

Book synopsis

This volume examines the use of French in European language communities outside France from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century. The phenomenon of French language usage is explored in a wide variety of communities, namely Bohemian, Dutch, medieval English, German (Prussian), Italian, Piedmontese, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Spanish, Swedish and Turkish. Each chapter offers unique insight into the existence of francophonie in a given language community by providing illustrations of language usage and detailed descriptions of various aspects of it. The volume as a whole explores such sociolinguistic matters as bilingualism and multilingualism, the use of French as a lingua franca and prestige language, language choice and code-switching, variations in language usage depending on class or gender, language attitudes and language education. The socio-historical and socio-cultural matters considered include the association of a variety of language with the court, nobility or some other social group; the function of French as a vehicle for the transmission of foreign cultures; and the role of language in the formation of identity of various kinds (national, social and personal).

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