

The French Review

From The Editor's Desk: Report for the French Review, 2005–2006

FR statistics for articles submitted 1 June 2005–31 May 2006 (vol. 79)

<u>Category</u>	<u>Submitted</u>	<u>Accepted</u>	<u>Rejected</u>	<u>Under Evaluation</u>	<u>No Decision</u>
Literature	71 (57.7%)	20 (28.2%)	19 (26.7%)	14 (19.7%)	18 (25.4%)
Pedagogy	14 (11.4%)	4 (28.8%)	6 (42.9%)	4 (28.3%)	—
Society & Culture	9 (7.3%)	2 (22.2%)	4 (44.5%)	3 (33.3%)	—
Film	28 (22.8%)	15 (53.6%)	8 (28.6%)	5 (17.8%)	—
Linguistics	1 (.8%)	1 (100%)	—	—	—
Totals	123 (100%)	42 (34.2%)	37 (30.1%)	26 (21.1%)	18 (14.6%)

This is an important year for the *French Review*. First, of course, is our 80th anniversary. Those interested in the history of the *French Review* and the American Association of Teachers of French should look back at our 75th anniversary issue published in May 2002. This year is also significant because it marks endings and new beginnings for *L'Année littéraire*. I am sad to say, for example, that this year's "Année poétique 2005" marks the last in a series of brilliant and important columns on contemporary poetry by Michaël Bishop, not only a poetry specialist, but a poet himself. Since May 1993 when he made his column and the *French Review* a must read for anyone interested in the cornucopia of poetry written in French, Michael has dazzled us with his analyses and insights. Now he is stepping down. I am very pleased that Michael Brophy will succeed him. We wish Michaël all the best as he continues to read, write, and publish poetry, both his and that of others.

Edward Baron Turk provides us with a new beginning with his "Année théâtrale." We look forward eagerly to Edward's insights into the state of French theater. This will also be a farewell column for James P. Mc Nab, author of "Bloc-notes culturel," which he began in 1999. Jim is to be commended for taking on the tough issues facing France in the last eight years in the political, economic, and social spheres. He has also kept us up to date on French cinema, art, and song. I know that many teachers have used his column in their courses on contemporary France and that his commemoration of "disparus" has provided us with a lasting sense of twentieth- and twenty-first century French history. We wish Jim all the best in his well-earned retirement in the south of France and hope that he will send us updates from time to time on life in the "hexagone." I am delighted to tell you that Bernard Cerquiglini, the internationally known linguist, will succeed Jim. We look forward to his perspective and insights. I will make you wait until next year to learn the new title for his rubric. I am equally happy to say that William Cloonan continues his column on the novel. This year's is particularly provocative as Bill exposes the shallow and superficial side of the French novel in 2005 amid the hype of American-style publicity campaigns, while at the same time uncovering a number of "trouvailles" in what was, after all, a very good year for the novel.

Pedagogy and linguistics are paired in a number of issues this year, much as film and pedagogy were last year. In the current issue the author of an article entitled "Thinking in English, Writing in French" takes on the much-debated topic of students' use of English to draft compositions in French, and by implication the use of English in the classroom. The author shows the different ways in which students use L1 while preparing to write in L2. This helps us to understand how students think about L2 though it does not resolve the question of how much time we should devote to English in our classrooms. Also in this issue we present a shocking piece entitled "Les Traitements des insultes racistes et sexistes dans les dictionnaires bilingues." The author shows how, on the one hand lexicographers are fearful of insulting minorities and do censure racism and anti-semitism, but, on the other they do not show the same concern for women. In the December issue the author of "Enjeux et défis de l'enseignement du français langue étrangère en France et aux Etats-Unis" poses a number of fundamental questions such as "What is the communicative approach?" and shows that there is no clear consensus. This scholar contrasts the individualized and personalized approach so popular in the United States with the French concentration on the target culture through documents, and discusses how to promote unity in a variety of ways incorporating both the American and French approaches. "L'Anglicisme ou le *mea culpa* des Québécois: éclairage historique" explains the myth of English as the enemy of the French language in Quebec and the prejudice of native speakers of English who viewed French-Canadian as inferior to Parisian French. Gradually the status of the French-Canadian language was elevated and English—even American English—came to be seen as part of the richness of French-Canadian. A related essay in the December issue, "Language and Ideology in the Maghreb: Francophonie and Other Languages," underscores how, after independence—especially in Morocco—the ambivalence toward *francophonie* had a negative effect on local languages such as Tamazight and Berber. According to the author the "arabisation" that followed also served to undermine the earlier high level of education and cut off the Maghreb from the Francophone world, thus encouraging religious fundamentalism and a social split between the French-speaking elites and the rest of the population.

In February "Shérazade in the Museum: A Visual Approach to Teaching Leïla Sebbar's Novel" considers the ongoing debate over Orientalism and emphasizes self-fashioning in the "société métissée" portrayed by Sebbar. The Tunisian poet Samir Marzouki shares his poems and reflections on bilingualism and "métissage" in a piece entitled "'Ambivalence ô mes délices...': splendeurs et misères du bilinguisme chez l'écrivain arabe francophone." This essay has special resonance because Marzouki has spent the last two years working at the Agence intergouvernementale de la francophonie in Paris. The February issue also brings us a useful article on how to evaluate textbooks. It is entitled "The Book Fair in French Teacher Education." In March there is a good overview of how to teach about France and the French-speaking world by addressing questions of cultural identity through film. The title of this essay is "Making Reel to Real Contact: Film in the French Culture Course." Another interesting pedagogical piece, "Second-Person Pronoun Use in On-Line French Language Chat Environments," shows how the "tu" form has come to dominate chat-rooms and offers reasons for this growing trend, while showing where the "vous" form has been maintained elsewhere.

April brings another article on how to teach about diversity and identity—the two watchwords of post-colonial times—in a film course. The authors of "Moi et l'autre, identité et diversité dans un cours sur le film francophone" explain how they sensitize students to other cultures and help them acquire strategies for cultural adaptation through the stages of rejection, defensiveness, minimization, acceptance, adaptation, and integration. A linguistic offering in the same issue, "Raymond Breton's 1665 *Dictionnaire caraïbe-français*," examines how Breton, a pioneer in anthropological linguistics, was interested in Carib culture on its own terms and considered the language's potential for communication; not just as an artifact. Breton also defended the Caribs and their language against the criticisms of Spanish writers. It is clear that Breton had "accepted" and "integrated" this culture and was ahead of his time.

Society and Culture, and Film also receive their due in Volume 80. In addition to “Bloc-notes culturel: l’année 2005” in this issue, the December number presents the already discussed “Language and Ideology in the Maghreb: Francophone and Other Languages.” Also in December we publish “La France face à la mondialisation,” an essay that highlights the erosion of social solidarity and economic justice that has accompanied globalization and the shift in France over the past twenty-three years from Democratic Socialism to Liberalism with social concerns. This article will help us to understand both the riots of November 2005 and the strikes in the spring of 2006, which led to the withdrawal of the CPE (Contrat Première Embauche).

In February the author of “*Mina Tannenbaum as the Epilogue to the Shoah: Bearing Witness to the Death of French Jewry*” explores the negative effects of the Shoah on both its survivors and their children. March brings an overview of the French political and cultural presence in 410 lycées around the world in an article entitled “Lycées et ‘grands établissements’ français à l’étranger.” In April we present a compelling essay, “French Rap Music Going Global: IAM, They were, We are,” which chronicles the African—especially Egyptian— influences on the rap group IAM while demonstrating the unquestionable influence of American rappers. The role of contemporary women rappers such as Beyoncé and the French Diam is also described. “Histoire et ambiguïté: un nouveau regard sur *Lacombe Lucien*” scrutinizes the fundamental difficulty of how to come to terms with the actions of the protagonist, who is a killer, but possesses undeniable human characteristics and at times displays concern for others. This ambiguity made it difficult for some viewers and critics to accept the film on its own terms when it first came out in 1974, a time when the French were just beginning to confront their role in the Occupation. In the same issue one of our literature articles, “L’Holocauste dans les écrits de Camus,” reminds us of the refusal of Pope Pius XII and the Catholic Church to oppose or condemn the Nazis, and the failure of the Allies, after the war, to take proper care of the survivors of the death camps.

French Literature always plays a central role in the life of the *French Review*. In this issue “Emotion and Poetry in Condillac’s Theory of Language and Mind” shows how Condillac differed from his contemporaries in making emotion and creativity (poetic imagination) necessary components of reason. The other essay, “Reading the Preface to Marie Bashkirtseff’s *Journal* through Rousseau’s *Confessions*,” argues that although both writers depended on traditional gender categories, Bashkirtseff parodied Rousseau’s opening paragraphs in order to move the genre in a new direction in the late nineteenth century.

In December the author of “The Mulatto as Island and the Island as Mulatto in Alexandre Dumas’s *Georges*” outlines how Georges represents the hybrid hero of the Francophone melting pot that the island of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean had become. His was an impossible search for identity. “X-Rated: Removing Madame de Clèves from *La Princesse de Clèves*” is a pièce de résistance which sheds new light on how Madame de Clèves’s critical role in the novel was removed by editors who did not follow standard editorial practices. The result is a spurious change in how we interpret this classic of French literature. The author calls for a restoration of the pronoun “elle” for “Monsieur de Clèves,” thus restoring Madame de Clèves’s agency. In February there is another article on Camus, “The Ethics of Hospitality in Camus’s ‘L’Hôte,’” the ever-popular short story taught in intermediate-level French university courses. The author emphasizes how the Arab’s decision to go to the prison in Tinguit may well reflect the influence of Daru’s hospitality on him. “Narratees in Butor’s *L’Emploi du temps*” explores the interplay of narrator and narratees who can generate the story in ways the protagonist can not.

March brings an essay on Jean Cayrol’s *Les Corps étrangers: Résistance Confrontée*, another piece that takes up issues concerning the Occupation. The author outlines how the novel reflects the attempts by World War II collaborators to justify their collaboration after the war had ended by presenting themselves as victims of the Nazis. Although we rarely publish “explications de texte,” of poems, a very close reading entitled “‘La Cruche’ de Ponge: un ‘objet’ mallarméen” brings new insight into both the poem and Mallarmé’s influence on Ponge. “*Le Voyeur*, ou l’érotisme de l’héautontimorouménos robbe-grillétien” is a challenging essay on the

confrontation of the conscious and unconscious. The author works with Jungian concepts to explain how a variety of secondary characters represent different facets of the protagonists, Mathias and Jacqueline. Although Jung sees the unconscious as feminine and the conscious as masculine, the author claims that Mathias's unconscious is feminine, but that Jacqueline's is masculine. The combat of conscious and unconscious is an androgynous one. In April "De la 'spéculation/risa/tion' des marginaux dans *Les Météores* de Michel Tournier" plumbs the status of marginal people and limns Tournier's argument that a society of unity must replace that of objectification, marginalization, and "commodification" so that the value of each individual can become a reality regardless of economic, social, or sexual status.

Literature outside of France continues to engage us as scholars and teachers in a complex, post-colonial world where vestiges of colonialism are ever-present. In December there is a fascinating and original essay entitled "Etude des cartes postales des Antilles françaises et de la Guyane des années 1900–1920." The author shows how photographs were used to justify the colonization of the Antilles while omitting scenes of the repression of worker strikes and the disappearance of the sugar industry. The latter was replaced by rum distilleries whose profits were reinvested in France. Also missing from the collections are photos of the devastation of St. Pierre, Martinique, where 30,000 died during the eruption of Mount Pélée in 1903. "Quebec Women in the Public Sphere: Historical and Fictional Views" sketches the progress made by working women in Quebec as depicted in recent novels by women. In February "Rethinking Rootedness in Simone Schwartz-Bart's *Ti Jean L'Horizon*" discusses the search for Antillean identity through the protagonist's travel, both real and imaginary. According to the author the Guadalupean hero, Ti Jean, shows how roots can be transplanted and new identity discovered. In April we publish "Complicit Victims in *Les Anciens Canadiens* and *Le Mulâtre*," an article detailing both white and black racism and sexism in the works listed in the title. Finally, our interview section continues to highlight authors throughout the Francophone world. In the current issue we present an interview with Azouz Begag, the well-known French novelist and author of *Le Gone du Chaâba*, who was originally trained as a sociologist and who, in June 2005, was named *Ministre délégué à la Promotion de l'égalité des chances*, thus becoming the first person of North-African descent to be named to a ministerial position in a French government. The second interview in this issue is with the famous Martinican author Patrick Chamoiseau and is an ode to diversity, linguistic and cultural. In March Linda Lê, a French writer who was born in Vietnam, is interviewed about the influence of both cultures on her work.

I am very pleased to announce that a special issue called "La Francophonie aux Etats-Unis" will be published in May 2007 in honor of the annual meeting of the AATF to be held in Baton Rouge from 12–15 July 2007 (cf. "Announcements"). It will present a wide range of articles on all aspects of Francophonie in the United States. I will have more to say in the May issue. I believe that this will be the first time we have put together such an issue.

Once again I urge you to write up your experiences and experiments in your classroom teaching and submit them as articles for our rubric "In Your Corner: Focus on the Classroom." We all stand to benefit from the experience and ideas of our colleagues as they apply to classroom teaching.

I cannot close without thanking our Advertising Manager, Margaret Dempster, for her two years in that position. I am delighted to welcome Ann Sunderland, a former member of the Executive Council of the AATF, as her successor.

Finally, please be sure to celebrate National French Week (*La Semaine du français*) from 7–13 November. It is more important than ever to share our passion for the French language and Francophone culture and literature with our communities and to encourage diversity across the United States.

Bonne rentrée,

Christopher P. Pinet