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Non-mixity as an organizational and resistance tool for  
collective identification within French radical activist groups

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## **Abstract**

This article investigates non-mixity (separatism), its functions, mechanisms, uses and impacts on specific groups within radical movements. Sense of belonging, frames, diasporic identities and dialogical processes are used to analyze the narratives, via semi-structured interviews, of young activists based in Paris (France) who are evolving in racialized only activist groups. Non-mixity fulfills several functions and is used as an organizational tool (it is not perceived as an end) for radical and revolutionary changes. Non-mixity as a tool allows for the creation of: a sense of belonging, inclusion/exclusion logics specific to such configurations and the realization of a dialogical process which enables the complexification of identities and discourses around their common struggle. Hence, non-mixity contributes to the construction of: a collective identity; individual complex identities; and speech genres specific to a social movement.

Key words: non-mixity; sense of belonging; dialogical process; inclusion/exclusion; radicality; racialization; identities

## **Introduction**

1998 was marked by France's World Cup triumph. On this occasion politicians and media celebrated the diversity of origins and skin color represented by the French football team. Behind the slogan "black blanc beur" meaning blacks, whites and north africans (inspired by the "bleu blanc rouge" of the french flag) a strong acceptance discourse of multiculturalism and the positive outcome of post-colonial migration for France was materialized by this triumph. This discourse encouraged the idea that social and cultural integration would allow individuals, and more precisely those coming from post-colonial migration, to succeed. With the help of patriotism, they would make France great again via a sort of multiculturalism *à la française*.

This diversity and celebration of multiculturalism via social integration impacted directly the field of politics. According to Mogniss H. Abdallah (2002), members of the post-colonial diaspora were scattered politically and their votes were going from extreme left to extreme right wing which ultimately benefited the right wing party RPR. However, this presidential election on the theme of multiculturalism and the celebration of *black blanc beur*

did not end state racism and its impacts on certain social groups such as police brutality and ethnic profiling. In 2005, two teenagers Zyed Benna and Bouna Traoré died in a pursuit with the police, their death ignited a series of riots and protests against police brutality in the outskirts of Paris, as described by Stephane Méchoulan (2020). Via such events and revolts against state violence and racism, the idea of post-racial society embodied by the slogan *black blanc beur* can be understood as a myth. France's model of integration is presented by researchers in social sciences such as Jocelyne Streiff-Fénart (2009) as republican assimilationism. In other words, assimilation to dominant culture : republicanism i.e. white secular elitism.

This republicanism nurtures both the denial/color-blindness and the myth of post-racial society. According to Constantina Badea (2012), based on the principle of equality of chances, France promotes equality among and between its citizens (and citizens only) via the total erasure of social differences which is inscribed in the French constitution since 1958. Pragmatically, this means that identification through culture, ethnicity, race or religion is not an option under the French republic. This was enacted in order to prevent any type of so-called communitarianism (seen as a deviance from the republican model of social integration), individuals are seen as such and not as members of any groups. Migrants are summoned to strip themselves of all cultural and racial attributes to embrace the uniform republican identity packaged with a set of values and beliefs. Again, according to Badea (2012), migrants are required to strip themselves symbolically (i.e. culturally/religiously) and physically especially for muslim women, *objects* of political legislation and regulation in the name of secularism. Communities from post-colonial migration in France are and have been targeted in the name of republicanism as I have described earlier.

On the 19th of March 2021 the minister of education has expressed the will to fight against "racist" (Le Monde, 2021) groups and events organized in non-mixity while calling those practices fascist (Le Monde, 2021). This proposition was voted on a few weeks later. The target in question was a student union called UNEF (a leftist national union of students founded in 1907). It is not the first attempt by the French government to try and forbid such configurations. Indeed, in 2017 a summer festival, Nyansapo, around decolonial theories and afrofeminism took place in Paris and have been subject to the same backfire from political and mediatic actors because they were planning on holding workshops in racial and gender non-mixity.

Briefly and roughly, non mixity, also called chosen mixity by activists, is a multifunctional tool for resistance and self-organization based on inclusion and exclusion of certain identities defined by a group of activists taking action for their liberation from systemic oppression. I will refer to these groups as collectives as it is, for most of them, the denomination they use. A collective, in the context of this thesis, is hence a political activist group that focuses on antiracist, decolonial and feminist issues.

This thesis focuses on non-mixity within French collectives active in the radical feminist and/or anti-racist movement. It explores how non-mixity, as an organizational and resistance tool, enables the creation of a subject (individual and collective) necessary for effective collective mobilization with all the paradoxes, dilemmas and limitations that it entails. Consequently, I focus on members of collectives organized in racial non mixity. I will specifically look at:

- 1) Does non mixity create a sense of belonging and how
- 2) What are the inclusion/exclusion logics in non mixity groups
- 3) Does non mixity affect identification processes

In order to do so I will first develop a theoretical framework and delimitate previous research in order to highlight a gap which my thesis will address and attempt to fill up. Then after having elaborated on the method and material, I will present the results in three parts. In the first part, I will focus on how non mixity allows for the elaboration of a collective identity through the importance of a sense of belonging, the idea of community and the necessity of a political existence of these groups. The second part will specifically address the inclusion/exclusion logics that take place within non mixity via the notion of frame and racialization. Finally, in the third part I will focus on how non mixity participates in the creation of a collective “we” via a dialogic process and how the latter participates in the complexity of identities and discourses around it. In conclusion I will summarize the crucial development of my thesis and conclude on how further research could benefit this field of study, as well as in which fashion they could be conducted.

## **Theoretical framework**

The notion of frame is central in the study of social movements. Borrowed from Erving Goffman (1974), it is the idea that there are frames of interpretations that enable mutual understanding. It works as a general referential from which individuals find guidance

to comprehend the social and cultural world (Della Porta & Diani, 2006, p.74). Paying attention to frames, in a scholarly manner, allows to grasp the modes of reasoning and intellectualization behind social mobilization. It allows to tackle the divide between structure and agency “meaning that it includes both the acknowledgment that people are active and empowered agents in their lives, but that they also exist within a social and political system that shapes their reality” (Christiansen, 2014, p.153). Framing, for social movements, allows identification of self, identification of an issue and to take action while looking at the world through the same lense (Christiansen, 2014, p.147). Frame building takes place through three processes (Christiansen, 2014, p. 152) : Discursive (communication and media coverage), strategic (tools for specific ends and outcomes) and contested (contestation from the outside of the collective/movement). Here, the strategic process of frame building is explored in this thesis in regard to the uses of non mixity.

One can see identity making as a component of framing as it is a process that enables individuals to give meaning to their experiences and social fabric in which they are embedded. The construction of identities ties the individual to the collective in a complex manner that involves political, psychological and social processes (Della Porta & Diani, 2006, p. 92). Identity making is a crucial part of collective action as it allows for identifications : between actors and adversaries, between actors within themselves, of a conflict; hence it helps the construction of trustworthy relationships among actors (Della Porta & Diani, 2006, p. 92). Another important point within identity making is the consideration of their multiplicity materialized by the various senses of belongings one can experience at the same time. This variety of belongings do not necessarily have to be antagonistic of each other but they allow for individuals to organize their relation to collective identities. By collective identity, I refer to the following definition:

[T]he process by which social actors recognize themselves – and are recognized by other actors – as part of broader groupings, and develop emotional attachments to them (...) Collective identities may also be based on shared orientations, values, attitudes, world- views, and lifestyles, as well as on shared experiences of action. (Della Porta & Diani, 2006, pp. 91-92)

Identity is to be distinguished from interest as it implies a connection closer to the one of kinship than the one of material exchange. Identities are based on characteristics such as sexual preferences, nationality, race, class, gender, but also religion. Collective identity

involves a sense of solidarity based on emotions as trust and affection which strengthen individuals' participation (Goodwin et al., 2001, pp. 8-9).

In terms of mutual understanding and shared meanings, dialogical processes are one of the means to such ends. Steinberg (2002) advocates for a dialogic analysis of social movements. He argues that such analysis enhances the understanding of the importance of the relational factor within meaning making processes. Through a variety of genres of speech within a specific discursive field shaped by dominant culture, meaning can be produced in a challenging way when it is mobilized in the repertoire of resistance (Meyer et al., 2002, p. 213). Within frame analysis, understanding and meaning are constructed as cognitivist practices in the sense that they would exist as an already made package one has or has not endorsed. While engaging in a dialogic analysis, it permits to think of frames as “alignment processes” (Meyer et al., 2002, p. 210) which requires relation, group effort and network building. In sum, considering the “multivocality” of the construction of a collective action and its frame set the ground for a dialectic understanding of collectives' cultures (Meyer et al., 2002, p.210).

When one wishes to develop on dialogical processes of a social movement it is not without evoking M. M. Bakhtin who first elaborated on dialogic theory as he was seeing discursive practices, also called speech genres, as constitutive of social life. Indeed : “Bakhtin viewed genres as patterned mutual understandings that develop over time, that change with the organization and practice of social life, and that can proliferate as spheres of social life become more varied and complex (Sampson 1993: 119–22)” (Meyer et al., 2002, p.211). Non-mixity as a tool for organizing social life, creating a complex social sphere and evolving over time creates a specific speech genre which shapes mutual understanding and shared meanings. Following Ian Burkitt's definition of genres (1998) they are seen as “given sets of statements involving positions, world-views, ideologies, and linguistic styles which usually find their expression in certain practices in the everyday world” (Meyer et al., 2002, p.211).

Belonging, as described by Yuval-Davis (2011), is often naturalized but can shift to a politicized form once threatened, it is only then that the politics of belonging comes at play, which the author defines as following : [The politics of belonging] comprises specific political projects aimed at constructing belonging in particular ways to particular collectivities that are, at the same time, themselves being constructed by these projects in very particular ways.” (Yuval-Davis, 2011, p.197) whereas belonging is defined as being an “act of

self-identification or identification by others, in a stable, contested or transient way (Yuval-Davis, 2011, p.199).

According to the author, belonging (both as a political and individual process) relies on three levels of analysis which are interrelated, namely: social location, emotional attachment and ethical and political values systems. Social location refers to belonging to a particular category which translates into power dynamics that vary from a historical moment to another. The notion of social location plays an important role in the analysis of non-mixity since it implies the intertwining between : 1) one's ability to identify with one identity category, 2) the societal construction of social locations along multiple identity categories that cannot be separated from each other as they are constitutive of each other and 3) the essentialist trap (Yuval-Davis, 2011, p.199).

According to Della Porta and Diani (2006), collective identity is mostly based on the heterogeneity of identities. Identity is seen as a social process while she emphasizes on the fluidity of sense of belongings. Hence, the existence of a strong collective “we” is to be nuanced and rethought (Della Porta & Diani, 2006, p. 96). Indeed, belonging to a collective or a community with shared identity does not equate a systematic shared approach of the world or that the social fabric they navigate in is the same. In other words: “ (...) it is rare that a dominant identity is able to integrate all the others. More usually, identities have a polycentric rather than a hierarchical structure.” (Della Porta & Diani, 2006, p. 98) Hence, talking about a sense of belonging and community implies inclusion and exclusion logics within non mixity which are constructed by the members and shaped by the dynamics of the collectives themselves.

Inclusion/exclusion dynamics can be based on groups and individuals' definition of racialization. From a phenomenological stance, racialization is an embodied phenomena that crystallizes itself through lived experience of frontal racism based on one's body. Following Merleau-Ponty's analysis of habitual body, Helen Ngo in *The Habits of Racism A Phenomenology of Racism and Racialized Embodiment* (2012) addresses how racism yields to bodily responses that are perceived as habitual (e.g. a white person clenching on their bag as they see a black man passing by) which the author qualify as “the bodily modes of racist praxis” (Ngo, 2017, p. XI). Alongside bodily responses, racism engenders a “bodily

experience of it” (Ngo, 2017, p. XI), drawing from Fanon’s work on psychological distress caused by experiences of racism, the author refers to the “‘work’ entailed in living and coping with racism, as well as the sense of body schema fragmentation that arises from the experience of being “in front” or “ahead” of oneself” (Ngo, 2017, p. XI). Finally, the racialized body is described by the author as “uncanny” meaning at the same time strange, alien and signifying a “not-at-home”-ness theorized by Maria Lugones as displacement which can be both a source of richness and suffering (Ngo, 2017, p. XI).

From a socio-historical stance, racialization is a process rooted in structures based on a racist ideology developed through historical events and discourses. In *L’ideologie raciste. genèse et langage actuel*. (2002, [1972], [1977]), Colette Guillaumin talks about the social construction of racism and its ideology which occurred before the XIXth century and links it directly to the notion of otherness. C. Guillaumin, through the study of french literature and texts (Gobineau, Rousseau, Brrès, Balzac, Proust, Diderot etc.), found a shift in the conceptualization and understanding of “otherness”; she then talks about an “ideological mutation” (Guillaumin, 2002, p.25) with the construction of a “racist theory” rooted in sciences. The shift went from religious beliefs before the XVIIIth century linked to the idea of souls, at this time otherness was constructed outside of the idea of humanity to the XVIIIth century, where difference became the very nature of humanity, she says :

The "others" are not waiting at the threshold of the law, they are within the law but according to a different status, modern racism speaks of “*sub*” humanity. This topological variation within the single universe is easily found in the phrases “third world”, “underdeveloped”, “developed/developing” to name the most common. (Guillaumin, 2002, p.27 [my translation])

## **Previous research**

Feminist separatism as described by Marilyn Frye in *Some Reflections on Separatism and Power* (1993) is not seen as “ultimate or political ends” (Frye, 1993, p. 92). In fact, the author describes feminist’s separatism as existing for the sake of “independence, liberty, growth, invention, sisterhood, safety, health or the practice of novel or heretical customs” (Frye, 1993, p. 92). It is always in a movement of putting aside various groups or institutions seen as malevolent that separations take place. Separatists configurations can be undertaken unconsciously or consciously, the latter is materialized by the need for self-organization. Separations, when not too difficult to achieve, can be marked by a feeling of relief, happiness

or joy; in situations where it is difficult to reach, there can be “pain, anxiety or grief” (Frye, 1993, p. 92). It is said that when women come together in a separatist configuration (it is not clear if she includes non-binary and trans people in this notion of women) they do so in a double movement of control and definition crossed with the empowering effect of this double movement through a transfer of power from the oppressor to the oppressed, separations make women “doubly and radically insubordinate” (Frye, 1993, p. 92).

According to Raymond. L. Hall (1977), Black separatism is seen as a product of the social stratification of American society, it is closely related to black nationalism and has existed for centuries (Hall, 1977, p.8). As the author asks what is social reality and how to analyse it through the phenomenon of black separatism, he insists on the fact that black people who are drawn to such organizations and groups are joining them for a variety of reasons that cannot be reduced to a mere pathological phenomenon, “social reality is multifaceted and multidimensional” (Hall, 1977, p.8). The author focuses on movement ideologies and individuals’ participation, in his words :

Social movements are derived from and constructed around societal conditions where individuals feel that they should band together to promote or resist change. Ideology may be regarded as the component that draws and (along with morale) holds together disparate movement elements such as age, religion, class, geographic differences, etc. Movement ideology — as we have seen in the historical introduction —does not crop up overnight, and individuals do not suddenly or spontaneously join a movement based solely on its ideology. Individuals, to be sure, join movements because they offer answers to certain dissatisfactions prompted by societal conditions in relation to their unique experiences. (Hall, 1977, p.13)

In France, from the 1970s and onwards, racialized women (including migrants, asylum seekers and women established in France) organized themselves into associations or groups in order to self-organize and to act collectively. These women are defined as being leftist, feminist, recognizing the intersections of systems of oppression that they are facing and fighting together against injustices both in France and in their homeland. However, black women felt the need to organize for struggles that are inherent to their position in society (Bruneel & Gomes Silva, 2017, pp. 64-65).

In *Paroles de femmes noires: Circulations médiatiques et enjeux politiques* (2017), the authors refer to an association called Coordination des femmes noires, who participated in the first black women's day in 1977, after which they made the following statement : “We have issues in common with men of color, with all women, but also issues that are specific to us as Black women. Hence the need for a common struggle and a specific struggle” (Bruneel & Gomes Silva, 2017, p. 67).

Through previous research about separatism (which I refer to as non-mixity as per the French use of the term), one can track back motives, ideologies and context of such configurations. However, little has been done on the actual functions of non-mixity and its collective construction (e.g. emotional, dialogical, political) as well as its impacts on the construction of identities. This is what my thesis attempts to address. I identified this gap as being major and in need of urgent conceptualization as separatism is constructed as a threat by the French government when it can find legitimation in activists' narratives and experiences.

## **Method and materials**

In terms of methodology, I follow the principles of Grounded theory. This methodology was developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) as a qualitative approach to data and social science research. Grounded theory is particularly relevant for the identification of concepts, development of theoretical knowledge and new perspectives on several phenomena (Corbin & Strauss, 2015, p. 28). This methodology is particular in the way that it constructs theory directly from data collected during fieldwork. In other words, it grounds the research in empirical material. Corbin and Strauss in *Basics of qualitative research: techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (2015) refers to Grounded theory as a constant back and forth between data collection and analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 2015, p. 29). The authors highlight that data collection can be achieved via a variety of methods but are mainly carried out via interviews and observations (Corbin & Strauss, 2015, p. 28).

In *Grounded Theory Methodology and Grounded Theory Method: Introduction to the Special Issue* (2019), J. I. (Hans) Bakker claims that Grounded theory implies conducting research without having elaborated hypotheses beforehand necessarily: “Researchers can make some assumptions based on their general cultural awareness and overall education, but GT can involve exploring a new subject never studied before or further refining explorations

that have only just begun” (Bakker, 2019, p.94). However, generalizations are possible once a saturation point is reached by the data collection and its analysis (Bakker, 2019, p.94).

I have then decided to follow a qualitative method consisting in semi-structured interviews. I have conducted 12 semi-structured interviews with people from 23 to 33 years old, 4 men and 8 women, members of 8 different collectives, based mostly in Paris and Marseille (France). Amongst the 12 participants, 8 are founder/co-founder of some of the collectives and 4 are volunteers in these collectives. The collectives are all structured differently and have specific goals aligned with their political orientation and understanding of liberation. In terms of composition, race is the major structural element; for the majority of the collectives, race is articulated with other identity categories such as gender and sexuality. When it comes to their actions, I have listed them as such : protest; artistic creation; solidarity; production of knowledge; pedagogy; conviviality and visibility. In terms of political definition they define themselves as decolonial feminists, anti-imperialists, anti-capitalists, antiracists, against islamophobia, queerphobia and antisemitism. Two of the collectives use mixity but the members are all racialized, for one of them, the aim is to work only with racial non-mixity in the future (more detailed information in appendix n°1 - collectives' distribution, composition and political orientation).

Concerning the actual exploitation of the datas, I have transcribed 11 interviews out of the 12 as I considered one of them to be not exploitable because I could not reach for the interviewee's personal experiences, hence I did not use it for this thesis. The transcriptions were carried out via a software called f4transkript which provides an interface that combines audio and text with keyboard shortcuts (to keys such as play, pause, etc.) I manually transcribed word per word recordings of the interviews. I have conducted the interviews based on an interview guide that I have elaborated myself and constructed around themes and follow-up questions related to non mixity and their experience of activism.

The interviews were conducted on Zoom (except for one conducted in my apartment) recorded via the same software, and held in French, all participants' mother tongue (me included). Once conducted and recorded, I have opted for a mix of verbatim and intelligent transcription since I transcribed word per word but I did not transcribe intros and outros as I considered that they were not holding any specific information (they essentially consisted of briefing and debriefing the interviews). Concerning one particular interview that has lasted a full afternoon, I have transcribed only the parts where non-mixity was mentioned. For each

transcription I have anonymized the participants and their collectives as well as every other collective mentioned, events and names that are not mediatized and/or nationally known. Finally, each participant had the opportunity, on demand, to access the video and/or audio file of the interview and the consent form (appendix n°2 - consent form).

I have then coded each transcript via a software called f4analyse which consists of an interface that helps to manually sort paragraphs per themes and to group paragraphs according to the coding. I have made use of a ground-up (inductive) coding consisting of open and axial coding, paragraph per paragraph, where I have regrouped paragraphs together according to their topics. I have for example identified paragraphs where definitions were made (e.g. feminism, afrofeminism, non-mixity, etc.) and regrouped them under the theme “definitions”. Another example is that I have been able to identify parts of their narratives where they recalled their journey to activism and regrouped them under the theme “experience leading to activism”. I have then categorized parts of these narratives in sub-groups such as their experience with mixed activist groups, with discriminations (e.g. sexism and racism), their struggle with finding a sense of belonging, the role of their social network prior to get enrolled into a non-mixed activist group etc.

Observations were not considered as I am not part of any of these collectives and because of the very nature of their configurations and identities it is most likely that they would have refused my presence during their preparations and actions. Also, regarding the Covid-19 crisis, it was best not to conduct a mixed method approach since observations presented a risk for my own as well as others’ health.

I have encountered the participants both via formal contact through social media research and emailing and via my friendship network, four of the participants are my friends (which at times made it harder to keep it short and explicit) and three of them are friends of my friends. Concerning this aspect, I find it important to pay specific attention to the emotional involvement between a researcher and their informants. In *Close But Not Too Close: Friendship as Method(ology) in Ethnographic Research Encounters* (2014), the authors highlight the existence of a polarization in terms of perspective within methodologies. On one hand there would be a positivist/traditional stance which claims that any personal involvement would bias, disturb and alter the course and results of the study. On the other hand, drawing from authors such as Hochschild and Hoffman, the following claim is made : “emotional involvement and emotional reflexivity can provide a rich resource for

the ethnographic researcher, rather than necessarily constituting a methodological “problem” to be avoided at all costs” (Allen-Collisson & Owton, 2014, p. 284). The authors goes on and elaborates on what they call “friendship as method” (Allen-Collisson & Owton, 2014, p. 285) or “methodological approach” which unfolds and tackles the power dynamics between researchers and informants. Again, according to the authors’ words :

The friendship approach seeks to reduce the hierarchical separation between researcher and participant (see Tillmann-Healy 2003 for a detailed overview), and is often accompanied by efforts at the establishment and maintenance of a dialogical relationship (Smith et al. 2009), and an ethic of caring that invites expressiveness, emotion, and empathy (Fine 1994; Tillmann-Healy 2003) between researcher and participants. (Allen-Collisson & Owton, 2014, p. 284)

However, friendship as a methodological approach does not guarantee and should not be primarily used to gain exclusive access to specific information, and ultimately it does not erase all power dynamics (Allen-Collisson & Owton, 2014, pp. 286-287). Even though this text deals with the befriending of informants during fieldwork and not beforehand like I did, I understand my relationship with participants as part of a methodological approach which gave me multiple advantages as well as inconveniences. Living in Paris I have found myself in various activist settings thanks to which I had the opportunities to meet activists of various collectives, around my age, sharing the same political views and agenda as me and befriended them. It is only then that I have formulated to them my wish to have them participate in this thesis via interviews. In terms of advantages I have been able to access collectives and informants easily and had a consecutive amount of time to explain the purpose, the context and possible outcomes of this study. We also shared language, understanding and political values which made it easier at times to keep the flow of the interview going and make myself understood as well as to understand them. When it comes to inconveniences, I have found myself having to pay extra attention to mutual references which translate into a constant effort to render explicit and question not only their rationalities but also mine. I believe that thanks to the comments and critiques of my colleagues, friends and supervisors I have been able to successfully render visible latent meanings, contextualize cultural specificities and clarify any confusion in the development of my analysis.

Name (fictive)	Roberto	Antonio	Lola	Marta	Ingrid	Adela	Carmen	Pavel	Silvia	Luisa	Juan
Age	28	27	24	23	25	33	25	25	32	27	27
Collective <sup>1</sup>	A	B	C	D	C	E	C	C	F	A	G
Role	Volunteer	Founder	Founder	Founder	Volunteer	Founder	Founder	Volunteer	Founder	Co-founder	Founder

## Results

### I - The politics of belonging and diasporic identities

To use non-mixity as a resistance and organizational tool for long term liberation means to focus inwards, via autonomy as praxis, in respect to the *for us by us* motto. In this sense, and as a participant puts it:

(...) Every time there's a non-mixed thing, white people like to say that it's "without white people, without white people, without white people..." when in fact it's without white people, without men, without everything you want, without anybody! It's between! between North African women! In fact it's without a lot of people, there are a lot of communities that are "forbidden" you see, I would tend to define it on the positive side by saying between something rather than without something (...) I would say that it's a space where we are between whatever you want, a moment of convergence towards the self in order to build ourselves collectively together, just to build ourselves collectively together. (Lola, 2021, Paragraph 128)

To *do together with the self* is to build a sense of belonging as well as consolidate/create a community. In order to create a sense of belonging or a shift from the *self* to the *collectively together* one must apprehend its existence and experience in terms of collectivity. What appears in Lola's narrative is that the definition of a group and its delimitation has to be made in a positive manner. Instead of removing people from the group, they are letting in people who are allowed within its imaginary borders. However, and as I will demonstrate in part three, this is not a homogenous feature, exclusion is a crucial feature of non mixity.

Collective action and identification allow for relationships to evolve, "(...) it is through action that certain feelings of belonging come to be either reinforced or weakened." (Della Porta & Diani, 2006, p. 93) Building a sense of belonging and a collectivity, as described by the

<sup>1</sup> cf appendix n°1 - collective distribution, composition and political orientation

participants, goes through a first step of understanding one's common condition and experience of discriminations within a group:

It is a feeling of belonging that is extremely intimate. As I told you, I have an immigration background and I was torn away from my environment, my space, my language and everything that is linked to that. Finding myself with North African women who share my problems allows me to give life to a part of me, you know, and it also allows me to legitimize what I am experiencing, which is not at all present in the public space, which is not at all present in the environments in which I navigate. (Ingrid, Paragraph 133)

What is important to highlight in this extract from Ingrid's life experience is that talking about a sense of belonging allows to address the displacement phenomenon, change of place in Clark's sense (1990). From a traumatic experience which led Ingrid to feel out of place, she then felt as if she belonged to this collective which gave her back this *part of her*, in other words, her place. Using non mixity as a tool can be ascribed to a deferred strategy that allows in retrospect to maintain a sense of self and place when the latter was challenged.

Alongside this place shifting there is a need for the acknowledgment of injustice and collective trauma that can materialize itself through emotions such as grief as it is the case for this participant : "I feel grief when someone is murdered by the police for example, I feel grief when trans women commit suicide or are killed." (Antonio, paragraph 22) This process of collectivizing one's experience is also referred to by the participants as an "extremely emotional process" (Ingrid, paragraph 50).

However, trauma from oppression is not seen as being the only source for creating a sense of belonging between individuals sharing experiences of discrimination, as Juan puts it:

I have the impression that this is also how I see a community. That is to say, it's not really about facing traumas, it's about how we're really going to make community on struggles, and not just struggles, not just care for example, to be able to talk, it's really about how we're going to get by materially, how we're going to struggle together to get a job, how we're going to struggle together to deal with if I get arrested by a cop, how we're going to deal with it ... just also to be able to move forward and also see what our countries of origin are doing, you know. And to be able to say, actually just to keep learning each other's history, you know, I feel like that... that creates a group too. To be

able to put into words who we are, what we're learning, what we want to share, what...  
culturally too, I suppose. (Juan, Paragraphe 81)

Another participant also emphasizes the need to “collectivize” her experiences of discrimination and to link them to systems of oppression, but also to organize for a struggle on the basis of positivity such as : “talking about our lives, sharing the same humor, sharing the same sayings” (Ingrid, paragraph 135). According to the participants, a community, which is the location of a sense of belonging, is characterized by a “resemblance” and a certain responsibility for each other rather than a geographical affiliation : “ the \*name of her collective\* it's really to have this community spirit in fact, to be one body together and to support each other to move forward and if only that already... It's political” (Luisa, paragraph 64).

They address belonging to a diaspora rather than a nation which is also present in Juan’s narrative as he talks about caring and knowing about what their countries of origin are doing and their histories. Mobilizing the concept of diaspora means to refer to an ongoing process of (re)identification via collective as well as individual narratives and memories around journeys, imagined and territorial borders and communities. It underlies a certain materiality which allows for the analysis of power dynamics and relations dynamics within and between diasporas as well as with other groups of a population. Avtar Brah (1996) links the concept of diaspora to a home and a dispersion although not all diaspora ought to fulfill a “homing desire” (Brah, 1996, p.189), they always involve a dispersion of a population creating hence a “multi-placedness of home in the diasporic imaginary” (Brah, 1996, p.189). This multilocality does not undermine the preexistence of roots to a homeland whether it is being imagined or experienced. In sum, and according to Brah’s analysis : “the concept of diaspora refers to multi-locationality within and across territorial, cultural and psychic boundaries” (Brah, 1996, p.189). Non-mixity, as it enables the elaboration of a narrative around a homeland (experienced or imagined), plays an important role in the making of diasporic identities.

Between being understood, included, finding your community, recognizing oneself in a group, *not being alone* seems to be one of the key features of belonging to a collective. One of the participants says that it helped her to feel less alone because evolving in a predominantly white environment prevented her from sharing discriminatory experiences in an emancipatory manner. *Not being alone*, in what they experience and what they see, relates

to a state of sanity and mental stability through sharing experience with others that “look like them”, don’t deny their identities, reassure them in the veracity and systemic dimension of their experience of discrimination. They refer to a state of loneliness marked by the feeling of “being crazy” or “paranoid” because of the belief that their experiences of discrimination are not systemic as they have no space to share their trauma before being involved in activism. Furthermore, it allows for conscientization and politicization. Besides the impact on individuals in terms of class consciousness, politicization and mental health there is a collective dimension in the elaboration of a sense of belonging via non mixity. Indeed, Ingrid refers to a mutual responsibility, they understand belongings as being responsible for each others’ well being and security.

According to Nira Yuval-Davis in *The politics of belonging: intersectional contestations* (2011) and drawing from Micheal Ignatieff definition of belonging, to belong means to be attached emotionally, one feels like one belongs when feeling at home and safe, as per the previous descriptions made by the participants. Once a sense of belonging is acquired and responsibility for each others’ well being is ascribed to members of the community, it is easier to address the struggle for political existence. Indeed, all participants have highlighted a struggle to exist in the political, mediatic and social landscape, sometimes addressed as invisibilization and sometimes as a lack of concern. The struggle for political existence is one of the reasons non-mixity is mobilized within their activism. A participant explains that : “In fact, Brown people are totally invisible in France, whereas France has a colonial past in India and it is this past that explains why we are now in France, why we are French. And so we decided to create our own collective.” (Marta transcript, Paragraph 2). Multiple reasons for this invisibilization or lack of concern are mentioned within participants’ narratives. A first one, as per Marta’s phrasing is the denial of historical consideration and the negation of the impact of imperialism and populations’ displacement through colonialism. Another interviewee evokes the *either/or* dilemma that north-african women face within French activism:

In terms of politics it's [north african feminism] not yet a full-fledged thing, because we've noticed that North African women are going to have to choose between anti-racism and feminism, so they're either going to go towards groups that are anti-racist, anti-imperialist, groups against police violence, groups that are also Muslim communities. Uh, or they're going to go to more feminist groups. But then mixed

feminist. And that's why we claim to be a North African feminist because we want to self-organize (Carmen Transcript, Paragraph 82)

The need for political existence stems from a denial and invisibilization from dominant society but also within activist groups themselves. In a very complex fashion, some identities are disregarded in a variety of activist groups from liberal to far-left, from white feminism to antiracist movements.

In the chapter 'The theoretical subject(s) of This Bridge Called My Back and Anglo-American Feminism' written by Norma Alarcon published in *Making Face, Making Soul. Haciendo Caras* (1990) three main stages of the white/mainstream feminist movements are evoked. First, the class factor and the race factor are seen as peripheral in social structures. Then they are deemed peripheral on the pretext that they lack information about these realities. Finally when a focus is made on marginalized women's lives it is merely on a descriptive level (Alarcon, 1990, p. 359). One of the participants reflects on white feminism and says: "Actually in the term of feminism, of groups of predominantly white people they're still deciding whether they can accept trans women or women who wear headscarves, so (laughs) they're behind, they're very very behind." (Carmen, Paragraph 72). In a similar manner, one participant talks about her experience with racially-mixed feminist groups : "This white feminism, I never felt (sound of mouth signifying disinterest) because this thing with the veiled women it made me feel bad, because I was always brought back to the position of Arab!". Finally another interviewee remembers an anecdote where she was put behind, in the background :

Well at one point I said "ah maybe we can do a little thing on anti-Semitism" I had been there for like a year and a half. (...) They were down, there was one girl who wasn't very down but the others were down.(...) And in fact, after we had said that we would do it at the meeting in two weeks, the meeting in two weeks came up and I admit I didn't put it on the agenda, but I thought it was obvious! And in fact I was supposed to do a little presentation, and they were like: "ah but we don't have time!" It was a thing, but it's not a thing, I think it's a thing that bothers them, I don't know (Adéla, paragraph 18)

These mechanisms participate in the delegitimization of individuals' sense of belonging and place. According to Audre Lorde (1984), this common denominator (gender), that makes mainstream feminist movements solely about (cisgendered) men and women's equality, is

sustained by the idea of - and will to create a - Sisterhood. Not only, this *gender standpoint epistemology* (Alarcon, 1990), ignores racial differences among women and its consequences and fragilizes women's movement in itself, but also, defining women's experiences through the prism of white-cis-middle-class-liberal-women's lives has an othering impact on racialized women and queer people. The exclusion, invisibilization and silencing of racialized and marginalized individuals through feminist history has led to a need from those put in the margins to self-organize in a non-mixed form in order to address and tackle down oppressions that are unique and inherent to their identities.

## **II - Inclusion exclusion logics**

Throughout the interviews I have noticed multiple mentions of these logics and how they actually take place. Inclusion/exclusion mechanisms, according to the material, rely on one's well being in the group shaped by how inclusive a group is. One's inclusion in a collective is based on three elements: 1) the alignment of one's political view (often characterized by its radicality) with the groups'; 2) racialization (through the example of white passing) and; 3) their embeddedness in specific networks (virtual or real), which I will not elaborate on.

Concerning the political alignment, several participants have underscored their need for organization based on radicalism defined as such : "radicality means that what is expected is a radical change in fact, radical is that we simply attack the system. It is that the system is to be revised and we attack the system, its institutions, its machinery etc." (Antonio, Paragraph 40). Radicality, coupled with revolutionary practice on which they based their collective identity as well as selectivity, is described as a "core", "basis", a "necessity" that cannot be negotiated as opposed to the reformist stance. They do not consider working with people who are not radical enough, as there is no negotiation possible: they expect them to leave without explicitly excluding anyone. Before this radical outcome that is exclusion, there are attempts to conform members/newcomers to radicality via a variety of measures including what they named "training". Trainings consists of education from confirmed members of collectives to newcomers in forms of weekends or workshops. They do pedagogical work to inform new members on the political stance of the collective, its organization and infuse radicality in their approaches to social problems. Other ways of selection also exist, they make use of official applications via fill-up forms where you can find questions such as

“How did you discover the collective?” or “Why do you wish to become a member?”. Here, radicalism can be understood as a frame, hence one can only access the collective if 1) they belong, 2) they present a form of “frame alignment” (Della Porta & Diani, 2006, p.87) which can be acquired if one is willing to take part in pedagogy.

Basically, what happened was that we started to establish the basis of how we wanted to deal with the dynamics, whether it was extra-community or intra-community, and as a result, some people left because we had very violent harassment, so some people who couldn't deal with that left. There were also people who left because they didn't necessarily agree with the majority as we wanted to deal with negrophobia for example. And so it was already a first disagreement with some people for whom, as we are North African in France and we are dominated, we cannot dominate other people. So that was the main disagreement. (Carmen, Paragraph 40)

While Antonio recounts an event in which his collective had to face miscommunication that led to exclusion of white passing people during a protest for LGBTQ rights, he addresses :

How can I put it, a very simple example but the question of the white pass, it is something. That is to say that there are people who consider that if you pass as white it means that you are not racialized. But in fact, this is a way of seeing racialization that is specific to a certain category of the population, that is to say, people from a certain immigration from the South (signs quotation marks) I don't know how to say it, but yeah. But in fact there are other processes of racialization, a Jewish person who white pass in fact will not be racialized because of his skin color for example. In the same way, you can have a name, a first name or a family name that will racialize you or things like that, so I think that this is something that needs to be settled because in fact the cortege that we had done for the pride, same, the pride for example there are people within the cortege that told the white pass to get out except that there were Jewish people and so. (Antonio, Paragraph 101)

In the meantime, Adéla, a jewish woman who passes as white, recalls an experience she encountered within a racially non-mixed collective that has ceased to exist now where she further describes feeling out of place and asking herself if she actually belongs :

[Talking about a racially non-mixed event she attended] I was too embarrassed, you know, all this shame I was feeling. And so I arrive in this room, where there was the \*name of the student collective in non-mixed race that has ceased to exist\* It was my first meeting in a racially non-mixed setting and there is a girl who looks at me and says, nicely, "but you're here for what? "I said "because I'm Jewish" (almost whispering), she looked at my friend and said "but Jews are the dominant ones, what the hell is she doing here?" What the hell am I doing here, I shouldn't have come here and all. Then we sit down and we go around the table, and there's a girl who says "what the hell is she doing here, she's white" after that it depends on how you use the concept of whiteness (...), I think we have to rework this concept of whiteness you know to include the Jews, the Roma etc. if we think in terms of domination relationships you know. (Adéla, paragraph 22)

Racialized people and sexual and gender minorities seem to have had to face delegitimization multiple times whether through the process of racialization as described above or via a double imperative which yields to what I call the *either/or* dilemma articulated by several participants in their narratives. This imperative is no exception within non-mixed organizations of either gender non-mixity or racial non-mixity. Three of the participants recall the feeling of being ascribed to their race, bearing the role of having to bring it up and problematize it in a double movement of instrumentalization and negation since there is no actual will to put the problem of racism forward. This double movement creates an identity paradox where they feel the need to assert themselves as racialized but also wish to come to terms with it. One of the informants links it to internalize racism, in his words :

I'm talking about coming to terms with your identity, the way you identify yourself and so on. I think when you're doing inter-association stuff, you remember that you're black. I think that there is something more complex in it because the way white queers see us is a little bit weird in fact. We are seen as racialized queers, it's good for them because it looks nice in the demonstration, but in fact... well... It's a little bit complex because we want to assert ourselves as racialized people but we know very well that we are going to look easily aggressive. There's something about it because internalized racism is not just something where you become aware that it's there and then you don't do it anymore. Because, it's not just a question of internalized racism, it's also a bit of a fear of the fallout of racism in fact (Antonio, Paragraph 157)

According to McGarry and Jasper (2015), collective identity entails an “assimilation dilemma” (Jasper & McGarry, 2015, p.7) in the sense that they are facing two options, one is to ascribe oneself to the group because of potential gain from this identification, the other is to refuse this identification by denying or hiding it. Although one can only hide it within the limit of its destigmatization, which for racial and ethnic identification is harder to achieve. In the meantime, Lola, who, before the creation of her collective with north african women and gender and sexual minorities, was enrolled in a antiracist organization that was racially non-mixed (now dissolved by the government), explains how she had to face this dilemma, the *either/or* dilemma where she had to pick between her race and her gender. She finally decided to create a collective where both were addressed concomitantly as she perceived them as non-extricable from each other.

Finally, feeling good or one’s well-being also depends on internal dynamics. According to Melucci (1995) internal difficulties may arise from the fluidity of identities, as it is a process of collective production of meaning towards action, there is a continual redesigning of identities (Jasper & McGarry, 2015, p.9). This redesigning allows for differences to appear and sometimes to exacerbate. Most of the participants have addressed these difficulties as inter/intra communities dynamics which makes them say that non mixity is not an end but a means for better collective action. As inter/intra communities dynamics, negrophobia, antisemitism, misogyny, transphobia, lesbophobia are quoted:

Afterwards, I think that what can pose a problem within \*name of the collective\* is in fact the intra-community and inter-community dynamics because ... how to put it... it's a mix that's chosen in fact, so it's queer-racialized, so that doesn't prevent negrophobia, it doesn't prevent trans-phobia, there are things that it doesn't prevent. I think that all people experience this when they are not surrounded by black people, exclusively I mean. So I think that sometimes there are negrophobic biases in what happens, but in reality, it doesn't impress me too much, generally the problem is resolved quickly" (Antonio, Paragraph 97)

These inter/intra communities dynamics are validating and invalidating at the same time the use of non mixity. Indeed, even though it is seen as reducing oppression (i.e. quasi-safety) it seems to crystallize inter/intra communities tensions and power dynamics. Despite this issue that all participants address, Pavel and Juan underscore that such discrimination within a non-mixed collective is inevitable. Pavel addresses it as a logical continuity of discriminatory

ideologies that transcends race, class and gender and a failure to reflect upon it beforehand, which therefore legitimates non-mixity as a tool to specifically tackle down and deconstruct such dynamics. He takes the example of his collective composed exclusively with North african women and sexual and gender minorities and their relationship to black north african individuals :

I mean... we feel better than if we were with white people, and so they feel better than if they were with white people, because in the idea we are white compared to them so... it's not... fundamentally a failure... well the failure is already there in fact. It's logical! You can't expect to be able to include everyone and then have everyone automatically feel included when you see everything that has happened before and continues to happen (Pavel, Paragraph 80)

To be included in a non mixed collective means to be able to rely on trust and reflexivity notably through discussion which appears as intertwined in participants' narratives. According to Adela, non-mixity : “ allows you to put things down and talk to each other, really talk about the problems, the stuff that's going and the stuff that's not really going well, with a, I don't know like a trust thing, I don't know why (...)” (Adéla, Paragraph 42). Trust is described by Gerlach and Hine in Della Porta and Diani (2006) as enabling the resistance to repression and allowing for help and solidarity to exist between activists of the same collective (Della Porta & Diani, 2006, p. 94). Every step of organization and collective mobilisation relies on constant questioning and dialogical reflexivity. The collective identity is always in negotiation, it is never an end nor an achievable objective but rather a continuum, a dialogical process.

### **III - Dialogical process**

Sarah Maddison as quoted in McGarry and Jasper (2015) argues that : “the apparent unity of collective action is discursively constructed through movement participants' reflective discussion and contestation over ends, means and fields of action” (Jasper & McGarry, 2015, p.10). Non-mixity allows for a certain dialogical process to take place and is also constructed discursively.

Through dialogue and discourse within a frame of radicality they manage to produce a specific culture of their collectives. A culture is defined as providing “cognitive apparatus

which people need to orient themselves in the world” (Della Porta & Diani, 2006, p. 73). Also, this apparatus includes “cultural and ideational elements” (Della Porta & Diani, 2006, p. 73) as well as “informal practices such as language, conversations, stories (...)” (Della Porta & Diani, 2006, p. 73) etc. Hence, it is correct to posit collectives’ activity as “symbolic production” (Della Porta & Diani, 2006, p. 74). Participants refer to culture multiple times as “common bases” which always seems as one of the most important features of coming together, Marta emphasizes: “I think that we have these common bases, but obviously we each have our own identities and we also understand the world differently I think. But I think the most important thing is that we have these common bases” (Marta, Paragraph 8). The multiplicity of their identities as well as their divergence from each other can be conciliated and mediated via these common bases. Common bases can be expected to be acquired before enrollment in a collective, it is verified via individual interviews as it was the case for one of the participants (Ingrid), or collective interview as for another participant’s enrollment (Pavel). Ingrid recalls : “I know that when I joined the collective, for example, I spoke with a member of the collective to see if we really agreed on the same things. For the negrophobia stuff, I don't know, like basic stuff... lgbt or queer stuff and that's how it's done.” (Ingrid, paragraph 158). Although there is a selection before enrollment in the collective, it is possible to acquire those common bases once you become a member. Indeed, one of the interviewee tends to highlight the pedagogical dimension of their work in non-mixity lifted by a profound care and love for one another :

There is also the pedagogical aspect that comes into play, there are people who are not aware of all the mechanisms at play in negrophobia, in terms of institutional negrophobia. Even if there are people who don't understand from A to Z what it is concretely, the ins and outs of it all, we also have this capacity to explain this, well to feed each other politically in fact. Because it is something that is important in the struggle, but also important that we all understand! So, in addition to the values that we want to transmit to the outside world, of course we apply them even a thousand times, I have the impression, within our collective. Because there is also this need to protect each other because in militant life it can be very tiring, very draining. So I think that this trust and mutual understanding is also there naturally. But in addition, in the context of the work, in the context of the struggle, there is the aspect of mutual protection, of the desire to protect together. (Luisa, Paragraph 72)

Luisa also refers to this pedagogy that takes place within dialogical interaction, i.e. training, on demand from the members. She refers to it as a training program covering *everything* in order to even up the “level of information” of participants and “give each other the keys” (Luisa, paragraph 74) always in a benevolent manner. When Lola traces back the formation of her collective she talks about the role that discussion played in this making. It was through discussion that political divergences appeared and were tackled, notably towards the question of positioning the collective in regards to other forms of feminism (e.g. white feminism, afrofeminism etc.) and intra-community violence. It is also through “simple discussions” and/or “in depth discussions” (Ingrid, paragraph 158) that participants make sure to dissipate conflicts and divergences of political opinions as per Ingrid’s words: “ there's always a way to discuss, to negotiate, to mediate, to learn pedagogy, to evolve.” (Ingrid, paragraph 165). Discussion between non-mixed collectives, and their participants, are also beneficial for the deepening of reflections around inter/intra-community discriminations such as islamophobia and antisemitism. Based on collective identity, culture, sense of belonging, frame alignment and trust a certain level of mutual understanding can be achieved.

Within non-mixity, the speech genre is one of complexity in the sense that it opens up to an intellectual and reflexive space that is less accessible in other settings. I will give four examples of complexity based on the narratives of four participants. Namely : 1) the affirmation of cultural differences after erasure by colonialism and imperialism; 2) the need for intra-community justice or transformative justice; 3) the construction of identities beyond the dualism colonizer/colonized; 4) the production of (under-investigated) knowledge through documentation.

For the first example, while talking about religious and familial practices influenced both by hinduism and caribbean legacies, Marta discloses that : “ The goal is really both, it simplifies for the outside world, in fact it helps us to take a clearer position in front of the outside world, and at the same time internally it helps us to complexify our identities, to explore in fact the complexity of our identities.”(Marta, Paragraph 97). The exploration of the complexity of their identities is mainly possible via non-mixity as they can prune basic introductions to their identities which they would have to make in a mixed setting. It then allows for deeper intellectualization, investigation and commemoration of their cultural genealogies.

In a second example, Pavel and Carmen articulate the dialogical process with concrete actions. As non mixity allows for a certain dialogic economy : “we don't have to re-explain

the why and wherefore” (Pavel, paragraph 58). It also lets them “move on to all the other things that nobody talks about because they can't get there because they waste so much time with the things before.” (Ibid). In this specific anecdote, he refers to anticarceralism and practical solutions to prevent the need for legal institutions and police. Carmen reflects upon the same topic as she talks about intra-community violence. Discussion within non-mixity appears as a toolkit provider in facing outside debates :

Today I can talk about intra-community violence in public (...), not just to be able to say it in a testimonial mode but really to be able to explain and analyze it, it is because in non-mixity we have been able to understand all this. We were able to really have advanced reflections on the subject, that really allows us to go further on the subjects of reflection (Carmen, Paragraph 104)

Thirdly, Lola argues that the dialogic process within non-mixity renders visible the lack of knowledge around complex dynamics that are at play within North African histories. She talks about a binary identification to the colonizer/colonized when it seems to be more complex, according to her : “It implies to rethink the Arab heritage differently, (...) I think for example of Islam, I think of the Arab identity, of Arabness, we are put in the head that it is anti-colonial by essence, that it is the liberation. And in the end, I don't think so.” (Lola, Paragraph 100) In other words, it seems that the display of an Arabness or Arab identity is not enough to be efficiently decolonial, being in a non-mixed setting allows for more reflection and questioning of identities and their role in anti-colonial work. This participant had the space and time to further analyze what being a north-african woman means and how the understanding of such a position can be a tool for decolonial progress. Furthermore, for the fourth and last example, she explains that non mixity allows for discussion around new forms of knowledge production about under-investigated areas such as violence towards north african and muslim women in France.

## **Conclusion**

Non-mixity, while putting autonomy in the center of activism practices, is seen as a means to achieve social justice, emancipation and equality as they are speaking for themselves on their own terms. Activists using such a tool believe that only them can and should address their struggle, not only because they have been invisibilized from wider

movements but also because their struggle is subject to instrumentalization once hijacked by mainstream movements.

As I have demonstrated throughout this thesis, non-mixity allows for the elaboration of a sense of belonging to a community, a diaspora but also to collectives. It creates an understanding of a common condition of discrimination via emotions such as joy and trust; it commemorates collective traumas via emotions such as grief; and solidifies the bonds between members as they become attached emotionally to one another, they learn to care and trust for one another). It is then that a shift occurs from a sense of belonging to politics of belonging. They construct this belonging around a particular political project and aim it in such a specific manner : separatistic. It is through politics of belonging that individuals and groups can regain a feeling of legitimation. All of the participants in this study have gone through some kind of delegitimization in the process of displacement for example.

In order to be included in collectives that adopt non-mixity, one should embrace a certain radicality which constitutes the frame of these collectives. Their identities (racialization, sexualities, gender etc.) should overlap with those of the collective hence fitting into the collective identity of the group. They should also have access to a network that enables individual participation and enrollment. Frame building and alignment take place via several processes elaborated by the members of the collectives themselves. It goes from pre-selection steps (interviews, forms, applications etc.) to post-selection activities (i.e. training and pedagogical work). However, for the form of non-mixity investigated in this paper, that is to say racial non-mixity, one should also be racialized according to (either) phenomenological racialization and/or socio-historical racialization. This process of racialization and its complexities create a quasi-safe environment where power imbalances and violences can however exist. Non-mixity allows them to work on these violences which are categorized as inter/intra communities dynamics and are seen as constitutive of activist work as members understand their embeddedness in bigger ideologies that transcend class, race, religion, gender and sexualities. In the past, members of such collectives have been faced with the *either/or* dilemma where parts of their identities were both negated and instrumentalized. This double effect creates what I called an identity paradox where they wish to assert and extract themselves from the notion of race at the same time.

This complexity is reflected upon and elaborated in these collectives. It is via dialogical processes that the complexity of the creation and sustainability of a collective

“We” is addressed. It takes place during ongoing social practices (e.g. training) coupled with discursive structures (that of radicality) consisting of frames and discourses conveying meaning. Discourse can therefore be seen as a multivocal practice helping to build or participate in the collectives’ culture. Indeed, individualities are always connected to a certain relationality to others especially through dialogue and dialogical relationships. It requires mutual engagement and acknowledgment of others’ individualities and specificity while staying away from the desire to make one strong unity as it is solely an aim one tries to reach through dialogical processes (Allen-Collisson & Owton, 2014, p.286).

Dialogical process, inclusion and exclusion logics as well as the creation of politics of belongings build collective identities as “necessary fictions” (Jasper & McGarry, 2015, p.2). Fictions, because they rely on members’ imagination to envision a collective struggle as well as to collectively construct meanings and cultures, and the borders of identities are fluid and negotiable according to a group’s concerns and interests. Necessary, because they allow for mobilization and collective action to take place while tackling every specificity that the multiplicity and complexity of identities entails. This idea of necessary fictions makes possible the identification of paradoxes and dilemmas as it tries to articulate at the same time fixed and fluid identities. Using Gayatri Spivak’s concept of “strategic essentialism” or “operational essentialism” to refer to an essence is necessary for the political existence of a struggle while it crystallizes individuals and groups within categories that they wish to abolish (Jasper & McGarry, 2015, p.2).

This thesis has attempted to address the gap highlighted in the exploration of previous research on the topic. It is a subject that is in great need of further research as it is actually questioned and tackled in politics and media especially in France. This practice, the use of this tool, is often seen as controversial and as a form of deviance derived from extreme communitarianism. As seen in the introduction, in France it has been a struggle to establish non mixity as a necessary tool for self-organizing within activism because of backlash and legal restrictions that have been recently voted on. To name and address non mixity within research and activism can be seen as a new perspective in France in regards to the reactions it provokes. Even though separatism is not a new practice, its struggle for legitimization and acknowledgment has taken a new turn these past three years in France. A specific attention and comprehension of this tool is then important in the light of the hostile environment it evolves in.

Further research on the role of emotion, the coalitions/alliance work, and in depth analysis of its mechanisms and impacts on identities and structures could allow for a greater understanding of such a tool as well as participate in the legitimization of its uses while highlighting its limitations. Such analysis could benefit directly grassroots activist groups as they could extrapolate analyses into praxis and reach for a better understanding of what is at stake in the idea of non-mixity.

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## Appendix n°1 - Collectives distribution, compositions and political orientations

collective	members interviewed	Composition	Non mixed	Actions	Political definition	Location
A	3	black people	YES	Protest, artistic creation, aid, production of knowledge, pedagogy	afrofeminist, anti capitalist, anti-imperialist, panafricanist	Paris
B	1	racialized queers	YES	Protest, conviviality, aid	anti-capitalist, anti queerphobias, antiracist	Paris
C	3	north african women and gender and sexual minorities	YES	pedagogy, protest, production of knowledge,	decolonial feminism, anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist, antiracist, against islamophobia and antisemitism	Paris
D	1	south asian women and gender and sexual minorities	YES	visibility, pedagogy, production of knowledge	decolonial feminism, anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist, antiracist	Paris
E	1	jewish women and gender and sexual minorities	YES	visibility, pedagogy, protest, production of knowledge	decolonial feminism, anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist, antiracist, against islamophobia and antisemitism	Paris
F	1	racialized and queer artists	NO	visibility, artistic creation and opportunities	anti-capitalist, antiracist, decolonial feminism	Paris - Marseille
G	1	Trans racialized	NO	visibility,	anti-capitalist, anti	Paris -

		men		pedagogy, production of knowledge	queerphobias, antiracist	Marseille
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## **Appendix n°2 - Consent form**

### **Information to participants about the student Master project “Non-mixity as an organizational and resistance tool for collective identification within French radical activist groups”**

The aim of the project “Non-mixity as an organizational and resistance tool for collective identification within French radical activist groups” (subject to change) is to investigate the mechanisms and conditions of mobilization of non-mixity within french activism. The subject is interesting because there is not enough research on non-mixity as a tool within activism and no use of social movement theories to elaborate on such uses. Also the claim of my thesis goes against the dominant discourse around racial non-mixity that based itself on racist ideology and political agenda.

The study is a student project that will result in a Master thesis within the Master Program in Sociology at the University of Gothenburg. The study is conducted independently by the student Lina Abazine, and the responsible supervisor is Cathrin Wasshede, Associate Professor at the Department of Sociology and Work Science (see further contact info below). The project adheres to the ethical principles of the Swedish Research Council for research in the humanities and social science research. Information about research ethical information for participants see below.

#### **Data Collection**

The data collection consists of qualitative interviews that are audio/video recorded with the consent of participants.

#### **Voluntary participation and non-disclosure**

Participation is voluntary and anonymous. All participants involved in the project are covered by professional secrecy. Personal names are not registered or will be exchanged for fake names when interviews are transcribed and encoded. This also applies to organisations etc. Participation takes place on the research participants' terms. The participant can choose to cancel the participation at any time.

### **Handling of collected material**

Material such as recordings and notes are kept locked away and are only available to authorized researchers. Some material: interviews will be transcribed to computer. The transcribed documents are named and sorted by fake names and dates. In the final thesis, shorter anonymous extracts from interviews may be cited. The collected material and interview transcriptions will not be used for any purpose other than scientific research and for teaching purposes than under the conditions described herein. The results may be presented in scientific article or report.

### **Results and publication**

The results of the study will be published in the form of a Master thesis that is to be completed on 4th of June. Participants will then be able to download the essay from GUPEA. Participants are also welcome to attend the presentation of the project on the 25th of June.

### **For questions and further information, please contact:**

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