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*A Brief Study of the French Language as an Influence  
in the Establishment of L'Académie Française*

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## *Overview of the French Language*

Language is an important part of culture. It not only serves to group people together geographically, but it is also a good indication of other aspects of a society. For instance, much can be learned about the ideals of a society by studying the evolution and structure of their native tongue. This is especially true of the French. The French language has long been admired for its flowing, beautiful quality. But for the French people, the pride in their language goes much deeper than simply its pleasing sound. To a Frenchman, his language not only identifies him as French, but is also a symbol of his high ideals and a reflection of the intellectual history of his society. A statement made by Gilles Ménage in 1672 reflects an idea still much adhered to today: "our language is not only the most beautiful and most rich . . . it is also the most restrained and most modest" (qtd. in Rudorff 185). The French have a conservative attitude toward the written language, and they are very proud of its complexity (Steele 4).

The language of France has long been "une affaire d'État (a state affair)" (Steele 4). The modern French language is formal and traditional, and it "bears an authoritarian stamp inasmuch as it echoes an autocratic determination to impose order and discipline" (Rudorff 184). This characteristic is mostly due to the monarchical influence present at the time of the codification of the language in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Government involvement in the remodeling of the language effected more than the pure structure of the language. The new language also became the symbol of a monarchy which was convinced of its supremacy in both politics and culture. French became the language of diplomacy, and the French became critical of foreign languages and cultures. The language became interlinked with the grandeur of the state, and it was impossible to venerate one and not the other (Rudorff 185). The French have a deep reverence for the standard language as a result (Lodge 3).

The great emphasis that French tradition places on language naturally extends to the writer. The idea that the intellectual has the ability and authority to shape the

moral and cultural values of the nation dates all the way back to the eighteenth century. According to this line of thought, a physicist speaking of religion is listened to because he is an intellectual, and he must know what he is talking about. According to Pierre-Henri Simon, one-time literary critic of *Le Monde*, "the inspiration and the movement of history belongs to those who think" (qtd. in de Gramont 332). The fact that this idea has become common in much of the developed world lends credit to the French belief of their intellectual superiority and influence.

### *What is the Academy?*

The French preoccupation with maintaining a superior written and spoken language continues to the present day. Over the centuries, France has accumulated material dealing with vocabulary, grammar, spelling and pronunciation much more voluminous than any other European country (Lodge 159). And all of this material is closely coordinated by L'Académie Française, a literary institution created by Cardinal Richelieu in the 17th century as the "official agency of linguistic formalism" (de Gramont 265) whose main task was to ensure the purity of the French language (Knecht 190). The Academy started as a small, informal literary group of men trying to escape from the female-dominated salons of the time. Described as "a fortress of entrenched French values" (de Gramont 267), the Academy and its forty "Immortals"<sup>1</sup> are now a permanent fixture in French society (de Gramont 273). Since its inception in 1635, the Academy has played an important role "in the sociolinguistic history of French - as one of the most powerful guardians of classical usage and inhibitors of change" (Lodge 161). The most tangible task that the Academy has succeeded in fulfilling over the years is the compilation and periodic revision of a dictionary which outlines the rules of correct French speech. But far more important is the Academy's cultural influence. The Academy's influence has been more widespread than its creators ever expected, as its "ideals and preferences of order, genius, and immortality have influenced the schools, conservatories, universities, and . . . intellectual and artistic tastes of the time" (Buzash, abstract). Although it is true that

the Academy is not "the supreme court of 'linguistic litigation'" (de Gramont 270) that it once was, there are still many who consider membership to be the ultimate goal of a life in the public eye (Luethy 69). The L'Academie Française is a symbol of the French predilection for order and clarity in their language, and the influence that this institution has been able to secure and maintain for over three centuries confirms the extent to which this mind set reflects the values of the society in general.<sup>2</sup>

### *Society Prior to the Academy*

It was the sixteenth century that brought about the first serious attempts to bring more structure to the French language (Lodge 159). The language at this time was mixed among classes, and literature was spattered with provincial expressions and different dialects. This was in part due to the fact that men of letters were not centralized and writers were influenced by their immediate surroundings. The use of colloquialisms was frequent and accepted in written works, and even agricultural terms were used in literature (Lough 244).

It was in this atmosphere that the age of Renaissance brought about a movement to enrich the language with classical tongues. Many thought that incorporating words from the Latin and Italian languages (which were considered as having more dignity) into French would increase the prestige of the newly-formed France (Lodge 159). Although the movement did enlarge the vocabulary beyond any previous point, this enrichment got out of control, and the "literary language was thus rich even to the point of incoherence" (Lough 244). Pressure for codification of the language started to come from a desire for more efficient communication. Just as the Renaissance brought about a return to simple forms in art, so did this enrichment start a countermovement calling for a purification of the language. The grammarians finally got fed up with "the untidy and pedantry-ridden state of their tongue" (Rudorff 184) and began a "spring-cleaning" of sorts.

The leader in the literary evolution of the French language was François Malherbe

(1555-1628), head poet for the court (Rickard 102).<sup>3</sup> Although his work led to "great impoverishment of the vocabulary of the literary language and of speech of educated people," it also led to an immense gain in clarity and precision (Lough 244). Although his main concern was for the language and techniques of poetry, he was a major player in the reaction against the "linguistic untidiness of the previous century" (Rickard 102). He did "cut away a great deal of dead wood" and created a more self-critical attitude among writers (Rickard 102).

Starting in Malherbe's time, literature, as well as language, came to be under the control of a narrow circle established in Paris of a few thousand that frequented salons and writers who sought to gain their favor (Lough 244). The centralization of the literary movement in Paris, as well as the gleaning of the language of unnecessary words resulted in an establishment of two forms of French language - upper polite society and the lower class (de Gramont 264). In fact, by the middle of the seventeenth century, a clean line had been drawn between the language of the masses and of polite society and literature. This idea that the court and polite society dictates language became so embedded in the culture that for more than a century the language of the common people disappeared completely from all higher forms of literature (Lough 246). Only words that were not bourgeois or plebeian could be used in polite society (Lough 253).

Vaugelas, a nobleman who spent a lot of time in the salons, was another important character in the codification process. He wrote the most famous book on this subject in 1647 - Remarques sur la langue Française.<sup>4</sup> In the preface, Vaugelas defines good usage as "that of an elite, bad usage that of the mass of the population" (qtd. in Lough 247). The status distinction that language came to represent inadvertently resulted in an increase in correct usage of the language, as "those lower down wanting to move up looked to correct speech as their ladder" (Lodge 159).

The movement by the Paris elite to restructure the French language and establish correct usage was only a part of the impetus behind the change in the language. There was a much stronger force at work: the state. The government saw in the

codification of the language a chance to express the order and absolute control of the monarchy. Consequently, the state did not allow the grammarians to act alone. The government had to be sure that the language was one of order and clarity that corresponded to "a vision of the state as absolute and immutable" (de Gramont 263). The state, in the person of Cardinal Richelieu, was involved in the codification from the beginning.<sup>5</sup> Richelieu recognized that codification was a political act and he would not dare leave it up to the grammarians (Lodge 160). Richelieu was intent on creating a centralized, authoritarian regime, and in this matter he attempted to dominate as he did in everything else.

### *The Birth of the Academy*

In 1629, in the house of Valentin Conrart (one of the king's secretaries), a small group of men of letters began meeting in an informal, masculine atmosphere with the feel of an English club (de Gramont 265). Not all of these men were writers. In fact, Conrart, who published nothing in his lifetime, is probably the only one who ever won a place in literary history "on the strength of his obstinate and prudent silence" (Guérard 140). The group would discuss questions of language and literature, read their own books to each other, gossip about the court, eat, and go for walks. Though these men were in touch with the court, they were not out to turn the king into "the prince of the golden age" as other groups were (Knecht 191). The men had simply grown weary of the female-dominated salon scene, and were looking for an escape (de Gramont 273).

But the group did not remain informal for long. On one occasion, the group invited François de Boisrobert, literary secretary to Richelieu, to their meeting (de Gramont 265). Unfortunately, word got back to the Cardinal. Richelieu immediately intervened after he learned of the group's activities. Richelieu had an incessant need to control every aspect of the lives of the French people, and he was therefore very suspicious of private social groups that escaped government control (de Gramont 207). Richelieu commissioned the group for some literary support of the king and



Cardinal, and was apparently so pleased with the results that he invited the group to meet under his authority from then on. Many members wished to decline because they were clients of Richelieu's enemies (Knecht 191). But it was not considered politically smart to refuse Richelieu's offers of assistance, as he was "not used to encountering resistance or to suffer it with impunity" (Knecht 191). So, fearing dissolution of their society or worse, the group conceded and became "ceremoniously pressed into government service in 1635" (de Gramont 265).

The group was given the name L'Académie Française after the Roman Academy founded by Pomponio Leto of Renaissance Italy (Knecht 192), and the institution was modeled after the Florentine Accademia della Crusca (Lodge 134).<sup>6</sup> Although Richelieu's motives were not completely selfish, it is probably safe to say that his reasons for establishing the Academy were not limited to enhancing the functional literacy of the language and standardizing usage to promote communication. Richelieu recognized that codification of the language could be used as a political strategy to enhance France's prestige in Europe. Also, by establishing the Academy under his rule, he would be able to better control how and what writers wrote, strengthening his absolutist grip on the nation (Lodge 160). In fact, the Academy's statutes included a clause requiring each member's loyalty to Richelieu's memory and virtue. But Richelieu was also careful to protect his image. To discourage the thinking that the state was running the Academy and to protect his social position (men of letters were not high up on the social scale in early seventeenth century France), Richelieu never even stepped foot inside the Academy (Knecht 192). And due to the barring of women from even the receptions at the Academy, it has also been suggested that Richelieu was attempting to "counter the threatened female monopoly on culture" created by the salons (de Gramont 394).

Other academies were established at the same time or soon after the creation of L'Académie Française, reflecting the era of classicism that had taken hold in France. The extent of royal patronage to the arts rose rapidly, as is demonstrated by the creation of the Academy of Painting and Sculpture, Academy of Science, and the



Academy of Music (Knapton 196). By 1700, there were five Parisian academies and eight regional ones. The establishment of these many academies was an important social and political development. In a way, these academies were a stepping stone to democracy in France. Although many of the academies were not exactly democratic in their admittance (especially the Française), once inside the atmosphere was one of equals that shared the same ideas and debated to make decisions (Kennedy 17).

The Academy encountered resistance from the very start. It was generally known that Richelieu surrounded himself with men he could control, and this extended to the Academy. Richelieu made sure that only his servants were members of the Academy, and he used the Academy as his personal secretary and soapbox. He called on the members to revise his speeches and write pamphlets in defense of himself and the King (Knecht 176).<sup>7</sup> These actions brought public criticism from Parliament, which delayed signing the Academy's charter until 1637, two years after its inception. Parliament was also fearful of the Academy's power of censorship, as it saw itself as the best qualified to make rules about the French language (Knecht 192).

The Academy was supposed to act in a legislative and judicial capacity, but it was slow to accomplish either task. Legislatively, the Academy was to get to the task of producing a dictionary and a Grammar, as well as a set of rules for rhetoric and poetry. The Academy was also to separate words into castes (lofty, mediocre, and low). Nothing much ever materialized except the dictionary, and the first edition did not even appear until 1694 (Guérard 140).<sup>8</sup>

There are a couple of possible reasons for the delay in the creation of the dictionary. First of all, Vaugelas, who was in charge of the dictionary, died in 1650, and work slowed (Guérard 140). Additionally, Richelieu had the group busy with other things such as delivering weekly speeches on different topics, and he did not pressure them to accomplish any of the tasks outlined in the statutes (Knecht 193). And when the group did work on the dictionary, progress was very slow, since they believed in "thorough deliberation of every nuance of every word" (de Gramont 271).

The Academy members likened themselves to "sanitation commissioners" whose task it was to "clean up the language and remove the garbage accumulated in the mouths of the common folk or in the magistrates' courts" (de Gramont 265). Consequently, the first edition, which consisted of two folio volumes, was a very select one. It excluded whole categories of words, words scorned by polite society and therefore also by the Academy (Lough 254).<sup>9</sup> This exclusion of words greatly reduced the vocabulary that writers were able to use (Lough 254). After the appearance of the first dictionary, the Academy produced a new edition roughly every fifty years. Always traditionalists, the members of the Academy used precedent and logic to revise its dictionary. In one case, a decision was made by referring to what one duke said about a second duke. Their reasoning was that since the statement was made by a duke it shows the "perenniality of certain French values" (de Gramont 272). Recently, the dictionary has become somewhat of a joke because of the time that it takes to produce a single edition. In today's fast-paced society, much of the dictionary is obsolete by the time it is released (de Gramont 271). As one author puts it, the Academy has "for three hundred years been working on a French dictionary and have again and again laid down one hundred years too late how an educated Frenchman should and should not express himself" (Luéthy 18).

In the seventeenth century, the Academy did a lot to promote grammatical and lexicographical activity (Rickard 102), but it also functioned in other capacities. Richelieu was always more interested in the theater than the Academy. He hung around the thespians, and even considered himself one of them. As a result, Richelieu initially tried to use the Academy as his own personal theater and literary critic, but he quickly realized that the Academy was not as malleable as some of his other institutions. A good example is a report that Richelieu commissioned the Academy to write in 1636 on Corneille's play "Le Cid". Richelieu wanted to condemn the play for violating classical rules, but the Academy was very moderate in its response (Knapton 193). But to Richelieu's credit, he did not suppress the play anyway (as later Napoleon would), but relied on only literary weapons for literary

quarrels. The compromise was honorable for both sides, but the Academy stopped expressing its opinions in matters of literature except to give out prizes (Guérard 141).

This distribution of prizes has become one of the Academy's major foci, although Richelieu never intended for the Academy to act in this capacity. He felt it was his job to reward those he deemed worthy of recognition (Buzash 5). In 1654, Guez de Balzac founded a prize for eloquence, and it was awarded for the first time in 1671, complete with three hundred pounds and a golden medal with the motto of the Academy inscribed on the back. This award, along with a poetry prize, were awarded regularly until the Revolution. After the Academy was reorganized by the Constitutional Assembly, the annual prize was reestablished. Following governments either added to or modified the number or amount of the awards, and presently there exist over three hundred and thirty prizes, one hundred and twenty-five being literary. The remainder are prizes of virtue and merit. The most recent prizes are the most important ones: the grand prize of literature (1911) rewards 50,000 francs, and the grand prize of the novel (1957) is one of the most respected. But whatever the monetary amount, the prestige that the award brings to the recipient is considered far more important (Buzash 6).

Because of Richelieu's preoccupation with theater, the Academy was not very well-organized in its early years. It had no scheduled meeting places or times until 1672 when it finally settled at the Louvre (Knecht 193) due to a push from the state financier, Jean-Baptiste Colbert. He gave the Academy a clock and scheduled the Academy to meet from three to five on Thursday afternoons and required that it keep minutes of the meetings. Additionally, he awarded medals to members present. This increased attention helped give the members a sense of purpose, and it is no doubt that this helped speed up work on the dictionary (Knapton 196).

### *Membership in the Academy*

The original small group that Richelieu approached in 1629 quickly grew to forty

members, including Richelieu's propagandists - Hay du Chastelet, Jean Sirmont, and Guez de Balzac (Rickard 173) - as well as two ministers of state, Abel Servien and Pierre Séquier. By 1642 the Academy was a pretty fair mix of French literary life, not leaning toward any particular movement (Knecht 192). Despite the Academy's chartered purpose to be a literary society, even from its early years membership has been more dependent on social origin and professional background than literary genius. This is apparent in the long list of literary legends that have been refused admittance, which includes Descartes, Pascal, Diderot, Zola, Flaubert, and Sartre just to name a few. One member even said that "If to enter here, glory, genius, and the gift of creativity were required, the seats would be often vacant" (de Gramont 266). But because so many of talent were refused, a rejection by the Academy was not necessarily the kiss of death to a writing career that it could have been (de Gramont 266).

The Academy has never been a purely learned body (Guérard 249). There were always a smattering of dukes and generals (for patriotism), as well as politicians, doctors, lawyers, scientists, and others with little claim to literary fame (Huddleston 559). In the eighteenth century, the Academy was a salon "where talented commoners, magistrates, noblemen could meet in a dignified and friendly atmosphere, and on a footing of strict equality" (Guérard 249). The wide array of professions that were represented in the Academy created colorful debates and brought different point of view into the discussions. While this characteristic helped the Academy to be less narrow-minded, these many views also hindered decision making (de Gramont 271).

The Academy consists of forty seats that are held for life (Steele 4), and the campaigning for a vacant seat has always been a time and energy-consuming task. It is not unlike running for a political office. If one wants to be considered for a place in the Academy, he must start early learning how to survive in polite society - flattery and kissing the right feet are all integral (de Gramont 272). Many famous writers and philisophes have spent countless hours trying to be admitted, only to be rejected for not having the right image, or for trying too hard. The Academy

has never liked "apparent effort", and flaunty garish behavior is frowned upon. Victor Hugo tried to become a member five times before succeeding. He risked humiliation for a seat, using excessive flattery and many different tactics (de Gramont 267). The Academy finally succumbed, but they consider Hugo the exception instead of the rule. Others were not so lucky. Even after personally visiting each of the forty members, Baudelaire was rejected for simple indiscretion. He was rejected not because he took drugs, but because he advertised it. Alexander Dumas was rejected for being too prolific (de Gramont 268). Hopefuls were very dedicated to their task, and were very careful about doing anything to compromise their chances. A good example of this is Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859), French statesman and author. Tocqueville downplayed his entrance into the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences in 1838 because he was afraid that it would be an obstacle in being accepted by the "Française". He became so intent on gaining entrance to the Academy that he even kept himself informed of the health of the oldest members. He finally succeeded in becoming an "Immortal" in December of 1841, two years after he had begun his campaign (Jardin 229).

The "final exam" of entrance into the L'Académie Française is the reception speech that must be made to the members. These speeches are models of what the Academy stands for: "urbanity, civility, musty gentility" (de Gramont 269). The tradition began in 1640 when Olivier Patru thanked the Academy with such eloquence that the Academy decided that all who followed should do the same. Even to this day, the speeches are an occasion and are even published in Le Monde (de Gramont 268). The reception could be likened to a Hollywood premiere. The speeches were attended by as much of polite society as could fit in the room. In August 1789, new entrant Abbé Barthélemy, author of Le Jeune Anarcharsis, arrived an hour and a half early on the day of his speech to an already packed house (Robiquet 35). He later wrote of the experience, saying that "we were all held up by one another . . . and the smaller of us were indeed standing on air most of the time" (qtd. in Robiquet 35). As with everything else in the Academy, the form of the

speech is steeped in tradition. Resources for the speeches are Latin learned in school and classical dramas (Schama 169). The speech begins with the new member praising the Academy, then goes on to praise the member whose place the entrant is taking. Then an old member welcomes the new one by giving a brief summary of the entrant's life and work (de Gramont 269).

Now as liberal as the Academy was with admitting members of most social groups, the Academy did have some issues with certain religious and social groups over the years. Accusations of Anti-Semitism were strong in the nineteenth century, but the first Jew was admitted in the twentieth century, and Jews have been part of the quota ever since (de Gramont 270). In the 1920's, papal condemnation of the Academy created a problem with French Catholics who then had to choose between the church and the Academy. Many members chose to follow the lead of conservative Catholics, making formal submissions to the papal ban but sabotaging it in practice. Some of the more active members did take more rigorous action, though (Hughes 69).

But the Academy excluded a much larger segment of society with its banning of women. As mentioned earlier, the birth of the Academy came from a desire to get away from the salons, which were female-dominated. The Academy has held fast to this rule until just very recently. It was not until 1980 that this "bastion of male chauvinism" admitted its first woman member, novelist Marguerite Yourcenar (Ardagh 347).<sup>10</sup> But despite their inadmissibility, women found a way to exert their influence. Instead of spending their energy trying to be admitted themselves, the women of the salons settled for campaigning for the male hopefuls (Guérard 140). This electioneering was done often with "marvelous tact" (Roustan 178), and the Paris hostesses would often make academicians "far less worthy of the distinction than themselves" (Guérard 249). Things were done this way from the days of Madame de Lambert in early eighteenth century to the days of Madame de Caillavet in the late nineteenth (Guérard 140), and it got to such a point that the author or philisophe was nothing without the support of the salons. The salon was to



seventeenth and eighteenth century France what the press is today. If one wanted a life in the public eye, one must make sure to be on the right side of the Paris hostesses, because it was in the salons that publicity was to be obtained (Roustan 178).

Now a word about the salons themselves is necessary to clarify their purpose. The salons were more than just "a clique of fussy ladies who spoke in ridiculous paraphrases" (de Gramont 394). They were also an important social development. Nobles, writers and artists met on common ground, whereas previously the former had looked down on the latter two. The men of letters lost some of their "bookishness", and the nobles became less ignorant of science and learning (Ducros 322). But in addition to their intellectual activity, the salons were also a stage for social ladder-climbing. This saccharine atmosphere was what the small group of men were attempting to get away from in 1629.

The reputation of the Academy has fluctuated over the years like an ebbing tide, but it has always managed to stay afloat. One author likens the Academy to "a family heirloom that has survived natural disasters and the attrition of time" (de Gramont 267). The French Revolution was an extremely stressful time for the Academy. In 1793 the Academy was suppressed for being "gangrened by an aristocracy" (de Gramont 267). Three members were guillotined and three others committed suicide. The archives of the society were saved only because a brave clerical minister risked his own life. The Academy was revived two years later by Napoléon, who commissioned the painter David to design uniforms for the members to wear, complete with swords (de Gramont 267).<sup>11</sup> The Academy took a great hit during the Restoration in 1815, when it became subject to the national purge of the administration and the army, and "Frenchmen of great eminence were deprived of their posts, honorific or real" (Brogan 17). A decade and a half later, the reputation of the Academy was on the rise thanks to the government of Louis XVIII (1815-1824) undoing some of the work done by the Revolution and restoring "the old pre-eminence of the L'Académie Française" (Brogan 46). The Academy grew



so prominent that even its resistance to the following government of Charles X (1824-1830) only increased its reputation (Brogan 46). The Academy stubbornly held on through politically unstable times. At the onset of World War II, Georges Duhamel (the secretary) announced that they would continue to meet no matter what happened (de Gramont 271).

The Academy began the pinnacle of its influence during the seventeenth century. This was a time when a Frenchmen had a feeling of cultural superiority over other nations, due to the growing power of the royal court and military victories (Kennedy 185). In this environment, the Academy flourished. The Academy increased the reputation of intellectuals, and in turn, the intellectuals gained influence over almost every aspect of the society. By the eighteenth century, the mind set that "intellectuals shape history" had taken a firm hold (de Gramont 332).

A warning must be given against overestimating the overall impact of this literary society. Over the years, the Academy lost some of its influence, but it has maintained its prestigious place among intellectuals. Membership in the Academy is still the staunchon of an orthodox literary career (de Gramont 272). Today the Academy is not the force it once was, and even in its prime, L'Académie Française never had the force of law (Lodge 161). Nevertheless, the Academy is still considered "a fortress of entrenched French values" (de Gramont 267). What has kept the Academy going is the desire for it. There are still men who try very hard to wear the strange uniforms and sit around discussing word definitions (de Gramont 267). Jean-Robert Bruce wrote of the Academy, "People . . . have reproached many times its blunders, its oversights, its biases . . . . But its institution is so solid that it has defied the centuries, the wars, and the revolutions" (qtd. in Buzash 11).

### NOTES

1. The members of the Academy are called "Immortals", although the appellation is not meant ironically, nor is it of much consequence (Guérard 140).
2. L'Académie Française is the only institution that Richelieu created that still exists (de Gramont 273).
3. There is some discrepancy as to exactly what Malherbe's job title was. Some consider him an important poet for the court, but his exact position is sketchy. Some consider him a great poet, but some regard Malherbe as nothing more than a law enforcement officer "posing as a poet" because of his tendency to condemn earlier poets because they did not follow his formulas (de Gramont 264).
4. Remarques were discussed and debated in the salons, and the Academy accepted them in its publishings in 1705 after careful study of them (Rickard 103)
5. Under a weak Louis XIII, Richelieu exerted all of the power (de Gramont 273).
6. These choices further demonstrate the prestige and dignity which the Italian and Latin cultures represented at this time (Lodge 159).
7. For example, Richelieu commissioned writer Daniel de Priézac in 1638 to defend his foreign policy. He rewarded him with appointment to the Academy the next year (Knecht 184).
8. Although a Grammaire de l'Académie was eventually published in 1932, it received hostile criticism, and the rhetoric and poetics never even saw the light of day (Lodge 161).
9. The preface of the dictionary is very clear on the point of omitting the words: ("L'Académie a jugé qu'on ne devait pas y mettre les vieux mots ni les termes des arts et des sciences qui entrent rarement dans le discours") (qtd. in

Lough 254). Translated, this states that “The Academy has decided that we wouldn’t include the old words nor the terms of arts and sciences which are rarely used in speech”.

10. Not everyone is in favor of the admittance of women. There are those that it is evidence that the "the citadel of French male society is crumbling" (Ardagh 354).
11. In fact, these uniforms are still worn today by the members of the Academy. The fitting for the traditional green outfit takes around six months, as various fittings, adornments, and alterations are necessary. Not only are the outfits ornate, but they are also very expensive. One can cost as much as the total debts incurred by the Academy for the whole year (Buzash 8).

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