one of triumph. Its leader Mr Jean Marie Le Pen was able to pride himself on the strides taken by his party since its 11 per cent score in the European election. Its emergence as an influence no longer marginal on the political scene, and his own new respectability as an elected member of the European Parliament, have encouraged open support from people previously inhibited by the disrepute into which he has been thrown by his extremely racist image. Many of his converts come from the ranks of the traditional right, primarily Gaullists...Mr Le Pen's objective of equipping himself with a solid powerbase throughout the country in good time for the next general election could well be achieved...Branches are springing up all over the country, frequently in towns where the Front had no representation...

© *The Irish Times*, 17th September 1984

Secondary Source 4

Initially (the *Front National* party's) militants had included members of previously marginalised extreme right-wing groups, including monarchists, former supporters of Vichy and of *Algérie française*, anti-Semites, students, neo-Nazis and traditionalist Catholics. Increasingly, it broadened its appeal to voters disillusioned with the existing parties. The Front national appeared to be a coalition of all those who believed that they had lost something whether it be national glory, a dominant Christian culture, security, and employment, and who wanted to apportion blame. It possessed an eloquent, energetic and rather menacing leader in Jean Marie Le Pen who constantly reiterated a relatively simple populist appeal to all those who disliked foreigners, were concerned about crime and unemployment, wanted to pay lower taxes and to re-assert French sovereignty by leaving the European Community.

Roger Price, *A Concise History of France* (Cambridge: University Press, 2005, p.427)

The 1986 Assembly Elections

Source 3D

Jean Marie Le Pen (57), leader of the National Front, appeals to the worst side of people's characters with his diatribes against coloured immigrants and allegations that the courts are soft on crime. Under a deceptively jovial exterior lurks a relentless opponent of Algerians, black Africans and other easily identifiable foreigners. True to his nationalistic convictions, Le Pen was a volunteer in a parachute regiment in the Indo-China war and ...rejoined the army for the Algerian War and is widely believed, despite his denials, to have tortured prisoners. His *Who's Who* entry describes him as an editor, in which capacity he was subjected to legal proceedings some years ago for selling records of Nazi songs. He makes a lot of noise but will not necessarily command a large vote.

© *The Irish Times*, 11th March, 1986

Source 3E



Nicholas Garland, *The Daily Telegraph*, 11th March 1986 © Telegraph Media Group Ltd

Cohabitation

Source 3F

National Assembly elections, 16 March 1986			
	Voted	Share of vote	Seats
Communists	2,663,259	9.7	35
Socialists	8,688,034	31.6	215
RPR-UDF	11,506,618	42.1	-
UDF	-	-	129
RPR	-	-	145
Front National	2,701,701	9.8	35

Table adapted from Roger Price, *A Concise History of France* (Cambridge: University Press, 2005, p.429)

Government immigration policies

Source 3G

Forced by economic reality to limit Socialist generosity towards foreigners, France yesterday announced a series of measures to search out and expel illegal immigrants...President Mitterand adopted a tone of unusual severity to address his Ministers on this subject. "Illegal immigrants must be sent back to their countries," he said, adding that "the law must be applied rigorously..."

© *The Irish Times*, 1st September 1983

Source 3H

France's nationality laws are generous - something which not only Mr Le Pen would like to see altered. Children born in France of foreign parents, both of whom were born abroad, are not born French but become so automatically at 18. This under a law dating back to 1889 [sic]. Algerian children born in France whose parents were born in Algeria before independence are French at birth - but also regarded as Algerian by Algeria. All of these are regarded as foreigners by Mr Le Pen, but the traditional right would not take their nationality away from them, although it would change the rules for those coming after.

© *The Irish Times*, 6th March, 1986

Source 3I



Nicholas Garland, *The Daily Telegraph*, 18th March 1986 © Telegraph Media Group Ltd

Secondary Source 5

In July 1986, the Chirac government adopted a resolution from the right wing coalition's proposal to frame tougher laws for immigration. It authorized the local administration to expel illegal immigrants, it reserved the right of granting automatic citizenship to the children of foreign parents, and it gave more power to the frontier police to refuse entry. In 1986, 1700 illegal immigrants were expelled from the country. However, these stringent measures couldn't effectively contain the problem.

Affan Seljuq "Cultural Conflicts: North African Immigrants in France" in *The International Journal of Peace Studies*, Vol.II, No.II, July, 1997.

Secondary Source 6

In 1986, [Charles Pasqua, Minister of the Interior] aimed to outbid Le Pen by regulations to reduce the number of immigrants and a bill to curb rights to French nationality. The initial socialist measures of 1981 to integrate clandestine immigrants had not led to an open door policy, but that was not how the FN represented the issue. Nor did Pasqua, who moved immediately to restrict access to residence permits and to return illegal immigrants to their country of origin. Under cover of night on 18 October 1986, 101 illegal immigrants from Mali were bundled on a charter plane and returned to Bamako...Opinion divided radically. A month later, Pasqua's proposals for a nationality bill deepened the issue. Children born in France to non-French parents who had been born abroad would no longer automatically have French nationality on gaining their maturity: they would have to apply for it. Civil rights organizations and *SOS Racisme* argued that it would mean eighteen year olds living in a limbo of nationality, provoking discrimination in the community. Religious opinion was alarmed. Mitterand announced his opposition.

Rod Kedward, *La Vie en Bleu: France and the French Since 1900* (London: Penguin, 2006, p.522).

The 1988 Presidential Election

During the 1988 presidential campaign, in which President Mitterand was seeking re-election, Jacques Chirac, the Prime Minister, was seen as the major opponent from the right. However, Jean Marie Le Pen was also emerging as a serious threat to Chirac's vote while Raymond Barre was also a candidate of the right. Chirac could not attack Le Pen too strongly as he might need his supporters to vote for him in the second ballot. But if he did not deal strongly with Le Pen, there was a danger that he might lose the middle ground who opposed Le Pen's racism. The first round results saw Chirac win 19.9%, Barre 16.5% and Le Pen 14.4% of the vote. This vote was seen as a sensational achievement for Le Pen, with four and a half million people supporting him. In the run off, Mitterand easily defeated Chirac, winning 54% of the vote.

Source 3J



Nicholas Garland in *The Independent*, 26th April 1988 © Nicholas Garland

Left to right above: Le Pen, Chirac, Mitterrand.

Source 3K

After the left came to power in 1981, Mr Le Pen gained a new lease of life. The economic crisis, especially in the automobile industry, which employed large numbers of immigrants in the Paris region, helped give a new appeal to Mr Le Pen's reactionary and xenophobic views....he has gone from strength to strength by forcefully exploiting three emotive themes: race, law and order and unemployment. His call to return France to the French and give French nationals priority in jobs, his support for capital punishment, and his attacks on decadence have all helped him win popular support from the communists. But Mr le Pen's skilful combination of wildly reactionary rhetoric and the ability to pose forcefully a number of fundamental issues, has won him support not only among the working class abut among the bourgeoisie. An increasing number of Le Pen voters are not extreme right-wing sympathizers but simply exasperated or disgruntled voters protesting against the existing political establishment.

© *The Irish Times* 26th April, 1988

Secondary Source 7

On the major issues of immigration and law and order, he (Le Pen) had indeed set the agenda. It seemed clear that, for the foreseeable future, the *Front National* and its leader would have a significant role to play in national politics

Roger Price, *A Concise History of France* (Cambridge: University Press, 2005, p.432)

Source 3L

For the time being Mr Le Pen is triumphant. He has been the undisputed star on all television networks during the past 24 hours, and he can now play political power broker in the second round. He has been careful not to declare his hand, postponing his decision on whether or not to support Mr Chirac... Wallowing in the limelight Mr Le Pen will try to squeeze every ounce of political capital he can from this pivotal election... he wants to exploit his national success to spread and consolidate his base at local level in the cities and provinces of France.

© *The Irish Times* 26th April, 1988

Source 3M

President Francois Mitterand and the French prime minister Jacques Chirac clashed bitterly over... terrorism... in a no holds barred televised election debate last night. In their sharpest exchange, the President drew a heated denial when he accused Mr Chirac of letting a suspected Iranian terrorist go free despite crushing evidence of his involvement in a bloody bombing spree in Paris in late 1986... Mr Mitterand (71), seen as the favourite to win the May 8th run-off for the presidency, appeared avuncular and relaxed as he traded barbs with his conservative prime minister for over two hours.

© *The Irish Times*, 29th April 1988

Questions on the sources:

1. According to Source 3A, what parties joined together with the *Front National* to contest the municipal elections in Dreux in 1983?
2. In Source 3A, what was the policy upon which the *Front National*-led alliance contested the election?
3. In Source 3A, what does the *Front National* claim will be the effect of its victory?
4. According to Source 3A, how did the victory of the right wing alliance lead to tension and conflict in Dreux?
5. In your view, what was the significance of the election result in Dreux as reported in Source 3A?
6. In Source 3B, why is the alliance of the right wing parties in Dreux referred to as “unnatural”?
7. What does Source 3B suggest is the attitude to the alliance taken by the Gaullist leader, Jacques Chirac?
8. What reason does Source 3B offer for the “soul searching” that the events in Dreux have caused?
9. What does Source 3C suggest is the reason for the *Front National*’s mood of triumph at its gathering in September 1984?
10. From what other party does Source 3C suggest the *National Front* has taken votes? What reasons does the source offer for this transfer of support to the *Front National*?
11. What evidence does Source 3C provide to suggest that Le Pen’s objective of building up a powerbase for the next general election is being achieved?
12. How does Secondary Source 4 suggest that the appeal of the *Front National* by the mid-1980s has broadened from its initial support base?

13. Is the viewpoint towards Mr Le Pen in Source 3D sympathetic or hostile?
Explain your answer.
14. What does the cartoon in Source 3E imply about President Mitterand's approach to the 1986 elections?
15. What is the significant feature of the *Front National* vote in the 1986 general election as indicated in Source 3F?
16. What evidence in Source 3G suggests that President Mitterand's attitude towards immigrants was becoming more hardline by 1983?
17. In Source 3H, what is suggested about Mr Le Pen's attitude in 1986 towards France's nationality laws?
18. What viewpoint is expressed in the cartoon in Source 3I towards President Mitterand following the 1986 elections?
19. What evidence is provided in Secondary Source 5 that the newly-elected Chirac government is moving to the right in dealing with the issue of race relations?
20. According to Secondary Source 6, how is Minister Pasqua attempting to outbid the threat to the government posed by Mr Le Pen?
21. What does Secondary Source 6 suggest was to be included in the proposed new French nationality laws as outlined in November 1986? What opposition to such laws is revealed in the source?
22. How does the cartoon in Source 3J show the dilemma faced by Mr Chirac in dealing with the threat posed to his vote in the 1988 presidential elections by Mr Le Pen? Who does the cartoon suggest will benefit from these circumstances?
23. What does Source 3K suggest is the reason that communists voted for Mr Le Pen in the 1988 election? What does the source suggest is the reason that middle class voters (the bourgeoisie) also voted for Mr Le Pen?
24. According to Secondary Source 7, on what issues did Mr Le Pen appear to have set the political agenda in France following his strong performance in the 1988 presidential elections?
25. Why does Source 3L suggest that Mr Le Pen is "triumphant" after the first round of voting in the 1988 presidential elections, even though he has not achieved enough support to contest the run-off?
26. According to Source 3M, what issue proved to be contentious between President Mitterand and Mr Chirac in the television debate prior to the presidential election run-off in 1988?

Enquiry, Step 4: What was the ‘headscarf affair’ and what impact did it have on race relations in France in the 1980s (and beyond)?

Relevant circumstances

- In October 1989, three Muslim girls from Creil in the Oise region of northern Paris were expelled from school because they wore headscarves (*foulards*), as required by their religion. A cornerstone of French society was its principle of *laïcité*, where there was a strict separation between republican institutions such as schools and religion.
- This issue generated a huge debate about the French model of *assimilation* and raised the question of whether it was possible to be French and Muslim at the same time.
- The *Haut conseil a l'integration*, set up in 1990, defended the republican model of assimilation which required immigrants to comply with the rules governing French society and to accept the republic's core values. It advocated “fusion” of Muslims into national society where difference would be respected but not exalted. This contrasted with the British model of multiculturalism, which critics stated was divisive and led to separate communities, concerned only with their own rights.
- Also in October 1989, the mayor of Montfermeil in Seine-Saint-Denis, Pierre Bernard, refused to register children of immigrant origin at the municipal nursery school. The school was located near the densely populated high-rise estate, *Les Bosquets*, where unemployment levels ran at 25% and over 80% of the 9,000 inhabitants were of immigrant origin.
- Bernard was associated with a right wing nationalist movement called *France Debout* which soon spread to over 130 towns where unemployment was an issue and immigrant communities were a source of tension.
- Tensions over the incidents at Creil and Montfermeil contributed to the victory of the FN candidate, Marie France Stirbois, at a legislative by-election at Dreux on 3 December 1989, thus building on an earlier success in the town in 1983.
- FN 1991 electoral manifesto demanded the repatriation of 3 million “immigrants” and “national preference” in the provision of employment, housing and welfare.
- In 1990/91, riots broke out in the suburbs of Mantes-la-Jolie and Vaulx-en-Velin, where young people from various ethnic backgrounds, mostly unemployed, burnt cars, ransacked shops and clashed with the police. The riots were a reminder to French society that immigrant communities were still disproportionately affected by unemployment, educational failure and derelict housing.
- Films such as *L'état des lieux* (1995) and *La Haine* (1995) revealed the extent to which a disaffected counter culture was developing in the suburbs and indicated the limitations of the French integration model.

Relevant sources

The 'headscarf affair'

Source 4A

As French children returned to school yesterday after the half term break, the national controversy over the right of Muslim girls to wear veils in secular state-run schools seemed as divisive as ever. At the Gabriel Havez College at Creil, a northern suburb of Paris with a large immigrant population, the three girls who triggered the whole affair last month were again refused admission to classes yesterday because they were wearing their scarf like *chadors*, or veils. The three-two sisters of Moroccan origin, Leila and Fatima Achaboun, aged 13 and 14, and Saimira Saidani (14), whose parents are Tunisian-had to push their way through crowds of journalists only to spend the day reading in the school library. The college's 62 staff voted overwhelmingly not to have them in class as long as they insisted on wearing their veils. Teachers all over France have been dismayed by what they see as a lack of direction in the affair from the Education Minister, Mr Lionel Jospin. While upholding the fundamental republican principle of secular education, Mr Jospin has insisted that it is more important that no child be turned away from a state school...But he has left it up to school principals to decide, on a case-by-case basis, what action they should take towards girls who show up wearing the Islamic veil.

© *The Irish Times*, 7th November 1989

Secondary Source 8

The [headscarf] incident stirred reaction in other cities in France and neighbouring European countries. In the last seven years the issue has become a topic of national debate. Madam Mitterrand, the First Lady of France, expressed her strong disapproval of the Ministry's action, saying "If today, after two hundred years of the revolution the secular schools cannot welcome all religions in France, that means there has been a setback". On the other hand, Interior Minister Charles Pasqua, speaking in the Parliament in November 1993, commented: "We must also be very vigilant and ensure that the wearing of the Islamic head scarf is not used in a deliberate and organized way to challenge the principles of secularism that govern our schools".

Affan Seljuq "Cultural Conflicts: North African Immigrants in France" in *The International Journal of Peace Studies*, Vol.II, No.II, July, 1997.

Source 4B

Dr. Mattei, [UDF candidate in Marseilles by-election to National Assembly 1989] on his election rounds, sees the project [building by the Mayor of a new mosque] as a provocation to the city's sizeable population of *pieds-noirs* - the white French administrators who retreated from Algeria after it won independence in 1962 and who make up the hard-core of the right and extreme right. "Islam is not just a religion, it's also a civil code," he said, pointing to France's current controversy over Muslim girls wearing their veils to state schools. "It's a negation of the French Civil Code". It's a position which is exploited even more forcefully by two candidates standing for the extreme right-the National Party and the little known French National Party. The National Front scored 34 per cent of the vote yesterday [in the first round], only one per cent behind Mr Mattei, with their election posters proclaiming "no to the mosque".

© *The Irish Times*, 27th November 1989

Front National gains in 1989

Source 4C

Jean Marie Le Pen is calling for all immigrants who had arrived in France since 1974 to be forcibly repatriated... The National Front leader has been quick to capitalise on the success of his party's candidate, Mrs. Marie France Stirbois, in the National Assembly by-election in Dreux last weekend. The widow of the former deputy leader of the party, Mrs Stirbois won 61.3 per cent of the vote. Many of her voters said that the current controversy over Muslim girls wearing veils in state schools prompted their support.

© *The Irish Times*, 7th December 1989

Source 4D

Mr Michel Rocard's government, which has been criticised for its vagueness in dealing with the veils-in-schools affair, finally produced policy proposals on integration yesterday. They agree that immigration is over in France, except for political refugees and the reuniting of families. The measures include extend the right (sic) to health care, demanding explanations when public housing demands are refused and speeding up the naturalisation process for those with the right to become French. But Mr Le Pen's success has forced the Socialists to prove that they are being tough against illegal and clandestine immigration. "We can't deal with all the world's misery," Mr Rocard said at the weekend, adding that 10,000 people had been expelled from France in 1988, and that the figure would be even higher in 1989. Chief among his measures announced yesterday was setting up an observatory to monitor the number of immigrants and foreigners in France. Mr Rocard says they number 4.2 million ...

© *The Irish Times*, 7th December 1989

Source 4E



Nicholas Garland, *The Independent*, 7 April 1990 © The British Cartoon Archive

Questions on the sources:

1. According to Source 4A, what view is expressed by Mr Jospin, the Minister for Education, in relation to the 'headscarf affair' in the school at Creil?
2. Why are teachers and Socialist Party members critical of Mr Jospin's actions, according to Source 4A?
3. According to Secondary Source 8, what was the reaction of the Muslim community to the expulsion of the girls in Creil?
4. How does Secondary Source 8 reveal the extent to which the 'headscarf affair' divided French political opinion?
5. According to Source 4B, what effect does Dr Mattei think the building of a new mosque in Marseille is having on the city's *pieds-noir* population?
6. According to Source 4B, why does Dr Mattei point to the 'headscarf affair' to justify his views about Islam?
7. What evidence does Source 4B offer about the strength of the *Front National* in Marseilles in 1989?
8. What has been the impact of the 'headscarf affair' for the *Front National*, according to Source 4C?
9. What action against immigrants is Mr Le Pen now calling for as a result of the *Front National*'s success at Creil, according to Source 4C?
10. What criticism is levelled against Mr Rocard's government in Source 4D in relation to the immigration issue?
11. What does Source 4D suggest is the impact on the Socialists of the *Front National*'s success at Dreux in December 1989?
12. According to Source 4D, what action is the Socialist government of Mr Rocard now planning to take on the immigration issue?
13. What seems to be the viewpoint of the cartoonist in Source 4E towards Mr Mitterand and the Socialists' response to the immigration issue in 1989 and early 1990?

The significance of race relations in France in the 1980s: some historians' views

A: Today there are about three million Muslims living in France, most of them coming from the Maghreb. There are 1,500 regular mosques... Muslims have become the second largest religious community, after the Roman Catholics. ..The growing religious awareness, the quest to retain their identity, socioeconomic disparities, French government policy regarding the Muslim world, waves of subversive activities, and last but not least, the Gulf War and its aftermath ...have posed serious challenges to the peace and stability of the Mediterranean region. French cities, especially ports where there is a sizeable immigrant population, are gradually turning into crisis areas in the contemporary European scene, challenging the peace and harmony of the region...

Affan Seljuq "Cultural Conflicts: North African Immigrants in France" in *The International Journal of Peace Studies*, Vol.II, No.II, July, 1997.

B: Although only 10 to 15 per cent of (French) Muslims are currently estimated to worship on a regular basis, amongst the young Islam offers a sense of identity. Once they would have wanted to become French. Feeling rejected, but with nowhere else to go, they have become increasingly assertive, and determined to express volubly their sympathy for terrorists associated with the attack on the Twin Towers in New York, with resistance to US forces in Iraq, and the Palestinian campaign against Israeli occupation. Roger Price, *A Concise History of France* (Cambridge: University Press, 2005, p.409)

C: It is clear in the early years of the twenty-first century that the issues raised by the question of multiculturalism cannot be adequately discussed purely with regard to France and Frenchness. The European dimensions of the issue, greatly increased by the enlargement of the EU, impose themselves...The challenge of creating a constitution for a still expanding Europe involves a new awareness of the multiculturalism deemed essential for a larger community of equal citizens. No less than decolonisation, this challenge has brought more pressure on the unitary French state, but it need not curb a discerning use of reason nor the contribution of its humanist tradition.

Rod Kedward, *La Vie en Bleu: France and the French Since 1900* (London: Penguin, 2006, p.648).

D: The rise of Islamism explains why the immigration issue...has become so central to French politics today. Old discussions about immigrant workers now concern solely Muslims or Algerians. The French justify their treatment of foreigners less on the basis of skin colour than fear that their culture threatens French civilization and identity. Muslims are frequently accused of being an alien presence, fundamentally at odds with a "host society" presented as too merciful and tolerant. Immigrants are no longer rejected as unskilled but as different, so different they cannot be assimilated. To recapture the support of voters lost to the National Front, the Chirac government (as well as its leftist opposition) has embraced harsh measures against Arab communities. It dispatches more money to the police to fight violence in the suburbs. Rather than create more jobs for young members of minority groups, the government favors more effective tools to fight social violence and terrorism. This "iron fist" policy in fact implements Le Pen's politics, just as the Socialists implemented the Right's politics in the past.

Rachid Tlemçani, "Islam in France: The French Have Themselves to Blame" in *Middle East Quarterly* March 1997, pp. 31-38.

Postscript

France win the 1998 World Cup in Paris

Record breaking crowds of up to 1.5 million...poured on to the Champs-Elysees...Young immigrants who earlier condemned the competition as entertainment for rich white people joined in the celebrations, waving tricolours and singing the Marseillaise, many for the first time. The country seemed to emerge from a long dark tunnel...Will France permanently shed its reputation for racism? Will Jean Marie Le Pen's National Front lose some of its 15% of the electorate? The winning team was, in the words of President Chirac, "tricolour and multicolour". Others called it "black white and *beur*"...Newspaper editorialists kept writing that the team's success was a rebuttal of his (Le Pen's) racist and anti-immigrant policies...One quarter of the French population has a foreign parent or grandparent, so the French football team was truly representative of France's ethnic diversity...the World Cup has boosted spirits-at least temporarily-in the immigrant *banlieues*. Youths named Mokhtar and Nourredine, interviewed by French television, said they feel they will be "more respected" in the future, that "there are no more blacks or *beurs*-it is the French who have won".

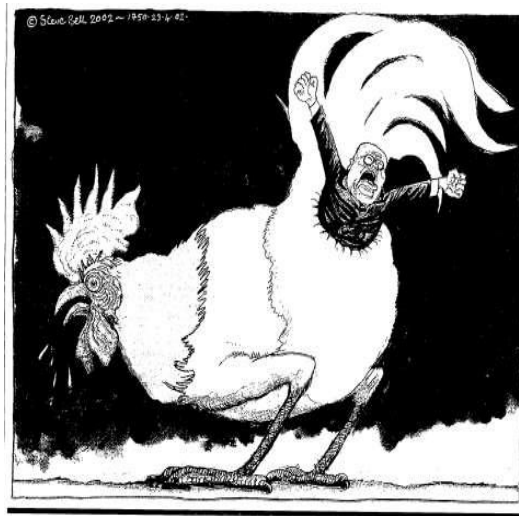
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Rioting in 2005

A full week of rioting by immigrant youths in the north eastern suburbs of Paris has revealed a profound cleavage in French society and the inability of its leadership to tackle this issue effectively. Some five or six million French citizens are immigrants from North Africa, most of them Muslim. Their effective cultural and political exclusion mocks France's official policies of assimilation and equality. It is a long standing problem that now threatens to erupt dangerously, as President Chirac acknowledged this week. Most of the suburbs involved are cut off from the rest of French society by barriers of poverty, social distance and cultural alienation. Unemployment there can reach 50 per cent, far in excess of the already high national norm. Little has been done to tackle the problem despite widespread documentation of its depth and extent...France's model of assimilation has...failed to absorb the North African immigrants who went there to work from the 1950s and some of whose children are now pitted against the riot police.

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Le Pen defeats Socialist Lionel Jospin to reach presidential run-off against Chirac in 2002



Steve Bell, *The Guardian*, 23 April 2002 © Steve Bell

Your conclusions on the enquiry



Based on the evidence you have encountered in the course of the enquiry, draw up a list of what you think are the SIX most important reasons why the issue of race relations sparked controversy and violence in France in the 1980s.

Make your case in a written report, devoting one paragraph (or more) to each of the reasons identified.

OR

Now that we have looked at a wide range of evidence on why race relations caused controversy and violence in France in the 1980s

- What do you think are the FOUR main reasons for the controversy and the violence?
- For each of the reasons you give, you must back up your reason with evidence from the primary sources (such as newspaper reports and cartoons) or secondary sources (such as extracts from the writings of historians) that we have studied.