



## Textes de section et de sous-section du parcours permanent

### Traduction Anglaise

1685

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#### **Ancien Régime France, Land of Refuge, Land of Exile**

At the end of the seventeenth century, the kingdom of France was a land of both immigration and emigration. The foreigners who settled here mostly came from neighbouring countries, driven principally by economic but also political and religious reasons. Few obtained a 'letter of naturalisation', allowing them to become subjects of the King.

The transatlantic slave trade also developed during this period. In the French possessions of the West Indies, the plantation economy was fuelled by the enslavement of African captives who survived this forced migration. In March 1685, a royal edict concerning the 'Policing of the French American Isles', known as the 'Code Noir' (Black Code), was promulgated. It synthesized nearly fifty years of regulations derived from local customs and law.

In October 1685, Louis XIV signed the Edict of Fontainebleau, which prohibited public practice of the 'so-called reformed religion', Protestantism. French Protestants -or Huguenots- were ordered to convert to Catholicism. Within two years, nearly 100,000 individuals had decided to flee to more welcoming lands in Europe as well as to the West Indies and southern Africa.

1685

Adoption of the Edict of the King concerning the 'Policing of the French American Isles', later called the Code Noir (Black Code). The Edict of Fontainebleau revokes the edict of Nantes, which had been signed in 1598 by Henry IV and had granted Protestants freedom of conscience, civil equality and limited public worship. Nearly 100,000 Huguenots flee the country.

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**1688**

Following the second English revolution, Catholic King James II goes into exile in France, together with around 35,000 English, Scottish and Irish Jacobites (supporters of the King).

**1697**

Driven by financial need, the monarchy decides to tax 'all foreigners settled in the kingdom since 1600, as well as their descendants, heirs and successors'.

**1777**

A royal declaration known as the Police des Noirs prohibits the entry of 'all Blacks, Mulattoes or other people of colour into France', with the exception of servants

### **Slavery and Trade at the Time of the Code Noir**

The transatlantic slave trade escalated in the seventeenth century, spanning Europe, Africa, the Americas and the Caribbean. In 1674, the French possessions in the West Indies became royal colonies. In 1685, an edict concerning the 'Policing of the French American Isles' –shortly thereafter called the Code Noir (Black Code)– was adopted. It institutionalised a new racial order. Between 1713 and 1791, 1 million African captives were sold as slaves and deported to the French West Indies, with more than 775,000 taken to Saint-Domingue. At the time of the French Revolution, slaves represented more than 80% of the population of the French West Indies, the rest were colonists and 'free people of colour'. The latter, freedmen or descendants of freedmen, did not have the same rights as White French

### **Exile of the Huguenots**

'One king, one law, one faith'. It was in the name of this principle that Louis XIV promulgated the Edict of Fontainebleau in 1685, thus revoking the Edict of Nantes signed by Henry IV in 1598, which had granted Protestants freedom of worship. The Huguenots (French Protestants) were ordered to convert to Catholicism. Faced with persecution (so-called 'dragonnades'), more than a quarter of their population decided to go into exile. They took refuge in the United Provinces (present-day Netherlands), Switzerland, England and Prussia. Some went as far as

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Southern Africa and the British colonies of the New World. Between 1680 and 1715, 180,000 Huguenots left France. This was the largest migratory movement of the Ancien Régime.

### **Foreigners under the Ancien Régime**

The kingdom of France attracted merchants, peddlers, peasants and craftsmen from neighbouring countries. It also employed the services of highly qualified foreign specialists: Italian artists and bankers, Dutch and Castilian merchants and shipowners, typographers and armourers from across the Rhine. Despite the restrictions imposed on foreigners, considerable inwards migration and asylum characterised France's absolutist monarchy. At the end of the seventeenth and into the eighteenth century, many exiles sought refuge in the kingdom, including the English, Scottish and Irish Jacobites, supporters of Catholic King James II. Driven out by the Glorious Revolution, they fled along with their monarch to the safety of France

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**1789**

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### **Foreigners in the French Revolution**

Foreigners were present at all three levels of Ancien Régime society (clergy, nobility, third estate). Nonetheless, they did not have the same rights as subjects of the king born in France, otherwise known as *régnicoles*. In 1789, the French Revolution established political citizenship, based on the recognition of new civil and political rights. Foreigners, who were granted freedom of expression and assembly, did not have the right to vote. They could, however, become French citizens: the French Revolution simplified their conditions of access to naturalisation and the exercise of public functions.

In this revolutionary context, nearly 150,000 French ‘émigrés’, supporters of the monarchy or fearing for their lives, fled the country. From their places of exile, many plotted against the Revolutionary government, hoping to restore the old regime. They would later be deprived of their civic rights and stripped of their property.

At the end of the eighteenth and into the nineteenth century, other types of migration continued linking mainland France to the colonies. At the height of the transatlantic slave trade, many colonists headed to France or the Americas following the slave revolt in Saint-Domingue (1791) and the first abolition of slavery (1794). Shifting European borders due to the Napoleonic wars led, under the First Empire (1804–1815) and through the beginning of the Restoration (1815–1830), to intra-continental migrations involving French conscripts, foreign soldiers, prisoners of war, political exiles and workers from neighbouring countries.

**1789**

Adoption of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. Emigration abroad of those opposed to the French Revolution or those fleeing its troubles begins.

**1791**

Revolt in Saint-Domingue leads to the abolition of slavery in the colony two years later, then across the entire French territory in February 1794.

**1793**

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As the Republic faces threats from inside and out, measures of surveillance and exclusion target foreigners, considered to be 'suspects'.

## 1802

Amnesty for French 'émigrés'. Napoleon Bonaparte, self-proclaimed First Consul, reinstates slavery in the colonies.

## 1804

Adoption of the Napoleonic Code: French nationality emphasises right of blood (paternal filiation) and increases the period of residence required to be eligible for naturalisation to ten years

## Foreigners and the Birth of Political Citizenship

With the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (August 1789), subjects of the king became citizens. Foreigners, formerly known as '*aubains*', '*forains*' or '*horsains*', had until then been required to abide by certain civil and political restrictions. As of April 1790, however, they could obtain the status of French citizen, provided they took the civic oath and had resided continuously in the country for five years. Foreigners became involved in government and the new forms of civil sociability (revolutionary festivals, political clubs). However, in the spring of 1793, due to the war against the European monarchies, they were placed under surveillance and subjected to exclusionary measures. The Montagnard Constitution of 24 June 1793, which never came into force, symbolically recognised the asylum given to the defenders of liberty

## The Saint-Domingue Revolution

In 1791, a slave revolt in the French colony of Saint-Domingue (now Haiti) turned into a revolution. It led, for various reasons, to large-scale migrations to the Caribbean and North America. These movements comprised White settlers, Black slaves brought by force by their masters and 'free people of colour' (freed former slaves and their descendants). Between 1791 and 1815, 15,000 people fled Saint-Domingue for Louisiana. In the hopes of winning the revolting slaves over to the Republican cause, slavery was abolished in Saint-Domingue in 1793, a decision extended to all of France the following year. However, in 1802, Napoleon Bonaparte re-

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established slavery and 'people of colour' were no longer permitted to bear the title of French citizen.

### **Workers and Exiles**

Napoleonic France continued to welcome foreigners after the Coup of 18-19 Brumaire (9-10 November 1799) and the proclamation of the First Empire (18 May 1804). The Civil Code redefined the conditions for obtaining citizenship, with foreigners now required to have resided in the country for at least ten years. In practice, few people requested and were granted naturalisation, as this meant they also needed to fulfil military obligations. Most foreigners instead preferred the intermediate residency permit (*admission à domicile*) created by the Civil Code, which conferred, for a limited duration, civil rights. Migrations flows continued under the Restoration: in the first half of the nineteenth century, France had the highest intake of migrants of any country in Europe.

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**1848**

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### **Emigrants, Exiles, Colonisers and Colonised**

Under the July Monarchy (1830–1848), the reception of foreigners in France markedly changed. The liberal revolution of the *les Trois Glorieuses* (July 27–29) led to the arrival of thousands of European political exiles (mainly Poles fleeing Russian repression). In 1832, a new law established the administrative category of ‘refugees’, a delimited group of foreigners more closely monitored than others.

The Revolution of February 1848 put an end to the monarchy and the Second Republic adopted male suffrage. The conditions for naturalisation were relaxed. For the first time, in 1851, foreigners were counted in the population census. They became involved in the cultural life of the country, and politically engaged in the insurrections and revolutions that marked the nineteenth century.

The year 1848 also saw increasing migrations towards the colonies. The invasion of Algeria in 1830 was followed by a fumbling and bloody colonisation of the country. After the defeat of Emir Abdelkader, the Second Republic divided northern Algeria into three departments. The state encouraged French settlers to come, but most who arrived were from the islands and poor regions of the Mediterranean. It was also to Algeria that the Republic, which had become conservative after the summer of 1848, tried to deport its undesirables. Attempts at penal colonisation were, however, largely unsuccessful.

**1832**

In March 1832 adoption of a first law on ‘refugees’, which generalises their confinement to specific centres, set up in provinces far from the capital.

**1848**

Second Republic: granting of the right to vote to male citizens and the second abolition of slavery in the colonies.

Transformation of northern Algeria into French departments (Algiers, Constantine, Oran); French and European migration towards this colony is encouraged.

**1851**

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Adoption of double jus soli: children born in France to at least one parent born in France are born French, though upon reaching the age of majority they can renounce this citizenship.

For the first time, the population census counts foreigners, who make up 1% of the population.

2 December: *coup d'état* staged by Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, forcing some 10,000 French republicans into exile.

## 1871

Many foreigners participate in the Paris Commune insurrection against the government of Adolphe Thiers, which in turn takes harsh repressive action. Nearly 4,000 Communards are deported to New Caledonia, joining the 2,000 Algerians expelled after the uprisings of 1864 and 1871

### **Foreign Refugees: Emergence of an Administrative Category**

After the July Revolution in Paris in 1830, thousands of exiles headed towards France. More than 7,000 foreigners were granted refugee status and financial aid. The government gathered these foreign refugees in provincial towns in barracks called '*dépôts*', a good distance from the capital and external borders.

The revolutions of the 'spring of the people' marked the year 1848. After the proclamation of the Republic in February, famous expelled foreigners, such as Karl Marx, returned or went to France. The new regime granted naturalisation more liberally. However, starting the following year, the Republic, which had become conservative, restricted reception conditions.

### **Political and Cultural Implications**

In the first half of the nineteenth century, foreigners participated in the flourishing cultural life of the Romantic period. Even though they did not have political rights, they still contributed to intellectual debates, particularly through the press. In 1849, the Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz founded *La Tribune des peuples* (The People's Tribune), a newspaper run by a cosmopolitan editorial staff. The involvement of foreigners also took less peaceful forms. Among those who fought behind the barricades set up by the Communards in the spring of 1871 were



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the Polish general Jaroslaw Dombrowski, the Russian activist Elisabeth Dmitrieff and the Hungarian jeweller Leo Frankel.

### **More Visible Foreigners**

In 1844, *Les Étrangers à Paris* (Foreigners in Paris) was published, an illustrated serial that highlighted the variety of foreigners living in or passing through the capital. These included, among others, a wealthy English traveller, a young chimney sweep from Savoy (then possession of the kingdom of Sardinia), and a Spanish exile. Foreigners, now more widely represented in the literature, gained visibility. In March 1851, they were counted for the first time in the national census. They made up 1% of the country's population; a figure that rose to 6% in Paris. New methods of control were imposed: individual forms for refugees and residence permits for foreigners wishing to settle in the large cities.

### **Second Abolition of Slavery**

Defined as an 'attack on human dignity', the decree of 27 April 1848 abolished slavery for the second time in the French colonies. Those who continued to engage in the slave trade or who acquired new slaves risked losing 'their status as French citizens'. Civil and civic rights were granted to the freed slaves of the 'old colonies' (Guadeloupe, Guyana, Martinique, Reunion and Senegal), though their mobility remained highly controlled.

To replace slave labour, plantations resorted massively to a system of 'indentured servitude'. Often in debt, African and Asian 'servants' (*engagés*) signed draconian work contracts to join the French colonies, where they were forced to remain.

New statutes appeared in the colonies that had not been founded on slavery, such as French Algeria. In 1881, a law defined an exceptional legal regime that governed the 'natives' (*indigènes*). A true mark of colonial domination, the Native Code (*Code de l'indigénat*) was applied in many parts of the Empire.

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**1889**

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### **From Foreigners to Immigrants**

Under the Third Republic, the citizenship law of 26 June 1889 institutionalized double *jus soli*, granting citizenship automatically and without right of renunciation to those born of individuals born in France.

There were two motives for this law. In mainland France, the aim was to prevent French children born of foreign parents from refusing French nationality so as to avoid a five-year military service, later reduced to three. In Algeria, French colonists feared being outnumbered by European foreigners. The law accordingly provided that their descendants automatically became French when they came of age.

Immigration to France continued in the late nineteenth century. The majority of these inflows consisted of Belgian and Italian workers who came to fill the ‘manpower shortage’. During this same period, the entire world was experiencing a long economic crisis. In France, this led to a rise in xenophobic sentiments: foreigners were the subject of hostile pamphlets and collective violence. Beginning in the 1880s-90s, the presence of foreign labourers was seen as a problem. The figure of the immigrant, together with the Jew –even when French, such as Captain Alfred Dreyfus– became the scapegoat par excellence.

**1881**

The number of foreigners living in France represents nearly 2.7% of the total population, or more than one million people.

**1889**

Double *jus soli* becomes compulsory with the nationality law of 26 June 1889.

**1893**

Nationalist writer Maurice Barrès publishes a pamphlet titled *Contre les étrangers* (Against foreigners).

Massacre in Aigues-Mortes, where Frenchmen kill at least a dozen Italian labourers working the salt marshes.

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Adoption of a law 'concerning the sojourn of foreigners in France and the protection of national labour'. All foreigners who come to work must make a declaration of residence.

**1901**

Italians are the largest foreign community in France, ahead of Belgian

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## **Labour and Immigration**

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, immigration to France gained new momentum. According to the 1881 census, more than one million foreigners were living in the country. In the mills, mines and industrial towns of the North, there was a substantial Belgian (mostly Flemish) presence. Immigrant workers were also numerous in Paris, especially on the vast building sites launched by the prefect Haussmann to modernise the capital. Italians took part in railway construction in southwest France or worked in commerce or other services. Parallel to the arrival of these low-skilled labourers, an influx of elites from Europe or further afield continued. Work, union involvement and the republican school system offered immigrants and their children powerful means of integration.

## **Xenophobic and Anti-Semitic Crisis**

The distinction between foreigners on the one hand, and on the other, French citizens who were granted political and social rights, became more pronounced at the beginning of the Third Republic. Xenophobic and anti-Semitic ideas gained traction in the public realm. At the same time, foreigners were readily equated with the 'enemy from within.' Allegedly scientific theories fed racist sentiments.

Working class anti-Belgian riots multiplied in the north, as well as in Lens in 1892. Meanwhile, numerous acts of violence were committed against Italians, culminating in the Aigues-Mortes salt-marsh massacre in 1893. Eight Italian workers were killed according to the official report, though this number was indubitably much higher. The assassination of President Sadi Carnot the following year by the anarchist Sante Caserio reinforced prejudice against Italians as criminal and dangerous.

## **Crossing and Emigrations**

France was, at the end of the nineteenth century, the largest receiving country in terms of immigration in Europe, but it was also a country of transit and departure. More and more Europeans undertook transatlantic migrations: 38 million people headed for the Americas between 1881 and 1914. Starting in the mid-nineteenth century, steamship departures from Le Havre were announced in the newspapers of all the major emigration centres. The law of 1855 addressed the transit of emigrants to America by creating a body of 'special commissioners in

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charge of emigration'. For a long time, Le Havre was the most important port of departure. The city was associated with the *Compagnie Française Maritime*, renamed *the Compagnie Générale Transatlantique* (known overseas as the French Line) in 1864. By 1887, however, Marseille had become the primary French port for emigrants seeking to reach the Americas.

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**1917**

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### **From the Great War to the 1920s**

The First World War dramatically altered the circumstances of foreigners. Beginning in August 1914, they were subjected to heightened surveillance. The state controlled their movements, passports with visas were reintroduced and residence permits became compulsory. Nationals of enemy powers were made to immediately leave the country or otherwise interned. Citizens of neutral countries, such as Italians and Spaniards also left, pushed out by the government and xenophobic pressure.

Nonetheless, due to the war, the country needed foreigners. On the frontlines as in the hinterland, the conflict was a time of intense movement. For four years, soldiers and labourers, foreigners and colonials, willingly or not, crossed paths in mainland France. This new diversity profoundly affected French society. The state became heavily involved in the recruitment, administration and control of immigrants. In April 1917, it created an identity card for foreigners, which would become a lasting and central tool in migration policies once peace was restored.

The violence that characterised the aftermath of the war in Europe triggered substantial refugee migration, particularly to France. In order to meet reconstruction needs and address the demographic deficit caused by the conflict, the government called upon foreign labour. It signed international conventions and organised collective recruitments with the support of employers. Meanwhile, old migration routes based on contact networks continued to function.

**1914**

The declaration of war prompts large-scale population movements. Enemy nationals have two days to leave the country. Foreigners from neutral countries are pushed to leave, while a large number of Belgian refugees arrive.

**1917**

Creation by decree of an identity card 'to be used by foreigners' that authorises and regulates their residence in France. Soon after, a second decree specifies the status of 'foreign and colonial worker'.

**1924**

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Founded by the French patronat (employers), the Immigration National Society organises collective recruitments of foreign workers. From 1924 to 1930, it brings nearly 450,000 men and women to France to work in industrial, mining and agricultural activities.

### **1927**

The law of 10 August makes obtaining French citizenship easier. Three years of residence now suffice to apply. French women who marry a foreigner retain their nationality. For the first time, the administrative procedure entails an assessment of the 'degree of assimilation'. The number of naturalisations increases sharply

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## **Foreigners and Colonials in War Effort**

In 1914, 43,000 foreigners enlisted and fought for France, such as the Italians who formed the Garibaldi Legion within the French army. Half a million soldiers across the colonial empire were mobilised.

Faced with a labour shortage during the war, the government recruited 500,000 workers from the colonies, China and other foreign countries. Agreements signed with several European states guaranteed rights to the newly arrived foreigners. Colonial workers were, in contrast, relegated to unskilled jobs, according to racial criteria. Subjected to a military discipline, cut off from the population and highly monitored, some went on strike, fled or revolted.

### **Lazare Ponticelli - An Italian Soldier who Fought for France**

Lazare Ponticelli, born into a poor Italian farming family of seven children, left home alone at the age of nine, in 1907, to seek a new life in France. He settled in Nogent, near Paris, and when the war broke out he and his brother, Céleste, enlisted in the French army. They were assigned to a unit of Italian soldiers known as the 'Garibaldi Legion'. When Italy entered the war on the side of France in 1915, Céleste was exempted but Lazare was drafted into the Italian army. Wounded in battle, Ponticelli received numerous military decorations for his bravery. After the war, he and his brothers founded a successful metalwork company. Naturalised in 1939, Ponticelli died in 2008 at the age of 110, going down in history as the 'last of the Poilus'.

### **The Surveillance of Foreigners**

In 1917, the state created an identity card for foreigners, equivalent to a residence permit, and a worker's card for foreigners and colonials. After the war, these were replaced by a single, compulsory card, making it possible to identify and control the entry, residence and work of foreigners.

Beginning in 1922, stateless Russian and then Armenian refugees were granted travel and identity certificates, introduced by the League of Nations at the initiative of the Norwegian diplomat Fridtjof Nansen. Known as the 'Nansen passport', it conferred a civil status to its holder as well as the possibility of traveling in a world increasingly governed by papers.



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The creation of these two documents led to the development of two administrations: prefectures for identity cards, and refugee offices, organized by nationality, that worked in the name of the League of Nations, in conjunction with the French authorities.

### **Melkon Bedrossian - The Long Journey of an Armenian Orphan**

Melkon Bedrossian (1906–1990) was born in Cilicia in the Ottoman Empire. His father died in 1909 in the Cilicia Massacres, perpetrated by the Young Turk regime. In 1915, at the time of the genocide, Melkon Bedrossian and his family were deported to the Syrian deserts. Separated from his mother and older sister, whom he never heard from again, Bedrossian was interned in the orphanage of Aïntoura (Lebanon), where Armenian children were ‘Turkified’ and converted by force. He escaped in 1918 and managed to reach Greece. He was fifteen years old. Stateless, forbidden to return to Turkey like all the survivors of the genocide, Bedrossian obtained an employment contract in France in 1923. After working a series of jobs, he settled in the Paris area, bringing two of his sisters with him. Mobilised in 1939, he was wounded in a bombing. He became a naturalised French citizen after the Second World War.

### **Nicolas & Adèle Vorontzoff - Russian Lives in the Early 20th Century**

Nicolas Vorontzoff was born in Kiev in 1904 and followed in the footsteps of his military family. His studies at the officer training school were, however, interrupted by the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 that overthrew the Tsar. The British, allies of the White Army opposed to the Revolution, moved the military establishment to Egypt, where Vorontzoff continued his education.

Having been exposed to French language and culture, like many Russians during this period, he went to France in 1923, with a stateless status. Within the large Russian community of Paris, he married Adèle Reznikoff in 1926, a young woman from a family of landowners driven out by the revolution, exiled in France since 1922.

### **Immigrant Workers after the War**

In France, World War I resulted in 1.4 million deaths. To fill the gap in manpower, the government signed a convention with Poland in 1919, then with other European countries to

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recruit workers. Starting in 1924, the Immigration National Society, created by employers' organisations, took charge of mass recruitments, without any real oversight on the part of the state. Candidates were first medically examined, tested and selected in gathering stations like the one in Myslowice, Poland, and then directed to camps in France, such as that in Toul. Identified and photographed upon arrival, they were subsequently sent to work in industry, mining or agriculture. Meanwhile, traditional migratory channels, based on local or family networks, remained active, particularly among Italians and Polish Jews.

### **Collective Portrait of a Diverse France**

By the early 1930s, foreigners and people from the colonies had become a notable presence in the public space. Cultural production, religious practices, sporting events, commerce and political engagement reinforced community expressions. In the northern mining camps, the Poles reconstituted 'mini-homelands', bound by strong identity ties. In the big cities, certain neighbourhoods changed radically in appearance. These close-knit communities offered a haven for foreigners, though they did not prevent either an openness to French society or a quiet assimilation, particularly among children of the second generation.

### **Agostino & Emilia Prandi - An Italian Family in Montreuil**

Agostino Francesco Prandi was born in 1887 in the Italian Piedmont. He and his wife Emilia Miglio and their two children, Maria Margherita and Luigi, emigrated to France in late 1920 for economic reasons. The family settled in the eastern suburbs of Paris where Agostino worked as a coachman for the Chaptal tannery in Montreuil, while Emilia toiled as a mattress maker at home.

Luigi, who became Louis, continued his education at a boys' school and then began an apprenticeship before becoming a cabinetmaker. In 1934, he married Andrée Chavinier, whose family was originally from the Cantal and Côte d'Or departments. Louis became a naturalised French citizen in 1936

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**1931**

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### **A Time of Crisis**

By 1931, 2.7 million foreigners made up 7% of the nation's population. Most came from other European countries, Italy and Poland in particular. Nationals from the French colonies were fewer in number and strictly monitored. In May, the opening of the International Colonial Exhibition in Paris celebrated the Empire. Palais de la Porte Dorée was expressly built for the fair, and its décor bears testimony to the colonial fervour of the time.

This same year also marked the beginning of a decade of crises: economic, social, political. Faced with rising unemployment, protection of the national workforce became a priority. Under pressure from the middle classes, an arsenal of legal provisions limited foreigners' access to the labour market and prohibited them from certain professions. Many were deprived of employment and thus also valid papers, and forced to leave the country, repatriated, or expelled. Pre-existing xenophobia and anti-Semitism fuelled this protectionism, exacerbated by the arrival of numerous Jewish refugees fleeing Nazism. At the most senior level of government, some authorities tried to impose a hierarchy of foreigners based on origins, deemed to be more or less 'desirable'.

In 1936, the parliamentary victory of the Popular Front represented a fragile improvement. For a short time, solidarity seemed to prevail, but soon international tensions and the arrival of new refugees aggravated divisions within French society. In 1938, the Daladier decrees ushered in a period of unprecedented repression of foreigners and threatened the tradition of asylum.

**1931**

Nearly 2,500 labourers of all origins and nationalities work on the construction of the pavilions of the International Colonial Exhibition, including Palais de la Porte Dorée. Inaugurated in May, the fair marks the symbolic apogee of la plus grande France (the greatest France) and the Empire.

**1932**

The law of 10 August limits the number of foreigners authorised to work in France. In the years that follow, nearly 700 decrees detail its application.

**1936**

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The Spanish Civil War begins and the first exiles arrive; the poorest receive material assistance. Refugees from Germany are granted conditional international protection. They can be deported in the name of public order, and their access to the labour market remains very limited.

### **1938**

The decree-laws issued under the leadership of Prime Minister Édouard Daladier heighten the control and surveillance of foreigners; avoiding infringement of the rules becomes increasingly difficult and violations are sometimes severely punished.

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### **Public Order and Political Surveillance**

Foreigners and migrants from the colonies were closely monitored. In Paris, all foreigners were required to register formally with the Paris Prefecture of Police. Imported foreign political conflicts, a fear of communism and several high-profile attacks fuelled the denunciation of '*metèques*' (pejorative term for foreigner) and 'troublemakers'. The expulsion of activists increased. Nationalist leagues such as the extreme right thrived on this breeding ground and gave free rein to xenophobia and anti-Semitism. On the left, the League of Human Rights mobilised to safeguard the rule of law, though parties and unions did not always resist the temptation of turning inwards.

### **Economic Crisis and National Preference**

With the crisis, protectionism became the rule. A 1932 law limited foreigners' access to the labour market. Driven by distrust of the Republic and hostility towards '*metèques*' (pejorative term for immigrant), the middle classes mobilised against foreign competition. Doctors and lawyers imposed a professional ban on non-nationals and recently naturalised citizens. Artisans and then merchants obtained the submission of foreigners to a worker's identity card regime. Yet, those who lost their job often also lost their compulsory identity card, and therefore their right to remain. Many redundancies led to refoulement and repatriations, on top of the voluntary departures of those who had been forced into illegality.

### **Short-Lived Solidarity**

In the spring of 1936, the Popular Front united French, foreign and colonial workers, in strikes and demonstrations. On the left, parties and unions mobilised to help and welcome German and Spanish refugees. This solidarity was, however, short-lived.

The government did not cease protectionism or expulsions, though it did demonstrate a certain degree of liberalism in their application. In 1937, foreigners were involved in a series of crimes and attacks, leading to a stiffening of public opinion. Hitler's demands, the rise of dictatorships and the arrival of new refugees further divided the country. In 1938, after the fall of the Popular Front, the Daladier decrees ushered in a period of uncertainty, threat and precariousness for foreigners.

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## **France, Colonial Empire**

Strengthened by its victory over Germany in 1918 but weakened by the deaths of WWI, inter-war France viewed the empire as a key means of maintaining its position as a leading world power. The government equated the imperial possessions with a reservoir of manpower and raw materials. '*La plus grande France*' (The greatest France) became one of the slogans of the 1931 International Colonial Exhibition. The downfall of the Ottoman Empire pushed the country to strategically present itself as a 'Muslim power' in diplomatic relations. Overseas, France paid numerous leaders of Islamic institutions (schools, courts, mosques, etc.) in an effort to control them.

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**1940**

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### **Foreigners and the Persecuted in Time of War**

In early 1939, as the Republic neared its end, the government granted asylum to Spaniards in mass exodus from the civil war, and to refugees trying to escape the Nazi regime. In September, when the war started, colonial soldiers, stateless people and asylum beneficiaries were mobilised. Some foreigners enlisted on the side of France while others, treated as enemies or undesirables, were interned. The military collapse of 1940 led to the occupation of part of the country and the fall of the Republic, replaced by Vichy France. In the span of a few months, the old order was swept away. The French State and the German occupation imposed new divides.

The rights of naturalized French citizens were reduced and their status threatened. In keeping with the anti-Semitic rhetoric of the 1930s, a legal partition now radically separated Jews from non-Jews. Starting in 1942, the Nazis planned and carried out the extermination of Jews in occupied Europe. In its xenophobic and anti-Semitic policy of collaboration, Vichy was complicit in this crime. Round-ups and deportations, especially of children, gradually shifted public opinion and led to rescue operations.

In 1944, foreigners and colonised people, resistance fighters and army conscripts took part in the Liberation. Amidst the chaos that followed German surrender, France found itself at the heart of a maelstrom of movement that changed the face of migration. The Empire also evolved: the French Union, created in 1946, transformed institutional frameworks; a series of uprisings challenged the colonial order. With the re-establishment of republican legality, new legal texts defined foreigners' conditions of access to nationality, entry and residence. The state took charge of the recruitment of foreign labour, essential to reconstruction.

**1940**

Implementation of an anti-Semitic policy that excludes Jews from the nation: German ordinances in the occupied zone; Vichy revision of naturalisations, creation of the status of Jews and abolition of the Crémieux decree, which had given Algerian Jews French citizenship since 1870.

**1942**

Ordered by the Nazis and carried out by the French police, the Vélodrome d'Hiver roundup mainly targets stateless Jews and their children. On 16 and 17 July 1942, Vichy France arrests

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12,884 people: 3,031 men, 5,802 women and 4,051 children under the age of 16, almost all of whom were French and handed over to the Nazis before even being requested to do so

### **1943**

After the French, foreigners are involuntarily deported to serve as labourers in Germany. The Nazi occupying forces also recruit, willingly or by force, foreigners and colonials to work in France on the construction sites and companies under its control.

### **1945**

Two ordinances of the Provisional Government of the Republic redefine nationality, entry and residence conditions for foreigners. They mark a re-establishment of 'republican legality' on immigration matters and, controversially, rule out decisions based on ethnic background



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## **The End of the Republic**

In Spain in late January 1939, the fall of Barcelona sealed Republican defeat and heralded Franco's victory. An exodus followed –the Retirada (or withdrawal)– leading France to open its border. More than 475,000 Spanish refugees, civilians and then soldiers, crossed into the country in less than three weeks. Almost all women and children were evacuated to shelters, while men were interned in hastily built camps, watched over by the army and subjected to an extremely strict regime.

In September, after entering the war against the Reich, France decided to intern Germans and Austrians living on its soil as 'enemies', including anti-Nazi refugees. After numerous releases during the winter, the arrests resumed in May, at the time of the German offensive. Until then spared, women were now also targeted. The camps became a trap: the Armistice agreement of June 1940 saw the handing over of interned anti-Nazi refugees at the request of the German occupying authorities.

## **Henri Radogowski - Polish military volunteer**

Icek Herz Radogowski (1908–1991) was born into a Jewish family in Pabianiz, Poland. In 1937, he joined his brother and sister who were working in Argenteuil as tailors and changed his name to Henri. On 27 November 1939, he enlisted in the Polish army reconstituted on French soil after the invasion of Poland by Nazi Germany, and served as a master corporal in the 3rd infantry regiment. He was captured on 20 June 1940 in Lunéville and interned in the Hayange camp of Stalag IX-B until his liberation by the Americans on 22 April 1945.

Upon his return to Argenteuil, Radogowski learned that his brother and sister had been deported in February 1943 and killed. He resumed his job as a tailor, eventually married and had a daughter.

## **Persecution and Extermination**

Beginning in 1940, Vichy and the Nazi occupiers implemented anti-Semitic policies, using various different means respectively. Under the French State, these doubled as xenophobic measures: internment of foreigners of the 'Jewish race', revision of the naturalisation law, and forced labour in units called 'foreign worker groups' (*groupements de travailleurs étrangers*).

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From 1942 onwards, the Nazis' genocidal policy targeted all Jews. In the name of collaboration, Vichy put the power of the state in service of this crime. Antisemitic and xenophobic, the regime chose to first hand over stateless people, foreigners and their children, many of whom were French. After the invasion of the unoccupied zone in November 1942, repression of the Jews was no longer differentiated according to nationality. Foreigners –less well integrated and the first to be sacrificed– were the hardest hit: 40% of foreign Jews and 16% of French Jews were deported and killed.

### **Gisèle, Abel & Serge Bac - A Jewish family's journey through persecution**

On 24 September 1942, 1,574 Romanian Jews were arrested in Paris. That day, the French police went to the home of Gisèle (Zysla or Ziala) Bac, at 146 rue Ordener. Born in Grojek (Poland), she was married Serge Bac, a Jew from the town of Bender in the Russian Empire, annexed to Romania in 1918. Settled in Paris in 1928, Serge joined a regiment of foreign volunteers at the beginning of the war. He was taken prisoner in 1940 and held captive in Fürstenberg-sur-Oder (Germany). He was protected from persecution by the Geneva Convention, but as a Jew suffered harassment and discrimination.

In Paris, Gisèle Bac lived with their son Abel, French and not yet four years old. That day, on 24 September, he and his mother were taken to the camp at Drancy. The following morning, both were deported in convoy n°37 and perhaps separated: the child is recorded, alone, on a list drawn up at the last minute. Abel and Gisèle Bac were killed upon their arrival at Auschwitz-Birkenau.

### **Rescues, Resistances and Military Engagements**

Foreigners and colonials fought the German occupying forces in all sorts of clandestine ways, but their engagement was especially evident in the armed struggle. Within the Resistance, their national and political leanings could sometimes be divisive. Nonetheless, the struggle against a common enemy was a unifying factor, bringing them closer not only to one another but also to the French.

Military enlistments, within the Free French forces as well as the regular army, also built a shared history. Yet, neither the heroes of the '*Affiche Rouge*' (Red Poster), the Spanish fighters of the 2nd Armoured Division nor the colonial soldiers of the First Army sufficed to dispel mistrust

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among the French. After the war, colonial order continued its harsh governance. Foreigners were integrated, but quietly, without any recognition of the injustices suffered in the 1930s.

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**1962**

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### **Reconstruction, Decolonisation and Migration**

In the immediate post-war period, the number of foreigners in France fell significantly (some returned and some were naturalised) yet a new migratory cycle soon began: from 1947 to 1975, foreigners doubled in number, growing from 1.7 to 3.4 million. Initially, this largely consisted of a low-skilled labour force who participated in the reconstruction of France and economic growth during the country's 'thirty glorious' post-war boom years, (Les Trente Glorieuses). Then, in the context of the Cold War, refugees fleeing communist countries or dictatorships sought asylum in France.

Algeria's independence on 3 July 1962, after eight years of war, was also the cause of a vast migratory movement: one million French citizens returned (80% of whom arrived in 1962). It was a mass exodus unlike anything the country had ever seen. In the aftermath of the gaining of independence across Africa, France's attitude towards its former colonised people, now called 'immigrant workers', remain ambivalent. Mistrust persisted, though there was also a willingness to distinguish them from ordinary foreigners, and even guarantee them specific rights. European immigration, even undocumented, was still nevertheless preferred.

Foreigners became ever more visible: their precarious living conditions (shanty towns or unsanitary housing) triggered new solidarity and mobilisations.

**1962**

Independence of Algeria. Mass exodus of more than 800,000 French and Europeans who leave Algeria to settle in metropolitan France (the 'repatriates').

**1963**

Creation of the Office for Migration from the Overseas Departments - Reunion, Guadeloupe and Martinique (BUMIDOM). Dissolved in 1981.

**1963–1965**

Bilateral labour agreements with Morocco, Portugal, Tunisia and Yugoslavia.

**1965**

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The Champigny-sur-Marne shantytown reaches its maximum size with nearly 15,000 inhabitants, the vast majority of whom are Portuguese.

### **Algerian Independence**

5 July 1962 was a day of celebration in many neighbourhoods across major French cities where many Algerians lived, after eight years of war and 132 years of colonisation, Algeria had gained independence. More than nine million 'French Muslims' were encouraged to become Algerians. At the same time, nearly one million Europeans fled Algeria and headed to France. Only a small minority of the 400,000 Algerians residing in France at the time opted for French nationality. The Algerian immigrant community, heavily involved in the struggle for independence, not only suffered years of police repression but was also marked by deep divisions.

### **Decolonisation**

The Colonial Exhibition of 1931 had showcased 'the greatest France'. With decolonisation, the empire of 100 million inhabitants shrank to a 'metropolitan France' and a few overseas departments and territories. Between 1954 and 1975, tens of millions of people, hitherto French subjects (even if few had enjoyed full citizenship) acquired new nationalities: Vietnamese, Algerian, Comorian, etc. Europeans were 'repatriated' from Indochina in 1954, from Egypt in 1956 and from North Africa between 1955 and 1962. Local auxiliaries, whether civilian or military, struggled to find their place in these population transfers and experienced a particularly difficult welcome.

### **Fodé Kaba - Guinean Student in France at the Time of African Independences**

Fodé Kaba was a student in France when Guinea gained independence in 1958. From one day to the next, he became a foreigner. In addition to the material consequences of this change, there were hostile reactions. In fact, the new Guinean president, Sékou Touré, refused to join the Franco-African community proposed by General de Gaulle.

Eager to participate in the construction of his country, Kaba returned to Guinea in 1968, accompanied by his French wife and their daughter. Eyed with suspicion and unable to adapt to the harshness of the regime, the family quickly gave up the idea of settling there. Kaba, prohibited from leaving, had to use false papers to get out of the country. He returned to France

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where he rapidly obtained citizenship. Kaba returned to Guinea once clandestinely in 1983 and then, after the death of Sékou Touré (1984), for holidays.

### ***O Salto, Portuguese Immigration***

Released in 1967, the film *O Salto* ('The Leap') recounts the exile of Portuguese nationals who, fleeing conscription and the colonial wars, clandestinely crossed the Spanish and French borders. From 1964 onwards, these illegal entries, disapproved of by the Salazar dictatorship, were tolerated by France and facilitated by a regularisation process upon immigrants' arrival at Hendaye station. Migrations organised under a labour agreement with Portugal added to these influxes. The French authorities sought, in this way, to encourage Portuguese settlement. From the late 1950s to the mid-1970s, the number of Portuguese in France rose from 20,000 to 750,000, and they became the largest foreign community in the country.

### **José Baptista de Matos - Journey of a Portuguese worker**

José Baptista de Matos was born in Portugal in 1934. Living under the pressures of the dictatorial New State (Estado Novo; 1933–1974), in the early 1960s he decided to go into exile out of concern for the future of his children. He left for France alone on a tourist visa in 1963 and first found refuge in the shantytown of Champigny-sur-Marne, home to more than 10,000 Portuguese migrants. A few years later, he managed to bring his wife and children. Hired in the public works sector, José became a technical manager for the RATP (Paris Transport Authority) and devoted 30 years of his life to the metro and rapid transit (RER) building sites.

### **Stokers of Growth**

Beginning in the mid-1950s, France experienced a period of strong economic growth. Industry was all the more in need of labour due to the hundreds of thousands of conscripts drafted into the Algerian war. Spontaneous migration, particularly from Italy and Algeria, was no longer sufficient to meet the need for temporary workers. In this context, labour agreements were signed with several countries such as Morocco, Yugoslavia and Portugal starting in the early 1960s. In contrast to the children of French workers who, during this period, experienced the beginnings of social mobility favoured by a lengthening of time spent in school, immigrants

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derived little or no benefit from improved living conditions. They remained on the margins of labour society.

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**1973**

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### **Politicisation of Immigration**

The 1970s saw an increase in racist attacks and crimes in France. In the wake of the crisis caused by the 1973 oil shock, the French government sought to ‘control migration flows’ and decided to ‘suspend’ labour migration. From 1977 to 1981, while Valéry Giscard d’Estaing was President of the Republic, migration policies tightened: increased recourse to expulsions and ‘assisted returns’, implementation of an administrative detention regime, and efforts to replace immigrants with a female French workforce. The Left, unions, churches and some right-wing parties fought this policy of forced return.

At the same time, in the wake of May 1968 and anti-colonial mobilisations, a movement to defend the rights of ‘immigrant workers’ took shape. The grievances were many and included the denunciation of racist crimes, calls to reform worker hostels, improve access to decent housing and stable legal status, and ensure greater social justice in factories and representation of immigrants in trade unions. In these different domains, victories alternated with episodes of repression and expulsion.

Concurrently, France also welcomed many political exiles: Portuguese fleeing the colonial wars, opponents of South American dictatorships, boat people from South East Asia.

**1975**

A work contract and housing are now required to obtain a residence card (Marcellin-Fontanet circulars). Protest movements on the part of undocumented workers begin, sometimes in the form of hunger strikes.

**1973**

The summer and autumn are marked by much racist violence, particularly in the Marseille region.

**1974**

3rd July: The government led by Jacques Chirac suspends economic immigration.

**1975**

With the support of the UN High Commission for Refugees and humanitarian associations, France welcomes nearly 130,000 refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.



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**1978**

8 december : The Council of State's GISTI (Information and Support Group for Migrants) decision elevates the right of immigrants to family reunification to a 'general principle of law' and concludes that the reunited family also has the right to work.

### **The Complex Reasons for Halting Labour Immigration**

On 3 July 1974, the government led by Jacques Chirac 'suspended' labour immigration, breaking decisively with the model that had been in force since the end of the war. The official explanation was the need to combat unemployment, on the rise since the 1973 oil crisis. Yet other factors also played a role, including a fear of the population explosion in developing countries, a desire to put an end to Algerian immigration, and worries over a new May 1968 mobilising immigrants. While legal labour immigration was halted, the government simultaneously tolerated illegal arrivals. A return bonus was introduced in 1977, yet those who took advantage of it were mainly immigrants who were already ready to leave.

### **Mobilisation by Right and for Rights**

The deaths of five Malians who perished in a fire on the night of 31 December 1970 in an overcrowded Aubervilliers hostel triggered a series of mobilisations. Hunger strikes multiplied in migrant worker hostels, neighbourhoods and churches, often supported by intellectuals, trade unions and associations. The early 1970s also saw several immigrantworker protests. In the factories, labourers demanded better wages, working conditions and access to housing. In 1980, the long hunger strike of Turkish workers in the Le Sentier district in Paris constituted an important milestone in the mobilisation of 'undocumented' workers. Highly publicised and accompanied by demonstrations, it led to the regularisation of a large number of labourers without papers.

### **The Reception of New Refugees**

Between 1964 and 1979, France welcomed 15,000 political exiles from Latin America (Brazilians, Argentinians, Uruguayans and especially Chileans). Around 10,000 of them were granted refugee status by the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons (OFPRA).

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From 1975 to 1989, with the support of authorities and intellectuals, the government granted asylum to nearly 130,000 'boat people' from South East Asia (Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia), reviving the country's reputation as a champion of human rights, which had been damaged by the wars of decolonisation. The welcome given to these refugees fleeing communist regimes contrasted with the country's restrictive migration policy during the same period.

### **Tran Dung-Nghi - A Vietnamese Family in Exile**

Born in 1963 in northern Vietnam, Tran Dung-Nghi migrated with her family to the south of the country in 1954, after the battle of Diên Biên Phu. The defeat of the French army in this decisive confrontation marked the end of the French Indochina War and paved the way for independence. North and South Vietnam continued, however, to clash against the backdrop of the Cold War.

In 1966, the family settled in Saigon (capital of the South). When, on 30 April 1975, the city fell to the Vietnamese People's Army, the Tran family fled on a Danish ship leaving for Hong Kong, and eventually arrived in France on 14 July 1975. After a stay in an immigrant hostel, they moved to the department of Seine-et-Marne. Tran Dung-Nghi continued her studies and in 1991 founded the Vietnamese Youth Association in Paris aimed at creating a link between her two cultures.

### **Cristina Diaz Vergara - A Story of Chilean Political Exile**

Cristina Diaz Vergara, born in Chile in 1945, helped found the country's first artisans' union and participated in mobilisations in support of the Popular Unity government led by Salvador Allende. In the face of threats following the military coup of 11 September 1973, she went into exile with her husband and their daughter.

Thanks to a visa issued by the French embassy in Chile, the family obtained the status of political refugees. She settled in Lyon where, in addition to her work as a special education needs teacher, Vergara fought for the rights of Mapuche Amerindians.

### **Xenophobic Brawls and Attacks**

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In the early 1970s, xenophobic violence, stoked by extreme right-wing groups, increased against North Africans. The October 1971 murder of a teenager of Algerian nationality by a French delivery driver – known as the Djellali Ben Ali affair – shocked the public. A month later, France ratified the 1965 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Soon thereafter, the law of 1 July 1972 (Pleven law) created the offences of insult, defamation and incitement to hatred, violence or discrimination. It furthermore foresaw punishment of any public official who ‘knowingly’ refused a legitimate right on racial or religious grounds. Associations could now bring civil actions. The law was, however, rarely applied, given the difficulty of proving the intentionality of a discriminatory act.

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**1983**

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### **First, Second, Third Generation! Struggles for Rights and the Emergence of New Boundaries**

After the election of François Mitterrand in 1981 and the success of the Left in the legislative elections, the government regularised 130,000 undocumented migrants, granted the right of association to foreigners, suspended expulsions and eased the repressive measures of the previous decade. This was a period of great change, characterised by mobilisations against xenophobic and racist violence and the emergence of a new political, urban and artistic culture.

In 1983, the March for Equality and Against Racism made the descendants of immigrants more visible in the public sphere. It also led to the introduction of the residence permit, valid for ten years. This same year however also saw the first victories of the National Front in municipal elections, a political party that strongly denounced immigration. Problems in the suburbs (banlieues) were the subject of heated political debate. More and more middle-class families left the large-scale housing estates (“grands ensembles”) that would become symbolic of urban policy and integration difficulties.

Starting in the early 1980s, regulations pertaining to the right of residence and right of asylum for foreigners became stricter. Certain changes had lasting effects: the resumption of expulsions, the use of administrative detention and tougher screening of entries. The gap widened between, on the one hand, ‘integrable’ official immigrants and, on the other, ‘expellable’ undocumented migrants. The government made access to asylum progressively more difficult and citizenship law became intensely politicised.

**1983**

First electoral successes of the National Front in municipal elections.

**1983–1984**

March for Equality and Against Racism; adoption of the ten-year residence card.

**1980–1986**

Compulsory visa for foreign visitors to France. Only a few national groups, including the Swiss, EEC citizens and Americans, are exempted.

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**1986, 1993, 1997**

The Pasqua-Debré laws tighten entry and residence conditions for foreigners, as well as access to nationality for children of immigrants

### **Worker Mobilisations and Stigmatisation of Muslims**

The years of economic upturn were followed by a period of crisis and the turn to austerity of 1983. The steel and car industries resorted to massive lay-offs and strikes increased. In the name of freedom of worship, Muslim workers made religious demands, and images of them praying in factories appeared widely in the press. Remarks made by several ministers contributed to an increasing debate on the so-called 'Muslim problem'. In October 1989, three schoolgirls in Creil who refused to remove their headscarves in class were expelled. The Council of State reaffirmed the free expression of beliefs in the school environment but prohibited, in the name of secularism, the wearing of conspicuous religious symbols, seen as proselytizing.

### **The March for Equality: Descendants of Immigrants Emerge in the Public Sphere**

Immigration had long been perceived as consisting primarily of male workers, but beginning in the late 1970s, women and descendants of migrants became ever more visible in the media. On 3 December 1983, the March for Equality and Against Racism, which had started in Marseille a month and a half earlier, reached the Place de la Bastille in Paris, followed by a procession of more than 100,000 people. Collective jubilation raised hopes for a fraternal future. Ultimately supported by almost the entire religious, associative, union, and media field and by the left-wing parties, the March was a major political moment for the descendants of immigrants. Though popularly called the 'Marche des Beurs' (Beur being a slang word for 'Arab'), this designation didn't do justice to the variety of migratory trajectories and family histories among the demonstrators.

### **Cultural struggles**

A sign of true cultural and political mobilisation, newspapers and fanzines, theatre groups, rock bands, associations and various media outlets multiplied. Independent radio stations were legalized in 1981, some of which were run by immigrants and their descendants, including Radio

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Soleil, Radio Gazelle in Marseille and Radio Beur. From 1977 to 1987, the state-funded television variety show *Mosaiques* aired every Sunday on the public channel FR3 and celebrated different immigrant cultures in France. In 1984, the programme *H.I.P. H.O.P.*, hosted by Sidney Duteil and broadcast every Sunday afternoon on the national channel TF1, made a strong impression on youth and encouraged the emergence of the rap movement. *Suprême NTM*, MC Solaar and Stomy Bugsy made regular appearances on the show.

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**1995**

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### **Construction of the EU**

European integration profoundly transformed migration and asylum in France. From Schengen to Dublin, a mobility scheme that distinguished Europeans from non-Europeans was reinforced. The Schengen Convention, which came into force in 1995, established an area of free movement, without passports or controls. In 2023, this area included 27 countries, 23 of which were members of the European Union. The migratory paths of Europeans became more flexible and mobility a formidable engine of integration. This integration however remained uneven. For example, certain members of the EU such as Ireland, Cyprus, Bulgaria and Romania were not, as of 2023, part of the Schengen Area.

The counterpart to free movement within the European Union was a strengthening of external borders. In 2004, the EU created the Frontex agency, responsible for their monitoring. Member States signed readmission agreements with ‘third countries’ and increased detention and expulsion operations. This reinforcing of external borders to the East and South was one aspect of defining a common asylum and immigration policy. The 1990 Dublin Regulation established that the country responsible for examining an asylum application was that where the migrant first arrived in the EU.

In France, the tightening of residence and asylum conditions led to a wave of social movements over the course of the 1990s. The issue of stigmatisation and racism towards the descendants of immigrants repeatedly emerged in public debate. There were many immigrant-led economic, political and cultural initiatives. Some immigrants developed strong ties with their or their parents’ country of origin.

**1995**

Implementation of the agreement ensuring free movement of people and the lifting of controls within the Schengen Area. This agreement establishes the principle of free circulation of Europeans, counterbalanced by external border controls.

**1996**

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23 august: Law enforcement agencies forcibly evacuate 210 undocumented migrants occupying the Church of Saint-Bernard, in the 18th arrondissement of Paris.

## **2002**

21 april: Jean-Marie Le Pen, the National Front candidate, reaches the second round of the presidential elections. A year later, a prefiguration mission presided over by Jacques Toubon was launched for a «resource and memory centre for immigration» intended to change the way people look at and think about migratory phenomena.

## **2005**

Riots take place in Clichy-sous-Bois in reaction to the deaths of two teenagers, Zied Benna and Bouna Traoré, electrocuted at a power substation while trying to flee a police patrol. Unrest continues in several suburbs for nearly three weeks, leading to the imposing of a curfew in 25 departments.

## **2007**

The National Centre for the History of Immigration (Cité nationale de l'histoire de l'immigration), opens at the Palais de la Porte-Dorée.

## **2008**

The writer Atiq Rahimi, born in Afghanistan in 1962, refugee in France in 1985 and naturalized in 1996, wins the Goncourt Prize.

## **European Circulation and Eastern Enlargement**

The fall of the Berlin Wall and the gradual enlargement of the European Union towards the East marked a turning point: yesterday's dissidents and migrants were now European. The Erasmus programme, launched in 1987, allowed millions of European students to spend a portion of their studies in another country, thus contributing to the emergence of a European generation. Several hundred thousand children are thought to have been born of these encounters between young Europeans.

In France, the integration of Central and Eastern European countries into the European Union was met with some scepticism and discontent. In 2005, during the election campaign for the adoption of the European Constitutional Treaty, the largely mythical figure of the 'Polish plumber' –someone willing to work at low cost and with lesser social protection– embodied the



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threat of deregulated European competition. While some of these migrants were employed in France in various sectors, many preferred Germany, Austria, Italy, Spain or Great Britain.

### **Tightening of residence and asylum requirements**

Over the course of the 1980s, entry visas were imposed on foreign travellers coming from developing countries. In 1995, these became 'Schengen visas'. Free movement was reserved to nationals of Western countries or holders of a residence permit in France.

Between 1978 and 1990, the percentage of positive decisions following the examination of asylum applications by the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons (OFPRA) plummeted from 90 to 15. Although several factors played a role in this crisis (end of the Cold War and the arrival of dissidents from the Eastern bloc, diplomatic issues between France and third countries), these figures also reflected a mistrust of asylum seekers. This particularly affected immigrants from Africa and the Middle East.

### **The Struggles of Undocumented Workers**

Strikes and occupations were the most frequent forms of action by undocumented workers, many of whom had lived in France for years. The struggles of the 1970s were followed by landmark protests such as that of the Turkish workers in the Sentier garment district in Paris in 1980, and then in the early 1990s, intense movements arose in response to rejected asylum seekers. In 1996, churches, symbols of hospitality, were occupied - first Saint-Ambroise and then Saint-Bernard, both in Paris. The latter was forcibly evacuated by the police on 23 August. Numerous collectives and associations, national and local, community-based or led by immigrant descendants, took part in these mobilisations, whether humanitarian or political.

### **Mobility and Putting down Roots**

Upon arrival, migrants often sought the company of their compatriots. Chinese, North African and Turkish neighbourhoods appeared in large cities. These were commercial spaces, but also important places of solidarity and sociability. Immigrants settled in France maintained a certain mobility relative to their country of origin. Life was sometimes organised between the two countries, each inhabited in a different way thanks to the construction of a second home or

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having access to a family residence. The seasons, necessities, joys and rituals of family and community life shaped relations with the home country.

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## **PRESENT DAY**

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### **Hospitality and Firmness: Europe in the face of New Conflicts**

Beginning in 2011, in the wake of the Arab Spring revolutions and the wars in Libya and Syria, hundreds of thousands of people arrived on Europe's doorstep after having crossed the Mediterranean. Among the exiles moving through France, many hoped to reach the UK or Northern Europe. Others settled in France and applied for asylum. Reactions of European states were mixed but firmness prevailed. In March 2016, they signed a financial agreement with Turkey, who took measures to keep the majority of asylum seekers on its soil.

During this period, France continued to welcome ordinary migration (work, family reunification, study). Globalisation has also contributed to diversifying the countries of origin of immigrants (Europe, but also Africa and Asia). Most were lawfully present, while those who didn't have their papers in order hoped to be regularised on a case-by-case basis. Collective mobilisations, such as major strikes by undocumented workers, raised awareness of a need for regularisation.

The free movement of European nationals mainly benefitted Portuguese and Italians. As Brexit loomed, finalising Britain's withdrawal from the European Union in 2020, applications from UK citizens for French naturalisation increased.

French society is the product of its long history of migration. While many immigrants and their descendants have put down roots in France, they remain victims of discrimination.

#### **2015**

Hundreds of thousands of people, mostly from Syria, reach Greece. Germany shows a willingness to welcome them, registering 800,000 asylum applications. This same year, the image of Alan Kurdi, a young Syrian boy found washed up on a beach in Turkey, sends an emotional but short-lived shockwave throughout Europe and the world.

#### **2016**

18 march: European states sign a financial agreement with Turkey, who takes measures to keep the majority of Syrian exiles who arrive on its soil and to take back those who manage to cross the Turkey-Greece border.

#### **2022**

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March: The French government launches a sponsorship platform allowing citizens to help welcome Ukrainians in France

### **Hospitality and Hostility at the Borders**

The Dublin Regulation established that asylum seekers must apply in the first country they reach –usually Greece, Italy or Spain. In practice, migrant trajectories extended towards other countries and occurrences of irregular migration increased. In 2016, the Calais ‘jungle’ was evacuated: a vast makeshift camp where migrants, joined by NGOs and activists, had settled while waiting for the opportunity to clandestinely reach Great Britain. The French government also ordered the clearing of tent camps in Paris. The people thus ‘evacuated’ were taken to reception centres farther away from the borders. In rural areas as well as in shelter cities (villes refuges), volunteers stepped up their efforts to welcome and support asylum seekers and unaccompanied minors, whether near the borders or along old reactivated migratory routes. At Europe’s southern borders, crossing the Mediterranean has never been so perilous.

### **Mohamad Shahab Rassouli - A Young Afghan in Exile**

Mohamad Shahab Rassouli was born in Afghanistan in 1992. At the age of four, he and his family escaped the Taliban regime and took refuge in Iran. Ten years later, against his parents’ will, Mohamad decided to undertake the long journey to Europe alone, fleeing war and misery in the hopes of obtaining an education.

In a trip that took the better part of a year, he crossed Turkey, Greece, Italy and France, narrowly escaping death on several occasions. In making his way towards England, he was arrested by the police in Boulogne-sur-Mer, then housed in an immigrant hostel. Subsequently placed with a foster family, Mohamad was able to rebuild his life and resume his studies.

### **Immigrants and their Descendants: Integration and Discrimination**

Immigrants and their descendants have filled needs within many work sectors: agriculture, construction, health, personal and business services. Care and support professions (childminders, family carers, nurses’ aides) –essential for maintaining social ties and the economy– have often been taken on by immigrant women.

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Remarkable career advancement has occurred in the associative, political, economic, intellectual, sporting and artistic arenas. Other trajectories reflect the formation of a middle class, frequently educated, whose parents or grandparents immigrated to France. Nonetheless, barriers remain for children of immigrants, even if most are French since birth. Discrimination due to a first name or surname, religion, or skin colour persists despite various measures, such as awareness-raising campaigns, in 2005 the creation of the High Authority against Discrimination and for Equality (Halde) and, in 2011, the Defender of Rights Authority.

### **Everyday Life in a Multicultural Society**

France is a multicultural society, even if minorities are not legally recognized. Mixed marriages have increased over the generations. Linguistic, culinary and festive practices are changing. As elsewhere in the world, neighbourhoods in French cities are home to shops where it is possible to acquire culturally-specific goods or services, or simply meet friends and family and catch up on news from back home. Now as in the past, people settled in France develop ties with their country of origin, which may be economic, emotional or political in nature. Numerous money transfers are directed towards productive and associative activities. Identities are multiple: millions of French people have at least two nationalities and divide their lives between several countries.

### **Nikolaï Angelov - From the Streets to a Commitment to Roma Inclusion**

Born in 1990 into a Roma family in Bulgaria, Nikolaï Angelov came to Paris at the age of 18 to protect his father, who had arrived some time earlier through a begging network that exploited him. The young man hoped to find opportunities in France that were inaccessible to Roma in Bulgaria. After three years on the streets, Nikolaï Angelov found a job then undertook civic service for the Paris City Hall where he was finally hired as a social mediator.

He obtained French citizenship in 2016 and has remained committed to supporting Roma integration and recognition of their rights, particularly among youth.

### **Mudasir Sano - Running for Life**

[Tapez ici]

Fleeing the war in Ethiopia, Mudasir Sano, then aged 14, crossed Sudan, Egypt and Italy before arriving in France. Following the dismantling of the Calais camp, he accepted the proposal of the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons (OFPRA) and left for Sainte-Marie-la-Mer, near Perpignan. While waiting to be enrolled in school, Mudasir regularly ran along the coast to occupy his days. Spotted by a track and field club, he began a sports career that would bring him to the podium of the French Championships. Now living in Ile-de-France, still driven by his passion for running, Mudasir remains concerned by events affecting his country, and in particular his people, the Oromos. Like his hero, the marathon runner Feyisa Lilesa, he raises his fists above his head to draw attention to the plight of his people

### **From discrimination to memory issues**

Numerous investigations clearly attest to the extent of racial discrimination in France. They confirm, for example, that the national origin or appearance of a potential tenant trying to rent a flat is sometimes considered a dealbreaker by the owner.

New voices raised, among victims of discrimination, in intellectual circles, associations and, more broadly among the general public have denounced the ‘racialisation’ that many people are subjected to. They call for ‘intersectional’ analyses –even if this word is not always used– of the factors that contribute to discrimination (gender, social background, racial assignment, disability) and highlight the weight of the colonial legacy in discrimination. Others, on the contrary, see these concepts as a threat to republican universalism.

Questions related to the legacies of the past have become ever more acute: should the symbols and monuments left by slavery, slave trade and colonisation be removed or rather confronted through a pedagogical approach that explains and educates the public? Debates over reparations, ‘repentance’, the national narrative, and how best to deal with France’s historical heritage and past have been divisive. Among immigrant populations and their descendants there is a desire that their ancestors ‘contribution to history’ be fully recognized, for themselves but also all as an integral part of the history of France.