

The French Review

From the Editor's Desk

From 18–23 July the AATF and the FIPF (Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Français) will hold a joint convention in Atlanta. It will be only the second time that the FIPF has held its meeting—it meets every four years—in the United States, and we are honored that they have chosen Atlanta. Special thanks must go to Jean-Pierre Piriou our immediate past president and now a candidate for the presidency of the FIPF, for making his idea become a reality when we met with the FIPF in Paris in 2000. And who can ever forget that meeting?! The Paris assembly of over 3,000 teachers of French from all over the world served as an epiphany for many of us and allowed us to view our profession in a much larger and more diverse context. Now we are once again fortunate to meet with a world-wide contingent of teachers. To date somewhere on the order of 1,000 presenters are expected to attend. But how does such a meeting actually come about? Who does the planning? How is the program established? Two people in particular stand out: Alain Braun, the immediate past president of the FIPF, came up with the theme, “Le Français: le Défi de la Diversité” and did the lion’s share of the work needed to put together a challenging and impressive “thématique,” which reflects the need for inclusion and compromise in the world arena. The other person who stands out for her Herculean efforts is Jayne Abrate, Executive Secretary of the AATF, who has put in countless hours implementing and finalizing the program while dealing with presenters from every corner of the globe and thousands of e-mail messages.

In honor of the meeting we have put together a special issue, “Le Monde Francophone,” which contains sections on Sub-Saharan Francophone literature, the Maghreb and France, the Antilles, and Vietnam. The articles include an interview with Euzhan Palcy, who made the movie, *Rue Cases-Nègres* (1984; English title *Sugar Cane Alley*), based on the novel of the same title by the Martinican writer, Joseph Zobel. Palcy is also known for her documentary on Aimé Césaire entitled *Une Voix pour l'histoire* (1994) and the Hollywood movie *A Dry White Season*.

The first piece in the Sub-Saharan section offers a discussion of the Senegalese writer, Mariama Bâ’s *Un Chant écarlate* and focuses on the problematic relationship of a young French woman of noble background and her lover, a young, black Senegalese Muslim. The second article presents the first novel written by a Francophone woman, the Cameroonian writer, Thérèse Kuoh-Moukoury. The author discusses matriarchal traditions and social structure and their rewriting in contemporary Africa. This section closes with a pedagogical essay which shows how to introduce Francophone Sub-Saharan African literature in second and third-year university classes through use of the 3R (Recognize, Research, and Relate) approach.

The section on the Maghreb and France features a study of sexual identity and a mother’s role in raising a girl as a boy in Tahar Ben Jelloun’s *L’Enfant de Sable* and in a boy’s transition from the space inhabited by women and children to the masculine space in *Halfaouine: l’enfant des terrasses*, a movie by the Tunisian director, Ferid Boughedir. A second article, “Hom(e)ing Devices: Locating Identity in the Work of Tassadit Imache,” explores cultural identity and how different characters in Imache’s novels try to find “home” in France. The third essay considers the important autobiographical novel, *Le Gone du Chaâba*, of the well-known writer, Azouz Begag, who, as the son of Algerian parents, grew up caught between two cultures in Lyon.

The Antilles is featured in the third section and we begin with a consideration of Martinique's fascination with Haiti and the legacy of Toussaint-Louverture. A study of Guadeloupean women and slavery uses new documents to explore the history of slave women in both fiction and historical records.

We close with an essay that deals with postwar Vietnam and the effects of war on both combatants and noncombatants in a work by Phan Huy Drong.

I owe great thanks to several people for help in preparing the special issue. Managing Editor, Clyde Thogmartin, who is finishing his term with this issue, has once again done a masterful job of putting the volume together. From copy-editing to proofing, from layout to communication with authors, typographer, and publisher, Clyde has been tireless in his pursuit of excellence on this, his third special issue in three years. Clyde's contributions to the AATF and the *French Review* are immeasurable, and I do hope that some of you readers will take the time to thank him by sending an E-mail or a note. Clyde will be succeeded as Managing Editor by Sharon Shelly of The College of Wooster. Sharon is already working on the October 2004 issue and we are all confident that she will do a fine job. J. Moss Hartt has once again helped me to find a cover worthy of the occasion, one that urges us to confront our humanity in all its guises, ethnicities, and imaginations. I also want to thank French Cultural Services, which have once again provided a subsidy of \$2,250 to help pay for the costs of this issue.

Finally let me welcome all of you and especially our foreign visitors as you discover the wonders of Atlanta, Georgia, the birthplace of Martin Luther King, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize and someone who never flinched while confronting the challenge and the hope of diversity. I urge you to visit his birthplace and the Martin Luther King Center, which is devoted to world peace.

Christopher P. Pinet