

Anglais, Khâgne Lyon, Spécialité Anglais (Thème et Presse).

1. Thème:

Traduire en anglais le texte suivant, pour la semaine de la rentrée (ce travail n'est pas à rendre, mais à voir en classe) :

Amer savoir, dit Baudelaire, celui qu'on tire des voyages. J'aurais pu parcourir toute la terre et n'en rapporter rien. C'est en ne quittant guère cet étroit univers, que je n'en finis pas d'apprendre, et de m'étonner. Ici d'ailleurs, rien n'est jamais complètement fini, et les mêmes personnages reparaisent, comme ces fantômes qui ne cessent de hanter les mêmes lieux. Ce paysage envahi par la nuit que j'avais sous les yeux, ce soir-là où j'étais accoudé à 5 ma fenêtre et pensais avec tant de regret à Nathalie, il me suffit de me lever de la table où j'écris : le voici, avec la ligne noire et dentelée des arbres qui ferment l'horizon, et au-dessus de la maison ce grand ciel où la voie lactée passe et se traîne. J'entends les chouettes qui se répondent doucement dans les bois de Torcy. Je pleurais à cette fenêtre en pensant à Nathalie, et cependant j'avais atteint à peine l'âge d'homme 10 et tout ne faisait que commencer. Il y avait encore ici mon père et ma mère, chacun dans sa chambre, et la lueur de leurs fenêtres, si je me penchais un peu, se discernait dans la nuit. Moins de voitures et de phares allumés, en ce temps-là, sur la route au-delà des arbres, qui traverse le village. Ces premiers pas de la nuit sur la campagne sont pourtant bien restés les mêmes, et je suis debout à cette même fenêtre, regardant à droite et à gauche ces groupes d'arbres noirs à peine remués par le vent, et qui ne me semblent pas avoir grandi depuis mon enfance. J'avais encore la lettre de Nathalie dans ma poche : j'ai pris mon briquet, et j'ai regardé brûler ce papier sur l'appui de la fenêtre. Quand ce ne fut plus qu'un petit chiffon noir, je l'ai poussé de la main. Il a voleté quelques instants, puis a plongé dans la nuit qui maintenant battait les murs de la maison. Depuis longtemps je n'avais vécu que pour Nathalie : je me dis qu'il serait temps encore d'aller jusqu'à la chambre de ma mère, de lui avouer tout, et de lui dire que pourtant rien n'était changé, que je n'avais jamais aimé qu'elle. J'entendais, de l'autre côté de la cloison, le bruit de pincettes reposées contre une cheminée. Mon père tisonnait dans sa chambre, où il entretenait même au printemps un feu de bois, pour n'être pas seul. A mon père, je ne fus même pas tenté d'aller parler de Nathalie et de mon chagrin, car je n'aurais su comment entrer dans sa chambre, m'asseoir à côté de lui, et commencer mon récit. Cela me paraîtrait si simple, aujourd'hui.

José Cabanis, *Le Bonheur du temps*, (1960)

2. Presse :

Préparer l'article suivant pour la semaine de la rentrée. Compréhension complète, résumé détaillé (paragraphe par paragraphe, avec élucidation des références nécessaires à la compréhension), résumé synthétique (idées essentielles), esquisse de commentaire (développement de la thématique du texte).

Brexit is entrenching some dangerous myths about ‘British’ culture

Britain has always had a warped sense of its own history, excluding ethnic minorities. Now a survey suggests this is becoming something more hostile and alarming

Afua Hirsch Thursday 25 May 2017 *The Guardian*

There is something deeply ironic about the wave of nostalgia sweeping political discourse in modern Britain. On one hand, it harks – increasingly since the Brexit vote – back to the age of empire. “A small island perched on the edge of the European continent became a leader of world trade,” is how international trade secretary Liam Fox fondly described that epoch to a group of Commonwealth trade ministers. On the other, the supposed humanitarianism that accompanied that age has been swiftly forgotten.

While the empire was founded on racist beliefs about the supposed inferiority of the people it subjugated, humanitarianism was its proudly flaunted justification. This was manifested perfectly in Winston Churchill, who was able to boast of killing “savages” in Sudan, while also playing a leading role in creating the international humanitarian norms that many consider one of the great accomplishments of the 20th century. It’s only a matter of time before Britain’s membership of the Council of Europe – along with the rest of the European institutions developed by patriotic Brits who are keen to avoid a repeat of war – faces the same fate as our membership of the EU.

The idea that British 'culture' is somehow opposite to the presence of ethnic minorities is a historical nonsense

Likewise, humanitarian attitudes are in sharp decline. This was the resounding finding of today’s Aurora Humanitarian Index – a project inspired by the legacy of the Armenian genocide, still one of the least-recognised atrocities of the 20th century. It’s no surprise to learn that responses from 6,500 people in 12 countries, including the UK, US, Turkey and France, found a lack of confidence, compassion and leadership in response to the humanitarian issues of our time – especially the ongoing refugee crisis of north Africa and the Middle East.

But in Britain something specific is happening. The survey found that more than half of British people feel hostile not just to refugees, but to ethnic minorities – many of them British people themselves – already living here. This can be put down to various perceived economic and social threats – a quarter think immigrants take away jobs, and a third that they remove more from society than they contribute. But more sinister is its generality. More than half of the British people surveyed felt that people from ethnic minorities threatened their “culture”.

This one finding says so much. It confirms what we all know, that “British culture” is perceived as something white. This was the dog-whistle narrative of the Brexit referendum campaign – apart from the appeal to imperial greatness, there was the demand to “get our country back”. Few said explicitly that this meant make our country white again. But some heard it nevertheless. It was the surely part of the reason for the spike in racist attacks after the

result, and why a cabbie told me I'd "be off home soon" as I rushed around on a referendum-related news story.

It was also the reason why, according to an Opinion poll, ethnic minority British people are now less likely to identify as British since the EU referendum. Instead, many are more likely to claim the identity of their ethnic minority heritage. British people who are not white feel less British now because that hostility is palpable, because there is an agenda of regressing to a time, before the European Union, that many remember not for the joys of complete sovereignty, but for the absence of protection from racism in the workplace, or at the hands of the police, or for being openly chased in the streets by white racists.

The idea that British "culture" is somehow opposite to the presence of ethnic minorities is a historical nonsense. Many of our most iconic cultural traditions are the products of immigration – such as fish and chips, an innovation of Jewish refugees from Portugal. Roads and cities were built by the Romans, banks were founded by Huguenots, a royal household established by a broad cross-section of European aristocracy. There were Africans in Britain, it's now widely accepted, before there were any "English".

No society ever has a perfect grasp of its history, and that doesn't matter, it's perceptions that count, and the harm that they cause. Britain's sense of self has become so warped, so devoid from reality, that it is demonising its visible minorities, including the 6 million or so British people of minority heritage among them. In this context, when I hear politicians appeal to patriotism, I feel very nervous. Not because there is anything wrong with patriotic feeling – like populism, it's a term that only becomes maligned by its context. But because I know only too well what that current context is. And thanks to the findings of widespread hostility towards the impact of ethnic minority people on British culture, so should everyone else.