

# The French Review

VOLUME 81, NO. 4

March 2008

*Devoted to the Interests of Teachers of French*

677 *From the Editor's Desk*

## ARTICLES

### LITERATURE

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**Andrew Miller**

**"From Literary  
Page to Operatic  
Stage: Manon's  
Tragic Voice of  
Her Own"**

An eroticism previously unimagined in the operatic tradition emerged in the figure of Manon whom Massenet adapted from Prévost's novel *Manon Lescaut*. Manon undergoes a remarkable transformation from novel to opera, due to the different functions of her death in the two genres. Manon's circular death in the opening pages of the novel deprives her of a voice, whereas in the opera the heroine acquires vocal autonomy because her death serves as the final resolution to her corruptive desire. Through her singing the operatic Manon enacts, tragically, her understanding that her sexuality and her fascination with it necessitate her death.

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**Susie Hennessy**

**“Consumption  
and Desire in  
*Au Bonheur  
des dames*”**

Zola’s *Au Bonheur des dames* is a prelude to one of the most prevalent transformations in society, the growing predominance of mass consumption and exchange value. Zola foretells the development of consumer desires and changing perceptions of self image in response to mass production and marketing. By delineating women’s relationship to shopping in terms of desire, this novel sets up a model for the female consumer market based on the substitution of use value for exchange value. The novel anticipates consumer culture in which shoppers make purchases in order to maintain a certain self-image that is always in flux.

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**John Westbrook**

**“Reorienting  
Surrealism”**

Beyond the political transformation of the surrealist movement through its engagement against French intervention in Morocco in May 1925, the emergent movement suffered from a larger “Oriental” crisis. Already in January 1925, literary and political debate concerning the “Orient” crystallized a traditional conception of avant-garde practice as spiritual revolt, on the one hand, and as political revolution on the other. The Philosophies group and Clarté respectively figured these two options. Their competition with the emergent surrealist movement forced it to reorient its practice towards the question of knowledge, seen as a point where the spiritual and the political intersect.

#### IN YOUR CORNER: FOCUS ON THE CLASSROOM

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**Leslie A.  
Sconduto**

**“Bringing  
French Culture/  
Civilization to  
Life in the  
Classroom”**

Making the past relevant and appealing to young people is always challenging. With the techniques described in this article, which include using eyewitness accounts, virtual visits via the Internet, feature films, creative writing exercises, and a *Vous y étiez* final project, students acquire a richer, more personal perspective of French civilization. They come away with a better understanding of life during different time periods, how social and cultural conditions evolved, and how the people and events of the past formed the modern world and continue to influence socio-cultural attitudes.

SOCIETY AND CULTURE

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**Louise Chaput**

**“Bloguez en français s’il vous plaît!”**

Cet article illustre le recours fréquent des blogueurs à la langue anglaise et tente d’en expliquer les causes. Dans un premier temps, il a pour objet la présentation et la classification des blogues qui ont servi à faire cette analyse descriptive. On y passe ensuite en revue les principales critiques auxquelles les blogues font face et on expose les diverses raisons de bloguer. Ces dernières peuvent, directement ou indirectement, être liées à l’emploi des mots anglais qu’on trouve en abondance dans les blogues. Pour finir, on présente différentes façons de prévenir l’intrusion de l’anglais dans la blogosphère.

FILM

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**Carine Bourget**

**“Traditions orales et littéraires dans l’œuvre cinématographique de Farida Benlyazid”**

Farida Benlyazid, l’une des quelques réalisatrices maghrébines, se démarque des films maghrébins non dans le choix de son sujet, mais dans son traitement. Au lieu de s’étendre sur la manière dont les traditions oppriment les femmes, Benlyazid leur découvre une force libératrice. Ses deux premiers films sont extrêmement riches en musiques et intertextes qui appartiennent à des époques et traditions culturelles différentes. Cet article examine le rôle de ces traditions musicales et littéraires (dont les plus saillants sont le Coran, des poètes soufis et des chants arabes), qui viennent aussi bien de la culture marocaine qu’occidentale, afin de les rendre plus accessibles.

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