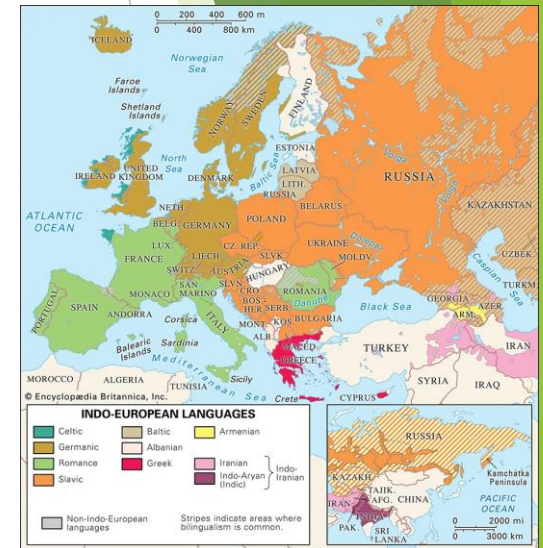


# Intercultural studies

Similarities and differences in French, English and German cultures

# I. Language roots

- ▶ Karl Wilhelm von Humbolt : ‘language in actuality only exists in spoken discourse, its grammar and dictionary are hardly even comparable to its dead skeleton’ (*Grundzüge des allgemeinen Sprachtypus* Vol 6: 147). According to *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, article written by Mueller-Vollmer, Kurt and Markus Messling, the prussian philosopher did not believe languages as species but as individuals resulting from a its historical development ».
- ▶ Stetter : « to study each language as a fragment of the universal language of the human species » (*Essai sur les langues du Nouveau Continent* 2004: 238)
- ▶ All from Indo-European language family
- ▶ English : Germanic
- ▶ German : Germanic
- ▶ French : Romance (derived from Latin)
- ▶ Communication
- ▶ Studies found that French paragraph developments are more prone and tolerant of digression and English not (Kaplan 1966/1980), same for German, Clyne found that digression has a defined function in German academia ‘Exkhurs’ which has « neither a conceptual [...] nor a translation equivalent « » in English (1987: 227)



## II. History / philosophy

- ▶ Common history, contemporary history studied in schools in all three schools (WW1/WW2 prominent part of History course in high school)
- ▶ France and England intransigently intertwined within their kingdoms as the rulers were often cousins. Ex : 1914 Kaiser Wilhelm II (German Emperor) and King George V (King of England) were cousins
- ▶ Siècle des Lumières / Enlightenment / Aufklärung → European intellectual movement of the XVIIth and XVIIIth century based on the rationality, knowledge of the universe.

# III. Cuisine

- ▶ Modern English and German food similarly stem from international influence, from geography to migration waves, both countries share a mix of world cuisines.
- ▶ Whereas French cuisine has a long history, the first work reference found from 1604 by Lancelot de Casteau *Ouverture de Cuisine*, « set out rules for the preparation and presentation of food for the nobility » (Amy B. Trubek 2000). Haute cuisine is a form of art and reflects french aristocratic culture.

# IV. Politics / law

- ▶ « Law, rather than a mere technical add-on to a morally (or immorally) finished society, is, along of course with a whole range of other range of other cultural realities from the symbolics of faith to the means of production, an active part of it » (Clifford Geertz)
- ▶ Law reflects what is moral or immoral, societies values
- ▶ France and Germany : civil law (binding codified legal codes). In France the civil code still stems from Napoleon.
- ▶ England : common law (body of law created by judges). Evolving law, grows with society
  
- ▶ Brexit has proven Britain's stance on shared power, Chatham House-YouGov (The Royal Institute of International Affairs 2015) survey found that 63% of the public thinks that the UK should aspire to be a 'great power', thus isolationism is regaining traction in Great Britain. While France and Germany share most of the power in the UE.