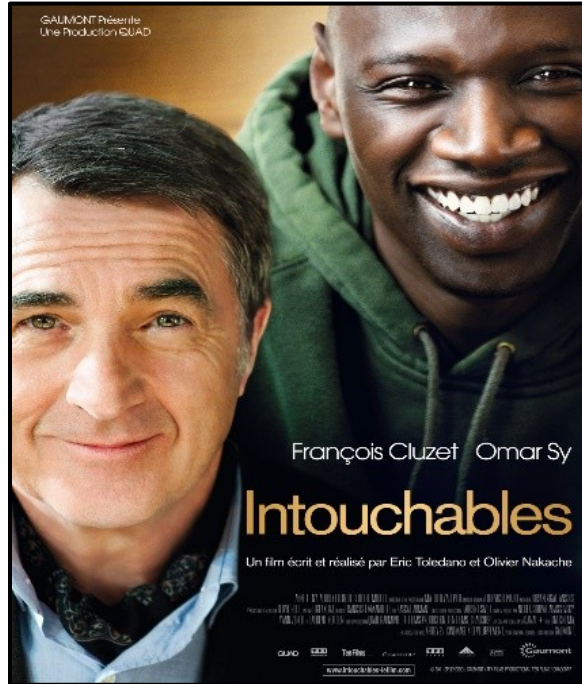


# A (Post)National Mainstream Industry

## Lecture 2: Franco-US Dialogue and 'Inclusive' Casting



*Intouchables/Untouchable* (Olivier Nakache and Eric Toledano, 2011) and  
*Lupin* (Series 1, Episode 1)

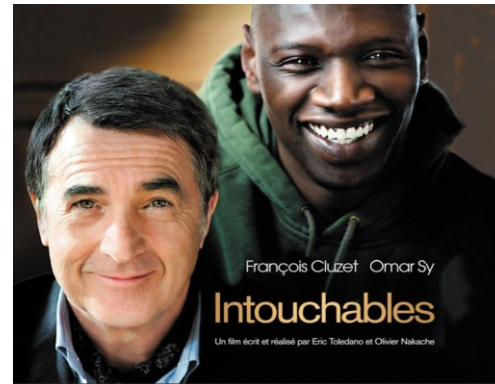
## Structure of the Lecture

- *Intouchables* as/and culture clash and buddy comedy
- Gender, class and ethnicity in recent French film comedy
- Close analysis of *Intouchables*
  - key visual and thematic motifs
  - key areas for discussion
- The Netflix era in France
  - French TV history
  - recent developments
- *Lupin*
  - localisation and 'inclusive' casting
  - historical revisionism

## The Best-selling Films on the French Market since 2000

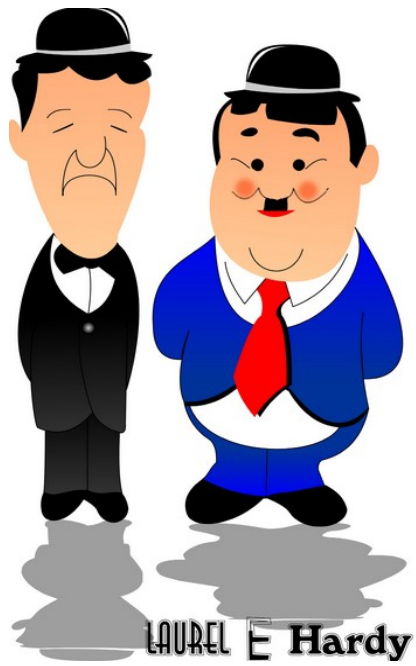
Extracted from a list of the 100 best-sellers, Internet Movie Database, www.imdb.com

Position	Year of release	Title	Director
2	2008	Bienvenue chez les Ch'tis/Welcome to the Sticks	Dany Boon
3	2011	Intouchables/The Intouchables	Olivier Nakache, Éric Toledano
8	2009	Avatar	James Cameron
11	2002	<u>Astérix &amp; Obélix: Mission Cléopâtre</u> /Asterix & Obelix: Mission Cleopatra	Alain Chabat
19	2014	Qu'est-ce qu'on a fait au Bon Dieu?/Serial (Bad) Weddings	Philippe de Chauveron



[Trailer: Bienvenue Chez Les Ch'tis Trailer - In UK Cinemas 1st April - Bing video](#)

See also M. Harrod and P. Powrie (2018) on 'New directions in contemporary French comedies'

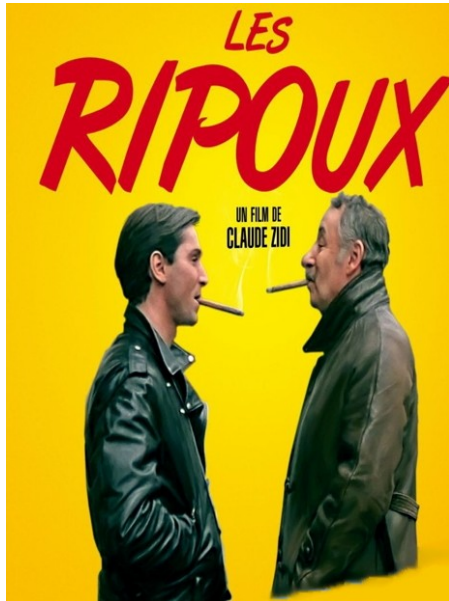
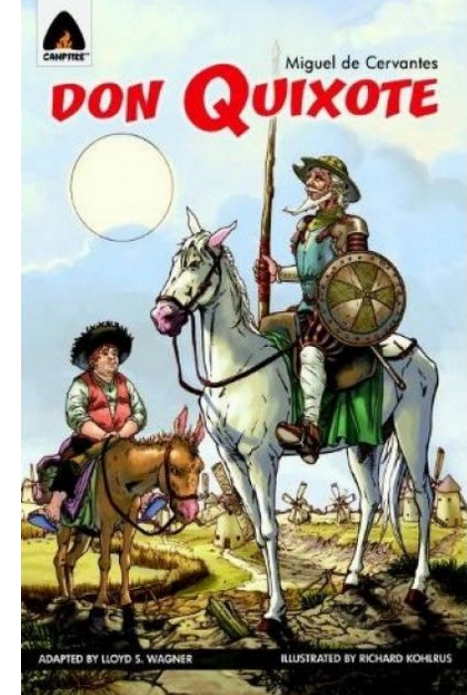


## INTOUCHABLES AS COMEDY Comic Buddy Duos

A transnational, transhistorical phenomenon.



*La Commedia dell'Arte*



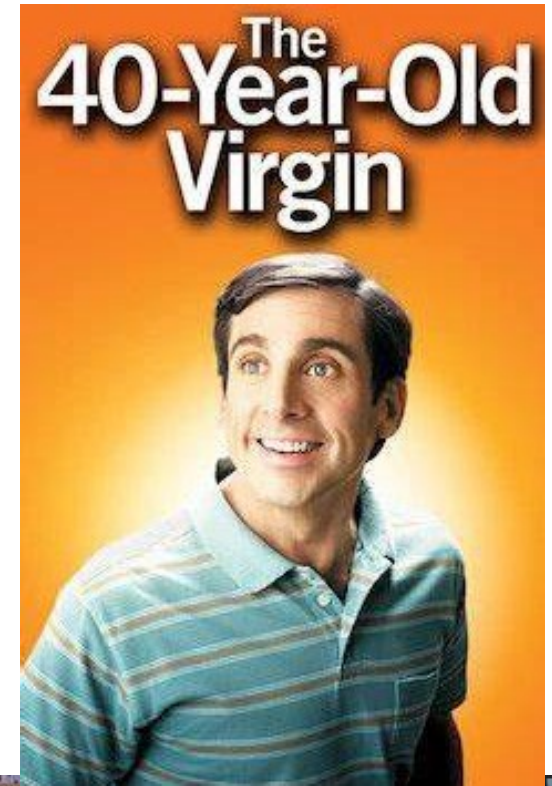
## Sy and Murphy



See also Raphaëlle Moine (2007, 165-7).

# Gender Politics and Comic Buddy Duos

A transnational, transhistorical phenomenon.



See also Alberti (2013), *Masculinity in the Contemporary Romantic Comedy*



## Class and Other Stereotypes in Comedy

What about intersectionality?



See Moine (2010), '*Bienvenue chez les Cht'is: la région ou la classe?*' / 'Region or Class in *Bienvenue...*'

**INTOUCHABLES AS COMEDY**  
**The Comedy of Ethnic Integration**

See Ginette Vincendeau on a recent French trend for comedies in which 'identity is affirmed and exaggerated stereotypically, provoking conflicts that are then resolved in a tale of social harmony'

in 'Minority Report,' *Sight and Sound*, June 2015, 24-25.

CLIP: *Qu'est-ce qu'on a fait au Bon Dieu?*



Cf. Stuart Hall (1996) has noted that there is 'always a price of incorporation to be paid when the cutting edge of difference [...] is blunted into spectacularisation'



**INTOUCHABLES AND REPRESENTATION**  
**Minority Visibility and Stardom: the Omar Sy Phenomenon**

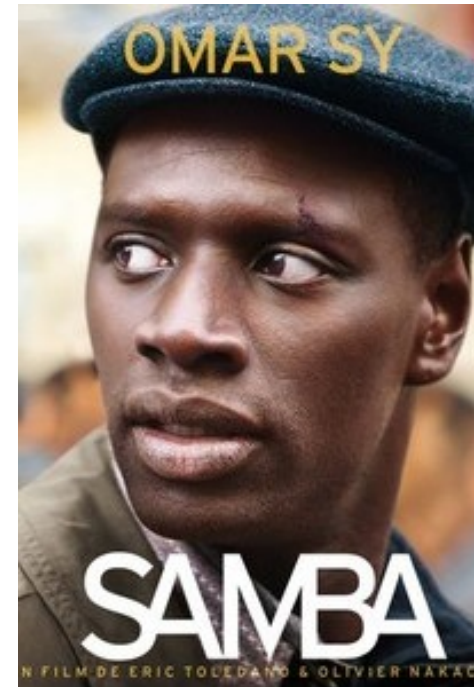
Service  
après vente  
des  
émissions  
2005-2012



2012



2014

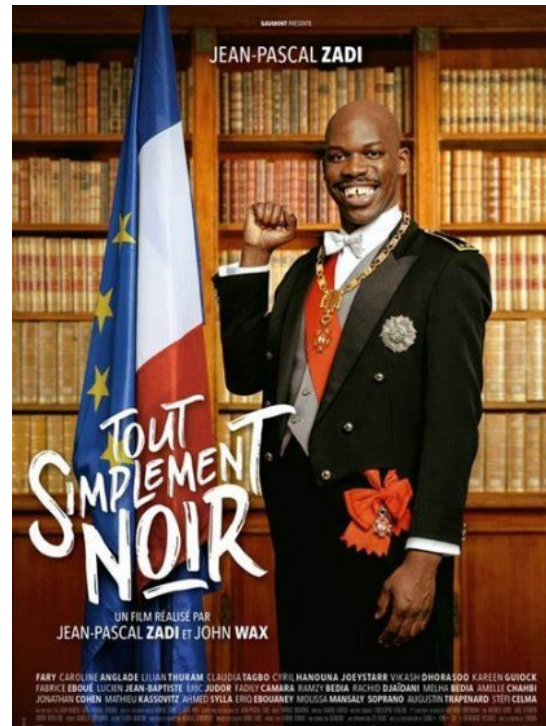


## Barriers to Diversity in Film Industries



Aïssa Maïga, Editions du Seuil, 2018.

## Comedian Comedy and/as Ethnic Minority Celebrity



The Impossibility of Colour-Blind Casting?



*Intouchables*  
Visual and Performative  
Stereotyping?



## Blackface (and) Minstrelsy



## Stereotype and Exaggeration: Spatial Oppositions in the Film

a) *la banlieue*



... versus Paris





b) Driss' house



...versus Philippe's house



## Inter-generational Dialogue



Do you agree with Jacques Mandelbaum's comments in *Le Monde* that *Intouchables* figures the possible benefits of contact between old and newer, more multicultural French generations? (in Michael 2013, p. 131, extra rdg.).

## Ambivalence and Liminality



## Additional Bibliography (Part 1 – pre-break)

- John Alberti, *Masculinity in the Contemporary Romantic Comedy: Gender as Genre* London and New York: Routledge, 2013.
- Stuart Hall, *Questions of Cultural Identity*, London: Sage, 1996.
- Mary Harrod and Phil Powrie, 'New directions in contemporary French comedies: from nation, sex and class to ethnicity, community and the vagaries of the postmodern,' Special Issue of *Studies in French Cinema* on contemporary French comedy, vol. 18, issue 1 (2018).
- Andrew Higson, 'The Limiting Imagination of National Cinema,' in M. Hjort and S. Mackenzie (eds), *Cinema and Nation*, edited by London and New York: Routledge, 2011, pp. 63-74.
- Raphaëlle Moine, *Remakes: les films français à Hollywood*, Paris: CNRS Editions, 2007.
- -----, 'Bienvenue chez les Cht'is: la région ou la classe?' *Poli-Politique de l'image*, 2 (2010).
- Steve Seidman, *Comedian Comedy: a Tradition in Hollywood Film*, Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1981.

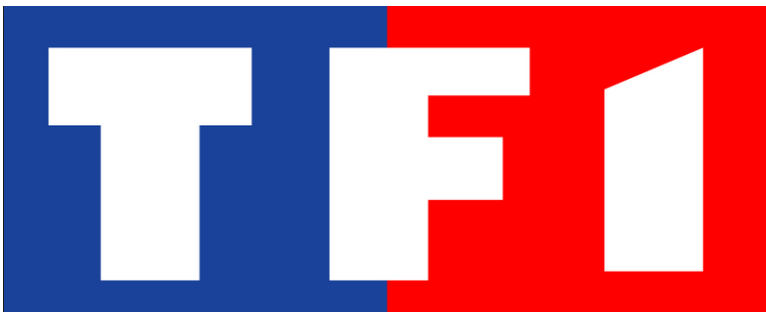
Introduction to Streamed  
'Television'





## Television in France

- The medium holds a different, lower status than in Anglo-American nations thanks to the links between French national identity and high intellectual culture.
- After a slow start in the early 1950s, 1958-64: ownership went from 10% to over 40%; it was a truly mass medium by the end of the 1960s.





# Television in France

‘Television in France is at once more adult **and more amateurish than in Britain** or some other countries. A relatively high intellectual level in programmes goes hand in hand with **clumsy technical blunders** of presentation due to lack of discipline or preparation.’

Charles Hildesley, *Sight and Sound*, 1958.

July 1982: Broadcasting Bill – end of State monopoly control of television.

See Mazdon, ‘Contemporary French Television, the Nation, and the Family: Continuity and Change.’ *Television and New Media* 2, pp.335-339 (2001).

## 1990s

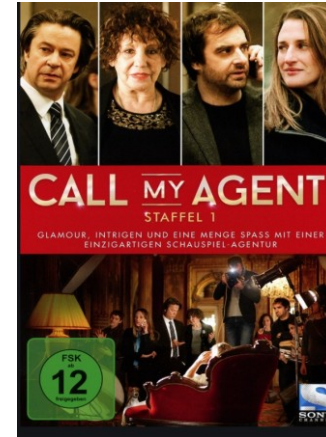
1. 'The **demise of the state monopoly**, the **advent of cable and satellite television**, coupled with the **development of new terrestrial channels and the privatization of TF1** have caused a fragmentation of the French televisual landscape and undermined the apparent certainties of the national broadcast to a national audience carried out by a state-controlled public television.'

Mazdon 2001, p.338.

- Competition
- 'Dumbing down' for mass appeal and due to
- The globalisation of culture...

## Changing Landscapes

2010s: the transnationalisation of television, notably through streaming platforms



- Auteurism in TV
- Dense storytelling
- Less reliance on stars
- 'French touch' European TV
- A generation of 'telephiles'

French programmes popular internationally, 2010s – and many more, including later *Lupin* preeminently above all of them

See Benjo in Durand (2012)

## Lupin and French Cultural Localisation



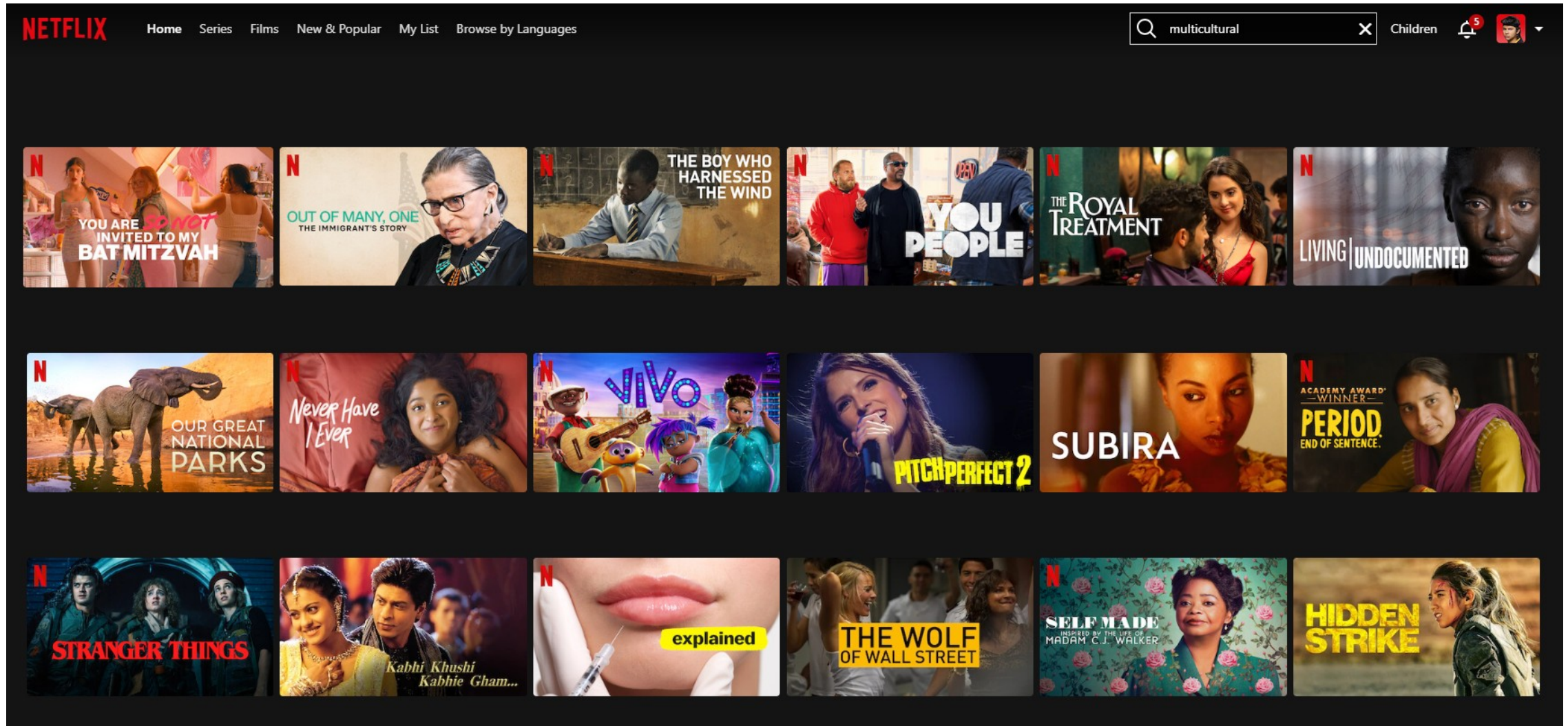
## Netflix and Localisation as Internationalisation

‘Broadcasting was a national industry that progressively internationalised[, while streaming is essentially a global industry that is progressively localising].’ Chalaby (2023, 1)

- Netflix Originals planned by locally embedded producers
- But in consultation with internationally-oriented market research teams
- Exportability has a bearing on budget

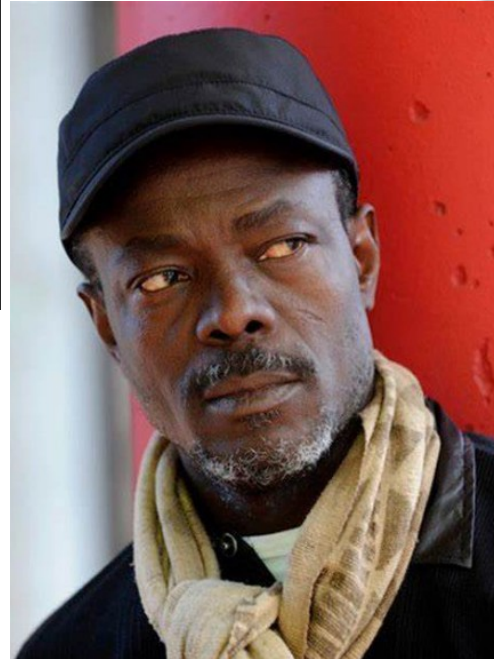
(Taillibert and Cailler 2022)

# 'Inclusive' Netflix



See also Scarlata, Lobato and Cunningham (2021, 145) on 'circulation-based casting'

## Images of (Relative) Ethnic Diversity



## 'Postcard Aesthetics'



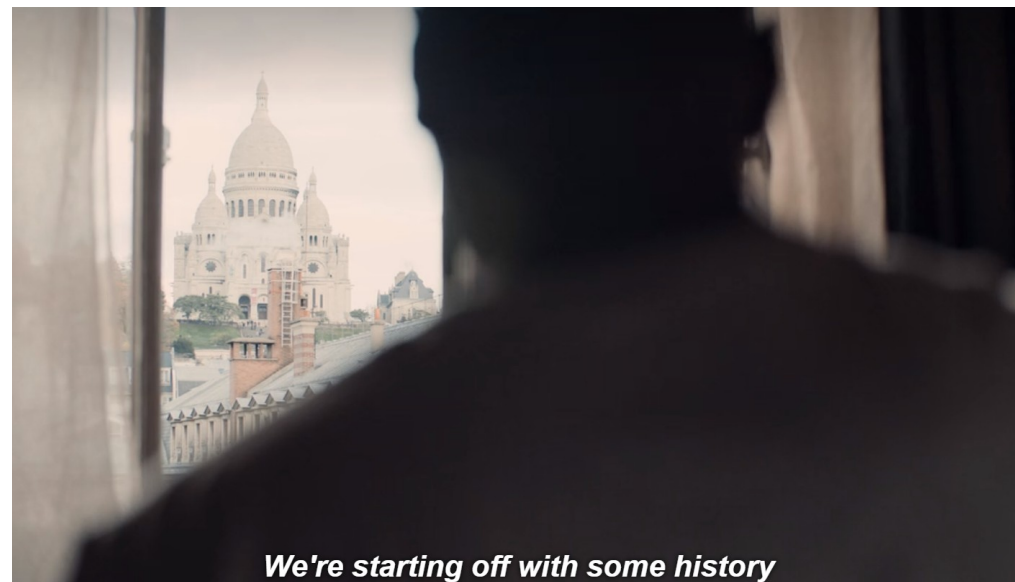
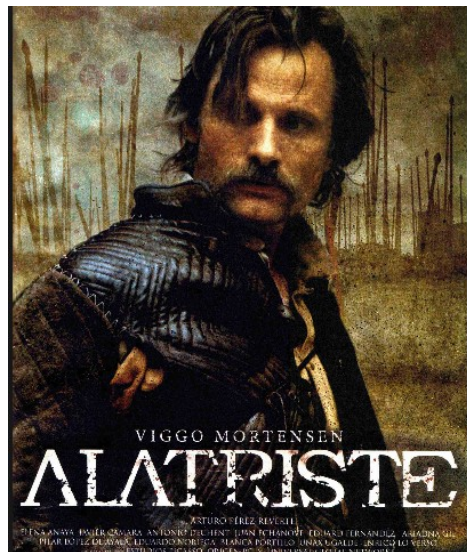
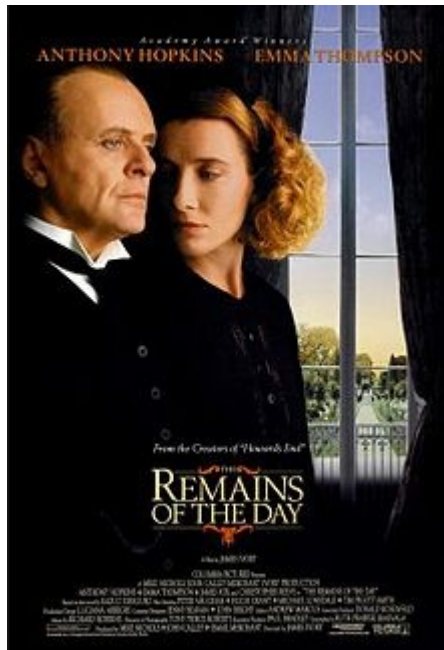
Behlil, Sánchez Prado and Verheul (2020, 96–97)



## Other Clichés



# European Heritage Films since the 1980s



*We're starting off with some history*

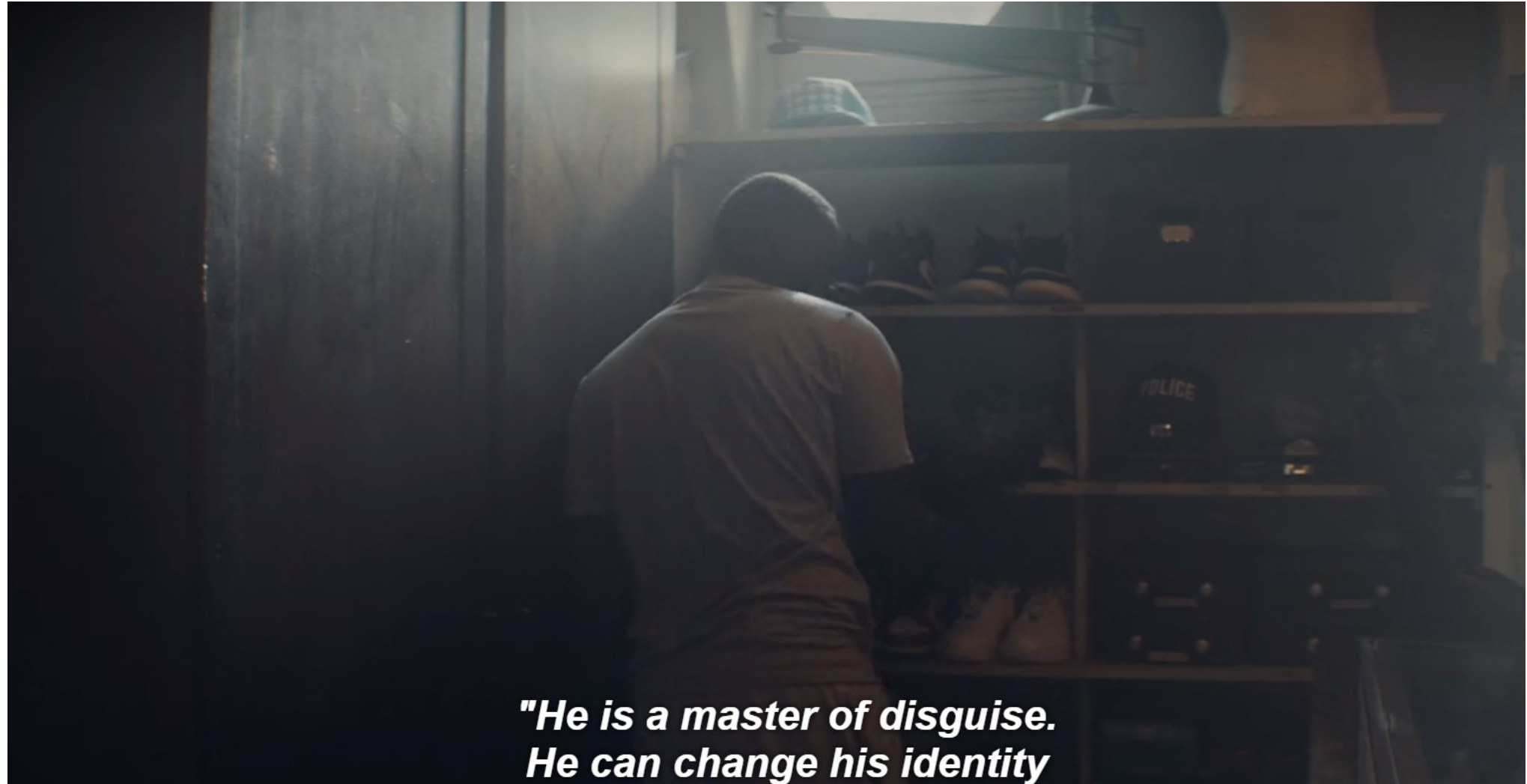
... and *Lupin*



## Modelling Fandom



## Rewriting Identities and (French and Postcolonial) Histories



***"He is a master of disguise.  
He can change his identity***

## Upper-class Decadence and Corruption



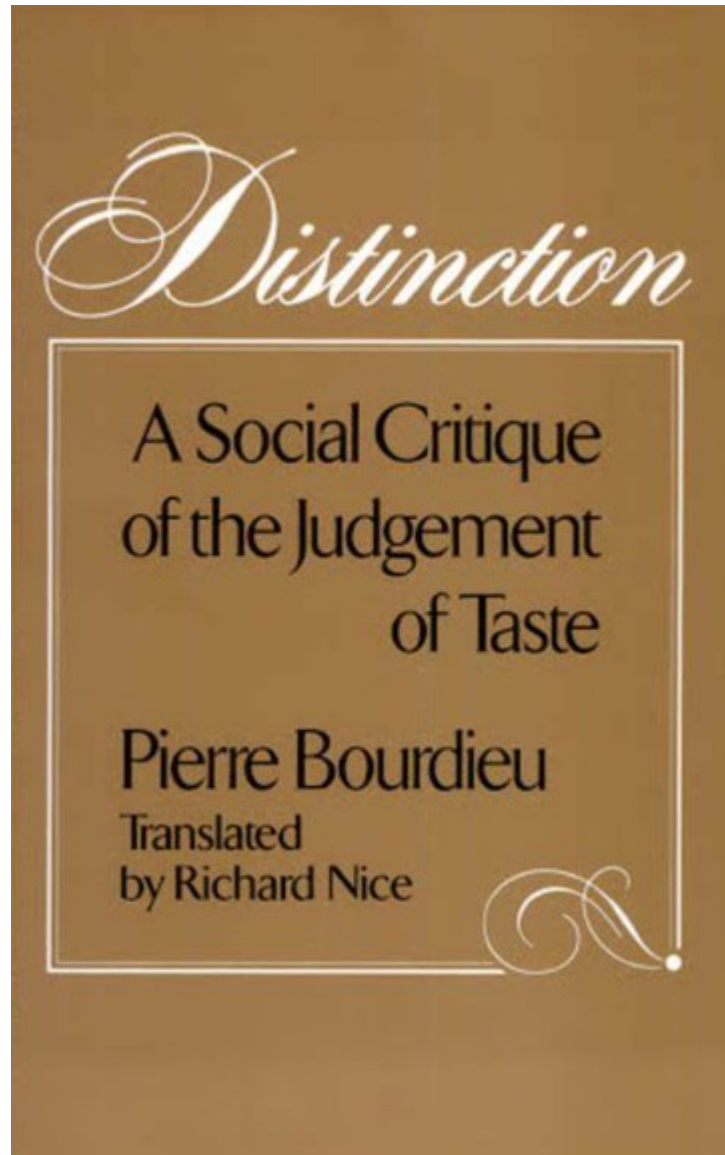
## The Fetishisation of Le Blanc's books



## The Legitimation of Leblanc's Books



# Having the Last (Elite?) Laugh





## Additional Bibliography (Part 2)

- Melis Behlil, Ignacio M. Sánchez Prado and Jaap Verheul, 'The Dead are Alive: The Exotic Non-place of the Bondian Runaway Production,' in *The Cultural Life of James Bond: Specters of 007*, edited by Jaap Verheul, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2020, pp. 81-102.
- Charlotte Brunson, *Television Cities: Paris, London, Baltimore*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018.
- Jean K. Chalaby, *Television in the Streaming Era: The Global Shift*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023.
- Bruce Crumley, 'French TV's reputation spirals upwards,' *The Guardian*, 19 February 2020.
- Jean-Marie Durand, 'Les Revenants, Ainsi soient-ils, Opérateurs...séries françaises: la resurrection,' *Les Inrockuptibles*, 25 November 2012. [Les Revenants, Ainsi soient-ils, Opérateurs... séries françaises : la résurrection | Les Inrocks](#)
- Lee Hyo-won, 'Ted Sarandos: Netflix's Global Platform Will Bring Diversity to Hollywood,' *Hollywood Reporter*, 30 June 2016. <https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/ted-%20sarandos-netflixs-global-platform-907558>.
- Lucy Mazdon, 'French Television: Negotiating the National Popular,' in D. Holmes and D. Loosely (eds), *Imagining the Popular in Contemporary French Culture*, pp. 162-94. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013.
- Alexa Scarlata, Ramon Lobato and Stuart Cunningham, 'Producing Local Content in International Waters: The Case of Netflix's *Tidelands*,' *Continuum* 35 (1): 137–150 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1080/10304312.2021.1884654>.