

FRENCH LANGUAGE PURISM: FRENCH LINGUISTIC
DEVELOPMENT AND CURRENT
NATIONAL ATTITUDES

by

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An impulse to protect the French language and exclude foreign languages, specifically English, has become prominent throughout France in the last two decades. This movement for linguistic purism, rooted in historical encounters with foreign languages and cultures, is motivated more by nationalistic sentiment and cultural pride than linguistic concerns. By consulting numerous French articles and commentaries on the recent developments in France, French language purism can be seen most prominently as an ancient cultural struggle to preserve French national identity. A discussion of the passage of the loi Toubon in 1994 and the surrounding controversy illustrates the current national attitudes concerning French culture and the French language.

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INTRODUCTION

" . . . la langue française n'est point fixée et ne se fixera point. Une langue ne se fixe pas. L'esprit humain est toujours en marche, ou si l'on veut, en mouvement, et la langue avec lui."

[. . . the French language isn't at all fixed and never will be. A language does not remain static. The human spirit is always marching forward, or if one wishes, in movement, and the language with it.]

Victor Hugo, 1827
(von Wartburg, 220)

An impulse to protect the French language and exclude foreign languages, specifically English, has become prominent throughout France in the last two decades. This movement is motivated more by nationalistic sentiment and cultural pride than linguistic concerns. By consulting independent social commentaries on and published reactions to the controversies surrounding recent government actions, it is possible to explore why language purism has become so strong in France in recent years. Following a summary of the development of the French language, an analysis of the situation in the late twentieth century highlights the French reaction to the loss of French cultural and political prestige to the United States, with a more in depth discussion of the 1994 loi Toubon and its import on the French language. The origins and history of the French language and its influence in the world bear powerfully on the underlying motives for

language purism in France today as conflicts and interactions with other languages influenced both the development of the language and attitudes toward the French language and other languages. Over time, the French language became regarded as the representative of French culture and also the country of France.

Arguments and interpretations from prominent scholars in the field of the origins or other aspects of language purism in France are used. Two linguists provide a brief glance over the history and development of the French language over the centuries, Peter Rickard and W. von Wartburg. Drawing upon anthropological methods, Jeffra Flaitz compared and measured attitudes of the French toward English and Anglo-American culture. He stipulates that once English had become widespread in France, it resulted in a negative attitude toward the English language, Anglo-American ideology and speakers of English (Flaitz, viii or ix). Richard Kuisel followed the evolution of anti-American sentiments in the twentieth century after World War II, finding that the French responded to the assumption that the United States is a "social model" (Kuisel, ix). Concentrating on the use of language by the media, Philip Thody reviewed English words in the media, where they appear and how they are used, to conclude that English terms are appearing where no French equivalent existed and are not unduly influencing the French language because they are not replacing French terms (Thody, 2). Peter Grigg focused on the loi Toubon and the movement against English in France and argues that the French are fighting against American dominance in commerce and

technology and the strong presence of American culture in the media. All of these authors drew upon the history and origins of the French language as a necessary background to comprehending modern linguistic attitudes.

ORIGINS AND HISTORY OF THE FRENCH LANGUAGE

In the fifth or fourth century B.C., most of France, then known as Gaul, was settled by Celts, who spoke a mixture of Celtic languages and dialects. The Celts drove out the Iberians and the Ligurians, as far as the Alps in eastern France and Switzerland, and even menaced the Greek settlements on the Mediterranean coast (Rickard, 1; von Wartburg, 16). The Greeks who controlled the coastal areas of southern France eventually asked for aid from the Romans to combat the Celts sometime during the second century B.C.; the first campaign against the Gauls, as the Celts were known by this time, occurred from 154 to 125 B.C. and the southeastern portion of Gaul was conquered by the Roman army and renamed Provincia (Rickard, 1).

Thereafter, the Celts ceased to be invaders and became defenders. To the east, the Germans contained the Celts as the Roman army advanced slowly but surely and, by 52 B.C., Julius Caesar had conquered most of the rest of Gaul (Rickard, 1). By the beginning of the first century, Roman law ruled Gaul, and Latin was the language

of administration, justice and commerce. The Gaulish inhabitants were forced to attend the Roman school, and thus to learn Latin, if they desired any social advancement. It simply became a practicality to learn Latin, the invaders' language, since the Romans were in power.

Celtic languages did have some influence on Latin. Words for which the Romans did not have an equivalent term were adopted into Latin, or Latinized. Some examples are: "alauda," a Latinized Gaulish word which was kept by the developing Romance language of Old French as "aloe" and is known today as "alouette" [skylark]; or "caballus," again Latinized (it eventually replaced, at least within the territory of Gaul, the original Latin term "equus") and survives in modern French as "cheval" [horse] (Rickard, 4). Yet any linguistic borrowings from the Celtic inhabitants beyond vocabulary, such as speech patterns or articulation, cannot be proven to have been carried over into Latin (Rickard, 3). Gaulish, or Celtic, place names remained, and still remain to this day, in such towns as Paris, named after the Parisii, the Gaulish people who lived in the environs (von Wartburg, 23). The vocabulary borrowing is evidence that interaction occurring between these two peoples influenced their languages.

The stage was set for the emergence of a new language -- local inhabitants speaking one language, and the people in power imposing another. The mixing of the Romans and Celts began to produce a new dialect of Latin, heavily influenced by the local languages, called "vulgar Latin". "Vulgatus" or "vulgaris" is a Latin adjective meaning "common, general" and "vulgus" is a Latin noun meaning "masses, people,

populace" (Traupman, 334). Cicero derisively labelled the budding Romance language "quoticianus sermo" [daily speech] or "rusticus sermo" [rural speech] (von Wartburg, 36; Traupman, 259, 274, 285).

During the fifth century, another contributor to Romance (the name given the stage between Latin and Old French) appeared on the scene -- the Germanic language. Franks and Visigoths to the east of Gaul began invading in 406 A.D. and settling in France; unlike the Romans however, they adopted the language of Gaul and even formed an alliance with the Church (Rickard, 7). Indirectly, the Germanic languages influenced the budding Romance language. Many military terms made their way into Latin from German, and thence into Romance. Before the Frank invasions, Germans had entered the Roman army, starting in the first century A.D., and, replaced the Romans in most positions of rank by the fourth century (von Wartburg, 55).

Soon more foreign peoples arrived and settled in Gaul. The Roman Empire had begun to deteriorate and only one province in southern Gaul remained under Roman control; Syagrius, the governor of the province, lost to Clovis and his Franks in the middle of the fifth century (von Wartburg, 55). The north of France was occupied by the Franks, while the south was under the weak domination of the Visigoths (Rickard, 8; von Wartburg, 64). Latin still reigned as the language of communication, especially as neither the Franks nor the Visigoths imposed their language upon the local populations. Between the north, controlled by the Franks, and the south, controlled by the

Visigoths, a linguistic division developed from the political and ethnic barrier between these two peoples which became increasingly striking over time (see map, Rickard, 40; von Wartburg, 64).

Between the sixth and ninth centuries A.D., pronunciation affected by Germanic accentuation drastically altered the Latin of Rome into the beginnings of Old French (von Wartburg, 65) and, by the end of the eighth century, Latin and Gallo-Romance had grown even farther apart than they were in the fifth century (Asher, 1300). As spoken Latin or Romance differed so greatly from written Latin, Charlemagne attempted to reinstate classical Latin in the ninth century A.D., bringing in scholars from Ireland and England to restore and "purify" Latin as well as founding numerous schools where all teaching was done in Latin (Rickard, 18; von Wartburg, 68-69). While Charlemagne did spark a scholarly revival of classical Latin which resulted in new copies of old manuscripts, his attempt failed to impose the reformed language on the populace. In fact, at the Council of Tours in 813 A.D., French bishops agreed that, instead of Latin, the Romance or German vernaculars were to be used by the local priests in preaching and educating the masses about God (von Wartburg, 69). However, the local vernacular of Gaul, Old French, was still only a spoken language (Rickard, 18).

The country known today as France was divided and subdivided into little morsels by conquering peoples and local controlling powers. It is important to note that although the dialect that would become Old French existed during the ninth century, a great number of local

dialects and separate languages were spoken all over the area. These dialects had grown and developed after the Roman retreat -- a period of four hundred years -- which reflected both the north-south division and the waves of foreign invaders (see map, Rickard, 40). Private wars between local rulers, lurking brigands and attacking Norsemen from the north kept the country in political and linguistic chaos (Rickard 23). French kings existed but lacked real power to control the country or reduce infighting.

The earliest extant texts in Old French appeared in the ninth century when Latin was dominant. One such text was the Strasbourg Oaths, translated or written in both the Romance and German vernacular, written in 842 A.D. (Rickard, 20). The other, a 28-line poem describing the martyrdom of the virgin Saint Eulalie, appeared around 880 A.D. (von Wartburg, 71). The oldest manuscripts were usually religious in nature as they were used to reach the masses (von Wartburg, 71). Three religious documents written in Old French appeared in the tenth century: one, known as the "Jonah Fragment", contains notes on a sermon; two are poems -- the "Clermont Passion" and the "Life of St. Leger" (Rickard 27). These are the only texts preserved from the period following the Strasbourg Oaths through the eleventh century.

Few texts survive from the tenth century, perhaps because it was a tumultuous political period, the era of the later Carolingian kings, who retained weak control over their warring vassals. In 911 A.D., Charles the Simple ceded Normandy, also known as Neustria, to the

occupying Vikings or Normanni (men of the the north), who eventually settled down and within a few generations spoke Old French (Rickard, 24; von Wartburg, 72). Before the Normans dropped their language, many of their sea terms, combat vocabulary and place names passed into Old French, such as the word "vagr" (Norman) or "vague" (Modern French), [wave] (von Wartburg, 74-75). By the end of the eleventh century, a capital had finally been established in Paris and the surrounding area developed into the political and linguistic center for France.

In the south, Occitan^{*} or the Langue d'Oc was widely spoken and was a possible rival for the northern language, the Langue d'Oïl. The two languages were named after their term for "yes" -- "oc" in the south and "oïl" in the north, "langue" meaning "language" in English (Berg, 5). Some texts were written in Occitan, such as the "Boecis" and the "Life of Saint Foi of Agen" in the eleventh century (Rickard, 35). However, the language of the north eventually prevailed since the capital was in the north and therefore it was the language spoken by the king. In southern France, the fall of the Toulousian dynasty, a consequence of Pope Innocent the Third's Albigensian Crusade (1209-1213 A.D.), ended any linguistic influence upon the north; the language of the south, Occitan, was rarely used after the end of the Toulousian dynasty for literary purposes (Rickard, 46). Although the Langue d'Oc was still spoken in the south, the Langue d'Oïl eventually dominated written texts.

* All underlined terms appear in the Glossary.

Epic poems began to be written in Old French from the eleventh century, a period known as the classical epoch (Rickard, 38; von Wartburg, 115). By the middle of the thirteenth century, French is used alongside Latin, even in royal documents and by foreign scholars. The language of Paris and the surrounding area, together known as the **Ile de France**, was accepted by the twelfth and thirteenth centuries as the desired form (Rickard, 39). The first "grands centres d'études" [great centers of study], the University of Montpellier and the University of Paris were founded in the thirteenth century, which reinforced the Ile de France as a linguistic center because courses would have been conducted in Latin (von Wartburg, 115).

By the end of the thirteenth century and up through the fifteenth century, a period of philosophical critique, French literature lost its prestige, but Latin also began to lose its role as the dominant language (Rickard, 62; von Wartburg, 116-120). Latin was still used for scientific purposes, and some official purposes, especially after the advent of the printing press, but during the fifteenth century, the use of French steadily increased within official spheres of the royal government even as its influence in Italy and Sicily waned (Rickard, 62-63). During this period, Old French had developed beyond its initial structure and by the fourteenth century is identified as Middle French (Rickard, 61). Latinisms, or Latin words, began to make their way into Middle French instead of vernacular terms appearing in Latin, a reversal parallel to its decline in prestige (von Wartburg, 140).

For the first time French, or Middle French, was recognized as the official language of France -- excluding Latin, provincial languages and local dialects (Rickard, 81). In August of 1539, the Ordonnances de Villers-Cotterets were issued; Article Three of the Ordonnances states that "all court proceedings, deeds, judgements, etc. were to be set down en langage maternel françois et non aultrement [in the French mother tongue and not otherwise]" (Rickard, 83). Henceforward French was used in civil and ecclesiastical administration and archives, even in regions not under the direct control of the French king (Rickard, 83). After several centuries of linguistic struggle French was finally "emancipated" from Latin in the sixteenth century (von Wartburg, 15).

Despite some loss of land to Italy, political unification of France progressed greatly during the sixteenth century as other lands were regained from England and regions annexed (Rickard, 81). This allowed for the official version of French, that of the Ile de France, to grow in strength and spread in use, even though Occitan, and many local dialects, held sway in the southern regions of France. The north-south linguistic division remained in existence, however, literature from the south was written in French and not in Occitan (Rickard, 82). According to John Palsgrave, an Englishman who wrote Esclaircissement de la langue françoise (Explanation of the French Language) to explain the French language to his fellow Englishmen, the most respected dialect of French was spoken in Paris and the region between the Seine and the Loire (Rickard, 82).

Following Palsgrave's observations, other grammatical studies of French were written and published as people became extremely interested "to describe it, analyze it . . . compare it in detail with other languages, and speculate about its origins" (Rickard, 81). Grammarian Robert Estienne wrote the first Latin-French and French-Latin dictionaries in 1532 and 1539, respectively, as well as creating "**la lexicographie**" [the lexicography] (von Wartburg, 151). Estienne based his syntax on the French of the royal court and state departments, such as the Chancellery and the Treasury, against which his son argued for a common standard based more on the idiosyncrasies of the "menu peuple [small/lower class]" (Rickard, 83). Beginning with Estienne and a few other grammarians in the 1500's, the number of dictionaries and grammatical texts grew throughout the following century. One problem they encountered was the lack of pre-existing grammatical rules for French, so they applied Latin grammar instead of creating rules to accommodate their language (Rickard, 90-91).

Perhaps the most important advocate for the French language during the sixteenth century was the group of poets who called themselves the **Pléiade**. Founded by Pierre de Ronsard near the middle of the sixteenth century, the Pléiade set forth two goals for themselves: to defend the French language and its literary worth and to create a more illustrious, distinguished French (Berg, 192). Joachim du Bellay's *Défense et Illustration de la langue française* (Defense and Enrichment of the French Language) describes how to achieve these

two goals. He posits three general steps: first, to enrich the language through vocabulary borrowings from other languages and even invention of new words; second, to imitate the classical writers, both Greek and Roman, in form and topical content, using rhetorical structures and mythological allusions; third, to respect the dignity of poetry and the Muses which inspire the poets (Berg, 191-193).

The Pléiade regarded vocabulary borrowing and neologisms as the best means of enriching the language. The creation of a French literary tradition was paramount in order to elevate French to the same level of linguistic and literary importance that Latin and Italian enjoyed. The Pléiade certainly aided the growth of new vocabulary through its adoption of foreign words and regionalisms, not to mention the terms they created for their poems (Rickard, 97; von Wartburg, 153-154). The Pléiade also encouraged the use of French in domains normally reserved for Latin, such as science (Rickard, 85).

Anti-Italian sentiment began to grow during this period too. The first comparison between French and Italian, Jean Lemaire de Belges' *La Concorde des deux langaiges* [The Concord of the Two Languages], appeared in the beginning of the sixteenth century (Rickard, 87). The rivalry eventually led to arguments over Italian influence on French and the equality, or lack thereof, of Italian to French (Rickard, 87). The Massacre of St. Bartholomew on August 24, 1572 aided the anti-Italian sentiment among Protestants who thought the queen of France, Catherine de Médicis, a Florentine, was the motivating force behind the massacre (Rickard, 88). Estienne published several books or treatises

in the latter half of the century confirming the superiority of French and heavily criticizing the use of "Italianisms" by the court (Rickard, 88). Language purists were protesting not only a high influx of approximately 450 Italian terms as well as Spanish, German and Dutch words, but also several Italian and Latin suffixes -- a travesty in their opinion (Rickard, 89-90).

By the seventeenth century, the French language of the Ile de France closely resembled the French of the twentieth century (Rickard, 100). One important development occurred during the seventeenth century which heavily influenced French, and still does today. In 1635, Cardinal Richelieu founded the Académie Française; this body was recognized by the Parlement de Paris two years later (Rickard, 102). The Académie Française was charged with the creation of a French dictionary and also a grammar, as well as a rhetoric and a poetics based on the observations of the academy (Rickard, 102). Its first dictionary was published in 1694; its grammar however did not appear until 1932 (Asher, 777; Rickard, 102). However, in 1705, the Académie Française ratified a treatise on grammar and lexicography published fifty-eight years previously, *Remarques sur la langue française* [Remarks on the French Language] by Claude Favre de Vaugelas (Rickard, 103). Favre de Vaugelas contributed to the standardization of the language with this work, especially as his observations of grammar were approved by the Académie Française (Asher, 777). By the end of the seventeenth century, it was generally

accepted that all aspects of French were permanently codified (Gordon, 27).

Spelling reforms were rampant during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as no standard spelling existed. The first reforms appeared in 1530 as Geoffroy Tory, a printer, and Robert Estienne each added the cedilla, "ç", and accents, such as the acute accent over the letter, "é" (Rickard, 93). These changes were also advocated by Montflory in the 1530's (Rickard 93-94). Louis Méigret attempted a spelling reform in the middle of the century, involving a more phonetically-based system, which was never quite accepted; several other attempts were made, but they never went beyond proposals (Rickard 94). In the seventeenth century, François de Malherbe criticized archaisms in word order and sentence construction as well as challenging the use of neologisms, any loan words (whether from a dialect of French or another language) and even technical terms in poetry (Rickard 102). Ronsard's suggested French spelling had been adopted during the beginning of the seventeenth century by, ironically, Dutch printers who then imported their books into France; by 1660, French printers were using the same system (Rickard 107).

Although the Académie Française had published its own dictionary, and continued to update it through the following centuries, other dictionaries and grammars appeared during the seventeenth century. The Grammaire de Port-Royal [Grammar of Port-Royal], published in 1660 by Claude Lancelot and Antoine Arnauld, was perhaps the most important (Rickard, 104; von Wartburg, 183). **Port-Royal**

also continued to publish dictionaries in the eighteenth century (Rickard 105). The Académie Française's two-volume dictionary excluded technical terms as it was mainly intended for the royal court; because this lapse was criticized, the Académie Française commissioned Thomas Corneille to create a dictionary, Dictionnaire des Arts et des Sciences [Dictionary of the Arts and Sciences], published in 1694 (Rickard, 104).

As evidenced by different dictionaries, the French language reflected the social stratification at the time. Some protested the separation evident in the actions of the Académie Française and other lexicographers and grammarians. Critics of the academy were more vocal and left behind written complaints about the quality of the vocabulary in the dictionary. Two French languages existed, one for "la vie de société" [society, or courtly, life] and one for "la vie de métier" [trade, or artisan's, life]; the nobility believed they had the right to ignore any and all scientific discoveries of the age, as well as the scientists who discovered them (von Wartburg, 186). Scientists of the time were generally lower-class people with some education, but not of the nobility, and who often did not speak the language of the court or the Ile de France. The separation of vocabulary in the many dictionaries reinforced the notion of "la vie de société" and "la vie de métier". One particularly vocal critic, Antoine Furetière, who compiled his own Dictionnaire universel [Universal Dictionary], which was not quite so universal, admonished the Académie Française for having

admitted into its dictionaries too many terms which he considered to be foreign (von Wartburg, 186).

There were also those who severely rejected the use of crude and indecent words (von Wartburg, 184). Others believed that even beautiful words, if used by the working-class populace, could become inferior and crude (von Wartburg, 185). Perhaps the most interesting group which actively sought to remove such words and thereby to prevent the muddying of the elite form of French, the language of the court, was the **Femmes Savants** (the Learned, or Wise, Women) (von Wartburg, 184). Their goal was to create a society to remove "ces syllabes sales, Qui dans les plus beaux mots, produisent des scandales" [those dirty syllables, which in the most beautiful words, produce scandals] (von Wartburg, 184). They considered words such as "âne" [ass], "vache" [cow], "cochon" [pig], "engendrer" [to beget] as too close to the land and the working class, and thus too vulgar to be included in French (von Wartburg, 184). Molière, a French playwright of the seventeenth century, wrote in quite the opposite direction of the Femmes Savants; his characters acted and spoke just as they would in reality (von Wartburg, 185).

By the eighteenth century, since numerous grammars and dictionaries had already made their appearance, people began to critique illogical vocabulary and syntax as language purism grew (Rickard, 105-106). Yet, the philosophers of the era understood that restricting vocabulary could limit thought and intellectual boundaries, which were being pushed at the time (Rickard, 106). Prose gained in

use and more vocabulary, either borrowed from other languages or created by authors, enriched the language with more precise terms and subtle distinctions in meaning (Rickard, 106; von Wartburg, 194). Latin dropped from daily use and remained in use only within academic domains, which opened the linguistic door for French (Rickard, 114).

With the power of Latin diminished, French grew to be the international language of the eighteenth century. Before the French Revolution in 1789, French language had been adopted as the international diplomatic language and was even used by the Russian aristocracy (Petit Larousse, 1627; Rickard, 117). While Occitan was still spoken in the countryside of southern France, French had become known in the cities and had replaced the local dialects for writing purposes (Rickard, 117). Interestingly enough, the Berlin Academy, in Germany, held an essay contest in 1782 to answer the question "Qu'est-ce qui a rendu la langue française universelle?" [What made the French language universal?], to which one of the two winners, Antoine de Rivarol, included comments such as "Ce qui n'est pas clair n'est pas français" [That which is not clear is not French], and "La syntaxe française est incorruptible" [French syntax is incorruptible] (Rickard 118). The general attitude surrounding French and its use appears to have mirrored these sentiments.

The events surrounding the French Revolution of 1789 affected the use of French and pushed the language to a new level as a national language. A few decades before the Revolution, Diderot used his Encyclopédie to attack the use and abuse of absolute power within the

government (von Wartburg, 193). After the Revolutionary Government established itself in 1790, the government asked Abbé Henri Grégoire to investigate and evaluate the "linguistic state of the nation" as it felt that "l'unité de l'idiome est une partie intégrante de la Révolution" [the unity of the language is an integral part of the Revolution] (Rickard 120). Grégoire found that, out of a total population of twenty-five million, only three million could truly speak French, and even fewer could write in French (Rickard, 121). It is hard to evaluate his research, which was limited to sending questionnaires to local parish priests, but the government decided to act upon his results, believing that an insufficient number of people spoke what was supposed to be the national language (Rickard 120-121).

The first step proposed was a primary school for each **commune**, with teaching done in French (Rickard, 121). This was not achieved until 1832, and primary school was neither free nor compulsory (Rickard, 121). State education at the primary level finally became compulsory, secular and free in March of 1882, which greatly aided the acquisition of French by non-French speakers (Rickard, 122).

Other factors played a role in the increasing use of French in France. After the Revolution, obligatory military service required men from different areas of France to communicate and it was not possible to learn all the local dialects (Rickard, 121; von Wartburg, 213). For administrative purposes, France was divided into eighty-three **départements**; villagers who knew no French could not continue to use their language except in the home, as during the Roman

occupation, and learned to speak French for political as well as social reasons (Rickard, 121).

A combination of the Industrial Revolution and Napoleonic rule contributed to the expansion of French within the country itself. After 1832 the growth of railways, along with national and regional journals, helped spread the French language to all areas of the country (Rickard, 122). Universal male suffrage (1848) in combination with electoral campaigns also aided the spread of French (Rickard, 122). Words were created and added to the French vocabulary with the invention of the new government, its internal structure and its institutions, such as the postal service (von Wartburg, 215). Standard grammar, based on Noël and Chapsal's grammar of 1823, and spelling, based on the 1835 sixth edition of the dictionary of the Académie Française, regulated the language used and taught in the state education system (Rickard 121).

A fairly universal, standardized French was spreading across the country.

The number of French speakers was growing and so was the vocabulary. Authors of the nineteenth century encouraged the flexible growth of French. Chateaubriand revived and used words in his poetry which had not been previously accepted (von Wartburg, 218). Victor Hugo originally believed his literary work had codified the French language, but he eventually changed his mind and promoted the concept of an ever-evolving language (von Wartburg, 220). Regionalisms began appearing again, but not archaisms; Honoré de Balzac employed regional vocabulary in his work (von Wartburg, 222, 224). Guy de

Maupassant continued in the same vein as Balzac, writing realistic dialogues for his characters (von Wartburg, 226).

Standard French was soon heard almost everywhere, and local languages and dialects were slowly dying and disappearing from France.

Even so, French was not yet the universal language of France until the twentieth century. New grammars and ideas for spelling reform appeared again in this century. One of the most important French grammars, *Le Bon Usage* [Good Usage] by a Belgian, Maurice Grevisse, was first published in 1936, with regular revisions through 1986 (Rickard, 136). The Académie Française traditionally records spelling and grammar; it does not create new forms (Rickard 137). Grammar rules had been recorded and supported with examples for standard rules and their exceptions by Grevisse, but French spelling used by the Académie Française were deemed incorrect or inadequate by many, causing a rash of reform proposals in the twentieth century (Rickard, 136-137). Proposals to compensate or change the complexity of French spelling were periodically made in the first half of the 1900's, but to no avail (Rickard, 137).

The decline in international use and popularity of the French language became apparent at the beginning of this century. After World War I, the Treaty of Versailles was set down in both French and English, upon the insistence of the American (United States) and British leaders (Rickard 153). It was one of the first instances when French had to share its international role. Another example occurred in 1945 with the proposal to only use English, Russian and Spanish as

languages of the United Nations Organization; eventually French and Chinese were added after protests and a vote (Rickard 153-154). General remedies proposed to slow or halt the dwindling international use of French include: spelling reform, as previously mentioned; world bilingualism (French and English); a new method of teaching French from the fundamentals, which appeared in 1954 as "le français élémentaire" [elementary French] (Rickard 154).

Several organizations were created to find and enforce solutions to the problem. Founded in 1957, the Office du vocabulaire français [Office of French Vocabulary] attempts to regulate neologisms and the improper use of French words by sounding public opinion and arranging referenda for specific problems pointed out by the surveys (Rickard, 155-156). Other committees and councils created to monitor the French language include:

The Comité d'étude des termes techniques français [Committee for Study of French Technical Terms] makes decisions regarding the definitions and forms of new technical terms, as well as finding French equivalents for foreign words (Rickard, 156);

The Conseil international de la langue française [International Council of the French Language], has three goals: first, the standardization of French spelling and grammar; second, the creation of French vocabulary for all aspects of the modern world, such as technical and scientific inventions and processes; and third, the promotion of French "as a language of economic and social development" (Rickard, 156);

The Organisation Défense de la langue française [the Defense Organization of the French Language] reports the daily decisions of the Académie Française (Rickard, 156);

The Comité pour la défense et l'expansion de la langue française [Committee for the Defense and Expansion of the French Language], contains three sub-committees, one of which, the Commission du bon langage [Commission of Good Language] concerns itself with upholding standards (Rickard, 157);

The Commissions ministérielles de terminologie [Ministerial Commissions of Terminology] have been created to "enrich" the language with, or create, new French technical terms instead of allowing foreign words to be adopted for lack of a French word.

In all there are more than twenty organizations involved in monitoring and controlling the French language (Grigg, 369).

Along with the linguistic committees laws exist regarding the French language. One of the most prominent laws is the Loi Bas-Lauriol [Bas-Lauriol Law]. Officially titled "Maintenance of the Purity of the French Language" (Grigg, 372), the law passed on January 4, 1976 (Rickard, 157). The Loi Bas-Lauriol restricted the use of foreign languages or foreign words "in the supply and demand of goods, in advertising (whether spoken or written), in labor contracts, business transactions, instructions and guarantees for appliances, in radio and television programs, in public services and transport" (Rickard 157). The intention, according to Rickard, was to protect consumers, tax payers, contractors, etc. from misleading descriptions or ill-defined terms in contracts (Rickard, 157). The Association générale des usagers de la langue française or AGULF [General Association of Users of the French Language] has actively sought to discover and prosecute

those who violate the law since it became effective in 1977 (Rickard, 157).

Overall, the French language developed from a combination of Latin with local languages and dialects of Roman-conquered Gaul into a quite distinct language with its own cultural background and identity. It is the language of France and the French people. French has spread around the world through international contact and use, as well as colonialism. Throughout the centuries, a love for the French language has grown amongst its speakers, who regard it as the representative of the French culture and civilisation as well. Perhaps because of its long history as a prestigious language, French people often view their language as superior to other languages in its syntax and vocabulary. These attitudes are the foundation for French linguistic purism. A language which has enjoyed fame and prestige, French has recently begun to recede from the limelight as other languages, such as English, gain acceptance and are used internationally more than French. This decline has triggered the most recent defense of French language and culture: the loi Bas-Lauriol and the loi Toubon.

THE FRENCH RESPECT FOR THEIR LANGUAGE

The French have a unique relationship with the language that they speak. They do not regard it simply as a mode of communication necessary for everyday life. For the people whose primary language is French, it represents much more: it encompasses their culture, their way of life, their ideology and their history. Above all, the French language is seen as the ambassador of civilisation, which the French themselves feel has been, is and will be French culture: a classical, humanist education; a philosophy which is realistic, tragic and skeptical; a way of life centered on *le bon goût* [good taste] and *haute cuisine* [excellent cuisine]; and "great intrinsic merit" (Kuisel, 235-236).

This attitude towards the French language is changing, and will have to change, in order for the French to adapt to the global economy of the future where English has replaced French as the "lingua franca" and American technology and consumerism have influenced many of the major cultures and countries of the world. The twentieth century has seen a great shift of power from Europe and France to North America and the United States; it is precisely this new international balance, resulting in a secondary role for France, which is driving the recent revival of language purism. A similar movement is occurring in the United States as the number of non-English speaking immigrants,

namely Mexican, grows. Although the language reforms proposed and the laws passed in France today appear to attack foreign languages in general, they are aimed at ousting English, "franglais" and Anglo-American culture from the media and business and, therefore, returning French language and society to the French and France.

The term "franglais" has been used in conversations and French publications for several decades to describe both the pervasiveness of English in French and allude to the prominence of American culture in France. Le Petit Larousse Illustré 1997 defines "franglais" as the "ensemble des néologismes et des tournures syntaxiques d'origine anglaise introduits dans la langue française" [ensemble of English neologisms and syntactic constructions introduced into the French language] (Larousse, 457). This combination of French and English vocabulary existed before the word "franglais" ever appeared in 1955 to describe it (Rickard, 132). The debate over the prominent use of franglais in France today is as strong as ever, with a few new developments bringing the battle to the forefront of politics, both nationally and internationally.

The enormous influence of American culture is spreading all over the world. Some countries accept it, others reject it. Each society deals with the flow of images and information from the United States in its own manner. Typically, the French view American culture as a threat to their country and culture. Jeffra Flaitz, in The Ideology of English: French Perceptions of English as a World Language, points out that the French view English first, as a threat to France and the

eminence of the French language; second, as a forceful, offensive linguistic influence; and third, as a subversion of French ideology (Flaitz, 104). The French are using linguistic restrictions as a defense against a phenomenon which they interpret to be American culture invading France through the medium of the English language and thus corrupting their way of life.

French Prestige

"Notre conscience linguistique n'est rien de moins que notre conscience nationale."

[Our linguistic consciousness is nothing less than our national consciousness.]

André Thérive, Le Français, langue morte?
(Flaitz, 103)

In the fifteenth century, the Renaissance occurred in Italy, and, in the following century, Italianisms and Italian ideas made their way into French and France. Acceptance and imitation were the primary reactions to new, fascinating ideas from Italy. These ideas altering many aspects of French life, from philosophy to art and architecture (Rickard, 87). People associated with the royal court used and, perhaps, overused Italian words; it was popular to use Italian vocabulary and even alter French words to appear Italian (von Wartburg, 151-152). By the second half of the sixteenth century, a

sentiment arose that the Italian language and culture might replace the French language and culture. In reaction the French began to reject Italianisms and Italian ideas because the French felt their interpretation and their vocabulary had moved beyond the Italian influx of ideas and terms. Some French intellectuals, such as the grammarian Robert Estienne, felt that their culture was superior to Italian culture, and led the outcry against anything and everything Italian. Eventually, France had absorbed the "new" concepts so that they ceased to be new and began to be regarded as French, instead of Italian; a few Italian words and suffixes remain in French today. In short, the French reached a point where the exchange ceased to be profitable for them and commenced to threaten their own ideas and language, even if some of their ideas were based on those from Italy. The French began rejecting Italianisms once they felt that their language was being unreasonably altered through the acceptance of Italian terms. France's strengthening political power ameliorated French cultural pride reflected in the linguistic purism response the Italianisms.

France's power grew continuously from the sixteenth century until the Industrial Revolution. The Industrial Revolution caused a switch in favor of English. Instead of exporting terms for art, food and philosophy, French began importing words for the textile industry and railways (Grigg, 369). The English were the first to industrialize and maintained economic leadership into the 1870's, when Germany began to surpass them. David Gordon argues in The French Language and

National Identity that the appearance of the Alliance Française in 1883 quite possibly is one of the first signs of the decline of France (Flaitz, 112). As the twentieth century approached it became clear that France was no longer the superpower it once was. Previously, vocabulary borrowing between French and English had been fairly equal, even favoring French somewhat.

The abundance of all types of English words and phrases is causing the same uproar today, for a similar reason. Many of the new inventions and concepts come from Anglo-American countries. This trend started with the Industrial Revolution and has continued to grow over the past two centuries. In the beginning, France did accept the new ideas originating in Great Britain and the United States. It modeled its reforms of the Revolution of 1789 after the Bill of Rights and the Constitution of the United States. During the nineteenth century railways, which originated in England, made their way into France. Certainly no-one today would think to question the term "chemin de fer" [railway]; it would not be seen as a borrowed English term because it has been completely absorbed into the language.

In the twentieth century, capitalism and free market economics reign supreme. America's leadership in the economic and technological arenas remind the French, who still had not fully accepted their country's secondary position, that they "could not catch up" (Kuisel, 215). After World War II, when the previously isolationist United States began to dominate the international scene, France quickly slipped into a background position. Its importance in Europe was

reduced, although France fought desperately to keep both its independence from and influence over Eurasia. The emergence of the Cold War may have been the first great international tension to eclipse the country of France and trap it between the United States and Russia.

As the new millennium approaches, the European Union and its importance in the world is touted more and more. The increasingly integrated Europe reduces France's autonomy. In addition the social, political and economic structures of France can be seen as similar to other Western nations, thus reducing their perceived uniqueness (Kuisel, 4). Polls, discussed in Jacques Rupnik's "Anti-Americanism and the Modern: The Image of the United States in French Public Opinion," reveal that approximately two-thirds of French citizens believed by the 1980's that France ranked as a secondary world power and that less than twenty-five percent continued to believe it to be a primary power (Kuisel, 225-226). Alain Decaux, a former minister of the Francophony, admitted in 1992 that French was losing its position as "the first language" and urged French speakers to "bolster its place as second" (Grigg 370). France may accept its place in the world today, but it is not ecstatic to have lost its prestige in the process.

Linguistic "Corruption"

In the eighteenth century, at the height of France's power, French was taught, studied and spoken all over the world; it was a sign of taste and refinement. By the turn of the next century, the Russian aristocracy used French more than Russian (Thody, 89-90). In the twentieth century, France was forced to choose a side in the Cold War, choosing capitalism over communism. From the beginning, the United States and the U.S.S.R were regarded as the two world superpowers and France rarely entered into the picture. As evidenced by the struggle to include French as one of the languages of the United Nations, the English language had come to dominate world affairs (Grigg, 370).

As the twentieth century progresses, the number of English terms in French increases. Direct borrowings, anglicisms, translated catch-phrases and combination French-English words are growing in daily speech, newspaper publications, and in the realms of science, technology and business. Concern over the prominence of English has led to the loi Bas-Lauriol and the loi Toubon, aimed at restricting foreign terms used in France; it is quite clear that the target is English, and not just foreign terms in general (Flaitz, 110). Both of these language laws ban the use of foreign words in France, especially

when a foreign term takes the place of a French term which is already in existence.

Terms which already exist in French are sometimes being replaced by their English equivalents, a fact which has caused an outcry for their removal. In 1994, the French government published the Dictionnaire des termes officiels de la langue française in order to provide French replacements for anglicisms (Thody, 21). The dictionary was compiled with the belief that the only reason that *franglais* words were being used was because the French language did not have an equivalent, and therefore French speakers had no recourse but to use a foreign term. Nicknamed the "Toubon" after Minister of Culture, Jacques Toubon, the Dictionnaire des termes officiels de la langue française has not been particularly successful in achieving its goal (Thody 22-23).

The Toubon was created by various ministries who found equivalents for some English and *franglais* terms (Thody, 23). They focused mainly on technical terms; because of this there is a great deal of slang and daily vocabulary absent from the Toubon. It is still useful for specialists, but the *franglais* words which pervade street slang are not included, rendering the dictionary virtually useless for the average person (Thody 22-23). The Toubon has not helped to solve the problem which many feel is too important to ignore -- the use of *franglais* in everyday life. The Toubon defines "disc jockey" as an "animateur" and a "comeback" as a "retour," yet it accepted "weekend" and "sandwich", without giving them French equivalents (Grigg, 374).

Equally baffling is the absence of French words for "baby-sitting," "businessman," "slogan," "junior," or "top model" (Thody 22-23). The daily words included and excluded from the Toubon appear to correspond to the classes; the upper and lower classes reject the concepts defined by "baby-sitting" or "top model," while they are accepted by the middle class.

Even when *franglais* terms have an official French equal, the French public does not always accept them or chose to use them. While words such as "ordinateur" have replaced the use of the English word "computer," others have fallen by the wayside, such as "minimarge" for "discount" (Grigg, 371-372). Some English words adopted by the French-speaking population have eventually become commonplace and can be found in French dictionaries. The Petit Robert 1 included direct loan words "holster" and "stetson" (as in the type of hat), as well as "collapser", meaning to faint or collapse ("Soft' and...", 6 Sept. 1994). Le Petit Larousse Illustré 1995 even admitted the words "soft" and "hard", with multiple definitions ranging from abbreviations for software and hardware as well as to descriptive adjectives referring to sexual acts in erotic films ("Soft' et 'hard,' les nouveaux...", 6 Sept. 1994).

Many anglicisms are borrowed, with no alterations in pronunciation, spelling or definition, because they are the only existing term for a new phenomenon, whether cultural or technical (Grigg, 374-375). French equivalents do not exist for this type of *franglais* vocabulary currently in use, and the government does not seem to be

keeping up with the constant flow of Anglo-American terminology. The original governmental agency created to oversee the development of the French language, the Académie Française, is ridiculed by French speakers as an ineffective, outdated agency with ancient, or aging, members, capable only of monitoring the evolution of the language (Grigg, 371). One British commentator, R. Gosling, noted in his January 1, 1995 broadcast of Gosling en France on the BBC Radio Four that the French, although they can be "nationalistic and chauvinistic" and may support laws concerning their language, they also have a sense of irony which often leads to ridiculing any proposals of the government (Grigg, 374).

Bertrand Poirot Delpech, a member of the Académie Française, is quoted in the April 26, 1994 issue of *The Guardian* as recognizing the relative ineffectiveness of the academy:

Laws cannot dictate the use of language because the use of language will always follow people's whims. In this respect, the Académie Française acknowledges that it has no role other than that of registrar. (Grigg, 371)

However, the Secretary of the Académie Française feels that it is still important to "fight against the pollution of [the French] language, which is to [the French] intellect what is air is to [their] lungs," although it may be that it is necessary to "bow to reality and include a wave of Anglo-american words" (quote from J. Akrill, *Times Literary Supplement*, No. 468, 1993, p. 14: Grigg, 371). The fight to conserve the French language is far from weak, even though it may be both

supported and mocked in turn. The French government has organized a great number of agencies to manage the language (Grigg, 370). There has been a marked increase in the number of these governmental organization which corresponds to the increase in English vocabulary borrowings (Grigg, 370).

Ironically, even as the French government and a fair percentage of the French population agitate for laws to limit the seemingly inordinate amount of *franglais* now found in French, the statistics produce a slightly different picture. As of 1981, foreign terms made up three to four percent of French words, with English terms only 2.5% (approximately 2,260 words) of total French vocabulary in active use by French speakers (Flaitz, 60; Thody, 33). The overall number of French words available to the French speaker may have grown with the addition of English and *franglais* terms, but *franglais* has not affected French syntax. Simply looking at the numerical data might lead to the conclusion that English has little influence in France, however the prominent use of the 2,260 English words in France is what French language purists are worried about.

What incites so many to push for governmental control is the fact that English is so pervasive in the media, where it is extremely prominent. By the beginning of the 1980's, thirty-six percent of the French advertising industry went to American controlling interests (Flaitz, 90). By the 1980's, three-fourths of imported television shows in France were American, a by-product of American dominance in the television and film industries (Flaitz, 72). The media, a daily

presence for many people, heavily uses Anglo-American culture and vocabulary; because of its prevalent use, *franglais* may appear as a greater threat to the French way of life.

Inevitably, words which are spoken on a regular basis, whether on the streets or in the conference room, are transferred to the media. Once a new word or term has been popularized by the media, many speakers may follow suit. Often, a *franglais* term may already be commonly known before it even appears in the media. For those who see *franglais* as an invasion of English and Anglo-American culture, the amount of *franglais* in the media is a devastating measure of the Anglo-American influence in France.

Ideological Colonization

Instead of the world imitating the French, the world and the French began to imitate the Americans -- at least, this is how it appeared to some of the French. A quotation from *Le Canard Enchaîné* (31 Aug. 1977 issue), sums up this attitude:

To be modern is to imitate the Americans. That's the French trouble: there is no modern way of being French. France, once the 'mother of arts, letters, and science,' has become a little copycat. Yesterday, we were the locomotive, today, the caboose. (Kuisel, 219)

In the 1970's, the anti-Americanism that had bloomed after the second world war began to fade and the desire to mimic American ways grew (Kuisel, 213-219). Claude Hagège, a French linguist, argues that Anglophobia rises out of jealousy of the United States as a superpower because of the way in which France was supplanted (Thody, 37).

The decline of France on the international scene and the increase in cultural influences coming from the outside, even if they do not emanate from the United States, have created uncertainty about the French national identity. French self-consciousness has grown with the "Americanization" of the world (Kuisel, 4). As they have in the past, the French are reacting to protect their language and the culture which it represents against the deluge of information, attitudes and opinions coming from the United States via the English language. Rejection of Anglo-American language and culture is propelled to a certain extent by such jealousy, but it is also driven by disapproval of Anglo-American society. Former President Mitterrand once said, "C'est blesser un peuple au plus profond de lui-même que de l'atteindre dans sa culture et sa langue" [To attack a people in its culture and its language is to wound that people in its very heart] (Flaitz, 108).

Réné Étiemble, in his book, Parlez-vous franglais?, states that by allowing English and franglais into the French language, French people will begin to accept American attitudes and values (Étiemble, 233-234). However, Étiemble's book has been discounted by some linguists for containing misinformation and lack of evidence for his extreme statements concerning the increasing use of foreign words by the

French. The complete acceptance of American culture that Étiemble predicted has not occurred. In 1970, six years after Étiemble's book was first published, polls revealed that the French disapproved of American culture and regarded their way of life as "better" and "more civilized", although they did recognize the power and prosperity of the United States (Kuisel, 218).

In the present decade, English and Anglo-American culture is still regarded in a similar light. English words can be found in the media, advertising, business meetings, scientific conferences and even political debates and conversations. It is easy to argue that English loan words have not provided a favorable picture of Anglo-American culture, nor has the French language been ennobled through their absorption, unlike English (Thody, 18). It is impossible to discuss popular music, homosexuality, teenage sexuality or drugs without using a *franglais* term or anglicism (Thody, 45). In the business world, English is seen as more "competitive" than French and the key to effective advertising ("France: Minister says...", 30 Apr. 1994; Baverel, 13 Mar. 1996). The negative social connotations of the English and *franglais* vocabulary form part of the reason why linguistic purism has come to encompass a struggle against both *franglais* and its accompanying cultural associations (Thody, 63).

Feeling their national identity is at risk by Americanization, the French resist in order to protect "civilisation" (Kuisel, 235), and American culture opposes the French definition of civilization. In France, Americans are viewed as "youthful, dynamic, wealthy,

pragmatic, optimistic and friendly, but... also... materialistic, puritanical, vulgar, and even racist and violent" (Kuisel, 9). Europeans, notably the French, were disappointed and frustrated when America did not live up to the hopes of an earthly paradise; the French had hoped for a "new humanity," a dream which was shattered as the images of gross inequalities, base materialism and racism appeared on the radio, television and film (Kuisel, 236).

The constant exposure to American cultural ideas about clothes, literature and cuisine through television, radio and film, advertisements and popular magazines and books is still regarded as "excessive" (Kuisel, 225) but generally accepted. Even though French adults are ambivalent about the impact of U.S. culture, there is paradoxically a craze for anything and everything American among French youth (Kuisel, 227). French youths are quite immersed in American culture, wearing American clothes, watching American movies and listening to American songs; for example, over fifty percent of the songs played on French radio stations are Anglo-American (Montaigne, 22 Mar. 1995). The appeal of English and Anglo-American culture provides strong competition for the French culture (Flaitz, 71-72), partly because young people may be more open to changing their cultural ideas than the older generations who feel so threatened.

In the twentieth century, the United States has come to dominate in the business and scientific worlds. Jacques Toubon, in a comment on the motivations for the existence of the loi Toubon,

stated that the French language is in the process of succumbing "au modèle unique anglo-marchand [to the one and only English market model]" ("Loi sur le français...", 30 July 1994). One journalist commented that English words are occasionally borrowed because they are quicker or faster to use, but for the most part, they are adopted because terms for a new technology do not have a French equivalent (Baverel, 13 Mar. 1994). A perfect example of this is the emergence of the CD-ROM, which did not have an equivalent until 1996, when the Académie Française merely altered the spelling, although not the pronunciation, of CD-ROM to "cédérom" (Giudicelli, 10 June 1996). Certainly the American culture is the dominant force on the Internet today (Kahn, 2 Feb. 1998). The modern world focuses on business, science and technology, areas in which the United States is the leader or major influence.

Toubon claims that "A foreign language often becomes a tool of domination, uniformization, a factor of social exclusion, and, when used snobbishly, a language of contempt" (Grigg, 368). This appears to be the truth in the case of Claude Roux, a French biological scientist with an international reputation for his expertise and knowledge of lichens (Peronçel-Hugoz, 25 Mar. 1992). Two years in a row, Mr. Roux applied for the job of Second Research Director at the Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique (National Center of Scientific Research), and, because he had only published in French and not in English, Mr. Roux was turned down despite an otherwise favorable review (Peronçel-Hugoz, 25 Mar. 1992). This is the case for many professionals in the

fields of science, medicine and technology where many of the new discoveries are reported in English, whether they were discovered by an English speaker or not. Occurrences such as this one are another contributing factor to the call for allowing only the French language in France.

Conclusion

To completely accept America and Americanization means, in a sense, to "forfeit Frenchness"; the French want their identity and culture to remain French while gaining the most from America (Kuisel, 233). In other words, the French are attempting to keep their culture, national identity and language intact while reaping the benefits enjoyed by the prosperous United States. The loss of international political power, as well as social and linguistic prestige, two areas in which France has regarded itself as the teacher for the world, has had a profound influence on how the French regard themselves, their country and other countries in the world today.

The French have focused on the United States, a country which, in the minds of the French, has not only usurped the place of France but has expanded its international influence. In addition to the enormous flow of Anglo-American culture and English vocabulary from the United States and England into France, the French are also facing a

similar cultural and linguistic threat from within. Immigrants, mostly from North Africa, have flooded into France in the last few decades, seeking a better life. These immigrants defy assimilation into French culture and maintain their culture amongst themselves (Kuisel, 4). Ironically, the French press rarely mentions anything, if at all, in relation to the impact that the immigrants have on the French language, although other conflicts rising from their existence in France are widely discussed and debated. With this in mind, it is clear that the French feel more menaced by the more overt Anglo-American threat.

Since the French see their language as a representative of their nation, accepting English, in any form, into the French language could be comparable to meekly allowing an invading horde cross their national border. Although anglicisms and *franglais* words account for no more than 2.5% of French vocabulary, their prominence in the media ensures that they are heard, read or spoken every day in France. The fact that many of the rising technical and scientific fields require the communication of new findings in English, and almost penalize doing so in French, has become an additional focus for the purism movement.

The language purism in France today, although it has its roots in the history of a country which values its language as the representative of their culture and civilisation, appears as a subtle protest against its decline from primary position in the world. Since the creation of the Académie Française in 1635, the French government has attempted to regulate the language. In the twentieth century, the government has continued on this path with the passage

of two language laws. The loi Bas-Lauriol has remained fairly ineffective since it took effect in 1976. A much stronger law, the loi Toubon, recently passed amidst a flurry of debates and foreign commentary. Three years after the first violator was prosecuted, the loi Toubon still continues to be used for routing English out of France.

FROM 1975 TO 1994

The French government made its first in a series of official attempts to regulate the language with the loi Bas-Lauriol. Introduced in 1975 with the title, "Maintenance of the Purity of the French Language," the loi Bas-Lauriol was meant to provide protection for French workers, consumers and tax-payers from potential misunderstandings caused by the number of foreign words employed by public services (Grigg, 371-372). However, the loi Bas-Lauriol was not able to fully restrict the use of foreign words by private corporations, the media, and the government. Enough loopholes existed in the wording of the law that businesses were still able to include foreign words in their commercial signs, company names and trademarks (Flaitz, 116).

Article One of the loi Bas-Lauriol, aimed most definitely at consumers and employees, prohibits the use of foreign words if a French equivalent exists (Flaitz, 113-114). This does not account for the foreign words which did not yet have a comparable term in French; some of them are still do not. Few companies were prosecuted under the loi Bas-Lauriol because the law was effectively ignored by both the public and the French government. Two companies which were discovered to be in violation of the 1975 law in France are TWA (Trans World Airlines), which issued boarding passes in English with no French

translation, and a French surf-board manufacturer who included instructions completely in English, again with no French translation (Grigg, 372). The fines imposed by the law were fairly low and therefore fairly ineffective -- the French surfboard manufacturer was only fined FF2600, or approximately \$520 (Grigg, 372).

In 1985 another government agency, the Commissariat Général de la Langue Française [General Commissariat of the French Language], was created to administer all of the government agencies monitoring the French language as another attempt at language control (Grigg, 371). The Commissariat did very little to contribute to the linguistic fight beyond managing the other linguistic agencies. Private linguistic pressure groups have also been organized by French citizens who are concerned about the influence of foreign words on the French language (Grigg, 371). Eventually, the lack of control over the evident number of foreign terms in the media and slang produced a new momentum for the purism movement, calling for stricter reforms. The French language had been identified as the language of the country and of the French people, but it had never legally been the national language. In 1992, the French government changed the constitution to state that French is the official language of France (Grigg, 370).

In that same year, a manifesto directed at French President Mitterrand asked him to protect the French language from the devastating ravages it suffered from English. It was signed by more than 250 prominent French people, including actors, Académiciens, diplomats, former ministers and writers who were for the most part

over thirty years of age (Grigg, 373). Excerpts of the text of the "Manifeste pour l'avenir du français" appeared in the July 6, 1992 issue of Le Monde, a prominent French newspaper comparable to The New York Times. The "Manifeste" claimed that English was being spoken even in the French government and, as "la langue de la République est le français" [the language of the Republic is French], France should participate "à la construction d'une communauté francophone internationale" [in the construction of an international Francophone community] (Peronçel-Hugoz, 6 July 1992).

The "Manifeste" may have been a subtle reaction to the push for the unification of Europe in that its proponents were attempting to assert French independence within the European Union. With similar emotional motives, the loi Toubon was proposed and passed two years after the "Manifeste" amongst great controversy. The loi Toubon is the most recent effort to eliminate Anglo-American culture through language reforms and remains highly controversial today among French citizens and the international community as well.

The Loi Toubon

In 1994 the Minister of Culture, Jacques Toubon, proposed the strongest law yet against foreign terms to the French Parliament. The law is similar to the loi Bas-Lauriol in that it is aimed at protecting

French citizens, consumers and employees and remedied the problems which arose from the inadequate provisions and penalties in the loi Bas-Lauriol. Introduced in order "to protect the language from foreign influences," the loi Toubon can be seen as an attempt to thwart the flow of Anglo-American words which accompanies the double threat of Americanization of the French youth and a technologically and commercially dominant America (Grigg, 368). Adopted on June 30, 1994 by the French Parliament (the political right voted in favor; the socialists abstained), (Peronçel-Hugoz, July 4, 1994; "Loi sur le français..." 30 July 1994), the law very specifically targets advertising, business corporations, scientific publication, television and radio as the problem areas.

In general, the loi Toubon stipulates that advertising on television and radio must use French unless no French equivalent exists; that all public notices must be in French; that safety and health regulations must be in French; all teaching must be in French; that at all conferences in France subsidized by the French government, all documents circulated must be in French (Thody, 61). Before it was altered by the Conseil Constitutionnel (Constitutional Council), the loi Toubon banned foreign expressions and terms from official publications, internal company documents and conduct codes, written and verbal advertising, invoices, merchandise instructions, private and public exams, all theses, and any type of public announcements (Grigg, 373).

Fines for violating the law are higher than under the loi Bas-Lauriol. The violator can be fined up to FF10,000 (\$2,000) for the first offense and up to FF20,000 (\$4,000) for any subsequent violations (Grigg, 373). Anyone caught interfering in an official government investigation of a possible violation can be fined up to FF50,000 (\$10,000) and sentenced to six months in prison (Thody, 62). The original plan of the Minister of Culture was to place "dans chaque département un délégué à la langue française" [in each department a delegate of the French language], as quoted by Agence France Presse (de Saisset, 21 Oct. 1993). The loi Toubon is quite a different system of attack on the appearance of foreign words than previous endeavors; perhaps this is why the law has created such a complex reaction from the French public (represented by the French press), and government officials and foreign countries, most notably Great Britain and the United States.

Support in France

The battle over the loi Toubon can be traced in the numerous articles discussing its validity which were published in the French newspapers and journals in the first half of 1994. The call for a renewal of the loi Bas-Lauriol was replaced by the demand for the loi Toubon and its immediate enforcement. People also expressed their

doubts whether the new language law would follow its predecessor, or whether it would actually make a significant difference. Many politicians and media personalities supported the law.

Jacques Toubon and other public officials reinforced the premise that control was needed and the government would provide such control. In an article from *Le Monde*, January 20, 1994, the President of the National Assembly, Philippe Seguin, is reported as believing the law was necessary to defend the French language, especially in light of the *loi Bas-Lauriol*, which had been stripped of its effectiveness (Peronçel-Hugoz, 20 Jan. 1994). Edouard Balladur, Prime Minister at the time, also supported Toubon's efforts to halt the spread of foreign languages to the exclusion of French in France, indicating that "le rôle de l'État était justement de redresser ce type d'évolution" [the role of the State was precisely to rectify this sort of evolution], and it must extend internationally to include all of the Francophone countries (Peronçel-Hugoz, 20 Jan. 1994; Peronçel-Hugoz, 14 Feb. 1994).

The bi-monthly radio talk show, "Tire ta langue" [Stick out your tongue] addressed French language issues, including slang, in a nostalgic tone "des écrivains et des splendeurs passés" [of past writers and splendors] since it began in 1984 (Chemin, 23 May 1994). Olivier Germain-Thomas, the host of "Tire ta langue", fights against those who are too lazy to learn the French language properly and promotes "la défense et l'illustration du français" [the defense and enrichment of French] (Chemin, 23 May 1994). He is even more harsh in his other talk show, "Agora," in condemning the "américanisation de

la langue" [Americanization of the language] (Chemin, May 23, 1994). The French philosopher, Michel Serres, appealed to the Prime Minister to take action against the preponderance of English in the media and government (Peronçel-Hugoz, 14 Feb. 1994).

Along with prominent figures in the media and politics, the Académie Française continues to attack the enormous number of English words in French and their flagrant use and abuse. Maurice Druon, the perpetual Secretary of the Académie Française, complained about language abuse by the French media, including "false meanings, barbarisms, ignorance of the most elementary rules of syntax, defective pronunciation, the invasion of foreign terms and a general tendency to vulgarity" in an article in *Le Figaro*, (Nundy, 12). He also attacked politicians for inventing words in parliamentary debates when their vocabulary failed them because these words were in turn adopted by their opponents and the media even though they were incorrect (Nundy, 12). Another member of the Académie Française, Bertrand Poirot Delpech, remarked, "Legislating with regard to verbal laxity in economic and administrative life is both legitimate and necessary. If it comes to imposing restraints, or even fines, if the laws are broken, then why not?" (Grigg, 372).

In May 1994, a poll published in *The Times* stated that sixty-one percent of the French public would support the government in regulating *franglais* (Grigg, 373). A separate study by SOFRES the Société française d'études par sondages [the French Society of Studies through Polls], published in *Le Monde Diplomatique* in August

1994, reported that eighty percent of those polled supported Jacques Toubon and the loi Toubon in order to control *franglais* (Thody, 3). However, some felt that the law did not go far enough. The French journal, *L'action française*, a royalist, extreme-right publication, argued for the abolition of any and all foreign words, including those in sports, while calling for the re-establishment of the French monarchy because it believed that without the monarchy France will never achieve a "dynamic and conquering French civilization" (Thody, 67). Most likely, this journal does not represent more than a small percentage of the French population, but these views highlight how intensely some of the French feel about their language and its relation to their nation and culture.

With such extensive public support, the loi Toubon appears to be exactly what the French people need and want for their language. François Perrut, a deputy from the Rhône province, reveals his belief that the loi Toubon is not a question of "une chasse aux mots étrangers" [an expulsion of foreign words], but "l'enrichissement consenti d'une langue vivante" [the consensual enrichment of a living language] (Plenel, 4 May 1994). The law was passed and is enforced today, yet those who opposed the loi Toubon were extremely vocal and, although they did not prevent its passage, did force a closer review of its particulars.

Opposition in France

The movement against the loi Toubon sprang from a number of diverse opinions, ranging from objections to the limitations it would impose on the scientific community to cultural concerns. The opposition was almost too varied to bond together and create a united front that might have halted the proceedings. Moreover, the majority did not object to the existence of such a law, but to specific articles. Comments in the press revealed concerns that the law was too regulatory and strict; that the law had no provisions for encouraging the use of French outside of France; that the law was really a crusade against English and Anglo-American culture. Another possible argument against the loi Toubon, mentioned only by an outside observer, was that the law itself might inhibit the natural linguistic evolution of the French language (Thody, 50).

Françoise Seligman, a French senator, argued against the loi Toubon in the Senate on the basis that it would cause a schism between French youth and the government as the law would alienate the younger generation by forbidding their slang words and manner of speech (Thody, 64-65). In the same vein, another French woman, Segolene Royal, asked whether her young daughter would be imprisoned for using the word "t-shirt" if the law passed (Peronçel-Hugoz, 4 July 1994). These comments clearly illustrate that the French public and

some elected officials saw the law as aimed at more than linguistic infiltration; they see the law as restricting the speech patterns and mannerisms that had evolved through its contact with English and Anglo-American culture.

Michel Rogale, executive creative director for J. Walter Thompson France, stated that the loi Toubon "is a form of racism" (Tilles, 8 July 1994). Agence France Presse reports in its July 1, 1994 issue that the deputies and scientists oppose the law for its xenophobic overtones (Mikoska, 1 July 1994). Their argument against the law is that languages cannot and should not be regulated by the government. Liberal deputy Laurent Dominati succinctly sums up the attitude regarding the link between free thought and language: "la langue, c'est la pensée; l'État n'a pas à s'en mêler" [language is thought, the State has no right to interfere] (Mikoska, 4 May 1994). Both Georges Sarre, a dissident socialist deputy, and Jean-Paul Fuchs, a deputy from the Haut-Rhin region, were disturbed that the loi Toubon did not provide any means for promoting the use of French outside France (Plenel, 4 May 1994; Mikoska, 4 May 1994).

The loi Toubon met with fierce opposition in the scientific community, who objected to specific articles aimed at keeping English out of all correspondence, conferences and publication ("Loi sur le français...", 30 July 1994). In the years preceding the loi Toubon, the percentage of English used in scientific circles, a consequence of the increasingly international scope of scientific and technological advances, had grown to the point that French, in some cases, had been

completely supplanted (Grigg, 381). The French Ministry of Culture viewed the state of affairs as intolerable, and the loi Toubon accommodated this attitude by including a clause to the effect that the government would withhold funding from organizations that did not publish their theses, scientific or not, in French or provide simultaneous translation at conferences (Grigg, 381).

The advertising world and the media also opposed the loi Toubon because they felt that it would restrict the creative nature of their work. The co-chairman of FCA!/BMZ, Philippe Calleux, mentions that although he originally felt concerned about the use of English, he then "accepted it as the language of the global village" (Tilles, 8 July 1994). According to the July 4, 1994 issue of *Le Monde*, some advertisers believe that the loi Toubon would cause their creativity to be "sterilized" (Peronçel-Hugoz, 15 July 1994). The AACC (l'Association des agences-conseil en communication -- the Association of Council Agencies in Communication), although it had abstained in the official debate over the law, relied on humorous articles and publications, such as the facsimile "Sky my pub", to indirectly lobby against this legislation (Ades, 18 Aug. 1994). When the law passed the AACC, along with other objectors, brought their complaint against the loi Toubon to the Conseil Constitutionnel (Constitutional Council).

The Ruling of the Conseil Constitutionnel

The vice-president and general delegate of the AACC, Jacques Bille, sent a letter to the Conseil Constitutionnel on July 11, 1994 advising the Conseil of the ramifications for the fields of communication and advertising that the loi Toubon would create (Ades, 18 Aug. 1994). The Conseil Constitutionnel then evaluated the loi Toubon and its formal ruling was announced one month after the law was passed by the French Parliament. Most of the law was deemed legal under the French Constitution; however, two articles were overturned.

On July 31, 1994, the Conseil Constitutionnel stated that the loi Toubon opposed "the fundamental liberty of thought and expression guaranteed by the constitution," notably the Declaration of the Rights of Man of 1789, and, therefore, the government could not "oblige private citizens, on pain of punishment to use certain words and expressions defined by regulation" (Grigg, 374). Therefore, the Conseil Constitutionnel annulled two articles: the first, prohibiting use of foreign words by private citizens in personal relations and by radio or television organizations and services, whether public or private; the second, granting government or public aid to teaching and research work in order to guarantee publication in French ("Loi sur le français...", 30 July 1994). Franglais was still illegal for advertisers

and public officials, but anglicisms are acceptable as long as a visible French translation is displayed (Grigg, 374).

After the alteration of the loi Toubon, a new ambiguity has appeared concerning the definition of what is French and what is not, as French is now required in so many areas (Grigg, 374). Arguments over what is allowable are muddied by claims that creativity is being hampered and by an obstinate refusal to quit using foreign words. The ruling of the Conseil Constitutionnel solved many of the problems noted by deputies who had opposed the law in Parliament. Since the loi Toubon cannot be altered further, many of the objectors have ceased to complain about the law and have returned to mocking the Académie Française and its members (Giudicelli, 10 June 1996, Colombani, 6 Dec. 1997).

Reactions from Anglo-American Society

The press in Great Britain and the United States published scathing and mocking articles about the loi Toubon and the linguistic debate in France. The consensus was that the loi Toubon would fail, just as the loi Bas-Lauriol had failed. The Anglo-American press recognized that the French language was integral to their culture but still felt that the measures proposed by Toubon were excessive (Nundy, 12). While the French press mocked the author of the law,

Jacques Toubon, by nicknaming him "Mr. Jack Allgood," the English went a bit further ("Loi sur le français...", 30 July 1994; Mikoska, 1 July 1994).

A conservative deputy in Great Britain, Anthony Steen, proposed a similar law to the British Parliament in July of 1994 that would have prevented the use of French words in English (Mikoska, 1 July 1994; "Un député britannique...", 21 June 1994). Steen commented,

Les français disent que les mots anglais rendent leur langue impure, eh bien, je suis déterminé à leur montrer combien ils sont idiots, en interdisant dans notre pays tous leurs mots, parlés ou écrits. ("Un député britannique...", 21 June 1994)

The French say that English words render their language impure, well, I am determined to show them just how idiotic they are, by forbidding all their words, spoken or written, in our country.

Naturally, the law failed to pass the British Parliament, but the fact that such a bill was actually proposed mocks the reasoning behind the loi Toubon.

The title of an article, "Comédie Française," in the July 9, 1994 issue of *The Economist* is a commentary in itself and the article does indeed take the view that the loi Toubon will be ignored by the French public ("Comédie française," 54). Other newspaper articles and editorials also begin with satirical and ironic titles. Some examples include: "Le Counterattack," a satirical poem written with French words that are prominently used in English, from the March 7, 1983

issue of Newsweek; "Saving le français" from the March 1986 edition of the World Press Review; "Why Should France Be Linguistically Laissez-Faire?" from the April 14, 1994 issue of The Independent; "Minister Says Non to Le Marketing Speak" from the April 30, 1994 issue of The Guardian; "France: Mind Your Language" from the March 23, 1996 issue of The Economist. Before the article is even read, the articles signal the opinion that the linguistic situation in France is ridiculous and unnecessary.

An editorial in The Independent commented that the French language "has no need to be defended by such measures as the loi Toubon," and noted that the Germans regard the number of Anglo-American terms that their language has adopted as beneficial, even though the Germans have adopted more American terms than the French ("Why France Should...", 14 April 1994). As one Anglo-American journalist pointed out, and as the French advocates also claim, the loi Toubon is more about protecting France and the French from "a new American invasion" than it is about maintaining the purity of the French language (Lottman, 54). The same article goes on to say that the law is one part of the struggle over the entertainment market, which can also be evidenced by the radio and television quotas requiring a certain percentage of the songs and broadcasts to be in French (Lottman, 16).

Foreign companies, specifically American and British corporations, now had to create new advertising campaigns in order to conform to the letter of the law. Although corporations such as Nike

and Benetton have not been asked to translate their names, which Oliviero Toscani of Benetton refuses to do, they have had to translate their advertising catch phrases, turning "Just do it" into "Ta vie est à toi," or find French equivalents to avoid accruing the heftier fines imposed by the loi Toubon (Tilles, 8 July 1994). Alan Vickers, president of Nike France, said that the new law "is bureaucracy gone mad" (Tilles, 8 July 1994). Forbes printed an article on May 22, 1995 which viewed the language law as a trade barrier with France (Klebnikov, 292). Overall, Anglo-American society dislikes the loi Toubon, but, as the law has been passed, compliance is necessary.

RAMIFICATIONS TODAY

Il n'y a pas de crise de la langue, il y a une crise de l'amour de la langue (Peronçel-Hugoz, 4 July 1994).

There is no crisis of language; there is a crisis of love for the language. (translated by Grigg, 374)

Roland Barthes, French intellectual

Since it was passed in 1994, the loi Toubon has ensured that the Académie Française has remained in the background. The attempts of the Academy and its secretary, Maurice Druon, to continue to regulate the French language have been ridiculed by the French press and public.

An article in *Le Monde* on December 6, 1997, is particularly harsh in comparing the Académie Française to workers still in the mines, while the rest of the world has ceased to use coal (Georges, 6 Dec. 1997). For the journalists of *Le Monde*, Druon and his fellow Immortals are straining in vain to codify the French language, and the French language will continue to elude them.

If the Académie Française has taken a back seat in linguistic affairs, the loi Toubon is still in force and the French government has ensured that this time the law will remain alive. Several foreign businesses, all of whom are mentioned by the press have been Anglo-American, have been found in violation of the loi Toubon in the last three and a half years. In 1995, a Parisian woman discovered that the Walt Disney Store in Paris, on the Champs Élysées, had English labels

on seven toys, and even though the other 4,993 toys had French labels, the company was required to remove the "offending merchandise" (Klebnikov, 292). The charges against Disney were dismissed; however, a year later, the Body Shop in the town of Chambéry, in the Savoy region, was found guilty of selling products without French labels and instructions and subsequently fined FF1,000 (\$200) under the loi Toubon (Smith, 22 Jan. 1996; "Commerce: un magasin...", 23 Jan. 1996).

The most recent development has been the case against the Georgia Institute of Technology. The Institute has an overseas campus in the French town of Metz and had created a Web site, in English, providing information on its courses, which are taught in English by American professors (Coleman, 57). Because the Internet site is not in French, and has not been translated into French, two language groups, which are sponsored by the government, have brought charges against the Georgia Institute and hope for a conviction and a fine of up to \$5,000 (Coleman, 57). An article published February 2, 1998 in *Le Monde* complains about the fact that English and American culture dominates the Internet (Kahn, 2 Feb. 1998). The author feels that "Il faut mettre du français sur le Web. La lingua franca du Web n'est pas l'anglais; c'est le codage" [We must put French on the Web. The lingua franca of the Web is not English; it is computer code] (Kahn, 2 Feb. 1998).

Languages evolve and have the capacity to deal with the flow of new terms, whether created by native speakers or foreigners, by

themselves. English is still used by French youth in their slang; it can still be seen in journals and advertisements (see Appendices 1 and 2), for example, in 1994 *Vendredi Samedi Dimanche* described some clothing as having "un look Army" [an Army look] and *Le Point* used "le top niveau" [the top level] in 1995 (Thody, 255; 198). The prominence of English in the media makes it difficult to see a great decrease in *franglais* terms and anglicisms.

The law certainly has made publication and advertising more difficult for the scientific community and for both French and foreign businesses. The science academies believe that the *loi Toubon* puts both scientific conferences and "la science française en danger" [French science in danger] ("*Loi sur le français...*," 30 July 1994). Although the *loi Toubon* does not appear to have created any major trade barriers for France in Europe or with America, it is quite obvious that only Anglo-American companies are found in violation of the *loi Toubon*; none of the big French exporters have incurred charges (Klebnikov, 58). The law may be ridding French of a few English and *franglais* terms, but the law has not encouraged the spread of French.

Created in 1970, the Francophonie, a group of countries where French is spoken (Peronçel-Hugoz, 15 July 1994), does very little to increase the use of French outside of France, yet its members advocate the restored pre-eminence of French.

S'il arrivait que le français ne reste pas la première langue de travail de l'Europe, alors l'Europe ne serait jamais totalement européenne (Plenel, 4 May 1994).

If it should happen that French does not remain Europe's primary language of work, then Europe will never be totally European.

Georges Pompidou,
former French President

Philip Thody, author of Le Franglais, Forbidden English, Forbidden American; Law, Politics and Language in Contemporary France: A Study in Loan Words and National Identity, comments that "it is quite unusual to find any recognition of the fact that the French are quite capable of ruining their language. . . without any help from the English or even from the Americans" (Thody 96). Even so, the fact that the French are so intent on ridding France of the influence of Anglo-American culture and the English language may possibly cause more problems in the future. Perhaps the loi Toubon will fade away, like the loi Bas-Lauriol, but it is more likely that it will continue to be enforced, just as the French language will continue to represent "civilisation" and the French culture for the French into the next century.

APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY

ACADÉMIE FRANÇAISE: founded in 1635 by Cardinal Richelieu, consisting of 40 members, its duty is to create a dictionary and a grammar for French and to protect the French language

COMMUNE: territory administered by a mayor assisted by a municipal council (similar to a county in the U.S.A.)

DÉPARTEMENT: territory administered by the general council and an administrator chosen by the prefect (similar to a state in the U.S.A)

FEMMES SAVANTS [LEARNED OR WISE WOMEN]: a group of women in the 16th century which sought the creation of a society to monitor and excise indecent and crude words from French

FRANCOPHONY: a group of countries where French is spoken who are interested in promoting the use of French in the world

ILE DE FRANCE: the area between the Seine and the Loire, surrounding and including the city of Paris

LANGUE D'OC [LANGUAGE OF "OC"]: synonym for Occitan, named after its word for yes, "oc"; southern French dialect(s) dating from around the 13th century A.D., virtually nonexistent today

LANGUE D'OIL [LANGUAGE OF "OIL"]: named after its word for yes, "oïl"; northern French dialect(s) dating from around the 13th century A.D., one of its local dialects for the Ile de France developed into the French of today

LEXICOGRAPHIE (LA) [LEXICOGRAPHY]: the act, process, art or work of writing or compiling a dictionary or dictionaries

OCCITAN: see "langue d'Oc"; general term for the French dialects of southern France

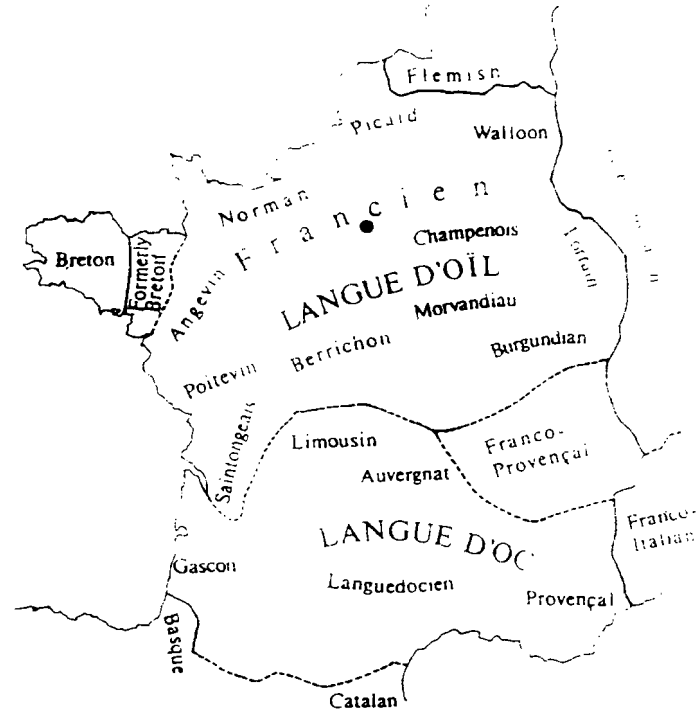
PLÉIADE (LA): a group of poets founded by Pierre de Ronsard and Joachim du Bellay in the middle of the 16th century in order to enrich and promote the use of the French language in literature

PORT-ROYAL: La logique, ou L'art de penser, a treatise on language, method and logique written by Pierre Nicole and Antoine Arnauld, first published in 1662.

Definitions are compiled from sources previously cited in the bibliography, as well as Webster's New World Dictionary and Le Petit Larousse 1997.

APPENDIX B

DIALECT MAP OF THIRTEENTH CENTURY FRANCE



Dialect map of France, c. A.D. 1200

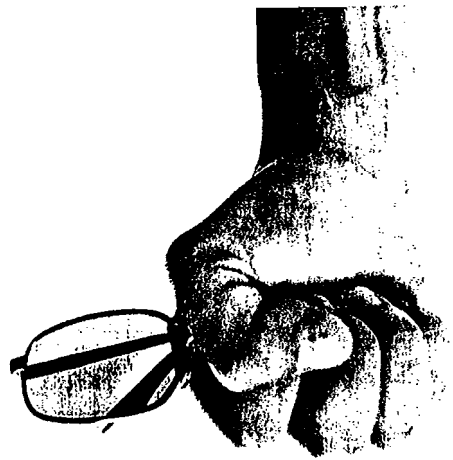
(Rickard, 40)

APPENDIX C

MAGAZINE ARTICLE FOR RAY BAN



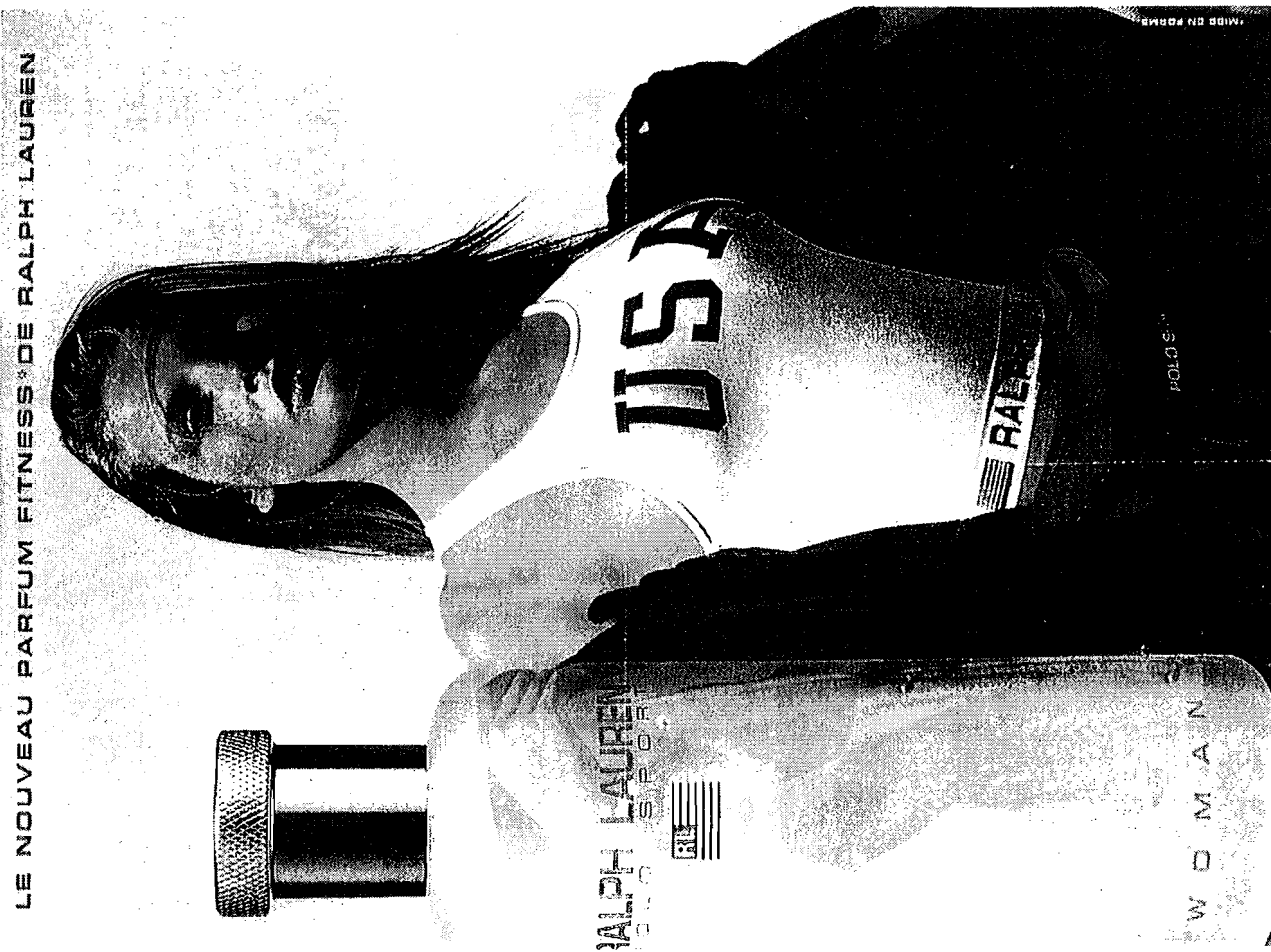
TILL THE END*



© 2008 Ray-Ban

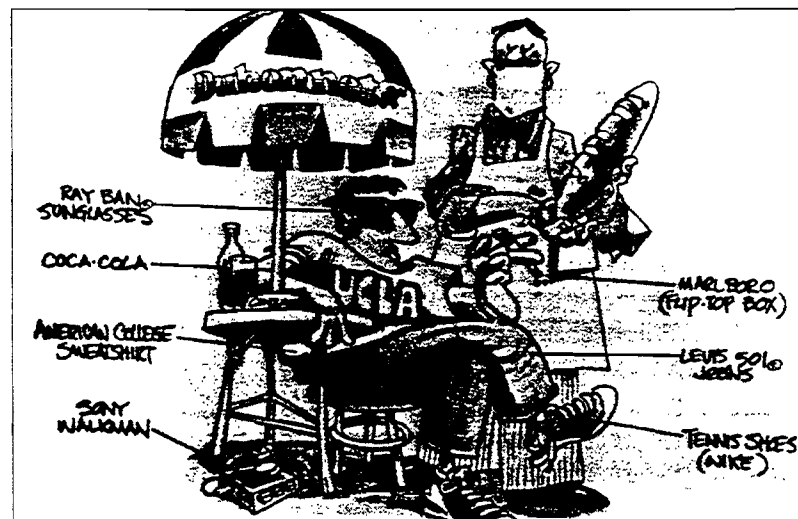
APPENDIX D

MAGAZINE ARTICLE FOR RALPH LAUREN



APPENDIX E

DRAWING OF FRENCH YOUTH



23. A trendy French youth emulates Americans, 1986. (Courtesy William T. Coulter)

(Kuisel, 224)

APPENDIX F

TEXT OF THE LOI TOUBON

LOI n° 94-665 du 4 août 1994 relative à l'emploi de la langue française
(1) NOR: MCCX9400007L

L'Assemblée nationale et le Sénat ont adopté,
Vu la décision du Conseil constitutionnel n° 94-345 DC en date du
29 juillet 1994,

Le Président de la République promulgue la loi dont la teneur suit:

Art. 1er. - Langue de la République en vertu de la Constitution, la
langue française est un élément fondamental de la personnalité et du
patrimoine de la France.

Elle est la langue de l'enseignement, du travail, des échanges et
des services publics.

Elle est le lien privilégié des États constituant la communauté de
la francophonie.

Art. 2. - Dans la désignation, l'offre, la présentation, le mode
d'emploi ou d'utilisation, la description de l'étendue et des conditions de
garantie d'un bien, d'un produit ou d'un service, ainsi que dans les
factures et quittances, l'emploi de la langue française est obligatoire.

[Dispositions déclarées non conformes à la Constitution par
décision du Conseil constitutionnel n° 94-345 DC du 29 juillet 1994.]

Les mêmes dispositions s'appliquent à toute publicité écrite,
parlée ou audiovisuelle.

Les dispositions du présent article ne sont pas applicables à la
dénomination des produits à la dénomination des produits typiques et
spécialités d'appellation étrangère connus du plus large public.

La législation sur les marques ne fait pas obstacle à l'application
des premier et troisième alinéas du présent article aux mentions et
messages enregistrés avec la marque.

Art. 3. - Toute inscription ou annonce apposée ou faite sur la voie publique, dans un lieu ouvert au public ou dans un moyen de transport en commun et destinée à l'information du public doit être formulée en langue française. [Dispositions déclarées non conformes à la Constitution par décision du Conseil constitutionnel n° 94-345 DC du 29 juillet 1994.]

Si l'inscription rédigée en violation des dispositions que précèdent est apposée par un tiers utilisateur sur un bien appartenant à une personne morale de droit public, celle-ci doit mettre l'utilisateur en demeure de faire cesser, à ses frais et dans le délai fixé par elle, l'irrégularité constatée. Si la mise en demeure n'est pas suivie d'effet, l'usage du bien peut, en tenant compte de la gravité du manquement, être retiré au contrevenant, quels que soient les stipulations du contrat ou les termes de l'autorisation qui lui avait été accordée.

Art. 4. - Lorsque des inscriptions ou annonces visées à l'article précédent, apposées ou faites par des personnes morales de droit public ou des personnes privées exerçant une mission de service public font l'objet de traductions, celles-ci sont au moins au nombre de deux.

Dans tous les cas où les mentions, annonces et inscriptions prévues aux articles 2 et 3 de la présente loi sont complétées d'une ou plusieurs traductions, la présentation en français doit être aussi lisible, audible ou intelligible que la présentation en langues étrangères.

Un décret en Conseil d'État précise les cas et les conditions dans lesquels il peut être dérogé aux dispositions du présent article dans le domaine des transports internationaux.

Art. 5. - Quels que soient l'objet et les formes, les contrats auxquels une personne morale de droit public ou une personne privée exécutant une mission de service public sont parties sont rédigés en langue française. Ils ne peuvent contenir ni expression ni terme étrangers lorsqu'il existe une expression ou un terme français de même sens approuvés dans les conditions prévues par les dispositions réglementaires relatives à l'enrichissement de la langue française.

Ces dispositions ne sont pas applicables aux contrats conclus par une personne morale de droit public gérant des activités à caractère

industriel et commercial et à exécuter intégralement hors du territoire national.

Les contrats visés au présent article conclus avec un ou plusieurs cocontractants étrangers peuvent comporter, outre la rédaction en français, une ou plusieurs versions en langue étrangère pouvant également faire foi.

Une partie à un contrat conclu en violation du premier alinéa ne pourra se prévaloir d'une disposition en langue étrangère qui porterait préjudice à la partie à laquelle elle est opposée.

Art. 6. - Tout participant à une manifestation, un colloque ou un congrès organisé en France par des personnes physiques ou morales de nationalité française a le droit de s'exprimer en français. Les documents distribués aux participants avant et pendant la réunion pour en présenter le programme doivent être rédigés en français et peuvent comporter des traductions en une ou plusieurs langues étrangères.

Lorsqu'une manifestation, un colloque ou un congrès donne lieu à la distribution aux participants de documents préparatoires ou de documents de travail, ou à la publication d'actes ou de comptes rendus de travaux, les textes ou interventions présentés en langue étrangères doivent être accompagnés au moins d'un résumé en français.

Ces dispositions ne sont pas applicables aux manifestations, colloques ou congrès qui ne concernent que des étrangers, ni aux manifestations de promotion du commerce extérieur de la France.

Lorsqu'une personne morale de droit public ou une personne morale de droit privé chargée d'une mission de service public a l'initiative des manifestations visées au présent article, un dispositif de traduction doit être mis en place.

Art. 7. - Les publications, revues et communications diffusées en France et qui émanent d'une personne morale de droit public, d'une personne privée exerçant une mission de service public ou d'une personne privée bénéficiant d'une subvention publique doivent, lorsqu'elles sont rédigées en langue étrangère, comporter un résumé en français.

[Dispositions déclarées non conformes à la Constitution par décision du Conseil constitutionnel n° 94-345 DC du 29 juillet 1994.]

Art. 8. - Les trois derniers alinéas de l'article L. 121-1 du code du travail sont remplacées par quatre alinéas ainsi rédigés"

<<Le contrat de travail constaté par écrit est rédigé en français. [Dispositions déclarées non conformes à la Constitution par décision du Conseil constitutionnel n° 94-345 DC du 29 juillet 1994.]

<< Lorsque l'emploi qui fait l'objet du contrat ne peut être désigné que par un terme étranger sans correspondant en français, le contrat de travail doit comporter une explication en français du terme étranger.

<< Lorsque le salarié est étranger et le contrat constaté par écrit, une traduction du contrat est rédigée, à la demande du salarié, dans la langue de ce dernier. Les deux textes font également foi en justice. En cas de discordance entre les deux textes, seul le texte rédigé dans la langue du salarié étranger peut être invoqué contre ce dernier.

<< L'employeur ne pourra se prévaloir à l'encontre du salarié auquel elles feraient grief des clauses d'un contrat de travail conclu en violation du présent article. >>

Art. 9. - I. - L'article L. 122-35 du code du travail est complété par un alinéa rédigé:

<< Le règlement intérieur est rédigé en français. [Dispositions déclarées non conformes à la Constitution par décision du Conseil constitutionnel n° 94-345 DC du 29 juillet 1994.] Il peut être accompagné de traductions en une ou plusieurs langues étrangères. >>

II. - Il est inséré, après l'article L. 122-39 du code du travail, un article L. 122-39-1 ainsi rédigé:

<< Art. L. 122-39-1. - Tout document comportant des obligations pour le salarié ou des dispositions dont la connaissance est nécessaire à celui-ci pour l'exécution de son travail doit être rédigé en français. [Dispositions déclarées non conformes à la Constitution par décision du Conseil constitutionnel n° 94-345 DC du 29 juillet 1994.] Il peut être accompagné de traductions en une ou plusieurs langues étrangères.

<< Ces dispositions ne sont pas applicables aux documents reçus de l'étranger ou destinés à des étrangers.

III. - Aux premier et troisième alinéas de l'article L. 122-37 du code du travail, les mots: << articles L. 122-34 et L. 122-35 >> sont remplacés par les mots: << articles L. 122-34, L. 122-35 et L. 122-39-1 >>.

IV. - Il est inséré après l'article L. 132.2 du code du travail, un article L. 132-2-1 ainsi rédigé:

<< Art. L. 132-2-1. - Les conventions et accords collectifs de travail et les conventions d'entreprise ou d'établissement doivent être rédigés en français. Toute disposition rédigée en langue étrangère [Dispositions déclarées non conformes à la Constitution par décision du Conseil constitutionnel n° 94-345 DC du 29 juillet 1994.] est inopposable au salarié à qui elle ferait grief. >>

Art. 10. - Le 3° de l'article L. 311-4 du code du travail est ainsi rédigé:

<< 3° Un texte rédigé en langue étrangère [Dispositions déclarées non conformes à la Constitution par décision du Conseil constitutionnel n° 94-345 DC du 29 juillet 1994].

<< Lorsque l'emploi ou le travail offert ne peut être désigné que par un terme étranger sans correspondant en français, le texte français doit en comporter une description suffisamment détaillée pour ne pas induire en erreur au sens du 2° ci-dessus.

<< Les prescriptions des deux alinéas précédents s'appliquent aux services à exécuter sur le territoire français, quelle que soit la nationalité de l'auteur de l'offre ou de l'employeur, et aux services à exécuter hors du territoire français lorsque l'auteur de l'offre ou l'employeur est français, alors même que la parfaite connaissance d'une langue étrangère serait une des conditions requises pour tenir l'emploi proposé. Toutefois, les directeurs de publications rédigées, en tout ou partie, en langue étrangère peuvent, en France, recevoir des offres d'emploi rédigées dans cette langue. >>

Art. 11. - I. - La langue de l'enseignement, des examens et concours, ainsi que des thèses et mémoires dans les établissements publics et privés d'enseignements est le français, sauf exceptions justifiées par les nécessités de l'enseignement des langues et cultures régionales ou étrangères ou lorsque les enseignants sont des professeurs associés ou invités étrangers.

Les écoles étrangères ou spécialement ouvertes pour accueillir des élèves de nationalité étrangère, ainsi que les établissements dispensant un enseignement à caractère international, ne sont pas soumis à cette obligation.

II. - Il est inséré, après le deuxième alinéa de l'article 1er de la loi n° 89-486 du 10 juillet 1989 d'orientation sur l'éducation, un alinéa ainsi rédigé:

<< La maîtrise de la langue française et la connaissance de deux autres langues font partie des objectifs fondamentaux de l'enseignement. >>

Art. 12. - Avant le chapitre Ier du titre II de la loi n° 86-1067 du 30 septembre 1986 relative à la liberté de communication, il est inséré un article 20-1 ainsi rédigé:

<< Art. 20-1. - L'emploi du français est obligatoire dans l'ensemble des émissions et des messages publicitaires des organismes et services de radiodiffusion sonore ou télévisuelle, quel que soit leur mode de diffusion ou de distribution, à l'exception des œuvres cinématographiques et audiovisuelles en version originale.

<< Sous réserve des dispositions du 2° bis de l'article 28 de la présente loi, l'alinéa précédent ne s'applique pas aux œuvres musicales dont le texte est, en tout ou en partie, rédigé en langue étrangère.

<< L'obligation prévue au premier alinéa n'est pas applicable aux programmes, parties de programme ou publicités incluses dans ces derniers qui sont conçus pour être intégralement diffusés en langue étrangère ou dont la finalité est l'apprentissage d'une langue, ne aux retransmissions de cérémonies culturelles.

[Dispositions déclarées non conformes à la Constitution par décision du Conseil constitutionnel n° 94-345 DC du 29 juillet 1994].

<< Lorsque les émissions ou les messages publicitaires visés au premier alinéa du présent article sont accompagnés de traductions en langues étrangères, la présentation en français doit être aussi lisible, audible ou intelligible que la présentation en langue étrangère. >>

Art. 13. - La loi n° 86-1067 du 30 septembre 1986 précitée est ainsi modifiée:

I. - Après le sixième alinéa du II de l'article 24, il est inséré un alinéa rédigé:

<< - le respect de la langue française et le rayonnement de la francophonie. >>

II. - A l'article 28, il est inséré, après le 4°, un 4° bis ainsi rédigé:
<< 4° bis. Les dispositions propres à assurer le respect de la langue française et le rayonnement de la francophonie; >>

III. - A l'article 33, il est inséré, après le 2°, un 2° bis ainsi rédigé:
<< 2° bis. Les dispositions propres à assurer le respect de la langue française et le rayonnement de la francophonie; >>

Art. 14. - I. - L'emploi d'une marque de fabrique, de commerce ou de service soustraite d'une expression ou d'un terme étranger est interdit aux personnes morales de droit public dès lors qu'il existe une expression ou un terme français de même sens approuvés dans les conditions prévues par les dispositions réglementaires relatives à l'enrichissement de la langue française.

Cette interdiction s'applique aux personnes morales de droit privé chargées d'une mission de service public, dans l'exécution de celle-ci.

II. - Les dispositions du présent article ne sont pas applicables aux marques utilisées pour la première fois avant l'entrée en vigueur de la présente loi.

Art. 15. - L'octroi, par les collectivités et les établissements publics, de subventions de toute nature est subordonné au respect par les bénéficiaires des dispositions de la présente loi.

Tout manquement à ce respect peut, après que l'intéressé a été mis à même de présenter ses observations, entraîner la restitution totale ou partielle de la subvention.

Art. 16. - Outre les officiers et agents de police judiciaire agissant conformément aux dispositions du code de procédure pénale, les agents énumérés aux 1°, 3° et 4° de l'article L. 215-1 du code de la consommation sont habilités à rechercher et constater les infractions aux dispositions des textes pris pour l'application de l'article 2 de la présente loi.

A cet effet, les agents peuvent pénétrer de jour dans les lieux et véhicules énumérés au premier alinéa de l'article L. 213-4 du même code et dans ceux où s'exercent les activités mentionnées à l'article L. 216-1, à l'exception des lieux qui sont également à usage d'habitation. Ils peuvent demander à consulter les documents nécessaires à l'accomplissement de leur mission, en prendre copie et recueillir sur convocation ou sur place les renseignements et justifications propres à l'accomplissement de leur mission.

Ils peuvent également prélever un exemplaire des biens ou produits mis en cause dans les conditions prévues par décret en Conseil d'État.

Art. 17. - Quiconque entrave de façon directe ou indirecte l'accomplissement des missions des agents mentionnées au premier alinéa de l'article 16 ou ne met pas à leur disposition tous les moyens nécessaires à cette fin est passible des peines prévues au second alinéa de l'article 433-5 du code pénal.

Art. 18. - Les infractions aux dispositions des textes pris pour l'application de la présente loi sont constatées par des procès-verbaux qui font foi jusqu'à preuve du contraire.

Les procès-verbaux doivent, sous peine de nullité, être adressés dans les cinq jours qui suivent leur clôture au procureur de la République.

Une copie en est également remise, dans le même délai, à l'intéressé.

Art. 19. - Après l'article 2-13 du code de procédure pénale, il est inséré un article 2-14 ainsi rédigé:

<< Art. 2-14. - Toute association régulièrement déclarée se proposant par ses statuts la défense de la langue française et agréée dans les conditions fixées par décret en Conseil d'État peut exercer les droits reconnus à la partie civile en ce qui concerne les infractions aux dispositions des textes pris pour l'application des articles 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 et 10 de la loi n° 94-665 du 4 août 1994 relative à l'emploi de la langue française. >>

Art. 20. - La présente loi est d'ordre public. Elle s'applique aux contrats conclus postérieurement à son entrée en vigueur.

Art. 21. - Les dispositions de la présente loi s'appliquent sans préjudice de la législation et de la réglementation relatives aux langues régionales de France et ne s'opposent pas à leur usage.

Art. 22. - Chaque année, le Gouvernement communique aux assemblées, avant le 15 septembre, un rapport sur l'application de la présente loi et des dispositions des conventions ou traités internationaux relatives au statut de la langue française dans les institutions internationales.

Art. 23. - Les dispositions de l'article 2 entreront en vigueur à la date de publication du décret en Conseil d'État définissant les infractions aux dispositions de cet article, et au plus tard douze mois après la publication de la présente loi au Journal officiel.

Les dispositions des articles 3 et 4 de la présente loi entreront en vigueur six mois après l'entrée en vigueur de l'article 2.

Art. 24. - La loi n° 75-1349 du 31 décembre 1975 relative à l'emploi de la langue française est abrogée, à l'exception de ses articles 1er à 3 qui seront abrogés à compter de l'entrée en vigueur de l'article 2 de la présente loi et de son article 6 qui sera abrogé à la date d'entrée en vigueur de l'article 3 de la présente loi.

La présente loi sera exécutée comme loi d'État.

Fait à Paris, le 4 août 1994.

François Mitterrand

Par le Président de la République :

Le Premier ministre,
Édouard Balladur

Le ministre d'État, ministre de l'intérieur
et de l'aménagement du territoire,
Charles Pasqua

Le ministre d'État, garde des sceaux,
Pierre Méhaignerie

Le ministre des affaires étrangères,
Alain Juppé

Le ministre de l'éducation nationale,
François Bayrou

Le ministre de l'économie,
Edmond Alphandéry

Le ministre de la culture et de la francophonie,
Jacques Toubon

Le ministre du budget, porte-parole du Gouvernement,
Nicolas Sarkozy

Le ministre de l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche,
François Fillon

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