"This Art of Being French"

A Critical Discourse Analysis on Nostalgia and National Identity in Emmanuel Macron's Speeches

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ABSTRACT

Current research carried out on contemporary political communication converge nostalgia as a discursive tool of extreme nationalism. This dissertation seeks to nuance these understandings of nostalgia, particularly through Boym's (2001) influential typologies of reflective and restorative nostalgia. Articulations of reflective nostalgia lie in personal reflexivity and temporal distance from the past, whilst restorative nostalgia refers to ideological practices that rehabilitate and maintain a 'true' sense of self (Boym, 2001; Lindstrom, 2005). Drawing on theories that underscore the ideological basis of language and the discourses that shape the imagined community - such as mythologies, collective memories, and symbols - this dissertation employs Critical Discourse Analysis to understand how Emmanuel Macron mobilises nostalgia to shape national identity.

The analysis of textual, discursive and societal dimensions of discourse (Fairclough, 1989) present the patterns Macron employs to depict the relationship between time and identity. Restorative nostalgia portrays French identity as a natural and transcendental phenomenon embedded in the values of the Enlightenment. Reflective nostalgia allows Macron to highlight cultural specificities, acerbate soft power and reflect upon French history. Together, these typologies (re)create national myths, narratives and symbols of European and French identity. It is argued that the mutual interplay of both typologies perform a constraining effect as to national imaginings, underpinned as predominantly white with masculine attributes. As such, Boym's (2001) theory is argued to ignore the impossibility to detach nostalgia from cultural and social memory frameworks. Furthermore, the dissertation outlines the empirical and methodological limitations of this analysis.

INTRODUCTION

In an interview on the topic of national identity in France, Nora eloquently states 'au fond ce n'est pas la France qui est éternelle, c'est la francité' (as cited in Gherardi, 2007: 12). To translate into English is relatively uncomplicated: Nora asserts France is not eternal; francité, the quality of being French, is. Defining what being French is a whole other matter. In 1991, Safran observed that the French 'have an increasing preoccupation with the problems of national identity – or, more exactly, a renewal of the old debate about what it takes to be French' (223). Thirty years later, Safran's statement still stands. Former president Nicolas Sarkozy fuelled the flames of this debate with the establishment of a Ministry for Immigration, Integration, National Identity and Codevelopment between 2007 and 2009 (Vampouille, 2010). Across the political spectrum today, politicians and public figures have blamed this 'crisis of national identity' (Safran, 1991) on external influences such as 'theories of the social sciences imported from the United States' (Macron, as cited in Dryef, 2020a: 2), mismanaged immigration, globalization, the European Union, decolonization, economic decline and a slew of other factors (Gherardi, 2007; Martigny, 2009; Dryef, 2020a). Contrastingly, Bouamama (2008) attributes this predicament to the ideals of the French nation-state itself, which subsumes individualism in favour of social anonymity. This opinion is not shared by everyone but scholars such as Bowen (2007) explain the Republic's universalist line of thought stems from Rousseau's social contract, a principle borne out of the Enlightenment that has become the bedrock of French Republicanism.

A significant portion of contemporary research on political communication and national identity focuses on the emergence of nostalgic discourses, often associated with populism, radical nationalism and demagogy (see: Bonnett, 2010; Goldstein and Hall, 2017; Polletta and Callahan, 2019; Menke and Wulf, 2021). This view of politicians' nostalgic discourse as polarizing or the product of right-wing rhetoric can be misleading. It understands nostalgia as

'an indication of a flawed political argument or allegiance' (Kenny, 2017: 256) rather than a legitimate emotion that not only comforts but facilitates imaginings of the future (Boym, 2001).

Essentially, this research seeks to contribute to the existing literature at the intersection of the study of nostalgia and national identity by analysing Emmanuel Macron's speeches using Critical Discourse Analysis. First, a theoretical and conceptual framework is built, with a particular focus on the imagined community (Anderson, 1983), structures of collective memory, and Boym's (2001) typologies of nostalgia. A methodological chapter consequently describes the rationale and limitations of Critical Discourse Analysis. Finally, the analysis is presented, before putting forward a discussion on nostalgia as an identity-constructing resource, alongside concluding remarks.

THEORETICAL CHAPTER

A Note on Modernity and the Enlightenment

The concepts of the national identity, historical memory and nostalgia all follow a common thread: modernity. To condense Stuart Hall's (1996) essay, to be modern is to believe in rationalism, 'secular forms of political power' (Hall, 1996: 8) that structure nation states, market economies and materialism. Whether enmeshed in discussions of temporality, politics, socio-economic realities or cultural theory, Hall (1996) understands modernity in Western societies to espouse what Hamilton (1996) considers to be the 'Enlightenment paradigm'. The Enlightenment was borne out of 17th and 18th century French philosophy that questions the legitimacy of monarchical and divine governance (ibid.) Consequently, the ideals of the Enlightenment rest on universal laws of being derived from 'empirical scientific knowledge', such as equality, freedom and secularism (ibid.)

The social contract is a key text penned by Rousseau during the Enlightenment, in 1762, that acts today as the leading philosophy of the French nation-state (Bowen, 2007). In his seminal *oeuvre*, Rousseau asserts that individuals possess a natural state but only submitting to a moral

and legal system that represent the 'general will' guarantees true freedom. These tenets empowered the French Revolution, an event that is often formulated as the beginning of modernity and the nation (Connerton, 1989; Smith, 1989).

Aronczyk (2013: 29) underlines the social aspect of modernity, stating that ''modern,' 'progressive,' or 'backward' can only exist in relation to the perceived modernity, progressiveness, and backwardness of others.' Given this relational premise, the discursive construction of modernity always necessitates an Other. Ultimately, it is this expression of modernity and the associated values that affect the manners in which we feel nostalgia, remember the past and identify with the nation.

The Imagined Community

Fundamentally, this research is preoccupied with the discursive manners by which political leaders shape national identity. Michael Billig defines national identity in the opening of his book Banal Nationalism (1995) as 'possess[ing] ways of talking about nationhood' (8). Implicitly, Billig understands national identity as a salient social identity (Hall, 1996). This concept, grounded in social psychology, presumes individuals possess the ability to self-categorize and assimilate within groups (Stets and Burke, 2000). It is argued that national identity can also be apprehended as a habitus (Wodak, 1999) which refers to a 'learned set of […] dispositions' (Edgerton, 2014: 194) acquired through socialization and conditioning by social structures (Bourdieu, 1977; Kolsto, 2006). Hence, understandings and constructions of national identity are as much unconsciously internalised as they are cognitively recognized by individuals.

This view of national identity and the nation as a social construct was widely theorised by Benedict Anderson, who leads much of the literature on nationalism and the nation in Western academia with his influential book *Imagined Communities* (1983). Anderson theorises the nation as an 'imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign' (ibid.: 6), a stark departure from primordialist theories which interpreted national identity as 'products of human sociobiological development' (Smith, 2003: 37). The imagined dimension,

Anderson explains, stems from the logistical impossibility for individuals to meet every other community member. Thus, the imagined community is 'a discourse of identity and allegiance' and a 'producer of values' (Aronczyk, 2013: 14).

France and the Nation-State

A vital underpinning of the imagined community is Anderson's (1983) emphasis on 'sovereignty', or the idea that the *imagined* existence of a state, free from monarchic or divine hierarchies, is the prerequisite for the nation. This conceptualization can be contested yet it holds to be widely accepted in regard to the French context. Retracing dominant political philosophies in France, Safran (1991: 221) explains that the French nation is 'defined, created, or recreated by the state'. Safran's supposition extends to that of institutions governed or closely affiliated to that of the state, such as public schools or bank holidays. Bhabha (2012) furthers Anderson's theory of the 8 intrinsic link between state and nation, positing that the state performs a conscious effort to disregard inequalities between members of the imagined community in an endeavour to solidify a sense of community and maintain social order. This is perhaps best illustrated by the French Republic's universalist motto *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité* ('Liberty, Equality, Fraternity') which acts as a guiding principle for citizens, republican institutions and political projects (Langer *et al.*, 2020).

Herzfeld (1996) criticizes Anderson's top-down approach, denouncing the lack of agency that is afforded to citizens in resisting hegemonic discourses of national identity. However, Safran (1991) highlights that the French Republic is founded on Jacobin ideology obtained from the ideals of the French Revolution and the Enlightenment. Jacobin ideology inscribes national identity as inseparable from the state, asserting that the French Republic is deemed in the collective imaginary to represent the democratic self-actualization and 'general will' of the people (ibid.: 235). This universalist approach to the nation-state is condemned by postcolonial scholars who consider the imagined community to be, at its core, exclusionary and oppressive. Appadurai (1990: 295) famously wrote 'one man's imagined community is another man's political prison.' The postcolonial perspective resituates the study of the nation at the nexus between 'the style in which it is imagined' (Anderson, 1983: 6) and the rules of membership.

Mythologies of the Nation

To imagine the nation, Billig (1995) stated, is to possess the linguistic tools with which to define it. Smith (2003) retraces common language as the fabric of national identity, enabling a critical mode of belonging to the imagined community (Hobsbawm, 1996). Bouamama (2008) observes that the French language acts as the 'essence' of the nation. Secondly, scholars of linguistics such as Foucault (1972) understand language as a form of symbolic power that constructs reality rather than reflecting what already is. It is those in positions of power that create, mediate and institutionalize powerful myths (Smith, 2003, Morden, 2016) that 'provide the architecture for consciousness' (Wang, 2018: 78) of national identity. Fabled narratives are crafted to identify an Other and naturalize certain values and ideals (Barthes, 1993) in an effort to 'define who a group member is, what it means to be a group member, and typically, who the group's enemies are' (Wang, 2018: 11). Moreover, national narratives substantially link individuals to the idea of an eternal imagined nation. As Hall (1996) understands it, a national narrative 'lends significance and importance to our humdrum existence, connecting our everyday lives with a national destiny that pre-existed us and will outlive us' (613).

Consequently, it is argued that these narratives are ideological. It acts as a guide for 'a form of life which is daily lived' (Billig, 1995: 68) by delineating out-groups and the normative expectations of in-group members of the imagined community. Bouamama (2008) illustrates this idea in his book, affirming that French presidents have consistently mythicized Anglo-Saxon models of multiculturalism and integration as contrary to French modern values, which is to say those of humanism, secularism and universality. Through this perspective, it is argued that Anderson's original definition of the nation as a political community lacks the recognition of the nation as 'a system of cultural representation' (Hall, 1996: 612). If the styles in which mythologies of nationhood are told differ (see: Morden, 2016), they always mobilise historical memory to anchor national identities in the present and give meaning to political projects (Berger, 2009; Dauncey and Tinker, 2015).

Memory and the Nation

Reflections on memory and its processes have greatly changed over the past century. In 1925, influenced by Durkheim, Halbwachs departed from the belief that memory was located solely in the individual psyche. Instead, he suggests that the ability to remember is inherently framed by social groups, or *cadres*. Henceforth, to remember is not solely a psychological phenomenon that presupposes a personal experience, but rather a process of subjective reconstruction of the past dependent on language for memory to be transmitted (Zerubavel, 2003). Remembering is also a function of forgetting. Renan (1882, as cited in Palti, 2001) memorably stated: 'forgetting, I would even go so far as to say historical error, is a crucial factor in the creation of the nation' (332).

Cadres of memory function as a bridge between public and private, and past and present (Boym, 2001). Imagined communities heavily rely on the production and expression of collective memory to shape, consolidate and promote national identity (Anderson, 1983; Hawkins, 2010). Zerubavel (2003) observes that 'acquiring a group's memories and thereby identifying with its collective past is part of the process of acquiring any social identity' (3). Consequently, imagined communities are inherently mnemonic communities.

The Past as Technology

In Hawkins' (2010) words, 'history defines the nation, and so the nation must define history' (230). History cannot exist without national memory, and therefore cannot be objective, impartial and complete. Similarly, Petersson, Olsson and Popkewitz (2007) understand history as a 'technology' which enables governments to 'rememorialize who 'we' have been' (49). In Foucauldian terminology, technology refers to 'social and political systems' (Behrent, 2013: 55) that both 'produces' individual identity and projects the individual into larger structures of power (ibid.: 90).

Therefore, the past is a technology of collective memory, which is also recognized to be a 'body of knowledge' and a 'process' (Dudai, 2002: 51). Expanding on Dudai (2002), Wertsch and Roediger (2008) talk of collective remembering to explain the processual and relational nature

of reconstructing the past. This conception is interesting insofar as it demonstrates the unfixed nature of memory and the subjective instrumentalization of history. Yet, scholars such as Boym (2001) or Ricoeur (2004) have employed this view to posit that *cadres* exist in a wider cultural context in which groups possess the agency to establish their own collective memory. Whilst this is undeniable, it is problematic to some extent. Connerton (1989) reminds us that 'official' collective memory is vehiculated by states and unconsciously internalised in culture. Bourdieu's concept of symbolic power (1990) compounds this thought by demonstrating that certain agents – and particularly states according to Loveman (2005) - own the capacity to shape the semiotics that shape culture. Susan Sontag (2003) furthers the theory of the past as a technology by assimilating collective memory with ideology. In her book Regarding the Pain of Others (2003), she asserts collective memory serves as 'archives of images […] which encapsulate common ideas of significance and trigger predictable thoughts, feelings' (86). This prescriptive archive, which functions as *cadres* of memory and emotion, is carefully crafted to help deal with current issues and ideas, a phenomenon Halbwachs (1925) terms *presentism*.

Symbols: Crystallizing History

Bourdieusian theory understands those who own symbolic power to be 'structured structures' and 'structuring structures' (Bourdieu, 1990: 164), acting as both (re)producers of symbols and cultural elements present in societies. This is not to undermine individuals' and groups' capacity to produce counternarratives and competing *cadres* but to highlight the inherent hegemonic power of the state over collective memory that seeks to 'maintain the illusion of historical continuity' (Zerubavel, 2003: 7) of imagined communities. This 'illusion' is perhaps best theorised by Pierre Nora (1998) in his Lieux de Mémoire collection. Bodnar (2000) argues these lieux de mémoire ('realms of memory') represent the 'natural order of things' (952) and 'the possibility of significant cohesion […] in the national project' (953). Essentially, these lieux de mémoire function as national symbols embedded in national *cadres* of memory. Sourced from historical representations, symbols, such as 'flags, monuments, memorials, museums […] and emblems, holidays, and ceremonies' (Tsai, 2010: 320) are 'incorporated into daily life' (Hawkins, 2010: 229). Building on Bourdieu's theory, it is essential to understand these

symbols as normative instruments that embody and crystallize the values, myths, and discourses of imagined communities. A clear example in French society is the state's role in vetting the individuals to be integrated into the Panthéon, a national mausoleum for 'the great men of the nation' (Nora, 1989).

Narratives in Mnemonic Communities

Symbols and mythical narratives frame the time and temporality of the imagined community (Olick and Robbins, 1998; Tsai, 2010). National holidays – such as Labour Day or Bastille Day – that celebrate major historical events and the values attached to them are inherently normative. Indeed, 'the shaping and reshaping of time-space relationships within […] systems of representation have profound effects on how identities are located and represented' (Hall, 1996: 620) since belonging is a 'temporal experience that is anchored in not only in place but also time' (May, 2017: 401). Zerubavel (2003) retraces the topographies of such symbolic representations that structure mnemonic communities in his influential book Time Maps. Whilst he outlines too many narrative plots to mention, Zerubavel does highlight that the imagined historical continuity of the nation and its symbols are dependent on a common perception of what modernity is. Moreover, these plot lines relativize historical time in a bid to create 'homogeneous time' (Benjamin as cited in Anderson, 1983: 26), which provides the illusion that individuals of the same community live in the same temporal space.

In the French context, Bouamama (2008) demonstrates two main overarching common narratives. On one hand, a social constructivist view proposes that national identity is ever-evolving and dependent on the social makeup of the republic. For example, Nora (as cited in Gherardi, 2007) cites the European Union as a new cultural resource with which to frame and expand the boundaries of 'traditional' national identity. In this view, Bouamama (2008) explains, discourse from state officials does not focus on solely defining national identity, but the rules that dictate 'communal living'.

On the other hand, Bouamama argues, there exists a primordialist approach, in which 'Frenchness' is the amalgamation of a glorious inherited legacy rooted in symbols and myths.

Essentialist narratives often include nostalgic mentions of the Gaulois spirit, Joan of Arc, the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, and the rejection of 'folkloric' identities such as Alsatian identity, ultimately perceived as backwards and non-modern. This type of discourse 'of national culture […] constructs identities which are ambiguously placed between past and future' (Hall, 1996: 615). Without pinpointing the concept, Hall recognizes this tension inevitably leads to nostalgic imaginings of the imagined community.

Nostalgia

Nostalgia was once perceived as a medical affliction characterized by feelings of longing and homesickness experienced by soldiers on duty abroad. The term was coined by Swiss physician Johannes Hofer, who employed the Greek terminology nostos, meaning a return home and algia, or longing (Beganović, 2012). Today, nostalgia is conceived as 'a process of remembering that is overtly […] emotional' (Smith and Campbell, 2017: 612). This process lies in the affective domain of the 'politics of loss and […] attachment' (Bonnett, 2015: 17). The corpus of research on nostalgia points to a sense of disconnect triggered by disappointment with modern conditions (Aden, 1995) and the rupture between past and present (Boym, 2001). Nostalgia provides psychologically comforting idealized memories of the past, blurring the lines between reality and the imaginary that 'give rise to […] aesthetic[s] of pastness' (Kitson and McHugh, 2015: 487). Effectively, the emotion is a resource for 13 groups and individuals to ensure self-continuity and preserve their 'true' identity (Boym, 2001; Özyürek, 2006; Dauncey and Tinker, 2015).

Bridging Personal, Public and Political

Nostalgia can be portrayed as a natural emotion rooted in an "autobiographical" memory (Mills and Coleman, 1994). Yet, this conception disregards nostalgia as a mnemonic process dependent on the *cadres* upon which memory is retrieved. Nostalgic emotions are 'individually embodied' and 'culturally embedded' (van Dijck, 2006: 359), acting as a bridge between collective remembrance and personal identity. This supposition renders nostalgia a particularly potent tool for political discourse (Özyürek, 2006; Bonnett, 2010). In their research

surrounding pro-Brexit rhetoric, Campanella and Dassù (2019) concluded political leaders nostalgically emphasized a 'golden' past bound to the colonial project of the early 20th century and weaponized prominent figures of British collective memory such as Winston Churchill. Whilst many pro-Brexit voters had lived through neither epochs, the recycling of representations of a past embedded in *cadres* of national memory sought to represent post-European Union Britain as the place for the 'real' Britishness. This case study locates the affective discourse of nostalgia within the realm of the imagined community and exemplifies the role of nostalgia in 'turning history into […] collective mythology' (Boym, 2001: 42).

Prospective Nostalgia

Nostalgia can therefore function as a powerful resource with which to imagine the future (Boym, 2001). This phenomenon is a compelling discursive strategy with which to 'orient nostalgia to the present and future whilst 'placing' nostalgia within a specific geographical frame: the home' (Kitson and McHugh, 2015: 488). This strategy is often found in political communication, yet it is predominantly studied as a resource that empower fringe politics and radical nationalism (see: Bonnett, 2010; Goldstein and Hall, 2017; Kenny, 2017; Polletta and Callahan, 2019; Menke and Wulf, 2021). This chasm demands to be explored, especially as nostalgia does not always necessitate grandiose articulations or vehement claims, as is often theorised. Instead, Boym (2001) asserts that 'to unearth the fragments of nostalgia […] needs a dual archaeology of memory and of place' (xviii). She presents two typologies of nostalgia in discourse, restorative and reflective nostalgia which represent two 'ways of giving shape and meaning to longing' (Boym, 2001: 41) that mutually inform each other (Hogan and Pursell, 2008). These categorizations, whilst not the only existing theory of nostalgic discourse, illustrate the manners in which cultural artefacts and historical representations shape belonging in the imagined community and everyday imaginings of the past (Boym, 2001; Lindstrom, 2005; Özyürek, 2006; Hogan and Pursell, 2008).

Restorative Nostalgia

Restorative nostalgia looks backwards in an effort to restore a community centred around fantasies of 'truth and tradition' (Boym, 2001: xviii). This typology of nostalgia does not recognise itself as nostalgic. Rather, it attempts to 'rebuild the lost home' (Boym, 2001: 41). In her research surrounding Yugonostalgia – a nostalgic sentiment for Yugoslavia – Lindstrom (2005) remarks that restorative nostalgia essentially lies in essentialized representation of the past as 'an image of the absent as prior' (Ricoeur, 2004: 238) which needs to be restored. Restorative nostalgia often materializes in 'formal and ritualistic features' (Lindstrom, 2005: 230), which are best understood as 'invented traditions' (Hobsbawm, 1983). They are vital in affirming social identities by providing a sense of ideological and historical stability (Boym, 2001). This typology comes alive through narratives of conspiracy and calls for a nationalistic 'restoration of origins' (Boym, 2001: 43) that represent authenticity. Restorative nostalgia is often associated with extreme forms of nationalism that rally around essentialist ethnic or religious conceptions of the imagined community (Boym, 2007). Yet, Billig (1998) reminds that the most 'banal' of invented traditions and nationalist symbols occur in day-to-day acts that have become completely normalized in society, such as domestic displays of the national flag or official anthems – or *lieux de mémoire*.

Reflective Nostalgia

Reflective nostalgia dwells in longing and fragments of an idealized past whilst recognising the imperfections and contradictions of the sentimentality of nostalgia (Boym, 2001). This typology of nostalgia understands historical representation as 'the image of the absent as unreal' (Ricoeur, 2004: 238). In opposition to restorative nostalgia, reflective expressions of nostalgia do not seek to rebuild the 'home' or depict the present (Boym, 2001). Instead, reflective nostalgia craves temporal distance, a singularity that enables individuals and groups to imagine a myriad of futures for their imagined community (Lindstrom, 2005).

Boym (2001) suggests reflective nostalgia is located in a space outside of *cadres* of imagined communities and embedded in individual memory. However, it is argued that existing

approaches to reflective nostalgia often denigrate the ideological work behind its manifestation. Özyürek (2006) is one of the rare researchers that comment on this form of nostalgia distinguishes the past clearly from the present, allowing for already-existing ideas and objects to be introduced as brand new in political discourse. In his analysis of political discourse in Turkey, the author makes note that reflective nostalgia allows for the introduction of discourses from different realms of culture – such as religion – which in turn creates new ideological *cadres* with which to image the past, present and future.

Conceptual Framework

The literature review demonstrated that discourse is constitutive of and (re)produces the reality of the imagined community (Hall, 1997). As such, belonging to the imagined community (Anderson, 1983) and possessing ways with which to describe the nation (Billig, 1995) is both a conscious and internalised project that is shaped by the dominant discourses circulating in society and nation-states (Wodak, 1999). Furthermore, the theoretical chapter has outlined narratives, mythologies and symbols that represent history and crystallize the past in the present as the cultural and political groundwork with which the imagined community is constructed and maintained. This dissertation employs a particular focus on nostalgic expressions and representations of national identity, using Boym's (2001) typologies of restorative and reflective nostalgia as the two main analytical tools.

The theoretical disparities surrounding Boym's (2001) conception of the articulation of reflective nostalgia have been broached. The typology of reflective nostalgia is understood by Boym (2001) to exist outside of cadres of memory and within the individual psyche rather than situated within a 'system of cultural representation' (Hall, 1997: 612) of which the imagined community is part of. Through Boym's (2001) theoretical conceptualization, reflective nostalgia is comprehended as productive in its capacity to imagine a myriad of futures. Yet, given the assumption surrounding the symbolic power of discourse, it is suggested reflective nostalgia joins restorative nostalgia in its intrinsic capacity to produce and sustain dominant

ideologies. As such, it is hypothesized that reflective nostalgia can be used as a reductive and normative resource with which to format representations of national identity (Özyürek, 2006).

With this in mind, the objective of this dissertation is to approach these concepts to better understand nostalgia in political discourse and narratives of national identity. To achieve this, an investigation of Emmanuel Macron's presidential speeches is undertaken through Critical Discourse Analysis. Departing from the archetype of the demagogue populist, Macron, elected President in 2017, is accredited in a New York Times article as a 'centrist straddling France's traditional political divide' (Onishi and Méheut, 2020: 1). In their research on Taiwanese expressions of national identity in presidential speeches, Chang and Holt (2009) posit presidential rhetoric, particularly speeches, embody the hegemonic ideals and principles that constitute national identity. Put differently, 'presidents speak for nation' (Chang and Holt, 2009: 304). The choice of using presidential speeches is layered with the ongoing 'crisis' of French national identity (Safran, 1991) and the fact that past and current research have not focused on Macron's discursive usage of nostalgia. Boym's (2001) typologies of nostalgia are employed as an analytical tool with which to explore how identity and longing are construed in Macron's speeches.

Hence, this dissertation seeks to answer the research question (RQ): **How does Emmanuel Macron mobilise nostalgia to shape national identity?**

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

This chapter presents the rationale behind Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), chosen as the empirical method with which to investigate the research question. Following this, I outline the research tools based on Fairclough's (1989) model of CDA and the sampling strategy utilized for conducting research. Finally, I discuss the limitations and ethical implications of CDA in the context of this project.

Critical Discourse Analysis

The theoretical chapter and conceptual framework established the centrality of language and discourse in (re)producing imagined communities, as well as the symbolic power held by political elites in shaping collective memory. Defined as 'a way of signifying a particular domain of social practice from a particular perspective' (Wodak, 2001: 66), discourse constructs and regulates identities and their representations (Hall, 1997). As such, discourse analysis has been posited by the likes of Billig (1995), Wodak (1999), Fairclough (2000a) and Wang (2018) to be the most appropriate method with which to study political leaders' discourse, national identity and collective memory frameworks.

Whilst many forms of discourse analysis – ie. thematic or narrative analysis - are useful in shedding light on discursive patterns or linguistic particularities of national leaders, they lack the recognition of discourse as fundamentally ideological (Weiss and Wodak, 2003). CDA functions on the premise that 'ideology functions in and through discourse' (Breeze, 2011: 520). Janks (1997) further specifies that CDA is a crucial mode of studying discursive practices in relation to identity and social practices, as "we are constituted in and by the available discourses" (p.338). In light of these assumptions, CDA allows for the denaturalization of language and discourses that are usually taken for granted in political discourse (Fairclough, 2000b; Machin and Mayr, 2012) or overlooked as trivial because of their nostalgic sentimentality (Boym, 2001). Given this theoretical premise, CDA 'sharpen[s] awareness of dogmatic, essentialist and naturalising conceptions of nation and national identity' (Wodak, 1999: 9). Moreover, it becomes possible to assess the voices that are left out rather than included, a central principle to the creation of an Other and the forgetting processes inherently contained in remembering.

Fairclough's model of CDA, first outlined in 1989, is appraised by Jørgensen and Phillips (2002) to be the 'most sophisticated framework analysis of the relationship between language use and societal practices' (89). This CDA framework approaches texts through three interconnected levels of analysis which includes textual analysis, 'socio-historical conditions' and 'the processes by which the object is produced and received' (Janks, 1997: 329), allowing

researchers to go beyond purely linguistic interpretations. Moreover, Faircloughian CDA emphasizes the study of intertextuality and interdiscursivity, two concepts I judge especially important for this research.

Interdiscursivity and Intertextuality

Intertextuality 'refers to the phenomenon that other texts are overtly drawn upon' (Wu, 2011: 97) in a given text. Meanwhile, interdiscursivity describes 'the mixing of diverse genres, discourses, or styles associated with institutional and social meanings in a single text' (Wu, 2011: 96). The study of interdiscursivity allows researchers to understand salient or hidden ideological associations woven within a text, which is essential in being able to link the symbols and myths to narratives of national identity.

Collective remembering and nostalgia often draw upon cultural representations and imaginaries of the past. Moreover, in his paper on national myths, Berger (2009) decries the lack of intertextual analyses carried out in national identity research. Hence, Fairclough's approach to CDA is fruitful in extracting the ideological and semiotic elements that are repurposed in a given text, as it focuses on the means by which texts combine a myriad of cultural and historical discourses. As such, this research seeks to correct the empirical blind spot observed by Berger.

Sampling

Random and Purposive Sampling

Transcripts of over 800 speeches given by Macron during his (ongoing) tenure are available on the official government website of the Elysée. To narrow the population, a random sampling approach combined with purposive sampling was undertaken for speeches given between the 1st of January 2019 and the 1 st of June 2021. The beginning of 2019 closely followed the unfolding of the *gilets jaune* movement, an influential nationwide protest grounded in narratives of unhappiness with the present and anti-government rhetoric (Mazower, 2019).

Random sampling involves 'sample members [that] are selected by chance, but with a known probability of selection' (Harter, 2011: 683). This method is chosen as the best sampling strategy with which to eliminate selection bias (Palinkas *et al.*, 2015), a prominent critique of CDA sampling (Breeze, 2011), and narrow the population. I compiled every five transcripts available online so as to gather 60 speeches. Once compiled, every text was systematically reviewed using purposeful sampling. Purposive sampling method is based on 'information-rich cases related to the phenomenon of interest' that allows for the identification of patterns (Palinkas *et al.*, 2015: 533). To make these patterns apparent, each speech was categorized according to the key topic the speeches broached (ie. economic policy or commemorations). Prominent themes and key words from the speeches were recorded as well.

Criteria and Sample Selection

Following this process, a criterion approach to purposive sampling was employed in order to slim the population size. The criteria for the selection of texts were based on both Faircloughian theory of political discourse and the conceptual framework.

In *New Labour, New Language?,* Fairclough (2000b) highlights that political leaders possess idiosyncratic rhetorical styles which they adapt according to genre. Fairclough broadly defines genre in the context of political communication as 'how language figures as a means of government' (2000a: 14) that (re)produce particular identities (Collin, 2012). Given that individuals possess multiple social identities entangled together (Wodak, 1999), it is interesting to select samples that refer to other social identities, such as those relating to religion or local culture. Therefore, a productive sample of texts incorporates different genres, various intended audiences and numerous topics, so as to escape the critique of CDA as a method that analyses 'stereotypical' texts (Breeze, 2011). Moreover, each selected text needed to (1) mention the past, (2) present some of the characteristics of nostalgia as outlined in the theoretical chapter, and (3) refer to French national identity.

Four speeches – specifically, four extracts obtained from the first few pages of the speeches - were selected using the aforementioned criteria [Appendix 1]. This relatively small sample

size is supported by Breeze (2011), who states that CDA of a politician's discourse should only be conducted on small quantity of texts for the analysis to yield meaningful and trustworthy results.

Design of Research Tools

This dissertation will conduct CDA as devised by Norman Fairclough (1989). This involves the analysis of three interdependent elements of discourse, namely textual, discursive and societal (Fairclough, 1989; Janks, 1997).

- **Textual**. This analytical dimension concentrates on linguistic elements. I will be looking at vocabulary choice, verbal modalities, mood and themes (Janks, 1997). Considering national identity is constructed through binaries (Bouamama, 2008) and nostalgia necessitates temporal markers, a particular focus is put on the study of pronouns, transitivity and verb tenses. Moreover, it has been established that myths and symbols are crucial in imagining the nation. Hence, linguistic tools of symbolism and abstraction such as metaphors and personifications (Wodak, 1999) will be analysed.

- **Discursive**. This level of analysis describes the processes of production and consumption of the text. It spotlights intertextual and interdiscursive analysis (Fairclough, 2003), a particular element of focus in order to accord with Berger's (2009) plea.

- **Societal**. This feature of discourse is concerned with context and "sociocultural practice" (Janks, 1997: 330). This dimension noteworthily focuses on institutions, which include the invented traditions restorative nostalgia often employs.

Limitations and Reflexivity

Although CDA is argued to be the most suitable method with which to conduct this research, there are several limitations and pitfalls to be mindful of. First and foremost, presidential rhetoric is not the sole producer of national identity (Machin and Mayr, 2012). Berger (2009) points to the fact that films and music exert just as much influence in circulating myths and symbols of the nations. Breeze (2011) extends this critique of CDA, warning that the method can lead to 'naively deterministic' (494) findings that ignore audiences' understanding. Hence, it is crucial to note that Macron's speeches can be negotiated and contested, rather than taken at face value by groups and individuals.

Second, the sample texts are extracts rather than complete transcripts. Given the previous emphasis on interdiscursivity and intertextuality, this limitation essentially renders the findings marginally incomplete. Wodak (1999) asserts intertextuality and interdiscursivity constitute the 'context' in which discourses of national identity are produced and understood. To mitigate this to the best of my ability, I carefully selected the passages that best resumed Macron's overall stance, which were often – if not always – outlined in the transcripts' first few pages. Furthermore, the texts analysed were originally delivered orally. There are no examinations of Macron's tone, gestures and other visual accompaniments, which are constitutive of the discursive act (Machin and Mayr, 2012).

Finally, Ainsworth and Hardy (2004) observe that CDA researchers' 'accounts are inevitably freighted with ethical and ideological implications' and biases that emerge in 'writing conventions' (Gergen, 2001 as cited in Ainsworth and Hardy, 2004: 246). In response to this, it is important to indicate that CDA, as an interpretative method, has never shied away from overtly asserting itself as political (Fairclough, 1989; Wodak, 2001). However, this critique invites the researcher to approach texts and their own research self-reflexively. This practice implies recognizing my positionality as author and researcher by disclosing my identities and position of power (Bourke, 2014). As a French woman born and raised in France with political beliefs that somewhat align to Macron's political project, I acknowledge this research is of particular personal relevance, and therefore may carry implicit bias as to the study of Macron's

discourse. My positionality as white, atheist, heterosexual, and cisgenderentails I have never grappled with French identity in the manners someone from a different or marginalised background and identity may, and probably has, done. In Janks' (1997) words, 'engagement [with the text] without estrangement is a form of submission to the power of the text regardless of the reader's own positions.' To favour the denaturalization of discourse regardless of my positionality, I follow Janks' (1997) advice to start with textual analysis. Lastly, it must be disclosed that translations of Sample 1 and 4 in this dissertation are my own.

Ethics

No ethical concerns regarding the methodology and research aims were detected prior to conducting this study. Approval to undertake the research was granted by my dissertation supervisor at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter reviews the findings and interpretation of the CDA. Given that nostalgia is deeply contextual and that presidential speeches are 'confined to the purpose of the occasion' (Chang and Holt, 2009: 304), each text is analysed separately to appreciate the intersections, complexities and particularities of nostalgia's relationship with French identity. As the RQ seeks to illuminate the manners in which Macron employs nostalgia, the results and interpretations are distilled and organized in concordance with nostalgia as (a) discontentment with the present, (b) the restoration of 'truth and tradition' and (c) a reflexive approach to the past. The coding scheme is found in Appendix 2.

Sample 1: Fiftieth Anniversary of the Election of Georges Pompidou

Sample 1 [Appendix 3] consists of Macron's nostalgic 2019 tribute to former French president Georges Pompidou. Pompidou is associated with an era spawning the 1950s and 1960s until the early 1970s, renowned in French collective consciousness as the Trente Glorieuses in France. This period is represented by rapid economic expansion, social reform (Pawin, 2013)

19

and what Macron qualifies as the 'French definition of modernity.' Throughout the speech, Macron defines France as a land of contradictions and constant tensions:

> France in its true form, which is to say this productive tension between rootedness and movement, conservatism and progress, entrenchment into the land and the thought of the world as it happens.

Finding « True » France in Rurality

The vocabulary choice of 'rootedness', 'conservatism' and 'land' intertextually link to rurality, a recurrent theme explored as the opposite of industrial progress and cultural globalisation through the lens of restorative nostalgia. Macon explicitly calls for 'the will to <u>preserve</u> our rural identity, our natural heritage.' Rurality and rural folk, as understood by many philosophers of the Enlightenment such as Rousseau, are entities inherently understood as 'authentic' (Morrison, 2003). Therefore, true French national identity is envisioned as ingrained in the rural, not only in opposition to the urban, but as a discursive tool of resistance with which to maintain this 'authentic' identity.

Macron's projection of restorative nostalgia is enriched through the interweaving of environmental (Hogan and Pursell, 2008) and biological discourses. He personifies France through terms that attribute "bowels" and a "personality" to rural France. Tyrrell (1996) denotes that such metaphorical personifications build a picture of nations as "a whole greater than any or all of its constituent parts" (241) which contribute to the construction of a mythical narrative in which French identity is immutable and natural. The environmental discourse includes references to social and governmental institutions such as 'Direction for the protection of nature then a Ministry for the Environment' followed by mentions of the 'Club of Rome' and 'Meadows rapport' which represent early initiatives of environmental thoughts in the mainstream political arena. This emphasis on ecology and the protection of the environment not only serves as a depiction of Macron's political agenda, but also portrays French identity and heritage as necessitating state involvement to survive.

20

French Modernity and Soft Power

Macron acknowledges that historical representations are idealized through a 'deforming prism.' Through the personal pronoun 'I' - repeated more than thirty times - Macron is self-aware that his own discourse on modernity, Pompidou and the Trente Glorieuses is nostalgic and grounded in sentimental symbolism. Quoting directly from Pompidou's 'dear old France' speech, Macron disassociates the 'traditional' past with the 'industrial' present, a defining feature of reflective nostalgia. Yet, this apparent reflexivity and separation of time enables Macron to explain what constitutes a 'French definition of modernity' which he hyperbolically defines as 'the most extreme progress.' This implies France as unique on the world stage, especially as the text is riddled with exclusive pronouns such as 'we' or 'our', a strategy American presidents often employ to portray national exceptionalism (Gilmore *et al.*, 2020). This exceptionality is textually visible through an active voice that grants France agency (Billig, 2008) and personifications.

> France confident in itself and its assets

> France will not suffer them but will live them, invent them, carry them

Personifications of abstract ideas and structures such as the nation-state are purely subjective and ideological (Engström, 2018; Long, 2018). The agency that is granted to France allows Macron to depict 'French modernity' as the catalyst for hegemonic soft power through the discursive and societal aspects. These phrases understand France as possessing its own natural attributes and a 'spirit' which enable citizens to innovate and resist external influences. Naming iconic brands such as 'Airbus' Concorde' and 'DS', Macron undergoes what Aronczyk (2013) understands as 'nation branding', an ideological process which relies on capitalistic discourse. Furthermore, Macron interlaces mentions of important literary and artistic figures such as Mauriac, Soulages and the impressionist movement. This interdiscursive aspect is understood as another form of nation branding which highlights French identity as polarized from other countries through cultural features (Vecchi *et al.,* 2021).

Interdiscursivity focusing on culture and the arts productively tie restorative and reflective nostalgia together. Macron, directly quoting Pompidou, understands French identity as 'this art of being French.' This turn of phrase, as well as the overarching theme of rurality as authenticity implicitly frames this 'art' as something inherently existing within French borders and inherited by the French, an exclusive invented tradition that encompasses a lifestyle dependent on identity. Moreover, the emphasis on France's soft power is understood to sustain France's 'permanence', highlighting French national identity as both grounded in culture and nature.

The Creation of a New Symbol

Through both forms of nostalgia, Macron paints a portrait of Pompidou not as a presidential figure, but as a symbol of French modernity and progress that encapsulates a '<u>French and republican</u> destiny.' The usage of the word 'destiny' insinuates an inescapable fatality shaped by France and the Republic, which go hand in hand, rather than an acknowledgement of history and government as socially constructed.

Firstly, this 'destiny' is repetitively likened throughout the text to that of Charles de Gaulle, a former French president that has come to embody a lieu de mémoire in French collective memory (Agulhon, 2000) and inscribed as such through Macron's employment of the nickname 'the General.' If De Gaulle incarnates the spirit of French resistance and traditionality according to Macron, Pompidou embodies a counter-symbol of 'progress', 'modernity' and 'meritocracy' that defies Boym's (2001) definition of reflective nostalgia as inhabiting outside of cadres of memory. Macron associates these abstract ideas to those of republican values, which in turn shapes French exceptionalism and personal destiny: Pompidou is the 'grandson of a peasant, son of a secular teacher.'

Pompidou's embodiment of French essence is instituted in Macron's indirect quoting of the nondescript "international interlocutors" that were reported to have stated:

> He had a French face, as unqualifiable as that expression is, because he incarnated
> France

As understood by Bouamama (2008) and Zerubavel (2003), the arrangement of plots surrounding ethnicity are often rooted in nostalgic primordialist understandings of national identity that are fundamentally exclusionary. Macron does not explicitly state who is excluded, but imagery of Pompidou depicts him as a tall, white male. In conclusion, the mythical narratives and symbolic representation of Pompidou as the face of French modernity is grounded in both reflective and restorative nostalgia. The many lists that detail Pompidou's activities in rural France or his literary and artistic endeavours bridge the private citizen with the public figure, immortalizing Pompidou in cadres of memory as a lieu de mémoire that incarnates French national identity and the *Trente Glorieuses*.

Sample 2: Fight Against Separatism – The Republic in Action

Sample 2 [Appendix 4] is an extract of a heavily-mediatized text uttered in October 2020, two weeks before the terrorist attack and murder of public school teacher Samuel Paty, a time of fear in collective consciousness (Dryef, 2020b).

Moral Panic

Although seemingly focused on separatism, which is often associated with multiculturalism (Chua, 2018), Macron frames this issue as one of 'radical Islam' and 'Islamism.' He repetitively insists that radical Islam is specifically targeted so as to avoid 'stigmatising' other forms of Islam and Muslim communities, but the constant stigmatization of Islam with pejorative vocabulary and an active voice builds the entire religion as a political entity that defies the Republic. Islam as a whole is personified and agentic:

> Wahhabism, Salafism, the Muslim Brotherhood – many of these manifestations
> were also, initially, peaceful for some […] They themselves have become
> radicalized

The present perfect, exemplified in this extracted quote, is regarded by Gu (2018) to attest to an 'inclusive past, suggesting a relationship between the past and now (and possibly the future)' (140). Moreover, by naming the Muslim Brotherhood and other 'manifestations' of

Islam established outside French borders, Macron implies radical Islam in France is the product of imported theologies, which he assimilates to 'ideologies' that present a threat to an established French identity, as well as to the paradigm of the French nation: laïcité (secularism). In Macron's words, 'A united France is <u>cemented</u> by laïcité', a metaphor that conveys secularism as the foundation for national harmony and stability in the imagined community.

Using the personal pronoun 'I', Macron historicizes a chronological account of Islam in France and around the world. The societal dimension of CDA highlighted mentions of 'Charlie Hebdo', 'the attacks of January 2015' and 'victims' families' during this explanation. Creutz-Kömppi (2008) denotes that the discursive usage and creation of collective memory is an ideological form of Othering. The portrayal of a quick succession of tragic events attributed to radical Islam depicts the religion as the murderous destructor of French families and communities - the fabric of the imagined community. In this sense, this representation of Islam in France constitutes a frame of memory with which to imagine the religion in the context of 'cohabitation' (Bouamama, 2008). In line with this depiction, the figure of the child is often mentioned:

> We know that 70 young people […] have left for Syria and it's <u>often children of the Republic</u> who stray down this path

> But we have to realize that a radical Islamism […] leads to the trivialisation of and to some of our citizens, <u>our children</u>, choosing the worst or believing the worst has become natural

The salient intertextual utilization of youth and children is of particular importance. First, children are a trope often used in discourse to portray innocence and malleable beings with little agency (Strassler, 2008). As such, the treatment of children by radical Islamism is immoral. Second, the child often serves as a manner to embody and mediate the vision the imagined community has of itself (Shiraishi, 1997; Strassler, 2008). The term 'Republic' is

24

consistently interwoven, implying it is the entire nation and Republican institutions that are under attack. Through authoritative observations that employ strong adjectives, Macron installs a sentiment of fear, a moral panic that the French way of life is endangered, exemplified with:

> Repeated deviations from the values of the Republic, which often translates to the constitution of a counter-society

Fighting for Identity

Macron authoritatively employs a form of restorative nostalgia with which to take back the values and the individuals that have 'strayed' from Republican institutions and society. As such, the identity of the imagined community is assimilated with the State, rather than a form of cultural intimacy (Herzfeld, 1996).

To reassure and legitimize his policy plans to combat Islamic separatism, Macron utilises martial vocabulary. Words such as 'reconquering', 'recapture', 'fight' (used three times) and 'strikes' suggest both offensive and defensive strategies against radical Islam. The use of uniting pronouns, such as 'we' supposes this project is not solely carried by the government but gathers every individual within the imagined community, even when these projects are carried out by special task forces:

> So we must very resolutely and strongly confront unacceptable and radical manifestations

> We have fought in the Levant, […] we are fighting in the Sahel

Without explicitly depicting the past as better, the notion of fighting against an emerging entity in opposition to the imagined community idealizes the past. Through his speech, it is posited ideas and individuals must align with French identity reposing on 'Republican values', rather than the opposite. Textually, the prefix 're-', which means 'again', supposes French identity is continuous and everlasting.

25

The Sahel and Levant – regions historically colonized by France - and the verb 'reconquering' are intrinsically linked to colonial discourse (Quijano, 2000). Macron overtly blames postcolonial and anticolonial ideologies in the text – considering them a 'trap' - that thwarts an all-encompassing French identity - or 'the way with which see ourselves.' The intertextual and interdiscursive theme of imported Islamism and the demise of a French lifestyle supposes immigration from the colonies to the metropole is implicitly to blame for Islamic separatism.

Colonial Reflections

Reflective nostalgia appears in the portrayal of the past as flawed, yet unbothered by preoccupations of the present. Macron, once again positioning himself as the authoritative figure on these topics by speaking in the first person and as the voice of the Republic itself, expresses ambivalence about France's official past with both Islam and colonialism:

> We are a country with a colonial past and traumatisms that aren't dealt with

> We must return on our own traumas and insufficiencies

Macron recognizes the failures of the French state by approaching the topics of the Algerian War, colonialism in the Maghreb, and the segregation of ethnicities through 'ghettoization.' Macron projects responsibility to 'we', the nation, to reconsider and generate a new official memory that acknowledges trauma, violence and exclusion, without condemning past or current governments. Moreover, this sort of statement regarding coloniality is not novel. Chirac had inaugurated a memorial of the Algerian War in 2002 to include narratives of colonial violence in the public sphere. As such, Macron's discourse follows the pattern of reflective nostalgia that Özyürek (2006) had identified. Interestingly, this form of reflective nostalgia that glorifies a French culture but demands French national identity faces its own 'hidden' reality is subsumed by the discourse of restorative nostalgia. First, the identification of institutional failure is juxtaposed with France as a victim of separatism, which suggests the Republic cannot be fully held accountable. Second, the call to 'break these taboos that feed separatism' in link with colonialism links back to Macron's usage of restorative nostalgia that

involve (a) military jargon to defend national identity from separatism and (b) anticolonial and postcolonial theory as scapegoats for the rise of separatism. Postcolonial and anticolonial theories suggest official national memory should not be 29 universally imposed by a dominant group, but to shine a light on 'silenced memories' (Noussis, 2020: 2). Consequentially, through both restorative and reflective nostalgia, Macron glorifies a time in which universality and a single state-sponsored narrative of history circulated in society to promote one culture.

Sample 3: Speech at Jagiellonian University, Krakow

In Sample 3 [Appendix 5], Macron emotionally addresses a crowd of young people, an audience often characterized by him as 'the future' during an official visit to Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland. Macron nostalgically touches upon the enmeshment of French, Polish and European history, using many dates, locations and national figures to shape a collective Franco-European memory.

A Normative European History

Throughout the text, Macron parallels French national identity to European identity and Polish identity. As such, there is little distinction between culture but a common thread of principles that highlight and emphasize French identity. This narrative strategy essentializes and distils Europe into a set of principles and concepts rather than a disparate geographical region:

> This history of Poland is a European history because Europeans know deep down
> the infinite fragility of their civilization and their model

First, the quote proposes a way of life prone to destruction. Second, Macron understands Europe as a model, which is implicitly but necessarily attached to the Enlightenment's ideals of governance, as is shown intertextually. Although this model has arguably evolved over time, it was originally seen as a democratic model that excluded minorities and women from public participation. Hence, European civilisation is essentialized, implicitly portrayed as predominantly male and white. The ideological instrumentalization of the past is conveyed

27

through restorative and reflective nostalgia. Restorative nostalgia in the European context consists of a call for preservation and a search for truth. This is characteristically demonstrated through the anaphora 'looking at history in the eye' that suggests revealing a 'real' history. The snippet below assumes European history is set in stone and prone to being 'lost'.

> Preserve […] any attempts of falsification, of rewriting, from some countries or
> some parties

Macron furthers historical memory as factual certainty by qualifying Polish history of 'historical scientific facts.' Macron sees 'conflict between historians and historiographical debates' as necessary to 'create a form of truth which is the story of our nations and our Europe.' The juxtaposition of preserving versus the necessity for debate and continuous development indicates that only certain institutions possess the authority to craft a European history that aligns with the continuation of the European 'civilisation'. The memory of such civilisation, according to Macron, brings 'hope' of a 'renaissance', a historical period often considered as the precursor and catalyst of the Enlightenment (Borghesi, 2019). The unremitting presence of the pronoun 'our', which implies a normative element to reflective nostalgia in regard to European identity. As such, European identity exists in a limbo between natural and social identity.

Finally, certain political actors, regimes and states are positioned as Other. He explicitly mentions the USSR, Nazism, Russia, Hungary and the current Polish government as players that revise history to suit their 'fantasy national memories' which endangers the 'principles' of European and French thought.

Finding France Through Poland

Both forms of 'European' nostalgia and transnational memory, at play within one another, enable Macron to compare, contrast and combine the principles and values that make up the essence of French and Polish national identity. He declares:

> What unites us in this common story is, I believe <u>very deeply</u>, in Poland and in
> France, being patriotic.

The usage of the first person indicates Macron's personal interjections and deepseated sentiments as leader of the French nation. This enables the subjective transposition of French ideals onto the representation of Poland, and vice-versa. For example, Macron retraces the history of Poland's desubjugation from both Nazi and Soviet regimes, and uses the present perfect to assert:

> <u>You</u> have led miracles, the miracle of independence, and you have led, I must say,
> one of the great miracles of freedom of the 20th century

Macron places liberty, freedom and independence, unlocked through the existence of patriotism, as ideals that both France and Poland share. Boym (2007) denotes patriotism itself as inherently nostalgic, emotionally directed at both the real and the imagined. The discursive dimension of CDA emphasized many direct quotes, such as one from La Fayette in 1833 that Macron re-employs: 'all of France is Polish.' Macron contrasts this quote with another one from 1848, in which Poland is a 'principle', rather than a nationality or national identity, that emphasizes 'fraternity'. Fraternity is easily recognizable in France as one of the key words in the national motto. The emphasis on the dates from the 19th century transcribe these 'principles' of patriotism and fraternity as continuous, enabling a view of French identity as incessant.

An Unsaid Mythology

To conclude, Macron employs both forms of nostalgia to shape a European history based on the principles of the Enlightenment and express friendship towards Poland to outline the values and principles - such as patriotism, fraternity, independence - that make the French nation-state. The past, materialized through dates and major historical events, is utilized as a technology with which to shape collective memory and symbolic values. In turn, this enables

the creation of a mythology of Poland which, by parallelism and the absence of comparisons, constructs a glorified mythology of France.

Macron highlights the best events of French history whilst subtly painting Poland's past as turbulent, uncertain and tainted by the list 'these dramas, these dead, these tears.' Poland is depicted throughout the extract as having traversed and lived different realities and temporalities. In opposition, Macron makes no mention of such turbulence in France. The absence of description portrays France as benefitting from 'heterogenous time' that Anderson (1983) describes as a founding concept for the existence of the imagined community. The glorified past inscribes itself into a new mythology of European and French memory. Whilst Poland struggled with different regimes and forms of repression, France savoured political and governmental stability, a narrative that consciously forgets events such as the Vichy regime or decolonisation wars. Macron does recognize a somewhat obscure past in Europe and France. However, these acknowledgements are either done using a passive voice, 'Europe is jostled by doubts, crises, troubles' or downplaying through the adverb 'sometimes':

Antisemitism, the hate of the Other and the capacity that we have <u>sometimes</u> had.

Sample Text 4: Speech at the Conference of Ambassadors

Uttered in the context of the G7 forum hosted in Biarritz, Sample 4 is a speech addressed to ambassadors of France, a very specific audience since diplomats' role involves portraying a hegemonic form of national identity abroad (Hixson, 2008). From environmental policy to reflections on neoliberalism, many different genres and contexts intersect to solidify a singular French identity.

The Bousculement of the World Order

The term 'bousculer' is employed consistently throughout the text to describe Macron's view of a new world order. There are no suitable translations for this term in English, although it closely approaches the notion of jostling, shaking and pushing in an abrupt manner. Interestingly, the term is either employed as a passive verb with Europe, France or the

hegemonic Western world order as the objects of this 'bousculement', which represents the nominalization of the verb. Inspired by Fairclough, Billig (2008) states that passive voices and nominalization 'permit[s] the deletion of agency' (792). As such, Macron positions 'Western' countries as victims and involuntary subjects of this 'bousculement.' In Macron's eyes, this jostling leads to the effacement of the reality Western civilisation (denoted with the pronoun 'our'), France, and inherently French identity:

> <u>Our</u> certainties and our organisation is disappearing

> The habits and information that were ours are not valid

The subjects that spur this shoving and consistently employs a discourse that emphasizes game and strategy: 'reshuffling of the cards' or 'the cards in their hands.' It must be noted that 'card' in French means both 'map' and 'card'. This subtlety engenders a double entendre in which the discourse of game is not only associated with the idea of socio-economic reorganisation, but a game in which the stakes comprise state borders, which make up the premise for the existence of the imagined community (Anderson, 1983). The subjects Macron names are China, India and Russia, of which he states:

> These new economies that are becoming not only economic powers but political
> ones, and <u>who think of themselves</u>, like some have written, as true civilisation
> states

This statement works on two levels. First, Macron asserts these nations only exist through their political and economic power, but in no way represent a 'civilisation'. Second, coupled with the repetition of 'ensauvagement' – the descent into a savage state – that Macron considers as the result of this new world order, the statement implicitly carries a colonial discourse. Simpson (2007) states the use of the word savage denotes an 'uncivilised Other' (561). This connotation was the basis for the French colonial project, who presented its mission as 'civilizing' (Røge and Leclerc, 2012). This not only implies the superiority of Frenchness but

supposes the countries Macron names possess an ideology contrary to that of the Enlightenment and Rousseau's social contract, which situates civilisation as the opposite of the state of nature – or the figure of the savage (Røge and Leclerc, 2012).

"Taking Back Control" and Cultural Specificity

In light of Macron's dire ascertainment regarding the state of the world, restorative nostalgia acts as a powerful and empowering tool for resistance. Macron does so by recycling pro-Brexit discourse, which Campanella and Dassù (2019) have established as grounded in nostalgic sentiments. This discourse is characterized with slogans such as 'take back control of our lives, our nation' which implies the French nation – and thus national identity - is under attack and dominated by external powers. The Brexit discourse is positioned as part of French 'DNA', suggesting resistance is naturally part of French identity. The notion of taking back control is linked by Macron as achievable because of the "French spirit" that consists of ideals and ideas sourced in the Enlightenment: 'humanism', 'vocation for the universal', 'civil liberties', 'democracy' and the separation of religion and state. Consequently, French national identity presumes the integration of these ideals, or individuals risk their personality being assimilated to that of the savage.

European Universality

There is another layer to restorative nostalgia in Macron's speech. On the opposite spectrum, this form of restorative nostalgia subsumes French specifity for European universality by evoking the Enlightenment and the Renaissance as universal principles that will reiterate European and Western hegemony. However, superimposed with Frenchness as an identity of ideals, Macron implies Europe could not exist without France, which is the foundation of 'a project of European civilisation.' Yet, Macron does exclude from this project American culture, 'Christian Hungary' and 'Orthodox Russia.' As such, Macron positions the values of the Enlightenment not solely as abstract principles, but cultural and secular invented traditions guided by French thinking that shapes 'European civilisation.'

DISCUSSION

Comparative Analysis

The text-by-text analysis and interpretation of findings afforded a deep-dive into the singular manners both restorative and reflective nostalgia articulated one hegemonic vision of French national identity. To better respond to the RQ, a comparative analysis is necessary.

Overall, a clear pattern emerges. To begin, Macron outlines a joyful past (Sample 1) or a bleak present, outlining the reasons through 'I', emotional adjectives and metaphorical discourses such as the figure of the child (Sample 2) or gaming (Sample 4). In employing the past as a tool with which to shape his presentist narrative, Macron's politics of memory set the stage on which reflective and restorative nostalgia mutually intersect (Hogan and Pursell, 2008).

Restorative nostalgia, present in all four extracts, rests on the preservation of a 'truthful' past, joining past empirical observations (Boym, 2001; Lindstrom, 2005). This typology is mobilised as a tool of resistance with which to protect and imagine the nation's historical continuity. The lexicon of environmentalism and biology were employed in Sample 1 and 4 to accentuate French identity as a natural occurrence inherent in France that must be safeguarded and cultivated in conjunction with the State. This is balanced with the repetition of 'destiny' and an evergreen 'French spirit', joining Hall's assertion that national identity exists through narratives of 'national destiny that pre-existed us' (Hall, 1996: 613). Textually, this is indicated through the usage of a general 'our' that rarely differentiates and personifications of France. The social and discursive dimensions of CDA exhibited the idea of modernity and the Enlightenment as the blueprint for French identity, portraying it both as 'modern' and traditional. Given this precedent, restorative nostalgia is inherently normative. As has been discussed throughout the analysis, the representation of the values and principles of the Enlightnment paints a portrait of Frenchness as white and mostly masculine.

Reflective nostalgia, identified in three texts, diverts from Boym's (2001) analysis. Rather than provide individuals with the ability to personally remember and freely imagine what can be, reflective nostalgia in Macron's discourse mirrors social constructivist narratives that imposes

a subjective way of conceiving a collective past and future. The polarizing usage of pronouns that create an 'us' versus 'them' mentality construct an ideological framework that glorify French cultural and historical specificity. For example, Sample 1, 2 and 3 identified that the recognition of an imperfect past and the distortion that comes with historical narratives. Instead of opening up possibilities for the future, Macron constructed the moral customs that define belonging in the imagined community, such as refuting postcolonial thought (Sample 2). In doing so, Macron builds what Herzfeld (1996) coins as cultural intimacy, a 'common social context' based on negative and positive cultural traits – such as a penchant for the arts and stubbornness (Sample 1) – that enable proud self- categorization. Subsequently, Anderson's (1983) conception of the imagined community encompasses political and cultural affinity (Hall, 1997).

The most striking finding is the pattern with which reflective and restorative nostalgia interplay. Using Morden's (2016) terminology of national narratives, reflective nostalgia comes alive through micro narratives of the nation, which are 'proximate and specific' (450) and embedded in meta-narratives which 'locate national stories within a wider, holistic scheme' (Auerbach, 2009: 295) represented through the abstract ideals of the Enlightenment vehiculated through restorative nostalgia. The expressions of reflective nostalgia allow Macron to consistently loop back to restorative nostalgia, which by definition rests on invented traditions and ideological cadres of memory. For example, the interaction between both typologies structured new ways of remembering the modern through Pompidou (Sample 1) or a glorious French past free of political instability (Sample 3). As such, reflective nostalgia is central in propping up cadres and vehiculating an ideological, reductive view of national identity. Surprisingly, this wider cognitive schemata crafted by Macron imposed a sense of cultural intimacy with Europe (Sample 3 and 4) that gives way to a trans- and supra-national dimension of national identity.

Implications

The mutual and complex interplay of nostalgias affords two main implications in regard to Boym's (2001) seminal text *The Future of Nostalgia*, as well as the broader literature and this dissertation.

First, in line with Özyürek (2006), I suggest that the claim that reflective nostalgia exists outside of the boundaries of *cadres* is impractical. Instead, it is the constructed chemistry between restorative and reflective nostalgia that produces and perpetuates the cadres of national memory – and even trans- and supra-national memory in Sample 3. For example, the creation of Pompidou as a national symbol and physical incarnation of France in Sample 1 cannot be executed without distancing oneself from the past. Effectively, reflective nostalgia 'temporalizes space' (Boym, 2001: x) but, unlike Boym's suggestion (2001) it does so with the ideologies expressed in the present.

Second, the insinuation that *cadres* of historical memory shaped the manners in which nostalgia is vehiculated, as I had outlined in the literature review, needs to be nuanced. Macron did seek to maintain these historical frames that already circulated in society, such as the *Trente Glorieuses* (Sample 1). However, it had not been suggested that it is the framing of the present and future, rather than the past, that enabled the creation of new *cadres* constituted of symbols and narratives, as demonstrated in all samples. Sample 4 denoted a potent form of nostalgia that regrets the present through *cadres* that shape the future. As such, memory should be reconceptualized in this dissertation as the social shaping of time, rather solely than the past.

Limitations

However, these findings are limited to several issues in regard to the methodology and samples employed. The extracts are originally in French, which posed some issues when it came to outlining the results in English. For example, French uses gendered indefinite and definite articles, which allows for metaphorical expressions of objects (ie. 'France' is always feminine) and can link nostalgic articulations to gendered representations and identities

(Richy and Burnett, 2020). Two samples were available pre-translated on the official *Elysée* website, but it was remarked that some verbs were transposed from passive to active, and vice-versa, which posed issues when undertaking the CDA.

Furthermore, restorative and reflective nostalgia are not the only analytical lenses with which to investigate nostalgic discourse. Many have theorised other forms, such Batcho and Shikh's (2016) 'anticipatory nostalgia' that closely resembles the findings of Sample 4. In retrospect, given that Macron's speeches have political ends and seek to shape imaginings of the future that legitimize his policy plans, such a typology could have been included. In concordance, it has been noted that the texts are extracts sourced from larger, broader texts. Many outlined policy plans and proposals that were exposed as rational tools for resisting a threatening present. As such, the analysis is missing a link that would expose the intricate ties of policy and nostalgia (Howell, Kitson and David, 2019).

CONCLUSION

This dissertation set out to understand the manners in which Emmanuel Macron employed nostalgia in his speeches to shape national identity. Through the assumptions outlined in the conceptual framework and Boym's (2001) typologies of nostalgia, a CDA of four speeches was undertaken. The findings cohesively paint a portrait of French national identity as a natural attribute, a trait powered by the values and principles of modernity and the Enlightenment as understood by the French state. The nostalgic depiction of the country additionally indicates a vision in which the unique features of French identity shape history and transcend territorial boundaries. These findings brought a more nuanced understanding of Boym's (2001) clear-cut categorization of reflective and restorative nostalgia. Both mutually instrumentalize and re(produce) symbols, institutions and narratives embedded in the cultural fabric of a society which shapes the imagined community. Hence, both typologies not only depend on collective memory frames but ideologically format these very *cadres* of remembering.

Although certain limitations pertaining to translation and a narrow analytical framework were identified, the findings ascertain that nostalgia cannot exist without the social shaping of time. Furthermore, Wodak (1999) astutely notes that there is never one, but multiple negotiated national identities and imagined communities. Yet, government-backed policy is shaped by dominant nostalgic discourses from political leaders that set out rehabilitative or preventive measures linked to the representation of past, present and future (Howell *et al.*, 2019). It is contended further research focus on the articulated rationales behind policy-making to provide a more comprehensive overview of the intrinsic link between the politics of nostalgia and the regulation of identities and lifestyle.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Samples

Sample 1. Extract, paragraph 3 to paragraph 11 of:

Macron, E. (2019) *Discours à l'Occasion du Colloque sur Georges POMPIDOU* [Speech Transcript*]. Palais de l'Elysée, Paris, France. 19 June. URL: https://www.elysee.fr/emmanuel-macron/2019/06/19/cinquantieme-anniversaire-de-lelection-de-georges-pompidou [Last accessed and printed 01/07/2021]

Sample 2. Extract, paragraph 4 to paragraph 18 of:

Macron, E. (2020) *Speech by Emmanuel Macron, President of the Republic, on the Fight Against Separatism* [Speech Transcript]. Les Mureaux, France. 2 October. URL: https://www.elysee.fr/emmanuel-macron/2020/10/02/fight-against-separatism-the-republic-in-action-speech-by-emmanuel-macron-president-of-the-republic-on-the-fight-against-separatism.en [Last accessed and printed on 01/07/2021]

Sample 3. Extract, paragraph 14 to paragraph 39 of:

Macron, E. (2020) *Speech Before Students of Jagiellonian University in Krakow* [Speech Transcript]. Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland. 4 February. URL: https://www.elysee.fr/en/emmanuel-macron/2020/02/05/president-emmanuel-macrons-speech-at-jaguellonne-university-krakow [Last accessed and printed on 01/07/2021]

Sample 4. Extract, paragraph 6 to paragraph 20 of:

Macron, E. (2019) *Discours du Président de la République Emmanuel Macron à la Conférence des Ambassadeurs et des Ambassadrices de 2019* [Speech Transcript]. Paris, France. URL : https://www.elysee.fr/emmanuel-macron/2019/08/27/discours-du-president-de-la-republique-a-la-conference-des-ambassadeurs-1 [Last accessed and printed on 01/07/2021]

APPENDIX 2: Coding Scheme
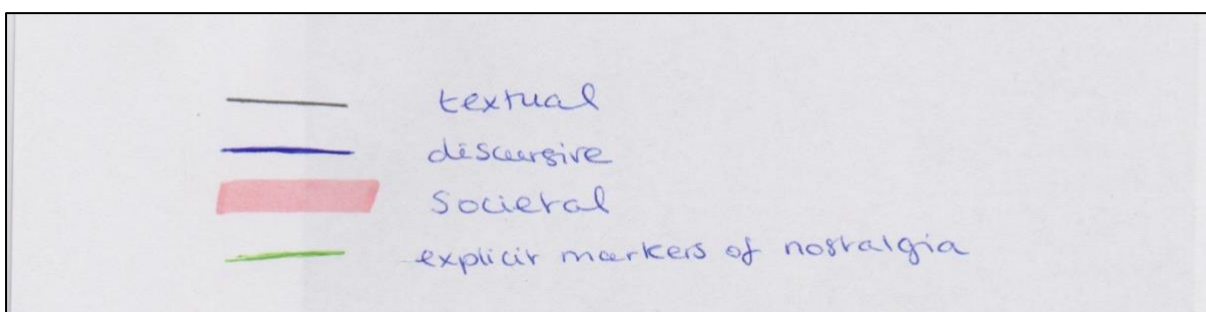
APPENDIX 3: Sample 1 Annotated Text. *Translation is my own.*

The first lesson I want to draw is, deep down, a French definition of modernity. The action of the one who was for 7 years Prime Minister of President DE GAULLE and 5 years President of the Republic carries to this day into the daily lives of our fellow citizens and corresponds to an extraordinary moment of our country's modernisation. The traces are everywhere in the lives of our cocitizens, they have become evidences in places where sometimes gestures or decisions have been the object of interrogations, controversies, sometimes of contestations that should send us back I would say to a form of contemporary calm: what becomes an evidence in the life of a country is always the result of debates. For Parisians Georges POMPIDOU is of course Beaubourg, and thank you for being there dear President, this unique place of art and culture that wasn't the most comfortable decision to make at the time where it was; it's the *boulevard périphérique* that whilst it was built considerably unclogged the circulation at the heart of the capital and participated to this novel development of this region, once again during these years under the President DE GAULLE and the President POMPIDOU. For the inhabitants of big French cities, Georges POMPIDOU, is the thousand consecutive projects to the politics of the balance of metropolis he initiated and for the first time the Republic affirmed there wasn't only Paris and the Ile-de-France and that the State should erect in Lyon, Grenoble, Marseille, Lille, Toulouse, Nantes, Nice and in 6 other cities *cites* of European dimension and thus a willingness to plan the territory and its modernisation.

For those of our cocitizens living in a rural zone, for the tellurians, Georges POMPIDOU incarnates the modernisation of our agriculture but also the willingness to preserve our rural identity, our natural heritage and so at the same time that this great transformation of this agriculture, he was also the first to realise ecological issues by creating a Direction for the protection of nature then a Ministry of the Environment. It is even before the international realisation, that of the Club of Rome, that of the MEADOWS report applied in action. Deep down the adventure of President POMPIDOU, and first of Prime Minister POMPIDOU, is the participation to the invention of this new France, that of which the traces are present everywhere in the mythologies of BARTHES, this France happy of an understood modernity, that of which goes from the motorway to the TGV by the way of the Airbus or the DS; it is for the parents the massive development of family allowances that allow to better undertake the education of their children; for the elderly and the most modest the *minimum vieillesse* to which he gives it all meaning at the time of the Grenelle agreements after ongoing talks with social partners. It is all of this and much more, but I am sharing here only some examples, only moments, only images that collide in our spirits and that are an integral part of our mythology of the past century because I profoundly believe it was a moment in the life of the country that justly corresponds to this capacity to embrace modernity and to find it a very French manner of doing it.

Handwritten marginalia:
- ongoing
- list
- speaks for them
- private citizen; public figures
- repetition of "evidence" = "truth"
- becomes a concept
- discourse around nature
- pride
- discourse of mobility linked to industrial expansion
- inclusive; "all" citizens
- implies there's many more
- past tense
- Restorative nostalgia
- active voice
- glorious narrative

implies it's a behaviour / lifestyle

The first is to consider that being modern is not to adapt to the ambient world but neither is it to refuse it and sometimes our country has found itself kind of prisoner of this dilemma. The modern is necessarily that which accepts the changes of the world, even if it means losing one's soul. The modernity of these years have nothing to do with which where being French would be deep down refusing these evolutions to see the world differently. We have trouble with *prendre la mer*, we are going to change the *mer*. I think there is in these years and in these choices that are made a very French way of constructing our modernity, that is to say to not be fearful of it, to seize it and to invent it and to take a part of risk that goes with modernity. And in my eyes the POMPIDOU years, as a Prime Minister and as President, they are the years of this French modernity, that is a capacity to take these risks and to construct a history of progress fully coherent with our identity and a history of progress that was at the same time the most extreme progress – technological, cultural, artistic – and progress for each of our cocitizens and for the French middle classes. And this ability to embrace modernity for everyone by taking their part, not to be afraid, to think about the future and not to consider that others were going to dictate it to us is I believe constitutive of our French personality and of what these years I believe can still teach tremendously useful and contemporary to our country.

= bad.
what not to dwell on.
tangible
the constructed
hyperbole
socio-economics

It is without a doubt why these years – at least the way we see them today, there is always a deforming prism – basically these 15-20 first years of the Vth Republic are always seen as happy years. They are the years of stability and of the construction of a new France, that which, allowed by the General, solid institutions, new geopolitical choices that give back to France its pride and the invention of this modernity in which we installed ourselves in. It is why I am happy, dear Bernard EISENBERG, that this colloquium that will start tomorrow and that you have organised, pays homage to this President, who until recently historiography may not have totally taken the right measure. Because indeed during these 12 years alongside the General then as President, he was the first to face the acceleration of all these revolutions and by seizing them precisely to decide that France would not suffer them but will live them, will invent them, will carry them. It was the choice of audacity, of a French response to the challenges of the time. Aviation was taking off, France would be at the forefront with the Concorde and Airbus; maritime transport was developing, there would be then Fos-sur-Mer, the biggest industrial-port complex of Europe. The dependence to oil was making itself more and more imposing, even before the shocks came, France would develop civil nuclear; the space race was launched, France with its European partners would be the kingpin of the Ariane rocket, another mythology also constitutive of our country. *Going beyond the earth's borders: space colonisation / imperialism*

Reflecive
30 Glorieuses
CDG – a symbol.
vague
modernity the result of action
in a sense, rewrite history to make him more important
repetition of brands
tense change

Deep down, it is a profound belief in progress – we don't dare say this word – that is to say in the profoundly rational part of what science says et the profound part not reducible to reason that ambition carries. It is the willingness, in acts, I belief, carried by the first two Presidents of the Vth

emotion over reason

- *Exceptionalsm even with self-reflection.*
- *Technical innovation = capitalist expansion = progress*
- *International European standing*

2

Republic that France did not have the vocation of being an average power because its history is not of that. It has a vocation of being a great power not to drape ourselves in the idea that we could make of a great power but to draw all the consequences, including the hardest, including by taking the sometimes most demanding choices, no; by considering that were are not a country of average choices because we are not a country who rises, who stands up when it is promised sort of road already traced or to go align on paths that already exist. I believe that the France of Georges POMPIDOU is a France that never resigns itself and who always affirms its singularity. And there is, in my eyes, in this two first Presidents of the Vth Republic, and by the way almost in complementary manner, this: our country always has a spirit of resistance, it is what has made its history, that which consists of to not ceding nor to fashions neither to fatalities; and there is at the same time this capacity to think the universal and taking the time to live. It is this that I put behind Pompideolienne modernity and this that corresponds to this epoch. It is not a modernity of adaption, of submission, it is a modernity of invention, of the conquests of a France confident in itself and its assets, of a France animated by the spirit of conquest, of a France that is truly this *"force qui va"* as HUGO would have said. Because at the same time, as others would say, these years are also years of deep stability, of anchor and these is in this manner to wear modernity a manner to assume French permanencies as well. And I believe it is indispensable when we experience big changes and when we want to wear them and undertake them: firstly that of institutional stability and I believe that – and many here in this room have written about it before me – one of the indescribable legacies of President POMPIDOU is to have established our institutions in a duration that goes beyond what I permit myself of qualifying as the DE GAULLE years. He has made them live alongside the General, he has then established them by inscribing them in time, by respecting them and, I will not expand on this point, but maybe deep down in what I would call the failed rendezvous with CHABAN-DELMAS there is without doubt a loyalty to the first reading of what the institutions of the Vth Republic are and in the manner with which the executive couple must duly function in its loyalties and primacies. But he installs this stability, and he assumes this France who is entering in modernity by assuming at the same time its moorings.

I have found an often-cited phrase that the President POMPIDOU pronounced here during one of his press conferences: "Dear old France", he said, "good cuisine, the Folies Bergère, the Gai Paris, haute couture, it's over. France has begun and largely started an industrial revolution". I think I can affirm under the control of his friends and family that if Georges POMPIDOU like industry and technology the child of the Cantal that he was born as never renounced what he called "the old France", this ensemble of realism, of bonhomie, of tolerance, this life. And quite the opposite I believe he always thought very deeply old France and new France because he thought, lived and acted for a France with its permanencies. Past and future together, traditions and movements together, he never ceased to lean

on the permanencies of France, this creative force that with us animates as much the engineer than the artist to engage France in its modernity and to bring to modernity like a reassuring face, to tame it and to render it acceptable which I believe is an indispensable teaching, at least I have acquired the profound conviction from where I talk to you today. And I believe that it is this, this joint conscience of the weight of history, of the permanencies of an old country and the challenges of the future that is this lesson of the manner to embrace, invent modernity that I believe stays eminently useful and that is for me the first teaching I wanted to share of the POMPIDOU presidency.

The second conviction or the second touch a little bit impressionist I wanted to share before you being your more serious works tomorrow is that part of incarnation of destiny of the country he carries. Some of his international interlocutors have often talked of the POMPIDOU character, of his facial features: he had a French face, as unqualifiable that this expression may have, because he incarnated France. There was something that is difficultly qualifiable in the detail but that participates of his truth, of the moment he brought to life in the country and of the fact that the French have, at this moment of their history, recognized themselves in Georges POMPIDOU because he incarnated them in every sense of the word: France, in what some take as contradictions but that is actuality France in its true form, which is to say this productive tension between rootedness and movement, conservatism and progress, entrenchment into the land and the thought of the world as it happens. And deep down, and it is this correlation to this lesson of modernity that he deliver still to this day, there is something in President POMPIDOU of this art of being French that I evoke here a few weeks ago.

He is indeed a revendicated inveterate: the Cantal and the cafés of the Plateau, Carjarc, the lotois engagements, his Provençal fidelities and it's the need for these lands and of these movement, and we see it as well in all his correspondence, these weeks in the bowels of the country, his friendly loyalty at the deepest of it are indispensable moments that make the man POMPIDOU, his incarnation, his place in the country, his trace. But it is the same who inaugurates the A6 motorway because this willingness is coherent, because there is something at the bottom of this art of being French that is profoundly his. And there is in his destiny something eminently French and republican, I believe I can say it, and that makes of these filiations that are not talked of but in which we recognize ourselves. Michel CHARASSE for whom I have an affectionate thought today, has welcomed for 20 years President MITTERAND at the Lac Chauvet for those who know the place it is at bird's eye view very close, very close of the little school that welcomed for some years the President MITTERAND and his first steps. And he confided when I went myself on pilgrimage to the Lac Chauvet that were wasn't one visit of President MITTERAND, first of the man then the President MITTERAND, finished without

4

[handwritten top margin: • Great man: France has obsession with "great men" who make history and shape nation, ie. Pantheon, commemorations...]

him asking, always refusing to be accompanied by whomever, to his driver, to be taken to the village, *[margin: constructing the myth, private life is public]* to enter alone in the school yard to systematically come back with the same expression: "what extraordinary destiny". I cannot imagine that he did not think a little bit of himself in imagining himself as an echo of his own density to that of President POMPIDOU, but there of this a profoundly French *[margin: French culture trumps local culture]* destiny and that we could find, each with its specificities and regional proprieties, in the destiniy of his predecessor, Charles DE GAULLE. Nothing is written. *[handwritten: Short statement = truth.]*

There is something only a country like ours can permit doing, living, that is partly a chance offered by *[margin: personal destiny impossible w/o Republic]* the Republic, of a deep belief in its values and what is carries, and this capacity to make one's own path. And it is in this republican dream, the grandson of a peasant, son of a secular teacher who, *[margin: meritocracy at finest. French dream = normative vision of elevating oneself]* through school and work, grew up and elevated himself within the political ranks as a great man, a *[margin: glorification]* talented past in the economic and financial sphere then at the top of the political sphere. It is this same incarnation of the promise of French meritocracy. In that, POMPIDOU's destiny is a French destiny, deeply. *[handwritten: meritocracy = French ideal.]*

I believe it is also a French destiny by the place that culture could take. No other country than ours carries culture at this place, no other, and in no other is there the inexpressible part of what the *[margin: emphasis]* presidency is and what the head of state should carry has this eminently symbolic component which *[margin: mythical creature]* consists, in a way, of placing oneself on the shoulder of giants who have preceded us and who have *[margin: 'great men']* written great books or painted the great paintings. I also have this theory on the fact that Georges POMPIDOU has himself wrote so little in his lifetime, beyond of his formidable letters that you have *[margin: audience or France?]* exhumed and the works that we all know. It is because he has read a lot and has always inscribed himself in the texts of others. Many here have come to love French poetry in its anthology and its loyalties. He has himself constantly, and has always been, deep down, the teacher that he never ceased to be, knowing everything he owed to his masters. But it is this love of literature, of painting, of architecture, the frequentation of GRACQUES, MAURIAC, SENGHOR, this capacity to bring together *[margin: anti-fashion = French. intertextual]* even PAULIN or AGAM in the same place at a time when nothing was written and accepted, to love SOULAGES before it became fashionable, marks a look, a taste, but precisely a part of this profound art of being French and of the unique wisdom there is in the love of art, of literature, of the manner *[margin: "to be" linked to culture]* to be in our country, to think it, to preside its destiny. In this mooring, in this incarnation of the republican dream and of a French destiny, in this attachment to literature, to culture, to education, there is, I believe, something of this unique destiny, of this French quintessence that we can find in President POMPIDOU and who, today still, deeply inspires.

And then there is one last thing in this second lesson, it is this part of humanity. I believe it marks a turning point, when I look at the history of our country and the advances, of the moment where we

[handwritten bottom margin: Macron shaping historical time]

Capucine Bourges

can start, in a way, to open up a form of benevolence because the country is ready for it. Many here have quoted the expressions that the General had when he said: "be hard, POMPIDOU". Not that he saw softness or weakness, but I believe that the President General DE GAULLE has been carried throughout time by an eminently necessary awareness of what our country was, of the challenges it had to meet, and I believe that this exclamation, that must date from 1946, has parodied some others when he said: "France first, State next, and as for the rights, we'll see when we have time', fortunately, and of that attachment that still yesterday some of his companions of his earliest hours reminded me of, of this sense of duty that carried a whole country and that, during these years, carried France and has allowed it to build it such as we know it. This thread, it must not be lost, even if some would like to make us forget it. But there is, with the arrival of POMPIDOU, something that emerges, because we can allow ourselves, because this happens, and which is, I believe, his outlook, a part of humanity that emerges. In any case, a part of doubt that can be told and can let itself be seen, something the General allowed himself less. We see it ins his texts or his writings starting 1958, the vertigo he described with great humility, and we see it in a form of free humanity that he will express when he will have had, still here, to talk of business that made the news and who made without a doubt some great moments of 20th century journalism. I believe that in these moments of sincerity where, defending a teacher that public disgrace had decided to execute, refusing to howl with the wolves or considering that objectors of conscience could, despite everything, merit a benevolent look, there is something, a part of humanity that expresses itself, and which is also eminently French. My intuition, it is that he pursued something that, in the contemporary moment of our history, the General DE GAULLE could not totally express but he thought the same as him, in this continuity that animates one and the other.

Handwritten margin notes: WWII without naming it · personification · vague who? · 100 years

Handwritten notes below:

- Myth of de Gaulle props up Pompidou's: one is stubborn, martial, traditional. The other cultured, visionary, humble. Both are French.
- The art of being French
- Culture versus nature and culture + nature. Ambivalence.
- Personifications & incarnations = allegorical narrative
- Constant "I" pronoun → Macron himself builds this myth
- Rurality, authenticity, deep/old France
- Many mentions of invented traditions
- France cannot exist w/o the state = needs stability = except "French spirit"

French identity needs to be anchored

6

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