The Ontological Security of Empire:
Honor and Hierarchy in French Colonialism

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Abstract

This thesis will address the question of how collective identities seek ontological security despite the puzzling question of how to seek a stable identity that is defined by conflicting narratives, and why one would find security in doing so. The case study of French colonialism serves to fill some of the unexplained gaps in the theory of ontological security. Why was France able to contain and seek to maintain the conflicting narratives of including its colonies into its self-definition while simultaneously enforcing a hierarchical separation between the citizens of the metropole and the subjects of the colonies? I will argue that it sought to do so in order to preserve its sense of identity through its definition of itself as it imagined being positioned honorably within its construction of international order. The presented case study demonstrates how preexisting ontological security theories can be combined and developed to conclude that collectivities find security by seeing themselves as inhabiting honorable and superior hierarchical positions within the international order.

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Timeline

1845: French government in Algeria formally established

1870: French Third Republic begins

1893: France fully establishes rule in Indochina

1904: French West Africa fully established

1918: Lebanon and Syria come under French mandate

1940: Vichy Government, German occupation of France

1944: Conference de Brazzaville (January 30 – February 8)

1944: Liberation of France, beginning of the Provisional Government (August 25)

1946: French Fourth Republic begins

1954: France recognizes Indochinese countries' independences

1958: Fifth Republic begins

1962: France recognizes Algerian independence

Introduction

"France cannot be France without greatness," wrote Charles de Gaulle as he reflected on the "glories" of his country, describing the ideas and objects that, for him, defined France.[1] It is telling that de Gaulle's notion of France was inseparable from greatness. This "greatness" defined France: it was every bit as much a part of its character, and even more so, than something more tangible like a territorial map or a system of government. French identity was defined, for de Gaulle, by honor and his actions strove to fulfill that identity role.

Throughout the Third Republic, French identity was, like many other collective identities, self-defined as honorable. This honor was constructed through its perception of its position in the world and within its empire. For France, "greatness" and honor were shaped by France's position as an empire. In fact, up until the second half of the twentieth century, the concept of France was inseparable from its status as an empire. Simultaneously, French honor was tied to the republican values that came out of the Revolution. In conceptualizing itself as an empire, France included its colonies in its self-defined notion of "France." However, it did not include the people it colonized into its image of French citizens, and it excluded them from many of the democratic rights afforded to the European French of the metropole.[2] How, then, could France juggle these two narratives of the self: that the colonies were at once both a part of the collective identity and purposefully excluded from it?

Ontological security theory currently does not fully explain how collectivities can promote multiple conflicting narratives of themselves, and why it is in fact important for them to

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[1] Jonathan Griffin and Richard Howard, trans., *The Complete War Memoirs of Charles de Gaulle*, (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, Inc., 1998), 3-4.

[2] The term "metropole" refers to the center of the French Empire, or the territory of what is now known as France, as opposed to the outlying colonies.

uphold these multiple narratives despite their conflicts. The case study of French colonialism helps to fill this gap by providing insight into the way in which collective identity security functions by the feeling of upholding the self-image in the international hierarchy, no matter what inherent contradictions build up this image. The tensions between inclusion and exclusion of its colonies that France held in its self-definition is representative of the competing narratives (or stories about themselves that often contradict one another) that all collectivities hold about themselves, and demonstrates their seeming need to perpetuate these narratives despite their contradictions. All collective identities hold competing narratives. No collective identity has a linear, one-dimensional self-perception. In the case of France, this is illustrated through the tensions it held between seeing the colonies as a part of French identity while simultaneously positioning the colonies in a way that did not disturb the French narrative of the metropole as hierarchically superior to those it colonized. France included the colonies into its conception of France, but it also denied citizenship and democratic rights to many of the colonized. Out of this paradox emerges the question of how a collectivity can contain such contradicting views of itself, and why it can fight to retain them, however conflicting they may be.

Ontological security rests on the notion that groups feel secure when they feel that they can define themselves within an organized world. They feel insecure when their actions and images of themselves do not align, or when they feel that they cannot predict the outcomes of their actions and of events throughout the world. Groups provide their members with classifications and categories that allow their members to feel secure in the notion that they understand the world, understand what to expect from the world, and can predict what the outcomes of their actions will be in this world. A state of ontological security eliminates the feeling of chaos.

For a group to have multiple narratives about itself, then, seems to complicate the idea that a clear, predictable, reliable identity provides security to a collectivity. How do collectivities rectify their competing narratives in order to feel ontologically secure in the world? On top of

this, how do they determine that their identities are secure? Most importantly, what is the basis for this feeling of security within the international sphere?

In this thesis, I will argue that the French sought to achieve ontological security through the reinforcement of a perception of their standing in hierarchical colonial order. Their dual narrative of inclusion and exclusion of the colonies makes sense because it was necessary for France to contain colonies in order to perceive its metropole as honorable by inhabiting a hierarchically superior position to the colonies. Simultaneously, it could not accept the peoples of the colonies on an equal footing with those in the metropole because to do so would undermine the hierarchical order on which their notion of honor was based.

The first chapter will analyze the theory of ontological security as it is used within the field of Security Studies and International Relations. It will examine the roles of honor and hierarchy in the ontological security seeking of a collectivity. The following chapters will then examine French colonialism in order to contextualize and challenge the preexisting concepts about ontological security theory. Chapter 2 will argue that after World War II, France sought to regain its sense of honor through a reaffirmation of its status as a possessor of colonies. Chapter 3 will then focus on citizenship policy and rhetoric within the Third Republic, demonstrating the role of the perception of placement in an international hierarchy as it relates to a collectivity's sense of self and honor.

I will show that French colonialism demonstrates the importance of a hierarchically determined sense of honor to a collective identity's self-definition. The need to reinforce an image of defined identity through this hierarchical honor often dictates the foreign policy decisions of international actors. Reinforcing their image of selves in relation to other groups, collective identities can often carry out what seem to be contradictory policies or rhetoric. They do so in order to maintain their image of self through the multiple narratives they define themselves through. In order to feel secure within the international system and as a reliable identity group, they seek positions of hierarchically located honor.

Chapter 1: A Literary Overview of Ontological Security Theory

Ontological security theory posits that individuals feel secure when the collective identities they belong to are consistent and reliable. Individuals look for reliably consistent environments from the groups they belong to. These consistent environments include international relationships. Collective identities construct maps of the international order so that they can provide their members with a feeling of security through understanding. Collectivities provide conceptions of how to view other groups and, through this, how to view themselves. Conceptions of global organization classify enemy and friend, locating the self in a network of relationships, and thus bring about security because the individual feels s/he does not exist in chaos.

The theory of ontological security has been studied in several different fields. This chapter will start by considering a philosophical understanding of self-identity, mainly through sociologist Anthony Giddens' definition of ontological security. This approach to ontological security, along with theories of collective identity such as that brought forth by Tobias Thieler, have recently been brought into the field of Security Studies and International Relations to provide an alternative approach to investigating what constitutes international security. Through her 2006 article on how ontological security-seeking directs the behavior of states in international relations, Jennifer Mitzen provides a good starting point for understanding ontological security's role in security studies. Catarina Kinnvall, Brent J. Steele, and Ayse Zarakol each follow a different track of explanation as to why ontological security is present and important within the security of collective identities.

I will examine these theories and argue that a combination of them can provide a more developed understanding of the functioning of ontological security. This can help to create a stronger role for ontological security theory in Security Studies. In the chapters following, I will present how ontological security has guided international policy historically, as demonstrated through the case of French colonialism. First, this chapter will place Steele's concept of honor within Zarakol's notion of ontological security as defined through international hierarchy. While the shame and honor that Steele discusses influence international security choices, these concepts are not complete. The importance of international hierarchical placement of the self that Zarakol discusses is also incomplete without a further reasoning as to why understanding of international hierarchy is important to self-identities. Honor provides a reason as to why states not only seek a stable hierarchical position, but also hierarchical superiority. States seek to secure their ontological security by perpetuating their sense of honor exhibited within self-perceived international hierarchy.

1.1 Philosophy

In order to make sense of the world, humans naturally seek order so that they are able to name things and concepts and thus be able to understand them and how to interact with them. Hannah Arendt describes this categorization as the creation of "prejudices," which tell people what consequences to expect from their actions and experiences, thus allowing them to act in the world.[3] Arendt's prejudices are almost like stereotypes, in that they classify groups under a general definition. However, her main argument about these stereotypes is that people have them for everything, and they are the language that allows us to understand the world. We need to be able to classify things in order to understand what they are.

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[3] Hannah Arendt, "Introduction into Politics," in *The Promise of Politics,* ed. Jerome Kohn (New York: Schocken Books, 2005), 99, 160.

Classification is important because it provides order, which provides predictability. For Arendt, we need this order to be able to act (both socially and not) without each action being an agonizing consequence-weighing decision. Humans know that if they do certain things, certain kinds of reactions will occur. This applies from the most basic actions of one's daily routine to the more complex of political interaction or calculation. Anthony Giddens argues that ontological security is based on trust that certain things in the world will be predictable, at least to some extent.[4] To Giddens, daily routines demonstrate the necessity of trust to the human mind.[5] People trust that routinized actions will consistently have the same outcomes. For example, if I turn on the faucet, I know that water will come out. I do not spend the beginning of every morning searching for water.

Giddens argues that people do not just automatically carry out these daily routines, but rather actively work to perpetuate them. This demonstrates how people decisively seek stability in their environments. He writes,

> …anxiety derives from the capacity – and, indeed, necessity – for the individual to think ahead, to anticipate future possibilities counterfactually in relation to present action. But in a deeper way, anxiety (or its likelihood) comes from the very 'faith' in the independent existence of persons and objects that ontological security implies.[6]

For Giddens, ontological security is not only a reliance on, but a seeking out of predictable expectations. He maintains that individuals seek out routines that provide these predictable reactions. Groups cater to this need for dependable outcomes. Collective identities offer ontological security to their members by providing consistent identities, along with their placement in a consistent world order.

Group organization thus provides an order necessary for the individual's comprehension of the world and his/her place within it. Tobias Theiler argues that people categorize themselves into groups so that they can avoid chaos.[7] According to Theiler, this is important because

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[4] Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993), 38.
[5] Ibid., 39.
[6] Ibid., 47-48.
[7] Tobias Theiler, "Societal Security and Social Psychology," *Review of International Studies* 29, no. 2 (April 2003): 260.

collective identities allow people to feel that they can define themselves, as they can imagine themselves fitting into one group as opposed to others. Theiler argues that people defend the group identities that they are a part of because they see themselves as tied to this group.[8] Accordingly, the death of the group would mean a simultaneous death of the individual's definition, and therefore is imagined as the death of the individual itself.

Security is an aspect of the kind of group organization discussed by Theiler. Jef Huysmans argues that security itself functions as an organizing principle.[9] Similarly to Giddens' concept of ontological security and Theiler's of group identity, Huysmans argues that groups provide the individual with a template through which to see the world, and thus through which to understand how they fit into it. Groups provide individuals with security, which Huysmans labels as a "thick signifier."[10] By this he means that security is suggestive of a concept, rather than being of actual substance. The concept of security signifies that something has been classified as something to secure the self against. Thus, securitization established by collective identities provides their group members with templates through which to understand the world by classifying what is secure and what is not.

The following section will build off of the aforementioned definitions of security in the context of individual ontological security to bring the theory closer to the international relations level. To do so, it will provide discussion of the concept of "othering," or defining the self through a construction of others.

1.2 "Othering"

Groups often define themselves partly through their relationships with and in comparison to other groups. They seek security within these international relationships.

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[8] Ibid., 262.
[9] Jef Huysmans, "Security! What Do You Mean? : From Concept to Thick Signifier," *European Journal of International Relations* 4, no. 226 (1998): 231-232.
[10] Ibid., 228.

Understanding the concept of othering will assist in linking the ontological security of the individual in his/her community, and the collectivity within the international community.

Richard Ned Lebow argues that identities are in part constructed alongside the construction of "stereotyped 'others,'" or outside groups.[11] The "other" is not necessarily the enemy, but rather an object against which one can examine the self. Much as Giddens argues that humans understand how to define things through differences, people also identify their group by positioning it as different from other groups. Giddens uses the analogy of the table to demonstrate definition through function, and through negative definition.[12] He argues that we can identify a table because its function is different from that of a chair. People identify the groups they belong to by positioning them against others.

The distancing and definition that occurs through a collectivity's encounters with immigrants demonstrates the process of constructing "others" who exist both inside and outside of the collectivity. Ayse Ceyhan and Anastassia Tsoukala describe the "othering" of migrants that happens through culture, so that the migrants become a cultural other.[13] Huysmans similarly describes the migrant as being negatively defined as a "non-I" – the migrant is not described by what it is, but by what it is not, and it is not an "us" or a "native."[14] On top of this, Huysmans argues that because the migrant is not an "us," s/he is then excluded from the possibility of sharing the natives' culture or values.[15]

The construction of an us-them dichotomy is a simple form of world-organization. But, because the migrant does not carry the values of the collectivity, yet is inside the collectivity, it is a threat to collective identity.[16] In his 1998 article, Huysmans differentiates between the "enemy"

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[11] Richard Ned Lebow, "Identity and International Relations," *International Relations* 22, no. 4 (2008): 474-492, 479.
[12] Giddens, 43.
[13] Ayse Ceyhan and Anastassia Tsoukala, "The Securitization of Migration in Western Societies: Ambivalent Discourses and Policies," *Alternatives* 27, Special Issue (2002): 28.
[14] Jef Huysmans, "Migrants as a Security Problem: Dangers of 'Securitizing' Societal Issues," in *Migration and European Integration: The Dynamics of Inclusion and Exclusion,* ed. Robert Miles and Dietrich Thränhardt (London: Pinter Publishers, 1995), 60.
[15] Ibid., 60.
[16] Ibid., 60.

and the "stranger."[17] The enemy, he argues, easily fits into an order that positions enemies outside of the self. Immigrants, however, reside within the borders of the sovereignty. They therefore disrupt the clear-cut dichotomy between inside and outside, making it difficult to distinguish between familiar and non-familiar, or even friend and foe. Huysmans describes this phenomenon as an issue of chaos.[18]

"Othering" is the process of defining a group in contrast to the self-group, but Catarina Kinnvall argues that the self makes "others" which are in fact a part of the self.[19] She argues that the self can create a definition for a threatening other even if that other is not physically present. The creation of this other, "becomes a means to securitize subjectivity as it reduces anxiety and increases ontological security."[20] In this way, the other acts to strengthen the self-group. It can provide or become a common enemy or threat against which to strengthen its unity and definition. It defines the self by what it is not, and thus strengthens the resolve of the self's values. Kinnvall argues that others often become threats when the identity feels unstable because of changes brought about by foreign or globalized influences.[21] In this time of ontological anxiety, establishing one of these "other" foreign groups as a threat allows the collectivity to feel secure through a feeling that it understands a concrete, predictable international order and a consistent identity for itself.

Ontological security functions on the principle that the elimination of chaos is security. In order to understand how ontological security is used as an International Relations theory, for securitization through order, it is important to keep in mind the importance of collective identity definition. While "othering" and concepts of collective narrative and identity definition shed light on how groups arise and are important to the individual, they do not explain the foreign policy decisions that groups make. The next section will take collective identity definition into

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[17] Huysmans, "Security!" 241.
[18] Ibid., 241.
[19] Catarina Kinnvall, "Globalization and Religious Nationalism: Self, Identity, and the Search for Ontological Security," *Political Psychology* 25, no. 5 (October 2004): 753.
[20] Ibid., 753.
[21] Ibid., 753.

the field of International Relations in order to discuss how perceptions of international order and collective identity within it influence foreign policy.

1.3 Ontological security in International Relations and Security Studies

The case for applying ontological security to international relations starts with critiquing realist assumptions that a state's first priority is physical security.[22] Ontological security theory posits that states often prioritize consistent self-narratives over physical security. Rather than ensuring physical security, they will often ensure that they do not contradict the role they see themselves as inhabiting. Jennifer Mitzen argues that individuals need stable societies in order to feel secure.[23] Part of what makes a collective identity, she argues, is its distinctiveness in relation to other collectivities. Because of these two factors, collective identities will seek "routinized" relationships with other collectivities in the international sphere. Essentially, the identity of a collective will feel secure in stable, routinized, defined international roles because these roles ensure that the identity is reliant, which provides a sense of security. Stability eliminates uncertainty.[24]

Thus, states maintain group distinctiveness through the routinization of their relationships with other groups. Mitzen places more importance on the "recognized role" than the "subjective identity," claiming that states tend to adopt the roles that others perceive them as having, rather than the roles they see themselves inhabiting.[25] Mitzen argues that states cannot maintain their international roles without the acknowledgement of these roles by other actors. The international side of the identity of a collectivity must be reinforced by its treatment from other actors.

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[22] Jennifer Mitzen, "Ontological Security in World Politics: State Identity and the Security Dilemma," *European Journal of International Relations* 12, no. 3 (2006): 342. Brent J. Steele, *Ontological Security in International Relations: Self-identity and the IR state,* (London: Routledge, 2008), 1-2.
[23] Ibid., 352.
[24] Ibid., 353.
[25] Ibid., 358.

Just as collective identities can adopt the traits others see them as having, they can also reassert their sense of individuality in order to find security through the familiarity of distinction. Kinnvall articulates ontological security within the international sphere, as it is relevant to the interaction between different collective identities, and the tendency to cling more to one's collective identity amid higher global exchange. Kinnvall argues that the disruptions to consistent identities brought about by globalization can lead to a reversion to tradition, and often to fundamentalism.[26] The cultural exchange that occurs through globalized economic or social practices leads to uncertainty about the future of a collectivity as a concise entity, distinguished from other groups.[27] As different cultures interact, globally, they exchange ideas and practices. While collective identities naturally evolve, foreign influences highlight changes, and they visibly display to individuals that their collective identity has the potential for instability. Kinnvall argues that extremism has been a reaction to modernization, sighting terrorist insurgents in the Middle East during post-world war II modernization.[28] Similarly, immigrants tend to cling to a sense of traditional culture in order to feel secure by belonging to a reliable collective identity while in a strange and often unwelcoming place and community.[29]

This kind of organization can fall under different categories of security. When viewing security as an organizing principle, some authors have distinguished between the definition of ontological security and physical security. Huysmans argues that "daily security" or physical security, is a subset of ontological security.[30] According to him, daily security is "the mediation of friends and enemies" whereas ontological security is "the mediation of chaos and order."[31] Ontological insecurity is the feeling of chaos while daily security provides an organization in which to understand one's collectivity's international relations.[32] Daily security essentially

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[26] Kinnvall, 742.
[27] Ibid., 742.
[28] Ibid., 745.
[29] Ibid., 746.
[30] Huysmans, "Security!" 243.
[31] Ibid., 229.
[32] Ibid., 243.

provides individuals with the knowledge of which groups can be trusted and which cannot, so that they are able to feel secure in the knowledge that they (or their communities) know how to defend them. Because this organization and understanding is itself the mitigation of chaos, Huysmans' daily security actually functions to enable ontological security, and vise versa.

For Huysmans, then, ontological security enables physical security. For Mitzen, on the other hand, seeking ontological security can impede physical security, as demonstrated through her argument of perpetuating security dilemmas in order to perpetuate role identities.[33] As in the prisoners dilemma, states are unlikely to back away from aggressively defensive posturing because they have defined the enemy as an offensive aggressor.[34] According to Mitzen, this perpetuation of identities brings ontological security and physical insecurity. However, for Huysmans, it is not a perpetual identity that is ontological security but an understanding of the international system. Because of this, he argues, ontological insecurity happens when enemy and friend are not clearly defined, such as in the post-Cold War era.[35] These two arguments share similarities, in that both argue that collective identities need clear templates of international organization in order to feel secure. Huysmans argues that this stability of organization allows the collectivity to better physically secure itself through preparation and mindset. Meanwhile, Mitzen argues that the image of international order includes relationships that provide physical insecurity. Collectivities are disposed not to change these relationships because to do so would create ontological instability by changing their concept of international order, and thus bring a sense of chaos or unknown.

This difference of opinion between two of a small pool of writers on ontological security's placement in International Relations theory demonstrates the potential flexibility of the theory. Ontological Security theory is convenient in that in its simple form it can be used to compliment other theories. The Copenhagen School, for instance, defines security as the survival

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[33] Mitzen, 356.
[34] Ibid., 359.
[35] Huysmans, "Security!" 243.

from an existential threat.[36] However, the referent object of survival is the collective identity. Ultimately, the referent object seeks survival of itself as a collective identity rather than a physical entity. Because of the inability to self-define within an indefinable order-less world, chaos would lead to the dissolution of collective identity and therefore represents an existential threat to it. Thus, the Copenhagen School can use a concept of ontological security by positioning it within pre-existing theories.

Because ontological security is generally accepted by a wide range of theorists and is left mostly unquestioned as an opposing theory, or often even as a significant contribution to the furthering of security studies, aspects of it are imprecise. The important question that arises from its conflicting uses, and that could place ontological security theory in a more contentious and significant position, is what kind of survival do collectivities seek? And, similarly to what Felix Ciuta has asked, how does it answer whether referent objects even seek survival as the object of security?[37] In ontological security terms, is it survival of the collective *identity*, as opposed to a more *physical* referent object, and then is it truly survival that is sought, and how could this survival be defined? Arguably, the goal of security is not in fact survival, but the perception and feeling of survival. Identities change with time and circumstance. They evolve, but they often do so reluctantly. As I will discuss later, the French Empire's reluctance to provide citizenship to all members of its Empire demonstrates the feeling of metropole-identity preservation as it was defined through its relationship with the colonies as a matter of anxiety that over-ruled even French republican doctrine, and threatened the physical stability and thus security of the French Empire. After this situation changed, so too did the collective identity. Yet, as France changed so did its conception of survival. It is the *perception* that one's collective identity will survive that is

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[36] The writers often associated with the Copenhagen School provide the explanation that ultimately referent objects seek survival of the collective identity. Chaos would dissolve this collective identity and thus chaos is an existential threat. Barry Buzan, Ole Waever, and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1998), 21, 23.

[37] Felix Ciuta, "Security and the Problem of Context: a Hermeneutical Critique of Securitisation Theory," *Review of International Studies* 35 (2009): 307, 320.

important to ontological security. Even if that collective identity does change, it will still seek

survival and protection. It will merely adjust its definition of what about the identity is worth

preserving and fighting for the survival of.

1.4 Shame and international hierarchical order

Mitzen's (and others') socially-dependent definition of ontological security provides the

theory with a stable starting point, but still leaves unaddressed the conflict that occurs when

collectivities define themselves through contradicting narratives. Acknowledging that

collectivities have more multi-faceted identities opens up ontological security studies to the

question of how to rectify the conflicting narratives of one identity. Shame and honor, located

within a constructed notion of hierarchical international standing, bring ontological security

towards a better perception of the contradictions inherent to the securitization of multiple,

changing identities.

Brent Steele criticizes Mitzen for, through bundling state personhood with the social

dependency of collective identity, portraying a state that, by seeking the continuation of a

permanent identity becomes a homogenous organism with a "coherent identity" to pursue the

survival of.[38] Steele claims that Mitzen's construction does not recognize how ontological

security is a process of constructed identity through the discourse of multiple concepts. For

Steele, identity is negotiated – a process he refers to as "self-identity contestation."[39] The

quandary of how to have a consistent identity that, by nature of being a collective identity,

changes is an issue to ontological security but is one that can be overcome. Steele resolves this by

arguing that collective identities have historically located self-narratives, and thus have a means

of defining an identity to secure.[40] While the definition of the identity evolves, it always has a

sense of how to define itself, and so the contemporary definition a collectivity has for itself is the

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[38] Steele, *Ontological Security,* 17.
[39] Ibid., 17.
[40] Ibid., 20.

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definition of the identity it seeks to secure. This allows not just for an ever-changing concept of identity, but also an ever-changing concept of what, precisely, seeks security and preservation (or for what security and preservation are sought).

In order to discuss the disconnect between action and ideology, Steele focuses on the concept of "shame" as the emotional device through which actors or collectivities can accept that they have committed dishonorable actions and then move on from them. He writes that on the individual level, "…shame is a much more private sense of transgression and produces a deeper feeling of insecurity because it means that someone behaved in a way he or she felt was incongruent with their sense of self-identity."[41] Steele argues that shame plays a part in the self-narrative of the collectivity.[42] Much like "anxiety, memory, and narrative," the collectivity uses shame as one of its means of building the story of itself. Shame addresses those actions that seem incompatible with how the collectivity sees itself. When the group acts in a way that contradicts the ideals or philosophies laid out in its self-narrative, it encounters shame.

Steele's brand of shame can be classified as a "device" because the uttering of shame is done by a speech actor with the intention of justifying the shameful action within extenuating circumstances and promoting the concept that the action will not be committed again in the future.[43] The utterance of shame then allows the state to accept its action and move on from it without damaging its self-narrative or changing its self-definition. For Steele, then, a collectivity must recognize two conflicting identity definitions through shame. His case study examples are of events, not on-going, continual policies. The state that commits the shameful act can accept it within their self-narrative because this is not actually a defining factor of their self-definition. Rather, it is an isolated event that occurred because of extraordinary circumstances. Under normal circumstances, then, the state can tell itself that it would have been able to act with honor.

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[41] Ibid., 53.
[42] Ibid., 54.
[43] Ibid., 55.

Steele argues that honor and self-identity are "mutually constitutive– both self-identity and collective identity are reinforced by, and in turn shape, our sense of 'honor.'"[44] It is both defined by the collective identity and defines the collective identity. Steele classifies two kinds of honor: internal and external.[45] He defines internal honor as existing at the level of the individual. It seems that he defines external honor as existing in the relationships outside of the collectivity, but he does not go nearly into as much detail as he does with internal honor. While it might be extrapolated that external honor could incorporate the relationships between collective identities, Steele does not directly claim as much. Rather, he focuses more on the individual level, on internal honor. The is significant in that it demonstrates Steele's focus on the reinforcement of notions of honor reciprocally reinforced between the individual self and his/her collective identity.

Steele devotes a case study to honor, arguing that Belgium acted to seek honor in order to preserve its self-identity, rather than physical security (and in fact threatened its physical security), when it did not comply with German demands to alliance and access to Belgian territory.[46] A collective identity is in part defined by its conception of honor, and honor is defined by the collective identity. Honor is important in the field of international relations because it offers an alternative reason for state behavior than physical security. Steele argues that, "states seek honor the same way they seek material resources…"[47] This notion can be seen throughout many examples of foreign policy action, especially in military bravado, which often defines a state's conception of honor for itself in the international field.[48]

Steele stresses that honor is not a "finite" resource to be competed for.[49] However, comparisons between the honor of different international actors does not necessarily mean the

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[44] Ibid., 97.
[45] Ibid., 97.
[46] Ibid., 95.
[47] Ibid., 40.
[48] Marie-Hélène Heurtaud-Wright, "*Un de la Légion*: Myth Conception and Misconceptions," in *Empire and Culture: The French Experience, 1830-1940*, ed. Martin Evans (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 41.
[49] Steele, *Ontological Security*, 40.

competition that Steele shies away from. Prioritization of one group over another depends on each collectivity's perception of the global order, and these perceptions, along with a placement of the self within them, do influence notions of honor. The self-constructed international hierarchies that collective identities place themselves into affect how states define honor. Ayse Zarakol discusses this, although without precisely using the terminology of "honor." Honor and self-perception are tied into global organization, and honorable action is what allows even a small state to think of its collective identity as residing above (perceptually) less-honorable larger states.

Zarakol introduces ontological security theory to collectivities' identity securitization through a placement within self-perceived international hierarchy. In the early twentieth century the generally accepted world-view in Europe was that of "three spheres of civilized, semi-civilized and savage," as Zarakol writes.[50] European nations positioned themselves in the top tier of "civilized," which was a fundamental part of their identities. Zarakol argues that nations' positions in these hierarchies become a part of their self-narratives.[51] Their choices then become bound up with their notions of how they should act according to the hierarchical role they see themselves as inhabiting. Accordingly, the self-definition of a collective identity is tied up with how it sees itself fitting into a constructed image of the international system.

Like Steele, Zarakol also focuses on reflexive narrative of the self. She discusses how the formation of national narrative evolves through the positioning of the domestic level into the international system or hierarchy. In addressing this concept, she evaluates instances in which states do not own up to their actions, do not articulate shame, and thus do not contradict their self-narratives. To demonstrate this point, she uses the cases of Japan and Turkey's refusals to apologize for past war crimes. Zarakol argues that these countries adopted the western international system as a frame. By doing so, they adopted the standards of judgment that this

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[50] Ayse Zarakol, "Ontological (In)security and State Denial of Historical Crimes: Turkey and Japan," *International Relations* 24, no. 1 (2010): 13.
[51] Ibid., 9.

system uses.[52] Thus, they position themselves within the hierarchy of the international system, according to the criterion of judgments that define this hierarchy. This means that they organized the world into levels of civilization, inserting themselves into the top tier, positioned above what they classified as their uncivilized neighbors.[53] Japan, especially, placed itself in a different category from the rest of Asia, thinking itself to be superior to and more civilized than other countries in the region.[54] Thus, they established a situation where, if they were to apologize for their actions, they would be recognizing that they were not in this privileged position, and rather inhabited their self-classified "uncivilized" definition.[55] This would go against their national narrative, and so to apologize would be to completely contradict the narrative of the self and self-definition.

Zarakol argues that the irony of this process is that it is in Japan and Turkey's best interests to apologize for their past actions.[56] From a realist perspective, it would benefit their position within the international sphere to do so. What Zarokol's argument points to in terms of understanding how the application of "shame" occurs, is that collectivities often do not voice shame even though to do so might be within the best interests of the state in terms of bettering their relations internationally. Shame does not act as a device for these nations to continue to inhabit their self-definitions in the way that Steele argues the articulation of shame should allow. Rather, states avoid encountering certain parts of their identity or history that do not fit into their self-narratives. In Zarakol's examples of the refusal to apologize, denial is most likely the key factor that allows these states to continue to perpetuate their self-narratives. Japan accedes a certain degree of wrongdoing in some of its actions during World War II, but denies contemporary ownership of or responsibility for these actions.[57]

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[52] Ibid., 9.
[53] Ibid., 13.
[54] Ibid., 17.
[55] Ibid., 16.
[56] Ibid., 19.
[57] Ibid., 5.

Zarakol's notion of hierarchy is shaped by how actors view their standing within the international realm. Ontological insecurity comes about when an actor's sense of its hierarchical standing conflicts with its perception of its actions or its sense of self. Zarakol explains that hierarchical standing is so important because it is about the self-perception of a collective identity aligning with its actions and speech. However, this explanation falls slightly short, because it would seem that it would then not matter where on the hierarchy the collectivity places itself. It is very rare that a collectivity accepts a place of dishonor for itself, as it itself defines dishonor. A collectivity's self-perceived hierarchical standing aligns with its perception of itself as honorable. Steele, on the other hand, provides a notion of honor that does not take into account international hierarchical order and how a community's reflexive perception of its placement in it derives ontological security. His notion of honor rests in a more domestic formation of it. It is not formed by the relations between international actors, but rather shapes the actions of the collectivity in relation to other international actors. As such, neither Steele's concept of honor nor Zarakol's of hierarchical order can stand alone in explaining international ontological security.

Both of these conceptions of ontological security are missing elements that can be rectified through a combination of the two theories. Steele's definition of honor works, reflexively, to both shape hierarchy and make it so important for states to uphold hierarchy in order to understand themselves in the way that Mitzen defines self-definition of collective identity as based on a reliant, consistent role within international order. Honor is not a concept isolated within a single collectivity. Each collective identity may have its own definition of honor, but these definitions rely in part upon the honor of the collectivity as a whole, and as it stands within international order.

1.5 Conclusion

Individuals, then, rely on their collective identities to provide them with a feeling of security, especially within the international sphere. They expect these identities to provide them with routines and with predictable consequences and reactions. Because collective identities are defined in part by what they are not and by their relation to other groups, in order to have a stable identity a collectivity must have a stable placement in a stable international order. Steele's notions of honor and shame pose a problem to this as a simple order. Security is not only order from chaos, but also, as Steele argues, the feeling of an uncontradictory identity. It is the feeling of having an honorable identity that does not take part in actions that it deems inconsistent with its self-perception. This takes Giddens' expectations of routine to a new level by placing more importance on hierarchical self-perception. The implications of this are that collective identities need to feel that they are honorable in order to feel secure, and thus ontological security is not merely a feeling of stability, but a feeling of stable honor within a stable global hierarchy. In order to not feel anxiety, groups must feel that they are on top of their self-constructed perception of global, hierarchical order because of their honor. They must feel that their collectivity is working to maintain that honorable position, and that they can thus rely on their collectivity to fulfill this expectation of stability in identity.

Zarakol is hesitant to say outright that states seek hierarchical superiority. However, it can be argued that states do seek honorable hierarchical positions. Rarely, if ever, do states exhibit comfort with thinking of themselves as dishonorable. As Zarakol herself demonstrates, even accepting a dishonorable past is difficult for collective identities to do. Even in times of feeling honorable within the international system, communities attain ontological insecurity at the prospect of owning a past dishonorable act. Steele argues that shame allows communities to distance themselves from shameful acts and continue on with their narratives of the self. However, the very prospect that both Steele and Zarakol present of collectivities' difficulty in accepting dishonor demonstrates that collective identities seek to maintain not only the

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international positions they see themselves as having, as Mitzen argues through the maintenance of international relationships, but that states seek to maintain an image of themselves as having honorable international roles.

The next chapters will examine how hierarchically conceived honor is exhibited within French colonialism, and how colonial order was maintained for the French of the metropole to feel ontologically secure. The social order created within colonialism was highly structured so as to preserve a notion of honor for France on two levels: the individual indigenous to the metropole, and a conception of France as a whole collective identity as it perceived itself in the broader international sphere. The next chapter will examine honor as it applies to the French Empire's reiteration of colonial possession after the dishonor of foreign occupation during World War II. Following, the third chapter will focus more on the international hierarchy created by colonization and its importance to France's understanding of itself as an honorable, hierarchically superior group within its conception of the world.

Chapter 2: Regaining Honor in Times of Shame

By the end of World War II, France was in a space of national shame. The French Resistance may have seen itself as honorable, fighting for democratic rights and freedoms. However, it was essentially exiled from what it claimed to be its own territory. As discussed in the previous chapter, Steele's form of shame is the feeling that occurs when a collectivity cannot reconcile a dishonorable action with its sense of self.[58] He largely applies this to the state itself acting immorally or contrary to its own doctrine.[59] Steele's definition of shame would fit well into a concept of French identity as a whole in terms of the Vichy government's collaboration with Germany contradicting French republican ideals, but the Vichy government may have been seen as a different identity from the France envisioned by the Resistance.

From the perspective of the Free French government and post-war interim government who were unable to independently secure French independence, by 1944 France had lost its sense of global standing. As Ayse Zarakol argues, ontological insecurity arises when a collectivity's sense of self does not align with its sense of its international standing.[60] One could add that international standing is coupled with a conception of internal structures. As the internal military structure failed to protect France from four years of foreign occupation, the nation sought to rectify its sense of global standing in order to regain a national and international sense of self-honor.

In order to regain honor after the war, France not only tried to rebuild its domestic sense of pride through its military, but it also sought to restore its perception of the international

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[58] Steele, *Ontological Security*, 54.
[59] Brent J. Steele, "'Ideals That Were Really Never in our Possession': Torture, Honor and US Identity," *International Relations* 22, no. 243 (2008). Steele analyzes the Guantanamo Bay prisoner abuses alongside American humanitarian and democratic ideals.
[60] Zarakol, 9.

hierarchy and its own sense of standing within it. The first section of this chapter will demonstrate how colonial possession was considered honorable. The section following will examine military honor's significance in a collectivity's perception of itself in the international system. These two sections will set up the notion of honor that the French tried to regain after World War II, as demonstrated through the discourse of the Brazzaville Conference.

2.1 Colonial holdings: honorable to the metropole

Colonial holdings were portrayed within the metropole as honorable for the collective French identity. Janet R. Horne argues that the image of "Greater France," or the French Empire as a whole, promoted by the Colonial Exhibition in 1931 was for the sake of bolstering metropolitan "national identity."[61] Colonial Exhibitions were held in France to display for the public both the cultures of the French colonies and the work of metropolitan French in them. The 1931 exhibition focused on a range of topics about the colonial project, including hygiene promotion, women's volunteer work, and modern progression and development.[62] Horne argues that the Exhibition was intended for "national renewal" – to revive nationalist spirit and the colonial mission after the demoralizing First World War.[63] The Exhibition was thus for the restoration of a feeling of honor. Post-war demoralization was not shame in the way Steele defines it, but it had a similar effect in allowing France to move on by looking to institutions it held as honorable in order to rebuild its spirit and sense of self as an honorable collective identity.

The presented image of the colonial project was targeted for the audience of the French metropole. It was conceived as demonstrative of how the French acted honorably in their satellite territories, aiding their development and standard of living. It was a political, morale-

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[61] Janet R. Horne, "In Pursuit of Greater France: Visions of Empire among Musée Social Reformers, 1894-1931," in *Domesticating the Empire: Race, Gender, and Family Life in French and Dutch Colonialism,* ed. Julia Clancy-Smith and Frances Gouda (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1998), 42.
[62] Ibid., 41.
[63] Ibid., 40-41.

lifting presentation aimed to persuade the people of and indigenous to the French metropole of the importance of colonial possession to French prestige.

The argument that the colonial project was for the sake of nationalism for the metropole is important because it constructs the referent object as metropolitan France, rather than the French Empire as a whole. The divisions that were made through the exhibits of the colonial exhibitions clearly placed the French of the metropole and those of the colonies into two different groups, or two different referent objects. The colonies and the metropole therefore experienced different types of honor. According to the metropole, the colonies were given honor through their association with the French Empire, and through the civilizing progress that France brought them. The metropole saw itself as honorable in part through its self-perceived generosity to the colonies, and in part through the demonstration of strength exhibited by colonial acquisition. The colonial expositions gave the impression that the French of the metropole philanthropically gave the colonies education, medicine, and modernity. The philanthropy of this brought honor to the bestower for helping those of a lower level of progression. Simultaneously, this concept demonstrated France's strength and own evolved status, through the image of its ability to help those below it.

Because colonial possession was considered honorable, the reclamation of these colonies would signify the reclamation of honor and standing, as will be discussed later in this chapter. First, however, the next section will examine the importance of military and individual honor, in order to understand how all of the narratives of French honor came together within the colonial project, and thus were important to the reconstruction of French identity after World War II.

2.2 Military Honor

Because the colonies demonstrated French strength militarily and morally, at the individual level it was honorable to be a part of the colonial mission for the sake of the honor and betterment of the collective identity's self-perceived international standing. The role of

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military honor demonstrates the many levels honor holds for a collectivity, which I would break down into four basic parts: 1) the collective as a whole; 2) the individual as s/he imagines the collectivity to see him/herself; 3) the collective's perception of its international placement. All three of these levels are interconnected, and function together to provide a collectivity with a definition of honor, and thus with a conception of the self as seen through the lens of this honor. The institution of the military is useful for demonstrating these levels of honor, and the importance of honor to a collectivity's sense of self-definition and understanding, and thus ontological security.

Metropolitan French working and fighting in the colonies were portrayed to the French metropolitan public as heroic and honorable (as well as hierarchically positioned above the colonials, as will be discussed in the third chapter). This is especially so in portrayals of the military. Marie-Hélène Heurtaud-Wright describes the "myth of the Legion" as the popular perception and representation of the French Legion as representing "redemption," adventure, and bravery in the fight for civilization in the face of "barbarism."[64] The Legion, established in 1931, was meant to act outside of metropolitan France, and thus was mostly active in the colonies.[65]

Heurtaud-Wright argues that the Legion was portrayed, especially in films, as a place where even the most undistinguished, honor-less Frenchman could find redemption and become an upstanding citizen praised for honorably fighting for the French Empire.[66] The Legion, like many militaries in the world's history, was an honorable and revered institution, and the public celebrated the *legionaires* for their participation in it.[67] Militaries represent a collectivity's image of power for both the individual and the group as a whole. They are important parts of a collectivity's identity because they demonstrate how it fits into the international structure. As

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[64] Heurtaud-Wright, 42-43.
[65] Ibid., 42.
[66] Ibid., 44.
[67] Richard Ned Lebow, *The Tragic Vision of Politics: Ethics, Interests, and Orders* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 269-274. Lebow describes how many empires and nations throughout time and around the globe have revered their militaries as honorable institutions.

such, it is important for the military to be revered as honorable, in order to be able to see the group as inhabiting an honorable position in the international hierarchy.

After military defeat, it is therefore not unusual for collectivities to experience shame or feelings of inadequacy because of the identity insecurity that arises when a collectivity's foremost indicator of international honor does not align with its own narrative of strength and capability. Committing a dishonorable deed brings a collectivity into a crisis of identity in trying to align its image of itself with how it sees its actions. Similarly, a collectivity will experience this same kind of crisis when one of the institutions it places on one of the highest levels of honor does not act in the way the collectivity imagines it should.

Foreign occupation of France during World War II put it in a place of ontological insecurity because it demonstrated that the honorable military was, in actuality, not as able as the collective narrative had portrayed it as being. This had several implications. First, it demonstrates how collectivities need the socialized reinforcement of hierarchically honorable international roles. International relationships act to either reinforce or disillusion narratives of the collective identity. Its relationship with Germany during World War II caused France to reassess its self-narrative surrounding itself as a sovereign nation with an honorable military institution. This demonstrates how international relationships and events cause unstable collective identity definition.

Its relationship to its colonies was one area that France could look to for bolstering its sense of self as honorable. As argued in this chapter, France saw participation in the colonial mission as honorable. Colonial possession not only stood for imperial strength and power, but also was held to be a good deed through supporting the progression of Mankind. In this sense, reasserting its colonial holdings represented to France its narrative about the self as an internationally powerful, but also benevolently honorable, collective identity. Because of the combination of these two things, France was able to feel ontologically secure through the acquisition of both honor and international hierarchical status.

Steele's interpretation of honor was not the only important attribute for France's post-World War II ontological security seeking. France also needed to secure the international hierarchical position it saw itself as inhabiting, as Zarakol argues is important to ontological security. These two concepts overlap, however, as France sought honor through its global standing, and could feel honorable if it inhabited the position it imagined itself to. Most importantly, perhaps, is this concept that France could feel honorable if its self-narrative and image of itself aligned. When these two images of the self do not connect, what emerges is Steele's brand of "shame."[68] After World War II, it was important to France's security in its identity to rectify the two images it held of its international hierarchical standing, what Zarakol advocates motivates ontological security. By seeking to bridge the disconnect between how it saw itself as an empire and how it saw its actions and status, France sought honor through its image of itself within the international hierarchy. Its conception of military power over the colonies was one way in which France articulated its image of honor. The reassertion of influence over the colonies was thus important to the reclamation of its sense of honor, as will be seen in the next section.

2.3 The Brazzaville Conference

Between January 30 and February 8, 1944, political leaders of the Free French government and members of French colonial administrations gathered for the Brazzaville Conference in order to reach a consensus on colonial standing in the French Empire, as seen by the Free French. Brazzaville is the current capital of the Congo and at the time was capital of French Equatorial Africa. The Brazzaville Conference demonstrates that even before the end of the war, the exiled Free French government sought to reinforce colonial order through reforms. This chapter will examine the two most commonly noted events of the conference: introductory speeches given by de Gaulle and the prominent administrator René Pleven.

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[68] Steele, *Ontological Security*, 54.

On June 22, 1940 the Armistice in Compiegne was signed and German occupation of France officially began. The Vichy government took control of the country and dissenting leaders were essentially exiled from France. One of these prominent leaders was Charles de Gaulle, who began the Free French government out of London. De Gaulle led this movement until the liberation on August 25, 1944, when he became the interim president of France until 1946. During the war, Indochina came under Japanese occupation with assistance from the Vichy government. French Equatorial Africa, however, allied with the Free French government and remained outside of Vichy possession.

After World War II, and for the Resistance movement during the occupation, France sought to reinforce its sense of identity as a hierarchically honorable collectivity through a reassertion of colonial possession and a reclamation of democratic values. These two aspects took on a new relationship with one another after World War II, as citizenship and democratic processes were made more available to the colonies. However, the French government and colonial administration continued to suppress independence movements and ideas, making democracy and colonial rule still incompatible in many respects. The discourse of the Brazzaville Conference demonstrates that attitudes toward colonization were not uniform. However, it is significant that administrators were careful to not precisely decry colonial possession altogether. Speeches from the conference demonstrate the way in which non-Vichy France struggled to reassert its sense of international power through the colonies, while simultaneously seeking to distinguish itself from the non-democratic, and thus dishonorable, policies of the Vichy.

De Gaulle's introductory speech to the Conference is often credited for setting the stage for decolonization.[69] In the speech, he never called for colonial independence. He referred to the

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[69] Charles de Gaulle Paroles Publiques, "Discours de Brazzaville: Contexte Historique," Institut National de l'Audiovisuel, http://www.ina.fr/fresques/de-gaulle/liste/recherche/themes/ll/Colonisation%20et%20d%C3%A9colonisation#8-9-date-desc (accessed May 31, 2011). For more on the Brazzaville Conference, see: Tony Smith, *The French Stake in Algeria, 1945-1962*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), 59-60.

mise en valeur, and claimed that the war precipitated the need to implement progress in the

colonies that became French bases. He said,

> Before, at the moment the present world war commenced, there appeared the necessity to put in the new bases the conditions of the *mise en valeur* of our African territories: that of progress, of men who live and who exercise French sovereignty.[70]

He claimed the African colonies as French, not just as French possessions but as part of the

definition of France, whose people are deserving of sovereignty and rights within their empire.

De Gaulle goes on to use very universalist language, claiming that the "*condition de l'Homme,*" or

the condition of man, was what was at stake in the war. He claimed that everyone in the world

was currently "interrogat[ing] his destiny," again not stipulating a nation or a people, but a

universal concept of "Man." He said that "None is more aware of the necessity to engage in the

more profoundly inspiring lessons of events… [than France]."[71] Here, he referred to France's

ideology of progression, going on to say that France was "destined to rise," to scale the

"summits of dignity and fraternity, where all can one day unite."[72]

Throughout this speech, de Gaulle's universalist rhetoric is significant because through it

he did not claim that the colonies are entitled to a separate identity and destiny from France. He

ended by stating,

> …when France was inhibited by a moment of defeat in the metropole, she found, in her overseas territories, refuge, recourse. And now, the departure base of her liberation is what created between herself and her empire a permanent link.[73]

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[70] All English translations provided in this chapter are my own, with the original transcript provided in footnotes. The complete original French language transcript, as well as audio, can be found in: Charles de Gaulle, "Discours de Brazzaville," (speech, Brazzaville Conference, Brazzaville, Congo, January 30, 1944), transcribed in Charles de Gaulle Paroles Publiques, "Discours de Brazzaville: Transcription," Institut National de l'Audiovisuel, http://www.ina.fr/fresques/de-gaulle/liste/recherche/themes/ll/Colonisation%20et%20d%C3%A9colonisation#8-9-date-desc (accessed May 31, 2011). "*Déjà, au moment où commençait la présente Guerre mondiale, apparaissait la nécessité de placer, sur des bases nouvelles, les conditions de la mise en valeur de nos territoires africains : celles du progrès des hommes qui vivent et celles aussi de l'exercice de la souveraineté française.*"

[71] Ibid. "*Aucune ne sent la nécessité de s'inspirer plus profondément des leçons des événements pour engager, sur les chemins des temps nouveaux, les soixante millions d'hommes qui sont liés au sort de ces quarante deux millions d'enfants. Aucune puissance, dis-je, plus que la France elle-même.*"

[72] Ibid. "*En premier lieu et tout simplement parce qu'elle est la France, c'est-à-dire la nation dont le génie est comme destiné à élever, pas à pas, les hommes vers les sommets de la dignité et de la fraternité, où tous pourront s'unir un jour.*"

[73] Ibid. "*Et aussi parce que dans l'extrémité où la France s'est trouvée refoulée par une défaite du moment dans la métropole, elle a trouvé, dans ses territoires d'outremer, le refuge, le recours. Et maintenant, la base de départ de sa libération est que cela a créé entre elle-même et son empire un lien définitif.*"

The colonies offered salvation to the idea of France that de Gaulle held on to, that of France as a sovereign republic. He claimed the metropole and the colonies to be indelibly linked because of this, not that because of it they deserved independence. Rather, their reward was to take on the rights of Frenchmen, and he bestowed upon them the honor that he associated with France.

René Pleven was the finance, colonial, and foreign affairs commissioner for the Free French government and after the war continued to hold high political positions. His introductory speech to the Brazzaville Conference used similar rhetoric as de Gaulle's in terms of incorporating the colonies into a concept of France and of the French war effort. Pleven was perhaps more pointed than de Gaulle in emphasizing the membership of the colonies in the French Empire. He advocated for colonial support of the Free French alongside the betterment of colonial rights. At the Conference, Pleven emphasized the progress, especially "technologically" and "ideologically," within the colonies, and the "ascension of the African populations."[74] His speech advocated for citizenship rights to be given to the colonies along with education. Pleven and de Gaulle's speeches at the Brazzaville Conference seem to present the proposal that in exchange for supporting the Free French government in the war effort, the colonies would receive better democratic rights and sovereignty.

Alongside honor comes "national pride" in how a collectivity sees its institutions upholding its international position of honor. Zarakol describes Japan after World War II as "robbed of its sense of national pride."[75] While France did not experience defeat in the way that Japan did, it did experience a crisis in this so-called national pride after the failing of a belief in its own military power and capabilities. After four years of occupation, and liberation only possible with the assistance of the Allies, France was left demoralized because it had not been able to rely on a structure that was considered to be honorable, strong and valorous. The military's

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[74] René Pleven, "Discours" (speech, Brazzaville Conference, Brazzaville, Congo, January 30, 1944), available in World News, "Brazzaville Conference of 1944," World News Network, Youtube video file, http://wn.com/Brazzaville_Conference_of_1944 (accessed May 31, 2011).
[75] Zarakol, 19.

unsuccessful defense of the nation ontologically signified that honor and valor had failed the nation as well.

Reiteration of colonial possession through the Brazzaville Conference allowed France to reclaim honor in the international hierarchical order it sought to reconstruct after its saw its own position and honor of having been taken away during the war. Lebow goes so far as to proclaim that, "Post-1945 French foreign policy makes no sense whatsoever unless we factor in standing as a principal motivation."[76] I would not claim quite as much, but Lebow's point is quite valid that French policy was directed by the need to reclaim a superior global position. This is of course in fitting with Steele's characterization of acts committed out of a sense of retaining honor rather than out of physical security-seeking.[77] Lebow's sense of honor-seeking policy fits into Zarakol's claim for preservation of hierarchical standing. However, his observations allow for Steele's honor to be seen more clearly as a motivating factor in this hierarchical positioning. France sought not to maintain it's hierarchical standing of war-time, but to regain the honorable position it saw itself as inhabiting beforehand.

2.4 Conclusion

A collective identity understands itself through how it sees itself placed within the international system. Security comes when it sees itself as an honorable entity in a superior hierarchical position, capable of ensuring its physical security while simultaneously maintaining the alignment of its narrative of self-honor and how it sees the enactment of it.

France saw itself as glorified and honorable because it held colonies that it was powerful enough to preside over, and which it could compare its accomplishments to on industrial, moral, and political levels. Honor was constructed through hierarchical standing brought by colonial possession. This hierarchy was also constructed, developed, and reinforced in order to reinforce

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[76] Lebow, *Tragic Vision of Politics*, 273.
[77] Steele, *Ontological Security*, 95.

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French honor. After the shame of foreign occupation during World War II, the French had to restore their perception of themselves within the international hierarchy, constructed through colonial possession, in order to once again see themselves as an honorable collective identity.

French shame during World War II was not the same as the shame that Steele discusses, but it served the same purpose in allowing France to move on and work to reclaim honor. One prominent way in which it reclaimed honor was through how it traditionally perceived international hierarchical standing, and the honor that came with a superior position within this order. By reclaiming this, and reinforcing the position it saw itself as deserving to inhabit, it sought the hierarchical reinforcement that Zarakol discusses. Honor is meaningful to a collectivity's feeling of security because of the international placement it allows a collectivity to imagine itself inhabiting.

France's reclamation of honorable hierarchical positioning demonstrates how it sought to regain a secure identity after a time of upheaval. The next chapter will examine the internal hierarchical order of the French Empire, and the importance of this hierarchy to the metropole's sense of self and ontological security.

Chapter 3: Hierarchical Colonial Order

The government of the French Third Republic's denial of citizenship rights to the majority of the people in the colonies contradicts the French rhetoric of colonial inclusion. This distinction between rhetoric and practice illustrates the paradox of French collective identity. In this chapter, I will argue that France had conflicting narratives that were both important parts of its self-definition. Because of this, it had to hold on to both in order to maintain its sense of self as located in its vision of honorable hierarchical placement. This is significant to the theory of ontological security because it demonstrates how easily a collective identity will hold onto conflicting narratives when both narratives are important to the collective's sense of self-definition as an honorable entity.

The Third Republic reinforced colonial order to maintain its sense of self alongside its self-narrative of international hierarchical standing. In order to do so, it established the colonies as an "other" by creating exclusionary citizenship policy and advocating the separation of European French from the natives in the colonies. Just as Kinnvall argues that groups may revert to traditional culture when feeling that their identities are not as clearly defined amid globalized exchange, the French secured their notion of citizenship as racially and nationally limited in order to hold on to an organized notion of the self-group in the international order. Part of maintaining this position was maintaining the self-constructed hierarchy of the empire. As discussed in the previous chapter, the French sought honor within international hierarchical order. Honor was, as Steele defines it, a self-referentially defined inverse of shame and the lack of seeing one's identity as consisting of conflicting narratives. This honor is sought within the hierarchical order that Zarakol defines as the lens through which a collectivity understands its

identity. In order to retain this sense of self as defined through honorable hierarchical standing, metropole France reinforced its and its colonies' roles to maintain the colonial hierarchy that provided it with order and thus security.

The French rhetoric of inclusion and unification can easily mislead the reader to assume that the French administration supported assimilationist policies. In this chapter, I will examine several ways in which the French may have claimed to include their colonial residents into a unified France but in fact did not. The hierarchical separation that was created throughout the empire, and which reinforced a separation between those indigenous to metropole France and those in the colonies, was often justified through the *mission civilizatrice* itself. France colonized territories to bring them a French notion of modernity and progress. French discourse justified doing so because it defined the colonies as "uncivilized" or un-progressed. Because of this initial definition, it was difficult for the French to allow the colonized into a universal conception of French identity; to do so would be to either incorporate the uncivilized into their self-definition, or it would mean to acknowledge a change in the hierarchical order. This change would negatively affect the French because it would mean that they were no longer at the top of a patriarchal hierarchy in which they could see themselves as the superior educators. Instead, by leveling out the hierarchy, they would lose their self-perception of being superior in the international realm. I will argue that because of this it was very difficult for the French to allow practices that would actually incorporate the colonized into a definition of French identity. Ironically, however, in order to retain their self-defined role they also had to continue the discourse that they were trying to incorporate the colonized into French society – with all of the responsibilities and benefits involved in being French.

3.1 Assimilation

The institution of citizenship, which took shape in France during the French Revolution, redefined who was included within the public and governmental spheres of France while it

simultaneously also provided a means of more clearly defining who was not allowed in to these spheres. Rogers Brubaker discusses citizenship and modern nation-states as having evolved with one another and as being in a sense inseparable concepts.[78] He argues that citizenship is "inherently bounded": by definition it creates an included group and an excluded group.[79] It helped to create the clearly distinguishable, "bounded" nation-states of the modern world.[80] Brubaker characterizes France as being inclusive towards citizenship-granting to those who were not ethnically European-French.[81] He claims that in the late nineteenth century, French citizenship became more inclusive.[82] What he neglects in this broad characterization is the many ways in which France denied citizenship to those it included within its narrative of French identity, and who it continued to exclude at least until the Lamine Guèye citizenship law in 1946 extended automatic citizenship to the colonies.[83] The exclusion brought about by citizenship that Brubaker discusses applies to internal French colonial order, and it was relied on as a means of retaining an ontologically secure group.

French colonial rhetoric often centers around the "*mission civilizatrice,*" and the concept of assimilation of the colonized into an idea of French identity as being the aim of the French Imperial project. The rhetoric of assimilation at times was used in practices that in fact often resulted in a clearer division between colonized and colonizer. Eric Bleich argues that France did not actually always work through direct rule to assimilate those it colonized into Frenchmen, as is often assumed.[84] Why did the French government and colonial administration use language of inclusion when discussing practices that were more divisive than encouraging of assimilation? The history of citizenship granting in the French colonies epitomizes a policy that preached

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[78] Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 71.

[79] Ibid., 72.

[80] Ibid., 49.

[81] Ibid., 72, 75, 85.

[82] Ibid., 85.

[83] James E. Genova, "Constructing Identity in Post-War France: Citizenship, Nationality, and the Lamine Guèye Law, 1946-1953," *The International History Review* 26, no. 1 (March 2004): 58.

[84] Erik Bleich, "The Legacies of History? Colonization and Immigrant Integration in Britain and France," *Theory and Society* 34, no. 2 (April 2005): 172.

universal access while in reality denying this access and creating a strong social hierarchy within the empire.

3.2 The colonies as a part of France

Politicians and social figures articulated "France" as an empire in its entirety. The colonies were not merely occupied territories, but a part of French identity. It was not only because of the physical security that came with holding territories, but the ontological that made decolonization so difficult. Because France defined itself as an empire, if it were to cease defining itself as such it would no longer have a consistent identity through which to see its surroundings. Not only that, but it would have lost the internal imperial hierarchy that gave those of the metropole the feeling of ontological security through being able to position themselves as hierarchically superior within their organization of international order.

At the height of the colonial era (and outside of this context, as well) it might be claimed that territorial acquisition and growth was important to the security of a nation or empire. In the international sphere, the more territory one has the more influence one should have. Militarily, more territory could put an empire at a strategic advantage. On top of the physical security advantages of territorial acquisition are the economic advantages. The more territory an empire holds, the more it has access to material, a larger labor force, and a market in which to sell its goods. All of these aspects of physical power and security are valid, and they in fact fall into the self-definition of French collective identity. That France held on to its territories in order to seek ontological security – a stable international position – does not mean that the physical benefits it received from this position, or thought it should receive from it, were null. Rather, just as Huysmans argues that daily security is a function of ontological security,[85] because France saw itself as benefiting materially from its colonial possessions it could therefore position itself in a place of honor and imagine itself as a superior member of the global order.

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[85] Huysmans, "Security!" 243.

French discourse envisioned the colonies as entities being incorporated not only into the French map, but also the French identity. France was what it was because of the colonies it presided over. At the Colonial Exhibition of 1931 in Paris, French historian Maurice Reclus said, "If France were not in Algiers, in Dakar, in Hanoi, one might wonder if she would [still] be in Paris."[86] France defined itself through the pieces of its empire. As Reclus believed, France was no more defined by Paris than Hanoi, a city half-way around the globe and a part of the French empire for fewer than 50 years. By comparing the capitals of the colonies with the capital of metropole France, Reclus claimed that the French colonies were as much French as the metropole. Similarly, of the Musée Social, a prominent republican organization active in the organization of the Colonial Exhibition, Janet R. Horne argues that the prevalent concept was that, "there was no fixed divide between empire and metropole."[87] Those who supported the colonial project clearly grouped the metropole and the colonies together into their conception of French identity.

However, the colonies were not fully accepted as *equal* to the metropole, nor were the people of the colonies accepted as being French on the same level and definition as those indigenous to the metropole. The device of paternalism and policies restricting citizenship acquisition ensured that the colonies were separated from the metropole. If this separation was enforced so strongly, then why did France use a rhetoric of inclusion throughout its colonial discourse?[88] The simple answer to this question is that France defined itself as an empire, and as such defined itself through its rule over others. France was France because it presided over other territories. This was an integral part of its identity.

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[86] Marice Reclus, quoted in Horne, 21.

[87] Horne, 22. Yaël Simpson Fletcher, "'Irresistible Seductions': Gendered Representations of Colonial Algeria around 1930," in *Domesticating the Empire: Race, Gender, and Family Life in French and Dutch Colonialism,* edited by Julia Clancy-Smith and Frances Gouda (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1998), 209. Fletcher argues that, "colonialist discourse aimed at a rhetorical incorporation of Algeria into France's national self-image, despite the obvious difference between colony and metropole."

[88] Alice Conklin, "Colonialism and Human Rights, A Contradiction in Terms? The Case of France and West Africa, 1895-1914," *The American Historical Review* 103, no. 2 (April 1998): 440. Conklin argues that the rhetoric of rights was used throughout the discourse of the colonial administration.

However, if this is the case it leads to several questions that this thesis does not seek to answer, but which should nevertheless be raised. Why was the rhetoric of inclusion, as demonstrated through narratives of integration, also necessary? To what degree was it practiced? To what level was the inclusion taken? If France benefited from the physical aspects of territorial acquisition, then why did it need a further rhetoric of inclusion that went unrealized? What did this rhetoric itself help France to attain? French identity was based off of multiple competing narratives. In order for it to be able to align its image of self with its actions it had to continue all of these narratives. Colonial incorporation and hierarchical standing over the colonies were both important to France's sense of hierarchy and honor. In order to not disrupt its image of hierarchical standing, as Zarakol describes, France had to maintain an image of itself within this standing, and thus as both an identity incorporating its colonies and one that was positioned above them, as will be discussed in the next section.

3.3 Citizenship policy

Those in the French colonies were de facto subjects rather than citizens under French law. Rather than have an automatic naturalization process, all natives of the colonies were automatically subjects and under certain circumstances could apply for French citizenship from the colonial governments. In 1912, colonial administrator Ernest Roume's law for citizenship came into effect, stipulating that an elite class of West African men could be eligible to apply for French citizenship if they met a list of criteria.[89] This included a proficiency in the French language, an education, good financial status, and "proof of devotion to France or occupation of a position in the colonial administration."[90] Roume argued that men who met these standards should be seen as "in every way our equals," and that they would be "justifying their ascension in

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[89] Conklin, "Colonialism and Human Rights," 434-435. Alice Conklin, "Redefining 'Frenchness': Citizenship, Race Regeneration, and Imperial Motherhood in France and the Colonies, 1870-1912," in *Domesticating the Empire: Race, Gender, and Family Life in French and Dutch Colonialism,* edited by Julia Clancy-Smith and Frances Gouda (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1998), 66.
[90] Conklin, "Colonialism and Human Rights," 434.

the social hierarchy by their merit and by services they have rendered."[91] The extension of

citizenship to the colonies was thus very limited in scope. It would only include a small, elite

group who could prove their affinity with French values and culture.

The 1912 law demonstrates the ways in which French policy did accept and even

encourage assimilation. Only those who had, one might say, converted to Frenchness could

attain the rights and status of a French citizen. Considering Brubaker's argument that citizenship

is based on inclusion and exclusion, the law ensured that only those who the French wished to

be incorporated into their sense of their own collective identity would be. Only those sharing

French characteristics, or characteristics of the self, would be included. This ensured that the

conception of the self would not have to change: it was not threatened by subversive external

influence being allowed in. Rather, it allowed the continuation of a contained and definable

group.

Later, a 1925 report by the minister of colonies read:

> The point is to know to what degree it is possible to satisfy the aspirations of the indigenous populations
> without jeopardizing our domination… Is it politic, is it in our interest to encourage naturalization?
> Generally speaking, no. Certainly, we must welcome those… of our subjects who can genuinely be
> assimilated, that is to say who have sincerely moved close to us by abandoning their customs, their mores
> and adopted ours… But how many will we find who fit this category? Obviously very few. The others,
> those who solicit the status of citizen… only to obtain certain advantages, will always be dangerous.[92]

The report demonstrates the fear of allowing citizenship to be extended beyond its traditional

scope. This colonial minister concedes that some may be able to become French through

adopting French characteristics, and that these people are not a threat to his notion of French

identity. However, it is important that he stresses the small number of people he expects to be

able to achieve this adoption. He phrases the concept of French citizenship as being safe as long

as it is not hit by an onslaught of foreign influence. Ontologically, his identity group was safe as

long as it could continue to be defined by its traditional characteristics and as a confined entity

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[91] ANSOM, AP 2759/2, "Politiques Indigène, Législation et Projets," Gouverneur Général to Ministre des Colonies, no. 1015, May 30, 1907, quoted in Conklin, "Colonialism and Human Rights," 434.
[92] M. Tesseron, "Rapport sur la Condition Légale des Sujets dans les Colonies Française et sur les Prérogatives qui en Resultent," 1925, Archives Nationales du Sénégal, 17 G 59, Fonds moderne, quoted in Conklin, "Redifining 'Frenchness,'" 72.

through reinforcing the population it was available to. On top of this, the rhetoric of the possibility of inclusion to those in the colonies also reinforced principles of democracy equally important to French identity. He could therefore continue to define himself as a member of a clearly definable group in a clearly definable world order.

In terms of honor, making the stakes of attaining citizenship high had two important functions. By making it difficult for those in the colonies to attain citizenship, it limited the pool of foreigners who could enter the identity group. It also helped to define the identity group as an honorable collectivity within international order. The difficulty of acquiring French characteristics meant that the French were evolved in a way that not just anybody could be, except for the select elite who worked hard enough and had the adequate French training. By telling themselves that the colonized could become citizens, the French were able to retain their sense of selves as democratic. By telling themselves that it was difficult for those of the colonies to become citizens, they were able to retain their sense of selves as hierarchically elite, progressed, and thus, in essence, honorable.

The effects of this highly controlled naturalization process was that in West Africa a very small percentage of the population attained French citizenship. Numbers vary, but out of a population of approximately 15 million, fewer than 50,000 had been granted citizenship by 1940.[93] In Algeria between 1865 and 1930, only 4,400 out of 3.5 million Muslim Algerians attained French citizenship.[94] Documentation shows that colonial administrations discouraged subjects under their administrations from applying for citizenship.[95] While the discourse surrounding citizenship presented a democratic process for rights under French law through assimilation into French culture, in practice these rights were not available to the vast majority of

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[93] The British Museum, "The Wealth of Africa: French West Africa: Students' Worksheets," The Trustees of the British Museum (August 2010), www.britishmuseum.org/pdf/FrenchWestAfrica_StudentsWorksheets.pdf *(accessed May 31, 2011)*. Central Connecticut State University Department of Geography, "Historical Geography of Africa," Central Connecticut State University,
http://www.geography.ccsu.edu/kyem/GEOG466_Africa/Slave_Trade_AfricaPartition.htm (accessed May 31, 2011).
[94] Bleich, 177.
[95] Ibid.

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the population. Rather, the distinction between colony and metropole was strengthened through the preservation of a citizenship defined racially and nationally and thus contained to white European French men.

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The criteria for citizenship created a very selective group of eligible citizens, ensuring the protection of a majority-subject population in the colonies. While in some ways French rhetoric included the encouragement of adoption of French values, characteristics and culture by those in the colonies, in other ways the colonial administration was uninterested in fostering assimilation out-right. Alice Conklin argues that even though it was not expected for all colonial residents to become citizens, it was assumed that they should be educated in French language, culture and notions of civilization.[96] Colonial administrations' hesitance to integrate the colonized into French culture can be seen on the institutional level of education. The emphasis on social redistribution within the colonies meant that public education was presented as a right to reach all segments of the population.[97] The nature of this education was presented as for the sake of the *mission civilisatrice*, and thus was to be universally French so as to encourage the civilization of those in the colonies through a French education. Bleich, however, argues that school curriculums were not as uniform as is usually claimed.[98] Rather than having a universal curriculum for public education, he cites the differences in education systems depending on the colony. For instance, while Conklin claims that a common language was established through education in West Africa,[99] during the interwar period the French language was not used to teach in schools in Indochina.[100] Bleich quotes the Inspector of Education for Senegal as specifically arguing against a mission of assimilation, and for the maintenance and "respect" of local

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[96] Conklin, "Colonialism and Human Rights," 429-430.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Bleich, 177.
[99] Conklin, "Colonialism and Human Rights," 429-430.
[100] Bleich, 177.

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culture.[101] These two examples clearly demonstrate that practices of assimilation were not always taken in the education system. Rather, colonial administrators often acted to keep a separation between French and colonial culture and skills. Whether this was done out of respect for local culture or out of a deliberate attempt to keep populations separate is a question worth examining, but hardly matters for the purposes of ontological security. In practice, the separation had the effect of retaining distinction between the colonies and the French of the metropole, along the same lines as citizenship exclusion.

The exclusion brought about by citizenship laws is made especially evident by the presence of protestation for further rights. Clancy-Smith notes that in Algeria during the Third Republic, both Europeans in Algeria and Muslim Algerians took up "proto-nationalist" causes, each arguing for larger rights under French law.[102] In Senegal, meanwhile, the first black African was elected to French parliament in 1914.[103] He advocated for full French citizenship rights alongside Muslim law to be available to all West Africans.

Between 1924 and 1933, a proposal in West Africa to create a category in between subject and citizen of the "native elite" was to serve as a kind of compromise in rights allocation.[104] This proposal did not come into law, however, because, as Conklin argues, it was seen as already essentially being a present category in practice because Africans were allowed to participate in some parts of the French administration.[105]

3.4 Subject-citizen and European-colonized dichotomies

As the above shows, the French encouraged separation of the "us"-group of the metropole and the "them" of the colonies. Creating dichotomies between the "us" and "them"

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[101] Ibid.
[102] Julia Clancy-Smith, "Islam, Gender, and Identities in the Making of French Algeria, 1830-1962," in *Domesticating the Empire: Race, Gender, and Family Life in French and Dutch Colonialism,* edited by Julia Clancy-Smith and Frances Gouda (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1998), 155.
[103] Conklin, "Redifining 'Frenchness,'" 69.
[104] Ibid., 73-74.
[105] Ibid., 74.

can enforce a collective identity's sense of hierarchical order. While the French included their colonies in their self-definition, citizenship policy and other practices ensured that a separation between the colonies and the metropole was maintained. Jean Elisabeth Pedersen refers to the "binary opposition between colonial citizen and colonial subject"[106] and Conklin argues that the label of "subject" made it possible to "den[y] basic rights to Africans on the grounds that they were inherently different from the French."[107] Men in the empire were locked into a duality of being either subjects or citizens, and this mode of organization allowed for the metropolitan French to view the colonized as, although being in a sense a part of French identity, still being an "other" within the empire. Much as Huysmans presents the case that the qualifying of an "other" group ensures that the other cannot be a part of the "us" group, an us-them dichotomy was created within the French Empire.[108] This dichotomy ensured that groups of people could remain enclosed within clearly definable groups, and that therefore the constructed notion of international order could remain intact.

The colonized were characterized as an "other" in comparison to traditional French culture and values, and were placed on a lower hierarchical level. Marie-Hélène Heurtaud-Wright argues that the portrayal of Algerians was as a subservient group that would take on French characteristics but never quite become French, and always be in a subservient position to the French.[109] Separation between Europeans and colonial natives was encouraged within the colonies through the discouragement of interracial marriage and support of French women in the colonies.[110] Biracial children hold a complicated place in French history and hierarchical

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[106] Jean Elisabeth Pedersen, "'Special Customs': Paternity Suits and Citizenship in France and the Colonies, 1870-1912," in *Domesticating the Empire: Race, Gender, and Family Life in French and Dutch Colonialism,* edited by Julia Clancy-Smith and Frances Gouda (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1998), 63.
[107] Conklin, "Colonialism and Human Rights," 433.
[108] Jef Huysmans, "Migrants as a security problem: dangers of 'securitizing' societal issues," in *Migration and European Integration: The Dynamics of Inclusion and Exclusion,* Robert Miles and Dietrich Thränhardt, eds., (London: Pinter Publishers, 1995), p. 60.
[109] Heurtaud-Wright, 48.
[110] Conklin, "Redifining 'Frenchness,'" 76, 79, 81.

order, but were largely seen as a "degeneration of the white race" who would disrupt the colonial order because of their imprecise racial categorization.[111]

Domestically, a certain prestige was seen through the separation of European and native in the colonies.[112] Marie-Paule Ha describes the accounts of women who lived in Indochina between 1900 and 1950 who describe their lives in the colonies as "privileged" and "middle-class," enabled by native domestic laborers.[113] The society that Ha describes is focused on socializing and class distinction. Most had a glamorized image of the colonies as a kind of land of plenty that the French could go to and live comfortably off of cheap resources and available jobs. This glorified image also included a distinction between the white French in the colonies and the natives, which Ha describes as being assisted by the roles created through native domestic laborers in white households.[114]

Ha describes the white-French female workforce in Indochina as being marked by social distinction, and of the "apprehension about the impact that such 'improper' women might have on white superiority. In other words, the anxiety was induced by a conflation of racial and class markers."[115] It is significant that in her socio-historical account Ha uses the words "apprehension" and "anxiety" in describing the white French colonial clinging to a sense of superior social class. The feeling of anxiety came about from possible disruptions to social distinction. The self-definition the women in the colonies had was tied to their hierarchical role in relation to the natives, and in terms of class and the attributes that came along with it. For these attributes to change, or for their relationships with native women to change, would disrupt their self-imaged social standing. The anxiety arises from a recognition of characteristics in the self that differ from the hierarchical definition they saw themselves as holding. Ontological

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[111] Ibid., 77.
[112] Ibid., 80.
[113] Marie-Paule Ha, "French Women and the Empire," in *France and "Indochina": Cultural Representations*, ed. Kathryn Robson and Jennifer Yee (Lanham: Lexingtion Books, 2005), 114.
[114] Ibid., 114.
[115] Ibid., 116.

insecurity arose from the very creation of social hierarchical markers, distinctions, and importance.

3.5 Parental role

The hierarchy created by the dichotomy between colonizer and colonized allowed the metropole-French to place themselves in a position of superiority. The nature of the *mission civilisatrice* allowed the metropole to envision itself as a kind of parental figure who could help the colonies who, like children, had not progressed as far. Definitionally, because these roles were based on the concept of teaching they should have been fluid and allowed progression. However, for these roles to change would have meant that the French perception of global hierarchical order would change as well. France's self-perceived and perpetuated notion of itself as a parental educator to the colonies was an integral part of its identity, and thus very difficult for it to allow to change.

The paternal approach towards colonial rule was meant to foster republicanism. Elizabeth Thompson argues that paternal language was used in speeches by Henri Gouraud, High Commissioner to Syria and Lebanon during the occupation after World War I.[116] Gouraud referred to the people of Syria and Lebanon as France's adopted children. Thompson argues that France established a paternal order because it was a "distribution of benefits, not by the recognition of rights to benefits" and because it was a male control of both the political and the domestic.[117] This paternal order was meant to establish republicanism.[118] But, as Thompson argues, the concept of "temporary tutelage" was quickly replaced by paternal rule.[119] Thompson argues that what emerged from this was a "colonial civic order," defined as such because of the

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[116] Elizabeth Thompson, *Colonial Citizens: Republican Rights, Paternal Privilege, and Gender in French Syria and Lebanon* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 58.
[117] Ibid., 66-67.
[118] Ibid., 56.
[119] Ibid., 59.

paternal hierarchy of nationality, gender and social class spanning both state and social order.[120] The temporality of paternalism was replaced by a more concrete, static order for society.

In other colonies, too, the paternal or maternal role was prevalent in the discourse of aid and betterment. The Musée Social, among others, discussed France as "*la mère patrie.*"[121] The 1931 Colonial Exhibition that the Musée Social participated in displayed an exhibit about the hygiene practices introduced to and developed in the colonies.[122] Exhibits like these demonstrate how pro-colonial French liberals and reformers often framed the colonial mission as a way of charitably aiding those less fortunate. This parental role brought honor to France while also requiring France to perpetuate the roles within it in order to align its narratives of the self with the roles it saw itself playing out.

3.6 Conclusion

In order for France to hold on to its sense of hierarchical standing it had to hold on to the institutions it deemed honorable. Although the colonies contributed to the definition of French identity, and were seen as a part of this identity, the people native to the colonies were not French in the same way that those in the metropole were. Rather, these two groups were given different kinds of French identity, usually labeled as subject and citizen. The dichotomy created by these two groups within the empire was very important to the metropole's understanding of its own hierarchical position. Without the dichotomy, it could not position itself above the subject-colonies, mirroring its image of international hierarchical standing. The sense of honor that came along with colonial possession and with positioning over the colonies was directly related to international hierarchy. This demonstrates the way in which Zarakol's importance placed on self-perceived hierarchical standing to a collectivity's self-perceived identity and sense of security and Steele's notion of identity defined through honor-guided

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[120] Ibid., 68-69.
[121] Horne, 22.
[122] Ibid., 41.

foreign policy are not complete concepts without one another's context. Honor provided the need for France to see itself in a hierarchically superior position. Likewise this honor was, reciprocally, based on a notion of superiority that was located within the international order, both globally and within the empire.

Conclusion

As the previous chapters have shown, the French metropole sought to secure its identity through its relation to its colonies. In the wake of the shame brought by foreign occupation during World War II, the Free French and later the interim government sought to reestablish their concept of France as an honorable collectivity. They did so in part through the reestablishment of imperial hierarchy. The colonial system that had been established over the course of the Third Republic was that of a strong hierarchical order. French rhetoric about this order, and about the relationship between the metropole and the colonies, demonstrates how French identity was self-perceived as existing within the context of colonial hierarchy. Its relationship with the colonies shaped the way the metropole conceived of its own identity and justified itself as an honorable international actor. The dichotomies created through citizenship denial and the encouragement of separation between the people of the metropole and the people of the colonies demonstrates the hierarchy that the French empire placed upon itself. The French of the metropole understood themselves as a group that was hierarchically superior to and benevolent to the colonies. The paradox of their position meant that they had to keep the colonies at a precise distance – they needed to see them as part of the self, but not on equal footing as the self.

As analysis has shown, the contradicting narratives the French held about their identity – that they were both democratic and imperial, that the colonies were at once an integral part of the self and yet were hierarchically inferior – demonstrate the difficulty of assessing the consistency of a collectivity's identity that could provide it with a sense of ontological security. The notion that ontological security provides people with a consistent collective identity within a

consistent framework through which to understand the international order is nearly impossible to actualize. International relationships are in constant flux and collective narratives continually evolve. On top of this, narratives within one group often contradict one another. As the case of the French Empire demonstrates, colonial order was envisioned in contradictory ways that were all followed in order for the metropole to continue to be able to understand itself as it imagined. Its narratives clashed, but it continued to hold onto them.

The case study of French colonialism presented in this thesis introduces new concepts that can advance the theory of ontological security, helping the theory to evolve into a better representation of observed international relations. The case study presented here clearly demonstrates the importance of maintaining conflicting narratives for a collective identity's sense of honor and thus security as it sees itself located within the international system. The lessons of the French Empire, and of colonialism as a general trend throughout history, challenge the analysis of a collectivity's international and identity-based security as explained by ontological security. They challenge it to include a notion of self-perceived honor based on superior international hierarchical placement. As the research here has demonstrated, it is this brand of hierarchically located honor that brings a feeling of security to an identity, and that is important to self-perceived security as ontological security theory begins to suppose it.

Existing scholarship in International Relations has introduced the concepts of honor and of hierarchical order as important aspects of how international actors construct self-image and seek ontological security. However, this work falls short of promoting the importance of honorable hierarchical superiority to a collective identity's feeling of security as the study of colonialism demonstrates. Steele maintains that collective identities seek honor. He holds that when a collectivity acts in contradiction to its conception of itself, it experiences shame. One could deduce from his work that the object of a state's security-seeking is honor through consistency in narrative. What is less clear about his work is how a collectivity understands honor, especially in the international context. Zarakol, meanwhile, presents another theory about

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the course of ontological security-seeking, maintaining that collectivities seek to reinforce the positions they envision themselves inhabiting in their constructed notions of the international system. Honor is left out of this, however, leaving the impression that a state could find security by reinforcing itself as a dishonorable, non-powerful, hierarchically inferior member of the international order.

If these two theories interact with one another, they can combine to create a more accurate representation of international relations. I have demonstrated that collective identities seek to reinforce their image of themselves as holding an honor that is defined through how they see themselves within the international hierarchy. They seek to rectify their image of the self with their actions, creating a type of honor. In addition to this, they seek a kind of honor that is defined through how they envision themselves in comparison to and interacting with other collectivities. Honor is thus understood through comparisons and interactions. Collective identities do not seek to reinforce a self-image of dishonor. Rather, they seek to reinforce a notion of themselves as hierarchically superior within their vision of the international order. Ontological security-seeking is thus a three-step construction. Collectivities seek an agreement between self-narrative and action. They seek this agreement to be carried out through a conception of honor. This honor is defined through the perception of superior placement within the international order. The case of colonialism demonstrates this necessity for a reinforcement of the perception of hierarchically located superiority and honor for the security and choices of a collective identity.

The presented research has not examined other cases that would be helpful towards furthering the study of ontological security, such as the impact of hierarchical order on modern nation-states' self-definition, sense of honor, and overall security-seeking. While it has tried to broach the subject of bridging the gap between traditional physical security and ontological security, work is still needed on this topic. The claims made by Huysmans, that physical security is a subset and is enabling of ontological security, resonate well with empirical application but

leave questions unanswered. While the notion of shame seems to police a collectivity's actions to remain honorable, honor-seeking can often seem to negate physical security. This matter will not be fully resolved here. However, perhaps the hierarchies ensured by ontological security-seeking end up fashioning these collectivities' perspectives of physical security. Perhaps physical security is interpreted through the lens of a collectivity's sense of hierarchical international order and where they stand within it.

The eternal question of security studies may be about what "security" actually entails. Ontological security provides the answer that security is the survival of a collectivity's sense of identity as interpreted within the international order. In order to feel secure, a collective identity will seek the survival of its perception of stably inhabiting a place of honor within its construct of international hierarchical order. However misguided, then, the perception of the survival of identity is what provides a collectivity with a sense of security in an organized world.

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