

Université de Montréal

ETHNIC IDENTITY AND SCHOOL AMBITION:  
THE CASE OF SECOND GENERATION YOUTH FROM A LATIN-  
AMERICAN IMMIGRATION BACKGROUND IN MONTREAL

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Mémoire présenté à la Faculté des études supérieures  
En vue de l'obtention du grade de  
Maître ès sciences (M. Sc.) en sociologie

Décembre 2014

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Université de Montréal  
Faculté des arts et des sciences

Ce mémoire intitulé:  
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## **REMERCIEMENTS À...**

À ma directrice de recherche, Estelle Carde, qui a su m'écouter, me comprendre et me guider, et qui a contribué à faire de moi, officiellement, une sociologue.

Au CREMIS et au département de sociologie de l'Université de Montréal qui ont investi en moi.

À tous mes participants, qui ont partagé un peu d'eux-mêmes pour m'aider dans mon parcours scolaire.

À tous mes amis et parenté qui m'ont aidée à trouver ces participants et toutes les autres personnes qui avaient mes études à cœur.

Et finalement, un gros merci à mes parents, qui ont quitté le Pérou en juin 1990, en plein terrorisme, pour arriver à Montréal, à l'âge de 36 ans, avec deux enfants âgés de 5 et 9 ans, et ma mère enceinte de moi de 7 mois, devant reprendre leur vie à zéro, sans famille ni amis, pour que leurs enfants aient une meilleure vie... Gracias.

## **THANKS TO...**

To my research director, Estelle Carde, who listened, understood and guided me, and who has contributed to make me an official sociologist.

To CREMIS and the sociology department of the University of Montreal who invested in me.

To all my participants who shared a bit of themselves to help me in my studies.

To all friends and family who helped me find these participants, and all others who had my school success at heart.

And finally, a special thanks to my parents, who left Peru in June 1990 because of terrorism, to arrive in Montreal at the age of 36, with two children aged 5 and 9, and my mom 7 months pregnant of me, having to start from scratch with no family nor friends, so that their children could benefit of a better life... Gracias

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## Résumé

Ce mémoire propose d'étudier l'articulation entre l'identité ethnique (à l'adolescence) et l'ambition scolaire – ici définie comme l'ensemble des motivations, des moyens de persévérance et du niveau scolaire – notamment à travers les concepts d'assimilation et de la résistance culturelle (McAndrew 2008). Nous nous intéressons aux jeunes issus de l'immigration latino-américaine à Montréal. Il s'agit d'une analyse qualitative, plus précisément d'analyse de discours qui nous a permis de comprendre comment leurs expériences et leurs représentations des Latinos et des Québécois influencent leur identification ethnique ainsi que leurs perceptions et décisions en milieu scolaire.

Les résultats de cette étude démontrent que l'identification ethnique, en corrélation avec le statut socio-économique et le genre, semble être liée à l'ambition scolaire. Malgré une certaine confirmation de la relation classique entre statut socio-économique et niveau de scolarité, les discours des participants ont permis de faire ressortir une particularité ethnique susceptible de contribuer à expliquer le choix de continuer aux études supérieures. Cet impact est plus important chez les jeunes femmes de notre échantillon; celles avec le niveau de scolarité le moins élevé, ont un statut socio-économique moindre et s'identifient davantage à la culture latino, en contraste avec celles les plus éduquées ayant aussi un statut socio-économique supérieur et qui s'identifiaient davantage à la culture québécoise.

**Mots-clés** : éducation, identité ethnique, Latino-Américain, Montréal, ethnicité

## Abstract

This thesis proposes to study the articulation between ethnic identity and school ambition – here defined as the motivations, the means to persevere and the level of academia – namely through the concept of cultural assimilation or resistance (McAndrew 2008). We focus our research on youth from Latin-American immigration background in Montreal. This qualitative research, more precisely analysis of discourse, has allowed us to understand how their experiences and their representations of Latinos and Quebecers influence their ethnic identification as well as their perceptions and decisions concerning school.

The results of this study demonstrate that ethnic identification, in correlation with socio-economic status and gender, seems to be related to school ambition. Although our findings have somewhat confirmed the association between socio-economic status and years of schooling, the discourses of our participants have underlined an ethnic particularity that offers a possible explanation for continuing into the highest levels of education. This impact is more significant amongst the young women in our sample; those with the lower level of education and the least socio-economic status, identified more to the Latin culture, as opposed to those with the highest level of education as well as highest socio-economic status, identified more to the Quebecker culture.

**Keywords** : education, ethnic identity, Latin-American, Montreal, ethnicity

# Introduction

I knew from college years that I wanted to teach in college. I needed a master's degree. When I first started my masters, I still did not have a specific subject for my thesis. It's only when I realized I was the only Latin-American from Montreal in my classes, while the other 'Latinos' in my program had immigrated here at an adult age to study in university, that an idea emerged in my mind. Why am I in school, in university, in a graduate program, when all the Latinos from Montreal I know, aren't (including my older brothers)? Having been taught by my parents that education is really important for South Americans (so they say), what is it that happens through the process of immigration that seems to weaken the transmission of the importance of education to the younger generations? Those questions led me to do this master's thesis. After reading a bit and reflecting on this research project, I decided to dig deeper into the relationship between ethnic identity and school ambition in younger generations from a Latin-American immigration background in Montreal.

Furthermore, studies on similar subjects seem to rarely focus on one ethnic group. Rare are, too, the studies on these ethnic groups and their performance at the university level. Hopefully, this thesis will be a refreshing one in the arena of sociology and education research in Montreal.

## Context

*Montreal is the only place in the world where people will speak in like – two people will speak in three different languages in the same conversation, like they'll mix words in the middle of sentences from three different languages and the other will know exactly what the other's talking about. That makes it very unique, very rare, and that that makes me very proud. I think it's one of the most beautiful things in the world. I think it's a, I think it's a spirit that stands to be emulated elsewhere.*  
-Emiliano

If you are a true Montrealer, when you think of Montreal, you think of ethnic diversity. You think of China town's bubble tea, Parc Extension's Indian threading, Outremont's French restaurants, St-Laurent street's African club Balattou, Côte-des-Neiges's shish taouk, St-Michel's griot and the list is endless. This big city welcomes 70% of Québec's international immigration (Kanouté et LLevot Clavet 2008, 164). This reality is more than ever present in elementary and high schools since 52% of these students are born outside of Quebec (and Canada), born in Quebec with parents born in a foreign country, or born in Quebec with at least one parent born in a foreign country (idem).

Many scholars interested by this diversity, have studied the integration of these immigrants, whether it is in the educational system or in the work force. Whether it is to relate the disparities between ethnic groups, the issue of disqualification that educated immigrants face, the discrimination some minority groups are victim of, the school success or failure of ethnic minority youths, or the general cultural adaptation of all ethnic groups, there seems to be an omnipresent concern in Quebec politics to integrate immigrants and embrace diversity.



This thesis will address a similar issue. The focus here will be on the children of immigrants, which we will consider here as ‘second generation’<sup>1</sup>, and their educational integration. While much research has been done at elementary or high school levels, this essay proposes to push this analysis further, to discover how the relationship between ethnicity and education evolves at the university level. More specifically, young adults from a Latin-American immigration will constitute the population of interest for this research. Brazilians are not taken into account because of the different language of use and because most immigration from Latin-America to Montreal come from Hispanic countries (Garcia Lopez 2003). This essay will not pretend to explain indisputably the relationship between ethnicity and education but will try to interpret and analyse school ambition through ethnic identity.

Chapters one and two will propose an overview of the situation in Montreal. Beginning with the broad and complex notion of ethnicity, we will see how immigrants become ethnic and examine how Quebec’s immigration policies have influenced the ethnic dimension of its citizens’ identity. We will explore the specificity of youth and their ethnic identity construction before getting to the case of the Latinos in Montreal. Following this, we will discuss the relationship between education and ethnicity and present our concept of ‘school ambition’, from which we will be able to introduce our research question and theoretical framework. The following chapter will present the methodological choices and justifications, from sampling to methods, to the interview grid and all other aspects relevant to this section. Chapters four will expose the results, in this case, the analytical interpretation of our participants’ discourse.

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<sup>1</sup> We will not use here a common definition of ‘second generation’, but rather, a modified definition derived from the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sport’s definition, which can be found at page 34.

# Chapter 1

## Ethnicity and Immigration: Defining Ethnic Identity in Pluralistic Societies

### 1.1. Ethnicity

#### 1.1.1. A Definition

Defining ethnicity is complex. There has often been an ambiguity between ethnicity, race and nationality. To clarify this vagueness, Weber proposes three different definitions. Race relates to the group you belong to when you are born, it is a social construction based on inherited biological or physical traits. Nationality is driven by political duty and passion, it is assigned along with citizenship. Ethnicity is not inherited, nor political, but socially and culturally constructed. Precisely,

“ces groupes humains (...) nourrissent une croyance subjective à une communauté d’origine fondée sur des similitudes de l’habitus extérieur ou des mœurs, ou des deux, ou sur des souvenirs de la colonisation ou de la migration, de sorte que cette croyance devient importante pour la propagation de la communalisation, peu importe qu’une communauté de sang existe ou non objectivement.” ((Weber [1921] 1971, 416) cited in Streiff-Fénard, Poutignat 1995, 38)

In other words, ethnicity is a more subjective sense of belonging. Although the concept of ethnicity blossomed in the 1970’s, Weber understood early enough in the 1920s the complexity of it. Already at the beginning of the century, he took into account the aspect of migration, which will, years later, be of great relevance.

Nonetheless, this definition is not yet complete. Not only do people define themselves in cultural and historical terms, but also in response to how others perceive them. We call these

external attributions, in opposition to internal attributions, and both are part of what is called in theoretical terms, ethnic barriers. They establish flexible boundaries between ethnic groups, each composed of individuals sharing similar communal interest. These boundaries are both defined by themselves and by others, to designate this group and eventually other groups, which are all different from one another (Streiff-Fénard, Poutignat 1995). Consequently, following the premise that ethnicity is not a static construction but a dynamic one, we also understand that a group's ethnicity can change through time and is influenced by its environment. The ethnic barriers materialize when actors subjectively seek for unity and togetherness with some, while affirming different interests from others, in a given time and place. Individuals affiliate to those similar to them, according to selected criteria. The selection of such barriers is based on a self-attributed ethnic identity and, by contrast, on other ethnic traits reinforced by the societal or external attribution. Individuals affiliate to those similar to them, according to selected criteria.

According to Streiff-Fénard and Poutignat (1995), Barth's notion of ethnic group is not defined by its culture but by its ethnic barriers precisely. Individuals, within society, will deal with these to either include or exclude themselves from a group. In other words, the interactions between individuals in society are influenced by the normative expectations of the other's behavior, based on one's perception of the other's ethnicity. It becomes a form of social organization in the sense that these actors will purposely affirm their barriers to maintain a distance, or open them up to include the other person in their more intimate sphere.

This definition of ethnicity as we now understand and use, is a reflection of the historical and social reality. Before this concept peaked in the Anglo-Saxon social sciences in the 1970s, it was merely another term to identify 'other' cultures, other than the western or American one.

Poutignat and Streiff-Fenart (1995) trace the first use of the term as a social category in the 1940s, by Warner who employed it as another socio-demographic characteristic such as gender, age or religion (p.22); like these, ethnicity shapes and is shaped by the social system, it is no longer a term to define 'others'. Later in the 1960s, this concept developed into more than a socio-demographic characteristic and became a sense of belonging to a community. From the end of this decade into the next one, more and more 'ethnic' claims and battles appeared on the map. In the United-States, the civil rights movement of the Afro-Americans is probably the biggest and most famous one. Other movements emerged around the globe: the regional movement in France, the linguistic battle in Canada, etc. (p.25). For such events, Barth's analysis of ethnicity through ethnic barriers offers a possible understanding of the complex dynamic which unfolds from many ethnic groups interacting. In the *zeitgeist* of these years, many more social scientists will dig deeper into this concept of ethnicity in the 1970s and until this day.

Yet, despite this growing interest in ethnicity in the XXth century, one might argue that ethnicity already existed centuries ago. Indeed, having to interact and negotiate ethnic barriers with 'different' people is a social interaction that has been present for as long as humans have formed groups. However, the emergence of this concept made it difficult to avoid, thus, becoming an important aspect to take into account to understand individual, social or political behavior. While classical sociology focused on social class, the ethnolinguistic battles and, let's not forget, the expansion of immigration fluxes worldwide, seem to have shifted the attention on ethnicity instead of social class. Certainly, the interest of ethnicity lies in the universality of the sense of belonging to an 'ethnic' group, making it a core element for both the individual and the societal levels.

### **1.1.2. From Immigrant to Ethnic**

The idea of ethnic barriers is relevant in the case of migration. Indeed, research about immigration has brought a new dimension in the conceptualization of ethnicity. Immigrants from diverse backgrounds come to live together in another ‘home’ than theirs. How they integrate is a matter scholars have been studying for a while now, but is also a hard and complex question to answer. The Chicago School has reflected on this for many years. According to it, initially, assimilation was the answer to this question and was believed to be the equivalent of eradicating minority groups. This type of integration follows three steps: a minimal adaptation of these individuals to society, followed by the conformism to the ideal citizen model, and ending by the abandonment of the solidarity ties with the original ethnic group (Streiff-Fénard, Poutignat 1995, 72-73). However, through the years, scholars from this School have noticed that instead of accessing all three assimilation steps, these groups adapt by creating a new ethnic group based on their origins but molded by their present social environment. They do not necessarily adhere to all traditional practices from their past country, but they still claim their different status within their new home. This is, in a more sociological term, acculturation, making a transition from ‘immigrant’ to ‘ethnic’ and bringing forward cultural pluralism (p.72).

For many immigrants, their ethnic self-identification process began once they arrived here. Becoming an ‘other’, a different cultural ‘other’, will bring an ethnic consciousness. That is to say that they will construct an ethnic identity based on the elements that make them feel different from this new country, city or neighborhood, and other elements that will help them embrace their new social reality. Ethnic barriers are negotiated to construct their new ethnic identity based on cultural traditions and new cultural and social realities, consequently extending sometimes their criteria of

acceptance or rejection of others in their group, as noticed by the Chicago School. An example of this is the ‘Latinos’ or ‘Hispanics’ in North America. This a socially accepted category (also used by scholars) composed of Salvadorians, Colombians, Peruvians, Chileans, etc. Some may even identify stronger to this broader ethnic identity than to their national identity. What happens often is that their national identity will transform into a more ethnic identity, not so much because of the migration itself, but precisely because, in the process of being an immigrant, they will keep and leave some elements of their culture and either narrow or expand their ethnic barriers when interacting with different people in this new context<sup>2</sup>. But this is not the case for everyone. Depending on where you come from, how many of ‘your people’ (that come from the same country) live in this new context, and other factors, you may adhere to a broader ethnic identity or stick to your national identity. The latter is true about Italians in Montreal for example. Some speak of an ‘Italian colony’ in Montreal (Ramirez, 1981). They have their own neighborhood named ‘little Italy’ in the center east of Montreal with many restaurants and cafes with Italian names such as Milano, Lucca, Da’Enrico, Ellios, etc. and seem to have created and maintained an Italian colony in Montreal<sup>3</sup>.

### **1.1.3. Power Relations in Ethnicity**

Nevertheless, the dynamics behind the construction of ethnic barriers also represent power relations and inequalities between certain ethnic groups. Theorists will explain these discrepancies

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<sup>2</sup> In Montreal, Peruvians and Chileans can both adhere to the supra ethnic identity of Latinos. But in South America, they often don’t like each other. There is an anecdote saying that they are ‘at war’ because both claim doing the original Pisco (alcohol beverage), but there are also historical facts leading to this. To know more : <http://laht.com/article.asp?CategoryId=10717&ArticleId=145866>

<sup>3</sup> On St-Laurent Street, at the corner of St-Zotique, there is an arch with a drawing of Italy and ‘Petite Italie Montréal’ written under. Walking around, it is easy to notice many Italian restaurants, cafes and stores.

in many different terms, and for this matter, two avenues of reflection are relevant. First, social hierarchy, once related to social class, was believed to be the result of the division of labor. Nowadays, this division of labor has evolved along with the changes in society due to immigration. To keep social order, a new division of labor will emerge and continue to serve economical purposes (for the richer) but through the hierarchization of ethnic groups (Streiff-Fénard, Poutignat 1995). Whether these are the new established categories in a capitalist form of division of labor or a continuity and complement of social class conflict, ethnic groups now represent at once a new face of social oppression and a new instrumental means of political power and mobilisation (idem). Common ethnic interest is indeed what bonds individuals together, but it also what differentiates them from, usually, the dominant culture, creating a form of communalism which can be interpreted as a response to unequal relations between ethnic groups (Juteau 1999). Ethnicity then becomes part of a bigger picture where many dynamics are intertwined, dynamics that suggest external and internal attributions to a given ethnic identity but also power relations between ethnic groups.

A second concept that contributes to the analysis of ethnic inequalities is the concept of sociological majority and minority. It is sociological in the sense that it is not the demographic majority that outnumbers the minority which is taken into account, rather, a majority that is dominant in contrast to a minority that usually is the victim of inequality, discrimination, economic struggle, etc. It is in that sense that some scholars use the expressions “minority groups” or even “visible minorities” in regard to ethnic groups. These minorities will often be disadvantaged in many social spheres. For example, this thesis will later focus on school inequalities between ethnic groups, more precisely between Quebeckers and youth from a Latin-American background. In order to understand such discrepancies, we need to consider the complex dynamic between power

relations and ethnic barriers. An example is the theory of self-fulfilling prophecy; “an assumption or prediction that, purely as a result of having been made, causes the expected or predicted event to occur and thus confirms its own ‘accuracy’” (Watzlawick 1984, 392). This is widely used to explain school performance gaps between Whites and Blacks in the United States; teachers expecting young Blacks to perform poorly will influence them to actually perform poorly (Biggs 2009). Moreover, having success in school can be seen as ‘acting White’, thus, discouraging them from academic success and resulting in underachievement in school (Fordham, Ogbu 1986). In this particular case, school success rather seems to be an external ethnic barrier for young Afro-Americans and a trait of the dominant group, the sociological majority of Whites.

To conclude on the subject of ethnicity, the convenience of the theoretical approach of ethnic barriers is that it applies and actually is prior to any context where two or more ethnic groups cohabitate, since it is through them that ethnic groups, as different from one another, are socially and culturally constructed. It confirms at once the universality of ethnicity and the dynamic construction of it. For example, as noted earlier, we have seen how immigrants become ‘ethnic’ through a process of integration, a process that involves creating ethnic boundaries to claim their differences and their traditional culture while negotiating who they want to be related to. This construction varies through time and space, making it changeable but yet universal. Another advantage of this conception of ethnicity is that it puts forward the subjectivity and rationale of the actor, rather than dismissing the actor’s contribution to the construction of ethnicity by categorizing him in a fixed group. Ethnicity is not just a way to classify individuals in large multicultural societies but also an important motor of social interactions and power relations.



## **1.2. Immigration and Ethnicity in Montreal**

### **1.2.1. Quebec's Immigration Policies**

First and foremost, it is essential to have a look at Quebec's history to understand its position towards immigration and explain its immigration fluxes and policies. To begin with, the arrival and colonization of the British and French claiming to be the founding nations of our country, belittling the status of actual natives, initiates a first ethnocentric ideology behind immigration. From that moment, until the late 1800s, peasants from the 'motherland' were exported to the new colonies to work for the economic prosperity of our country. These 'exported' workers were not perceived as immigrants (Bernier 2005). As a result of Canadians' ethnocentricity from both British and French descendants, it is only since the Irish immigrated here, around 1820 due to famine and peasant expropriation, that a certain concept of immigration, and later ethnic group, appeared: a concept that can now be defined as the demand to reside and gain citizenship in a different country from where one is born (Juteau 1999, 62) or lives prior to immigration.

Pursuing its two goals of economic and demographic growth (Juteau 1999, 66), immigration in Canada will expand and change throughout the XXth century. From white and English speaking immigrants, serving the purpose of maintaining the homogeneous ethnic landscape (Juteau 1999), to developing and Third World immigrants, much discriminated at first, Canada will use the latter as labor force for cheap and unqualified work, namely, in the construction of railroads (Bernier 2005). This transition will peak worldwide between the 1960s and 1970s. People from third world countries will start to immigrate to developed capitalist countries such as Germany, France, United-States, etc. It is the case of Canada; immigrant

population will experience a radical drift, going from 60% of Americans (from United-States) West Europeans (France, Spain, Portugal) and Australians in 1965, to 60% of South Europeans (Italy, Greece), Africans, Asians and South Americans in 1975 (Bernier 2005, 12-13). Keeping in mind the economic purposes of immigration for the welcoming countries, administrative policies will place these newcomers into two categories. Those who come from developing countries and are considered to be from a rural background will more or less pertain to the group of “*parrainés*” (Bernier 2005; Juteau 1999) – when sponsored by a relative or a friend – and be convenient for cheap and mostly unqualified labor force. The others, mainly from West Europe or the United-States and usually from industrialized regions, will be categorized as “independents”, in part also, because of their highly qualified professions. In fact, nationality, urban or rural background and other elements will be used in “policies [...] based on preferential selection criteria” (Labelle 2005, 88). A third category will soon emerge to register women and children of men recently admitted as immigrants: the “dependants”. The first two categories coincide with a division of labor based on a division of ethnic groups, placing immigrant workers in different job opportunities according to their ethnic background and believed characteristics. The third category, associating women with the dependant category, demonstrates further paternalism coming from employers (Bernier 2005).

While Canada restructures its administrative immigration policies, Quebec is fighting many battles of its own due to divergences with federal immigration policies and changes in education, both related to its ethnolinguistic battle to preserve their French language. While more and more immigrants arrive in Quebec conforming to an English speaking system, the Commission Parent (“Commission royale d’enquête sur l’enseignement”) proposes in 1961 to develop means to help immigrants learn and adopt the French language as their own (Couton 2010). In that spirit,

the 1960s are also remembered in Quebec for its *Quiet Revolution*, in which French Canadians claimed their title as a founding nation and their ethnolinguistic particularity as Quebeckers, institutionalizing French as its official language in 1974 (Corbett, 1990), and creating the famous bill 101 in 1977 with the goal of implementing other laws to strengthen the use of French in Quebec (Couton, 2010). We notice in this particular example, how, while Quebec claims to be a founding nation like the rest of Canada, language constitutes the ethnic barrier between the two. This is even present in the different ways of integrating immigrants; while Canada did not intervene much when it came to the language spoken by them (Juteau 1999), Quebec made it a priority to (try to) teach French to all its immigrants.

In the later 1970s, a new fight against racial and ethnic discrimination at both the federal and provincial levels will arise. Multiple immigration related policies to insure the integration of newcomers will result from the ideology of pluralism promoted in the political federal and provincial spheres. Indeed, Canada's prime minister Trudeau will embrace pluralism ;

Nous croyons que le pluralisme culturel est l'essence même de l'identité canadienne. Chaque groupe ethnique a le droit de conserver et de faire épanouir sa propre culture et ses propres valeurs dans le contexte canadien. Dire que nous avons deux langues officielles, ce n'est pas dire que nous avons deux cultures officielles, et aucune n'est en soi plus officielle qu'une autre. Une politique de multiculturalisme doit s'appliquer à tous les Canadiens sans distinctions ('P.E. Trudeau 1971, cité dans Comité spécial sur les minorités visibles dans la société canadienne 1984, 2' cited in Juteau 2009, 72)

Moreover, in 1982, the article 27 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Charte canadienne des droits et libertés)* will even support the preservation and reinforcement of the multicultural heritage of Canada (Bernier 1995, 7).

As for Quebec, in the upheaval of its cultural and political actions, namely through the bill 101 and the change in cultural belonging, from French Canadian to Quebecker (Juteau &

McAndrew 1992, 166), the Minister of Cultural Communities and of Immigration will embody the same political stand in 1981 by assuring that actions will be taken to respect the rights and fulfillment of non-francophone cultural communities (Juteau 1999, 73).

The difference with the rest of Canada is that Quebec focuses on language as an ethnic barrier. While English Canada distinguishes its immigrants in more racial terms, calling them “non-whites” (Juteau 1999, 74), Quebec calls them “non-francophones”. This example illustrates well the subjectivity of ethnic barriers; it suggests that Quebec will include immigrants as Quebecers if they speak French, otherwise, they are “non-francophones”. Moreover, Quebec’s social and political status, its fragmented immigration administration due to federal control for many years (Juteau 1999), and the addition of ethnocultural diversity to two linguistic communities and the native community (Couton 2010), make this province’s pluriethnic social context more complex and unlike any other (Labelle et Lévy 1995 cited in Couton 2010, 12).

This pluriethnicity model due to immigration policies is typical of many countries made by immigration (Juteau & McAndrew 1992). The particularity of Canada and Quebec is the fact that two distinct cultures cohabitating leave much less space for assimilation. In fact, Quebec is marked by a sociolinguistic context unfamiliar to most “simple majorities” (McAndrew, Tardif-Greneir & Audet 2012, 4). Being the only French society in an English speaking North American sociological and demographic majority, Quebec’s majority and minority status contributes to the understanding of other minority groups’ claim of cultural belonging, at least from a political standpoint. Indeed, ethnic minorities will be supported by many programs and campaigns to integrate immigrants with all the diversity they bring with them<sup>4</sup> or, in the words of the Minister

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<sup>4</sup> Programs such as ‘plan d’action du gouvernement du Québec à l’intention des communautés culturelles’, ‘comité d’implantation du plan d’action à l’intention des communautés culturelles’ (CIPACC), ‘comité interministériel mixte

of Cultural Communities and Immigration “[Québec verra] à prendre des mesures destinées à respecter, et même, dans certains cas, renforcer les droits et les moyens d’épanouissement des communautés culturelles non francophones” (Juteau 1999, 73). This ideology was also present in the legislation in the 1970s and 1980s with the Quebec *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms* (*Charte des droits et libertés de la personne*), triggering legislative means to fight racial, later ethnic, discrimination (Garon et Bosset 2003). This inclusive mind set will also expand in other spheres such as the educational one; as part of their curricula, future teachers now have to develop a pluriethnic consciousness and adapt their teaching to this pluriethnic context (McAndrew, Tessier & Bourgeault 1997).

Although Quebec fits the pluriethnic description, it differentiates itself from three other models of pluriethnicity ; the American *melting pot*, the multicultural approach in Canada and the assimilationist model in France (Couton 2010, 12-13). Without explaining in detail all three of them, Quebec distinguishes itself by adopting the intercultural model which promotes harmonious interactions between ethnic groups while encouraging all immigrants to feel and be *Québécois*, namely, by promoting the use of French language (Couton 2010). In other words, Quebec is not looking forward to assimilate immigrants, nor letting them simply cohabit, but more so, it wants its newcomers to relate to each other through a sense of belonging to Quebec, while keeping alive their cultural differences in reasonable ways. What is reasonable is still a controversial debate in both politics and everyday life, although somewhat different in both contexts. Whether this form of integration is successful or not can be difficult to argue since it can be subjective.

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de coordination générale du Plan d’action’ and ‘le Comité d’égalité en emploi dans la fonction publique’ (Juteau, 1999)

### 1.2.2. Ethnic Identity in Quebec

As noted in the precedent section, ever since bill 101, Quebec empowered itself through its status as a distinct society, symbolically making French the official and dominant language of the province, and has established as one of its priorities the integration of immigrants. This integration does not stop at the mere physical integration of immigrants to society as new residents but pushes further as to promote the emancipation of their cultural distinctiveness. The 1970s and beginning of 1980s represented a time where immigration policies were concerned by and favorable to the cultural emancipation of these culturally different groups, which legitimized the reproduction of cultural differences. Moreover, “the change in ethnic and linguistic political hegemony [...] further contributed to the maintenance of ethnic distinctiveness” (Meintel 2000, 17). The city of Montreal, home of most new immigrant residents, is full of examples; there is the ‘Little Italy’ neighborhood with many Italian stores and residents, on Bélanger and St-Michel there is a “*bon bagay store*” (“good stuff store” in Creole), at metro Place-D’Armes there is Chinatown, on St-Hubert there are many restaurants specialized in South American food where you can be served in Spanish, etc. Quebec’s policies regarding immigrants’ integration has led to these social spaces where each ethnic group can negotiate its ethnic barriers in order to feel “at home” and maintain its ethnicity, consequently keeping some distance from Quebec’s ethnicity too.

The other particularity of Quebec, as mentioned earlier, relies on the concept of minority. Although Quebec has succeeded in having its distinctiveness from Canada recognized and although it is politically open to diversity, Sarkar (2008) believes that the francophones in Quebec suffer from an inferiority complex in relation to their local linguistic diversity. This is not new; linguistic diversity can be seen as not only a societal challenge but also as a threat to the

preservation of the dominant culture (Bernier 1995, 19). Therefore, for a culture that already has to fight for the preservation of French in an English North American context, the threat can be greater with the rise of immigration, even if its policies are open to diversity.

Nevertheless, language as an important factor in ethnicity is especially important in a society that can be both a dominant and minority group, such as it is the case in Quebec. Sarkar, too, believes French language to be the main item in the Quebecker identity (Sarkar 2008). But she goes as far as to say that, since today's youth have grown up with the Bill 101, no matter how many languages they speak, they all have French in common and still don't blend in with the Quebecker identity. Although being a *Québécois* is primarily fulfilling a civil purpose - to live here and participate in the social and political spheres - she believes that the 'ethnospecific' identity, which she names *québécoïcité* and can be translated as "quebeckerness", relies on the color of the skin and the accent in French. This definition is helpful to understand how some ethnic groups might not identify with the dominant group, even after integrating or being raised and growing up in this society, and fluently speaking French – the one criterion that was believed to unite all Quebec citizens. There seems to be, then, a gap between what policies put forward as their concern for the integration of immigrants, and the general cultural consent of who is considered 'Québécois'.

This does not mean that Quebec is divided. This society is truly diverse. Immigrants have to deal with new ethnic barriers; they have to reinforce what they believe their ethnic identity to be, and usually do so while transmitting it to their children. However, whether born or at least raised here, they have to transform the ethnic identity they were socialized in because of the intergenerational gap and the cultural divergence between their family socialization and the school

socialization. They grow up and build their ethnic identity in an already very heterogeneous environment, not to mention the two separate ethnic spheres they will face: their ethnic background (country of origin) and their ethnic environment (Canada, Quebec or Montreal). Immigrant youth in Quebec represent the famous national identity issue in the sense that they are French speaking Quebecers but still feel ‘ethnic’ – a topic we will develop in the next segment.

### **1.3. Youth and Ethnic Identity**

#### **1.3.1. The Importance of Identity and Ethnic Identity in Adolescence**

As just mentioned above, children of immigrants have specific challenges in the negotiation of their ethnic identity, different from their parents’. However, building this ethnic identity is in itself a big step for each and every one of us. Actually, “[a]chieving a sense of identity is one the most important psychological tasks for the adolescent” (Rosenthal in Phinney & Rotheram 1987, 156) and although identity might form exclusively around gender, class, and ethnicity, the latter seems particularly “relevant in societies that are heterogeneous in nature, where one or more minority groups exist alongside a dominant social group” (idem). Adolescence represents the crucial moment in life to understand and find who we are in order to move into adulthood with a strong sense of self, namely achieved by developing a sense of identity (Vaughan, Phinney & Rotheram 1987, 73).

The broader concept of identity is important and inevitable for two reasons, but primarily, because it is the result of one’s socialization, the process by which one child learns to behave and participate in society (Berger 2006). This process implies a social dimension that gives identity a



reciprocal dynamic, a social acknowledgement of who we are. As De Beauvoir (1949) said: “On ne naît pas femme on le devient” (One is not born, but rather becomes a woman). In other words, one is not born knowing how to act as a woman, or in our case, as a member of an ethnic group, but rather learns to perform one’s identity. Identity therefore also implies that it is a behavior too; we enact who we are, and sometimes confirm expectations of who we are. The other reason for its importance is that identity is very relevant to the survival and well-being of individuals. As anthropologists would say, we are social animals. We need to affiliate (Berger, 2006). This is even more relevant for immigrants who leave all they know for a, sometimes, completely different physical and social environment. They specially need to affiliate and will affiliate with individuals of a similar national or cultural background.

However, the children of immigrants do not go through the exact same process. Although they have been socialized and ascribed an ethnic identity by their parents and society, they are not necessarily defined by this identity since it has been argued earlier that ethnic affiliation and identification is a subjective process, even more so at a young age where identity is not fully formed yet. It is not simply ‘passed on’. Earlier thought as a problem for youths from minority groups in pluralist societies, Meintel (2000) assures us that this is not the case anymore, at least not nowadays in Montreal, not for a majority of youth and nor is it the case in other pluralistic societies (Pilote & De Souza Correa 2010). As we will see later, Meintel (2000) argues that youths with a different cultural background than Quebec’s see themselves as enriched by the two cultures, embracing both while leaving aside some elements from both minority and dominant cultures.

In fact, ethnic identity in youth is an important indicator of changes in modern society since they represent a group of individuals in a specific historical and geographical trajectory with

particular linguistic and cultural elements (Pilote & De Souza Correa 2010). In the modern context of democratic globalization where multiculturalism is more and more in effect in developed and developing countries, children of immigrants around the world are the pioneers of their reality, negotiating new ethnic barriers. Those new barriers, fundamental to the construction of their identity, will also play a role in their political, social and economic integration. Indeed, Wieworka establishes three dimensions of this new identity: the cultural dimension which includes ethnicity, language, religion, nationality, etc ; the political one concerning citizenship and democratic as well as economic participation; and a more personal one where one is subject of his or her own experience, leading to particular choices in society (Wieworka 1997, 50 cited in Pilote & De Souza Correa 2010, 4-5).

In Pilote & De Souza Correa's book (2010), concerned with the identity construction of minority youths in two distinct pluralistic societies, Quebec and Brazil, we discover sociological patterns particular to minority ethnic, linguistic and religious groups. Overall, these youths represent the survival of their ethnic group through time and distance. They reproduce their ethnic origins learned through socialization with the family, and later transform it through the lens of other spaces of socialization, such as educational institutions (p.161). Their challenge is to insure the continuity of their ethnic background while adapting to a different society. To do so, the authors noticed four angles of successful identity construction in youths from a migration context. First, the "performance of socialization" – interacting the way one was socialized to – peaks in school where social and ethnic differences are socially constructed and understood. Although school socialization might differ from family socialization, school institutions in pluralistic societies acknowledge and encourage ethnic diversity, facilitating this first step. Second, the "group's internal cohesion" refers to the strength of the ethnic barriers to avoid assimilation, for example,

ethnic week-end-only schools, religious spaces, traditions, etc. Third, the advantages of belonging to their group need to be clear and reinforced. For example, as mentioned earlier, some young men and women feel enriched by the two cultures (Meintel, 2000). Moreover, speaking two, three or more languages can be seen as a great asset. Finally the fourth element concerns the “other” in the sense that individuals outside the group and society in general need to acknowledge one’s ethnicity. As was previously stated, school institutions make sure to do so. These four elements all contribute to the adolescents’ identity construction and their well-being while it insures the survival and adaptation of their ethnic upbringing.

Given these points, identity in itself is crucial to the development of children’s sense of self and passage to adulthood. The ethnic dimension of identity has gained much importance since the 1960s, becoming an important part in youth identity. Moreover, migration is increasing and making this notion all the more complex and relevant. Youths now have to undertake the negotiations of new ethnic barriers to reproduce and modulate their ethnic origins, upbringing and identity.

### **1.3.2. Schools as an Important Socialization Space**

As noted in the preceding section, school is an important socialization space for children and teenagers. Educational institutions are believed to be a place where children learn to behave in society and become the adults of tomorrow. Already in the beginning of the XXth century, Durkheim believed education to be the means for older generations in a given society to socialize younger generations in order to become the future ideal citizens of a given society (Durkheim,

1956<sup>5</sup>). School's duty is then to teach youth their role in society as citizens and is therefore a space and a step in life where one might experience another form of socialization than the one experienced through the social institution of family. It is meant to educate, socialize and raise the future generations to develop the necessary competences to participate in the shaping of society, namely by understanding social rules, the role of social institutions and the values and behaviors expected from each citizen (McAndrew, Tessier & Bourgeault 1997). This civil education serves an important purpose in social cohesion.

In the mid-twentieth century, Durkheim believed school to serve a moral duty to educate future citizens of a certain national affiliation to learn the civil life, which was, back then, first introduced by the family institution, but was yet not sufficient (Durkheim 2012). Nowadays, in modern pluralistic societies, social cohesion cannot be obtained anymore by adhering to a pure nationalist perspective. Education transforms itself along with social change. It does so in both a seemingly unconscious and conscious way. The first because schools, as a social construct, become subject to follow the general trend of the ethnicization of social relations, in part too, because members of minority groups sometimes claim their ethnic belonging (Poiret 2000) and difference. The second because, when faced with more diverse and heterogeneous social origins, educational institutions have to adapt to this ethnic reality in order to pursue their role of insuring social cohesion and social equality. On the one hand, it is then crucial for schools to welcome newcomers to integrate them in their new society, namely by giving them the same process of socialization as others. Furthermore, in pluralistic societies such as Quebec, policies stress the importance of including cultural and ethnical equity in school curricula to encourage democracy,

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<sup>5</sup> More precisely, this was mentioned in the Introduction of this book by Paul Fauconnet.

social justice, (Bouchamma 2007) openness and intercultural harmonious exchange. School then adapts to social change to insure the integration of all citizens on equal terms.

On the other hand, some will say that behind this appearance of equality through universal education and more recently ethnic equity, hides a political agenda to maintain social order through social inequalities. Bourdieu believed school inequalities to be reproduced and maintained through educational institutions (Bourdieu 1971). An example to support his thesis was that school tests to access '*college classique*', where one could study liberal professions (such as law, medicine and others), were made in a fashion to accommodate the students from a higher social class (*bourgeoisie*) and restrict children of workers from entering these colleges by using a vocabulary adapted to the first and unfamiliar to the latter, thus, perpetuating traditional work placement according to the social origin or social class of the individual.

As argued throughout the preceding pages, ethnicity has gained importance in social sciences, somewhat replacing the concept of social class. This can also be applied to Bourdieu's (1971) argument; some inequalities in school can now be related to ethnic inequalities. To fight these, in Quebec for example, school institutions as socialization spaces where children learn about ethnicity and construct ethnic differences, have for mission to provide help for immigrant students and incorporate cultural awareness in their curricula, among other things, and to show how politics intend to improve the integration of immigrants and their children, namely through the school success of these children. In doing so, much importance is given to the ethnic identity of youth. Indeed, we saw earlier how the construction of one's identity is crucial to the growth and well-being of an individual, how the ethnic identity of minority youths is important to the survival of

an ethnic group, and how school, adapted to today's reality, encourages ethnic awareness and openness for social cohesion. Youth ethnic identity therefore, can be relevant to succeed in school

### **1.3.3. Ethnic Identity in Montrealer's Second Generation**

We affirmed earlier Quebec's intention to form a united intercultural society, but this is even more relevant in a city like Montreal, where most of Quebec's immigrants settle down. Concerned with the ethnic identity of youth in Montreal, Mela Sarkar (2007; 2008), in her many researches on urban hip hop culture in Montreal, states that the particular hip hop/rap culture, which attracts much of today's youth in Montreal, is constructed by the many linguistic influences from the very diverse immigration landscape. Although seen as an art from the 'black' culture, this culture unites a great number of teenagers, of whom, most are from diverse countries. Nevertheless, there are some actual Quebecers who have adopted this culture and embraced the multilinguistic approach, using themselves some popular slang in Montreal, a slang derived from French, English and Haitian Creole (Sarkar & Allen 2007). This 'multiracial', multiethnic and multilinguistic culture of hip hop defies the unilingual white 'quebeckerness' and those who adhere to hip hop have different identity criteria than the dominant one (idem)

In a multicultural city like Montreal and in a political context favorable to diversity, it is of no doubt that ethnicity plays a role in the identity of Montrealers. It is not rare to be asked early in a conversation with a stranger "where are you from?" or "what's your nationality?" (Sarkar 2008). This ethnicity is challenged by the continuous and ever changing immigration dynamics. With time, a new element comes in the picture and molds ethnicity: the generation gap. For foreigners

who come here at an adult age, they become immigrants, and most of the time, keep their nationality as their ethnicity. For younger ones who came as immigrants, or whose parents are immigrants but they were born in Canada, it's a more complex process and the outcome is not always the same.

We saw earlier that ethnicity in Quebec is particular due to its minority status in Canada. Ever since the 1960s, the change in immigration fluxes, the commission Parent (in 1961) and the *Quiet revolution* all contributed to Quebec's ethnolinguistic identity. Growing up in this political context, some immigrants and/or minority youths identify to the French-speaking Québécois as members of a minority group relating to another and not as members of the majority (Meintel 2000). Conversely, similar to Sarkar's interpretation of urban hip hop culture, in some "neighborhoods, particularly in the younger age groups, being of "minority" origin is to form part of a multi-ethnic majority of backgrounds other than French nor British" (Meintel 2000, 17). Thus, the process of ethnic identification does not exclude a certain identification with other ethnic groups (Garcia-Lopez 2003, 41).

Meintel is particularly interested in the ethnic identity formation of youth of immigrant background, or "second generation" immigrants in Montreal. She studied 'ethnic identity' as opposed to 'ethnicity', because the second implies a static essence, which undermines the subjective and negotiable nature of ethnicity. Indeed, when interviewing Greek, Portuguese, Chilean, Vietnamese and Salvadorian 'second generations', she reports "plural, or composite identities (...) [as referring] to identities with several referents" (Meintel 2000, 21). As a matter of fact, as mentioned earlier, many of them describe themselves as being "Québécois plus". Through their discourses, the author remarks a sense of belonging to multiple cultures and a feeling of being

enriched by these (p.29). From this double or multiple identity, often referred to in many different terms<sup>6</sup>, one cultural influence will dominate, depending on the context, without necessarily denying the other(s).

For example, when it comes to family values, most of these youth, from any immigrant background, seem to believe that Quebecers are different, more or less in a negative way. They are not as family oriented as immigrants; they don't care where their siblings are, they talk back to their parents, they don't help out their parents, etc. (Meintel 2000). On a brighter note, it was repeatedly said, as a good thing, that Quebec is not as macho as other cultures. Thus, one can choose what to keep and leave from his/her original ethnic background and what to embrace from his/her new cultural environment, negotiating ethnic barriers for him/herself. However, as already mentioned, context also influences what is shown and what is hidden and this choice can change as often as the context. As a 22 year old Greek woman says, at home she's Greek and outside the house she's Greek, Quebecer and even Canadian (Meintel 1992, 81).

Although some particularities are common to many second generation immigrant youth, and although some of them relate to an ethnic group identity such as "Greeks from Montreal" or "Latinos" or "Europeans" for example (Meintel 2000), different experiences and life trajectories will forge different personal ethnic identities for each individual. In contrast with the ethnic group identity, where each generation negotiates the new boundaries of their ethnic identity, the individual dimension of ethnic identity can be diverse among the same ethnic group. One can mark their difference from the dominant culture, one can also try to blend in – ethnic 'camouflage' as Garcia Lopez (2003) calls it – or even identify to a greater and plural ethnic identity – ethnic

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<sup>6</sup> "Us meditarreanians, Us greeks, greek in canada, greeks from the island (...)"



'*caméléonage*' (from chameleon, as in versatile) in Lopez's terms (*idem*). No matter the type of ethnic identification chosen, it will participate in one's growth and consequently, might affect future choices in adulthood, since we behave according to who we think we are. Therefore, ethnic identity, as previously stated, is an important aspect in youth development.

## **1.4. Latinos in Montreal**

### **1.4.1. Immigration**

For this research, the particular case of Latinos in Montreal will be of great interest. First, Montreal is specifically chosen because it is Quebec's biggest city and is Canada's biggest French-speaking city. In 2006, Quebec welcomed 13% of Canada's immigrants and of these individuals, more than 70% chose to live in Montreal (Kanouté & LLevot Clavet 2008, 164). It's almost to say that Montreal is the new home of around 9% of all new comers to Canada. This reality is more than ever present in youth. In elementary and high schools 52% are from an immigrant background – either born in another country, born here but with parents born elsewhere, or born here and at least one parent is born in another country – and 38% are allophones – whose mother tongue is neither French nor English nor Native (*idem*).

Regarding a specific immigration flux, in this case, the Latin-American immigrants, many questions arise. When did they come here? Who are they? What defines them? As mentioned before, it is only around the 1960s that Canada and Quebec started welcoming individuals from developing and third world countries. But it is mainly in the 1970s that the first wave of immigrants from South and Central America, mainly from the Andes, Ecuador and Colombia, moved here as

temporary workers (Rojas-Viger 2006<sup>7</sup>). The second wave was initiated by the overthrow of Allende by Pinochet in Chile, forcing thousands to exile. The general socio-economic crisis in South America –inflation from 150% in Peru to 400% in Argentina and unemployment up to 30% in Peru and Chile (Gosselin 1984, 394) – paired with Canada’s engagement to welcome refugees and its demand for workforce can also explain the massive wave of immigration in Canada from neighboring countries as well. In Quebec, the program “*mon pays*” (my country) in 1975, legalizing the civil status of clandestine immigrants (Gosselin 1984), made it very appealing for South Americans to move to Quebec. This was the case, mainly, for Chileans, Peruvians, Colombians and Argentinians (*idem*). A third wave is noticeable from 1981 to 1986, this time mostly from Central America, because of political violent events then (Rojas-Viger 2006). Finally, with socio-economic conditions barely improving, the Latin-American immigration continues in the 1990s, mainly from Peru and Colombia (*idem*).

In 2006, Statistics Canada counted 56 530 Latin-Americans in Montreal and 89 510 in the province of Quebec<sup>8</sup>. Of the approximately 90 000 Latinos in Quebec, 76% live in the city of Montreal, and an increasing number choose to live in the surrounding municipalities, like Laval, Longueuil, Brossard, Dollard-des-Ormeaux and Côte-Saint-Luc; 15% of newcomers

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<sup>7</sup> In her text, this represents the second wave because she considers Spanish descent to form the first wave of Latin-American immigrants. We chose to detail here the second wave as the first ‘Latinos-from-Latin-America’ immigration wave.

<sup>8</sup> We suppose these numbers to represent the island of Montreal and not the Metropolitan Region of Montreal, since it is compared to 1 823 905 habitants in Montreal. We choose Statistics from 2006 because the most recent statistics (2011) measures ethnic groups by their mother tongue, mixing migrant sfrom Spain and Latin-America in one hispanophone category of migrants : <http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/92-591/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CD&Code1=2466&Geo2=PR&Code2=24&Data=Count&SearchText=Montreal&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&GeoLevel=PR&GeoCode=2466>

in 2006 compared to 11% in 2001 decided to live in these suburb areas<sup>9</sup>. Overall, the women migrants are slightly more numerous than man.

Of these immigrants, studies agree to say that most of them come from Salvador, Chile, Peru and Guatemala (Garcia Lopez 2003). Most of South American immigrants are highly educated and Chileans were particularly politically involved in their country, men and women (Bernier 1995). But whereas generally speaking, those with education usually find it easier to integrate professionally than less educated individuals, Latin-American women, even if more numerous than man and with a high rate of university level education – up to 17% had a bachelors or a professional diploma in the early 1990s compared to 15% for all other immigrants (men and women) and 13% for women born in Canada (Rojas-Viger 2006, 29) – seem to have more trouble integrating the labor market, in part because of their nurturing housewife-like stereotype (idem). As for Central Americans, most of them are refugees and are often less educated than the South Americans (Gosselin 1984).

As for their choice of residence, most “Latinos”, like most immigrants, choose to live in the region of Montreal. Unlike some other groups, like Italians, who are somewhat concentrated in some areas (like in Little Italy for example), Latin-Americans don’t seem to have a preference in their geographical establishment. According to a study in 2003 (Garcia-Lopez) Latinos don’t have a ‘segregated’ or ‘ghetto’ area in Montreal as other ethnicities might have. In this same study, the author illustrates the residential occupation of Latinos (in 1996) and shows how many reside in the center north east side of the island of Montreal; in order of importance (1)Villeray, St-Michel, Parc-Extension (2) Côte-des-Neiges, Notre-Dame-de-Grâce (3) Rosemont, Petite-Patrie

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<sup>9</sup> The Daily, 2007, <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/071204/dq071204a-eng.htm>

(4) Ahunatic, Cartierville and (5) Plateau Mont-Royal. It was also noticed that these neighborhoods they choose to live in are more francophone.

#### **1.4.2. Ethnic Identity: the *Latinos***

Although their nationalities, and sometimes their socio-political background, are diverse (Garcia-Lopez 2003), and although they are scattered around the region of Montreal, they seem to have many things in common. Often perceived as all belonging to the Latino ethnic group, they become conscious of this group identity and themselves (not all of them) confirm some togetherness based, at first, on their common language, Spanish (Gosselin 1984; Garcia-Lopez 2003). This unity is recent and appears to be growing. In 1984, at a time where Latin-American immigration was barely important (compared to the United-States), Gosselin (1984) states that, although the neighborhood of Plateau Mont-Royal hosted some Latin churches, restaurants and a soccer field where many of them used to show up on Sundays, there was not yet a sense of Latin community, in part because they were not concentrated in one neighborhood like the Greeks or the Portuguese. Eleven years later, Bernier (1995) contradicts this by enumerating ‘ethnic media’ that promote this Latin identity, such as *El Correo*, *El popular*, *La Voz* to name a couple newspapers, and *L’émission Hispanique*, *Hispano-Latino*, *La Hora Espagnol* and *Latin Time* for radio shows. Garcia-Lopez (2003) describes this as the invisibility paradox: although not geographically concentrated, there is a unity and a strong cultural presence through ‘ethnic media’ but also through newer means of identity claims such as ethnic businesses and a growing number of cultural Latin events.

In a city like Montreal, that “offers a hospitable environment for perpetuating immigrant ethnic identities” (Meintel 2000), we can also notice how easy or ‘normal’ it is for immigrants to speak their language or pass it on to the next generation. The growth and importance of Latinos in Montreal can indeed be somewhat<sup>10</sup> measured by their ethno-linguistic position; Spanish is the second most declared allophone language (Kanouté et al. 2008). In addition to their ‘ethnic media’, ethnic spaces and events, their ethnic identity as Latinos is consolidated by more than just a common language. Some common grounds such as “music, patterns of sociability, similar political concerns, Catholic religion” (Meintel 2000) and *futbol* (Bernier1995; Gosselin 1984) unite them and form their wider Latin identity.

Another important element in the perpetuation of a group’s ethnic identity is the geographical space where one can meet up with fellow South American compatriots and perpetuate their cultural origins. Many social and ethnic gathering places reinforce ethnic identities. For example, ‘ethnic businesses’ as mentioned earlier are stores, groceries stores and restaurants that sell almost exclusively products from a foreign region for a clientele that comes from that same region. Montreal has many of them, and has two particularly popular Latin-American stores, ‘*la Librairie Espagnole*’ on St-Laurent and ‘*Los Andes*’ on St-Denis (Garcia-Lopez 2003). In addition to these ‘ethnic spaces’, their common religious background and affiliation has inspired them to gather in many places of worship such as churches. Indeed, Garcia-Lopez (2003) has noticed a certain amount of churches for an almost exclusively Latin-American crowd; for example, *Église Luso-Latino, Iglesia Triumfantes de Jesucristo, Iglesia Bautista Hispana Luz y Verdad, Mission Catholique Latino-Américaine Notre-Dame-de-Guadalupe*, etc.

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<sup>10</sup> Somewhat only because this includes immigrants from Spain. However, Spain only accounts for one country whereas Latin-America includes over 15 countries.

All of the elements presented above constitute the general image of the Latin-American immigration, culture and ethnic identity. However, we recall that ethnic identity as explained earlier is both social and personal and does not simply ‘add up’. It is perceived and experienced in many different ways and can trigger as many different behaviors, since identity is also a performance (Berger 2006). Further, on a bigger scale, ethnic groups can also show patterns. In the next lines, the relationship between education and ethnic groups will be exposed in order to present our related research question.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Education: equality for all individuals but inequalities between groups**

#### **2.1. Purpose versus Reality**

We established earlier the importance of school as a socialization space and as an institution that promotes the equality of all individuals and cultural equity. However, even if there is equal access to school for all children, Bourdieu (1971) does not believe in an equal exit, that is to say equal outcome or equal chances of social mobility. To him, social class is reproduced and reinforced structurally through school. We gave earlier the example of tests using vocabulary much more familiar to the children of liberal professionals than to the children of working-class men. Willis takes on this issue and reveals another dimension present in the reproduction of social class through school, a dimension that involves more rational choices. Indeed, Willis's (1977) study demonstrates how sons of manual workers interpreted their school failure as an indicator of being real men, unlike the guys that succeeded in school, and embraced their future as working-class men, like their fathers.

Whereas this was relevant in the 1970s, a time where social class conflict explained much of social inequalities, today's society, transformed by international immigration, suggests a change in these social inequalities. Indeed, we may hypothesize that the new ethnic groups that are formed due to the diversity of immigration bring out a new dynamic in power relations, thus, in social and school inequalities. It is actually the purpose of this research; to see how a particular ethnic group

experiences school and if there are school inequalities that might be explained through the dynamic process of ethnic identification and ethnic relations.

## **2.2 What Authors say about Education and Ethnicity in Montreal**

### **2.2.1. Montreal's Students**

In Québec, ever since the commission Parent in 1961, education has become universal and mandatory for all children under 16 years old. But despite the efforts to include all citizens in the educational system with the premise of equal chances of access to school, in hope of a more educated society, it seems that, in reality, this has somewhat failed. Compared with the other two biggest and most cosmopolitan cities in Canada, Toronto and Vancouver, Montreal shows the lowest graduation rates from high school; 60% in Montreal, 65% in Toronto and 80% in Vancouver (McAndrew et al. 2011, 506).

In Montreal, a city where half of elementary and high school students are youth from an immigrant background, many researchers have focused their attention on inequalities between ethnic groups. If we target certain youths from more specific ethnic groups, those who speak Spanish and Haitian Creole at home show the lowest high school graduation rates even two years after the expected year; respectively 52% and 40% compared with 60% for all ethnic groups other than Quebecker, and 62% for all students (idem). This means not all ethnic groups are experiencing difficulties in school since their average rate is much higher than Haitians and Hispanics but yet close to the population average. In fact, some ethnic groups do better than the average : those who



speaking Chinese, Vietnamese, Iranian or Farsi, and Arab at home have the highest rates, respectively 78%, 82%, 65% et 67% (idem).

However, when it comes to postsecondary education in Canada, allophones, and minorities have higher rates of participating in colleges and universities (Kamazi et al. 2009). Furthermore, Kamazi et al. (2009) came to the conclusion that the most perseverant groups in college and university level education are the Anglophones outside Quebec, members of minority visible groups, children of professionals and administrators/managers, and children of parents with highest annual income and postsecondary education. Although Kamazi et al.'s study (2009) covers all of Canada and not specifically Montreal, they show, with the help of statistics, how Quebec is the province with the lowest rate of access to University, but this can be explained by the unique addition of cegeps, a post-secondary educational institution other than universities, in their educational system. The authors also propose an upward educational mobility logic that could explain why some members of minority groups choose to access university despite their lower socio-economic conditions. Such a logic can be relevant for future analysis as well.

### **2.2.2. Some Theories**

Many scholars have hypothesized possible explanations for these discrepancies in the educational system in Quebec, mainly regarding elementary and high school levels. Concerning inequalities between Quebecers and immigrants, four explanations arise. A first proposition is to look at deficiencies in mastering the French language as a factor of school difficulty (Dagenais 2008), but this is easily contradicted by the good performance of some allophone ethnic groups

such as those mentioned before (Persians, Chinese, Vietnamese and Arabs). Secondly, one can take into consideration the delay caused by migration and the adaptation to a new school system, but this can be due to the ‘classe d’accueil’ they have to attend to first, in order to learn French, or can simply be due to different school systems (Ledent, Murdoch & Ait-Siad, 2010) that do not start in September such as it is the case in Quebec. It does not necessarily correlate with school difficulties. Another viewpoint focuses on social class as an indicator of school success or failure. Although social class is an older term - socio-economic status would be its equivalent nowadays – it is still relevant to explain school inequalities. However, Kanouté and Lafortune (2011) tell us how, in a context of migration, immigrant parents all believe education is the best and only way to guarantee a good quality of life, but don’t always transmit their ambitions even if educated. Therefore, socio-economic status oriented theories are insufficient or incomplete. There is, however, a fourth explanation that can complete if not replace the last and all previous ones; a viewpoint in which school inequalities are the result of cultural conflict.

The last theoretical perspective is nothing new. Scholars in the United-States have been interested by the poor school performance of Blacks and have proposed explanations in terms of racial inequalities, that is, inequalities based on racialized characteristics such as physical traits or cultural habitus socially constructed as forming a so-called race. Two of them are relevant for this matter and have been noted in an earlier section. The first one is the theory of self-fulfilling prophecy which we already described as being the confirmation of an expectation, whether true or false, by behaving the way one is expected to. In the case of Afro-Americans in American schools, studies have argued that teachers’ expectations of Blacks performing poorly incited these students to have difficulties, fail or even drop out (Biggs, 2009). Secondly, and complementing this, Ogbu’s cultural ecological theory of academic disengagement affirms both the role of society and school

towards minorities and the perceptions and reactions of members of these minorities to schooling (Ogbu & Simmons 1998). According to Ogbu et Simmons (1998), minorities are faced with discrimination within school and consequently mistrust 'white' institutions, sometimes leading them to form oppositional cultures and/or to disbelieve in the "usefulness of school as a vehicle to success in life" (idem, 180). As we mentioned earlier, stereotypes such as school success being a 'White' thing and school dropout a 'Black' one (Fordham & Ogbu 1986) exist and might justify such reactions towards school. All in all, as the first theory suggests, these stereotypes are conveyed by teachers and contribute to the self-fulfilling prophecy, but the ecological aspect added by the second theory offers an explanation as to why some members of the minority group will confirm such expectations by adopting the expected behavior.

Although Ogbu's researches reveal inequalities from a different time and context, his findings are relevant in Montreal as well, since young students from the Black community also suffer the most from inequalities in schools. In a quantitative research done by McAndrew, Ledent & Ait-Said (2009), we notice the cases of Creole speaking youths, and English speaking Caribbeans and Africans are the most alarming, particularly the Creole speaking ones, who show the lowest rates of high school graduation and the lowest rate of access to college. The authors believe the self-fulfilling prophecy to be somewhat responsible for this since expectation from teachers towards 'racialised' groups such as Blacks – in other words, groups that are identified (and naturalized) by biological and cultural differences – can affect their school performance. However, within the Black community, the French speaking Africans and Caribbeans show the highest rates of high school graduation and the highest rates for access to college, both around twice the Creole speaking group's rate – 49% and 51% vs 24% (idem, 19) and 60% and 62% vs 34% (idem, 27) respectively. This comes to show that not all members of the same racialized

groups, the Blacks for example, suffer from inequalities. In this case, their language of use and their geographic origin are better predictors of school success than the color of the skin or other physical racialized attributions, or the expectations of teachers towards Black students. Therefore, self-fulfilling prophecies, racism and discrimination seem to be incomplete explanations. Instead, McAndrew et al. addresses this issue by turning to Ogbu's theory :

"les individus appartenant à des minorités *volontaires* adhèreraient fortement à l'idéologie et la mobilité sociale par l'école et considèreraient les obstacles qu'ils rencontrent comme temporaires [...] les minorités dite *involontaires* auraient un rapport de méfiance avec les institutions majoritaires et douteraient que l'éducation puisse véritablement représenter un véhicule de mobilité sociale. Ils résisteraient également davantage aux demandes d'assimilation linguistique et culturelle" (McAndrew et al. 2008).

In other words, within the group that is disadvantaged by its social and/or cultural characteristics, some, called 'voluntary minorities', adhere to the ideology of social upward mobility through school, and others, called 'involuntary minorities' distrust the system and do not believe education will bring them higher in society, inciting resistance to any type of assimilation, whether linguistic or cultural (idem).

The advantage of this theory is that it leaves room for interpretation and does not simply put an individual in a determined position in society. There might be gaps between ethnic groups in regard to school success, but one's association with a minority group is insufficient to explain schooling difficulties. For example, if we recall the results concerning postsecondary education participation, we stated earlier that members of minority visible groups, which include the same Black communities who may also have the lowest graduation rate, are amongst the ones who persevere the most at university level schooling. One can think that those who actually succeed in high school are either the best or truly motivated and ambitious. Most probably, to them, and to their parents, education represents a means for social upward mobility. Thus, individuals within

minority groups react differently to power relations associated with ethnic groups. McAndrew et al.'s concepts of voluntary and involuntary minorities are then appropriate to understand how both the actual and the perceived or experienced ethnicity can affect the success of some and the failures of others, in much more (and needed) flexible and accurate terms, since not all members of disadvantaged groups have the same school path.

Studying the relationship between ethnicity and education is complex, mainly because the definitions of ethnic groups and of school success can vary from one research to another. There are inequalities in school that reveal inequalities between ethnic groups, but is it really the entire group who suffers from it? Is it really school success or school perseverance? We choose the fourth explanation to take into consideration both the individual's perception of their ethnicity and description of their choices in his or her educational path, as we look to understand the sociologically defined patterns of school path amongst this ethnic group.

### **2.3. Constructing “School Ambition”**

The educational system and structure we now know has been in place since the 1960s. It is only since the commission Parent intervened that we now have preschool, 6 years of elementary school, 5 years of high school, cegeps, instead of *college classique* (Dufour 1997), and 3 cycles in university. School is mandatory until the age of 16, after which, one can either go to an adult education institution to complete a high school diploma, or have a professional (vocational) training in a trade school, to go straight to the labor market. During cegep, one can attend a pre-university programme to later enter university, or a ‘technique’ programme to be ready to work

right after graduation. In university, unlike the rest of Canada, Quebec has, most commonly, three-year undergraduate programmes (because of pre-universities programmes in cegeps) and graduate school which are usually associated with masters and doctoral programmes<sup>11</sup>. Adding to this an immense variety of fields, young high school students have important choices to make in regard to their future.

Even though schools are supposed to be a place where the adults of tomorrow are socially raised, they also serve a purpose of selection. Indeed, Durkheim (1956) believed and somewhat praised moral education through schools, but also agreed with the ‘division’ in education which would later evolve into the division of labor. He thought it to be part of the normal overall functioning and prosperity of a given society. Durkheim’s perspective was a functionalist one and relied on the assumption that this division of labor in schools was right, without considering the gaps it would encourage and naturalize. Sociologists with a less determinist approach might not share his point of view. Although it is difficult to deny the existence of selection in schools nowadays – school selection test and R-scores in Quebec for example – which leads to a similar outcome as division of labor, the functionalist perspective is outdated because it cannot explain the many rational choices in contemporary educational systems.

Indeed, the many transformations in schools and educational systems and multiplied options in school careers have permitted individuals to have more say in their school-related decisions. As Doray et al. (2009) have noticed, one’s school curricula does not necessarily follow the normative school trajectory proposed by the system. The authors interpret ‘atypical’ school

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<sup>11</sup> In the English system, bachelors, or the equivalent, are considered undergraduate programs, and masters or graduate certificates and doctorates, graduate programs. However in the French system, terms such as first cycle are used for bachelors or the equivalent, and superior cycles such as second and third cycle represent masters or D.E.S.S. and doctorates, respectively.

careers as being strategically and rationally chosen by individuals. Students have more options and fewer limitations about their academic future. They are not confined in a social position or a certain type of job because of inherited characteristics. The once normative school paths are deconstructed by these authors by critically analysing concepts in education and putting forward more flexible terms to define one's 'schooling'.

While many scholars in Quebec address this issue in many different terms, most common ones being 'school success', 'school failure', 'school difficulties', 'school career', and 'educational trajectory', Doray et al. (2009) rather chose the expression 'schooling' (*parcours scolaire*)<sup>12</sup>. First, they argue that the previous terms are too normative and such a characteristic is inappropriate since the educational system is made to include what some call 'atypical' school careers or trajectories. Secondly, the expression 'schooling' is best to include objective elements such as school steps, grades, success or failure, etc., and subjective elements such as the school and the field chosen. Moreover, unlike 'school trajectory', it does not necessarily imply a strict sequence of educational steps to follow, which is an important factor to consider since many stop and go back to school, and sometimes go from university to cegep again to reorient their career goals.

Such subjective choices can be very relevant. In our study, we look for an expression resembling 'schooling' in that it includes such a variety of elements, but that also includes a motivational aspect to it, in part because we are interested in those who succeed despite some structural school inequalities that are believed to exist between some ethnic groups. Before specifying our research question, we'd like to finish this section with the elaboration of our own term 'school ambition'. As mentioned before, grades, success, failure, linear or non-linear

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<sup>12</sup> English version we chose to translate 'parcours scolaire'

educational trajectories, typical or atypical schooling, etc., are all part of one's experience in school, but strictly in terms of education. We look forward to include motivation, perseverance, and somehow, ambition in school careers to explain why some succeed and some fail, or why some go on with prestigious school careers and others with less recognized professional training, mostly within groups that are believed to have 'less opportunities' because of their cultural, social or ethnic background. That is why we chose to continue this research with the expression 'school ambition'.



## **Chapter 3**

### **Research Questions, Corpus and Methodology**

This chapter will present the research question, the theoretical framework and the methodological aspects of the following research. Concerns such as the criteria of selection of participants, the interview grid, arguments in favor of a qualitative method, the choice of method, difficulties we encountered and an introduction to future analysis will be exposed in the next few lines. Before doing so, a brief presentation of the research question as well as some concepts and theories relevant to our research will help illustrate the concerns of this study. Following this, a summary of what is intended might be helpful to introduce the more technical terms and details of our methodology. Far from wanting to explain this in factual terms, we will elaborate on how and why qualitative methods will help us interpret the discourses of these young adults on education and ethnic identity, to then propose a sociological analysis of the interaction between this ethnic identity and what we call ‘school ambition’.

#### **3.1. Research Question**

Our research question is the following: “Among the second generation of young men and women from a Latin-American immigration background, does their ethnic identity during adolescence affect their school ambition, whether they choose to stop school early or to continue and complete graduate-level studies in University?”

As stated earlier, the purpose of this thesis is to look more closely to the school ambition of youths from a Latin-American immigration background. We intend to look in detail at their definition of self as members of an ethnic group and how this self-identification will come into play in the choices they make in life, namely, in regard to education. We want to see if their perception of school and/or education is in part related to their perception of self as ‘ethnic’ or not, and if it has affected their motivation through school.

### **3.1.1. Defining the Concepts**

First, the concept of second generation is important to define. The Minister of School, Recreation and Sports defines ‘first generation’ as those born outside of Canada and ‘second generation’ as born in Canada, but with at least one parent born outside of Canada, or whose mother tongue is neither French or English (Kanouté et al. 2008, 267). Our concept of ‘second generation’ differs in that it includes both but is closest to their concept of second generation. As mentioned earlier, to us, ‘second generation’ concerns the children of immigrants, whether born in another country or born in Canada. We only added to this definition one criterion for the purpose of our research. We are specifically interested in those young, second generation adults from a Latin-American immigration who arrived here before the age of 12, only because Quebec’s students start high school at 12 years old, and we are interested in the construction of their ethnic identity during their adolescence, here associated with high school.

Second, ‘ethnic identity’ is the core concept in this research. We already exposed the importance of youth’s ethnic identity in pluralistic societies and more so, in cosmopolitan cities

such as Montreal. We chose the term ‘ethnic identity’ rather than ‘ethnicity’ to take into consideration the negotiation and the sense of belonging to one’s ethnicity. Identity refers to a more personal identification, socially influenced by one’s family and background, and one’s experience in school. We saw earlier how those two socialization spaces might not necessarily be homogeneous. Ethnic identity will then refer to one’s own established ethnic barriers based on his or her social experience.

Third, because of arguments previously expressed, we want to evaluate one’s ethnic identity during adolescence, which goes hand in hand with high school. As said earlier, high schools represent the time and space where one becomes aware of social and ethnic differences. One also attends high school at an age where the formation of the identity is crucial for later years. High school also represents that moment when students have to make educational choices for their future. Finally, since identity is also a performance, we could argue that their identity then has influenced their attitude towards school and can show in their school paths.

Last, we purposely chose to mention in our research question the highest level of education to really grasp the rationale and subjective reasons for individuals to choose the most prestigiously recognized level of education in our society. As stated earlier, with a concept such as ‘school ambition’, we aim to understand what differentiates individuals within the same group to persevere or not in school. This could be even more relevant in disadvantaged groups, such as Hispanics, who have a low high school graduation rate in Montreal (McAndrew et al, 2011).

Thus, this study will look at the relationship between the ‘ethnic identity’ constructed during adolescence (high school years) and ‘school ambition’ in adulthood (postsecondary years).

### 3.1.2. Theoretical Framework

To answer our research question, we would like to expose here our theoretical framework to analyse the ‘ethnic identity’ of our participants, and to explain its relationship with ‘school ambition’.

For the first concept, we would like to recall Sarkar’s (2008) concept of quebeckerness (*québécoisité*) which takes into account the color of the skin or the general appearance and the accent when speaking French. We would like to see if our participants adhere or not to this definition of being ‘Quebecker’. This can be even more relevant for the Anglophone participants since they don’t fit the profile according to this definition of quebeckerness which places much importance on the French language as a crucial part of the identity. Inspired by Garcia-Lopez’s (2003) concepts of ‘ethnic camouflage’ and ‘*caméléonage ethnique*’, we will take into consideration different levels of proximity or distance towards both perceived cultures in our interviews.

For the second part of the analysis, the relationship between ‘ethnic identity’ and ‘school ambition’, we will take into account Ogbu’s (1998) theory of academic disengagement along with the concept of self-fulfilling prophecy and McAndrew et al’s (2008) notion of voluntary and involuntary minorities. We believe at least one of them (or a mix of all of them) to be able to explain the articulation between the ethnic and educational dimensions, as well as both individual and societal influences in one’s schooling. We want the theoretical framework to be as flexible as their sense of belonging to an (or multiple) ethnic group, and their motivations and choices in education, in order to be open to all possible motors of motivation and perseverance in graduate studies and/or the rationale behind other options.

## 3.2. Participants

### 3.2.1. Criteria of Selection

First of all, as noted at the beginning of this chapter, we are particularly interested in second generation men and women of Latin-American immigration descent. We were looking forward to interview 16 participants in total. Of these, we initially wanted to divide them into two groups: those who have attained a high level of school achievement, which we settled here at the graduate university-level, and those who have achieved as their highest academic diploma, their D.E.S. (*diplôme d'études secondaire*). Of these 16 participants, we wanted equal numbers of men and women as well as equal numbers of Francophones and Anglophones as Quebec has this language debate specificity.

However, once in the field, we noticed a general difficulty in recruiting Anglophone Latinos. It is believed to be so because of the time of the first wave of Latin-American immigration: the first wave of immigrants from South America started in the 70s, the same time Quebec passed its bill 101 requiring "children of allophones to enrol in French language school and eventually integrate with the francophone [...] community of Quebec" (Bourhis 1983, 236). Only those whose father or mother went to English language school in Quebec before or at the time of the bill are allowed to go to English schools as well (p.244). Another difficulty encountered once in the field was that many Latinos (and any ethnic group for that matter) belong to neither previously established schooling groups : just high school or graduate school. We decided to create another category to include them too, since we noticed they were much easier to find and recruit.

Another criterion concerned the age of our participants. We believe it was important to specify that our participants should be aged from their mid-20s to their early 30s. We felt anybody

older than 35 would be too different in terms of generation. Before 23, which is the age of two of our youngest participants, we felt as if life decisions weren't necessarily definitive at that age. For example, at 21, anybody without a D.E.C. can go to university and complete a probation year before entering a day-programme. One of the two youngest participants actually portrays this reality. The other one is already doing his masters. In the end, the idea is to have them old enough to witness different paths taken in regard to life and school, and young enough to make sure the historical context is not too different. All participants went to high school in the 1990s and/or 2000s.

Due to these challenges, we decided afterwards to narrow down the number of participants to 12, regardless of how many are Anglophone or Francophone, but keeping a balanced quota of men and women. As a result, a total of 6 women and 6 men were equally associated with one of the following three categories, D.E.S or less (never been in college or university), post high school (DEC *diplôme d'études collégiales* or trade completed or in undergraduate studies at university) and graduate school (either enrolled and almost done or completed). Unfortunately, since Latino men from Montreal with a master's degree were hard to find, we decided to have an extra interview in the 'D.E.S. or less' group to keep a total of 12 interviews, while still having equal numbers of men and women.

Although we did not keep the language (either English or French) as an important criterion of selection, we believe it to be important for our future analysis. In a province such as Quebec, language is an important part of the identity, but while true for all nations, some scholars have identified it as a tool of domination too (Sarkar 2008). Nowadays, French-speaking Quebeckers form the 'majority group', in the political, economic and cultural sphere, and immigrants have

been described as the ‘minority group’ (idem). With this in mind, one might think that any immigrant who has learned English here and is more of an Anglophone (Indians for example, colonized by the English), can suffer from a double minority membership and might have a different relationship towards members of the ‘dominant group’ than immigrants who learned French and are more Francophone (Moroccans, colonized by the French). We thought maybe, differences would arise from the language of preference and use of participants in their construction of their identity. That is why we mention it in our list of participants. We also thought more appropriate to conduct the interview in their preferred language, to have ideas expressed in the best and most accurate way.

Moreover, regarding gender, we cited early a study about the integration of Latin-American women in the work force and how they are sometimes limited by the stigmata of their stereotype as traditional rather than educated women (Rojas-Viger 2006), and we wanted to see if this element would come out as a particularity of women’s discourses on their education and ethnic-related topics. Additionally, gender is often used as a demographical and control variable because it influences expectations and experiences. Also, inequalities between men and women are often studied in sociology, whether within the context of education or salary (pay equity). We thus decided to have equal numbers of men and women in our sample.

Here is a summary list of our final participants<sup>13</sup>:

D.E.S. OR LESS:

WOMEN : **Ana**, francophone, 26, no high school diploma, from El Salvador

**Maria**, francophone, 34, D.E.S. El Salvador

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<sup>13</sup> To preserve the anonymity of our participants, we assigned them fictitious Latino names.

MEN : **Diego**, anglophone, 27, D.E.S. El Salvador  
**Pablo**, francophone, 24, A.E.C., El Salvador  
**Daniel**, francophone, 26, D.E.S. Peru

#### D.E.C. / TRADE / IN UNI

WOMEN : **Paula**, both, 23, in university, Chile  
**Sofia**, both, 32, bachelors, Salvador

MEN : **David**, anglophone, 32, D.E.C. + Trade, Honduras  
**Emilio**, both, 28, D.E.C. has been to university, Guatemala

#### GRADUATE PROGRAMS

WOMEN : **Diana**, francophone, 30, currently doing her PhD, Chile  
**Sandra**, francophone, 28, enrolled in 2<sup>nd</sup> masters, Peru

MEN : **Mateo**, francophone, 23, professional masters, Peru

After reviewing our criteria and adding an intermediate group, we felt more confident about collecting data from a variety of realities, all of which represents best the complexity of Latinos in schools in Montreal.

### 3.2.2. Recruitment

To recruit those who ended their school career before university, we found them through networking; we asked around, through social networks also, for participants who might fit the profile. This can be confused with the snowball sampling method which is when existing



participants recruit future participants from among their friends, family or acquaintances. Although similar, we did not adhere to this method in order to avoid having participants knowing each other and giving out answers too similar to one another. We like the idea of being able to observe a complex and diverse sense of what it is to be Latino. We simply asked different individuals to refer us one person. For the ones at graduate level, we thought practical to send to a couple of social science graduate program coordinators affiliated with University of Montreal and McGill, at first, an email with a description of the project and the criteria for participants needed. The lack of success of this method led us to use the same method mentioned above for the university-level participants as well. Social network such as facebook was of great help here to establish contact with as many potential participants as possible, as well as the traditional phone call.

### **3.3 Data Collection**

#### **3.3.1. Qualitative Method**

Our epistemological position is one of a comprehensive sociology. A position which led us to use qualitative methods and analyse our data by interpreting ethnic identity and school ambition and the articulation of both within and with the help of discourses, which we will cover later in this chapter. We chose a qualitative approach because we are interested in every participant's identity and perception of education. Those are too specific and different from one individual to another and we do not believe quantitative methods to be fair to the complexity of self-identification and personal school experiences. Although many debates can go in favor of quantitative methods, we believe qualitative methods to be more open to personal answers. Whereas the first method is of great use to represent a problematic with a great sample, the latter

is of better use for smaller samples and deeper understanding of a matter. In our case, identity is certainly sociological in the sense that it is a construct based on social similarity or difference with others, and is also based on many characteristics such as gender, class, ethnicity, to name the most common ones, but it is also a personal process for each one of us. As Gaulejac (2009) puts it, this process of self-identification resulting in a realm of motivations, aspirations and decisions specific to an individual are socially conditioned but yet, not socially determined. An individual can identify to and act out his or her position in society, be it as a woman, an immigrant or a lower-class worker, but can also identify or act differently. Therefore, we seek to analyse identity in sociological terms but taking into consideration the complex self-identification process of each of our participants, which can only be, although maybe not perfectly but somewhat accurately, understood in their own words.

In order to do such work, as to dissect and study each discourse biased with individual experiences and perceptions, we choose to conduct semi-directed interviews. The interview was the obvious choice to make compared to the other qualitative methods such as observation, surveys, participant observation and so on. Even more appropriate was to choose the semi-directed interview. In fact, what interviews do that other methods don't, particularly the semi-directed interview, is that it gives the subject a voice, it lets the subject express his or her ideas the way he or she wants them to be understood, it lets them make sense while answering. We get to ask questions to have answers, and their answers not only give us the information we seek, but give us, too, much more to discover. It brings the researcher to open up his possibilities and understand better underlying factors that he or she might have dismissed or been unaware of. This method led us to their personal experiences, perceptions, representations, and opinions that will give us material for further analysis.

Furthermore, as Giddens has argued, every individual has the capacity to think and rationalize his actions (Giddens 1987 cited in Hamel 2010). Without necessarily asking if their ethnic identity has influenced their school ambition, through our questions, we want to understand how they draw conclusions on their identification process, their schooling, the relationship between the two, and even their opinion on the principal matter, our problematic. We value their reflexivity because they make sense of their actions following a certain logic. However, as Bourdieu once describe the object of sociology to be ‘the knowledge of knowledge’ (Bourdieu 1992, 103 cited in Hamel 2010, 27), our task as sociologists here is to take that knowledge and make sense of it in a bigger picture.

The semi-directed interview has this advantage of giving us a direct access to the experiences of these individuals and their point of view (Savoie-Zajc 2009) to understand how they maintain a close or distant relationship with members of the perceived dominant group. Understanding this relationship can help find out their position in society as individuals with an immigrant background, which can in turn give some insight on their school and career choices<sup>14</sup>. We did not want to ask directly how they view their reality and their interactions, but semi-directed interviews have this advantage that, without asking them precise questions, we can be vaguer and let them lead us to the realm of their thoughts and rational processes.

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<sup>14</sup> Bourdieu developed a visual topology of the ‘social space’ in which he claims individuals have a position. These positions would be the result of economic, social, cultural and symbolic capital than an individual possess. This position can be possible predictors of affiliation and decisions (like school career choices) (Bourdieu, 1984).

### **3.3.2. The Semi-Directed Interview**

The interview grid is essentially divided in two themes, ethnicity and education. For the first theme, we have three parts; one concerning personal ethnic identity, another regarding opinions and representations, and a last one regarding discrimination. We start by asking the participants about the immigration process of their parents in order to know where they come from and when they got here, to understand the context in which they arrived and situate the immigration and cultural policies in place. Following this is a general question such as ‘what is ethnicity’. We thought it might get them thinking in a vague and non-restrictive way about the matter before really getting into the heart of the subject. After this, whether successful or not, came the main question, ‘what was your ethnic identity in high school’. This is of utmost importance since we explained earlier how adolescence is a prime moment in life for social and ethnic differentiation and construction. In addition, we believe adolescence, paired with high school years, will influence the choices teenagers have to make in their future. Since we are interested in the articulation between ethnic identity and school ambition, we believe both to be somewhat decisive in those years. We do not deny these can change. Which is why the next and last question of this section goes as follows, ‘how has your ethnic identity evolved?’ This concludes the first group of ethnic-related, more personal questions.

The second group of questions regarding ethnicity concerns the representations they have about both cultures. Here, we asked what values they associate to each culture, Latino or national and Quebecker, and which ones they relate to the most. The reason behind this is related to the complex mixture individuals from an immigration background make of their ethnic realities. While this might be true for natives as well, children from an immigrant background may have to face

two different social and/or cultural realities; one at home with their families, and one at school with all children learning one way to exist together, be it open-minded or not. The general school curriculum in Quebec seeks to transmit the history of the province and the country, the values of secularism, diversity and acceptance of others, and the French language, all of which are familiar to Quebecker students, but sometimes unfamiliar to immigrants. By asking such a question, we also introduce the idea of dichotomy in this complex ethnic construction. We would like to use such information to have an idea of the proximity or distance each individual has towards the dominant culture being the Quebecker one, and the Latino culture.

Also, we want to know how their discourse can apply to the representation of Quebeckerness – concept earlier stated from the works of Mela Sarkar (2008) who describes it as being French and white – and see if, as this author seems to think, this reinforces the ethnic gap. The reason for this interest is inspired by earlier studies in the field of education. Works such as Bourdieu's (1971) have demonstrated that 'dominant' groups excel in school, while the underdogs suffer the social and school inequalities, and might even embrace their social position, as seen in Willis's work (1977). In this new era where ethnicity has gained interest in the studies of inequalities, mainly in countries of immigration such as Canada, we seek to see if second generations of Latin-American descent are the new underdogs, and if they embrace their culture as being opposed to the dominant white Quebecker and (theoretically) successful one, as some have argued is the case for the Afro-Americans in the United-States (Ogbu et Simmons 1998; Biggs 1999).

Following this logic of dichotomy in the precedent paragraph, the last part concerning ethnicity and self-identification covers subjects such as racism and discrimination. Simple

questions such as ‘have you experienced racism or discrimination?’, ‘When, where and how?’ were asked. However, we also asked if they considered Montreal different from Quebec, since the immigration rate and ethnic landscape is different, and Quebec from Canada, since the ethnic relations seem to unfold differently due to the added particularity of language in Quebec.

The second theme, education, starts with an invariable interrogation about the participants’ parents’ education level and the importance they grant to it. Some authors have defended the idea that education attainment by parents can be a positive factor for their children’s success and perseverance in school (Kanouté et al. 2008) Although it might be an important factor to consider, which is why it is taken into consideration, we don’t believe it to be the only factor, nor to act by itself. To us, it is more complex than to confine one’s school ambition to one’s parent’s academic success. Even if true for a majority, in case it is not for a few individuals, we ought to observe the articulation between all possible factors. Following this interrogation, we pursued with their schooling; why they stopped or why they continued, depending on their level. Moreover, we go on about their experiences and perceptions in school, how they felt and what they experienced, to get a general idea of what school meant to them.

To end the interview, we ask them directly for their opinion about the articulation between ethnic identity and school ambition in general, if there is any and why, and then amongst Latinos, as to know if it’s easier, harder, or simply a matter of will. This is to know which ones believe more or less in meritocracy, and which ones see and denounce flaws in the system, and if these opinions reveal something about their ethnic identification or school ambition.

Obviously, as interviews vary from one another, some questions are reformulated, and others are even added, reusing elements of what they said themselves.

### 3.4 Interview Progress

Most interviews took place in summer (2013). We preferred neutral spaces to conduct our research, such as Parc Jarry. The good weather made it enjoyable for all parties. It was probably easier to find participants in summer because of this precisely. Other interviews conducted in fall or winter took place either in university, near the cozy couches in Jean-Brillant, or at their home, whichever they chose. We would have preferred to conduct all our interviews at the same site, to avoid any biases in terms of the influence of the place<sup>15</sup>, but since we had to continue over fall and winter, we tried our best to accommodate our participants.

Before starting any official interview, we passed the ethical compliance form, explained the purpose of the research concisely, not to bias any answers, and talked a little about them. We thought important to establish an atmosphere of trust by doing so. Indeed, many researchers talk about the interview as an asymmetrical sociological interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee (Savoie-Zajc 2009). We tried to minimize such asymmetry by talking with them in their tone and vocabulary, thus, resulting in a conversation as equals. We also had two advantages. The interviewer was a young woman. The young age and proximity in terms of generation usually inspires less of a social distance than an older person would. Secondly, this same interviewer was from Latin-America herself. Some might argue that this can bias answers, since participants are talking to one of 'their own', biases such as taking for granted that their interlocutor understands what they mean, or thinking that they will be judged by someone from their community, but we believe it to be helpful to get more information, because they feel less different or regarded as

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<sup>15</sup> Blanchet and Gotman talk about the influence of the place chosen for the interview to be conducted. Blanchet, Alain and Anne Gotman. 2007. *L'enquête et ses methodes, L'entretien*. Paris : Collection Armand Colin.

different, thus, being favourable to a more insightful conversation. The interviewer might have related or not, but interfered the least possible with personal comments.

In the same way that both parties exchanged words before, they did afterwards as well. The interviewer made sure to thank participants and explain how they are actually helping this research by detailing better its purpose. We believe this helped to reinforce the bond as equals and made them feel good about sharing opinions and experiences that might seem personal.

### **3.5 Difficulties**

As for the difficulties, the recruitment segment was definitively a hard one. Not only was it hard to find individuals who perfectly fitted the criteria, but those with the lowest education level were the least responsive. Many messages were sent without even a negative answer as feedback. This is a commonly known problem and can lead to biased results since we don't have the experiences, opinions, and perceptions of these particular people. Despite this, we have a diverse enough sample that can nonetheless show many facets of what it is to be a Latino in Montreal.

In addition, as a first-timer, the interviewer has inevitably evolved throughout the interviews. This biased mildly the content because of poorer re-launches for the first interviews and consequently, better ones for the last interviews. Thus, the quality of interviews has increased with time and practice, in terms of improvisation and adaptability as well. Overall however, there was no major problem or inability to react to any situation; given that these exchanges can be personal, it has happened that some participants go on about personal and emotional moments or experiences they recall, leaving the interviewer in a less comfortable position to bring them back on track.



Finally, one last difficulty we thought important to mention was the recruitment of young male Latinos from Montreal that have a master's degree. They were the hardest to find, and this, to us, was relevant because it spoke for itself about school ambition amongst young Latino men. Moreover, in the process of asking around for referral of these rare highly educated individuals, reactions such as 'Oh! Latino with a master's? That's near impossible', or plain laughing, were more or less clear indicators of poor academic-related expectations for Latino men.

### **3.6 Future Analysis**

In the next chapter, we will present both some descriptive and interpretative content analysis based on every participant's discourses. As qualitative methods do not intend to predict behavior or establish causality like quantitative methods are generally used for, we aim to understand and to explain intelligibly the consequences of ideas, opinions and representations. We believe that although many norms, perceptions, values etc. are socially created, and thus, can be debunked with the help of critical minds, they are nonetheless real in their consequences. For example, some of our participants might have biased perceptions of certain realities, but these same biases, and because they believe them to be true, will lead them to act upon it. This is an essential part of what we work to understand by thoroughly dissecting and analyzing their statements in order to see where they come from and how they might have led to actions and decision relevant to our research.

## Chapter 4

### Ethnic Identity and School Ambition: A Matter of Culturally Defined Values

#### 4.1. Ethnicity and Ethnic Identity

In our interviews, we mainly focused on ethnicity and ethnic self-identification. We will expose in the next few lines elements of culture that are associated with each ethnic group, how they use them to compare both and which ones our participants identify with.

##### 4.1.1. Latinos vs Quebeckers

There are both positive and negative elements in each culture, according to our participants. They have, many times, compared the two cultures to give us a representation of what is better in which culture. For example, Latinos have good traits such as being festive, in a ‘good mood’, warm, being hard working people and fighters who don’t give up. Paula has expressed how she feels Latin people are warmer and greet more than Quebeckers, who in turn, are ‘creeped out’ if a stranger smiles at them. As for the hard work, it seems many believe that Latinos don’t give up, they work hard as they are used to do so, no matter the conditions, and will fight for a better life.

*typical latino is somebody that is willing to get an opportunity to move forward to a – to work hard for it. It’s a person that is, it’s a lot of dedicated to whatever he wants. Eum, always family oriented. Eum, good spirit, good mood.. eum.. will fight for something that we believe on.. and eum I’d say, you know, good food, good music.*  
-David

*Une autre histoire moi c'est plus que tout l'histoire du pays. Ils sont très et et j'leur dis, euh, j'ai tout l'temps dis ça, 'on est beaucoup plus fort' va cont – je contagie ça tout partout – euh, c'est, c'est cette force qu'on a. Je dis, nous autres on s'démotive pas aussi facilement ok? alors euh, aillez les guts latino away away tsé j'veux dire, et j'le dis souvent à mon fils, lui a été souvent victime d'intimidation dû à sa à sa handicapité et j'lui dit 'eh eh, ni parc'que t'es latino ni parc'que t'es comme t'es, scuse moi, non tu fonces, t'es mieux que lui' et euh... c'est cette chose que j'essaye de transmettre à mes enfants, ce qu'on a les Latino-Américains, cette force-là, cette union-là,*  
-Maria

They often work hard to provide for their families, which is an important value for Latinos, much more than for Quebeckers. They all, except one, have mentioned family values as a positive element associated with the Latin culture. This was also found by Meintel (2000): in general, immigrants or youth from an immigrant background, whether Greek or South-American or other, felt that Quebeckers did not value the importance of family as much as them.

*j'suis avec un Québécois pis j'vois, j'compare un peu les, la culture, comme les deux, pis j'vois qu'ils sont comme.. eux c'est genre 'moi, moi, pis moi pis moi' tsé, nous on est plus comme unis, plus famille, plus – pour moi c'est très important que j'parle à ma mère au moins une fois par soir, c'est très important tsé comme la culture, c'est très important qu'le dimanche j'aïlle chez mes parents qu'ça soit le souper, la famille, on est plus proche.. que les autres*  
-Ana

*la famille des fois j'trouve que c'est pas assez important comparé à les Latino-Américains p't'être un juste milieu, un mélange entre les deux. Parc'que le Latino y'est trop familial (...) pour certains Québécois, mais j'peux pas généraliser non plus, le nombrilisme pis le 'c'est pas d'ta faute'. Souvent j'ai l'impression qu'y'a des euh 'ah mais c'pas ta faute, c'est pas grave, l'important c'est toi toi toi' pis les gens j'trouve qu'ils sont très égoïstes pis qu'ils vont pas penser au-delà de – genre t'es malheureux dans une relation ben tu brises ta relation tu casses pis c'est pas d'ta faute tsé t'es correct ou t'es pu heureux avec ta femme pis tes enfants, ben t'as l'droit d'partir ... j'trouve que y'a un .. c'est trop facile de s'déresponsabiliser tsé de certains actes*  
-Sandra

However, there are also negative elements in the Latin culture, which many believe to be stereotypical but nonetheless true. This is the case for the street gang related stereotypes of Latinos,

either portrayed as ‘bums’ or gang members like the ones from MS13 gang<sup>16</sup>. Some of the men (Diego, David, Daniel) mentioned it as something they did not want to adhere to, nor the gang, nor the bumming around, nor the style described as wearing ‘baggy pants’, ‘bandanas’, ‘cortez shoes’ etc. One woman mentioned MS13 as part of her self-identification as a Latina, while another one explained how she was indirectly involved in a street gang and felt it impacted her ethnic identity and her life negatively.

*j'tais 100% salvadorienne euh.. j'tais euh Salvatrucha for life (...) Ouais ouais ouais ouais moi pour moi c'tait Salvadorienne, Latina, Real, pis euh that's it. Moi Québécois no way.*  
-Ana

*Latino-Américaine, malheureusement oui, je dis malheureusement oui parc'que ça été dans l'époque où est-c'que mon frère il s'est mêlé dans des problèmes avec des gangs de rue (...) j'étais la sœur de un des intégrants, dans cette époque-là, assez important, alors c'est ça. C'est – j'te dis malheureusement j'étais latino-américaine dans cette époque-là, j'en en voulais beaucoup beaucoup parc'que je l'étais. Parc'que j'me disais que d'autres ethnies n'avaient pas la même problématique que moi j'avais, mais moi c'est c'que j'me disais quand j'étais jeune dans ma tête.*  
-Maria.

It was mentioned many times by our participants, that they did not want to follow the stereotypes they perceived as negative. Sandra gives us another example of this with a stereotype she had in mind of Latinas who shop and wear cheap lycra spandex tight clothes.

There is also one element in the Latin culture that many have pointed out in comparison with the Quebeckers; the first have more of a close-minded, old-fashioned traditional mentality compared to Quebeckers who are more open-minded, mainly in regard to gender roles. Women in our sample were more concerned with machismo and how they did not want to adhere to their

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<sup>16</sup> MS-13 was initially composed of Salvadorians who immigrated to the Unites-States in the 1980s (Grascia, 2004; Delaney, 2006) cited in "À la découverte des jeunes latinos qui fréquentent les gangs de rue à Montréal. ". According to this article, the MS13 has also expanded to Canada, more specifically Montreal. in Tremblay, Marie. 2008 "À la découverte des jeunes latinos qui fréquentent les gangs de rue à Montréal." Thèse de doctorat, Université de Montréal.

traditional role in the couple. Latino men were either described as ‘*stuck in old tradition*’ or as thinking of themselves as ‘*the man of the house*’. A few men mentioned how machismo is real in Latin culture, but only one specifically said he did not want to participate in it. Women with Quebecker boyfriends were able to offer us a comparison that showed why the women preferred the non-macho Quebecker culture and how this culture affected them; they feel they are allowed, much more than in their background culture, to have opinions and independence.

*c'est macho, c'est contrôle – ils veulent toute contrôler – ok si j'compare le chum (Latino) à ma sœur pis mon chum bon, le chum à ma sœur c'est quelqu'un de très, surtout les hommes, c'est très macho, contrôlant, il veut toute contrôler, ils sont plus euh straight euh, ils sont plus euh, c'est eux les hommes toi tu fais ci toi tu fais ça, c'est toi la femme tu t'occupes de c'qui est popote pis ci pis ça. Côté québécois qu'est-c'que j'aime c'est, il te laisse aller, genre t'es, tu peux faire c'que tu veux tu peux euh, t'as une opinion aussi tsé, t'as l'droit de dire « check, moi j'aime pas ça, j'veux pas ça comme ça » pis il.. il t'prend, il t'écoute pis il prend la peine à.. à t'écouter d'un sens*  
-Ana

This brings us to Rojas-Viget's (2006) article denouncing the stigmatization of traditional domestic roles which Latin women are confined to here, even if educated. A bit Paula mentioned, most Latin guys, as well as men from other ethnicities according to Sofia whose husband is Quebeco-Italian, have in mind the traditional ideal of the Latina who has ‘*the meal ready*’, ‘*the house clean*’ and ‘*the kids fed*’. This is precisely the case of Sofia, a bachelor's graduate whose level of education is higher than her husband's, who was still believed by the latter that her being Latina meant she is a good housewife.

*le côté macho, ben tsé de dire ‘non tsé t'es à la maison, pis’ tsé.. ça.. lui il voyait ‘ok ben j'me marie avec une Latina, fait qu'c'est sûr qu'elle va s'occuper d'ma maison pis tout’ euh non. Moi j'suis pas comme ça, moi c'est tout l'monde est égal là, gars ou fille.*  
-Sofia

Adding to this all the other neutral elements identified as Latino, such as music, dance, film, food, etc., some are taken and others left out depending on each individual. Family is one of

the most popular, yet, the one element that all of the participants agree to keep and pass on is the Spanish language. In other words, whether they identified poorly or strongly to their Latin origins, all of them have some reason or desire to keep the language, thus, all showing some kind of resistance to a complete assimilation.

Concerning the Quebecker culture, we wanted to see if they identified with it, and if so, with what elements. We were also interested in which elements were associated with this culture. We already stated some differences with the Latin culture, such as the old traditional gendered mentality and the family values. Most importantly, we were searching for the two main characteristics of Sarkar's 'quebequicite' (2008) which are the appearance, as in the 'white' color of the skin, and the language, which goes beyond simply speaking French itself, but also focuses on the accent when speaking French. Indeed, many have mentioned the language as an important element of the Quebecker identity. To one participant, Daniel, it exclusively is about the French language. Other elements, such as political affiliation, can be associated with their culture and identity. One participant gives us quite a summary of the typical Quebecker identity:

*first of all, French, you know, umm, I'd say eum French you know emm, definitively I would have to say white... you know... not that really- color really matters because you can probably be born here and born as a Quebecois you know, but it's still the fact that your blood, it's not French eh (...)what is a Quebecois... it's ... you know it's a person that believes in ... that has values like us obviously.. but eh except from the fact that I'm saying French, white, em .. you know.. I could probably picture 'separatiste' you know  
-David*

There are also other characteristics associated with the Quebecois people that came up when comparing the way children are raised. Many have noticed how Latino parents are more severe, strict or overprotective, while Quebecker parents are more 'easy-going', and give more freedom to their children.

*tu sais comment c'qu'on est les Latinos-Américains, on veut tout savoir, euh on veut tout contrôler en tant que parent et ne pas avoir cette liberté là c'est ce que, c'est ce que j'ai été jalouse des Québécois. Ok? C'est avoir cette ouverture-là de dire 'bon ben mon fils a envie de faire telle ou telle chose, c'est sa vie il est adulte, il a plein d'liberté' non moi non c'était sous le contrôle total. Maman euh, elle me disait tu n'as pas l'droit d'aller nulle part si je n'suis pas là*  
-Maria

About the language issue, it seems it is strongly associated with Quebec's identity, but not all approve that Quebec should only represent the French speaking people. Emiliano denounces this in the following manner:

*Euh, moi tout c'qui a trait à, à baser l'identité culturelle sur la langue, ça c'est des trucs que moi j'ai j'ai... je suis en désaccord complet, like like Québécois culture is not, like, to say Québécois culture is francophone culture would be to do Québécois culture a tremendous disservice, and to ignore the, the amazing contribution of Quebec's anglophone community and Quebec's ethnic community which which which give Quebec, this this this in – this beautiful unique um, character that is that is is none other in this planet.*  
-Emiliano

In regard to the Quebec identity, although many participants stated qualities or positive elements in the local culture, not many identified with it. Only two of our participants said they related to the Quebec culture exclusively, during their adolescence: Sandra and Diana. They identified with the sentiment attached to the French language, but they also adhered to Quebec's nationalist politics and were mainly surrounded by Quebecers. When explaining their self-identification process, they did mention the two characteristics of the so called 'quebecité'. They are both white and defend the French language in Quebec. Here is an example of how one of them uses these two elements to describe how strange she felt about choosing between the two ethnic identities.

*j'ai toujours cherché qui j'étais, étant comme, pas forcément foncée en tant qu'Latino, n'étant n – n'ayant pas un gros accent quand j'parle français euh, j'étais dans une école*

*privée francophone française avec un accent québécois mais Péruvienne d'origine, d'origine française quand même, mon arrière-grand-père du côté d'mon père est français*  
-Sandra

Basically, she was white, and had the 'right' accent, like any other Quebecker, thus, identifying with them. Diana too, mentioned not feeling any different from any 'white Quebecker'.

Moreover, Diana's parents exiled Chile because of Pinochet's *coup d'état* and arrived here in the middle of Quebec's social changes in the 1970s, assimilating well to the political manifestations and claims of the Quebecois people. She, as well as Sandra, was more surrounded by Quebeckers (or at least self-identified Quebeckers), specifically separatist Quebeckers, and truly felt as one of them, wanting, too, independence and sovereignty, and strongly defended their French language.

*Euh, français euh, j'suis à fond la caisse dans dans l'français pis euh s - ... j'veux dire c'est un un plus c'est un atout de pouvoir euh parler au – une autre langue en plus mais la base c'est l'français j – pour moi c'est, ça me – si moi j'ai été capable d'apprendre le français en bas âge, venant d'un autre pays , pourquoi les autres sont pas capables de l'faire, pourquoi les autres font pas l'effort de l'faire pis j'trouve que c'est une grande richesse ça me ça me ça me frustre que les gens soient comme ' ah ben j'parle Anglais j'ai pas besoin d'parler Français' c'est pas vrai la. T'es t'es au Québec tu fais l'effort pis that's it c'est tout là*  
-Sandra

In this statement, Sandra clearly shows how, besides the fact that she was born in another country, she defends the one thing that is known to be of utmost importance to any self-identified Quebecker, the French language.

About this issue, as we can recall in the first chapter, we saw how policies were put in place in the 1980s to assure a pluriethnic francophone environment. French was at the core of many inclusive policies, as well as acceptance of diversity and open-mindedness. These last two characteristics were also mentioned by certain participants as traits of the Quebecois people.



However, not all agreed. Precisely because of this ‘battle about language’ due to the ‘fear’ of losing their language, some participants feel the opposite; they feel Quebeckers don’t always accept different people.

*I have a hard time to adapt to the Quebec mentality. I find like Quebeckers are somehow, really close minded. They – they have this thing that I never got the point, that they’re afraid of losing their culture, ehm, specially their French language.*  
-David

Notwithstanding this issue of open-mindedness or not, any citizen of Quebec is a Quebecois; on paper, anybody born here, or anybody who is considered citizen of Quebec will have the same advantages and rights as any other. Three of our participants have acknowledged this, Sandra, Diego and Maria. However, the three of them have done so in fairly different manners. While Sandra, who strongly identifies with Quebeckers, has used this as another reason for her to feel Quebecker, Diego has merely stated it as the only way he could fit the definition of being Quebecois. Maria, in turn, has used it only at her advantage. She does not relate to anything Quebecker, but when faced with discrimination or what she perceives as racism, she uses it to claim equal rights and treatment. Here is an example of how she used it while in a face to face job interview following a first-round telephone interview:

*(...) ‘oh boy, t’es vraiment pas ce que tu sembles être au téléphone’ et j’ai dit ‘j’devrais sembler à quoi?’ elle m’a dit ‘j’pensais que tu étais Québécoise’.. Pour moi ça ça été vraiment raciste ok? Et là je lui ai dit, ‘je suis Québécoise, dites-moi de quelle manière on appelle une personne qui est née au Québec’, elle me dit ‘Québécoise’, ‘et alors, où est le questionnement?’*  
-Maria

To summarize this section, the main elements in play for the Latin ethnic barriers are the language and the value of family. Again, each individual negotiates his or her barriers, but we see a reoccurrence of these two elements. As for the Quebecker identity, our participants more or less

confirm the two elements of ethnic barriers of the language and the look. This will be even more emphasized in the next section.

#### **4.1.2. Ethnic Categorization**

The last quote cited above introduces well this next segment of ethnic categorization. We want to expose here in what terms our participants have understood they were ethnically different. We believe those terms to be the same as the ones used to identify with Quebeckers according to Sarkar's definition (2008) and to be reinforced by members of the dominant group. Poiret once wrote : "la catégorisation sociale est l'apanage du groupe dominant qui marque ceux qu'elle désigne du sceau d'une différence privative" (Poiret 2005, 8). In other words, ethnic categorization, much like any social categorization, is constructed and understood in light of what the dominant group judges as different.

In our sample, we noticed women were more conscious of their ethnicity and were more inclined to identify to one ethnic culture or another, while men did not all strongly choose between the two. In fact, the women often affirmed having a majority of friends with the same culture and sense of identification, at least during their adolescence. The men sometimes chose one or the other, sometimes simply did not identify with either, and one adhered to a broader culture, the hip hop culture. We wanted to expose here some examples of ethnic categorization to understand what elements were used for our participants to be regarded as different, by the members of the 'dominant' group. It varies from the color of the skin, to the language; the two elements (once again) thought to define the most the 'quebequicité', as stated previously. Here are some examples of the 'look' of others

*Pis à chaque fois que je – que que les gens ils sont quand même ‘Sandra c’est un beau nom et tout euh ça vient d’où’ que quand j’dis j’suis Péruvienne ils sont comme super étonnés, sont ‘Ah! Pour vrai? Mais sont pas comme petits pis brun?’*

*-Sandra*

In this example, Sandra was not discriminated against, but was confronted with the mental image members of the Quebec culture have of the members of her group. People from her ethnic background are regarded as different in terms of the color of the skin. Another participant became conscious of this after a little girl in Quebec looked at him and told her mother “*ah maman regarde, il est brun*” (*‘ah mom look, he’s brown’*). Another of our participants got bullied for both the elements of differentiation between Quebecers and others.

*we got picked on. You know, either colors, language or the accent so I was kind of like.. I didn’t understand the fact that someone could pick on me because of my color.. and (...) So, when I got to high school (...) I was really prepared to fight*

*-David*

To him, it was a bit more than becoming conscious of ethnic barriers (of skin colour and accent when speaking French) between him and the local majority group, he also became conscious of a certain conflict. Unlike Sandra, this does not simply show on what terms an individual might be considered different, but on what terms one can be treated differently, teased. As he said, he was ready to fight and not let anybody treat him in any negative way because he is different. For another participant, who was also picked on because he spoke French with difficulty, it was not a matter of ‘fighting back’, instead, he chose to find acceptance elsewhere.

*people picked on me a lot, Pa’ce j’avais d’la misère avec le français, parc’que j’t’ais Anglophone, parc’j’t’ai très américanisé pis, parc’que j’t’ai baveux tsé, I talk a lot of shit too, you know, I’m no I’m no saint but I had a hard time in in in high school and ah, it made me want to a, you know, um, go study in English were I felt like I could excel at – by doing the absolute minimalist effort possible (...) so I started posting, getting more concerned with being accepted and um, and um... you know, um, we, yea! You know.. being accepted and and and and finding a a group to belong to*

*-Emiliano*

Emiliano found acceptance with the Anglophones, not necessarily as a Latino, nor as an Anglophone, but as he says later, simply as a person. This is coherent with Sofia's idea that English educational institutions are more welcoming and did not require her to 'make her place'. She sometimes feels like, even if she has integrated the culture and speaks French perfectly, she is still seen as a 'Latina', hence, different and not belonging here. This is a sentiment also expressed by another participant. As she says, she has felt 'out of place' in the past ;

*I'd say 95% of cadets<sup>17</sup> over there were only Quebeckers, and maybe a 5% was, you know, from different ethnicities, and I felt, I kind of felt out of place. It's weird, but I kind of felt out of place, I felt like, like if, if I ever spoke a word of Spanish people would look at me like I, I was from another planet you know I was, it was just weird, you know*  
-Paula

These examples show us that Sarkar (2008) was right to believe that there are power relations between Quebeckers and immigrants, based on the two elements that keep immigrants away from feeling 'Quebecois'. One of our participants even believes racism is real and that Quebeckers and immigrants are rivals.

*Mais je vois que y'a une certaine complicité entre eux<sup>18</sup>, et y'a du bla bla bla contre ceux qui sont, et j'vais dire très clairement, Noirs ou Latino-Américains. (...) oui je vois une rivalité de part d'eux autres et, envers– vice versa.*  
-Maria

This was in the context of her workplace. She has given a couple of examples of racism, and explains thoroughly how Quebeckers and immigrants are different. It is not specifically a rivalry between Latinos and Quebeckers, but more so between immigrants and Quebeckers, as immigrants from any ethnicity are alike, namely in their way of being different from Quebeckers. She gives

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<sup>17</sup> Cadets are young trainees in the military.

<sup>18</sup> Quebeckers

an example, where she says how immigrants, no matter where from, will be more inclined to demand the services of an immigrant or ethnic staff because they feel they can relate better to each other. Meintel (2000) speaks about this when she states that the minority ethnic groups gather to create a certain sense of majority and relate to one another as non-members of the majority. Their status, or perhaps the status of their parents as immigrants, can open ethnic barriers to include all of them. As David said

*we went through the same things and understood each other*  
*-David*

When it comes to the young, they can also mix within an urban culture. Sarkar (2008) believes hip hop to be the kind of urban culture where youth from different backgrounds all relate to each other because it transcends ethnicity. Indeed, Emiliano is one of them, and has spoken about his relationship to hip hop.

*I identified I identified with with with hip hop really, like I'm trying to be funny like my my my, that's that's really like, 'cause it was universal 'cause it was it was black it was Asian it was Arab it was m- you know, Latino it was everybody*  
*-Emiliano*

In this statement, Emiliano does mention the universality of hip hop, but we notice he did not include 'Whites' in his list of people belonging to this wider culture. This all corroborates how minority youth can open their ethnic barriers to many things, but have a harder time with Quebeckers, probably because there are power relations in place that remind anybody from afar that they either are not white or don't speak with the proper accent.

Beyond ethnic conflict and ethnic power relations, we have also noticed, thanks to the linguistic variety of our sample, that within these ethnic relations exist language-related power

relations too. One of the reasons we included Anglophones was, precisely, to see if they felt more distant to, or different from the local, dominant Quebecker culture because of their language affiliation, or put simply, because of the fact they spoke English. It seems being Anglophone can be a double ‘handicap’ when paired with the Latino ethnicity, as well as a single source of discrimination, regardless of the Latin background. Here is an example of the first :

*j’ai travaillé à la rive-sud, c’est très très francophone pis moi j’suis trilingue donc euh, déjà là c’t’ait comme ‘bon non seulement t’es Latina, mais en plus de ça, tu parles anglais’ donc t’es un monde à part.*  
-Sofia

This example shows how in some cases, ethnicity and linguistic identity can be added in order to have a double ethnic barrier. However, it is not the case for everyone. Emiliano has experienced discrimination because of his Anglophone identity, but never because of his ethnic identity.

*I think that Quebecois people love everything that’s Latino, anything perceived tsé tout c’qui tout c’qui semble tropical, ils adorent ça. Tsé en terme de musique la, um, j’m présente, j’m présente tsé à un comité en tant que rappeur anglophone ... you get fucked basically. Mais tsé, dès qu’ils voient que que tsé ‘quoi latino? Ah c’est latinos! Ok c’est ouain c’est bon ça!’ you know what I’m saying*  
-Emiliano

His example shows how, as a Latino, he can be welcomed and accepted and can even trigger some kind of curiosity, namely in the music industry, but as an Anglophone, he can be discriminated. His ethnic Latino identity has never caused him to feel discriminated or even to feel as regarded differently, but his linguistic identity has been an important barrier for him to feel accepted by the French speaking majority. What is particular in his case is that, unlike Sofia, he doesn’t look Latino, he looks White. Therefore he is not discriminated against for his appearance or color of the skin, but for his preference to use English to talk, write, or perform. He only fits one of the two criteria of Sarkar’s (2008) ‘quebequicité’; the look but not the language. In contrast, Sofia has confirmed looking Latina and has never even been mistaken for any other ethnicity. The color of

the skin seems, then, to be an important factor to be accepted (and not bullied) when interacting with others. However, Emiliano shares with us some insights about the disadvantage too, of being a White Latino:

*I still feel like completely ostracized I still feel like like ah like – ‘cause when you’re, when you’re the kind of Spanish that we are, which is, you know, white Latino, it’s like we’re not allowed to struggle, we’re not allowed to complain, we’re not allowed to feel excluded ‘cause we’re white, we supposedly, you know, belong to the master race which is a bullshit assumption which makes it actually makes us possibly the most, you know, excluded people um, in the world  
-Emiliano*

He goes even further in his thoughts and uses some academic knowledge to understand this;

*there’s a really fascinating book by, by Guatemalan ah.. sociologist named ah Severo Pelar Martinez (Severo Peleaz Martinez) called ‘ la patria del criollo’ and ah, in his book, it talks about, it’s talks about basically the creation in the middle class in Guatemala which was ah.. the ah – what they called the ladinos who are, you know, the, the direct descendance of the ah, the the Spanish conquistadors who raped the indigenous women ah when when, they, they pillaged the country and so, you see the creation of this middle class and you see this ah, you know, the ah, the the ah, the the 23 shades the the, of ah, of classification, racial classification that they use in order to determine your social standing, shit like that...  
-Emiliano*

According to his knowledge and words, in Guatemala was created a social hierarchization based on the color of the skin, placing the whitest at the top of social class hierarchy, forming part of the ‘master race’. Following this, we understand how Emiliano believes that others regarding Whites as not struggling, diminishes the fact that as a Latino, white or darker, one might struggle. This possible contradiction makes any side misinterpreted, thus, him feeling ostracized, as he doesn’t fulfill the expectations of being a white Latino. Nonetheless, being ‘white’ has proved to be in our sample, a favoring factor, as seems to think Paula who inadvertently inserted such concern in her discourse;

*the fact that I'm completely white you know, I don't look I don't look my physi – mon physique I don't look Latina at all, so that I guess played in my favor. Like, not played in my favor in a mean way but like, just in the way that people didn't recognize me as a Chilean, yea*  
-Paula

If we look at our sample, Diana is an example of a 'white Latina' who strongly identified to the local dominant Quebecker culture. In her opinion, she's Québécoise without a doubt;

*j'ai pas l'impression d'être différente d'une autre Québécoise blanche tsé*  
-Diana

As we can see in this quote, she precisely chose to mention the color of the skin to affirm she did not feel any different from a Quebecker, thus, letting us know she is white, but also showing some consciousness of Quebeckers being white. She also added later that even her friends forget she is from Chile. In her case, many other elements can explain her choice of identifying with the Quebecker culture. Elements such as her parents' affiliation to Quebec politics when they came here, the majority of Quebecker friends she was surrounded by, the very francophone neighborhoods she grew up in, or the simple fact she was born here.

About the latter, some may think that assimilation or integration is harder for children who come here at an older age. This is the case for David, who arrived at the age of 8 and who feels Latino more than anything else. However, Sandra arrived here at age 7, and completely adhered to the Quebec culture. The fact that David got picked on in school for the color of the skin or his accent in French might have strengthen the idea that he was different, hence identifying with his ethnic background, whereas Sandra, a 'white' Latina, assimilated and integrated the culture here much better. Here is her answer when asked why she feels Quebecker:

*Ben, parc'que j'suis arrivée à l'âge de 7 ans, parc'que j'ai grandi dans cette culture la, parc'que, tout c'qui est politique euh je j'connais plus pis j'adhère plus à politique*



*Québécoise que la politique Péruvienne que j'ai pas eu le temps d'me renseigner par rapport à ça, euh, par rapport à l'histoire j'ai des lacunes, je je pense pas connaître l'histoire du Québec assez eum, mais tout c'qui est liberté égalité droit euh, j'y adhère plus  
-Sandra*

The age of arrival is therefore not as relevant, as probably, the color of the skin or even the gender, as these are the only elements that differentiate the different experiences between David and Sandra when facing ethnic categorization.

Regardless of inclusive policies of integration, ethnic categorization is inevitable and discrimination seems to still be present in Quebec. It is real and based on ethnic characteristics, whether it is about appearance and color of the skin, or the language of use and the accent in French. Each individual will then experience ethnic categorization in different terms, more or less than other, more positively, more negatively, whichever, and it will influence his or her ethnic affiliation.

## **4.2. Chances of access to university: a matter of ethnicity, gender and class?**

### **4.2.1. The articulation of gender and ethnicity in inequalities**

Since we are interested in knowing which Latinos do continue to higher levels of education, and which don't, we want to look at possible disparities in terms of access to university, and particularly to graduate level degrees.

First, we noticed in our sample that the biggest disparities are found in the group of women. The most educated individuals are Diana, presently doing her PhD and Sandra doing her second masters, and the least educated individuals are also women: Ana with her secondary 4 and Maria

with her D.E.S.. All men either have a trade or a D.E.C. or are in school, up to university level. It seems the articulation of ethnicity and education is further emphasized for the women; the women who felt more Quebecker and who affirmed being 'white' are more ambitious than the women who strongly identified with their ethnic background as Latinas. It is the case of Diana, Sandra, and somewhat Paula, who might not have a graduate level diploma yet, but who strives for even more.

This goes in the same direction as our initial thought. We believed individuals who identified more with Quebeckers and looked more like them, are the same who went further in their studies, up to graduate level. This is true in our sample but particularly in the female group. Our only man in a graduate level program doesn't identify with the Quebec culture but is not necessarily overly proud of his Latin side, at least not since elementary school.

*... j'pense dès l'primaire la, 5<sup>e</sup> primaire. C'est ça dans l'fond quand j'tais jeune souvent je, je j'voulais vraiment m'affirmer comme Péruvien (...) mon père m'disait t'es pas Péruvien t'es Québécois (...) Ben j'pense que c'est avec l'adolescence pis toute ça j'pense que.. à.. 9 ans peut-être, j't'ais un peu moins intense  
-Mateo*

We also noticed that those who strongly identified with either culture during adolescence, also hung out with many members of the ethnic group with which they identified, even more so, for women. For example Diana and Sandra felt very Quebecker and had many Quebecker friends, more than from any other ethnic backgrounds. Others, such as Ana, Paula, Sofia, or Maria, that felt very Latina in high school, had more Latino friends than from any other ethnicity. For the guys, it varied. They had friends from around the world, regardless of their ethnic affiliation.

Gender and ethnicity together seem to define better, so far, who is more inclined to be ambitious about school<sup>19</sup>. However, we are still missing an important element in our analysis; social class. We will see how adding this third component, after ethnicity and gender, completes the bigger picture about inequalities in the educational system.

#### **4.2.2. Socio-economic status as another factor in play in inequalities**

For all parents, except for maybe one of our participants, education is important. Many come here for better opportunities, namely in the educational sphere. Many have great ambition for their children, pushing them towards prestigious careers as doctor, lawyer, economist and others. Some participants even speak of the pressure for academic success.

*.. c'est quand même, ben j'te dirais qu'c'est quand même important surtout comme quand on est la première euh ben comme on est la première génération à être ici, tsé comme on va être les premier, on va dire, à réussir académiquement*  
-Pablo

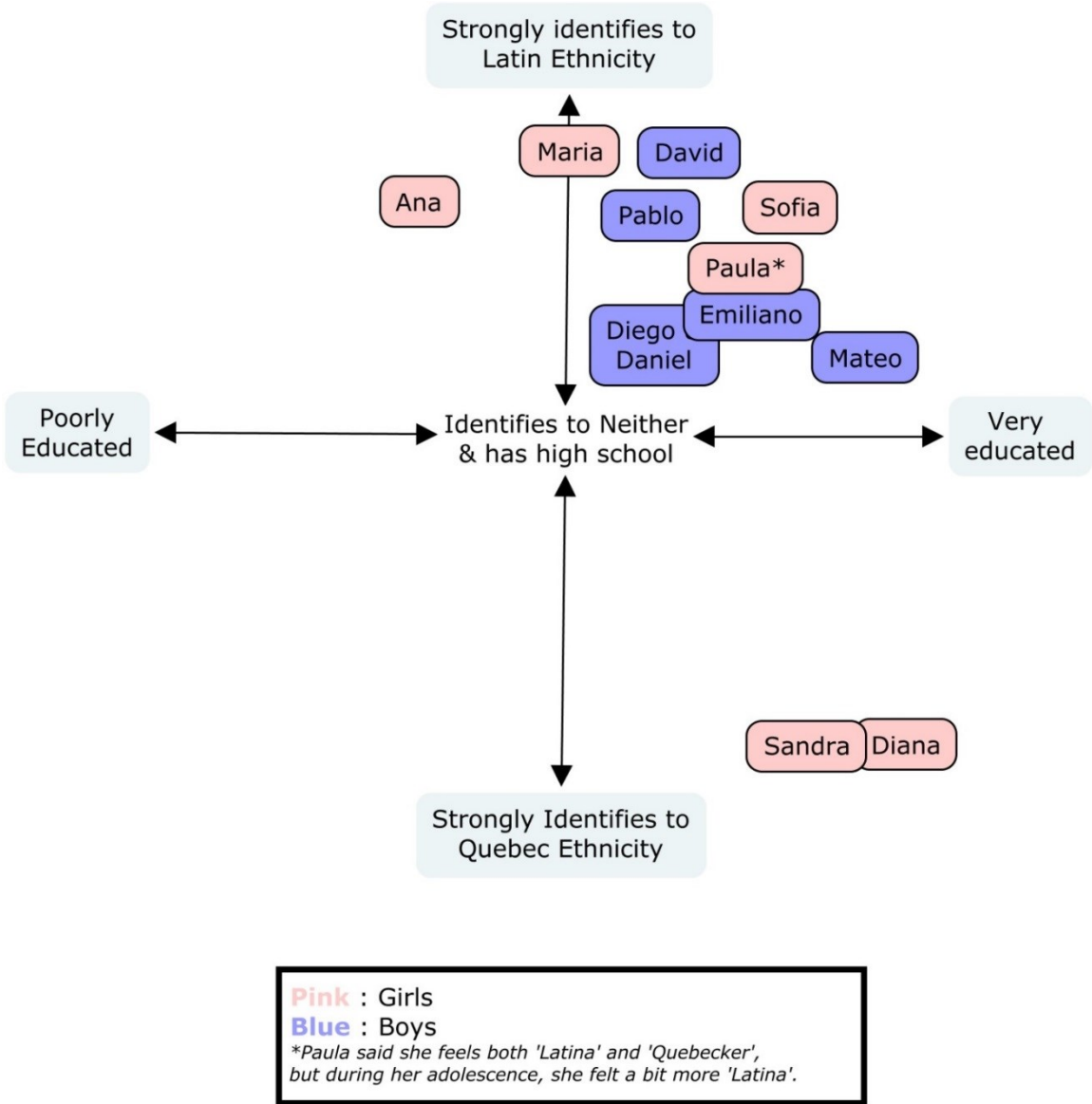
*I was the first and still the only member of my family to graduate high school and college and make it to university. My younger sister she dropped out of high school, my older sister never finished high school, my older brother never finished high school either so.. that they they made it so that they placed a lot of their hopes in me. They were like 'we got one' 'he's gonna make it' 'he might' you know 'he might get a job at a bank or something' like 'awesome'. So ah you know, I felt a lot of pressure to excel on an academic level because of because of that.*  
-Emiliano

Social class has served as a theoretical framework to explain school inequalities, as we have seen earlier (and will come back to later) with Bourdieu (1971). In the case of our research, since we did not ask for their social class or socio-economic status, we looked at the highest educational level of one parent, which we found to be correlated with the country of origin. Our

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<sup>19</sup> See Chart 1 on the next page to merely visualize the relationship between gender, ethnicity and education.

Chart I: Articulation between gender, ethnicity and education.



participant's parents who came from South America are the most educated, and those from Central America, the least. This seems to be somewhat relevant if we dig into the literature. Indeed, immigration fluxes offer a possible explanation. On the one hand, the immigration fluxes from Central America first came in the 1970s, because of civil war. The individuals participating in this flux were less educated individuals and mostly from rural backgrounds (Garcia-Lopez 2003; Bernier 2005). On the other hand, the immigration fluxes from South America represent people who came to Canada in the 1990s for political reasons. The best example is the case of many Chileans who came here as exiles after Pinochet's *coup d'état*. These people are known to be more educated (idem). These fluxes might explain why there seems to be a correlation between the country of origin and the parent's level of education, which we consider here as part of the socio-economic status.

Financial means are also important but neither were they measured. Nevertheless, through the discourses of our participants, we can find information about their financial means or about how financial ease can help in the pursuit of higher education. It is the case for Sandra for example, whose father had saved money for her studies (and for her brother's). But not all have the chance of having a savings account ready to pay their studies. Sofia expressed her opinion about this, and how she feels Quebeckers and Latinos are different because of this precisely.

*Faut qu'tu travailles pour payer tes études parc'que pas nécessairement tes parents ont les moyens de. Versus, tsé si je vois des amis Québécois, bon, ben souvent leurs études sont déjà payées, dans mon entourage, tsé, ou euh, c'est ça, y'ont pas à faire les deux. Mouais, j'te dirais qu'ils lâcheraient (les Latinos) surtout à cause de – le besoin de travailler vient comme primer ...*

*-Sofia*

She sees Quebeckers as financially better off, compared to Latinos. She also thinks this lack of money may explain why Latinos drop out of school, as it was the case for Emiliano and Daniel.

Speaking of financial means, private and public schools seem to be indicators of socio-economic status as well, because of the expenses private schools infer. Since not all can afford private school, this plays as a financial resource and status we can and should take into account. As a matter of fact, after observing which participants went to private or to public school, we noticed that those who went further in their schooling also went to private school<sup>20</sup>.

After looking at the ethnic identity, gender and socio-economic status, our sample results show some patterns. Any of these three by itself cannot explain the disparities or the inequalities in university access, but the articulation of the three can better depict who goes further or not.

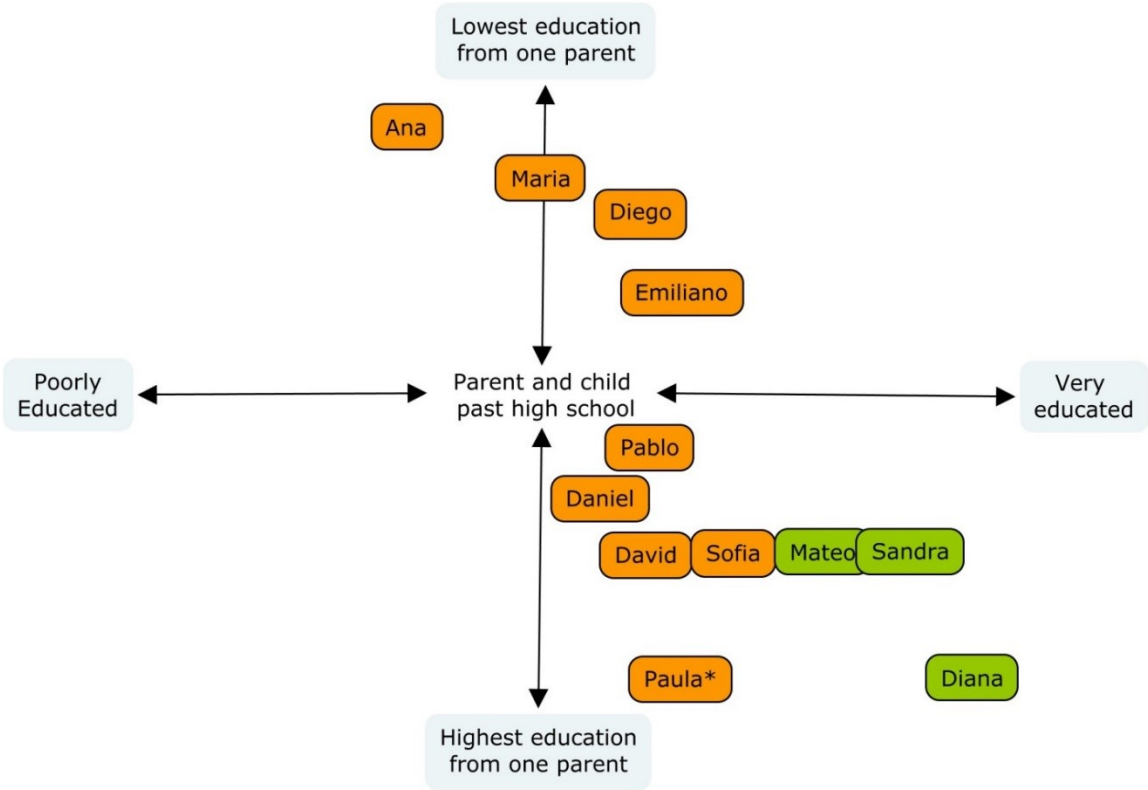
This articulation reminds us of the intersectional approach, that is, nowadays<sup>21</sup>, the study of multiple marginalities not added nor multiplied but differently articulated depending on each category to which an individual belongs, and portraying different more complex forms of discrimination or identity, or in other words, the study of “the multidimensionality of marginalized subjects’ lived experiences” (Nash, 2008). However, many scholars have pointed out the lack of clear definition and methodology to study such a complex notion (McCall 2005; Nash 2008) which is why we will only introduce this concept to emphasize our intention to understand inequalities in the light of all three avenues of reflection revealed earlier – (race or) ethnicity, gender and (social class or) socio-economic status – as completing one another. We will see in the next chapter how this intersectional approach comes into play to understand who goes further or not.

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<sup>20</sup> See Chart 2 on the next page to visualize the relationship between, socio-economic status, ethnicity and education

<sup>21</sup> Intersectionality was first presented as a critic to feminism, or to ‘White’ feminism that did not represent the struggles of Black women and failing to transcend the variation of struggle within the social group of women. (Crenshaw 1989; Nash 2008)

Chart II: Articulation between socio-economic status, ethnicity and education.



**Green** : Private School  
**Orange** : Public School  
*\*Paula hasn't finished her bachelors yet but she aims for higher education (she might join Diana in a couple years)*

### 4.2.3. Who goes further? Who doesn't?

The three components of intersectionality are relevant to study the possible inequalities experienced or believed by our participants. Although this work is not quantitative, and so, not able to infer our findings to the general population, we think it is important to point them out (to be rigorous and to possibly inspire future research).

We already detailed how women are both the most and least educated. It seems ethnicity and social class, here understood and analysed in terms of ethnic identity and socio-economic status, impact women more than men. The most successful, two French speaking white Latinas, identified strongly with Quebeckers, and the least successful in school, with Latinos only. We also observed how socio-economic status, being the highest level of education of a parent and access to private school, which underlies a certain financial status, can be a predictor of school success and advancement for our participants with the highest degrees.

We also noticed another tendency. Amongst the ones who identified with Latinos, or at least, not with Quebeckers, the ones who graduated from college or university, did so, in an English institution; Sofia went to Dawson then graduated from Concordia, Emiliano has a D.E.C. from Dawson and went to Concordia before dropping out. Even Paula, who attended a bilingual high school, went to an English language college, but continued in university in French. This came to our attention after a certain interview, which led us to ask one of our last participants what she thought about this issue, and she noticed a difference between French and English institutions. Her answer offers a new outlook on language, ethnicity and education.

*Eum, oui. Euh, ben en tout cas, moi j'trouve qu'en anglais c't'ait plus, tsé j'avais pas, j'avais pas ma place à faire, était faite, tsé c'est juste (...) Tsé j'avais pas à, c'est ça, j'avais, j'avais pas l'impression de devoir faire ma place tandis que, quand j'étais en*



*français j' devais, on dirais qu' tu dois faire ta place faut qu' tu démontre que t' es capable*  
-Sofia

In French educational institutions, she feels as if she has to prove herself to be as good as them, whereas, in English institutions, she almost automatically has her place there. Indeed, we previously reported her perception of the second institution as more welcoming. Possibly, the Anglophones are excluded from the linguistic barrier of the Quebecker identity, making other perceived outcast identities share a common trait of not fitting the dominant identity ideal.

Diana and Sandra seem to represent best the articulation of all items listed above as encouraging elements for higher education, such as being white women identified with the dominant Quebecker culture, with educated and financially well-off parents. Yet, Paula, who represents both encouraging and discouraging items for school ambition and success (according to our analysis in our sample), is not as easy to fit in the equation. She is presently doing her bachelors and she declares that she won't stop until she gets a master's degree or a doctoral degree. For someone in university with such ambition, she has an uncommon school path; she dropped out of college because she '*had other priorities*' and worked instead in order to obtain financial independence. She then went back to school, night school, to finish her D.E.C. before going to university in nursing. In her case, she has some of the so called criteria we found to be in favor of further education; she is white, speaks French perfectly, and English too, and her father has a PhD. However, she also went to public school, and during her teen years, strongly identified with her Latin side, more specifically her Chilean roots. This brings to mind many questions, such as: which factor is more influential?

To summarize, we can create an *ideal type* of the most and least ‘ambitious’ in school’. After observing our sample, it seems that white women from South America who identified strongly as Quebeckers during their adolescence, who went to private school and whose parents have university level education, are the most ‘ambitious’ or ‘successful’. Conversely, women from Central America, strongly identified by themselves and others as Latinas, who went to public high school and whose parents barely have elementary school level of education, are the least ‘ambitious’ or ‘successful’. Maria, who has a D.E.S. as her only degree, is the only one whose parents did not support her at school. This brings into play a more individual factor in the pursuit of higher education. Be that as it may, this lack of support is justified by a belief anchored in her parent’s education.

*(...) des gens Québécois qui m’disaient toujours ‘plus t’étudies, moins tu travailles et plus tu gagnes’ ok? Et ce proverbe ça tout l’temps trotté dans ma tête et là j’disais ‘ah, leur manière de penser n’est pas la même’ en change ma mère m’disait – mon père m’disait ‘il faut travailler fort fort fort, il faut savoir utiliser tes mains, pour aller loin’ mais si tu vois maintenant manuel, c’est plus tant manuel, c’est plus là j’m dis ‘je m’suis mis une limite’ ou ‘j’ai permis d’avoir une limite à cause de ça’ c’est ça que j’admire chez eux, en tout cas, oui, parc’qu’ils motivent leurs enfants à aller beaucoup plus loin pis à vraiment fixer pour des études*  
-Maria

Not only is education not associated with Latinos but with Quebeckers in her mind, but also, manual labor is what she associates with Latinos. As the two contradicting ideologies cited above demonstrate, manual labor is most opposite to education, and more so, it illustrates the opposition between an older, more traditional vision of work as physical, and a more modern definition of work as mental or intellectual. This can be explained by her parents’ probable past occupation as rural workers in El Salvador. As the migration fluxes show, immigrants from Central America mainly came for rural areas and worked as peasants.

### **4.3. Our analysis: Different priorities.**

As explored in the first chapter, school inequalities were once explained by social class. Famous sociologist Pierre Bourdieu studied the structural inequalities in school and their impact on youth from different socio-economic status (1971). He perceived the school system as a means of social reproduction of inequalities, which students would unknowingly participate in. To solidify his argument, he gave as an example the vocabulary used in examinations; they were written in such a manner that was familiar to youth from the *bourgeoisie* and unfamiliar to youth from lower socio-economic status.

Paul Willis's study (1977) on a similar subject, quite complementary to this, found that youth from a lower socio-economic status, whose fathers were laborers or manual workers, did not succeed in school and did not aspire to, either. In fact, they embraced their lack of success in school and focused on manual work. Such kids referred to boys who use their hands for work as 'real lads', whereas those who used their minds were not. This created two opposed cultures; the culture where manual work is valued by the 'real lads' and the school culture where sons of professionals excelled.

Things have changed, societies have evolved and communities are more and more diverse. The boom of immigration helped transform this new society, making one's social class no longer one's social origin. We believe social class cannot, anymore, be the one factor to explain school inequalities. Ethnicity can bring some interesting insight to it. Namely, to explain nowadays school inequalities, we can turn to the concept of self-fulfilling prophecy, which is to enact the social expectation others have of us because of our belonging to a certain social group. This notion was mainly used by American scholars to explain the difficulties of Afro-Americans in schools (Biggs

2009; Fordham et Ogbu 1986; Ogbu et Simmons 1998). We can apply this to Willis's findings by hypothesising that lower class lads ended up confirming expectations of school failure by taking pride in their manual work abilities, which leads to confirm too, the social reproduction enacted not only by structural inequalities but by the individuals themselves.

The advantage of the self-fulfilling prophecy theory is that it does not confine nor limit the understanding of inequalities in terms of structural characteristics or general determinist conclusions. Its definition underlies the interwoven relationship between one's choices and one's social affiliation, the same way our concept of ethnic identity incorporates both individual perception and self-identification, and socially established criteria of ethnic barriers. Indeed, there is a certain individual aspect to one's choices and identity in the self-fulfilling prophecy, but it mostly takes into account the construction and the performance of both as socially imbedded in one's experiences and as the products of social interactions.

Ogbu's ecological theory of academic disengagement (Ogbu et Simmons 1998) and McAndrew et al's theory of voluntary and involuntary minorities (McAndrew 2008) seen earlier also offer this more flexibility perspective. Indeed, we want this flexibility to explain how, although socially categorized by society as members of the same ethnic group, Latinos have a rationale and attitudes sociologically explainable towards both their ethnic self-identification and their educational choices. In the next lines, we will use the contributions of authors named above to help us produce sociological interpretations and analysis.

#### 4.3.1. A matter of discrimination?

If we start by looking deeper into our participants' own rationalized opinion about the articulation of ethnicity and education, many seemed to believe it is up to the individual, that ethnicity is not (or should not) be a predominant factor in one's success or ambition in school.

*Ouais ouais ouais. J'te dirais l'ethnie c'est pas vraiment quelque chose à avoir*  
-Pablo

*I blame them! I blame, I entirely blame them. It's always up to the individual, it's always up to the individual in order to maximize the opportunities that are presented to them*  
-Emiliano

Only one of our participants believes there is structural racism, namely in the sphere of education. For her, there are fewer opportunities for Latinos to access school and persevere while these opportunities are easily given to any Quebecker. Having been the one who has experienced the most racism, it might explain why she is the only one who sees such clear inequalities. This is nevertheless important to mention since her perception might be the one of many others in Montreal who were not reached by our research.

Social class, specifically, was noted as an important factor only by one of our participants.

*pour moi l'rapport y'est plus entre la entre la, la la, majoritairement, la classe sociale, le niveau d'éducation, le niveau d'scolarité pis l'ambition, j'pense que c'est ça. Justement, tsé à Montréal-Nord, y'avait des Québécois aussi pis j'pense que l'ambition était quand même moins grande que... dans un quartier comme à Laval, j'pense que dans les bons, dans les bons quartiers, y peut y avoir des Latinos meilleurs, j'pense pas que c'est l'origine ethnique en tant que tel*  
-Mateo

This same participant added to social class the influence of neighborhoods. The quality of a neighborhood can be a relevant factor since we know some neighborhoods are known to be safer than others, richer or poorer, hence, favorable or not to encouraging education. As Mateo mentioned also, in Montreal-North, there are more Latinos affiliated to street gangs, and thus, less

interested to, or inclined to continue school, past high school. He and one other mentioned the area as a possible factor to explain school success or failure.

*c'est juste euh peut-être un peu plus médiatisé au niveau des quartiers (...) tu prends Montréal où la proportion d'immigrants est plus élevée, c'est sûr qu'y aura plus d'immigrants qui vont décrocher que de Québécois*  
-Pablo

In this quote, Pablo compares Montreal and Quebec in terms of proportion of ethnic groups. Where there are more immigrants, there are automatically more immigrant drop-outs than Quebeckers. He did add later, that he feels Blacks and Latinos are also more mediatized as drop-outs, but this is not necessarily the truth nor his opinion, but a mere image given by society. McAndrew has proof however that it is true that Blacks, mainly Haitians or African Anglophones, and Hispanics have lesser results in school and higher rates of high school drop outs (McAndrew, Ledent et Ait-Said 2009; McAndrew et al. 2008).

The two most elaborate opinions about the matter of ethnicity and education came from our two most educated individuals, who had similar point of views.

*tsé l'Québec d'auj – d'aujourd'hui en tout cas est beaucoup plus ouvert par rapport à ça qu'à l'époque tsé mes parents y, c'est plus difficile à s'faire comprendre tout ça, mais euh... non j'pense que les difficultés c'est, c'est les gens eux-mêmes qui s'les font pis qui s'les qui s'les mettent pis euh, en restant ghettoisés mais ça c'pour toutes les cultures j'pense que c'est c'est ça qui fait qu'c'est difficile ensuite de s'intégrer tout ça mais j'pense pas c'est propre aux euh, aux latinos.*  
-Diana

*Ouais mais comme mes élèves euh y'a de tout. À Montréal c – j'pense que c'est un des avantages aussi c'est qu'y'a de tout fait que les gens ils se mélangent super bien, de plus en plus, j'te dirais que maintenant ça s'mélange plus que quand moi j'ai été euh élève eum, j'pense que, au-delà de, de la couleur de ta peau, c'est ton attitude aussi, si tu veux t'intégrer tu t'intègre. Si si tu veux euh te tenir juste avec des Latinos pis juste parler Espagnol pis juste écouter d'la musique Latino-Américaine, ben tu vas pas t'intégrer pis c'est ton problème tandis que si tu veux t'intégrer ben tu t'intègres avec des Haitiens, des Latinos, des Pakis si tu veux mais qui ont la volonté aussi de s'intégrer pis de se sentir Québécois pis d'appartenir à la société québécoise*  
-Sandra

These explanations offer us a realm of thoughts about both individual and societal factors. Diana speaks of people who ‘stay ghettoized’, insinuating both an individual choice of not integrating the dominant culture, and a societal reality of ghettoized environments. Sandra emphasizes this idea when she specifically tells us some Latinos do not integrate and actually strengthen the distance between their culture and the dominant Quebecker culture by only having Latin friends, only speaking Spanish and sticking to Latin cultural elements. Excluding oneself from the dominant culture, failing to integrate it to some extent, can result in denying oneself the same chances and resources. Indeed, self-segregated ghettoized environments may result in poor access or motivation towards education. As one participant’s puts it, after reflecting on the issue,

*(...)j’vois pas comment, comment est-c’que ça pourrait influencer mais ouais d’un sens c’est vrai parc’que... tsé euh, c’est vrai que les euh, les comportements changent quand on est en groupe ethnique (...) un groupe de latino y vont s’mettre ensemble c’est sûr que les, les notes ça va pas être la même affaire  
-Daniel*

It seems those whose ethnic identity and lifestyle is strongly associated with their ethnic Latin background, exclude themselves from the dominant culture and their chance to integrate, namely through education. For example, in our sample, if we take the two most discriminated individuals, David and Maria, they both identify the strongest to their Latin side, and neither went to University. Both got discouraged to do so in different ways. David abandoned his dream of university to do a trade and work manually instead of working ‘against’ his people (a matter we will get back to later) and Maria believes in structural inequalities and was afraid to enter into a programme in college.

The advantage of using a concept such as ethnic identity is precisely to not confine an individual in an ethnic category but to examine how their ethnic identification can influence their

perceptions and attitudes. Diana and Sandra's opinion point out something relevant. How individuals experience their identity might lead them to be 'ghettoized' and/or to not integrate, resulting in lower levels of education. Indeed, we purposely used 'ethnic identity' instead of 'ethnicity' and 'school ambition' instead of 'school success' to take into consideration both the structural relations and the individual preferences and choices concerning both ethnicity and education to see how they interacted. Consequently, we don't necessarily believe the Latin ethnic group to be a handicap when it comes to school, rather, the affiliation to this Latin ethnic group might reveal underlying processes that explain the relationship between ethnicity, here portrayed as ethnic identity, and school, here defined as school ambition. We believe it to be correlated and we will see, in the next section, what our conclusions are about the issue, incorporating the thoughts given by our participants.

#### **4.3.2. Family (or Community) vs Individuality**

After exploring the discourses of our participants, we observed a certain gap between a particular Latin value and the importance of school. The same way 'real lads' valued manual work instead of school, it seems Latin-Americans prioritize their families or family values over the pursuit of higher education. For example, Ana only has her secondary 4 but at the age of 26, already has two kids aged 4 years old and 6 months old (at the time of the interview). Daniel, who is struggling to finish his D.E.C. to become an ambulance driver, puts his studies aside to work and help his mother pay for the mortgage ever since his father passed away.

We have already seen in previous quotes from our participants how family values are strongly associated and important to Latinos, in contrast with the perceptions of Quebecker's



individualism. Family is indeed important to our own participants, especially the ones who strongly identify as Latinos. As one of our participants noticed, family and individual school ambition can sometimes be in conflict.

*au niveau des des valeurs, comme tsé nous on est très centré sur la famille. Eux-autres c'est beaucoup plus, ben, le, une bonne éducation pis après tu penses à ta à ta famille, tandis que nous autres on est tellement comme tsé.. moi mes amis la majorité à 21 ans ils s'mariaient pis ils avaient des enfants tsé euh, moi j'ai comme dépassé les statistiques en en m'mariant plus tard*  
-Sofia

Here, she describes how both values can appear to be contradicting. In her case, she continued on to university level studies, and even while she was studying, she was working and was already married. Being herself one of the rare strongly-identified Latinas who went further in her education, was confronted with both values:

*dans mon cas, comme je disais, j'voulais pas faire partie des statistiques du monde<sup>22</sup> qui avait lâché, fait qu'j'ai comme, mais tsé c't'ait, c'est ça c't'ait la persévérance parc'que, oui chez nous, tsé l'éducation est importante mais à quelque part la famille l'est aussi. Fait qu'à moment donné, tu retrouves dans ta vie où qu't'es comme confronté aux deux. T'as comme un choix à faire 'bon ben est-c'que j'reste ici à construire ma famille ou est-c'que j'investis à poursuivre mes études*  
-Sofia

This quote clearly describes the opposition she had to face between 'going on with my schooling' or 'prioritize family'. She did both, knowing she did not ascribe to the 'Latina norm' she perceives and talks about. She also added that she felt pressured to have her own family since most Latinos got married and had kids in their mid-twenties, whereas Quebeckers she met rarely did so, or had children only in their early thirties. To her, education is more associated with Quebeckers, as a pursuit of personal interest and accomplishment.

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<sup>22</sup> She's referring to Latinos here

This is also what other participants believed, like Paula and Maria. Paula has this perception of Montreal Latinas who drop out of school and get pregnant early, whereas, to her, Quebeckers want to study and succeed.

*A typical Québécoise for me is a hard-working girl um..you know they they wanna study, they want to, they want to find a job, they're very independent, oh my God, these girls are so independent (...) compared to Latinas*  
-Paula

Maria has shown us previously how she found her parents' idea of school to be in contradiction with the perception of school Quebeckers have shared with her; her parents believed she couldn't waste more time in school and had to work hard to earn a good salary, whereas Quebeckers she met told her the more she'd study, the more she'd earn.

There seems here to be some expectations from Latinos to prioritize their families over their personal school success. Not to say they have to drop out of school, but it becomes harder to consider a doctoral degree since it involves staying in school much longer, being in debt and working possibly less, which ultimately are not beneficial if one wants a family in their mid-twenties. Moreover, the fact that there is a certain opposition between prioritizing one's family and one's individual and personal school ambition, and that the two are associated with different ethnic cultures, shows how, in contrast with Willis's study, it is possible to hypothesize that there is a 'family culture' somewhat opposed to a 'school culture'.

In fact, in our sample, the two most educated individuals did not so strongly talk about family values, whether it is because they did not grow up to have this value so internalized, like Diana, or because they thought Latino's perception of family was too invading, like Sandra, and actually did identify the strongest to the Quebecker culture. Even when we look at Paula, who has expressed the desire and ambition to pursue graduate level studies, she has mentioned identifying

as strongly to her ‘Canadian’ side as to her Chilean side nowadays. With her opinions of Montreal Latinas and Quebeckers, she seems to have taken the ‘best of both worlds’ in her discourse. About her schooling, in her case, other factors come into play, such as her father’s level of education, and probably her being white, as she has mentioned that this could be a favorable element. However, she did not have a ‘normal’ school path as she dropped out of college at some point, to work and prioritize her financial independence

#### **4.3.3. Work over Studies**

Following the idea that family is prioritized over personal higher education (much higher education), it seems that work becomes more important than studies. This is true for many participants, partially because of financial reasons. This is the case of Daniel, for example, who stops school every once in a while to work more and help out his mother financially.

Indeed, many of them believe it can be about the money. For example, Sofia says Quebeckers already have their studies paid, taking off their shoulders the responsibility and pressure of working. If we look at the fact that all of those who went to private school graduate (or will do so, soon) from graduate school in university, financial ease can be relevant. Furthermore, the lack of financial resources can also be the reason why one drops out. It was the case for Emiliano who dropped out of Concordia for ‘*financial reasons*’.

This is more than ever relevant for second generations since they are the first to attend high school in Montreal and the first to instigate this relationship between both variables. Emiliano shares another thought about how it is hard for first wave immigrants to stay in school.

*I think that the temptation to ah, to to to chill.. and ah, it can kind of like – or or just get easy money is is such that ah, a lot of people just don't necessarily finish , they just don't, you know they just don't care enough and you know a lot of people they just have, like you know, they have to depend on on, on survival and so, you know, they have to rely on themselves and they have to go out and get it and, you know, you can't live in a, this like, in this isolated um, vacuum of world where you're going to school and that's that's your world, you know, when you have bills to pay and you know, food to put in on the table and you know, lights to keep on, you know, so um, I think that specially specially like when when, when they're when they're like first wave immigrants, when they're first wave immigrants it's damn near impossible to stay in school (...)like I said the temptation of easy money and the survival instinct kicks in so the interest of going to school wings, and they just don't do it. It's 'cause they don't care they rather go out and get paid*  
-Emiliano

Emiliano here reveals to us the urge of first wave immigrants to get paid instead of spending more time in school.

Working represents money, which represents being able to pay the bills, which is, as Emiliano says, what comes first. In addition to this, Diego brings a relevant point to help us understand how work overshadows school choices. To him, by opposition to higher levels of education, there is the option to do trades to enter the workforce faster.

*The majority no they they don't [go to school] [...] But it's cause all we [Latinos] have in our heads is work and succeed in life.*  
-Diego

As Diego shows in this quote, work seems more appealing than school to 'succeed' in life, that is financial success and not school success.

Furthermore, university represents big costs, which can influence one's choice of school career. For participants like Sandra, whose school is paid, she did not have to worry about finances, unlike Sofia who has experienced a bit more struggle, working while studying. In the case of Emiliano, he actually dropped out of school mainly for financial reasons. Even Pablo, who was

planning maybe to go to university, hesitates because of the school fees. For Latinos, work seems to be the most efficient way to ‘succeed’ in life, and not necessarily school.

In a study about ethnic minorities and school success, McAndrew et al (2008) observed two behaviors coming from youth ethnic minorities towards educational institutions, either assimilation or linguistic and cultural resistance, to which she appointed the names ‘voluntary minorities’ and ‘involuntary minorities’, respectively. We discovered both realities in our sample; those who identify strongly to the dominant Quebecker culture and those who adhere stronger to their origins, namely by taking on more elements of the Latin culture, or even slipping some words of Spanish in their discourse. We also noticed those who assimilate better to the dominant group go the furthest in school, and the others who go to university and who do not identify with the dominant group (only one completed a bachelors), continued in English, showing some sign of cultural and linguistic resistance. Sofia even goes to admit having trouble being told which language to use;

*j’ suis encore très rebelle par rapport à m’imposer des langues la tsé.*  
-Sofia

Those who do not continue to university all have diverse reasons and paths but all show as well some kind of resistance. Maria believes there are fewer opportunities in school for Latinos in Quebec, compared to Toronto, thus, explaining her resistance and rivalry with Quebeckers in her discourse. Another example of this behavior is David’s choice of career. At first, he dreamed of John Molson School of Business to make money for his family, as he says :

*John Molson for me was a big picture you know, like ah... big cars, big house, um.. giving the good life to my parents, specially my mom, ‘cause my mom save<sup>23</sup> our home, so it’s really helping out my family,*  
-David

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<sup>23</sup> As in ‘not losing the house’, being able to pay rent or mortgage.

But then realized it meant to make money by betraying his people.

*But um, it hit me also, because, to me to go to business eventually would mean making somebody that is rich richer [...] so it kind of hit me because I come from a [third] world country, so it's like abusing my own people.*  
-David

He then ended up choosing and graduating from a trade, and working with his hands, instead of becoming a business man which would've contradicted his values and would have made him feel as if he was 'betraying' his own people.

The idea of assimilation vs linguistic or cultural resistance seems to have some substance in the daily lives of youth ethnic minorities, including youth from a Latin-American background. In the school sphere, such behaviors as the second one can lead to a certain form of ghettoization and thus, a lack of integration which is supposed to be assured by an equal access to education. This, Sandra and Diana understood and feel that because of this, one's ethnicity is not an excuse nor a reason for one's success or failure in school. We agree that one's ethnic group itself does not explain such behaviors or ambition in school, but more so, what one does with his or her ethnic identity. If we recall the four steps to attain a positive ethnic identity – performance, cohesion, advantages and acknowledgment (Pilote et De Souza Correa, 2010) – studied in the first chapter, it seems there is a lack of advantages in school when being Latino, namely as portrayed in the media, as Pablo believes, and there is an acknowledgement of their cultural difference but not only in a positive light as some of our participants' experiences show. Following this process of self-identification to certain ethnic groups, which are associated with certain expectations, can arise choices and motivations in school influenced by an either positive or less positive socially constructed ethnic identity. In the case of some of our participants, their Latin ethnic identity has oriented their priorities towards work, somehow resisting what school has to offer.

#### 4.3.4. Redefining Ambition

Considering this, school ambition is not the only type of ambition one could or should strive for, nor is it the only measure of success in life. For all of them, their parents came for better opportunities. In some cases, they had high hopes of them becoming doctors or lawyers or any other prestigious career. Although the latter is not the case for any of our participants, they almost all have as much or more years of schooling than their parents. As Sandra put it:

*oui c't important d'avoir un diplôme pour moi, parc'que ... mes parents y'ont fait des sacrifices pour nous pis j'trouvais ça important d'avoir plus qu'un secondaire 5 pis travailler chez IGA tsé*  
-Sandra

There is only Paula whose father recently graduated with a doctoral degree, but she is not done yet, and will pursue graduate level studies, possibly up to the doctoral level.

In addition to this, we hypothesize that our participants have a pragmatic perception of school. Although we cannot compare to other groups, since we only have Latinos in our sample, we believe that they have such a perception because none of our participants has gone back to school to change the orientation of his or her career goals. They find what they want to do, and do it. Either some have a trade and work, like David and Diego, or they find a job and pursue it, like Maria and Pablo or Emiliano (who pursues his passion as a MC, panelist, etc.) or they do the amount of studies necessary to attain their goal, like Diana, Sandra or Mateo. Their dream might not be to become a doctor or a lawyer, but they do whatever they feel they have to do, depending on their priorities. Even the most educated individuals have mentioned they only did graduate level studies because they needed it in order to pursue their dream job, like psychologist, Spanish teacher and Professional Fitness Trainer (related to Kinesiology). The only one who did more than the

necessary is Sofia, whose ‘technique’ in Social Work was sufficient to become a Social Worker, but decided to graduate with a bachelor in Public Relations. Indeed, she repeatedly mentioned how she wanted to ‘undo the statistic’ of Latinos not pursuing higher education.



## Conclusion

This qualitative research about the articulation between ethnic identity and school ambition amongst Latinos of second generation in Montreal, based on twelve individual semi-directed interviews, has a couple of conclusions to share. Inspired by Bourdieu, Willis, Biggs, Ogbu and McAndrew, we have come to our own conclusions which we will summarize here.

In our study, going further or not in one's education can be explained by the articulation between one's ethnic self-identification, in other words the cultures they perceive and ascribe to, and their priorities, behaviors, choices and motivations in school. We can say there are inequalities between those who identify to the Latino ethnic minority group, and those who identify to the majority group, should it be an identification process based on personal self-exploration and/or the ethnic categorization of others.

We have confirmed, too, in our sample, that socio-economic status is still an important factor in the pursuit of higher studies. Nonetheless, it has also come to our attention that, in our sample once again, socio-economic status correlates with being White, speaking French, and ultimately identifying with the Quebec culture. As mentioned earlier, we wanted to keep in mind the intersectional point of view to see how one category is not enough to explain such discrepancies, nor is it as simple as to add them, but rather, to see how they interact together. Indeed, the elements associated with Quebec culture are also associated with higher socio-economic status, which is in turn associated with education, which is itself somehow associated with Quebecers. Three participants (Sofia, Paula and Maria) associated education with Quebecers and two participants (Maria and David) showed in their discourse how Latinos are associated with manual work. Others (Diego, Emiliano, Daniel and Sofia again) associated Latinos

with working and not studying, namely to help out their families (parents and siblings), pay bills, or start their own family (having children) in their mid-twenties. Family is associated with Latinos, while Quebeckers are seen as more individualistic. The more family oriented are the ones who identified most with Latinos, and were perceived as more Latino by others. The ones who identified with Quebeckers had the 'right' skin colour, white, which is associated with higher socio-economic status. This recalls Emiliano's idea of Whites being the Master race and his notion of shades of skin colour and social class being correlated, placing Whites on top.

We could hypothesize there are two sort of Latinos, which was mentioned in our verbatims, whether it is as 'Montreal Latinas' dropping out of school and getting pregnant young compared to real Latinas who work hard (Paula) or Latinos who go out and drink compared to Latinos to which education is important (Pablo) or Latinos with lower social class in street gangs from poorer neighborhoods such as St-Michel compared to Latinos with higher social class from suburbs such as Laval (Mateo). This brings us to another conclusion that takes these statements into consideration; Latinos who identify with Latinos are more prone to perform their ethnicity and might perform their stereotypes, which, as we have seen in the discourses of our participants, are the negative ones as getting pregnant young, belonging to a street gang or chilling and drinking, all discouraging education.

However, the bigger picture is not so negative or radical. We believe those who identify with Latinos do perform their identity and perform a role not strongly associated with education, but not because they necessarily perform their negative stereotypes, rather, they perform their family-oriented Latino role. This role seems to be opposed to aiming at higher levels of education, such as graduate level studies; it is not advantageous when one wants to help out his parents or provide for their children, which they usually have earlier than Quebeckers. Since Latinos value

the importance of family more than Quebeckers, leading the most Latino self-identified to start families earlier, and since delaying this family planning to study means acquiring more socio-economic status, we see how the family element of the Latin ethnicity lowers the odds of striving for the highest levels of education and is associated with lower socio-economic status.

This is especially true for the women in our sample. As we have showed, explained and illustrated, the most and least educated are women, and the least educated have the lowest socio-economic status and strongly identified with Latinos while the most educated have the highest socio-economic status and strongly identified with Quebeckers. This is not too surprising as women are the ones most affected by family planning. Pregnancy can stop one from going to school, and reaching the doctoral degree level is easier without a kid. In the end, gender, social class or socio-economic status and ethnicity or ethnic identity offer a multidimensional analysis to understand how prioritizing family by working instead of staying in school for more than 11, 13 or 16 years<sup>24</sup>, is 'normal' to any strongly identified Latino, and is also associated with lower socio-economic status and impact more women, since women are more affected than men in family planning (or unplanning).

Hopefully, this study can have some heuristic value and can be used to deepen the understanding of ethnic inequalities, of the relation between ethnicity and education, and of how gender, social class and ethnicity interact in any societal sphere. On another note, our research is only a beginning and can be completed by collecting similar data on various other ethnic groups, particularly the Quebeckers, since they are the dominant group. It could be interesting to know if they develop their identity around the same concepts of '*quebequicité*' and if they feel there are

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<sup>24</sup> 11 years of school is associated to high school level studies, 13 to college level studies and 16 to a bachelors

inequalities between ethnic groups. Another interesting addition would be to interview ethnically mixed individuals. As Pablo says, we will probably see more and more ethnic mixes, which might blur the lines of ethnicity, weakening the relationship between ethnicity and education and the school inequalities between ethnic groups in the future.

To end, the parents of our participants came for better opportunities for their children and the latter have somewhat fulfilled this as they almost all have more education than their parents who wanted more from them.

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# ANNEXE

## Interview\_grid

### Ethnicity

- Can you tell me about your parents' immigration process? Where are they from and when did they come? How old were you? / Peux-tu me parler du processus d'immigration de tes parents? D'où viennent-ils et quand sont-ils arrivés? Quel âge avais-tu?

- What is 'ethnicity' to you? / Dans tes mots, c'est quoi 'l'ethnicité'?

- What was your ethnic identity when you were in high school? / Quelle était ton identité ethnique pendant le secondaire?

(How Latino or Quebecker were you? En quoi étais-tu Latino ou Québécois?)

- How has your ethnic identity evolved? / Comment est-ce que ton identité ethnique a évolué?

- In your opinion, what is a typical Latino? And what is a typical Quebecker? / À vos yeux, qu'est-ce qu'un Latino typique? Un Québécois typique?

(How are they different or similar?/ En quoi sont-ils différent ou similaire?)

- Have you experienced racism or discrimination? If yes, when, where and how? / Avez-vous déjà vécu du racisme ou de la discrimination? Si oui, quand, où et comment?

(Do you think Montreal is different from Quebec? / Penses-tu que Montréal et le reste du Québec est différent?)

### Education

- Can you tell me about your parents' education? / Quel est le niveau d'études de tes parents?

- What is your education? (and school path) / Quel est ton niveau d'éducation? (et ton parcours scolaire)

- Can talk about your experiences in school? Anything related to your ethnicity? / Peux-tu me parler de tes expériences à l'école? Quelque chose de relié à ton identité ethnique?

- Do you think there is a relationship between ethnicity and education? Why? / Penses-tu qu'il existe une relation entre l'ethnicité et l'éducation? Pourquoi?