

What is culture ?

The term “culture” originates from latin “colere”, meaning to nurture and cultivate.

*Culture is what you remember when you forget
everything else*

Culture can be explained through identifying what holds people together in a society or country.

Culture can act as a cement between individuals and groups or create frictions and drive groups apart.

Look at what people of a certain culture have in common.

What is their common history?

What is their common believe system?

What is their common pain and trauma?

*To understand the culture of a given country, one must therefore **consider the experiences of its citizens, on both the macro and micro levels.***

On a macro level, that means reading books about the country's history, speaking to its citizens and understanding their thoughts on its major historical events, and understanding its political system.

On a micro level, it means going to the supermarket and talking to the cashier about anything at all as you pay for your groceries.

It means talking to the bartender as you order a drink.

It means understanding the daily lives of a country's people and then considering the minute differences between their daily lives and the lives of people in your own country, because sometimes cultural differences are subtle in practice, but extreme in the way that they affect people.

*As a French student, I lived in Canada (Ottawa) for a couple of months. As I do in France, I would use the bus to go anywhere. Spending so much time in buses, I started to **notice a lot of very small but very interesting details** that would tell a lot on the country's culture and mindsets : the relationship between the driver and the passengers or the words used in the automatic messages for instance.*

*Understanding **contradictions** is a good way to understand a country's culture*

To understand a given culture, one has to immerse oneself in that culture. By moving to Paris in September 2019, I've learned my things about the French in a very subconscious, everyday way.

The first person I talked to when arriving in France was the concierge of my building who addressed me as "Mademoiselle" and after 1,5 years she still does. Then we were strangers for each other, now we are familiar, we know about each other's families and lives, but she will not deviate from calling me "Mademoiselle".

By doing this she maintains our relationship rather professional, her role is being the concierge of the building, mine is being a tenant. While talking to the concierge, she'll repeatedly correct my French in a polite but very strict way. This interaction with the lady at my building taught me two things:

One: French people take "la politesse" very serious,

Two: French people care about proper language.



Loge de concierge,
7 rue de Chaumont, 75019
Paris, 1979
Photo : Jean Mounicq

Understanding one's culture can be done through observation, pre Covid, I would see people gathering around at different terrasses from 16h00 on, showing their joie de vivre. French love food, wine and their cigarette. In the street, they do not shy away from calling you a "CONNASSE" when you are in their way, but will be very shy when you cross them in the corridors of your building. All of these things I learned by just being here.

About how big events in history marks the actual society:
This can be seen on daily examples such as how generally French people won't denounce their neighbors as it is a reminiscence of the times of the Nazi's occupation of the country.

Secondly, one must look at the painful aspects of history, because what lies at the heart of one's identity is pain. French pain is about shame, mainly for collaborating with the nazi and the colonies. The collaboration of the French state during the Second World War was only publicly acknowledged by Jacques Chirac in 1995 during a speech to remember "la rafle du Vel d'hiv". Before that, theories such as the "thèse du bouclier et de l'épée" were favoured : Pétain and De Gaulle were actually working together to save France. As a matter of fact, France considered itself a winner of the war. Nevertheless having the German army walking on l'Arc de Triomphe still bears consequences to this day, e.g. delation in France is deeply despised.

VEL'D'HIV



PLUS JAMAIS de 16 Juillet 1942



As France was feeling shameful after the second World War, people in the country started to sing less, as opposed to people in the UK where the music landscape flourished.

Something that I have noticed in France is a high conservatism from society in general, as well as a lack of reinterpretation of the legal system. Despite the heritage of the French revolution and the desire to erase the nobility and monarchy in order to have a more equal society, France seems to be very attached to its structure and to the preservation of the status quo and of its elites. There seems to be a difficulty to question the hierarchical structure, and to tackle the elites. To me, this can be seen in several instances in which powerful people continued to maintain a level of power despite having been accused of unlawful actions. Filmmaker Roman Polanski has been convicted of rape and pedophilia by several individuals and is currently chased by American judicial system. However, France protects him, and even honors him at the highest cinema institution in the country. When Macron reappointed his ministers, he chose Gérald Darmanin as “minister de l’intérieur”, despite his involvement in a rape lawsuit. What I find surprising is that the political and elite worlds are often uncomfortable to denounce these acts and to address them, despite creating controversy and sometimes marches. This is probably due to the general agreement that denunciation and “délation” is seen negatively in France since WW2. I do find this extremely concerning that people are willing to accept violence and perpetuate patterns in order to avoid confrontation and having to point fingers at individuals.

Is there a « french mindset »?

France is not America, that's for sure.

An example is the fact that according to French people, French fashion is about creation and American fashion is about marketing, which the French despise.

There is a plurality of mindsets that oddly coexist within the French society which in a way answers the constant proposing of antithetical and diversified slants that do, in a way, paint a ubiquitous all-inclusive “French mindset” as one entity.

Having lived in the United Kingdom for 4 years for my undergraduate studies, I remember the one thing that my dad told me before taking the plane and starting my new independent life in England: 'Do not come back with the English mindset!'

The commentary of a New York Times' reader published following the terrorist attacks that took place in Paris in November 2015 sums up, in my opinion, the "French mindset".

« France embodies everything religious zealots everywhere hate: enjoyment of life here on earth in a myriad little ways: a fragrant cup of coffee and buttery croissant in the morning, beautiful women in short dresses smiling freely on the street, the smell of warm bread, a bottle of wine shared with friends, a dab of perfume, children playing in the Luxembourg Gardens, the right not to believe in any god, not to worry about calories, to flirt and smoke and enjoy sex outside of marriage, to take vacations, to read any book you want, to go to school for free, to play, to laugh, to argue, to make fun of prelates and politicians alike, to leave worrying about the afterlife to the dead.

No country does life on earth better than the French.

Paris, we love you. We cry for you. You are mourning tonight, and we with you. We know you will laugh again, and sing again, and make love, and heal, because loving life is your essence. The forces of darkness will ebb. They will lose. They always do. ».

This commentary is a magnificent tribute to France and its way of life.

He praises the French mindset and this mindset will prevail over terrorism.

The French mindset is about criticizing France while being very happy to live in France and loving this country for everything it symbolizes across the world and the immense heritage that France bears.

The French Mindset could be defined as a sort of ongoing discontent, while finding comfort in it, a French person will never “settle for less” in their minds. For instance, if going to the Boulangerie, they will not pay 1.30€ for a Baguette Tradition if the National price is set at 1.20€, or if they do buy it, they will specifically make a comment, turning it into a public complaint.

... This “French mindset” comes from the fact that French people always want a better life and **it is more about the individual over the common good**

The StopCovid application has been downloaded less times in France than in its neighbour states.

To understand France, I would first advise any foreigner to dive into French cinema, as to me what is key to understand about France is the sense of humour. I believe that French humour is about sophisticated and well-turned phrases, *'jeu de mots'* and sarcasm, and often the silliest the sentence is the most brutal satire it can be. It has been described to me by British people as *grinçant*, and I think that is a good word to describe it. It is typically French to have the object of the joke being somebody else taken in derision, and one perfect example of that would be the movie *Le Diner de Cons*, by Patrice Leconte in 1998. This would obviously have to be followed by other Patrice Leconte movies such as *Les Bronzés*, *Les Bronzés Font du Ski*, or even *Le Père Noël est une ordure*.

Humour grinçant

Understand the « clichés » and get rid of them

There is more than only one French mindset, as France is today a multicultural country with a lot of immigration and a wide range of political ideas

I don't see France in a romantic way.

French aesthetics = classical rather than romantic

 Classical versus Romantic 	
CLASSICAL	ROMANTIC
Reason, thought	Emotion, feeling
Restraint, caution	Exuberance, excess
Objectivity	Subjectivity
Balance	Imbalance
Order and proportion	Freedom of expression

Heritage/weight of the past

France is a very historical country which builds brands from heritage and the past. Its values are not as modern as some countries I have been in, for example, I believe the LGBTQ community is more widely accepted and celebrated in England

Since 2010, the French gastronomic meal and its rituals have been listed as part of UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage



IfmParis

@IfmParis



Paris, ville-musée ou capitale vivante et créative ?
[@EchosLifestyle lesechos.fr/luxe/actu/buzz...](#) #luxe
#mondialisation #mode #Paris #France

3:38 PM · 21 févr. 2013 · Twitter Web Client

Aesthetics

Understanding French aesthetics through Air France advertising campaigns.

Although the airline's slogan has changed to "France is in the Air", its previous one "Faire le ciel le plus bel endroit de la Terre" is just one side of the same story. Indeed, the airline's ads over the last 10 years, include close to no visuals relating to the reality of the product offer, or the actual experience of travelling with Air France.

*Instead, you are overwhelmed with images hinting to beauty, perfection, and supposed "French excellence". In fact, **its ad have objectively more similarities with fashion editorials than airline ad campaigns**. That being said, a clear "surprise variable" is showing up: beauty. What Air France is aiming to tell, is that not only do they make the skys, painful airport journeys simply beautiful: they invite the world to see how the French make everything you thought you knew, more aesthetically pleasing, enjoyable and sophisticated.*

AIRFRANCE / FAIRE DU CIEL LE PLUS BEL ENDROIT DE LA TERRE





and call a crew member.

“French culture might be characterized by the ideal of the golden mean: nothing in excess”

*Especially during the covid phase, I observed how many people stood in long lines to shop at the **small** family butcher store, or at the **small** vegetable store, while it was empty in large supermarkets. I think this behavior, the appreciation of the **small** merchant, the interactions between buyer and seller, as well as the conscious opposition to large institutions can be considered emblematic of France.*

LA P'TITE CAVE

La petite chaloupe

L'épicerie



Océane

For me, important elements of “French mindset” include: preference for **lightness**, search for **beauty** instead of pure functionality, respect for **knowledge** and **social aspect** instead of money, respect for **traditions & savoir-faire**, certain level of **hierarchy** in organisations and **freedom of speech**. For instance, in France, people respect knowledgeable people such as doctors and professors more than pure businessman (“money is dirty”) while in China, success and happiness are closely linked to wealth and fame.

-Select and comment a significant French word or concept among all the words and concepts you think are important in France

Answer:

The word chosen: **lightness**.

I think “lightness” is an important element in French culture. Lightness means **everything should be moderated** and “being too much” is generally not welcomed in French culture. The “lightness” could be seen in different aspects of France such as architecture & art, business operations and social life. Three examples I would like to discuss are as follows: First of all, one of the famous symbols of France, **the Eiffel Tower**, can be **seen through** and it is associated with the “light culture” of France. Moreover, the popular **AirFrance safety announcement video** which featured a group of stewardesses turned the “serious and heavy” topic of flight safety into something **easy to absorb** through a playful tone of voice and humorous & dynamic actings. Finally, it is recommended to only fill **one third of a wine glass** when pouring wine instead of filling the glass full, which not only gives more room for wine to spin in the glass but also remind the drinker to taste the wine in an elegant and light way.

*I feel like there is a **lightness** to France when walking along the Seine in the summer or through the streets in the evening. There is a translucent beauty about France that is unique to this country.*

*Compared to the English gardens (I come from England and so therefore know it well), the Jardin de Tuileries represents balance, **order**, structure, harmony, symmetry and elegant formality. Whereas English gardens are about the freedom of the growing plants and finding peace within the wildness...*

Order in France is implicit, it can be seen in the well-behaved manner they carry themselves or even through the way they dress. As I am from England, I dress slightly more provocatively than the average French person who doesn't show much skin and dresses appropriately for the seasons.

I think that the Netherlands is a country in which convenience, and efficiency are extremely important. We care a lot about time-management and if something is not working appropriately, many people will be bothered.

*I believe that here in France, people care more about the **aesthetics** of things instead of its **purpose**. In the Netherlands, this is definitely the other way around.*

Love of ideas and abstraction

Politics first

Despite the COVID, a major event that could have led to a "union sacrée", the country continues to put the spotlight on political events: the question of the quality of the government's management of the current crisis is even more debated than the health situation.

In recent months, controversies have emerged regarding political extremist movements and the liberation of speech regarding incest.

As always, France is animated by ideological, societal and moral discussions.

If we look at how France advertises itself to foreign investors, we can identify a lot for the French mindset. In contrast with Germany, that is advertised as hardworking, efficient and highly structured, as having an almost "square mindset", France is putting forward all its assets when it comes to art, history and culture. France's arms are knowledge, culture, and education, through philosophy, literature and art.



The French mentality and society value things like education and knowledge much more than the economical value.

“Culture” is put on a pedestal in France, which shows through following expression:

“c’est un homme / une femme de culture”.

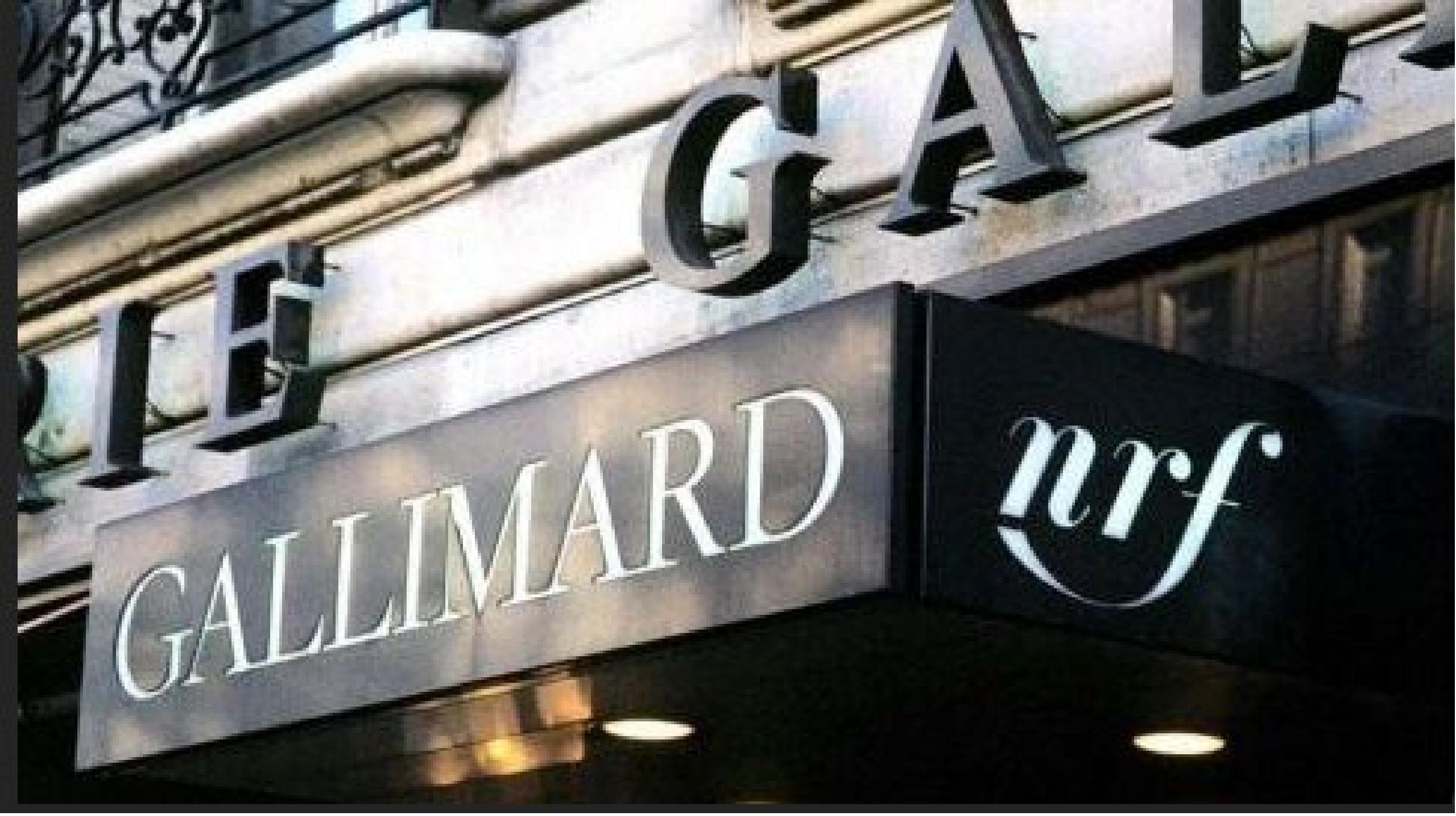
Being a *man or a woman of culture* is supposed to create a feeling of respect and admiration, even of superiority.

In France, you are rich, or admired in the Hollywood sense, if you are “cultivé”. You don’t need to be explicitly “pointed at” when not knowing your classics of “culture Générale” to physically feel the phenomenon.

The whole language is full of anecdotes, proverbs, expressions, which flood French conversations with overwhelming references. An American, a Chinese or Brazilian may learn French grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation to perfection, but will easily feel left out whenever a cultural reference is unknown. I recall asking my French teacher during the baccalauréat year: “ How can I improve my French vocabulary efficiently?”.

Her answer was quite evocative of French success today: “ you have to read books”.

*Indeed, **having your book published at Gallimard, is at least perceived as an equal success (if not higher) than reaching a CEO position at LVMH.***



HEGGA

GALLIMARD

my

*One of the best way to understand French culture is by looking at **French literature**.*

If France has one specificity, it is the importance of literature at the very heart of the State and in the hearts of the French people.

So much so that one could even say that France is a literary creation.

*Writers, philosophers and poets have always played an important political role in France. Zola confronted judges and military authorities to defend the innocence of Captain Dreyfus. Molière denounced the hypocrisy and sectarianism of clericalism. Victor Hugo, in *Les Misérables*, brought to light the pain and poor situations of the victims of the industrial revolution. It is indeed one of the French originalities to see that writers rebel against the State, when they judge that the latter fails in its mission and is no longer equal to the nation's ideal.*

In fact, this is how the ashes of Victor Hugo and Zola are transferred to the Pantheon to signify the true values of France.



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- Another element of the French mindset is a **respect for knowledge and culture**, which was visible in the wave of protestation that was sparked by the closing down of bookstores and libraries in the context of Covid-19. There is indeed a deep respect for knowledge that can be traced back to the 18th century and 'Les Lumières', which have placed the quest for knowledge above everything else. This explains why in France, appearing knowledgeable at a dinner party is highly valued. Likewise, it explains why luxury groups such as LVMH are investing in maisons d'édition (LVMH in Gallimard).

*French people value culture and abstract knowledge, they like refinement and they tend to think theoretically and not concretely (unlike German people). This impact the French mindset because it places ideas and concepts on top, as well as **critical spirit**.*

Critical spirit

*I was surprised to see how **critical thinking** is valued in French schools and universities. In Italy, students are often not allowed to express their opinion or debate with the professor. In fact, during classes only the professor talks and no one will ever ask a student to from and express a personal judgment.*

Contrarily in France, many times professors are interested to hear students' opinions and classes are often open debates.

This really showed me how important it is in France to be able to think critically and have a firm opinion about every subject and be able to articulate your thoughts.

*French people like to protest, they will say something if you jump the queue and often will not hesitate to speak up if they disagree, the stereotype of the “**râleur**” if you will. This in my opinion is extremely different to the english mindset where being too outspoken can be interpreted as rude, or pushy.*

*If something bothers a French person, you can be sure that it will be stated out, on the contrary to British people for instance, who have a sense of politeness and restraint that perhaps the French do not view in the same way. And that sense of honesty, of often rebellion against what the French do not like, can be seen and has been seen as arrogance from the viewpoint of other countries. The truth can sometimes be brutal, but I believe that the French do not fear the truth and would **rather live realistically than optimistically.***

French people easily criticize the established powers, politicians, and bosses of big companies. That can explain some strikes, political and social movements such as the “gilets jaunes”. On top of that, it also explains why French people tend to mistrust wealth holders like Bernard Arnault.



150 EURO PREMIÈRE ÉDITION N°1346 MARCHÉ SEPTEMBRE 2019 WWW.LIBERATION.FR

Libération

«Libé» répond au patron de LVMH

Bernard, si tu reviens, on annule tout!

Le débat relancé hier par la Une de «Libération» sur l'exil fiscal des grandes fortunes enflamme la presse et les politiques. **PAGES 47**

A Marseille | Stoltiz contre

The LVMH logo, a gold-colored 'LV' monogram on a purple diamond-shaped background, is positioned on the right side of the newspaper cover.

French people are proud, they love life, they love to complain and **they need tension to exist.**

French contradictions

There are two mindsets that coexist strangely within the French psyche. The first is to have a rule, a law, a regulation, a permit, a license for the slightest thing. On the face of it, the French are the most policed nation on earth.

In contrast, the French are also the most rebellious people and the most refractory to the application of the law.



Even though France describes itself as a République, it actually functions like a monarchy, with a very powerful king/président: there is a king who decides, a parliament which doesn't decide and the people.

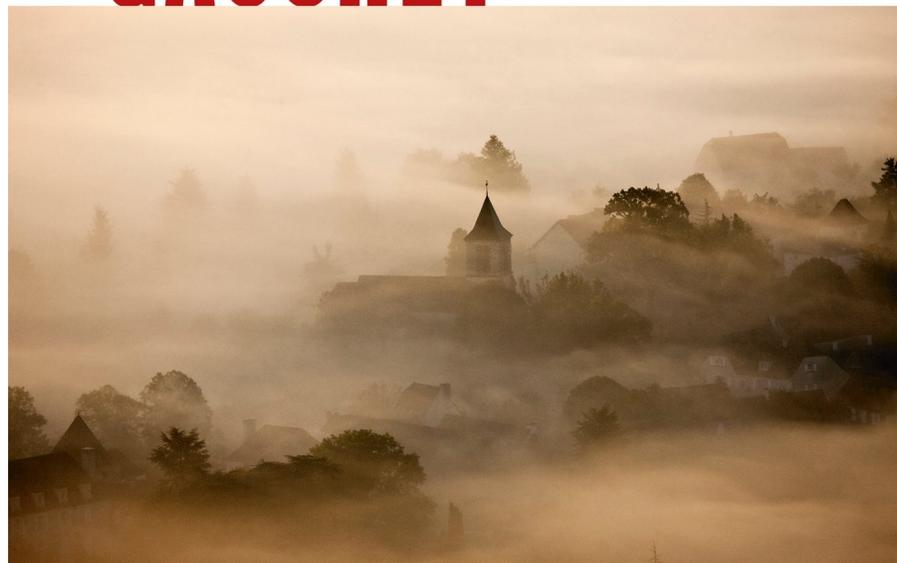


It was seen in a survey that France has a measured 'low happiness' level lower than China. This is interesting because their healthcare is one of the best in the world, education is free, they are a more progressive country compared to a lot of others and they have a relatively good quality of life.

French people might be described as selfish, but France is a very collective country.

The idea of being together is very important, whether it is as a family, with friends or even gathering for cultural events like festivals.

Marcel
GAUCHET



Comprendre le malheur français

avec **Éric Conan** et **François Azouvi**

les essais
Stock

France in 2021 is also a France of solidarity, as we have seen in its last weeks during the rising waters, the floods, where many neighbors, colleagues, friends have helped each other to cope as best they can with this situation that has turned into a catastrophe

**CONCERT
SOLIDARITÉ**
**EN FAVEUR DES SINISTRÉS
DES INONDATIONS**

EN COLLABORATION AVEC LE
SECOURS POPULAIRE FRANÇAIS



I found it very interesting to see how French people take care about other French when they are abroad, while back in Paris they would absolutely not care about each other, as if being abroad had freed them from the snob Parisian role they were obliged to perform.

Even though the French say they are 'unhappy' they love to be around one another to celebrate with a bottle of Champagne, whether that be in the form of an apéro or through bigger celebrations.

It is interesting to see so many homeless people in Parisian metro stations and in the streets however, there is a huge amount of luxury advertisement everywhere.

A photograph of a person sleeping on a cardboard box on a city sidewalk. The person is wearing a dark blue hooded jacket and blue jeans, and is barefoot. They are leaning against a blue metal structure. In the background, there are parked cars and a street with trees. The text 'YES SANS LOGEMENT' is overlaid in white, stylized font across the middle of the image.

YES SANS LOGEMENT

AYONS L'ÉLÉGANCE D'AIDER CEUX QUI N'ONT RIEN.

Aurore
Association

www.aurore.asso.fr

France has two faces: that of the bourgeois neighborhoods, of the big cities, which represents good French taste, which makes Paris the capital of beauty, with all its monuments, its Hausmannian buildings, its great houses, with LVMH and Kering at the head of the list.

But there is also the France of the misunderstood, the France of people who are tired of suffering, the France of yellow jackets, the suburbs, where insecurity reigns and the police no longer dare to go.

One of the most successful French industry is the luxury industry, in a country where there is an extreme mistrust of people having money.

At the same time, it's a country that is known as being very chic and snob, yet French humor and references are always popular and not aristocratic.

Luxury in France is connected with popular culture: an example of this is the hat Gavroche by Dior, which roots its references in Gavroche, a fictional character of Les Misérables (Victor Hugo, 1862), who lives in the streets of Paris and represents the free spirit of the city, portrayed next to Marianne in the painting by Delacroix.



DIOR

Casquette Gavroche

“ Inspirée par l'esprit de révolte de Mai 68, cette casquette gavroche accompagne toutes les silhouettes de la collection d'Hiver 2018. En chèvre velours noir, elle est doublée de soie, ornée d'une abeille brodée dorée. ”

France is a country that understands itself as a country of the south for lifestyle, but as a northern country for its economy.

France despises how Americans live yet the French are pretty close to their mode of living (...). France is the European country with the most McDonalds restaurants.

French people do not want to give their personal data to the government, yet they do not mind giving it to Facebook in exchange of access to the social media.

I don't see French values as more progressive than other countries even if they want to show liberation and freedom. There is still a pay gap between women and many high ranking jobs are still occupied by white men e.g. the owners of Kering and LVMH are two of many examples.

There is a tension in France between a desire for strong leading figures and authority but also an omnipresent revolt against the institutions and their verticality.

*In sports, the Équipe de France capitalizes more on **individual talents** than on a collective setting.*

The French are full of contradictions, they love to protest against the establishment, but as soon as Macron does a speech, meetings end early and everyone is tense about what he is about to say, which shows they value what's coming.

To me, being Belgian, this contradictive behavior is almost funny. If the prime minister at home is holding a speech, most people will not even be aware that it's happening. If people are angry about a new law, they might complain, but won't take any action.

Here in France, people want to rebel against something, but they need that something to be there in order to be able to rebel.

Pour Emmanuel Macron, l'enjeu est désormais de maintenir sa cote de popularité au niveau élevé actuel (autour de 40 %, selon plusieurs sondages), alors même que sa gestion de crise est rejetée par près de huit Français sur dix. Une décorrélation qu'il reste à prouver sur la longueur.

« For Emmanuel Macron, the challenge is now to maintain his popularity rating at the current high level (around 40%, according to several polls), even though his crisis management is rejected by nearly eight out of ten French people. A decorrelation that remains to be proven over time ».

Le Monde, 20/03/2021

As we have learned in class, all decisions are taken in Paris, by the president, and this might not make sense for other regions in France, which shows again the spirit of bureaucracy and hierarchy that may be absurd at times. Even during the second confinement, no one was respecting the rules put in place (at least in the district where I spent my confinement) and there were no controls made by the police, as the police was never even present. This shows the huge contradiction between the intransigent rules taken by the "petit chef" and the lack of enforcement of the latter, which made the situation even worse and takes even longer to slow down the spread of the virus. In the UK for example, people were on strict lockdown and were respecting it (for the most part) and cases went down by a lot. This is not the case in France.

France is known for cultivating beauty, there is a certain grandeur everyone sees and feels when entering Paris. The use of gold on buildings, the boulevards, the gardens ,... all signs of luxurious beauty. French appreciate beauty but are not allowed to show personal wealth. In the streets one only rarely sees super cars, people are almost always dressed in dark colors, woman hardly wear jewelry and almost no makeup. It's badly viewed to show wealth as an individual, it evokes a lack of trust, but as a collective, the French do not shy away from displaying severe chauvinism. Together they are superior to the outside world, but among each other they cannot display signs of superiority.

Within this I need to add another weird contradiction that makes the French very French. Though they are very equalitarian, they have a deep respect for hierarchy. This is mostly visible in the French language and how people address one another.

A personal example of this I have from once accompanying my grandfather in his then factory in the south of France. He wanted to show me around and greeted one of the workers in the same way he did in Belgium, one of the syndicates that was with us at the time told him not to greet workers as he thought it was not my grandfather's place to talk to workers. To me this was absolutely confusing, but it pointed out how deeply invested the people were in hierarchy.

For me it was really interesting to observe the mistrust of the French towards the vaccine, with approximately 50% of the population declaring that it would not take it once available. It's not a reaction exclusive to French people, with antivaccine movements growing all around the world, however, I found it intriguing and at first a contradiction to my view of the French population. How can a country, so educated and intellectual distrust science? This surprise was reinforced by my personal experience, as I encountered many people that didn't trust the vaccines...



While French people expect the benefits coming from the socialist structure, they don't want to be called socialists.

The French mindset is also imbued with a special relationship with the colonial and imperialist past of the state. The French oscillate between pride in France's powerful place on the international scene, acquired notably thanks to this colonial past, and guilt about past policies, the Algerian or Indochina war and the current relationship.

“C’est la vie” is a significant French word or concept, and particularly its usage in daily life is representative of a certain aspect of the French culture, a certain defeatist mindset or existential approach.

It is an interesting paradox in French culture because it juxtaposes the democratic values of the French people - they protest against things that they don’t agree with, they are argumentative and stand up for what they believe in, and yet they use this phrase **“c’est la vie”** to suggest that something is wrong and they can do nothing about it.

How French people understand freedom ?

France embraces everything that conservative religious diehards elsewhere hate: the right of not believe in any god, the frivolous world of beauty and fashion, the coffee clope pause every hour, the daily dose of bread and cheese without any worry of calories, to go school and hospital for free, to go on vacations every month or two, to flirt and have sex outside of marriage under the name of love and romantic.

Freedom (as seen from France) =
your individual identity is above all kinds of determinism
(religion, family, ethnicity...)

*I am especially sensitive to the French approach of discussions on **race**, largely because I think it differs substantially from the American approach, especially within progressive American academic institutions. In the United States, it is normal to characterize people by their race. This is perceived as a way to acknowledge that people of different races face different challenges (especially discrimination) and have different experiences. For example, on job applications there is typically a voluntary box to check your race.*

This kind of question would never be asked in France.

Even from a language perspective, discussions on your background would be referred to as questions about your ethnicity rather than your race. In the US, it is also acceptable and usually customary for organizations, especially universities, to collect and publish demographic statistics. This is perceived as a way to hold institutions accountable for maintaining equal hiring practices and maintaining more diverse student or employee populations. In France on the other hand, it is illegal to collect and publish statistics on race and ethnicity, which is tied in part to the trauma of WWII. I am American and was educated in American institutions and this is the most obvious cultural difference that I have been able to identify, especially since I have studied at IFM, a French institution. Addressing questions of inequality have to be approached completely differently in France as a result of these policies, perhaps more indirectly. Whereas in America, they are often raised and addressed directly. I struggle to understand how France will address their colonial past and how it impacts their institutions today and any contemporary issues around racial inequality when it is difficult to address race directly in conversations in France. This is not to say that America has addressed issues of racial inequality, but that we have perhaps more straightforward language and means to understand these questions.

Following the previous question, the way we could describe the “French mindset” is strongly linked to different concepts but the one which stands out the most is the concept of sovereignty, which for French people doesn’t necessarily mean power, but **freedom**. Sovereignty means freedom from any external control, it means autonomy since, if you are not sovereign other people will decide for you. The reason why France values the concept of freedom so much can be traced back to a diversity of scenarios that the country has lived throughout its history like, for instance the Second World War and how the German occupation represented submission lack of freedom of speech.

*The word **sovereignty** is very important to France. But it is interpreted as freedom and autonomy, not power, which is a very different concept than my culture in South Korea.*

Last summer I celebrated Bastille Day with some of my French friends. We sat by the Seine, drank cans of beer and watched the fireworks together. Everybody was out and as soon as the fireworks started everyone stopped talking to watch. This event is considered to be the symbol of the battle against oppression for all French citizens. It again shows the importance of tradition and being able to celebrate what is important. But, it also shows how important freedom and liberty is to them. It symbolises the three ideas of the Republic represented on the tricoloured flag all became meaningful: Freedom, Equality and Brotherhood which shows what is significant to the French.



LIBERTE EGALITE FRATERNITE

La Marseillaise is all about coming together and revolting, rising up as a collective and taking matters into your own hands in an expression of freedom and defiance. The lyrics are powerful, describing the raising of the French flag even though it is stained with the blood of patriots. This is a very different sentiment to the English National Anthem. Furthermore, the music of La Marseillaise can be considered as iconic, yet classically pompous and extravagant.

*If I had to choose just one significant concept that we learned on the course, I would definitely select the notion of **freedom**. Indeed, the concept of freedom in France is different when compared to other countries. The term **sovereignty**, which is highly important in France, is not related to power but to the meaning of freedom.*

*In the French culture, the notion of freedom is related to individual freedom and the availability of individuals to speak up and express it freely. It is thus understood as a freedom of expression, **a legacy from the French revolution as religion would no longer decide on each individual's lives.** The latest and most remarkable example of this is the issue related to the publishing of Charlie Hebdo's cartoons and Samuel Paty's murder.*

Other cultures may understand both actions as a lack of respect towards the Islamic religion or a blasphemy whereas in France the principle of laicity and freedom of speech stands above all.

Laïcité

*I find this topic incredibly interesting, especially when considering conversations that took place during my French Culture classes at university in Scotland, where the general consensus was that laïcité was an out-dated and backwards idea. However, it has to be said that **just because something is very hard to understand when it is not a part of your culture, does not mean it is wrong.***

*The secular notion of the French educational system, and consecutively of the state has been threatened a lot the last few years, with the importance of religion gaining more ground in France. Based on Voltaire's principles, people should be free to worship if they want but **religion itself does not deserve any respect. It is an opinion as respectable as any.***

In France, it is **not legitimate to feel an attack to a religion as an attack to the self.**

*In France, the limits to freedom are only set by **law**, which **does not forbid nor punish blasphemy.***

French ~~culture~~ identity does not include religion

Despite France not being a catholic country by law, culture is totally embedded in the history of religion and of catholicism in the country.

Macron, in an interview with NYTimes, once stated that 'Our model is universalist, not multiculturalist,' he said, outlining France's longstanding insistence that its citizens not be categorized by identity.

« In our society, I don't care whether someone is Black, yellow or white, whether they are Catholic or Muslim, a person is first and foremost a citizen ».

The world « laïcité » (secularism) is based on three principles: freedom of conscience and the freedom to manifest one's convictions within the limits of respect for public order, the separation of public institutions and religious organizations, and the equality of all before the law regardless of their beliefs or convictions.

Laicity is principally and originally the fact that the state does not recognize any religion, although its roots were mainly Christian.

In France, this world can be considered as a synonym of freedom which characterizes the French mindset and values as it guarantees to believers and non-believers the same right to freedom of expression.

Nothing can be prohibited in the name of secularism since it is a guarantee of freedom. Secularism is not just one opinion among others, but the freedom to have one.

France has been called for a long time the “eldest daughter of the church”. Despite this, the nation has been able to build a strong concept that enables the state to remain impartial with regards to religions.

In 1905 it was established the state secularism in France, after the acceptance of the law separating the church from the state. This led with time with more people becoming atheist and see religion as a cultural aspect more than a belief.

*In France **people cannot understand that a person is defined by its beliefs**. People will respect people, but for the French “religion itself does not deserve any particular respect. It is an opinion as respectable as any”.*

*Even though religion, historically and still today, creates division, it is interesting to witness with the Jewish community of Saint Mandé the fact that **they feel Jewish, but they primarily feel French**. Duality in cultures, if not more, is omnipresent in Paris and represents the France mindset of acceptance and freedom of being, thinking, believing in whatever people feel.*

*As a French citizen I have the impression that **communitarianism** have never been peaking as much as in the recent years, there is a sort of climate of fear that has settled in our country and this is very upsetting.*

About Samuel Paty :

The fundamental purpose of education is to create a safe environment for different people to exchange different ideas, and the ban of conversation about religions makes this exchange impossible

Secularism is also a very present notion in the French mindset: the fact that the state, in addition to being divided from religious institutions, must be completely neutral in matters of religion. This notion is learned very early in the school system and comes back very frequently on the political scene and debates.

Freedom of speech

The Charlie Hebdo attacks (January 2015) were huge attacks against freedom of speech. The French people being very much attached to this value got united and protested for their rights: French government officials estimated that the protests were attended by up to 3.7 million people nationwide, making them the largest public rallies in France since August 1944, when Paris was liberated from the Nazis at the end of World War II, and also the biggest in French history.

In 2015, after the Charlie Hebdo's terrorist attacks, the country bled and cried pioneers of freedom of speech, but as our people know how to do, we went out in the streets to fight the fear and to stand strong facing ignorance. We chose togetherness, we chose to agree, all of us, for one day, we smiled and cried that day, we clapped and felt united.

I think that I have never felt more proud to be French, seeing all the generations of French people in the streets, feeling empowered and so strong, knowing that no matter what our freedom of speech needed to be fought for, needed to live, and that dying for a drawing was not conceivable, in any way. Our country and my city, Paris, was hit again later that year, and I was in Montreal where I was studying, and I have never felt more alienated and alone to be so far away from home, to see the restaurants I always went to, bleeding for celebrating our culture.



One event that particularly marked me was the “marche blanche” that followed the terrorist attacks on Charlie Hebdo in January 2015. I was a high school student at the time and I went with friends to this gathering on a scale I had never experienced before. I was used to the Grands Boulevards, but I had never experienced an event of such intensity. The streets were full from Richelieu Drouot to the Place de la République, everyone wanting to go to a place symbolizing national unity (The republic is the government of the French people, it is "one" and indivisible). The crowd was so dense that it was no longer moving forward. In the surrounding hubbub, a sort of paradoxical silence seemed to be interspersed with unanimously sung Marseillaise songs where your neighbor on the right was trying to explain to his child what was going on and the one on the left insulted you because you were pushing him around. At the age I was, this event was significant because I was then totally imbued with the common and sometimes true idea that the French were divided, individualistic, resistant in an event of unanimous solidarity and unity.



Charlie corresponds to a certain French vein, but that can't be a collective ideal.

“I don't share your ideas but am willing to fight until my death for your right to express them !”

Voltaire ? No: Evelyn Beatrice Hall (1868-1956)

The life of Voltaire

Evelyn Beatrice Hall



Reprint from the collections of
the University of California Libraries

French people like to talk about any subjects in-depth and really speak about their ideas whether it is in the areas of politics or art. This was very new to me, because in my country, it is still a taboo to talk about politics especially to the person that you just met or people with a different socio-economic background.

It is well known that in France, one must never talk about politics, religion and money.

The State

*In France, what holds people together is the **State**, through an army and taxes. The state must be sovereign, as a trauma from WW2, and must be able to handle anything.*

The way we could analyse France in 2021 on a very general perspective is, for example, how the country is handling the COVID-19 situation since, to understand a country is a lot of the times to understand how they react to global crises.

A very interesting quote to mention is “France experiences the epidemic not only as a debacle but also as a remake of the occupation” (Jürg Altwegg, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung)

*This is highly connected to the fact that **in France there is the state, and then the individuals.***

A very interesting comparison could be with South Korea and how people didn't hesitate to give away their data because it is a question of safety and this, not being conceived in France.

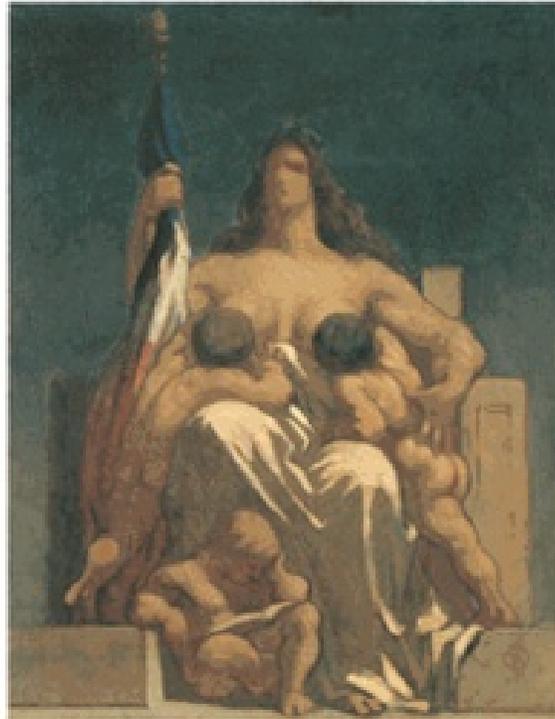
*There is an almost maternal relationship between the French **State** and its people.*

The French people have a "love-hate" relationship with the State. While they consider the State as a "mother figure", looking up to it and respecting it, at the same time, the French citizens have huge expectations from the state, demanding things and manifesting when they are not granted.

MICHEL SCHNEIDER

BIG MOTHER

PSYCHOPATHOLOGIE DE LA VIE POLITIQUE



Odile
Jacob

*Some opponents will state that certain parts of the population, usually from lower strata, are highly demanding and never satisfied with the privileges and “**acquis sociaux**” they might have.*

The fact that the state plays an important role in the life of French people can be surprising for many foreigners. The French state is the most generous in the world. As people have been used to receive so much from the state, they expect a lot, especially financially.

Receiving financial aids and assistance has been internalized and is now thought as fomenting normal. However, for an American, who gets personally into debt for his health, his education and his retirement, this over-dependent aspect of French people on the state can appear unrealistic and extraordinary.

Jacobinism

A 'significant detail' I have experienced prior to living in France and that I continue to observe is verticality. In my opinion, France's Jacobinism past and the importance of Robespierre as a key historical figure is still omnipresent in the country and its organisation.

This is true politically, in the organisation of the major French companies but also in schools where the verticality of the teacher/student relationship has marked me growing up. For instance, I have vivid memories of professors for whom an interesting reasoning but a wrong answer to a math exercise meant 0/20 rather than trying to understand the reasoning and encourage the student to persevere. I have also experienced this verticality in my internship experience in a French company last year (...). This mindset surely allows efficiency and prevents misunderstandings, it also prevents from taking initiatives or bolder actions.

During the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, there was a big problem when it was decided that skiing resorts will not be able to open. This decision was taken in Paris, but not on the “basis”, in the skiing towns. In this case, people should have decided it from the bottom, not from Paris as they don't know how it works in the skiing resorts and can't judge the situation accordingly. This situation has been proof of a very vertical way of deciding in France. This way of deciding comes from the history = **Jacobin**. Jacobin started off as a political club in Paris during the revolution, who were in charge of the Absolute Revolution. The head of Jacobin was Robespierre and he was killed. So why is Jacobin that big in France and with what do people connect it? As there are so many different populations (e.g. Brittany), Jacobin meant that for Brittany and Paris to exist, France had to impose the same rules everywhere, which means the same language everywhere, which has been a big loss for people who spoke Breton. In France you have a Parisian imperialism, vertical contradiction coming from Jacobinism: the conception that all decisions have to be taken from Paris at the center of the country to make the country stay unified, showing that Jacobinism is a very central concept in France.

Last but not least among all of the aspects that conform the French mentality, it is very important to also understand that in France the contradictions are always vertical (since there is always one person ruling over everything, unlike Germany for instance). Everything is decided at the Elysées Palace. In every institution you have a king, and that is France (like in the group LVMH with Bernard Arnault). All of the information is decided in Paris and that is where the issue comes from.

The word that defines this verticalism in France is “Jacobinism”, which is the term used to describe this concept of the one institution deciding above the rest. The problem in France is that you have so many different populations and the same rules in France were imposed everywhere, from Paris to the rest, having the example with the language in Bretagne for instance, which its language is slowly being less used, this being a big

source of pain for them. In that way, the president can take big decisions in a short period of time, since there is nothing between the state and the people, this leading to a lot of protests and strikes. France has actually been constructed around the state and the King, in the past. This being the reason why luxury for example begins in Versailles, and is only accepted when it comes from the actual state, since it is supposed to be for the common good.

2/2

The idea of France being the center of fashion has been cultivated and supported politically by the State.

Colbert, the minister of finance of Louis XIV, said « Fashion is to France what the gold mines of Peru is to Spain ».

Colbert understood that fashion could be a real profitable business for France. He welcomed the best craftsman of all over the world in France.



The Couvent des Jacobins (rue Saint-Honoré) was on the site of what is now Place du Marché-Saint-Honoré.

It is notable as the meeting place of the **Jacobin Club** during the French Revolution.

*France has typically been considered a very centralized country, already from the age of monarchy, when the country was constructed around **the King**, and through the instauration of Jacobinism, when all control relied on **Paris**.*

Since its origins, France has been constructed around the State and around the King.

Centralization is a concept which typically characterizes France. According to me, saying that there is a gap between Paris and “la Province” is not exaggerating. Absolutely everything is in Paris from top university, to political power, but also companies’ headquarters, celebrities and culturally influent people. It is especially striking for me since I am from one of the largest and richest cities in France but not from Paris. To pursue my studies, get opportunities to work, enlarge my network, I had to move to Paris.

French people attach importance to the regional pronunciation. It can be discriminating. I am conscious myself that I tend to pronounce certain words in a slightly different way from the Parisians (for example « cahier »), which is something I try to avoid in order to better fit in the teams at work for example.

About the parisian “small world”:

Rich businessmen and women get married, they have relationships with the cultural world, they know some artists, own some art pieces, they have graduated from the same schools and universities, have the same leisure and groups of friends.

*This French characteristic contributes to reinforce the “elitism” and “establishment” because it represents an entry-gate for people from “**Province**”, which are sometimes discriminated.*





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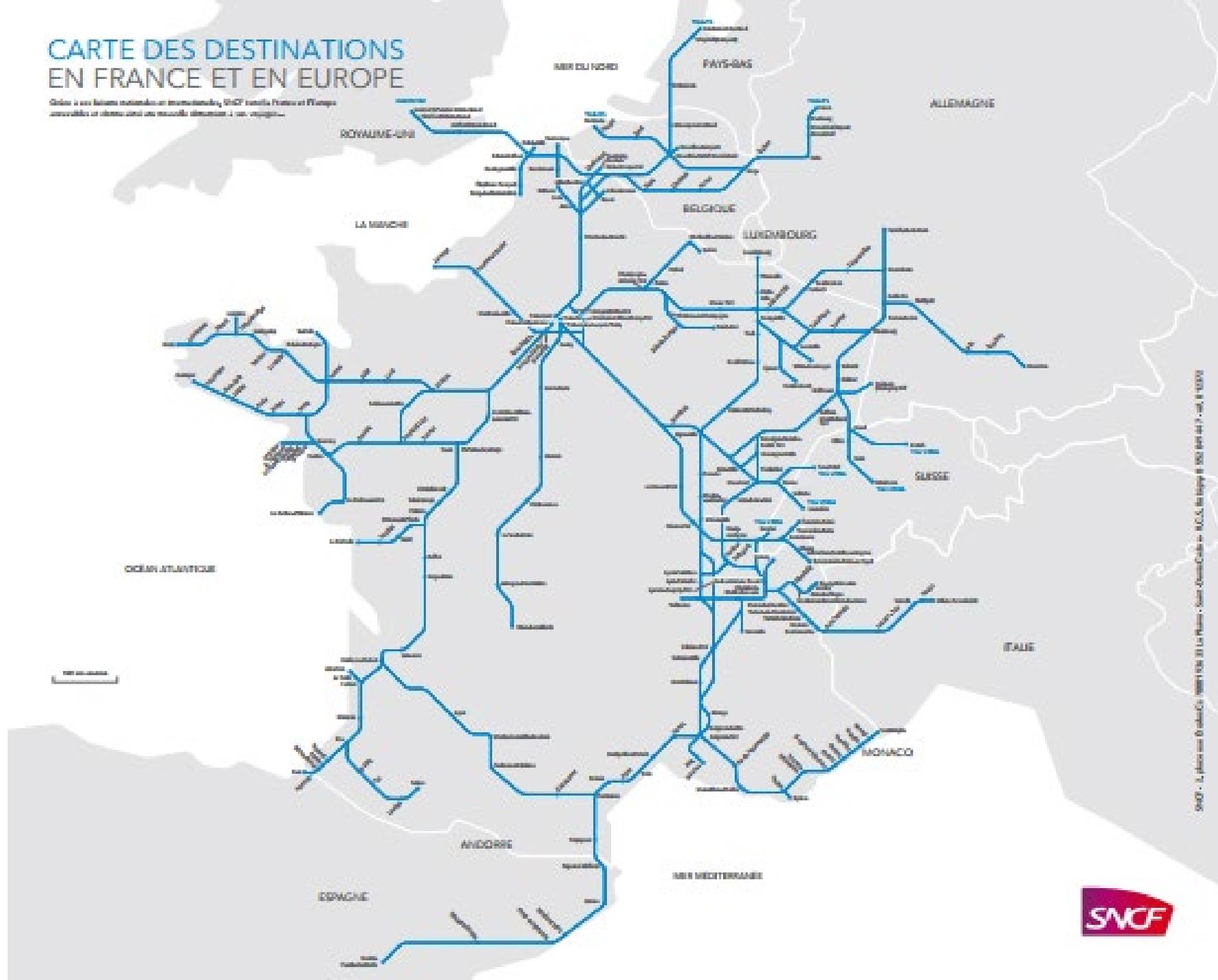
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*French also has the mindset of **centralism**. For example, French national transportation, SNCF, takes a big part in French identity, because it symbolizes centralism and it is the system that connects French altogether in both a literal and symbolic meaning.*

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Paris





When I moved to Paris this year, I was amazed by all the strikes at Bastille and place de la République as I live in between them.

*If anyone is interested in knowing about the issues and debates that are happening in France, a trip to **Place de la République** will give you all the information you need.*

At least every weekend there is a protest that vary in size it can be immigrants protesting something happening in their home country to wide and massive protests with thousands of people.

It is very important to remember that a city (like Paris) is not always representative of the entire country. Before to have a very constructed thought about a culture, you have to remember that in the countryside and in big cities, of course people don't have the same activities and behaviors

Parisian culture will differ from Bretagne culture, and even within the Parisian culture, you can find a Rive Droite and Rive Gauche division.

Paris and Ardèche seem like two completely different countries.

It is important to walk around different areas in Paris, because I noticed that there are different moods and feelings that I perceive in different arrondissements.

The **Père Lachaise Cemetery** is a world famous landmark and yet you never see any tourists (in the most generalised sense of the term) in the 20th, apart from inside the cemetery itself. It is clearly a destination that foreign tourists identify and go to visit, but without much consideration of the district that surrounds it.

This makes me think about how the notion of French culture as it is perceived by some foreigners is simply a collection of objects or ideas that they feel represent the French, but without consideration as to how each of these things relate to each other.

To someone not from Paris or not from France, the cemetery might be a representation of the 20th arrondissement, but to someone from the 20th, it only makes up a small part of the culture of the district.

bohemian and rather artistic. I think the 10th arrondissement, alongside all the other arrondissements of Paris, is interesting to understand France as a whole, since living here feels like living in what could be any French village. I like the fact that each arrondissement has its own way of life and its own community. The 10th may not be that far from the Marais, but it's **not** the Marais, and I love that.

The Butte-aux-Cailles borough (13th arrondissement) has managed to retain much of its village ambiance. Many aspects of the area are constantly reminding a « village ambiance ».



La Butte-aux-Cailles is a very lively borough. And to illustrate this point there is a bar called The Mockingbird which is considered as an institution of the borough's nightlife. This bar with its colourful decoration has always been very lively until covid. There is a magnificent reproduction of the mythical painting of Le Père Noël est une ordure, a classic movie in the French Culture.

As a matter of facts, I chose this borough to live in for its bohemian vibe and atmosphere that I find very inspiring and yet it is modern as there are young forms of art appearing in the borough with the passing of time. Many graffiti can be found everywhere on the walls in the streets.



A love letter to the 7th arrondissement :

The cultural heritage (Musée d'Orsay, Musée de l'Armée), the historical heritage (Invalides, Eiffel Tower), the popular heritage (Gros Caillou), the heritage of know-how (rue Cler), good taste and luxury and fashion (Bon Marché, Balenciaga headquarters, Saint Laurent headquarters), gastronomy (Maison Robuchon, Passard) and finally the opening of France to the world (numerous embassies).

I believe that the 16th is relevant to understand France as a whole, because it embodies the French fragmentation. As the only neighbourhood separated into two zip codes (75116 and 75016), it is well known that like a Marseillais and a Chti, someone from the 16eme nord is unlikely to move more south than la Muette. Le Village d'Auteuil is Paris at its most traditional, as it is where “old money” lies, contrary to l’Avenue Kléber, all about “new money”.

*Finally, I changed to the 18th arrondissement, near Marcadet, on the other side of avenue Barbès than Montmartre. A rather active quartier with important diversity that is easily observed through the options of restaurants: from indian to couscous to kebab. Younger inhabitants, less **bobo** than those in Marais but somehow more artistic.*

Though there is a **boboification**
(boboisation) of the 12th arrondissement, it is
still a melting pot of nationalities like Asians,
French and North Africans

-Describe the district of Paris in which you live and explain why it is interesting and relevant to understand France as a whole.

During the first semester, I lived in the 16th arrondissement of Paris. My neighbourhood was wealthy, the architecture beautiful, and the shops very expensive. I moved into the 10th arrondissement in January and was very surprised by how different the two are. Overall, the 10th arrondissement strikes me by how diverse it is, in terms of population, but also architecture, habits, restaurants, etc. While in the 16th, the restaurants and grocery stores are very traditional and fancy, with for example Les Merveilleux, La Grande Epicerie de Paris, le restaurant de la Gare or again la Rotonde, the 10th is full of local shops to discover with many international restaurants like Le Petit Cambodge, El Nopal or Street Bangkok. At school, children do not have the same routine. While in the 16th, most of the children live walking distance from school and go home for lunch, in the 10th I see the children having lunch at McDonalds and staying in the street after class every day. While at Saint Jean de Passy or La Tour they wear uniforms, in the 10th they are very fashionable and bold in their outfits. I am impressed by how much they express their individuality and personality in comparison to the 16th.

The way people speak

*The mentality of just speaking French is no longer
the sign of a civilised person.*



Marc Fumaroli

de l'Académie française

*Quand l'Europe
parlait français*

Editions de Fallois
PARIS

The French language brings the population together, in a practical but also in a more theoretical way that is mirrored by the rules and beauty of the language.

I can perfectly remind when you asked me in class as a French student what was the most important thing in an interview, as in a first impression.

*I know I replied “how you are dressed”, but you were in fact referring to : the “**liaisons du participe passé**”.*

Indeed, grammar and vocabulary are extremely important for in France, and it can surely deserve you in an interview.

My love for the French language stayed with me all through my education, through my undergraduate degree, my year abroad, and in many ways, it led me to my master's at IFM.

*One of the best epitomes of France and its internal rifts is the debate **“chocolatine” versus “pain au chocolat”**.*

When we look at it in a very rational way, it is only the fact that a pastry is called two different ways depending on the regions (not even talking about people from Lille calling it “petit pain”).

But this opposition bears a strong emotional meaning, and this opposition between the South West and the rest of France shows how people are attached to their “terroir”, their vocabulary and their region.

A few years ago, the parodic newspaper Le Gorafi created an article which explained that a woman had shot dead a Parisian asking for a pain au chocolat in her bakery in Toulouse. Some people who didn't know about Le Gorafi actually believed it.

I loved learning about tenses that we do not use anymore such as the imperfect subjunctive or the passé simple. It was a way to make “funny-sounding” words. Furthermore, having two of my grandparents being old primary school teachers, I would spend a lot of time with them revising my tenses, grammar and readings. Even to this day, my grandpa uses the “passé simple” with me because he knows that we created a special bond over it.

A French word that I find significant to understand French culture is “flâneur”.

I discovered this word for the first time last year during the Fashion History course of Emilie Hammen. A flâneur is a wonderer, someone who just walks around from one arcade to another and spent his live looking at the spectacle of modern life. This word was important historically as it was widely used and interpreted by authors like Charles Baudelaire and depicted by artists like Gustave Caillebotte. This word is in my opinion still relevant today as in France people really enjoy to sit back and watch the streets. This is also influenced by the urban architecture of the city made of big boulevards and cafés with chairs displayed like in a theatre in the terrasse.

*There is something rather negative in the French mindset, and somewhat of constant complaints – which is easily explained by the fact that one of the most used words in common French language is **putain**.*



-Select and comment a significant French word or concept among all the words and concepts you think are important in France

I think that the word "*putain*" is very typical of France. Even though it has an outrageous etymology, it has been integrated in the common language and almost stands as a connecting word. In the South, particularly, where the accent makes it even more singing, "*putain*" can be used to transcribe any strong feeling: whether it is happiness, surprise, discontent, hope... It is still considered as a very familiar word, but it no longer bears the insulting component of its original meaning. Today, the young generation uses the abbreviated version "ptn" on the social media for example, but it is only a word to accentuate the emotions and it doesn't bear a specific meaning. It can be defined as an important word in France in the way that it is very widely used, by a lot of people and for a lot of different occasions, and it can seem a bit surprising that this swear word is such integrated in the daily vocabulary.

"Putain" is probably one of the most used words in the French language. It can express many emotions depending on the tone you use. The word putain originally used to refer to someone that stinks before being used to refer someone as a whore. Today, the word putain has been emptied of its semantic signification. It is now what we consider as a word where we can put all our frustration, surprise or disgust on. Putain is very versatile and can be used in any familiar situation where swearing is accepted and not frowned upon. Putain also represents the French mindset as it does depict the French pessimism and the tendency we have as French people to always complain.

The French have a particular sense of humour with many “jeux de mots” and special expressions (« en faire tout un fromage », for example).

Semantics and the richness of the French vocabulary is a legacy I am particularly sensitive to. This I believe is the beauty of French.

Social habits

Entering a local home, and having lunch with a local is always extremely enriching. This has taught me, for example, that you cut a baguette with your hands and not with a knife, as well as helped me understand the importance of libraries in every French home.

A common social behaviour is to stay up late and eat late in Paris (...). I do feel as though it plays into the romantic nature of France though, being with friends into the late hours not wanting to say “Goodbye”.

*French seem particularly comfortable in **silence** with one another, whereas Australians are extremely uncomfortable with silence. The emotion felt by Australians during silences is “awkwardness” hence leading to the expression “awkward silence”.*

Children in France are put far quicker in the world of adults, even as a child you are expected to eat the same food as adults, participate in adult conversations, you are not set apart.

In France there is a certain reluctance to let children change your life completely whereas in the UK once you become a parent your children become your preoccupation and your lifestyle choices really become based around it.

Another element of difference I would say is around health. Although this is changing especially in Paris where we see Naturalia and Bio shops emerging everywhere, there is still less of an obsession about health and food. The notion of “Bon Vivant” is especially true in France, the idea of not restricting your self to live a good a full life. In the UK healthy food, diets etc... have becoming a massive part of people’s lifestyle whereas in France i think there is a different interpretation of the notion of what is “good for you”, food and drink is something that is to be enjoyed. We can see this also around exercise, in the UK exercising is seen as part of your lifestyle you talk about what gym you go too, what diet you are on etc... whereas in France these things are not necessarily well seen people still exercise of course but it is more nearly hidden there isn’t a gym culture they don’t see fitness as a lifestyle going around in yoga pants isn’t something many French people do whereas in the UK even if you haven’t been to a gym it is a show of a lifestyle and who you are.

In the United States, time is seen as an investment, where all activities should be optimized, and where one should be able to do as much as they can.

As such, young active Americans in big cities will often wake up early to go to the gym before going into work. It's a work driven organization.

This is not as prevalent in France. People won't necessarily wake up early to work out, and depending on their sector, can come in rather late.

This also affects leisure.

In the US, leisure is also seen as an investment of time, which usually means all activities are scheduled and people must respect the times assigned. As an

*example, **in France, when people go out for drinks after work or school or for dinner, unless they have other plans, they usually won't have a time***

***limit.** This is not the case in big American cities like New York, where every time I went out for dinner, they usually would not last longer than an hour and a half.*

Social status and language

*The “vouvoiement”, the very polite tone of voice (...), the **hierarchical work culture** is part of the French mindset.*

In France, language can show socioeconomic status and how educated someone is, such as the way Macron speaks in French.

I grew up in a city in England called Leeds, West Yorkshire which is surrounded by the beautiful English countryside. It is well-known in England that 'northerners' are more friendly than the rest of the country. We say hello to passing strangers, we know our next-door neighbours and we always offer a helping hand.

*In Paris, one of the main differences is that people like to keep to themselves or 'mind their own business'. Here, you avoid eye contact and usually if you see someone struggling you turn a blind eye. I do not mean that in a negative way because I feel as though it is more common in larger capital cities where people are busy. However, although it is more similar to London I feel it is more prevalent in Paris. This adds into the fact that there is **a lot of mistrust and individual good over the common good.***

Money

An aspect about French culture that I find particularly troubling is the fact that people do not talk about money, whether they have very respectable earnings or they are troubling financially. Even if France is one of the wealthiest countries and strongest economies in the world, French people criticize extreme wealth, even if they possess it and even if they dream of having their own “chateau” deep in inside their heart. Ostentatious wealth, for French people, may attract the envy of one’s peers. Even among friends, people do not know how much money their social cycle makes, whether they have savings or struggle with debt. This French reluctance to talking about money can be traced back when many people were living in the countryside as farmers and would not save their money in the bank but would hide them somewhere in their house. They were very careful not to talk about it so that nobody would steal it.

Another reason for this behavior is the historical influence of Catholicism in the culture. For catholic people, it was thought that rich people won't go to heaven, and that it is a good thing to help the poor financially. Money was considered vile and to display one's income was tantamount to arrogance. This resulted to a suspicion towards money and the ones who earn it. Last but not least, based on the legacy of French revolution, the notion of equality can be contradicted by money when it asserts itself as a symbol of inequality through differences in income. Therefore, talking about money is seen as mischievously defying others, trying to assert oneself as superior when one has it, and showing jealousy or envy when one does not have much of it. To conclude with, talking about money can feel demeaning for French people with low incomes, whereas wealthy people fear they may have to justify their salary.

Look at the French equivalent of the American dream. Just like for the French language, the French dream is subtle, and in French context, “raffiné”.

Your French dream house is miles away from the 10 bedroom and 20 bathroom villa in Beverly Hills, it’s confidentially wrapped around acres of trees and embodies “la retenue” in its proportions.

The only thing shared with Versailles, is overwhelming proportion of nature vs building, and how remote the dream house is from the hectic, industrialized metropolis. The French dream, adds another dimension to freedom: the freedom to escape.









Another aspect very essential to consider about the French mind-set is that France is a political country, economy doesn't come first and money is something Tabu in France being health and education much more important. People in France never say how much money they make as it is something seen as a bit dirty, unlike in the US for instance, since it is much more common and normalized. Actually, an interesting socialist saying in France is "having the pocket from the right but the heart from the left", just like for example Pierre Bergé which means that you can be very rich in France but when you speak publicly you have to be left. Economic freedom, then is important but equality is a high value having a soft spot for socialism.

There is a French mentality of jealousy against those who have succeeded and of not valuing success. This mentality is when BFM reproaches Bernard Arnault for giving "only" 200 million euros to restore Notre-Dame.

It is the France of those who are offended by Kyllian M'bappe's salary but who will be the first to support him when he shines in a European team.

*In France, **money** is not a common topic of conversations in a social setting, whereas in China, there is a strong show-off culture, in which people have the urge to prove that they're not poor and they're living a comfortable life.*

It is common to ask about one's salary in China. For example, before starting a relationship with someone, it is not uncommon for a girl to ask how many houses and cars that a guy owns so she could determine if the two families are a good match. In France, on the other hand, it is extremely inappropriate to ask someone's salary or the number of properties (houses, cars, etc.) they own.

Enjoying life in France

*Just like the Italians have La Dolce Vita,
there is “L’art de vivre à la française”*

*I lived and worked for one year as an English language assistant in the Loire Valley, in a town called Blois. This experience was something that has greatly marked me as a person. I learnt about the French education system; both at a 'primaire' and a 'collège' level. I saw how the minds of French children are nourished, how they are taught, **the fabulous food in the school dining room***

How I see the French culture: an art de vivre, living slowly and simply and enjoying the small pleasures of life as you want, without anything being dictated to you by puritanism and conservative morals.



Even if the streets of Paris are not filled with “marinières” and bérêts, we count 1,565 bakeries in Paris and even during the confinement the wine shops were considered "essential".



With this freedom in mind, a chill spirit comes after. I realized that French people rarely say “I’m very excited” as I’d hear more frequently in any other English-speaking countries. French are always in no rush, in the moment. Hence the expression “On n’est pas bien, là?” I suppose.



« On n'est pas bien, là? »

- Finally, there is a strong **Epicurean spirit** in the French mindset, which is apparent in the importance attributed to food, wine, spending time in family. For instance, the importance of the lunch break in France is very different from other cultures. While in the United Kingdom for instance employees tend to eat within half an hour or in front of their computers, the lunch break in France is taken very seriously and is seen as an important time of exchange and pleasure. This Epicurean mindset is visible in all the ending scenes of *Astérix et Obélix*.



Being Swiss, one of the main difference I observe in terms of common social behaviours between my country and France is the Epicurean mindset. As mentioned previously, France is a country that knows how to enjoy life and its simple pleasures. Food and the importance of the meal is one example of that, other elements include the importance attributed to celebration or family time for instance. The impression I have from living in France is that almost all reasons are good to open a bottle of wine or even champagne, go out, eat in a restaurant or cook a good meal. The smallest reason or even just the desire to have a nice dinner and enjoy a glass of wine are legitimate reasons to do so. In contrast, these small enjoyments often appear as 'unnecessary' or 'unreasonable' in Switzerland, which rather values restraint, rationality and decency. Coming from a Calvinist tradition, the notion of having fun for the sake of having fun is hardly understandable in Switzerland. For instance, part of my family tends to only go to the restaurant when there is something to celebrate but never just for the sake of enjoying a night out and eating something different. What is odd to me is that this reasoning is not linked to any economic or practical considerations, but only comes from a habit of 'being reasonable' – which I am glad to have escaped coming here. This same restraint applies to many aspects of daily life.



*It took me about 3 years, going out with my local friends (that I also struggled to get along with at the first place) who “enlighten” me to the **casual wine drinking at 4pm** habit – or apéro as they call it, to students night parties every Thursday instead of the weekend, to Dalida’s and also Jul’s music, to raclette, who walked me through not only hidden art galleries in the Marais but also secret bar behind a lavomatic, who called me “**meuf**” and talked to me about their “**keum**” that I finally find myself integrated in the life here.*

The most “French” or “Parisian” experience that I would advise a foreigner to do is to sit on the same side of the café facing the street to watch people pass by and talk about life. It is an experience that was brand new for me. In my home country China, people never opt to sit outside of a café, since it is considered that part of the experience of the café is the environment and décor inside. The fact that most choose to sit outside of a café in Paris is because the scenery and the street is where the view is.



Coming from Chinese culture, where self-indulgence is strongly criticized, it is a sharp contrast and even unimaginable that French people could take “année sabbatique” for vacations or further studies.

However, this reveals the French viewpoint on not only the work-life balance but more fundamentally individualism versus collectivism.

PAUL LAFARGUE



LE DROIT
A LA PARESSE

REFUTATION du DROIT au TRAVAIL de 1848

There is a concept called “996” in China, meaning working from 9am to 9pm, 6 days a week. As a worker in China, one should never turn off their phone, since there is no distinction between a “work phone” and a “personal phone”, whereas in France, a worker is not owned by a company; they are no assets of a certain company, and the salary is only for certain hours of service of this person. Unfortunately, this concept is not widely accepted in China. To most employers, an employee equals an asset that is by default, always readily available to use.

**QUE PRÉVOIT LA CHARTE
OU L'ACCORD D'ENTREPRISE ?**

**MODALITÉS
ET EXERCICE
DU DROIT
À LA DÉCONNEXION**

It is intriguing how a person who voluntarily work overtime after work hours is viewed as a “hard-worker” in China, but as a “strike-breaker” in France. From an individualistic point of view, offering free overtime work is breaking the equilibrium of the labor market, and hence lowering the price of labor for the rest of the people. It is a betrayal to the fellow workers. Ironically, in a collectivist society like China, the hard-workers are working overtime for their own benefit – easier promotion in the future, or simply pleasing the boss. Consequently, by prohibiting such behavior that sabotages the community welfare of the workers, France ended up securing a much better and healthier work environment for the people.

In South Korea, there are short period of time given for lunch for students at school as well as employees in the companies. However, I learned that in France, taking break from work and enjoying the time to eat is very important.

In Japan, I have noticed that people would never challenge any kind of authority and even if things appear to be wrong, they would comply, this would never be the case in France where we have certain limits we wouldn't allow some of our superior to cross.

I have also noticed that people devote a lot of time and efforts to their careers rather than their family, compared to France where a lot of people work to provide for their family, in Japan people would tend to work for the sake of the accomplishment and the need to contribute to the society.

A lot of couples do not consider the option of having a children, which is time consuming and anti-productive.

*In South Korea, there is no culture of **apéritif**. It is common in France to have an apéritif with friends or family such as a glass of apéritif wine, Kir, or fruity cocktails before lunch or dinner. However, it is rare to drink before having a meal in my home country. We consider drinking before meal as bad for our health as it can hurt our stomach.*



Coming from Germany I do see a major difference in how daily tasks are fulfilled here in France and that there is a certain relaxed attitude towards most of the things. Something I do admire coming from a country where most of the people struggle a lot with being relaxed and at ease.

Many in France go for drinks with their coworkers after work during the week. It is social gathering that strengthens the relationship within your team and I am happy to have witnessed such situations.

In Germany things like this rarely happen because there is the strong belief that professional and private life have to be strictly separated. Which results in the fact that you most certainly do not even talk about private things with your colleagues.

In Spain the process of preparing daily meals is rather common and home-made food is always preferred before already prepared meals.

Although in France this tradition was typically maintained too, it has been loosing popularity in the last decades given day-to-day demands and the availability of little time to cook. It is not yet as common as in other countries such as the UK or the US but it might lead towards it in the future.

Eating is considered to be a social event in Spain, therefore it is rare to find people eating alone at restaurants or bars.

Nonetheless, in France there is a social factor linked to it but not mandatory which leads to situations of people eating individually and not as in a shared experience.

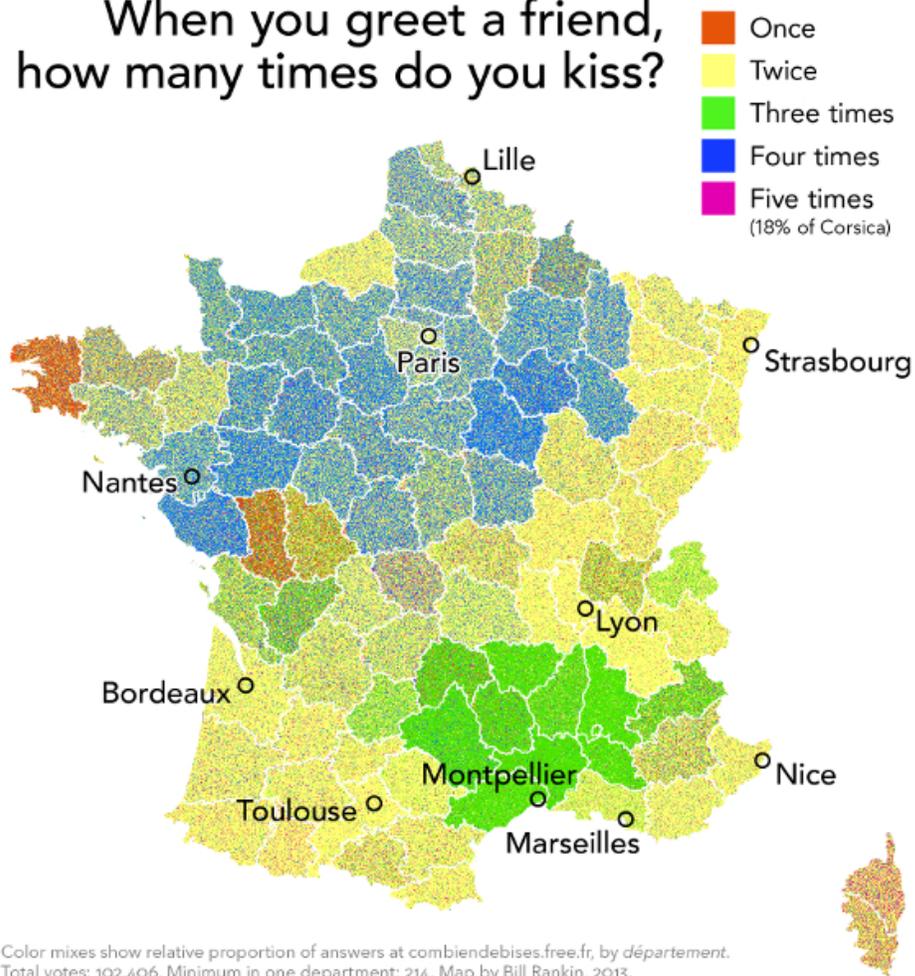
In France it is common to kiss each others cheeks when greeting each other.

Something like this only rarely happens in Germany.

*The thing that “strike” me the most during my life in France must be the local greeting way: **la bise**. Coming from a south east country where emotions are most of the time hidden (eg: a rarely “I love you” out loud even in my family or my mom hiding my eyes from kissing scene in Hollywood movies), **bisous** have forever changed my life.*

*Not only it is confusing, in term of how many times, on which side first or the level of “closeness” that you have with the person in front, this whole intimated concept of getting my head (and cheeks) around got me quite flummoxed at the beginning. Especially, when I arrive late to a party and have to make a **bisous tour** to everyone.*

When you greet a friend,
how many times do you kiss?

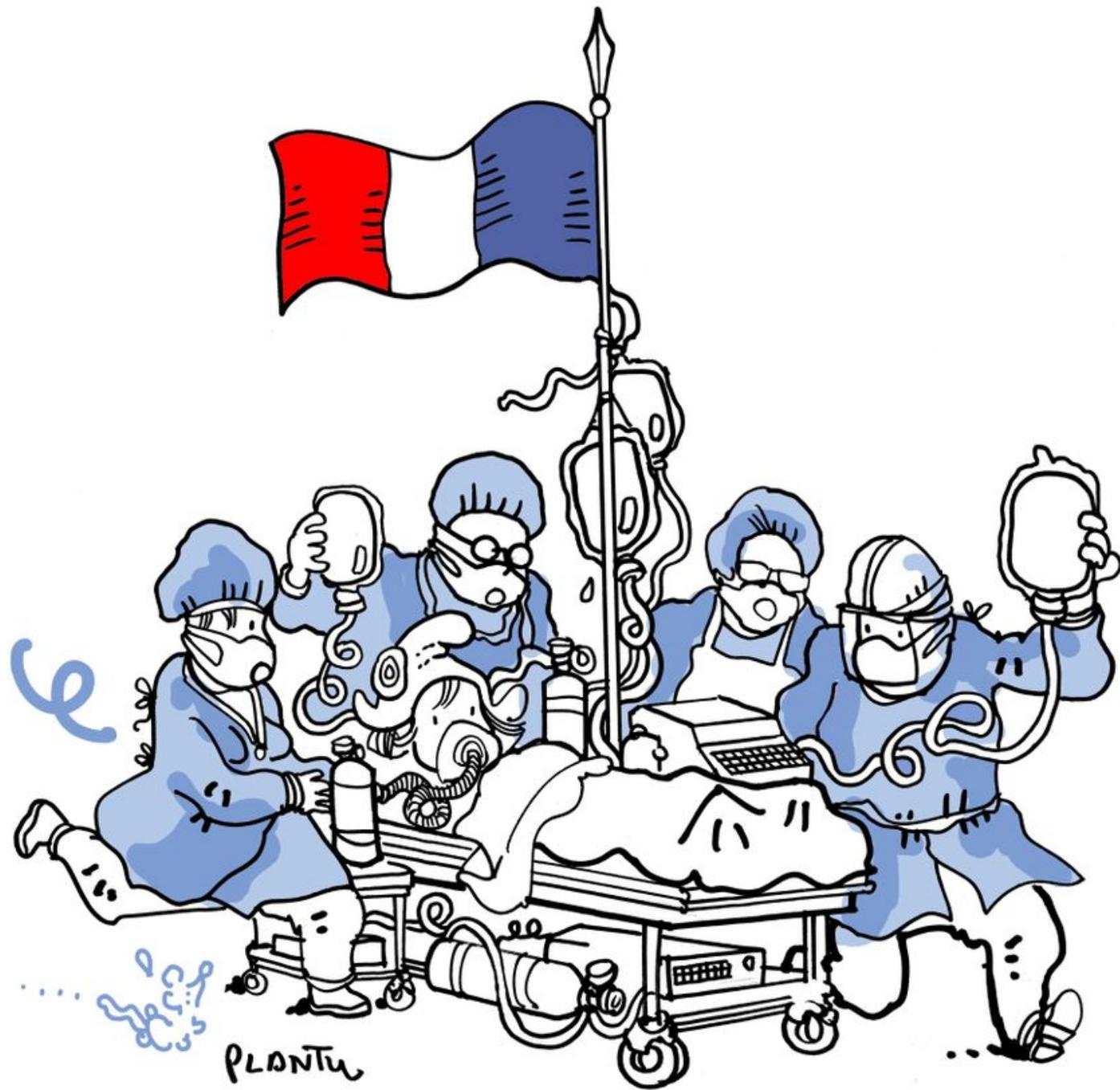


How many kisses in France ? Before COVID/After COVID

France in 2021

*France in 2021 can be portrayed by one word: **divided***

France was the country of equality thanks to a redistribution system and powerful public services such as hospitals, but the crisis has unveiled that the hospitals are overwhelmed, and it has increased social and economic inequalities. In my opinion, the situation is experienced as a failure and a shame by French people.



PLANTU

*In 2021, France is **morose** as Michel Houellebecq's depressed characters that passively live their ordinary lives and whose capacities of action are almost inexistant.*

France is today experiencing a decline on the world stage, with the decline in terms of economic, military and demographic power as well as due to the rise of new players such as China.

*This **'déclassement'** of the country on the world stage combined to its increasing internal fractures leads me to argue that France is facing a new reality, both nationally and internationally, which means that the era in which we are currently living is a crucial one, which is likely to redefine the role of the country and its position on the world stage for the years to come.*

This habit of being “superior” in terms of “rayonnement culturel”, educational system, healthcare system, economic performance, military strength has certainly led France to make the “expert driver failure”, typically described in management books.

The expert driver, is so used to driving, that he not forgets the logic of or link between certain rules, but his attention to his environment gradually decreases to the point where his perspective doesn't allow him to react accordingly to anything unexpected.

*I believe the latter narrative fits ironically well the position of France today. The press has even named the phenomenon: “**le déclassement français**”*

It seems that the French nation has fallen into its own socio-political trap where numerous social divisions and an on going “écartement” of these social groups has lead to the weakening of a unified French entity. I may be proceeding into a French “malaise” rhetoric which of course is a pessimistic one like the writings of the author Michel Houellebecq which we’ve discussed in class but the patriotic French ideal claimed by everyone is dismantling as nationalism seems to be only adorning the words of speeches or in victorious moments like “La coupe du Monde” in 2018.

*The layers of French society are in reality more complicated where there is an obsession with social partitioning and segregation which is of course due to a plurality of cultures within the French culture but that doesn’t seem to be able to come consensus to the greater good **of the French “devise”** which **seems as an abstract set of idealistic keywords.***

Cartesianism

*If I had to describe what the French mindset means to me, I would describe it using the word "**structure**".*

*From an outside perspective it looks like in France there is an agreed idea that there is a "right" way of doing things, a structure that guides things towards their ideal. A quick illustration that comes to mind would be the exercise of **dissertation**. This intellectual exercise follows a precise code, with an introduction, usually three parts and a conclusion.*

In the french mindset of structure, being able to follow the rules of a dissertation is to an extent more important than the contents of the essay. That is not to say that the French will not care about ideas or debate them, far from it. But for an idea to be worthy of discussion, this exercise of structure must first be completed, for in their eyes if something is not expressed properly it is most likely not conceived properly.

*The influence of **Descartes** becomes evident in this regard where thinking precedes and the approach of french academics.*

French fashion is structured and organized versus the conception of English fashion, which is the opposite [eccentric].

*This idea is also seen on how the French garden is carefully built under **human control** whereas the English garden is based on the freedom of growing plants, with no specific structure on it.*

French arrogance

*France is for most people a very hard country to move to, since people are not always very open to foreigners especially if you do not speak the language and **arrogance** is very often evident even when people make an effort to speak the language.*

I have met a large group of French friends through my roommate and once you show them that you are trying to learn the language they became a lot more interested in me.

"Are the French going to continue to be our friends or not?
This book will open your eyes!" —Sean Hannity

The
ARROGANCE
of the
FRENCH

*Why They Can't Stand Us—
and Why the Feeling Is Mutual*



RICHARD Z. CHESNOFF

With A New Preface

I have rarely felt this pride to be French and this positive feeling of nationalism in France, within the borders. In my point of view, it only roars abroad. Back in France, we plunge back into our roles and our contradictions.

*Bureaucracy is strongly present
in the French mindset.*

The French mindset can be summarized in four terms in my opinion:

- culture (intellectual),*
- bureaucracy,*
- freedom*
- contestation.*

*I am particularly sensitive to the French **bureaucracy**. Everything here goes slow. Though in Belgium we have strong bureaucracy as well, it's not comparable to France. Sometimes, I feel like the French brought me back to another era. Nothing here runs smooth and efficient. You want to open up a bank account, you need to have a French phone number, but in order to have a French phone number, you need a French bank account. If you want to close your bank account, you have to write a formal letter (a letter – not an email...).*

A key element of the French mindset is the prioritisation of idea over execution and operational capabilities.

Decisions are made at the top of the pyramid, with little knowledge around common realities, such as the ones of health care workers.

This was illustrated with a reaction from a health care giver to President Macron's claim of "being at war", while speaking about COVID (spring 2020).

"Stop talking about caregivers as good little soldiers. Soldiers have weapons. We have garbage bags", said the French nurse Mélane Le Barz-Ceretta to the Huffpost.

Again, we are faced here with an illustration of the "idea before skills" (operational).

France in Europe

*France is a European country as it can be defined as **not being America**.*

In general, the values shared by the European Community, which are also at the heart of France, are very different to the ones that we can see on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean.

- How can France be considered a “European country”?

France is a European country in every respect.

First of all by its geographical location on the European continent with natural barriers common to other European countries: the Alps, the Pyrenees, the English Channel / la Manche.

In its history, deeply linked to all the states of this continent, notably through wars and the creation of the European Union of which it is one of the founding states, it is even at the initiative of the euro currency.

The fact that France shares with the other European states a strong Judeo-Christian but also Greek-Latin heritage: from a political, economic, linguistic, artistic, cultural and religious point of view.

The peoples of Europe have blended together over the years and today share a strong history and a common heritage.

From a geopolitical point of view, France has also been a major player in European life for centuries. Sometimes a military and/or economic adversary, sometimes a source of influence through its culture, its crafts, its innovations, France and its neighbors have exchanged and nourished each other. Even today, France is a major player in the construction of Europe. As a founding member of the European Union and whose current government is campaigning for its development, it is part of a set of collective actions within the old continent. It is involved with its partners in the European space project, notably with the Ariane program, in military cooperation with the establishment of the SCAF, and in the economic field, with Germany at the origin of the initiative for the recently voted European recovery plan.

- **How can France be considered a “European country”?**

I believe France can be considered as a European country. From an historical point of view, France has been one of the founding countries of the CEE which later has become the European Union we know nowadays. This give France a certain entitlement to being considered as a *European country*. By going more into depth into the reasons that make be consider France a European, I believe the main reason could be that France is place in the heart of Europe as looking at its geographical borders with other cities. It confines with many European countries such as Germany, Italy, Belgium and Spain.

In addition, there have been political figures that have been playing in important role in making France a more European country. This is the example of the important role that Valery Giscard d'Estaing has been playing for the country. He carried out social reforms the generation of May 1968 aspired, particularly on the status of women and the rights of young people. He also modernised the French political life, but most importantly he reinforced the European institutions and the monetary system that made the euro possible, in close complicity and friendship with German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt. History will remember him as one of the great founders of 21st century Europe.

The power of the French anthem is most easily understood, as an English person, when considering the moment at Wembley Stadium in London (November 2015), when in a show of solidarity just days after the Paris attacks, the French and English Men's Football teams joined together for a moving rendition of La Marseillaise.

Books, movies, architecture :
your advices

“When the truth is no longer free, freedom is no longer real”

(Jacques Prévert, 1900-1977)

*Freedom is learned from a young age with **Le Cancre (The dunce)**, a poem by Jacques Prévert) which deals with freedom but also innocence and rebellion which are key aspects of the French mindset.*

The Dunce

His head says no
but his heart says yes.
He says yes to what he loves
He says no to the teacher.
He's standing there,
being questioned,
and all the problems are posed.
Suddenly he gets the giggles.
He wipes the board clear of
the numbers and the words,
the dates and the names
the sentences and the traps.
Then, despite the teacher's threats,
and the jeers of the child prodigies,
with chinks of all colours,
on the black board of misfortune,
he draws the face of happiness.

Jacques Prévert (1900-1977)

Robert Doisneau :

His photographs of the young children and their playfulness / innocence / rebellion / freedom clearly show how the French people think when it comes to their individual role in society.

ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY

Le Petit Prince

★ Avec des aquarelles de l'auteur

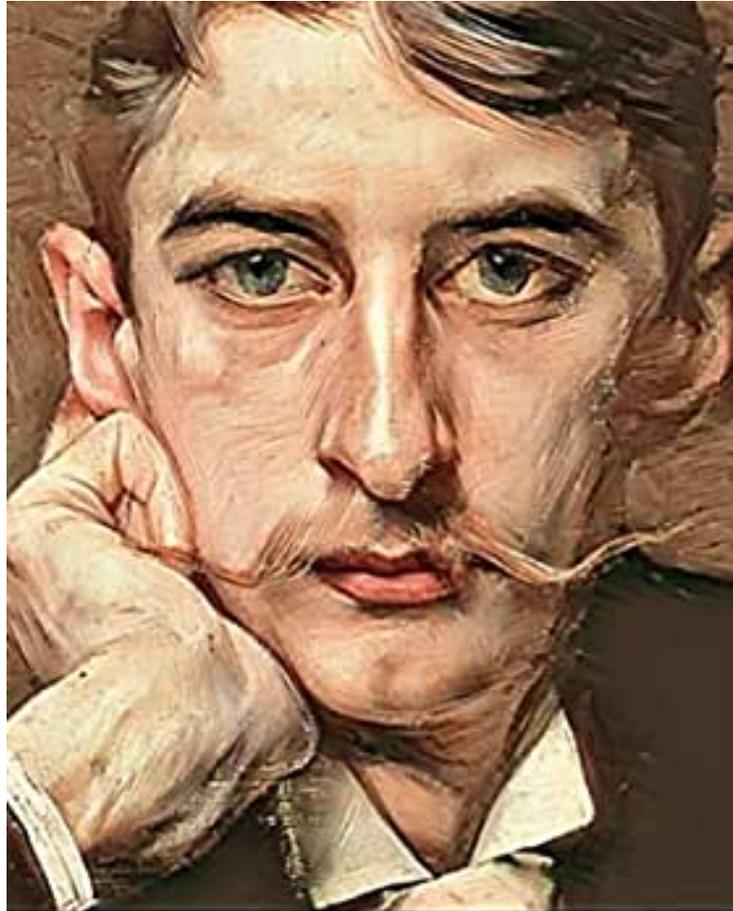


Read Le Petit Prince, which stands for the universal value of innocence.

There are many elements representing France and French culture. I think an interesting source is represented by elements related with kids and the younger generations, and their education. An item that is rather unknown to the foreign public, but which can be quite revealing of some aspects of French culture could be Babar. Babar is a cartoon telling the story of an elephant who was a king. In the story, published in the 1930s, Babar loses his parents, the same way the kids reading the story had (from the battles in WWI), therefore Babar represented a way to recover from the deaths and the losses of the war. This was done by proposing the image of an ideal benevolent king, which was always a need in France. In fact a benevolent supreme power was what could keep the country united, a major issue for France. One of the kings who succeeded in this was Henry IV, who became catholic in order to unify the country and helped it overcome religious and civil wars. Therefore, I think Babar is important not only as a mean for French people to recover from the horrors of the war, but to the eye of a foreign person, it gives an insight on how the ideal political power in France should be: a monarch, but also socialist, moralist and secular.

*I would recommend a foreigner to buy and read **Bel Ami**, from **Guy de Maupassant**, because the book depicts the Parisian society of the late 19th Century, and the way social relationships are key to climb the social ladder and to become someone from the high society, recognized and estimated as such. In the novel, Georges Duroy aspires to become a journalist and starts writing articles thanks to the relationships he builds with women especially. At the end, during his wedding, he looks at Paris and aspires to enter the political world (he looks at the Palais Bourbon).*

The novel is a criticism of the French bourgeoisie who wants to elevate by any means and of its success due to interpersonal relationships in Paris and opportunism. At the same time, George Duroy is an example of accomplishment and social mobility.



BEL AMI

GUY DE MAUPASSANT

GUY DE MAUPASSANT

BEL-AMI

TEXTE ÉTABLI, AVEC INTRODUCTION, NOTES

ET RELEVÉ DE VARIANTES

PAR

GÉRARD DELAISEMENT



CLASSIQUES GARNIER

biblio Théâtre collège

CYRANO DE BERGERAC

Rostand



hachette

Cyrano de Bergerac from Edmond Rostand (1897) particularly responds to French Culture. It exemplifies the romance, particularly present in France. Secondly, it valorizes the “bien-parlé” which makes a difference in France. The book is in the continuity of French classic literature, a backbone of French culture (use of alexandrins for example). It was later adapted in a film, starring Gérard Depardieu. He is stereotypically French being a epicurean (c’est le moins qu’on puisse dire) and being “free in his speech”.

**- What would you advise a foreigner to do or read to understand France and why?
You can also talk about music, cinema, whatever you want.**

I would firstly advise him to read about La Marseillaise and the national songs of the country, in order to understand what sustains the population and the spirit of hope that encourages them. Then I would suggest to deep dive into classic and contemporary literature, starting from the poems of Prévert (about freedom, innocence, rebellion) and going to Albert Camus's *The Stranger* and *The Search of Lost Time* by Proust (humanism and Parisian bourgeoisie). François Sureau and Michel Houellebecq. The latter has a form of realism in his works. He is considered the main representant of French literature today because he has a depressed mood in his novel and he conducts a passive life. |

A perfect day could be to bring a book of Camus for example and go sit in a bistrot to read it.

I most certainly would feel very French doing so.

One of my favorite books to understand French culture as a Swiss student is *L'étranger* from Albert Camus. Born in Algeria, Oran from pieds-noir parents. Oran is still a big part of the French mindset, the brutal civil war (54-62) has traumatized the country and is now part of the French pain which has to be understood in order to better understand the French mindset and what holds people together. The idea that France is also still divided between this opposition between East-West, North-South is also emphasized in the book. The book embodies humanism, philosophy, and the Mediterranean. France sees itself as the head belonging to the northern part of Europe and the heart to the South. The plot takes place from a place of tragedy and suffering after World War I and II this thus forced the questioning of life and its meaning which is also part of the French pain.

*I walk almost every Sunday in the beautiful Jardin des
Plants where famous German poet Rilke wrote his
Panther poem.*

Im Jardin des Plantes, Paris

Sein Blick ist vom Vorübergehn der Stäbe
so müd geworden, daß er nichts mehr hält.
Ihm ist, als ob es tausend Stäbe gäbe
und hinter tausend Stäben keine Welt.

Der weiche Gang geschmeidig starker Schritte,
der sich im allerkleinsten Kreise dreht,
ist wie ein Tanz von Kraft um eine Mitte,
in der betäubt ein großer Wille steht.

Nur manchmal schiebt der Vorhang der Pupille
sich lautlos auf -. Dann geht ein Bild hinein,
geht durch der Glieder angespannte Stille -
und hört im Herzen auf zu sein.

*His gaze against the sweeping of the bars
has grown so weary, it can hold no more.
To him, there seem to be a thousand bars
and back behind those thousand bars no world.*

*The soft the supple step and sturdy pace,
that in the smallest of all circles turns,
moves like a dance of strength around a core
in which a mighty will is standing stunned.*

*Only at times the pupil's curtain slides
up soundlessly — . An image enters then,
goes through the tensioned stillness of the
limbs — and in the heart ceases to be.*

« There is a house in the XVIIème district that belonged to Nissim de Camondo and that is worth mentioning. The beauty of the house, which is today a museum that can be visited, is accompanied with the tragedy that followed the Camondo family, as they were all sent to concentration camps given their Jewish heritage.





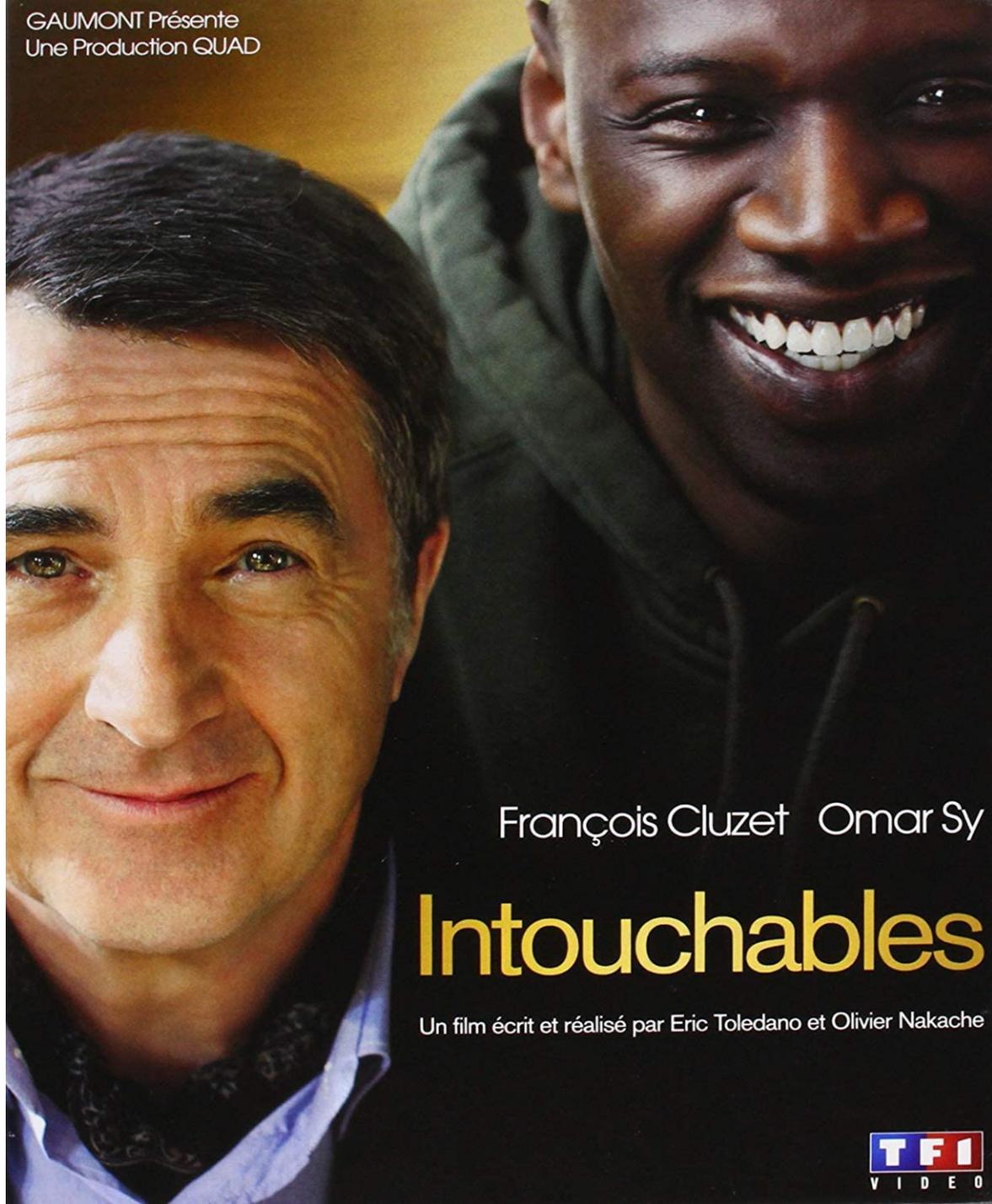


Cult French cinema is the best way to really understand what goes into being French, how people speak, the way they dress and act.

In addition, I would propose to watch many films, such as *La Grande Vadrouille* and *Les Tontons Flingueurs* to understand the stereotype of power and the popular sentiment of feeling good.

*The movies from Olivier Nakache and Eric Toledano to me describe the French mindset of linking emotion with humour, and not taking life too seriously (with movies such as **Intouchables**, **Hors Normes** or even **Le Sens de la Fête**, which all portray quite serious topics but turn them into a positive through sense of humour).*

GAUMONT Présente
Une Production QUAD



François Cluzet Omar Sy

Intouchables

Un film écrit et réalisé par Eric Toledano et Olivier Nakache

TF1
V I D E O



La République
des Pyrénées



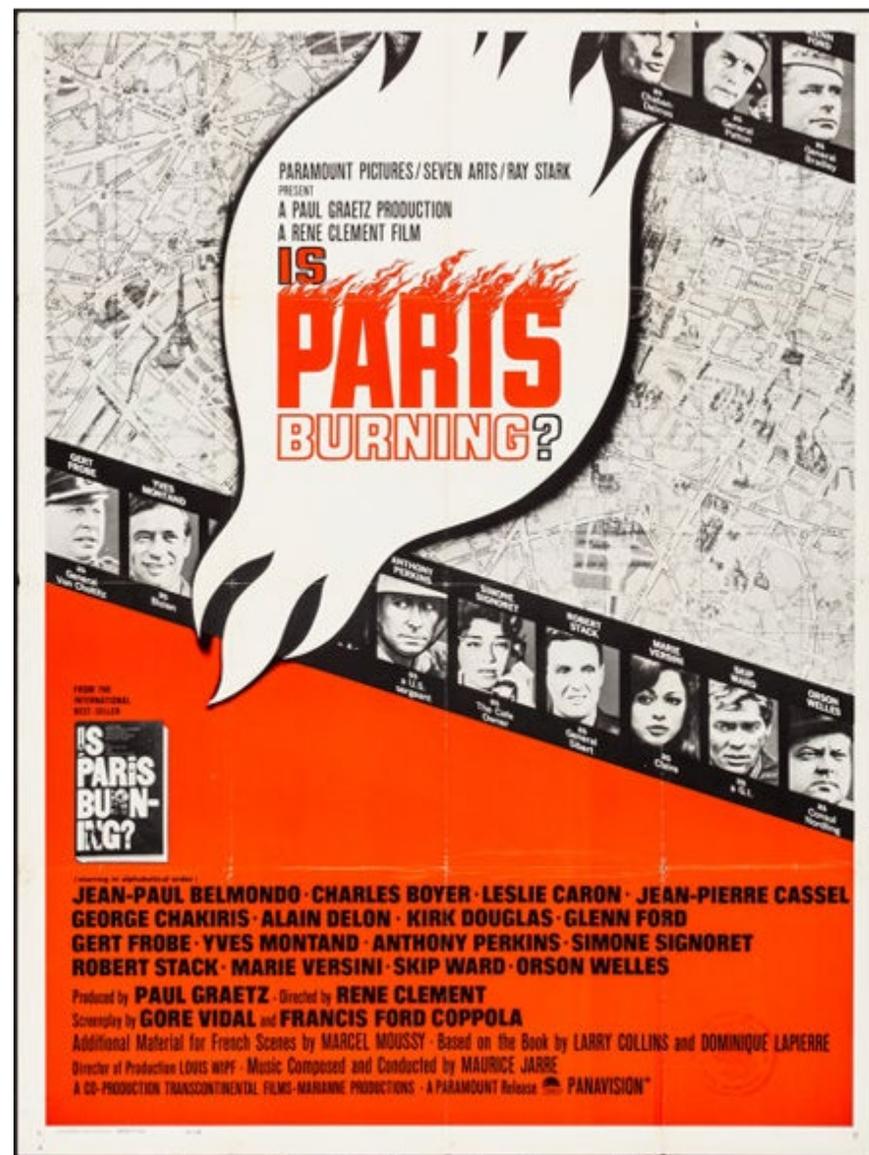
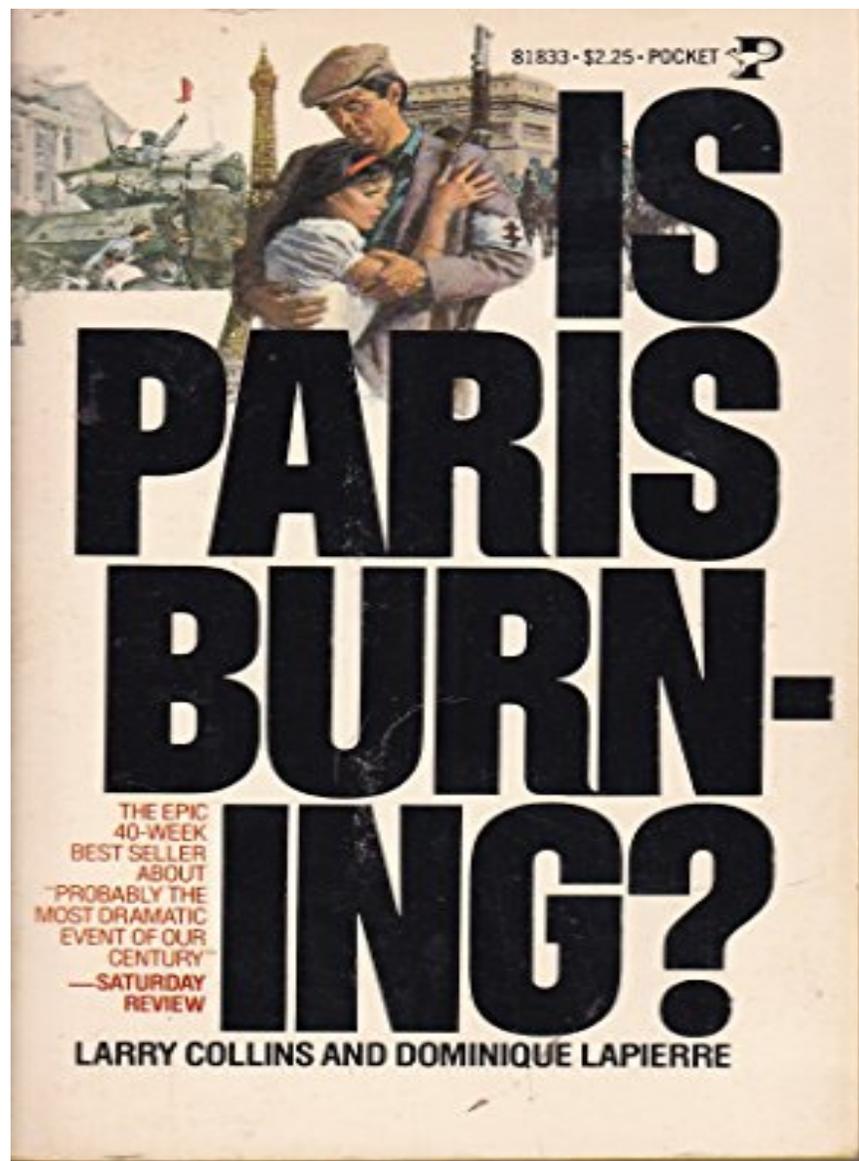
FESTIVAL DE CANNES
HORS COMPÉTITION
SÉLECTION OFFICIELLE 2019

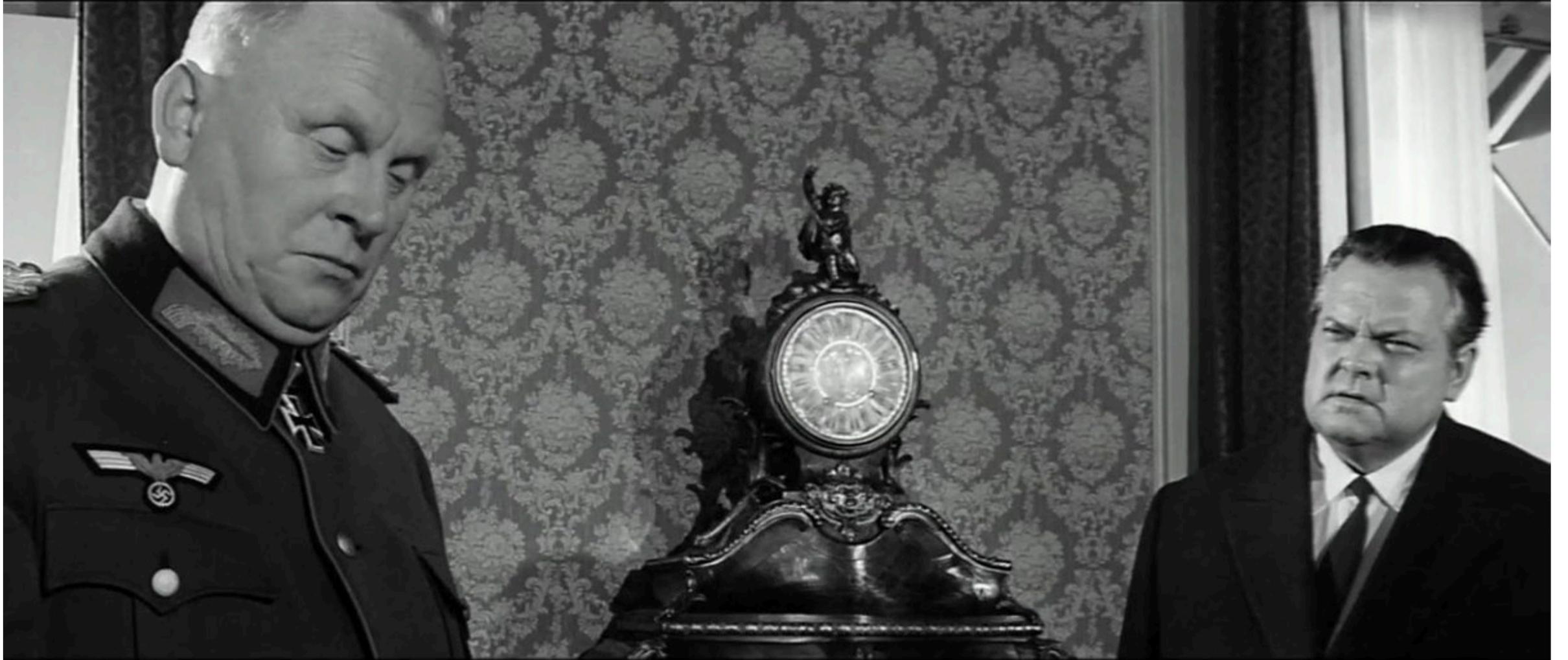
Hors Normes

un film de Eric Toledano et Olivier Nakache



*I would like to talk about the book **Paris brûle-t-il ?** from Dominique Lapierre and Larry Collins (published in 1964). This book retraces the story of the liberation of Paris in 1944, and Hitler ordering to his Governor of Paris, Dietrich von Choltitz, to destroy Paris.*







Look, read, listen to :

the cinema of Truffaut or Godard, the poetry of Prévert or Pagnol, the theater of Anouilh or Rostand, the sculptures of Lalanne, the paintings of Soulages or the style of Chanel, the music of Daft Punk or Lully...

Go to the foundation of Claude Monet in Giverny, visit Versailles, or descend the Loire at the rhythm of the castles.

Enjoy the gastronomic culture, the heritage of a generous cuisine magnified by the know-how of internationally renowned chefs such as Ducasse, Darroze or Robuchon.

Take a hot chocolate and a croissant at Café de Flore, or have dinner in a “bouillon Lyonnais”.



French people does not like change, and they rather have a strike than listen to all the point.

*An example would be the **columns of Buren.***

Jack Lang, who was the minister of culture, had order to change the parking lot next to le Palais Royal, as he could not stand to see car in one of the most beautiful place of Paris. A lot of French people were against this project and they did not want to see the artistic approach of the project. Today the column of Buren are one of the most visited place in Paris.















Musée Edith Piaf

5 rue Crespin du Gast - 75011 Paris

Père-Lachaise - Ménilmontant - 11e Arrondissement



Oscar Wilde's grave
at the Père Lachaise

For a foreigner to understand France, I would without a doubt advise them to get to know Marcel Pagnol's work. A lot of his works can be either read, seen as movies or seen at the theater.

Reading the trilogy *Marius, Fanny and Cesar*, or *La gloire de mon père*, or *Le château de ma mère*, would be a good way for a foreigner to understand and see **how France is not only Paris** and what everyone knows about Paris and its clichés.

**RAIMU
PIERRE FRESNAY**

DANS



Hubou

UN FILM DE
MARCEL PAGNOL
DE L'ACADEMIE FRANCAISE

MARIUS

MISE EN SCENE D'ALEXANDRE KORDA
AVEC CHARPIN • ALIDA ROUFFE • PAUL DULAC • MIHALESKO
et **ORANE DEMAZIS**

Les Chefs d'œuvre n'ont pas d'âge

**RAIMU
PIERRE FRESNAY
ORANE DEMAZIS
CHARPIN**

DANS



Hubou

FANNY

UN FILM DE **MARCEL PAGNOL** DE L'ACADEMIE FRANCAISE
AVEC ALIDA ROUFFE • MOURIES
REALISATION DE **MARC ALLEGRET**

**RAIMU
PIERRE FRESNAY
CHARPIN
ORANE DEMAZIS**

dans



avec
MILLY MATHIS
E. DELMONT
VATTIER
ALIDA ROUFFE
DOUMEL
PAUL DULAC
MAUPI
et
ANDRÉ FOUCHÉ

Hubou

CÉSAR

UN FILM DE
MARCEL PAGNOL
DE L'ACADEMIE FRANCAISE



-What would you advise a foreigner to do or read to understand France and why? You can also talk about music, cinema, whatever you want.

I would advise a foreigner to take a stroll and stop by a game of *pétanque*. It is a very old way of being together, and this sport is very inclusive: everyone can play, no matter their age, their gender, their social class. Depending on the players, it can be a way to understand inter-generational relationships, or how families or friends behave together. It is also a game which is calm, so people speak and enjoy this moment to have a chat. The atmosphere during a *pétanque* game is very relaxed – except when it comes to competitions – and it can be accompanied with typical French foods and drinks, depending on the place. This game is typical of France, and it is a great way to understand the feeling of enjoying and sharing a good moment in a perfectly French way.

Nature is an important part of France, we have one of the biggest forest in Europe (forêt de Rambouillet).

Tasting products

Boeuf de Bazas Igp



Taste the **boeuf de Bazas**
(IGP : indication
géographique protégée)

LA QUICHE LORRAINE



*Pâte brisée ; lard fumé ; gruyère ; 3 œufs ;
1/4 l de crème ; sel ; poivre*

Préparer une pâte brisée sans sucre et l'étendre sur un moule à tarte beurré. Placer dessus de petits morceaux de lard fumé grillé et parsemer de lamelles de gruyère. Séparément, mélanger 3 œufs avec 1/4 l de crème. Saler, poivrer et verser ce liquide dans le moule. Faire cuire au four 30 mn et manger chaud.

Mürbeteig in eine gebut. Springform auslegen. Mit kleingewürfeltem glasierten Speck belegen und mit geriebenen Schweizer Käse bestreuen. Danach 3 Eier mit 1/4 L Rahm vermischen, Salz und Pfeffer dazugeben und darübergiessen. Im warmen Backofen 30 Min. backen und warm essen.

Take the short paste (without sugar) into a buttered griddle. Lay out with bacon, cut into small pieces and glazed, also strew it with grated Swiss cheese. Mix 3 eggs and 1/4 l cream, salt and pepper and pour it over the cake. Bake it 30 min. in the oven and serve it hot.