

Zayd Ibn Thabit at the command of the Caliph 'Uthman Ibn 'Affan, who ordered and oversaw the collection of the Qur'an into one book. This arrangement is unanimously believed to be unique in coherence.

As to the themes of the Qur'an, there is one major theme, which is the relationship between God and His creatures, and it deals with all issues that concern Muslims, such as wisdom, worship, law and doctrine. It represents the prime source of the Muslim's faith and practice, as well as providing guidelines for proper human conduct. (Zahia Smail Salhi)

Further reading

Abdel Haleem (2001).

Kourouma, Ahmadou Born CÔTE D'IVOIRE, 1927. One of Africa's foremost writers with stylistically innovating novels, marked by humour, humanism and political satire, inspired by oral literature: *Les Soleils des indépendances* (1968; *Suns of Independence*, 1981), a classic; *En attendant le vote des bêtes sauvages* (1998; *Waiting for the Vote of the Wild Animals*, 2001), a key novel of present-day dictatorship; *Allah n'est pas obligé* (2000; Prix Renaudot 2000), a black humour story of a child-soldier in the tribal wars of Liberia and Sierra Leone. (Ingse Skattum)

Further reading

Derive (1979–80) – excellent explanation of the integration of oral literature in his first novel; Borgomano (2000) – good explanations of the cultural and political background of his 'dictatorship' novel.

Laâbi, Abdellatif Born 1942. Moroccan poet, translator and dissident political activist. In 1972 he was tortured and imprisoned for eight years by the Moroccan regime on account of his socialist ideas. Editor of *SOUFFLES* alongside Abraham SERFATY, he became a *cause célèbre* for human rights groups and opponents of MOROCCO's repressive political system. As well as producing a lyrical but violently experimental poetry, both before going into and whilst inside prison (1969, 1976, 1981, 1986), he has published a selection of his prison correspondence (*Chroniques de la citadelle d'exil: lettres de prison*, 1983), turned into a prose poem (*Sous le baillon, le poème: écrits de prison*, 1982), both providing an account of his time as an internee. (Andy Stafford)

Lacoste, Robert Born Azerat, France, 1898; died Dordogne, 1989. French Politician. He was an active CGT (Socialist) militant syndicalist, highly decorated for distinguished service in the world wars. He was DE GAULLE's minister (industry) in 1944, mayor of Azerat (1945–89), served in two constituent assemblies (1945/46),

was elected parliamentary deputy (1946–68) and minister several times during the Fourth Republic. Premier MOLLET appointed him Resident-Minister in ALGERIA in 1956. A strong supporter of French Algeria, Lacoste used the special powers, granted to the Mollet government by parliament, to pursue policies of ruthless repression and reform. He was later elected senator (1971–80). (Marianne Durand)

Further reading

Horne (1987) – useful coverage of the history of the Algerian War. Read from page 154 for a detailed account of Robert Lacoste's reforms and his repression of Algerian nationalists.

Lafleur, Jacques See RPCR.

La Haine Mathieu Kassovitz's second full-length film, after *Métisse* (1993); a box-office hit and critical success when it was released in 1995. Dedicated to the memory of Makome M'Bowole, a young Zairean killed in a Parisian police station in 1993, *La Haine* narrates a series of confrontations between police and BANLIEUE youths: the police shooting of an Arab youth, who subsequently dies; the violent uprising to protest over this event; and the final confrontation, probably fatal. Inspired by Spike Lee's *Do the Right Thing* (1989), *La Haine* differs by its depiction of friendship (a black, an Arab and a Jew). (Mark McKinney)

Laïcité A term referring to the French understanding of SECULARISM, or separation of church and state, and to the neutrality of the state regarding religious affairs. The 1905 legislation instituting *laïcité* abolished the Napoleonic Concordat (1801–02), under which the French state had previously officially recognised Roman Catholicism, Protestantism and (later) Judaism. *Laïcité* sealed the triumph of republican over anti-republican forces allied to the Catholic Church. Republicans sought to relegate religion to the private sphere, thereby making the public, political sphere autonomous. Based on Enlightenment rationalism, republicanism is suspicious of religion, which is viewed as 'backward'. The secular state school system, conceived during the Third Republic (1871–1940), transmitted a secular morality to rival Catholic values, and is still considered by many republicans today as a 'neutral', tolerant space (see HEADSCARF AFFAIR). After 1945, the 1905 secular settlement became relatively consensual and well established. However, since the early 1980s, *laïcité* has once again attracted heightened political interest. Whilst the 1905 settlement addressed the three main religions of the time (see above), large-scale MIGRATION from majority Muslim countries (e.g. ALGERIA, MOROCCO, Turkey) during the twentieth century has seen ISLAM become France's second religion. Muslims, as part of a more general revival of interest in religion in French society, and as a re-affirmation of religion as a component of ethnicity, have pushed for greater rights since the 1970s. However, the benefits of *laïcité* (in particular in relation to religious associations) only started to be extended to Islam in 2001. The apparent neutrality of French secularism has also been questioned. For example, the secular state school calendar none the less remains based around Catholicism. Whilst Article Two of the Fifth Republic's constitution (laid down in 1958) stipulates that the state theoretically respects 'all reli-

gious beliefs', there have been calls (Baubérot, 1990) for *laïcité* to accept a greater degree of religious DIVERSITY. (Jim House)

Further reading

Baubérot (1996) – accessible collection of key constitutional texts accompanied by expert analyses that assess both the historical and contemporary significance of *laïcité*; Baubérot (1990) – an attempt to provide a new theoretical grounding for secularism in a more diverse society.

Lake Meech Accord The protracted negotiations among the Canadian provinces at Lake Meech sought to satisfy five constitutional demands by QUEBEC, which had prevented it from agreeing to the repatriation of the constitution by TRUDEAU in 1982 (see LÉVESQUE). Agreement was reached among the eleven provincial premiers in 1987, but the Accord foundered later, when two provincial legislatures failed to ratify it. A second attempt in 1991, known as the Charlottetown Accord, also failed. Ironically, the Quebec premier who found himself rebuffed by Canada was Robert BOURASSA, a convinced federalist. (Ian Lockerbie)

Lakhdar Hamina, Mohammed Born 1934. Algerian film-maker, known for his portrayal of the human element in his depictions of the ALGERIAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE. Films include *Le Vent des Aurès* (1967; Prix du premier film, Cannes); *Chronique des années de braise* (1975; Palme d'Or, Cannes); *Vent de Sable* (1982); *La Dernière image* (1986). See also CINEMA, ALGERIA.

Lamizana, Abubakar Sangoulé Born Touga, UPPER VOLTA (since 1984 BURKINA FASO), 1916. Soldier and president. Lamizana came to power in a military *coup* in 1966. After a new constitution was approved in 1970, with Gerard Ouedraogo appointed as Prime Minister, Lamizana ousted him in 1974, in order to retain power. He was himself ousted in a *coup* in 1980 led by Saye Zerbo.

Langevin, André Born Montreal, 1927. QUEBEC journalist, novelist and dramatist. He is especially known for his first two novels where he relates the destiny of people faced with the absurd. *Évadé de la nuit* (1951), his first novel, was notable in the 1950s for its critique of French Canadian society repressed under harsh moral rules. *Poussière sur la ville* (1953; *Dust over the City*, 1955) relates the story of a man, unable to take charge of his own destiny, who encloses himself into an interior world of despair. Alienation, failure and restricted spaces characterise his aesthetic. His last novel, *Une Chaîne dans le parc* (1974; *Orphan Street*, 1976) expressed suffering and violence in the most simple and bare style. (François-Emmanuel Boucher)

Further reading

Brochu (1985).

Language/Language policies in Quebec French has been the language of QUEBEC since the foundation of New France as a French colony in 1608. Not surprisingly, however, the history of the language in this distant continent has been significantly

different from that in its original European setting. Two forces have particularly influenced its evolution: the environment and politics. In North America, French (like English) naturally developed many new words, expressions, language habits and pronunciation patterns that did not occur in Europe, and also *retained* features that disappeared from European usage. This process in itself has made Quebec French as distinctive a language variety as American English, in both spoken and written forms, but the character of the language was further affected by the impact of history in 1763 when New France became a British colony. This led to the overwhelming domination of French by English for the next two centuries, and an Anglicisation of the language (at its most extreme in *joual*) that provoked feelings of alienation and dispossession in French Canada.

The aim of the *RÉVOLUTION TRANQUILLE* of the 1960s was to restore French to its proper place as the language of a modern national community. This was accomplished principally by legislation (the CHARTER OF THE FRENCH LANGUAGE) making French the one official language of Quebec. In addition Quebec governments have, in different ways, encouraged the promotion of European French as the preferred norm, and discouraged recognition of the distinctiveness of Quebec French.

Although mild contention still surrounds both the language legislation and the question of the preferred norm, there is no doubt that these language policies have been extremely successful in restoring French and returning Quebec to the position of a leading Francophone nation. (Ian Lockerbie)

Further reading

Plourde (2000) gives a comprehensive overview of all the issues. Bouchard (1998) is a detailed account of the fears of Anglicisation.

Language policy A major characteristic of most Francophone societies that have emerged as independent entities since the 1950s and 1960s is that, although they constitute states, they have not become unified nations with single languages. For various reasons, it is rare for these states to have a shared political culture common to all ethnic groups. Many different cultural and linguistic groups have been brought together through force or diplomacy under common rulers. In situations of this kind, language is vital as a means of communication between different groups, becoming a significant factor in political cohesion and social learning. In the past, common languages have emerged as a result of increased contact between different language groups. The Francophone states, on the other hand, have seen large-scale governmental programmes of language planning or language policy intended to equip their populations for internal communication. Any language that becomes an official language, regardless of any direct intervention in the educational system, comes to occupy an important part in school and college curricula. Given the large number of new independent states that have emerged in the postcolonial Francophone world, there are variations in the actual policies undertaken. However, whatever the differences in details, these policies are distinguished by the extent to which they are based on one of two general approaches: integration or assimilation (see ASSIMILATION/INTÉGRATION/INSERTION). The integrationist approach accepts a situation of linguistic