



â??Topâ?? French media pundits canâ??t name three living Chinese people

## Description

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French media fail

This is genuinely incredible and says SO SO MUCH about the perception of China in the West.

This is the #1 news show in France, and the host â?? David Pujadas â?? asks the pundits around the table (a sample of the top media figures in France) if they can name 3 living Chineseâ??. [pic.twitter.com/gkkWxTKfni](https://pic.twitter.com/gkkWxTKfni)

â?? Arnaud Bertrand (@RnaudBertrand) [May 29, 2026](#)

This selection of [French media pundits](#) was offered a simple challenge: name three living Chinese people.

As youâ??d expect, a familiar response came: Xi Jinping; thenâ?; nothing. *Rien. Juste lâ??embarras.*

These are not some random fellows interviewed vox-pop on the street. Theyâ??re prime-time pundits on the supposedly â??topâ?? or [number-one French news show](#). According to Chinese-resident French journalist [Arnaud Bertrand](#), theyâ??re some of Franceâ??s media bigwigs. Yet their ignorance on China is staggering.

Like much of the Western media class, they regularly obsess about Xi Jinping and the Communist Party of China (CPC). They accept that one cannot study global affairs without talking about the major, transformational role China plays.

Yet they cannot name anyone beyond Chinese President Xi. Not even Premier Li Qiang. What baffling idiocy.

Here's a simple primer – just think about how many US politicians you could name. One category alone. Now add to that American singers, actors, sportspeople, internet personalities, etc. Sure, they're English-speaking – but I bet you could name a few across non-anglophone Europe too. Start to notice the imbalance? Funny, innit?

## Western double standards

We've suffered enough UK and global English-language corporate media over the years to have no doubts that French media heads aren't alone on this. We've all imbibed the simple-minded analysts at work.

It's why so frequently pundits and politicians resort to the same tired clichés Chinese workers stole our jobs, they didn't do colonialism in Africa, or China is a threat to our national security. It's not the left isn't innocent of this either – see anti-imperialist journalist Abby Martin challenging Novara's Michael Walker on the latter unfounded assertion

But these French *bien-pensants* don't know any counterpart journalists, nor top CPC council politicians or ministers. Not even the master of Western-media spotlighted Chinese figures such as Jack Ma Jimmy Lai Ai Wei Wei Jackie Chan or singer Faye Wong

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They couldn't offer us any Chinese person they've met, even in their personal or professional lives, they're so isolated from *actual contact* with China! Gentle reminder – Chinese people account for 17% of us *all*.

As Arnaud Bertrand writes on X

They do not know a single living Chinese person beyond the president.

That's the level of ignorance of China we're dealing with in the West today, in 2026.

Top academic researcher Jason Hickel – whose Substack research on China is well worth checking out – added that his experience of talking to Westerners about China is exactly similar.

This is disturbing. And it accords with my own experience, where Western pundits will pronounce very strong opinions about China's political system, with great certainty, but when you ask them even basic questions like "how do NPC elections work?", "how do CPC elections work?", or "https://t.co/e2DKllpyab"

Jason Hickel (@jasonhickel) May 29, 2026

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By Cameron Baillie

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