ANDRÉ MAMAN
1927-2018

This Memorial Resolution
Prepared by a special committee,
was approved by unanimous rising vote at the meeting
of the Princeton University Faculty
on February 4, 2019 and ordered spread upon the
records of the Faculty.
A Princeton legend in his own time, André Maman was born in Oran, Algeria in 1927, when Algeria was still part of metropolitan France. He studied at the University of Toulouse, from which he received a doctorate in law, and at the Sorbonne. He practiced law in France for several years, then held teaching positions in Norway and Canada before joining the Princeton faculty as an instructor in the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures in 1958. He served as Assistant Dean of the College from 1968 to 1971, and was promoted to professor in 1976.

Renowned as a dynamic and charismatic teacher and a generous mentor, Maman attracted generations of Princeton undergraduates in large numbers to his courses on French language, culture, and history. His talent and dedication won him recognition from all quarters. He was elected an honorary member of the Class of 1979, was presented with the New Jersey Foreign Language Teachers Association Presidential Award for “outstanding contributions to foreign language education” in 1982, and in 1991 was selected as one of the first four recipients of the President’s Award for Distinguished Teaching at Princeton. At the time of his retirement, many former students wrote to tell of the personal interest Maman had shown in them, the guidance he had given them, and the influence his teaching had had on their lives and careers. Understandably, he was much in demand and highly successful as a speaker at alumni gatherings. He also organized and directed the first alumni college to be held abroad, at Rouen in 1976. The Department of French and Italian annually awards the André Maman Senior Thesis Prize for an outstanding thesis on the culture, economy, politics, or society of France.

Although Maman’s major impact was on the undergraduate program, his influence on the Department’s graduate students was also significant. Over the years, hundreds of them worked with him as preceptors and assistant instructors. He demanded a lot of them, and they in turn learned a great deal from him as a model of responsibility
and integrity in teaching. Furthermore, he was known for his support of junior faculty, having, himself, come up through the ranks at Princeton.

Maman’s extraordinary success as a teacher of French language and civilization was due not only to his enormous energy and generosity but to his sustained engagement in French politics and society. Ever active in promoting Franco-American relations—he was once identified in the distinguished French newspaper Le Monde as “the French mayor of New York”—he served for twenty years as representative of the northeastern United States on the Conseil Supérieur of French citizens resident abroad, the body that ultimately elected him to the French Senate. Within the Conseil, he was President of the Commission on Teaching, with supervisory responsibility for 465 schools worldwide. His obligations to his constituents, which required that he be fully conversant with current French legislation, his frequent journeys to Paris to attend meetings of the Conseil, and his relations with leading French statesmen—the Conseil Supérieur is presided over by the Foreign Minister—made him an invaluable resource on contemporary France to students and faculty throughout the University.

Maman was the author of four books on French language and culture: La France: Une Tapisserie, Grammaire et Style, Le Français: Langue écrite et langue parlée, and La France: Ses grandes heures littéraires.

In 1976, Maman was made a Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur by President Giscard d'Estaing, in recognition of “service rendered to strengthen ties between the United States and France.” In 1987, President Mitterand elevated him to the rank of Officier, and in 2003 President Chirac named him Commandeur, the highest citation conferred by the French government for civil or military merit. For his service in the teaching of French language and civilization, Maman was also named an Officer in the Order of Palmes Académiques.
In 1992, at the age of 65, Maman left Princeton to embark on a new career in public service, having been elected by the Conseil Supérieur to a nine-year term in the French Senate. As Senator, he created internships for Princeton students and hosted alumni in Paris. At the same time, he maintained his home in Princeton, returning often to renew his many ties with the University and its students.

Mister President: For the Committee I move that this Resolution be spread on the records of the Faculty; that a copy be sent to Marie Maman (spouse), Jean-Paul Maman (son), Suzanne Maman Charles (daughter), Pierre Maman (son), and Anne-Marie Maman (daughter) and to the Archivist of the University.

Respectfully submitted by:
Jeffrey “Lionel” Gossman
M. Taylor Pyne Professor of Romance Languages and Literatures, Emeritus

Pietro Frassica
Professor of French and Italian

François Rigolot
Meredith Howland Pyne Professor of French Literature, Emeritus; Professor of French and Italian, Emeritus

Suzanne Nash
Professor of French and Italian, Emeritus

Thomas Trezise
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