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Growing Up French

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<center>Youth Rebellion and the French New Wave</center>

After World War II, the French younger generation is growing increasingly unhappy about the rise of the *Front National*. The tension between the youth and the governing generation rise in the disagreements in political opinions as well as in encounters in the family and the educational system. Around the year of 1959, extreme-right nationalist Charles de Gaulle became the president of French Fifth republic. A cultural revolution marked by the French New Wave emerged with the release of some iconic films. From Les 400 Coups which examined the French culture as insiders to Hiroshima Mon Amour which looks at the French society in a more distant way, French New Wave films are main proponents of the youth rebellion.

Les 400 Coups and *Hiroshima Mon Amour* are both popularly perceived films released in 1959 when de Gaulle came to power. Les 400 Coups talks about a

French cinemas have had political connotations in them since 1946. After World War II had ended, France signed the Blum-Byrnes agreement with the Unites states which obliged the screening of much more American films in France. Filmmakers in France developed their tastes and skills in the Hollywood way. As a result, films in the late 1940s and in the 1950s produced in France were mostly produced by the large studios according to a fairly standard template. Other aspects of the French culture possess the same sense of restriction from the authority and mimicking of old traditions. Education, for example, impose strict classroom rules on the students. According to Charles Sowerwine in his book *France Since 1870: Culture, Society, and*

the Making of the Republic, "The French lycee curriculum in the first half of the twentieth century was dominated by classical Greek and Latin, as it had been since the 1880s; it presented the world as governed by Reason, progressing toward ideals first articulated by Greek civilization 2500 years earlier."