Part 2

France

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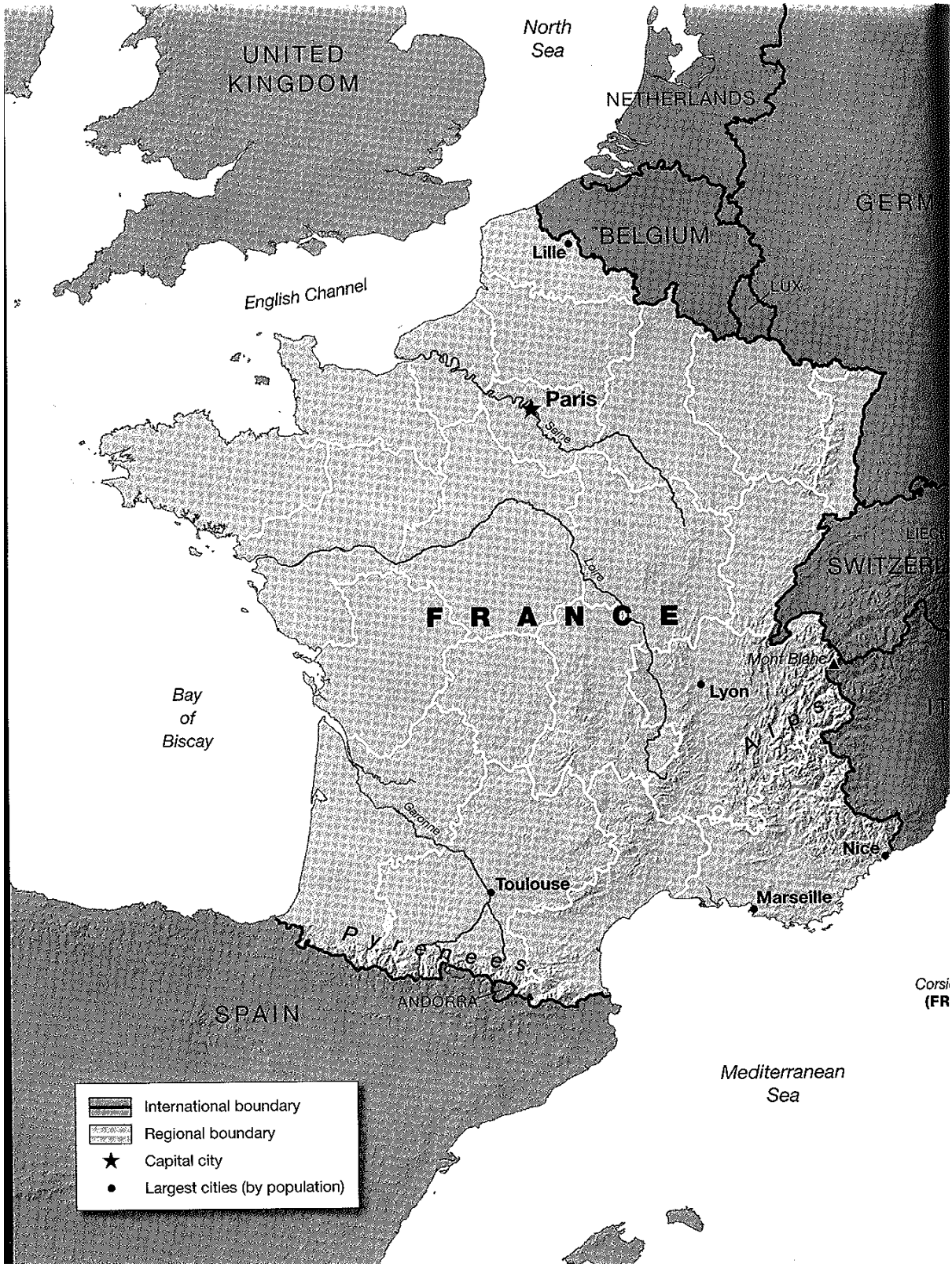
UNITED KINGDOM
North Sea
NETHERLANDS
GERM
BELGIUM
Lille
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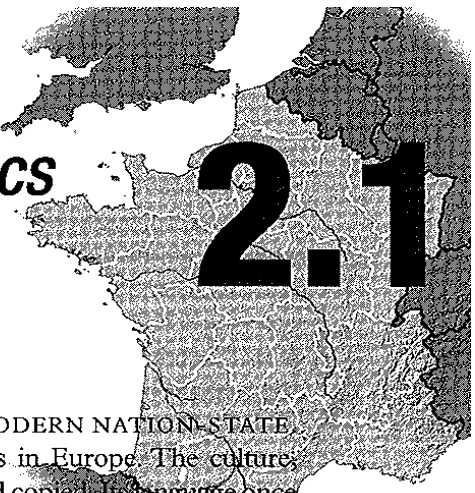
English Channel
Paris
Seine
Loire
FRANCE
SWITZERL
LIECH
Mont Blanc
Lyon
Alps
IT
Bay of Biscay
Garonne
Nice
Toulouse
Marseille
Pyrenees
ANDORRA
SPAIN
Corsi
(FR
Mediterranean Sea
International boundary
Regional boundary
Capital city
Largest cities (by population)

The Context of French Politics 2.1



FRANCE IS WIDELY CONSIDERED TO BE THE FIRST MODERN NATION-STATE, it is also one of the oldest and most important countries in Europe. The culture, architecture, and cuisine of France have been much admired and copied. Its language once served as the chief medium of diplomacy, and its political philosophies and institutional patterns have exerted influences far beyond the country's borders. Until the end of World War II, France had the second-greatest colonial empire, with possessions in Southeast Asia, the Caribbean, and North and West Africa.

The third largest country in Europe (after Russia and Ukraine), France is more than twice the size of Great Britain, 60 percent larger than Germany, and four-fifths the size of Texas. Except in the north and northeast, France has natural frontiers: the Atlantic Ocean on the west, the Pyrenees in the south, and the Alps and Jura Mountains in the east. Its wide variations in landscape—the northern flatlands of Flanders, the forests of Normandy, the mountainous east and center, the beaches of the Vendée in the west, and the subtropical Riviera coast in the south—are accompanied by regional trends in cuisine, dress, speech, and attitude. Its population is less than Russia's and Germany's but eclipses that of all the other case studies included in this volume (see Table A-1 in the Appendix).

Ever since the country's early efforts at unification under centralized auspices, Paris has been the locus of national political power, as well as France's cultural and economic center. Paris contains the biggest university complex, three-fourths of the nation's theaters, and the majority of its museums and art galleries, and it is the hub from which most of the railroad lines radiate. The Paris region constitutes about 2 percent of the nation's land area, but it boasts its largest factories and accounts for a third of its industrial production. It also contains more than 20 percent of its total population, which in 2013 reached 67 million.[1]

In recent years, however, differences between north and south and between Paris and the rest of the country have been narrowing because of advancements in national transportation and communications and the growing geographic mobility of the population.

For many generations, the French referred to "our ancestors the Gauls"; they prided themselves on their descent from Gallo-Roman tribes that had fused over centuries into a homogeneous nation. In fact, however, France is the most ethnically and racially diverse country in Europe, with 20 percent of its population having a foreign-born parent or grandparent. The Italians, Germans, Poles, and others who settled in France over the course of several generations blended easily into the melting pot of Celtic, Latin, and other elements, and the more recent immigrants from Africa and Asia have made the population truly multiethnic. At the same time, the French acquired a deep sense of national identity from living in one of the first large European countries to have its boundaries more or less permanently fixed. Several decades ago, however, the collective consciousness of minorities began to reawaken. Alsatians, Bretons, Corsicans, and other ethnic groups—and more recently the Jewish, Muslim, and other ethnoreligious communities—have demanded that

their cultural uniqueness be recognized. The retention of a monolithic national identity has become more difficult in view of the changed nature of immigration. In 2009 more than 3 million foreigners lived in France, making up 5 percent of the population. This figure is smaller than the number of immigrants, because many of the latter have been naturalized, a process that traditionally has been relatively easy.[2] A large proportion of the newcomers since the 1960s came from non-European countries and adhered to non-Christian religions. This development led to an extensive debate about the future of national identity, a debate that Nicolas Sarkozy encouraged when he campaigned for the presidency and was officially launched in 2009 by Eric Besson, the newly appointed minister for immigration, integration, national identity, and solidarity. The government has floated new proposals under which immigrants would be admitted on a quota system based on their economic utility and naturalization would no longer be automatic—applicants would have to demonstrate knowledge of the French language and political system. Moreover, illegal immigrants would not be candidates for naturalization; instead, they would be deported in larger numbers, and those aiding them would be punished.

For many years, foreigners and natives widely believed that, apart from Paris, France was essentially a peasant country. The Industrial Revolution did not proceed so early and so thoroughly in France as it did in Great Britain and Germany; by the end of World War II an estimated one-third of the French labor force was still employed in agriculture. Most of the farms were and still are small, as the consolidation of landholdings was impeded by the traditional division of a family's acreage among several descendants. Industrial development was long delayed by the lack of private investment capital and the limited need for industrial manpower in the cities. In the past sixty years, however, agricultural modernization has been impressive. As a consequence, employment in agriculture has declined from more than 30 percent of the active population in 1946 to less than 5 percent in 2013: there are fewer than 500,000 farms, half of the number that existed ten years ago.

In 1946 a little over half the population (then 40.5 million) lived in cities; today, more than 85 percent do so.[3] As the number of farms and rural villages declined steadily and the number of urban agglomerations continued to grow, the French began to speak of a "terminal peasantry." In a parallel development, an extensive national superhighway system, high-speed rail transport, and a modern telecommunications network tied the provinces more closely to Paris, and the sense of separation between the small towns and the capital diminished.

Yet despite urbanization, many French men and women continue to share the belief that life in the country is more satisfying than an urban existence, which may account for the tendency of middle-class, big-city dwellers to acquire second homes in the country. Indeed, the "peasant romanticism" long fortified by the patterns of family loyalty, parsimony, and conservative moral values carefully nurtured by the Catholic Church has been rediscovered today as an ideal by those disenchanted with the economic insecurities, overcrowding, unemployment, and growing social disorganization and crime in the cities, and it has become a component of the ideology of extreme-right movements. There is no doubt that urbanization has contributed to a rapid increase in crime and in the prison population, which increased from 48,000 in 1992 to nearly 67,000 in 2013.

Religion and Social Class

For a long time, most of the population of France embraced Roman Catholicism; indeed, France was considered the "most Catholic" of countries. Once the Protestant Reformation

spread to France in the sixteenth century, the country became riven by bitter struggles between Catholics, who were supported by the ruling elite, and Protestant Huguenots (mainly Calvinists), many of whom were massacred. After a period of toleration, the privileges of the Protestants (such as the right to live in certain fortified towns) were revoked in the seventeenth century, and many Protestants left the country. With the consolidation of absolute rule under the Bourbon kings, the position of Catholicism as the state religion was firmly established. Dissatisfaction with monarchism implied a questioning of the church and its privileges, and revolutionary sentiments were accompanied by anticlerical attitudes.

Anticlericalism and republicanism, then, are closely intertwined. The revolutionary commitment to *laïcité* (secularism), associated with a "religion of reason," made considerable headway during the Third Republic (1870–1940), when, under the leadership of left-wing parties, a national school system was created from which religion was entirely absent. Meanwhile, the hold of Catholicism gradually weakened as a consequence of industrialization, the rise of a new working class, and demographic and social changes. In 1905 the Catholic Church was formally "disestablished." France became, like the United States, a secular country, at least in constitutional terms (except in the province of Alsace where, for historic reasons, the clergy continues to be supported by public funds).[4] According to recent surveys, the majority of the French population is nominally Roman Catholic, but fewer than one-third of Catholics attend church regularly.[5] About 80 percent of French citizens are nominally Catholic, but in 2012 only 6 percent were practicing, and only 1 percent of those between ages 18 and 24. In 2010 France had only 15,000 priests, half of whom more than 75 years old.[6] Many inhabitants of the larger cities, and the great majority of industrial workers, are "de-Christianized" except in the most formal sense.

Yet Catholicism cannot be divorced from French culture and political consciousness. The cathedral remains the heart of small towns, most legal holidays are Catholic, and many political movements and interest groups are still influenced by Catholic teachings. (When Pope John Paul II died in April 2005, flags in France were flown at half-staff, and in Marseilles civil service workers received a half day off work so that they could go to church.) Furthermore, public policy attitudes have often been inspired by Catholic social doctrine: aid to large families, the notion of class collaboration (instead of conflict) and the "association" of employers and workers in factories, the long-held opposition to the legalization of birth control and abortion, and the legal dominance—until well into the 1960s—of the male head of the family. Devout Catholics constituted a large proportion of those who demonstrated against the legalization of same-sex marriage in 2013. Today, between 15 percent and 20 percent of parents opt to send their children to Catholic parochial schools, which benefit from governmental financial support.[7]

Of the 1.5 million French Protestants, many are prominent in business, the so-called free professions (such as lawyers, physicians, and architects), and, more recently, politics and administration. The current Fifth Republic has had three Protestant prime ministers (Maurice Couve de Murville, Michel Rocard, and Lionel Jospin) and numerous Protestant cabinet ministers and presidential candidates.

Jews have lived in France since before the Middle Ages, and today they number about 700,000. During the Dreyfus affair in the 1890s, antirepublican feelings were accompanied by a campaign to vilify Jews and to eliminate them from public life. During the Nazi occupation of France (1940–1944), persecutions and deportations of Jews ravaged the Jewish community and reduced it by a third. Since the early 1960s, the number of Jews has

been augmented by repatriates from North Africa. Much like Protestants, Jews have tended to support republican regimes and have decidedly preferred left-of-center parties identified with anticlericalism. Although Jews are fully integrated into French life, anti-Semitism has not been eliminated and tends to be perpetuated by extreme-right political parties and, more recently, by Muslim immigrants.

Since the mid-1960s, France has experienced a significant influx of Muslims, primarily from North Africa. Many of them perform the most menial work in industrial cities. Estimated at about 6 million, the Muslim population constitutes the second largest religious group. Many French people, especially the lower-middle and working classes, feel that the growing presence of these "exotic" immigrants has contributed heavily to the growth of unemployment and criminality in France and will sooner or later disfigure the very nature of French society. Moreover, practicing Muslims, unlike other minorities, are said to adhere to a "fundamentalist" religion that rejects the primacy of French civil law, secular education, gender equality, and religious pluralism and therefore poses a challenge to the values of the republic. Other observers are more optimistic; they argue that Islam comes in many forms and that a large number of Muslims have become acculturated to French values and way of life.[8]

The growing racial, ethnic, and religious diversity in France, which has generated conflict and violence against minorities, has been met with a variety of responses. On the one hand, the National Assembly has passed both antidiscrimination laws and legislation penalizing the dissemination of ethnic, racial, and religious hatred, and the government and others have made efforts to acculturate minorities and integrate them into the mainstream. On the other hand, the French people have been hesitant to accept cultural pluralism.[9] They have been uneasy about *communautarisme,* the identification with cultures and subcommunities based on ethnicity or religion.

The growth of the Muslim population and the continuing decline of Christianity have led to a renewal of the debate about the place of religion in a republic committed to the principle of *laïcité.* In an attempt to "westernize" Islam, the government established the French Council of the Muslim Faith (Conseil Français du Culte Musulman [CFCM]) with branches at the regional level. The CFCM represents a variety of Muslim organizations and functions as official interlocutor with the public authorities.[10] To dilute religious influence in education, the government successfully sponsored legislation to ban the wearing of the Islamic headscarf (*hijab*) by Muslim schoolgirls as well as the wearing of ostentatious Christian and Jewish accoutrements in public schools. There is a growing fear of Islamism, a politically charged fundamentalism that is regarded as hostile to French values. Many imams preaching it have been expelled.[11]

Superficially, the French social system is typical of that found in other European countries. The medieval divisions of society into nobility, clergy, townspeople, and peasants gradually gave way to a more complex social structure. The traditional, land-based aristocracy declined as a result of the use of the guillotine and the diminishing economic value of agriculture, and today the aristocracy has a certain vestigial importance only in the military officer corps and the diplomatic service.

Members of the modern upper class or haute bourgeoisie—a status derived from graduation from a prestigious university or the inheritance of wealth or both—generally make up the higher echelons of the civil service and serve as the directors of large business firms and as bankers. The next social group is the *grande bourgeoisie,* which includes university

professors, high school teachers, engineers, members of the free professions, middle-echelon government functionaries, and the proprietors of medium-size family firms. The middle and lower-middle class, today the largest social category, comprises elementary school teachers, white-collar employees, small shopkeepers, and lower-echelon civil servants. The lower classes (*classes populaires*) include most of the industrial workers, small farmers, and possibly artisans.

These class divisions have been important insofar as they have influenced a person's political ideology, general expectations from the system, lifestyle, place of residence, and choice of political party. A typical member of the free professions has tended to adhere to a liberal party (that is, one oriented toward individualism), a businessman to a conservative (or moderate) party, and an industrial worker to a socialist party. The class system and interclass relationships have been constantly changing, however. These changes have taken place with particular rapidity since the dramatic events of May through June 1968, when masses of students and workers joined in a general strike and almost brought down the government. Nor is the correlation between class membership and adherence to a specific political party as predictable as it once was. In recent years, there has been a growing underclass of uprooted farmers and redundant artisans, industrial workers now jobless because of the decline of traditional manufacturing and the growth of the high-technology sector, and immigrants who cannot be precisely categorized and whose relationship to the political system is fluid, if not marginal. Moreover, distinctions between classes have been partially obscured by the redistributive impact of a highly developed system of social legislation and the progressive democratization of the educational system. Table 2-1 reveals some of the changes that have taken place over sixty years.

Table 2-1 France: Some Changes over Sixty Years

	1946	1975	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2009
Total population (millions)	40.5	52.6	55.0	56.56	58.3	59.8	60.7	65.4
Number of adolescents over age fourteen enrolled in schools (thousands)	650	4,000	4,200	5,400	5,600	6,400	7,700	6,644
Average annual duration of full-time work (hours)	2,100	1,875	1,763[a]	n.a.	1,500	1,355	1,450[b]	—
Infant mortality per thousand live births	84.4	13.8	10.1	7.5[c]	4.9	4.4	4.3	3.33
Number of private cars in circulation (thousands)	1,000	15,300	20,800	22,750[c]	n.a.	27,500	n.a.	
Longevity of males (years)	61.9	69.1	71[d]	73.3	73.8	75.2	76.0	77.8
Longevity of females (years)	67.4	77.0	79[d]	80.6	81.9	82.7	84.5	

Sources: Based on Jean Fourastié, *Les Trente glorieuses ou la révolution invisible* (Paris: Fayard, 1979), 36; *Quid* 1988, 1992, 1996, 2001, 2006 (Paris: Robert Laffont); Dominique Borne, *Histoire de la société française depuis 1945* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1988), 95; Gérard Mermet, *Francoscopie 2001* (Paris: Larousse, 2000), 195, 301–302; INSEE estimates for 2009.

[a] 1986.
[b] 2004.
[c] 1989.
[d] 1982.

Education

The centralized national school system established at the end of the nineteenth century was based on uniform curriculums stressing national, secular, and republican values and theoretically creating opportunities of upward mobility on the basis of talent, not wealth. Traditionally, the Ministry of Education controlled the educational curriculums, from public elementary school in small villages to lycées in large cities, and was the major voice in the administration of universities. In practice, the system (at least until the late 1950s) fortified existing social inequalities, because most children of the working and peasant classes were not steered toward the lycées, the academic secondary schools whose diplomas were required for admission to university, and therefore were condemned to perpetual lower-class status. Since the early 1960s, a spate of reform legislation has been aimed at making schooling more uniform, at least up to the age of sixteen. Curricula are now more practical, more technological, and less classical-humanistic. Under new laws, universities have become more flexible and less hierarchical, and they allow students to participate in decision making (but there are complaints that the pace of implementation has occasionally been impeded by insufficient funds and the resistance of the academic establishment). As a consequence, 77.5 percent of lycée student now get the *baccalauréat*, the *lycée* diploma, and with it, the right to enroll at a university. University enrollments have exploded, rising from 1 million in 1985 to nearly 2.4 million in 2011–2012.[12] But the inability of many university graduates to find jobs has acted as a brake to further significant increases. Moreover, a large proportion of students drop out after one or two years at a university.[13] Although tuition fees are minimal, many students from families in straitened circumstances complain that state scholarship aid (*bourses*) covering registration and other fees as well as living expenses and books is inadequate. Since the election of Sarkozy, many French universities have been granted more autonomy (often against their will) to decide on budgets, curricula, student admissions, and contracts with the private sector.

Among the major beneficiaries of educational reforms, and of social changes in general, are women. Before World War II, women could not vote. Although they obtained that right in 1945, they gained complete equality only gradually. In 2000 the constitution was amended—followed by legislation—to institute a system of gender "parity" in the nominations for elective office, but only 12.3 percent of members of National Assembly elected in 2002 were women (compared with 10 percent in the previous assembly). In 2007 the representation of women in the assembly had risen to 18.5 percent and in 2012, with 155 out of 577 deputies, to 27 percent. But women have done well in the regional councils, where they make up 47.6 percent of the membership.[14] The place of women in the executive was greatly enhanced in 2012, when gender parity was achieved with the appointment of 17 women to cabinet posts in Prime Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault's government. In 2012 parliament voted to set a 40 minimum quota for women in higher administration, to be attained by 2018.

Women have also made considerable headway in the private sector and in associational politics. The French Democratic Confederation of Labor (Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail [CFDT]), one of the three largest trade unions, was headed by a woman president in the 1990s, and in 2005 the Association of French Entrepreneurs (Mouvement des Entreprises de France [MEDEF]), with 700,000 member firms, elected a woman as president.

Table 2-2 France: Political Cycles and Regimes

Moderate monarchy	Liberalization	Conservative reaction
Constitutional monarchy of 1791	Republic of 1792	Dictatorial government of 1795
Restoration of 1815	"July Monarchy" of 1830	Second Empire (1852–1870)
Early Third Republic (1870–1879)	Later Third Republic (1879–1940) Fourth Republic (1947–1958) Fifth Republic (since 1981)	Vichy regime (1940–1944) Early Fifth Republic (1958–1981)

Source: Adapted from Dorothy Pickles, *The Fifth French Republic,* 3rd ed. (New York: Praeger, 1965), 3–5.

The attitudes of the French toward politics have been shaped by their education and social condition. Scholars have suggested that the French are more critical of their regime than are Americans or Englishmen, and there are periodic studies of what is wrong with their country.[15] French citizens have frequently participated in uprisings and revolutions, and they have exhibited "anti-civic" behavior patterns such as tax evasion, draft dodging, and alcoholism. They also have often shown contempt for law (and the police), and members of the working class, in particular, have been convinced that the legal system favors the "established" classes. Finally, a large segment of the population has adhered to political ideologies and parties oriented to replacement of the existing political order.

This insufficient acceptance of the existing regime—a phenomenon called "crisis of legitimacy"—was produced by, and in turn reflected in, the apparent inability of the French to create a political formula that would resolve satisfactorily the conflict between the state and the individual, centralism and localism, the executive and the legislature, and representative and "direct" democracy. Since the abolition of the old regime of royal absolutism, there has been a dizzying succession of governments—republics, monarchies, empires, and republics again—most of them embodying drastically different conceptions of the proper division of governmental authority (see Table 2-2).

Revolutions, Regime Changes, and Legitimacy Crises

Many regimes created institutional solutions that were too extreme and therefore could not last. The Revolution of 1789, which led to the abdication of King Louis XVI in 1792, was followed by a series of experiments that, collectively, has been termed the First Republic. It was characterized by the abolition of the old provinces and the restructuring of administrative divisions, a reduction in the power of the church and the inauguration of a "rule of reason," a proclamation of universal human rights, and the passing of power from the landed aristocracy to the bourgeoisie. It was also marked by assassinations and mass executions—the Reign of Terror—which ended when order was established under Napoleon Bonaparte. At first leader of a dictatorial Consulate (1799) and then president (1802) of what was still, formally, a "republic," Napoleon had himself proclaimed emperor in 1804. In 1814 Napoleon's empire collapsed after a military defeat, but the emperor left behind a great heritage of reforms: the abolition of feudal tax obligations, a body of codified laws, the notion of a merit-based professional bureaucracy (much of it trained in specialized national schools), and a system of relationships (or rather, a theory about such

relationships) under which the chief executive derived his legitimacy directly from the people through popular elections or referendums. The chief executive's rule was unimpeded by a strong parliament, subnational government units, or other "intermediary" institutions or groups. At once heroic and popular, the "Bonaparte's" approach to politics had a strong impact on segments of the French nation; much of what came to characterize Gaullism was heavily influenced by that approach.

The power of the clergy and nobility was revived in 1815 when the Bourbon monarchy was restored, but that was to be a constitutional regime patterned on the English model and guaranteeing certain individual liberties and limited participation of the parliament. In 1830 the Bourbon dynasty, having become arbitrary and corrupt, was replaced by another regime, that of Louis-Philippe of the House of Orleans. In 1848 the French rebelled once more and inaugurated what came to be known as the Second Republic. They elected Louis Napoleon (a nephew of Napoleon I) president for a ten-year term, but in 1852 he too proclaimed himself emperor. The "Second Empire" was a "republican" empire insofar as a weak legislative chamber continued to exist and, more important, because Louis Napoleon derived his power from the people rather than from God.

The Second Empire was noted for many achievements: industrial progress, a stable currency, and the rebuilding and modernization of Paris. But popular disenchantment with what had become a dictatorial regime and France's military defeat at the hands of the Prussians in 1870 brought it down.

The Third Republic, the regime that followed, was inaugurated in bloodshed: the Paris Commune of 1871, in which thousands of "proletarians" rebelled and were brutally suppressed by bourgeois leaders. Most of these leaders did not, in fact, want a republic. The National Assembly (then called the Chamber of Deputies) was elected to make peace with Prussia. It was dominated by monarchists, but they disagreed on which of the competing pretenders—Bourbon, Orléans, or Bonaparte—should be given the throne. Consequently, the assembly adopted a skeletal constitution that provided, on a temporary basis, for an executive and a legislative branch and outlined the relationship between them. This constitution, which contained no bill of rights, lasted nearly seventy years and set the pattern for subsequent republican regimes.

In the beginning, the president, who was elected by parliament for seven years, tried to govern while ignoring that body, and he even tried to dissolve the National Assembly, whose political composition he did not like. In 1877 parliament rebelled and forced the president to resign. Henceforth, presidents became figureheads, and prime ministers and their cabinets were transformed into obedient tools of powerful parliaments and were replaced or reshuffled about once every eight months. Many observers viewed this instability as endemic to republican systems as such and encouraged romantic monarchists to attempt to subvert the republic. Yet this republic had many achievements to its credit, not the least of which was that it emerged victorious and intact from World War I. It might have lasted even longer had France not been invaded and occupied by the Germans in 1940.

After the German defeat of France, the "unoccupied" southern half of the country was transformed into the "French State," which took the form of an authoritarian puppet regime led from Vichy, a provincial resort town, by Marshal Philippe Pétain, an aging hero of World War I. The behavior of the French during this period, both in the Vichy state and

in the occupied part of the country, was complex and ambivalent, and the debate about who collaborated with the Nazis and who resisted them continues.[16]

The Fourth Republic, which was instituted in late 1946, two years after France was liberated, essentially followed the pattern established during the Third Republic. Although its highly detailed and democratic constitution included an impressive bill of rights, it made for a system even less stable than that of the Third Republic. There were twenty governments (and seventeen prime ministers) over a twelve-year period; the National Assembly, though theoretically supreme, could not provide effective leadership. Ambitious deputies, seeking a chance to assume ministerial office, easily managed to topple cabinets, and a large proportion of the legislators—notably the Communists on the left and the Gaullists on the right—were not interested in maintaining the regime.

Yet the Fourth Republic was not without accomplishments. It inaugurated a system of long-term capitalist planning under which France rebuilt and modernized its industrial and transport structures. It put in place an extensive network of welfare state provisions, including comprehensive statutory medical insurance. And it took the first steps toward decolonization—relinquishing control of Indochina, Morocco, and Tunisia—and paved the way for intra-European collaboration in the context of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and, later, the Common Market. Some of the failures of the Fourth Republic—its inability to institute meaningful local democracy and its foot-dragging on tax reform—were also failures of the political system that replaced it.

The Fourth Republic probably would have continued had it not been for the problem of Algeria and the convenient presence of a war hero, Gen. Charles de Gaulle. France was unable to decolonize Algeria easily, or grant it independence, because more than 2 million French men and women, many of them able to trace their roots in that territory several generations back, considered it not only their home but also an integral component of France. A succession of Fourth Republic politicians lacked the will or the stature to impose a solution to the problem. Meanwhile, the war that had broken out in Algeria in the mid-1950s threatened to spill over into mainland France and helped to discredit the regime.

Under the pressure of the Algerian events (and the threat of a military coup in continental France and North Africa), the Fourth Republic leadership decided in mid-1958 to call on de Gaulle. De Gaulle had been a professional soldier; a member of the general staff; and, several months after the outbreak of World War II, deputy minister of war. After France's capitulation in June 1940, de Gaulle refused to accept the permanence of surrender and the legitimacy of the Pétain regime. Instead, he fled to London, where he established a "government in exile" and organized the "Free French" forces, which were joined by many of the Frenchmen who had escaped in time from the Continent. In 1944 de Gaulle became the provisional civilian leader of liberated France, presiding over a government coalition composed of Christian Democrats, Socialists, and Communists. In 1946 he retired from the political scene, having failed to prevent the ratification of the Fourth Republic constitution (a document he opposed because it granted excessive powers to the parliament). In retirement, de Gaulle continued to be a political force: more precisely, a force of inspiration to a political movement, the Rally of the French People (Rassemblement du Peuple Français [RPF]). These original "Gaullists" wanted to replace the Fourth Republic with a new regime that would be led by a strong executive.

The Fifth Republic, established in 1958, is an institutional mixture of a powerful executive and a weak legislature. The institutional relationships common to this republic are described in Chapter 2.2; what follows here is a description of the French political culture—that is, political attitudes that are widely held and behavior patterns that cut across specific social classes and party ideologies.

Aspects of French Political Culture

Except for parts of the industrial working class, most French people have shared the universal ambitions of French civilization and have not seemed to consider the often exaggerated chauvinism of their intellectual elite to be inconsistent with such ambitions. They have taken pride in France's international prestige, cultural patrimony, and intellectual accomplishments, although these may have borne little relationship to objective reality, may not have benefited all citizens equally, and may not have compensated for the more immediate economic needs of the underprivileged. In recent years, some members of the intellectual elite have been worried about the excessive influence of mass culture and the "pollution" of the French language by Americanisms. A recent manifestation of France's cultural insecurity was a government bill to allow universities to offer selected courses *taught* in English, thus upsetting a 1994 ban against using a language other than French as a medium of instruction. The bill was denounced by some politicians and academics variously as cultural suicide, a death warrant for the French language, and a humiliation of French speakers.[17]

The French have had a tendency toward hero worship that has led them, on several occasions, to accept "men on horseback": the two Napoleons, Marshal MacMahon (in the 1870s), Marshal Pétain, and General de Gaulle. This tendency has been balanced by one of rebelling against authority. Moreover, although the French have often opted for leftist or revolutionary ideologies and politicians, such leftist thinking and speaking have sometimes been meaningless exercises because there was little expectation that they would (or ought to) translate into leftist government policies. Public opinion polls conducted from the 1950s to the 1990s typically showed that the proportion of French voters preferring Socialist Party (Parti Socialiste [PS]) candidates was consistently higher than the proportion of those who favored the nationalization of enterprises or the equalization of incomes—both traditional components of socialist ideology.

The French have often held their politicians in contempt; indeed, according to a recent survey, 82 percent of respondents think that politicians work mostly to promote their own interests, and 62 percent think that most of them are corrupt.[18] At the same time, the French have allowed politicians leeway for tax evasion, money laundering, collusion with business, and other behavioral departures from bourgeois moral norms. Among the most recent examples of prominent politicians, including former cabinet ministers, charged with some of these crimes have been Jérôme Cahuzac, a Socialist minister for the budget, and Claude Guéant, a former Gaullist minister of the interior. Only in the past few years has such toleration been replaced by popular impatience with, and the electoral punishment of, corrupt politicians. A manifestation of that impatience, reflected in an increasingly independent judiciary, has been the indictment—and in some cases, conviction—of nearly 100 elected officials of both the right and the left for the misappropriation of public funds and a variety of other legal violations.[19] President Hollande's attempt to "moralize"

politics by asking national elected officials to disclose their wealth and to publicize it will not be fully realized. The disillusionment with the "political class" has manifested itself in negative voting behavior: about half of adults do not vote, and most of those who do tend to vote against the government, as they did in the presidential elections of 2002 and 2012, the regional elections of 2004 an 2010 (see Chapter 2.3), and the referendum on the European constitution in 2005.

At the same time, the French have a widespread desire to enter public service, and much prestige is attached to it. Traditionally, the French have been sharply critical of the regime, but they have a highly developed sense of belonging to the nation and they have *greater* expectations from the "state" than from the market. This statism is reflected in a large civil service and a high proportion of expenditure for the production of public goods, such as mass transport, education, and social services. There is a culture of entitlement expressed in the belief in the continuity of "established rights" *(droits acquis).* Some examples include the strikes in the fall of 1995 by public transport workers, who were protesting threatened cuts in social security protections and demanding a lowering of the retirement age; the strikes a year later, for similar aims, of drivers in the private trucking industry; and the massive strikes in 2006 against a government bill to make it easier for employers to lay off young entrants into the labor force. Although greatly inconvenienced by these events, the general public supported the strikers—both to express their social solidarity and to avoid having traditional welfare state entitlements for any part of the population called into question.

Ideology is now far less important than it was at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, and a growing number of French men and women have become market-oriented. Such a change, however, is a far cry from an unqualified embrace of classic liberalism. France's traditional nationalism has been moderated, and most of its citizens are more open to Europe and the world at large. Yet at the same time they are not quite willing to accept the consequences of globalization.

Other important changes have emerged as well—especially over the past two decades. For example, there is now little question about the legitimacy of the political system: more than 90 percent of the French people accept the institutions of the Fifth Republic, a consensus signaled by the gradual convergence of the parties of the right and left and, indeed, in a growing impatience with ideological labels.

Conversely, the state has been desanctified in the eyes of many French citizens, and the role of the market has become more widely accepted. At the same time, the state retains at once its multiple roles as protector, insofar as 4 million French citizens work for it and several million more depend on it. A poll conducted by SOFRES at the end of 2004 found that 75 percent of respondents believed it was up to individuals more than the state to move society forward. Yet 74 percent opposed the privatization of hospitals, 85 percent opposed an increase in cost sharing by patients for medical care, 78 percent opposed raising the retirement age to sixty, and 81 percent opposed easing protection against layoffs by employers.[20] Although the French still have an "instrumental" view of the state in the sense that it is expected to continue to be important in economic, social, and cultural affairs, their expectations have become somewhat more realistic. This development is reflected in the fact that in recent years the French have been attaching greater value to liberty than to equality. A poll taken a decade ago revealed that for 63 percent of

respondents French national identity was essentially symbolized by a commitment to human rights—roughly the same percentage for whom that identity is symbolized by French cuisine.[21] Even though the French have become more ego-oriented, they have also come to attach increasing importance to "civil society" and its component parts. For example, in addition to placing greater reliance on the market, the French have participated in the rapid growth of voluntary associations on the national and local levels. These developments have served to reduce the social distrust and lessen the "fear of face-to-face relations" that was once considered a major aspect of French political culture.[22] They also tended to foster a greater openness to "out-groups," both within France and outside it. One manifestation of that change is the widespread public support of fairer treatment of immigrants (which compensates for pockets of intolerance) and a higher appreciation of aspects of non-French culture. The massive riots by Muslim and African immigrants and their descendants—the "immigrants of the second generation"—in October and November 2005 challenged France's position on ethnic and racial minorities. Many of the rioters were unemployed, lived in suburban ghettos, and felt politically, socially, and economically marginalized. They saw no way out of their isolation and neglect. These events introduced considerable doubt about the efficacy and seriousness of government efforts to integrate immigrants into a monocultural French society and even called into question the relevance of the Jacobin monocultural ideal itself.

NOTES

1. INSEE [Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques] estimate, Updated. Population growth is indicated by the following comparative figures (in thousands): 1950, 41,647; 1970, 50,528; 1990, 56,577; 2004, 60,200. Laurent Toulemon, "Population, grandes tendances," in *L'Etat de la France 2005–2006* (Paris: La Découverte, 2005), 24. The demographic surge, which represented the second highest fertility rate (after Ireland) was the result of natalist policies, such as generous income supplements for families with children, free nursery schools maintained by cities, and paid leaves of absence to nursing mothers.
2. Naturalization has been based on the principle of jus soli (law of the soil), the criterion of birth or residence in the country. Immigrants may seek naturalization after a minimum residence of five years, and foreigners born in France may opt for French citizenship upon reaching majority (age eighteen).
3. Updated from Antoine Haumont, "Cadre de vie: Grandes tendances," in *L'État de la France 2005–2006* (Paris: La Découverte, 2005), 55.
4. Alsace and the department of Moselle (Lorraine) were annexed by Germany in 1870 after the Franco–Prussian war. When these areas were returned to France in 1918, the government continued the system of support of the "official" religions (Catholicism, Protestantism, and Judaism) that had been in force in Germany.
5. According to a January 2007 Harris poll, 51 percent described themselves as Catholics, 31 percent as atheists, 4 percent as Muslims, 3 percent as Protestants, and 1 percent as Jews. (*Daily Telegraph,* January 10, 2007). These figures must be used with caution, however, because the figure for Muslims is much higher. Note also that many who are nominally Catholic do not believe in God.
6. "Pénurie de prêtres en France," *Le Point,* February 14, 2013, 45.

7. On the place of Catholicism and other religions in French public life, see Jean-Paul Willaime, "Religion et Politique en France dans le Contexte de la Construction Européenne," *French Politics, Culture and Society,* 25 (Winter 2007), 36–61.
8. See Jonathan Laurence and Justin Vaisse, *Integrating Islam: Political and Religious Challenges in Contemporary France* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2006). See also John R. Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009).
9. See Edouard Balladur, *La fin de l'illusion jacobine* (Paris: Fayard, 2004); and Pierre-André Taguieff, *La République enlisée: Pluralisme, communautarisme, citoyenneté* (Paris: Editions des Syrtes, 2004).
10. See special issue on "Le Conseil Français du Culte Musulman," *French Politics, Culture and Society* 23 (2005).
11. Only about 400 of the more than 2,000 imams practicing in the country are French citizens.
12. Ministère d'Education Nationale, de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche, and INSEE, *La France en Chiffres, 2011–2012* (Paris: INSEE, 2012).
13. See Stéphane Beaud, "L'echec à l'université des 'enfants de la démocratisation," *Cosmopolitiques* 10 (2005): 13–14.
14. For these and other statistics, see Anne Chemin, "Une nouvelle génération de femmes s'est lancée en politique," *Le Monde,* March 8, 2005. Updated.
15. Somewhat older exercises of this sort are the following: Michel Crozier, *La société bloquée* (Paris: Seuil, 1970);. Alain Peyrefitte, *The Trouble with France* (New York: Knopf, 1981). Among more recent studies in "declinology" are the following: Nicolas Baverez, *La France qui tombe* (Paris: Perrin, 2004); Alain Lefebvre and Dominique Méda, *Faut-il brûler le modèle social français?* (Paris: Seuil, 2006). Also see Sophie Meunier, "Free-Falling France or Free-Trading France?" *French Politics, Culture and Society* 22 (Spring 2004): 98–107.
16. The debate even involved President François Mitterrand. In 1994 many details began to surface about his involvement with the Vichy regime and his earlier identification with right-wing movements and personalities. See Pierre Péan, *Une jeunesse française, 1934–1947* (Paris: Fayard, 1994). See also Emmanuel Faux, Thomas Legrand, and Gilles Perez, *La main droite de dieu* (Paris: Seuil, 1994).
17. Marie Piquemal, "L'université française va-t-elle parler anglais?" *Libération,* May 12, 2013.
18. IPSOS poll, France 2013, Les nouvelles fractures, cited by Gérard Courtois, "Les crispations alarmantes de la société française," *Le Monde,* January 24, 2013.
19. The list of those convicted includes Jean Tibéri, the mayor of Paris; Alain Juppé, former deputy mayor of Paris and current mayor of Bordeaux; Charles Pasqua, former minister of the interior; and Jean-Christophe Mitterrand, the eldest son of the former president. See Jérôme Dupuis, Jean-Marie Pontaut, and Jean-Loup Reverier, "100 élus dans le collimateur: Le Who's Who des mis en examen," *Le Point,* June 10, 1995, 36–45.
20. Sylvie Pierre-Brossolette, "La fin des tabous?" *Figaro-Magazine,* January 17, 2004, 41–50. A poll conducted in 2005 confirms such figures. See Emmanuel Rivière, "Valeurs idéologiques: La France à la recherche d'elle-même," in *L'État de l'opinion 2006,* ed. Olivier Duhamel and Brice Tenturier (Paris: Seuil, 2006), 35–36.
21. See Claudius Brosse, *L'Etat dinosaure* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2000).
22. See Michel Crozier, *The Bureaucratic Phenomenon* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 220–221.