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SCANDAL AT THE OPÉRA DE PARIS

Posted on June 15, 2022



A whole section of the French Right seems to have awakened to the reality that high culture is entirely controlled by left-wing ideology, and by people who defend their turf without intending to give up an inch

of ground.

Category: <u>COMMENTARY</u> **Tags:** <u>AROP</u>, <u>France</u>, <u>high culture</u>, <u>Left</u>, <u>Opéra de Paris</u>

Asad affair is shaking up the small world of the French conservative press.

A few weeks ago, a young girl applied for an internship at the prestigious <u>AROP</u> (Association pour le Rayonnement de l'Opéra de Paris, or Association for the promotion of the Paris Opera). Passionate about opera culture and music, the young candidate was highly motivated and convinced that she could put her enthusiasm at the service, through AROP, of the venerable institution which recently celebrated <u>the 350th anniversary of its foundation by King Louis XIV</u>.

So Adélaïde—that's her name—sent her CV to the human resources department with hope and confidence. But the young lady seemed to have forgotten that her career path was littered with politically incorrect experiences. She had the bad taste to work successively for the editorial offices of *Boulevard Voltaire*, *L'Incorrect*, and *Valeurs Actuelles*—three conservative press organs, classified as 'on the Right,' but which the dominant ideological consensus does not hesitate to call *extreme*. This predisposed her rather badly to work in the cultural sector which, in France as in many other countries, is fundamentally—one might even say essentially—left-wing. The young girl dared to stand up against politicalideological determinism. She paid dearly for it.

At first, Adélaïde was pleased to see that her CV had, as recruiters' jargon puts it, "caught the attention of human resources," and that she had been called for an interview. For her, this was a small victory, as getting a quality internship is nowadays a bit of an obstacle course. The first stage of the selection process usually results in silence or rejection, without any explanation. With her interview scheduled, the budding music lover therefore went to her appointment with a smile on her face and a heart full of expectation.

The EUROPEAN CONSERVATIVE

Alas, the perfidy of our ideological enemies knows no bounds.

Adelaide was summoned to an interview, yes, but for the purpose of telling her all the ways her application offended the noble leftist aristocracy of the Opéra de Paris: a humiliation in due form, institutionally organised under the auspices of a good conscience.

After trying to explain her motivation, her desire to do well, and her love for lyrical art, the poor trainee was sarcastically told that, given her pedigree, she should not hope for a single second that she would be able to come with her fascist look to sully the noble marble staircases of the Palais Garnier, which has become, for some years now, <u>the temple of cancel culture and promotion of ethnic diversity</u>.

Not being selected for an internship because of a poor performance at a job interview is one thing. But to be summoned to be humiliated in person by a superior who has no intention of giving you a chance is pure sadism. "Miss, how dare you exist and talk to us?" This was the message that the young woman had to take in, from an authority that claims to be the champion of inclusiveness.

All this is quite ironic. An ump-teenth sociological comedy dripping with political correctness is out on the screens now, called <u>Ténor</u>, featuring a director of the Paris Opera who has decided to give a guy from the immigrant suburb community a chance as an opera singer. This hip, street rapper is entitled to the legendary broadmindedness of progressives—not Adélaïde, a former intern at *Valeurs Actuelles*.

But Adélaïde is not going to let the matter rest. She has filed a complaint for discrimination. Her lawyer is demanding a real job interview, not a sham witch trial.

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It is time to turn the enemy's weapons against itself.

In the meantime, the Paris Opera has done the minimum required, announcing an "internal investigation" with AROP ... which will probably not lead to any serious sanction.

The most interesting aspect of this affair is certainly the discovery by right-wing circles, thanks to this fortuitous incident, of the Left's monopoly over cultural institutions. The press organs in question—*Boulevard Voltaire*, *Valeurs Actuelles*, *L'Incorrect*—are indignant. In fact, a whole section of the French Right (very respectable, by the way), seems to have been awakened on this occasion to the fact that high culture is entirely controlled by left-wing ideology, and by people who defend their turf tooth and nail, with no intention of giving up an inch of ground.

The Left controls theatres, cinemas, festivals, ballet, and opera—institutions whose art forms shape our imaginations, our dreams, and our inner world in a formidable way. It is perhaps too late to realise this and to be scandalised by it. For decades now, the vast majority of right-wing circles have abandoned culture to the Left, like a 'bone to be gnawed on,' according to an apocryphal phrase attributed to General de Gaulle. On the Right, it is fashionable to concern oneself with serious things: to find a proper wife or husband, to worry about going to a good business school, or working in a bank. Among the right-wingers, it is understood that culture—like education—is 'leftist stuff.' At dinner parties, people make fun of <u>Buren's columns that disfigure the Palais-Royal</u>, of the Avignon theatre festival with its sloppy stagings, and of the "intermittents du spectacle," those artists who live off ideology and public subsidies.

But for decades, absolutely nothing, or almost nothing, has been done to try to reverse the trend. Let us hope that the 'Adélaïdegate' will awaken the consciences of the Right, to make culture the site of an authentic political battle.