

Code de la nationalité (CNF) A legal code defining the conditions of access to French nationality and CITIZENSHIP, carrying with them a combination of rights and duties, such as the right to live in France and participate in elections as well as (until recently) compulsory national service for males. The CNF became a major political battleground during the 1980s and 1990s amid the debate over immigration (see MIGRATION) and the settlement of minorities originating in former French colonies.

Compared with countries such as Germany, France has for most of the last century operated relatively liberal nationality laws. After a period of residence in France, immigrants can apply fairly readily to become 'naturalised' French citizens. Most of their children and grandchildren have been automatically given French citizenship. This automaticity was thrown into question during the 1980s by the extreme right-wing *FRONT NATIONAL* and the centre-right RPR and UDF parties, which doubted the cultural assimilation (see *ASSIMILATION/INTEGRATION/INSERTION*) and loyalty to France of immigrant minorities from former colonies, especially ALGERIA. In government between 1986 and 1988, the RPR and UDF attempted unsuccessfully to reform the CNF in such a way as to require the children of immigrants to request French citizenship, instead of receiving it automatically. This reform (from which second-generation Algerians were largely exempted for technical reasons) was eventually enacted when the centre-right parties returned to power in 1993 as part of a raft of changes known as the PASQUA laws designed to tighten immigration controls and make it easier to deport members of minority groups who, if they lacked citizenship, had weaker residence rights in France. The Left reversed most of these changes on taking office in 1997. (Alec G. Hargreaves)

Further reading

Revealing insights into the debate over the CNF are offered by the hearings of a special commission set up under the chairmanship of Long (1988).

Codes de la famille See FAMILY CODES, MAGHREB.

CODOFIL Conseil pour le développement du français en Louisiane (Council for the Development of French in LOUISIANA). Created in July 1968 by a unanimous vote of the Louisiana state legislature, CODOFIL's mission is 'to do any and all things necessary to accomplish the development, utilization and preservation of the FRENCH LANGUAGE as found in Louisiana for the cultural, economic and tourist benefit of the State'. To this end it has launched actions to improve the cultural status of French by restoring its legal status, to create competence in the French language through educational programmes, and to promote a positive image of CAJUN culture through the media. CODOFIL's *Comité du français Louisianais* also seeks to formulate a policy for the standardisation of Louisiana French and the establishment of orthographic norms. (Marie-Anne Hintze)

Colonial policy French colonial policy has generally been characterised as assimilationist (see *ASSIMILATION/INTEGRATION/INSERTION*). From the end of the nineteenth century, the French stressed the 'civilising mission' that they claimed was at the heart of their

colonial conquests, highlighting the 'superiority' of the French empire over its 'mercenary' English counterpart. The French proclaimed that colonisation would 'civilise' the 'primitive' peoples of their colonies, assimilating them into French culture. This the 'process of creating 'black/brown/yellow Frenchmen' has been central to discussion of French colonialism, and it forms the heart of many texts written by colonised writers. For the Senegalese author Bakary Diallo, writing in the 1920s, assimilation is presented as an ideal to be obtained but, in later works such as C. H. KANE'S *L'Aventure ambiguë* (1961; *Ambiguous Adventure*, 1963) and CHRAÏBI'S *Le Passé simple* (1954; *The Simple Past*, 1990), assimilation is seen as a painful and alienating process.

However, historians have increasingly challenged the notion that French colonialism was based on assimilation, arguing that French policies were, in fact, far more pragmatic and similar to the British policy of indirect rule. Only a small percentage of colonised peoples received a French education, while the vast majority of the population were subject to the exigencies of *l'indigénat*, the repressive system under which the colonised paid a levy to the French and could also be made to work free of charge on behalf of the colonial regime. African novels such as OYONO'S *Une Vie de boy* (1956; *Houseboy*, 1966) and SEMBENE'S *Les Bouts de bois de Dieu* (1960; *God's Bits of Wood*, 1962) reveal the brutality underpinning French colonial authority – from summary imprisonment to savage beatings with the infamous *chicotte*. Reforms to this repressive system were gradually introduced, gathering pace after World War II. (David Murphy)

Further reading

Miller (1998) – excellent analysis of culture and colonialism.

Communauté Economique des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest See CEDEAO.

Communauté Financière Africaine See CFA.

Communauté Financière du Pacifique See CFP.

Communauté française 1958–60. The name given to the short-lived colonial constitutional structures created by France from 1958 to 1960 to prepare France's African colonies for independence. These were accepted by the territories involved by a plebiscite called by General DE GAULLE following the dissolution of the Fourth Republic.

Foreign affairs, defence, economic policy, higher education, the judiciary, inter-state transport and telecommunications were implemented as Community policies. Constitutionally, the President of France (de Gaulle) was also President of the Community and was served by an Executive Council made up of the French Prime Minister and the leaders of the assemblies of the 12 heads of the African states, with the French ministers assigned to oversee Community policies. (Antony Walsh)

Comoros The Islamic Republic of the Comoros (population 530,820; capital: Moroni) is made up of three volcanic islands, Anjouan, Mohéli and Grande Comore