Culture and Identity in Contemporary France

HLM, Boulogne-Billancourt
Announcements

Your final paper (8-10 pages, not including notes) is due in class a week from today. It counts for 30% of your grade.

The final exam is on the following Wednesday, Dec. 12th (5:00-7:00 p.m. in this room). The exam covers the entire course. Format:

  - two essays (approx. five paragraphs, 30-35 minutes each) to be selected from six questions; those six will be chosen from ten which will be on the website after the final day’s class on Dec. 5th (each counts 35%)
  
  - five “comment on this passage or image” mini-essays (paragraph or so) these will be “sight unseen” and count for 6% each.

If your grade on the second paper was higher than your grade on the first, the second grade will count for 10% and the first for 5%. If it was not higher, than both papers count 7½%.

Discussion class this week: Azouz Begag, *Shantytown Kid*.

No discussions next week.
Culture and Identity in Contemporary France

European Union

1957  Treaty of Rome creates European Economic Community
      (France, West Germany, Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg)

1992  Maastricht Treaty created European Union “citizenship”

2002  euro enters circulation
Europe under pressure, 2009-present

economic crisis:
interlinked economies with largely independent economic-policy makers

becomes a political crisis:
central monetary authority demands cutting social programs in some places (Spain, Greece) and raising taxes elsewhere (Germany)

undermines idea of democratic Europe

protesters in Guadeloupe
LKP=Liyannaj kont pwofitasyon [“alliance against exploitation”]

protester and riot police in Budapest (Hungary), 2009
Europe, the euro crisis, and French presidential politics, 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>First round</th>
<th>Second round</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>François Hollande (Socialist)</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>51.64%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nicolas Sarkozy (UMP—center right)</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>48.36%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Union for a Popular Movement</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Marine Le Pen (Front National—far right)</td>
<td>17.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jean-Luc Mélenchon (Front de Gauche—far left)</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td></td>
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Voter turnout:
- First round: 79%
- Second round: 80%
Culture and Identity in Contemporary France

France, a Country of Immigrants?

population of France, in 1000s
**Foreigners in France (2006 census)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Population</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>61 million total residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td>880,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algerian</td>
<td>700,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroccans</td>
<td>600,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turks</td>
<td>200,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>135,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgians</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Britons</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germans</td>
<td>95,000</td>
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</tbody>
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Note: Children born in France are automatically French citizens.
Building Contemporary France

HLM *habitations à loyer modéré* = state-subsidized low-rent housing

1956-1975, approx. 100,000 new apartments/year
(at the time, less than half of these new constructions had toilets or bath/shower facilities)

built on the outskirts of existing cities;
city centers were left largely untouched

2007: 4.3 million households in HLMs
(1.5 million on the waiting list)

--constitute close to half of all rental properties

Le Corbusier
Cité Radieuse, Marseilles, 1945-1952
From the Center to the Suburbs (*banlieues*)

map of high-speed public transit in Paris and surrounding region
The Banlieues—not your mother’s “suburbs”

“The Banlieusards” (2008)
We’re not condemned to failure, that’s what the fighters sing
Banlieusard and proud of it, I wrote the song of the fighters—
those who don’t do what they’re supposed to
who don’t say what people want them to
Because life is a fight for the big and the small
If you don’t know this, it’s because you’re a bum
Listen to this, get up, and march. …
Look at me, I am black and proud of it
I twist Molière’s language, I master French literature
because France colonized my ancestors but my spirit is free…

…
Why us in the ghetto, them in the ENA*
Us behind bars, them in the senate?…

* ENA = Ecole nationale d’Administration (one of the elite “grandes écoles”—admits 120 students/year)

Arise children of the fatherland, the day of glory has arrived…
To arms citizens; form your battalions. March, march…Rouget de Lisle, “The Marseillaise” (1792)
Universalism without diversity: the general will and the will of all

France’s “immigration problem”
--socio-economic exclusion
--cultural difference

I have always had a certain idea of France...

Charles de Gaulle, first sentence of his War Memoires

“Lawn permitted, ball games forbidden”
(sign in a public park in Tours, Indre-et-Loire)

How can you govern a country that has 246 different kinds of cheese?

The adversaries of the Jewish people attack me. ... They say to me, the Jews have their own judges and laws. I respond that it is your fault and you should not allow it. We must refuse everything to the Jews as a nation and accord everything to Jews as individuals. We must withdraw recognition from their judges; they should only have our judges. ... They must be citizens individually. But, some will say, they do not want to be citizens. Well then! If they do not want to be citizens, they should say so, and then, we should banish them. It is repugnant to have in the state an association of non-citizens, and a nation within the nation. . . .

Count Stanislas–Marie–Adélaide de Clermont–Tonnerre,
“Speech on Questionable Professions and Religious Minorities,”
23 December 1789.

1. Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions may be founded only upon the general good.

3. The principle of all sovereignty resides essentially in the nation. No body nor individual may exercise any authority which does not proceed directly from the nation.
“Was General De Gaulle braver than Marshall Petain? I don’t know; it’s easier to resist in London than in France.” (1965)

“Olympic games show clearly inequalities between the black and white races concerning, for example, athletes, and runners in particular. It’s a fact. [...] I’m stating what I see. [...] Egalitarianism is simply absurd.” (1996)

"I ask myself several questions. I'm not saying the gas chambers didn't exist. I haven't seen them myself. I haven't particularly studied the question. But I believe it's just a detail in the history of World War II." (1987)

Jean Marie Le Pen
1956 elected deputy (Poujadiste)
1957-59 military service in Algeria
1960 co-founder National Front for French Algeria
1963 found guilty of being an “apologist for war crimes”
1976 monarchist cement millionaire leaves him fortune
1983 Front National allies with “traditional right” to win town government of Dreux
1988 Le Pen wins 11% in presidential election
2002 Le Pen second in first round presidential elections
Human Rights and Anti-Immigration Rhetoric

“My husband, he’s a good Moslem. He never hits me in the face.”
(cartoon on website of de Villiers supporter)

Islamic Veil, Women’s Oppression
(Feminist-Laïque Cooperation)

“You’re for zero percent immigration. So am I.”
Philippe de Villiers, Mouvement pour la France (2007)

Hollande: residents without EU citizenship should be able to vote after five years

Sarkozy: should reduce immigration 50%; tighten border controls

Le Pen: “most of the meat being sold in French supermarkets is really halal” immigration should be reduced 95%
The Headscarf Affair (affaire des foulards)

Lila and Alma Levy, with their father (2005)

bois de Boulogne

bois de Vincennes

Aubervilliers

Two French teenagers died fleeing the police in a Paris banlieue, and other youth in the same neighborhood protested, set vehicles and municipal buildings (schools, post offices) on fire. The riots eventually spread to all French banlieues (nearly 3000 people jailed) and a “state of emergency” declared, giving police exceptional powers in the banlieues.

Nicolas Sarkozy
French president, 2007-2012
as Interior Minister in 2005, he called people in the banlieues “scum” who should be “cleaned with a blow torch.”