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État présent:
Post-earthquake Haitian Writing

The second Haitian Étonnants Voyageurs festival was to be a great celebration of a literary tradition that had just attained unprecedented international recognition.[1] In 2009, Haitian authors had garnered thirteen major international prizes, and the festival was set to recognize those achievements in a series of activities across Haiti. The event was due to start on 13 January 2010, and by 12 January, many authors, critics and journalists from Haiti, North America and Europe had already arrived in the country. When the earthquake struck at 4.53 on the afternoon of the 12th, the terrible human tragedy rightly overshadowed the disappointment of the cancelled literary festival. Literature seemed to be of minor importance faced with an overwhelming human and social catastrophe, and one was left to wonder what the role of writing and art in general might be in a country so deeply scarred by an unrelenting, unforgiving history, of which the earthquake might be read as a kind of *point culminant*, a dramatic finale to hundreds of years of environmental, social, and political degradation.[2]

The earthquake seemed also to have marked an abrupt end to the literary cycle that culminated in the successes of 2009. Almost immediately, works from before January 2010 appeared like chronicles of a past time, epilogues to a long historical cycle that stretched back at least to 1804. Haitian authors were now facing a new reality, one in which their roles and functions risked being altered considerably. If, for example, virtually everyone in Haiti now had at least one remarkable true story to tell, we might ask what purpose it serves to invent stories. What can fiction add to the great mass of first-person narratives that are already so remarkable that they require no embellishment? Apart from the human calamity it brought about, the earthquake risked provoking a crisis in Haitian fiction, so long one of the most productive and fertile spheres in which Haitian reality has been explored and brought to life. Aside from the question of the intrinsic worth and purpose of inventing stories in the post-earthquake period, there are also ethical issues that potentially make fiction writing in Haiti a fraught and troublesome activity.[3] Is it possible to write fiction about the earthquake without a ghoulish sense of exploiting the event and advancing one's career as an author over the bodies of the dead? What role, then, does fiction have in the post-earthquake period?[4]

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[1] The Étonnants Voyageurs website has a very comprehensive and useful page on Haiti-related literary news, particularly from the post-earthquake era. See http://www.etonnants-voyageurs.com/spip.php?rubrique148 [accessed 18 August 2011].

[2] This is not to say that disaster on this scale was inevitable, or that Haiti is alone in experiencing political, social and environmental upheaval. Following the earthquake, many Haitian authors remarked that the event signified a decisive break with the past. Edwidge Danticat, for instance, writes that there is to be no turning back from this moment, no comforting recollections of familiar places, as these memories now belonged to a previous Haiti, one that 'no longer exists, the Haiti of before the earthquake'; *Create Dangerously: The Immigrant Artist at Work* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), p. 161. See also the current visual art project run by the journal *Small Axe*, which considers the Caribbean to be a 'measureless scene of catastrophe', a region that is extremely vulnerable to 'natural disasters, but also to social and political atrocities (invasions, enslavements, exterminations, tyrannies)'. 'In fundamental ways', the project statement argues, 'the Caribbean has never overcome [the] founding colonial catastrophe'; 'The Visual Life of Catastrophic History: A Small Axe Project Statement', *Small Axe*, 15 (2011), 133–36 (p. 134).

[3] There are also no doubt issues related to the ethics of reading and criticism to consider. Perhaps critics, especially non-Haitian ones, are increasingly obliged to pay proper attention to the primary works and to engage fully with the range of social, political and historical ideas expressed by Haitian authors. See Paul Farmer's *Haiti after the Earthquake* (New York: Public Affairs Press, 2011) on the ethics of bearing witness to disaster.

[4] The earthquake quite clearly has cultural implications beyond literary fiction. See, for example, Arnold Antonin's documentary film, *Chronique d'une catastrophe annoncée: Haïti apocalypse now* (Centre Pétion Bolivar, 2010), which details the destruction of key buildings of cultural value such as Jacques Roumain's family house at Bois Verna. See also the

Remarkably, virtually all of the major authors in Haiti at the time of earthquake survived, with the notable exception of Georges Anglade, the essayist, critic, and promoter of *Lodyans* as a literary style particular to the Haitian tradition. It is striking, moreover, that many of the voices first read and heard in the international media were not those of Haitian politicians, but of Haitian authors of fiction, including Lyonel Trouillot, Kettly Mars, Edwidge Danticat, Dany Laferrière, Yanick Lahens, Louis-Philippe Dalembert, Evelyne Trouillot and Rodney Saint-Eloi. In the virtual absence of respected political figures, it was writers who were approached to speak of the event and who, perhaps unwittingly, have taken up to a large extent the role of spokespeople for Haiti. In effect, the earthquake made many major Haitian authors into internationally visible public figures, newly engaged with and committed to the fate of the nation.

Significantly, too, and understandably, the first published works of many of these authors following the event have been chronicles, accounts of personal and collective experiences, and reflections on the fate and future of Haiti, very much in the spirit of the public intellectual. In this sense, then, not only have the authors 'gone public', but so their earliest post-earthquake works often have a public-oriented, manifesto-like quality. If we are looking for declarations of intent, crystallizations of the social and cultural stakes in post-earthquake Haiti, it is first to these works that one should look.

One of the most forceful and compelling works that deal with the changing literary stakes in Haiti is Edwidge Danticat's *Create Dangerously: The Immigrant Artist at Work*. One senses immediately in the title of the work an urgency, a supplication or imperative, and a manifesto-style declaration of intent. The book consists of twelve chapters, individual essays that date back to 2001, rewritten and updated to varying degrees in the light of the events of January 2010. That this is a text of the post-earthquake era is further suggested in the cover image, a reproduction of Pascale Monnin's moving work and in the dedication to 'two hundred thousand and more'. Perhaps more accurately this is not fully a post-earthquake text, but one that straddles the event, and sits on the fault line as it were between the pre- and post-January 2010 periods.[5]

In this work, Danticat meets head-on the ethical, literary and political challenges faced by contemporary Haitian authors, striking a new note of assurance and suggesting a renewed sense of mission. It seems that as the earthquake has literally and metaphorically weakened the foundations of Haitian culture and being, Danticat has been strengthened, and emerged with a new idea of her purpose as a writer and an even steelier resolve to fulfill that purpose. Indeed, in reading these essays, the earliest of which was originally published in 1999, one can trace a growing sense of confidence, a gradual crystallization of the issues that matter most to her and to Haiti, and an increasingly direct engagement with those issues. At the same time, she embraces the 'danger' alluded to in her title, which in general terms inheres in a refusal to bow to dictates on the form and content of national culture. Disobeying is considered a vital function, almost an obligation of the artist; especially it would seem those from Haiti, both in the pre- and post-earthquake periods.

The need to disobey and the danger that resistance creates are laid bare in the opening essay, which retells the story of Marcel Numa and Louis Drouin, two Haitian exiles who were executed in 1964 by François Duvalier for engaging in armed resistance as members of the *Jeune Haïti* movement. Through her careful description of the film of the executions, we get a sense of the stark images running through her own mind in a kind of loop, constantly reminding her of the sacrifices made by previous generations of Haitian patriot artist and intellectuals. Quite obviously,

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remarkable post-earthquake works of the visual artist Frantz Zéphirin, some of which may be viewed here: http://www.indigoarts.com/gallery_haiti_zephirin.html [accessed 18 August 2011].

[5] Other works apparently largely written before 2010 but published following the earthquake include: Emmelie Prophète, *Le Reste du temps* (Montreal: Mémoire d'encrier, 2010); Evelyne Trouillot, *La Mémoire aux abois* (Paris: Hoëbeke, 2010); Louis-Philippe Dalembert, *Noires blessures* (Paris: Mercure, 2011); Kettly Mars and Leslie Péan, *Le Prince noir de Lillian Russell* (Paris: Mercure, 2011); and Gary Victor, *Le Sang et la mer* (La Roque d'Anthéron: Vents d'Ailleurs, 2010). Marvin Victor's *Corps mêlés* (Paris: Gallimard, 2011) is considered to be the first full-length novel on the earthquake, though it appears in this case too that the writing began before the earthquake.

too, the images remind her of the dangers associated with disobeying, and specifically the risk for the Haitian artist of losing her life in pursuit of her principles. The patriotic artist exists it seems in a precarious situation, and to turn away from that danger is implicitly a kind of betrayal, a moral and creative death. The need to embrace this precariousness and the danger it brings appears all the more pressing for the diaspora or 'immigrant' artist, whose relative security in exile seems to lead to an even greater compulsion or obligation to disobey and defy.

This idea of the artist sacrificing herself for her country or her political convictions is in many senses a troubling one, especially in the context of recent and contemporary Haitian literature, which has tended not to insist on the obligation of the writer to tie her fate to that of the nation. Perhaps the author who has most insistently distanced himself from the nationalist tradition in Haitian writing is Dany Laferrière, who has developed through his work a distinctly introspective, self–reflexive, writerly sensibility. Conventional political causes mean little to Laferrière, who insists that his unique cause is 'le style. Ou plutôt parvenir à l'absence de tout style. Aucune trace. Que le lecteur oublie les mots pour voir les choses. Une prise directe avec la vie. Sans intermédiaire. Voilà ma cause'.[6] In focusing on the minutiae of everyday life and in making the act of writing arguably the dominant theme in his works, Laferrière effects and reflects the shift in Haitian writing away from grand rhetoric and inflated political ideals, and away from the glorification of the author figure towards a fascination with the anonymous writer working, struggling to write in an often indifferent, ambivalent world.

Danticat's reworking of the notion of the engaged, self-sacrificing writer and the idea of dangerous creation marks to some extent a return to a previous set of concerns that largely tied Haitian writers' fate to that of the nation. It seems that for Danticat the post-earthquake Haitian author is bound to re-engage with political and social issues and that the period in which writers from Haiti could decouple themselves from a set of specific expectations and 'just write' may be over.[7]

The idea expressed in Danticat's work that the earthquake has shaken not just the physical space of Haiti but also its cultural and social foundations, indeed everything, is suggested in the title of Dany Laferrière's first post-disaster book, *Tout bouge autour de moi*.[8] The image it evokes is of the author at the centre of a still shifting world, in which he stands shaken and alone. One gets the sense that he wants to resist being redirected, thrown off the singular literary and intellectual path that he has carefully shaped for himself for over a quarter of a century. He says that he had decided when sleeping out on the tennis court at the Hotel Karibe to not let the earthquake 'bousculer' his agenda (p. 7). He admits nevertheless how difficult this will be as he says that when he closes his eyes 'les images affluent dans toute leur horreur' (p. 7). However much he wishes to keep to his own agenda, he does feel an obligation to speak for Haiti in the post-earthquake world. Where Danticat emphasizes the re-politicized role of the artist, Laferrière insists more squarely on the worth of culture in itself. 'La culture est la seule chose qui puisse faire face au séisme', he says (p. 8), adding later that 'L'art, à mes yeux, n'est pas un luxe, il structure notre vie et se révèle aussi nécessaire que le pain' (p. 72). The culture he speaks of is not only the literary and intellectual element, but that of the people, that which structures and gives meaning to their lives (p. 8). Now

[6] Dany Laferrière, *J'écris comme je vis* (Outremont: Lanctôt, 2000), p. 44.

[7] On the other hand, some of the earliest post-earthquake works of fiction suggest that certain authors have re-asserted their right to creative and thematic freedom and have continued to resist such expectations. See, for example, Kettly Mars and Leslie Pean, *Le Prince noir de Lillian Russell*, and Lyonel Trouillot, *La belle amour humaine* (Arles: Actes Sud, 2011). It is also true to say that these authors are clearly historically and politically 'engaged' in their own particular ways. See Lyonel Trouillot's recent argument that 'literature has not changed the world' and that it is up to the citizen, not the writer, to do so; http://defend.ht/entertainment/articles/literature/1295-qliterature-has-not-changed-the-worldq [accessed 18 August 2011].

[8] Dany Laferrière, *Tout bouge autour de moi* (Montreal: Mémoire d'encrier, 2010). A new edition was published in Paris by Grasset in 2011. There are significant differences between the two editions. The structure is quite different, and the writing more expansive in the second edition. Also, the second edition includes an account of the author's return to Haiti several weeks after the earthquake.

is not the time for tears, he says, but 'continuer notre chemin' (p. 8). He does not accept the idea of an 'année zéro' for the Haitian people or that the collective memory can be easily erased (p. 61). The earthquake is part of the historical journey that stretches back to Africa. Nothing could change that journey, he says, 'On continue' (p. 61). The vocabulary and imagery he uses suggest a continued forward movement; the paths must continue to be walked down, one cannot stand still or look back. This contrasts to some degree with Danticat's idea of a radical break with the past and of the post-earthquake period as a completely new epoch in Haitian history. One almost has the sense with Laferrière that he writes in the first edition of this book, understandably, still in shock, and that part of him wants to repress the memory of the event.[9] 'Faut pas ouvrir la boîte noire', he says, before being gripped by the compulsion to write the book, which he refers to as a 'monstre' (p. 9).

Laferrière's experience of the earthquake was shared with Rodney Saint-Eloi; it was only when Laferrière finally left for Montreal that the two were separated. Saint-Eloi's account of the earthquake, *Haïti kenbe la!* [Haiti hold on!], thus offers an opportunity to compare two versions of the same events, and presents some revealing contrasts in terms of narrative form and subjective experience.[10] The first major contrast is that Saint-Eloi's book is almost twice as long as Laferrière's. The former's style is more expansive—at times digressive—descriptive, steady and measured, and presents a more comprehensive picture of the general ambiance of Port-au-Prince before, during, and after the earthquake. Saint-Eloi's account is remarkable for its precision and detail; relatively speaking Laferrière's chronicle is more impressionistic, an account of the internal effects of the event. Saint-Eloi recalls a great number of sights, sounds, and smells from both before and after the earthquake, even if as he says, he wants to forget the catastrophic images that pass through him like 'crazed spiders' (p. 46). One also senses that Saint-Eloi is comparatively less shaken or troubled by the memory of the event. He is certainly haunted by images of suffering, but in relation to Laferrière seems slightly less disoriented or unsure of his place in the world. This may be down to differences in individual sensibilities, but it also appears that Saint-Eloi's more extended experience of the earthquake and its aftermath has helped him come to terms with it more readily than Laferrière, who has only the memory of the most intense and terrifying moments, the traumatic effect of which seems to have barely faded in the time following 12 January 2010. Because he was in a sense parachuted out of Haiti at the harrowing peak of the disaster to find himself in the unreal setting of prize-giving galas in Montreal, he seems, at least in the first edition of the book, to have missed out on the difficult yet psychologically important processes of remaining in the place of the traumatic event and experiencing its full aftermath with those who had gone through the same experience. Saint-Eloi appears to have benefited, relatively speaking, from remaining longer in Haiti and going through further stages in the post-disaster psychological processes that have helped him better recuperate the memory of the event.

Laferrière's and Saint-Eloi's books have much in common, notably in terms of style and form, in that their works are relatively straightforward attempts to record their thoughts and observations in the largely neutral style of the chronicler. There is analysis and they do offer reflections on broader issues, but formally these works remain in great part standard chronicles, recording events in a largely chronological manner and in this sense they remain faithful to the event itself. Fidelity to the truth seems to be a primary motivation for both authors. One is left to wonder again however what the role of fiction might be in the post-earthquake period. Does the drive for truth and the need to bear witness necessarily exclude fiction and render it a sign of vanity, a luxury almost?[11] Fiction in a sense was a victim of the earthquake. One wondered at the time how long it must itself stay buried under the rubble, and when it was finally pulled free from

[9] He perhaps refers indirectly to himself when he writes of certain people's immediate reactions to the earthquake and of those who continue to do what they were doing before: 'Une façon de nier l'événement', he says (p. 28).

[10] Rodney Saint-Eloi, *Haïti kenbe la!* (Neuilly-sur-Seine: Michel Lafon, 2010).

[11] See Paul Farmer's reflections on the question of bearing witness. He and his coauthors seek to 'echo and amplify' the words of those they encountered in Haiti and those who perished in the disaster; *Haiti after the Earthquake* (p. 2).

the ruins what condition it would be in. Would it have retained its force and vitality, or would it have to start anew, its memory either erased or forever traumatized by the event? What was the point of writing fiction after 12 January 2010?

Some preliminary responses to these questions are offered by Yanick Lahens in her 2010 work, *Failles*.[12] The book is largely an account of the author's experiences following the earthquake, but in terms of style it is more ambitious in the way it goes beyond the chronicle form and pieces together various kinds of writing, including journalism, philosophical, economic, and historical reflections, self-reflexive musings on the craft and purpose of fictional writing, and finally excerpts of pure fiction, not directly related to the earthquake. As such, Lahens uses a hybrid style that suggests a new, perhaps provisional, form and crucially does not exclude fiction from the present and the future of Haitian writing. Fiction, she suggests, has an important role in understanding the present and in starting to move beyond it. It is perhaps significant that in Lahens' work there is little of the sense of guilt that one finds in the survivor testimonies of the exiles Laferrière and Saint-Eloi, both of whom leave Haiti following the event for the relative safety of Montreal, while Lahens turns down the chance to leave and remains in her home in Port-au-Prince (p. 91). One senses that Lahens' decision to remain in Haiti reduces the degree of survivor's guilt that she feels, and that in turn this allows her to return to writing fiction relatively quickly.[13] Also, her hybrid style suggest a more nuanced version of the truth, and that the world of the imaginary to which fiction and the arts more generally offer access are key sites in which the event will be processed, re-imagined and perhaps finally committed to memory.

The collection *Haiti Noir* edited by Edwidge Danticat and published in early 2011 offers further insights into the potential future functions of fictional writing in Haiti.[14] First, it seems significant that the collection is published entirely in English, and that there is apparently no French or Creole translation planned. In terms of marketing, the earthquake appears to have created an enlarged Anglophone audience, no doubt rooted in Danticat's own established and growing readership. While French, and to a lesser extent Creole, remain the primary languages of production, it does seem that authors and publishers are alive to the great potential for growth in the Anglophone world. Indeed, many of the leading contemporary authors have already had some of their fictional work published in English translation. This trend seems likely to grow and intensify, and re-direct authorial attention to some extent from France to the US and Canada, especially given the large and often non-French-speaking Haitian diaspora in North America.

In terms of genre, it also seems important that this is a collection of short fiction, as opposed to a longer, single-authored work. The great novels of the earthquake will no doubt take time to compose, and may not appear for decades to come.[15] For the moment, short fiction seems a more apposite genre; its sharp blasts of narrative from many different voices are suggestive of the difficulty of conceptualizing longer fiction at such a short remove from the event. Also, there is the sense that no one person can own the event or its memory and that it is something to be shared and constructed collectively. Indeed, it could be said that the short fiction mode has been the dominant genre in recent and contemporary Haitian fiction. Lyonel Trouillot writes short novels that could be categorized as long novellas, while Laferrière's books are made up of episodic, fragmented narratives, and Lahens and Danticat are accomplished short story writers whose most recent novels—*La Couleur de l'aube* and *The Dew Breaker*, respectively—are also constructed around short,

[12] Yanick Lahens, *Failles* (Paris: Sabine Wespieser, 2010).

[13] In a way Laferrière does not write 'pure' fiction, in that his creative works are often based on his own everyday life, and are to a certain extent autobiographical.

[14] *Haiti Noir*, ed. by Edwidge Danticat (Brooklyn, NY: Akashic, 2010).

[15] That said, Marvin Victor's *Corps mêlés* has a strong claim to be the first great earthquake novel. It is a remarkable work written in a style quite different to the dominant modes in contemporary Haitian writing. The book's style seems to owe more to non-Haitian writers, such as Glissant, Condé, Chamoiseau, Márquez, Joyce, and even Balzac, than to the established Haitian authors. That this is Victor's first novel makes the work all the more impressive.

self-contained chapters that draw on the modes of short fiction.[16]

Amid the devastation brought about by the earthquake and the political and social crises that have followed it, Haitian literature is alive and remains one of the nation's most remarkable cultural phenomena. Haitian authors have taken the lead in addressing social and political issues and in speaking for their country in a time of disaster. If however they have done so, and if the Haitian people continue to exist in the most trying circumstances, it is not because they are innately resilient or born to suffer, but because they have to, they have no choice but to continue. The earthquake may have raised new challenges for Haitian writers, but it also calls for readers to reengage in new ways with the texts and to read them on their own terms, to understand what they say about Haiti, and crucially, what they reveal about the world more generally, for Haitian literature has been and will remain a prism by means of which specific, localized experience is refracted far beyond Haiti, illuminating and resonating with all of our realities.[17]

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[16] Yanick Lahens, *La Couleur de l'aube* (Paris: Sabine Wespieser, 2008); Edwidge Danticat, *The Dew Breaker* (New York: Knopf, 2004).

[17] For further reading on the earthquake, see some of the various collections published since January 2010: *Haïti: Parmi les vivants*, ed. by Sarah Berrouet, Faubert Bolivar, Sophie Boutaud de la Combe and Georges Castera (Arles: Actes Sud, 2010); *Le Serpent à plumes pour Haïti* (Paris: Du Rocher, 2010); *Pour Haïti*, ed. by Suzanne Dracius (Paris: Desnel, 2010); Pierre Buteau, Rodney Saint-Eloi and Lyonel Trouillot, *Refonder Haïti?* (Montreal: Mémoire d'encrier, 2010); and Martin Munro, *Haiti Rising: Haitian History, Culture and the Earthquake of 2010* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press; and Kingston: University of West Indies Press, 2010).

From Cultural Protection to National Protectionism: Reading Contradictions of France's Cultural Diversity Agenda in Abderrahmane Sissako's *Bamako* (2006)

This article considers how French interventionist aid policies financing the production of cinema from the global South promote a cultural diversity agenda which influences the thematic and stylistic conventions of West African cinema. While acknowledging the role of cultural diversity as an important tool for establishing cultural democracy, the following pages problematize the efficacy of the agenda when used to promote national interests via international policy. Establishing first that French interpretations of cultural diversity stem from broader anxieties pertaining to Anglo-American cultural and linguistic hegemony, the article investigates how interventionist policies benefit the French film industry economically and culturally. It considers how policies aiding cinema of the South have posited Paris as the production and reception centre, influencing thematic and stylistic conventions and the way cultural diversity can be expressed. Considering Abderrahmane Sissako's *Bamako* (2006) as a text working within these constraints,[1] the article examines how these policies may work to regulate the possible heterogeneity of West African cinema that the diversity agenda aims to support.

My interest in the cultural diversity agenda stems from a growing awareness that cultural diversity has become central to the French and European funds supporting cinema of the global South, including Francophone West Africa. Historically, France has played a significant role in the development of West African film industries and, more recently, those of the global South, with the Centre nationale de la cinématographie (CNC), the Ministère des affaires étrangères et européennes, the Organisation internationale de la francophonie (OIF) (of which France is the greatest financial contributor), and the European Union injecting millions of euros into a variety of different funding programmes. The form of cultural diversity articulated within these policies addresses the struggle for non-European minority cultures to maintain a sense of cultural identity in relation to the homogenizing forces of the global North through the creation of their own cinema, with the intention 'que toutes les voix puissent se faire entendre à une époque où la mondialisation des échanges a plutôt tendance à standardiser toutes les formes de consommations culturelles'.[2] A key source of funding for the cinema of the global South comes from the French cultural intitative Fonds Sud Cinéma.[3] Established in 1984, Fonds Sud is a collaborative project of the Ministère des affaires étrangères et européennes and the CNC, both of whom provide 50% of the annual budget of €2,000,000. The main aim of Fonds Sud is 'Soutenir de la diversité culturelle dans le monde' whereby '[le Fonds] privilégie les projets à forte identité culturelle destinés à circuler dans le monde entier'.[4] Cultural diversity is also a central tenet of the aims of the Francophone Fund for Audiovisual Production in the South, run by the OIF in conjunction with the Conseil international des radios et des télévisions d'expression française (CIRTEF) with an annual budget of €1,000,000. In its promotional material, the fund states that its criteria are designed 'Promouvoir la langue française et la diversité culturelle et linguistique' with a dedication to cinema that 'mise en valeur du patrimoine culturel et de la diversité des identités'.[5] Similarly, in 2008 the European

[1] *Bamako*. Dir. Abderrahmane Sissako. Les Films du Losange. 2006.

[2] Véronique Cayla, *Les 25 ans du Fonds Sud Cinéma*, http://www.cnc.fr/CNC_GALLERY_CONTENT/DOCUMENTS/publications/plaquettes/Plaquette_25ansFdsSud.pdf [accessed 20 November 2010].

[3] For a history of French investment in West African cinema, see Claire Andrade-Watkins, 'France's Bureau of Cinema—Financial and Technical Assistance 1961–1977: Operations and Implications for African Cinema', in *African Experiences of Cinema*, ed. by Imruh Bakari and Mbye B. Cham (London: BFI, 1996), pp. 112–27.

[4] MAEE, 'Fiches Rèperes: La France et le Fonds Sud Cinéma', http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/IMG/pdf/fiche_fonds_sud_cinema.pdf [accessed 19 June 2010] (p. 1).

[5] OIF-CIRTEF, 'Le Fonds francophone de production audiovisuelle du Sud: Volet Cinéma', http://www.francophonie.

Union awarded their first round of a three-year EU/ACP programme (of €6.5 million, or just under €2.2 million annually), targeting the audiovisual sector of countries of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP). The overall objective of this latest funding programme is 'to step up the promotion of cultural diversity' and 'enhance ACP cultural identities'.[6]

As Tony Bennet and Vera Boltho argue in the study *Differing Diversities*, the promotion of cultural diversity in Europe as a tool for the establishment of cultural democracy and heterogeneity should be supported.[7] As Boltho writes:

> Cultural Diversity invests national cultural policy with the responsibility to define the new conditions of equity and fairness for cultural participation that is necessary for addressing the changing face of national identity in a world where new forms of international mobility are challenging traditional homogeneous notions of national identity.[8]

Bennett agrees, arguing that cultural policy promoting cultural diversity with the goal of cultural democracy could assist in the development of cultural entitlement that would 'shift [...] from polities based on the normative principle of homogeneity to ones based on the principle of heterogeneity' and become useful when addressing 'the demand for the right to maintain and develop specific cultural practices that will function as the organizing foci for cultural lives that are not centred on the notional mainstream of a nationally defined society'.[9] Yet, according to Cris Shore, European cultural policy remains 'driven by problematic assumptions about "culture" as an integrative mechanism'. He states:

> policy makers have sought to harness culture as a vehicle for promoting solidarity and social cohesion among Europeans, but the eurocentrism and class bias inherent in their conceptions of culture also promote exclusion and intolerance, particularly towards those who fall outside the boundaries of official European culture.[10]

Shore argues that cultural policies are shaped primarily by political factors, and claims that the promotion of cultural diversity in the policies of Europe's member states, such as France, generally share a fear of US cultural exports as a form of cultural imperialism that 'threatens to undermine the integrity' of national cultures in Europe; and the approach to the formation of identity as 'a dualistic and oppositional process', whereby cultural policies remain committed to constructing a homogeneous dominant culture around assumptions of shared Greco-Roman and Judaeo-Christian roots.[11]

Arguably, France's cultural diversity agenda unites broader concerns towards reconfiguring traditional notions of mainstream national identity in the wake of intense migration with specifically French anxieties pertaining to the potential threat of American hegemony on the French audiovisual sector and French cinema itself.[12] This connection becomes more evident when

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org/IMG/pdf/Notice_cinema_2010_OK.pdf [accessed 10 November 2009] (p. 4).

[6] UE-ACP programme d'appui cinéma et audiovisuel, 'Objectives of the programme', http://www.acpfilms.eu/htdocs/modules/content/index.php?id=6/&lang=english [accessed 11 November 2010].

[7] Cultural democracy is defined by Bennett as the right for all members of society to have access to the participation in cultural activities without compromising cultural allegiances, whereby governments work through consultation with communities to sustain and develop cultural differences that interact with differentiated cultures within the same environment. See David Bennett, *Differing Diversities: Transversal Study on the Theme of Cultural Policy and Cultural Diversity* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing, 2001), pp. 1–202.

[8] Vera Boltho, 'Preface', in *Differing Diversities*, pp. 5–6 (p. 5).

[9] Tony Bennett, 'Differing diversities: transversal study on the theme of cultural policy and cultural diversity', in *Differing Diversities*, pp. 7–69 (p. 20 and p. 25).

[10] Cris Shore, 'The cultural policies of the European Union and cultural diversity', in *Differing Diversities*, pp. 107–22 (p. 108).

[11] Shore, p. 117 and p. 118.

[12] Richard Ferdinand, '*Exception Culturelle* and Cultural De-Centralisation: Contradictions in the Landscape', http://www.amicentre.biz/spip.php?article29 [accessed 25 November 2009].

considering the French cultural diversity agenda as directly related to *l'exception culturelle* that was pertinent to France's fight against cultural and linguistic hegemony, and the threat to French national identity in the final days of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) negotiations in 1993 and 1994. *L'exception culturelle* is closely linked to a primarily nationalist agenda concerned with *la mondialisation*, especially regarding restrictions of American cultural products and the English language itself. The former Minister of Culture and Communication, Catherine Trautmann, articulates this position clearly, claiming that 'la mondialisation pousse à l'uniformisation des comportements et des modes de vie. Dans ce contexte, banaliser le traitement de la culture ne permettrait pas de préserver les identités linguistiques et culturelles'.[13] For Trautmann, 'L'exception culturelle est le moyen [...] d'atteindre l'objectif de diversité culturelle'.[14] The French challenge to this liberalization of the audiovisual sector across the global market via a connection of cultural production to the preservation of cultural identity and language is an idea that, as Brigitte Rollet highlights, is 'following a tradition that has strong roots in French society, where culture plays a very special role in many fields that are not strictly speaking cultural'.[15] As cinema in France has historically been understood as an essential part of French heritage, this perception of cultural production as intricately connected to the formation of linguistic and cultural identity can be seen to shape directly France's national film policy,[16] with government subsidies for French productions working as 'eloquent illustrations of the "institutionalisation" of culture'.[17]

However, despite Trautmann's own declaration that '[l]a notion de diversité culturelle ne se substitue pas à celle d'exception', cultural exception as a term has lost currency since the GATT negotiations, with the core principles of the cultural exception agenda taking on a new form.[18] When UNESCO signed the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005), the term *exception culturelle* was replaced by the term *diversité culturelle*, which, according to Christoph Beat Graber, was necessary to move the debate away from the negative connotations of the term *exception*, regarded as nothing more than French protectionism against the United States. As Graber writes:

> In contrast to the negativism and the latent 'anti-Americanism' of the 'cultural exception' rhetoric, the new concept has the advantage of being conceptually neutral. Diversity in audiovisual trade is something that can be analysed statistically—free from ideology and protectionist ulterior motives.[19]

Ideologically neutralized, it is this *diversité culturelle* that has become central to the policies of financial and technical support of the audiovisual sectors of the South. With its roots in protectionism, can we read France's nationalist agenda, with an implied anti-Americanism and promotion of *francophonie*, within its interventionist policies?

Criticisms pertaining to French policies towards cinema of the global South tend to draw attention to the way France has used the cultural diversity agenda to promote broader social

[13] Catherine Trautmann, 'L'exception culturelle n'est pas négociable', http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/politique-culturelle/index-dossiers.htm#cinema [accessed 11 October 2009].
[14] Catherine Trautmann, 'Diversité culturelle et exception culturelle', http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/actualites/lettre/dossiers.html [accessed 12 December 2010], pp. 1–4 (p. 3).
[15] Brigitte Rollet, 'Cultural Exception(s) in French Cinema', in *The French Exception*, ed. by Emmanuel Godin and Tony Chafer (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2005), pp. 167–78 (p. 167).
[16] See Anne Jäckel, 'The Inter/Nationalism of French Film Policy', *Modern & Contemporary France*, 15 (2007), 21–36 (p. 22); and Elizabeth Ezra and Sue Harris, 'Introduction: The French Exception', in *France in Focus: Film and National Identity*, ed. by Elizabeth Ezra and Sue Harris (New York and Oxford: Berg, 2000), pp. 13–22.
[17] Rollet, p. 170.
[18] Trautmann, 'Diversité culturelle et exception culturelle', p. 3.
[19] Christoph Beat Graber, 'The New Unesco Convention on Cultural Diversity: A Counterbalance to the WTO?', *Journal of International Economic Law*, 9 (2006), 533–74 (p. 555).

policies that, rather than aiming for heterogeneity or cultural democracy, potentially determine the coherence of a common national culture, undermining the legitimacy of the cultural diversity agenda.[20] First, while intervention into cinema of the South is not a profit-making venture for France, it does benefit the French film industry economically. Fonds Sud stipulates that the 50% contribution of funding made by the CNC must be spent in France.[21] For filmmakers, accepting these funds often means consenting to a number of requirements, such as the hiring of a French technical crew, renting materials in France, and developing film in French laboratories, thereby keeping French investment in France, and explaining why programmes such as Fonds Sud have been readily accepted without opposition in France.[22] Similarly, this investment is designed to encourage filmmakers to opt for French co-productions, a strategy that has become essential to France's maintenance of a competitive film industry in a global market.[23] As it is through a country's production output that national industries are assessed on an international level, co-productions with the global South are included in international assessments of the French industry. In 2009, while France produced a total of 230 films, forty-eight were co-productions with a foreign majority investment, while forty-five were French majority co-productions. That is, 137 of the 230 films, or 59%, claimed as French output were exclusively French productions. The investment in foreign production creates what Millet describes as a flexible national patrimony, working 'gonfler les statistiques et de renforcer la présence du film français (ou à coproduction française) tant sur le territoire national [...] qu'à l'étranger'.[24] Danan suggests that 'this two-pronged global/national approach to cinema illustrates some of the complex ways France is constructing a new national culture to meet the demands of globalization'.[25]

Second, the direct intervention of the French ministry and its administration of funds destined for the global South has arguably created a Parisian-centred system of cultural production that aligns its international policy with national interests. The concern with this process of centralization is its 'tendency to conscript communities as agencies of cultural governance' that can 'lead to conservative forms of cultural closure rather than an opening up to new forms of diversity', while creating an exodus of artists which impacts the sustainability of industries in the source country.[26] This centralization is the result of France's directly determined and administered cultural policy, which, in the case of West Africa, has existed since France's earliest intervention in 1961. It is strengthened through the policies of programmes such as Fonds Sud that privilege candidates who have entered a co-production agreement with a French producer. Fonds Sud's 2009 policy stipulated that an intermediary French production company would disperse the aid granted by the fund via a co-production agreement established with an African producer,[27] while the 2010

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[20] See Martine Danan, 'French Cinema in the Era of Media Capitalism', *Media, Culture & Society*, 22 (2000), 355–64; Manthia Diawara, *African Film: New Forms of Aesthetics and Politics* (Munich: Prestel, 2010), *passim*; Dina Iordanova, 'Feature Filmmaking within the New Europe: Moving Funds and Images across the East-West Divide', *Media, Culture & Society*, 24 (2002), 517–36 (p. 21); and Raphaël Millet, '(In)dépendance des cinémas du Sud &/Vs France', in *Cinéma et (in)dépendence: Une économie politique*, Théorème, 9, ed. by Laurent Creton (Paris: Presses de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, 1998), pp. 141–78.

[21] 'France Diplomatie: Règlement de la Commission Fonds Sud Cinéma', http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/actions-france_830/cinema_886/aides-production_5622/fonds-sud-cinema_6140/reglement-commission-fonds-sud-cinema_12750/index.html [accessed 30 December 2009].

[22] Clément Tapsoba, 'The Influence of Aid on the Creativeness of Filmmakers', *Écrans d'Afrique*, 13–14 (1995), pp. 86–94 (p. 92).

[23] Danan, p. 56.

[24] Millet, p. 164.

[25] Danan, p. 355.

[26] Bennett, p. 49.

[27] 'Règlement: Fonds Sud Cinéma', http://www.google.com.au/url?sa=t&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CBUQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.cnc.fr%2FCNC_GALLERY_CONTENT%2FDOCUMENTS%2Fdivers%2Fdaei%2Freglement_Fonds_Sud1.doc&rct=j&q=%22Cette%20aide%20s%E2%80%99adresse%20%C3%A0%20des%20projets%20dont%20le%20budget%20pr%C3%A9visionnel%20total%20ne%20doit%20pas%20%C3%AAtre%20sup%C3%

criteria stated that 'à l'inscription du projet, la présence d'une société de production de juridiction française n'est pas obligatoire', intimating that a French investor would then be found for the successful applicant.[28] These co-production agreements tend to privilege the greater financial investor, most often the producer of the global North, who gains entitlement to the distribution of funds. In addition, all applications must be translated into French, including the script, regardless of its language, and sent to Paris, where the funding committees are located.[29] According to Dina Iordanova, this Parisian network producing 'international' cinema is encouraging filmmakers globally to relocate to the capital in order to 'position [...] the director closer to the action and increase [...] the chances to secure financing'.[30]

Abderrahmane Sissako is one such filmmaker. After spending twelve years in Russia studying film, he migrated to Paris in 1993 when his short film *October* (1993) was selected for the Cannes International Film Festival. In an interview in 2000, he admitted that he was in France 'for financial reasons'.[31] In 2010, he was still in Paris, where he has established a production company, Chinguitty Films, returning to Mali and Mauritania regularly to scout for film locations and, more recently, as part of his association, *Des Cinémas pour l'Afrique*, whose first project is the renovation and reopening of closed cinemas in Africa.[32] Yet, while Sissako's ties to West Africa remain strong, his own position as a diasporic filmmaker living and working in France for almost twenty years positions him as part of the growing number of filmmakers who add a 'transnational essence' to contemporary cinema that Iordanova argues makes it 'necessary to re-evaluate the clear-cut concepts of belonging and commitment to a national culture'.[33]

Considering Sissako's position in the interstice between the global North/South divide, his film *Bamako* is a paradigmatic example of the complicated nature of West African film production when an industry is so heavily reliant on international aid. A French/Malian co-production, 91.5% of the total budget of the film was provided by financial support from French/Francophone funds, including Fonds Sud (7.5%), the CNC (12.4%), OIF/CIRTEF (12.4%), as well as another French Ministry programme, the discontinued Fonds Images Afrique (3.1%). Writing about *Bamako*, critic Manthia Diawara argues that Sissako is addressing 'concerns of the being and the mode of existence of an African image in cinema', adhering to the broader aims of the cultural diversity agenda in its attempt to diversify the images of Africa and of Africans.[34] The film imagines a scenario in which African society literally puts the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the agents of global capitalism on trial. Originally entitled *The Court* (*La Cour)*, this process takes the form of an outdoor tribunal, set in the courtyard of Sissako's own father's house in Bamako. Blending the division between fantasy and reality, real judges listen as real lawyers present their cases, with local Malian citizens acting out their roles as witnesses, giving heart-wrenching testimonies detailing the increasing inequalities in Africa caused by the Structural Adjustment Programmes, neoliberalism and the processes of globalization. Motifs of witness and testimony are constantly in play against their binary opposites, the 'deaf and blind' international institutions, who are accused by the plaintiff, and arguably by Sissako himself, of silencing Africa into subordination.

The court serves a dual function in driving the narrative, doubling as a space for the playing out of quotidian activity. This allows Sissako to introduce characters and stories outside of the rather didactic narration given at the trial, what he describes as the 'intrigues secondaires' of the

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A9rieur%20%C3%A0%203%20millions%20d%E2%80%99euros%22&ei=Zk0hTbHZEIOWcY7R9dML&usg=AFQjCNHFR2oswwQVaw8BWqKtGy-UuGdFiQ&sig2=D3zBDPxlxqb2Lwpfn8YUOA&cad=rja [accessed 29 October 2009].

[28] 'France Diplomatie: Règlement de la Commission Fonds Sud Cinéma'.

[29] 'France Diplomatie: Règlement de la Commission Fonds Sud Cinéma'.

[30] Iordanova, p. 526.

[31] Sophie Boukhari, 'Directors in Exile', *The Unesco Courier*, October 2000, pp. 37–38 (p. 38).

[32] See www.descinemaspourlafrique.com.

[33] Iordanova, p. 527.

[34] Diawara, p. 115.

film.[35] The film follows the breakdown of a couple's marriage and a detective's investigation into a missing gun, all the while filming in detail a variety of cultural practices that make up Malian life, including a wedding ceremony, tea-drinking and the dyeing of clothes. These activities and additional narratives are juxtaposed with the trial itself, working to accentuate the broader consequences of what is being discussed, as the life of the residents 'fasse écho ou interfère avec la parole délivrée à la barre' with the intention that 'cette érudition du propos soit relativisée par ces vues'.[36] While a man lying ill in a room next to the court reminds the audience of the very real effects of the privatized health system, the clothes dyers working alongside the trial also endeavour to show the possibility for an alternative, for the 'hope' that is continually invoked by witnesses, whereby Africans will run their own economy, made untenable by the crippling nature of their debts.

Parallel with the trial, these 'intrigues' emphasize the failure of language and of communication in addition to the silencing of Africa. The investigation within the film into a missing gun, interwoven into the trial scenes, culminates with a suicide at the end of the trial. This death embodies a silencing of the self and works to marry the accusations made by the plaintiff regarding the subordination of Africans with the reality of daily Malian life. It is symbolic that the funeral is the final scene to take place in the court. The scene is shot mainly with a hand-held digital camera from the point of view of a cameraman who was recording the trial earlier. Mostly filmed without sound, the crowd slowly file out of the court with the lifeless body, the lack of sound perhaps suggesting a return to the silence of the Malian community at the end of the trial, as well as the futility (and impossibility) of the trial itself.

The presentation of a specifically local Malian image, in a film overtly addressing the imperializing process of globalization, clearly aligns the film with the criteria of French interventionist policy, such as Fonds Sud, that 'privilégie les projets à forte identité culturelle destinés à circuler dans le monde entier', enforced by the criterion stating that 75% of the film be shot in the country of origin.[37] Just as *Bamako*'s trial scenes draw attention to the negative effects of neoliberal policies adopted by the global North, these other scenes attempt to put the local on-screen, producing images of lives that transcend both the political and economic discourse of 'Africa', the film itself working as a cultural product that defies the disjunctive and unequal interactions of images in a world system dominated by the global North. Sissako demonstrates not only the political effects of the policies that have, in Neal Lazarus's words, 'become a favoured means of disciplining postcolonial states, domesticating them and rendering them subservient to the needs of the global market', but also reveals the disjunctive nature of an ideology that has deterritorialized the imagination of its people.[38] In this sense, despite France's seemingly conflicting financial investment in the film, *Bamako* expresses a very real critique of Northern interventionist policies, while simultaneously contributing to the body of contemporary Malian cinematic production that works to give Malians access to their own images.

However, according to Raphaël Millet, the realpolitik of French intervention into cinema of the global South is more complicated. He argues that French intervention deliberately pits cinema from the global South against the values of the Hollywood industry, the same cinema *l'exception culturelle* was designed to challenge.[39] This is supported by Martine Danan, who claims that cinema of the global South has become 'part of France's "diplomatic arsenal" in the "culture wars" which

[35] Abderrahmane Sissako, 'Bamako: la cour' http://www.arte.tv/fr/mouvement-de-cinema/2218956.html [accessed 19 June 2010].
[36] Abderrahmane Sissako, 'Bamako: la cour'.
[37] MAEE, 'Fiches Repères: La France et le Fonds Sud Cinéma', p. 1, and 'France Diplomatie: Règlement de la Commission Fonds Sud Cinéma'.
[38] Neil Lazarus, 'The Global Dispensation since 1945', in *The Cambridge Companion to Postcolonial Literary Studies*, ed. by Neil Lazarus (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 19–40 (p. 37).
[39] Millet, p. 177.

support a nation's "struggles for political rights and recognition" in the world economy'.[40] Thinking about *Bamako* and its critique of audiovisual hegemony and local consumption patterns in West Africa, a complex tension between France's protectionist agenda and the film encourages further investigation.

In a scene that takes place one night after the trial, a shared television is set up in the court, where residents and their children have gathered to watch a Western, titled 'Death in Timbuktu'. A story within the story, Sissako interchanges shots of the Western with the reaction of its Malian audience to reveal a complex and even contradictory relationship between the mass media and local culture. Arguably, the Western genre is a deliberate choice criticizing the hegemonic ideologies promoted through an increasingly globalized media, a criticism that closely echoes the arguments in the trial itself. As Dayna L. Oscherwitz argues, there is a history of the Western narrative in African popular culture (particularly through the cinema of Djibril Diop Mambety), whcih expresses concerns pertaining to colonialism, neo-coloniaism and globalization, or what she describes as 'a new colonization of African in the postindependence era'.[41] Diawara makes a similar remark about Moustapha Alassane's *Le retour d'un aventurier*, claiming that 'while it takes seriously the imitation of the Western style, it also exposes the penetration of American cultural imperialism in the remotest of African villages'.[42] In this context, the 'Western' scene arguably aligns Sissako with those who denounce the genre's conventions for promoting imperialist ideologies while naturalizing racism and violence.[43] As cross-cuts are made between the on-screen violence of the cowboys and the pleasure on the faces of its local audience, smiling as they watch Africans kill Africans at the command of the white cowboys on the screen, the scene becomes a critique both of corruption in Africa and African passivity. The scene appears to imply a dislocated, deterritorialized imagination, remaining relevant to criticisms being made more explicitly during the trial scenes, which pertain to the corruption of local governments; as one witness says: 'the impetus is Northern but the theft is local, done with our complicity'.

Nonetheless, *Bamako* can also be understood as exemplifying a type of African narrative favoured by French funding committees, promoting what has been criticized by some as a European humanitarian discourse, a 'humanitarian Tarzanism'[44], and a 'miserabilism or zoological curiosity' of Africa.[45] The concern is that such representations of Africa reproduce what Stefan Andreassen describes as the 'reductive repetition' motif, which he claims 'becomes an effective tool with which to conflate the many heterogeneous characteristics of African societies into a core set of deficiencies', seriously compromising the cultural diversity agenda.[46] As France is the primary producer and consumer of West African cinema,[47] attention to how these images are received in Europe needs to be taken into account, and Andreassen's theory seems warranted when reading how French reviews of *Bamako* stress the 'misery' and 'poverty', and an overall 'obsession for a better life'.[48]

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[40] Danan, p. 361.
[41] Dayna L. Oscherwitz, 'Of Cowboys and Elephants: Africa, Globalization and the Nouveau Western', in Djibril Diop Mambety's Hyenas', *Research in African Literatures*, 39 (2008), 223–38 (p. 236).
[42] *Le retour d'un aventurier/Return of an adventurer*. Dir. Moustapha Alassane. POM Films. 1966; Diawara, p. 139.
[43] See, for example, Robert Stam and Ella Shohat, 'Contested Histories: Eurocentrism, Multiculturalism and the Media', in *Multiculturalism: A Critical Reader*, ed. by David Theo Goldberg (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1993), pp. 296–324.
[44] Diawara, p. 77.
[45] Cheick Oumar Sissoko, 'Filmmakers' Opinions', *Écrans d'Afrique*, 15 (1996), 54–56 (p. 55).
[46] Stefan Andreassen, 'Orientalism and African Development Studies: The 'Reductive Repetition' Motif in Theories of African Underdevelopment', *Third World Quarterly*, 26 (2005), 971–86 (p. 972).
[47] Millet, p. 167.
[48] See, for example, Yannick Lemarié, 'Bamako: Entendez-vous la voix des 'sans nom'?', *Positif*, 548 (2006), 15–16; and Thomas Sotinel, 'Abderrahmane Sissako: Pour en finir avec le cinéma du Nord', *Le Monde*, 19 April 2007, http://www.lemonde.fr/cinema/article/2006/10/20/abderrahmane-sissako-pour-en-finir-avec-le-cinema-du-nord_825800_3476.html [accessed 19 June 2010].

In addition, while claiming to provide the global South 'accès à ses propres images', French interventionist policies, such as Fonds Sud, preference films whose narrative style is more closely aligned with art cinema than more popular and accessible cinematic formats,[49] with policies emphasizing the search by committees for narratives 'en fonction de la qualité artistique du projet'[50] or 'leur potentiel artistique'.[51] West African films funded by France tend to adhere to a reflexive filmmaking and 'deconstruction of Hollywood film language', exemplified in *Bamako* through its narrative style (fragmented and ambiguous use of time and space, obscure subjectivity, and spectatorial distancing).[52] Partly, such filmmaking practices can be understood as the result of the training of West African directors, who, due to a lack of film schools in Africa, tend to study in Paris and Moscow, cities that have traditionally been at the forefront of alternative film practices and historically connected to the emergence of art cinema itself. Thus, filmmakers such as Sissako, who studied at the VGIK in Moscow, will tend to emulate and reinvent these styles. In addition, it is necessary to acknowledge that West African cinema is steeped in a tradition of filmmaking that champions progressive, socially conscious cinema, epitomized by the subversive cinema of Paulin Soumanous Vieyra and Ousmane Sembène, as well as manifestos such as the 1975 'Algiers Charter on African Cinema'.[53]

It is important to understand that art cinema is not only a narrative strategy, but also an institution that developed out of Europe during the 1930s as a response to Hollywood hegemony.[54] Producers, unable to compete commercially, participate instead through what Dudley Andrews describes as 'a niche art strategy', relying on cultural prestige over commercial profit, and producing an audience that is fundamentally class-based.[55] Institutional practices of art cinema can be understood in the involvement of the Franco-German television network ARTE, who provided 50.1% of *Bamako*'s total budget. Financial support from funds such as the OIF require an established pre-sale or co-production contract with a Francophone television network, explaining the importance of a contract with ARTE. However, Diawara notes that Pierre Chevalier, the head of ARTE's fiction production between 1991 and 2003, can be credited with both 'the renaissance of French and world cinema of the *art et essai* type' as well as the 'emergence' of Sissako, who worked closely with Chevalier on his two previous features, *La vie sur terre* and *Heremakono*.[56] Thus, in addition to contributing to the commercial interests of ARTE (according to French law, all French television networks are required to invest 3.2% of their turnover into film production),[57] the involvement of ARTE in the production of West African cinema has implications on the style of cinema that is produced. The *art et essai* cinema epitomized by Chevalier needs to be understood as 'One of France's competitive film strategies in the global film market', what Teresa Hoefert de Turégano, like Millet, describes as a type of 'national cinema' that is encouraged both 'at home and in other countries as a way of strengthening these niche markets against American products'.[58] This is not to suggest that all art cinema is somehow inherently French, nor that African audiences are

[49] Millet, p. 150.
[50] 'France Diplomatie: Règlement de la Commission Fonds Sud Cinéma'.
[51] OIF-CIRTEF, 'Le Fonds francophone de production audiovisuelle du Sud: Volet cinéma'.
[52] Diawara, p. 87.
[53] The Manifesto states that 'African filmmakers must be in solidarity with progressive filmmakers who are waging anti-imperialist struggles throughout the world. Moreover, the question of commercial profit can be no yardstick for African filmmakers'; quoted in *African Experiences of Cinema*, ed. by Imruh Bakari and Mbye Cham (London: British Film Institute, 1996), pp. 25–26.
[54] Steve Neale, 'Art Cinema as Institution', *Screen*, 22 (1981), 11–39.
[55] David Andrews, 'Art cinema as Institution Redux: Art Houses, Film Festivals and Film Studies', *Scope*, 18 (2010) http://www.scope.nottingham.ac.uk/article.php?issue=18&id=1245 [accessed 4 February 2011].
[56] *La vie sur terre/Life on Earth*. Dir. Abderrahmane Sissako. Haut et Court. 1998; and *Heremakono/En attendant le bonheur/Waiting for Happiness*. Dir. Abderrahmane Sissako. Haut et Court. 2002. See Diawara, p. 100
[57] 'Arte France Cinema' http://www.unifrance.org/annuaires/societe/80026/arte-france-cinema [accessed 2 June 2010].
[58] Teresa Hoefert de Turégano, 'The New Politics of African Cinema at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs', *French Politics, Culture and Society*, 20 (2002), 22–32 (p. 29).

somehow less accepting of art cinema than European audiences. Rather, the emphasis on artistic qualities and the involvement of companies that produce primarily art house cinema suggests that Francophone West African filmmakers are limited to one style of filmmaking that is neither profitable nor highly visible, arguably problematizing the very intentions of accessibility these policies promulgate. Hoefert de Turégano notes that the *art et essai* style of cinema and its accent on cultural identity has 'pushed francophone West African cinema into a cultural, non-commercial stream, which simultaneously undermines effective support if the aim is to help develop African cinema on its own continent'.[59] In reality, this cinema exists primarily on the festival circuit, creating a *présence festivalière* that legitimizes French investment by creating 'un espace vital où la France déploie sa politique culturelle', with films such as *Bamako* (which screened at seventy-four festivals around the world) promoting 'une indéniable valeur de prestige internationale consolidé'.[60] Finally, since the *art et essai* cinemas are located mostly within Paris *intra-muros*, the establishment of the Parisian centre becomes complete, not only crucial to the West African process of production and post-production, but to its reception as well.

Despite the commitment to the protection of cultural diversity by France, current interventionist policies regarding West African film production seem to be producing some complex tensions relating to the national agenda of the *Hexagone* that appear contradictory to the intentions of the programmes themselves. Supposing that Sissako is aware of the unequal transnational processes within which he works, this opens up *Bamako*'s 'Death in Timbuktu' to an alternative reading, whereby the issues raised in the film's Western mirror the predicament of West African cinema and the West African *cinéaste* himself. The cowboys in 'Death in Timbuktu' are played by actual filmmakers from the global South (Palestine and the Congo), as well as Sissako himself, all led by the French director, Jean-Henri Roger, against the lone-ranger, the American Danny Glover. If, as Sissako has stated, this scene is to show the complicity of Africans in the corruption and violence of governance, can it not also be read as implicating the filmmakers themselves in a constrained partnership for control of images and the mindsets of the African people? Caught between a French/US ideological shoot-off, be it for African screens, minds, or resources, 'Death in Timbuktu' is the film's moment to put African cinema itself on trial. Sissako makes his film address the peripheral position of Africa in the world system, but ironically, in a case of life imitating art, imitating life, perpetuates the stronghold of the global North, and Paris in particular, on how cultural diversity can be represented. West African cinema, like West Africa itself, appears to remain at most a peripheral player. The Western then, can be re-read, not only as a critique of US-led cultural imperialism, but also as a subtle nod to the policies that see African cinema caught in, and complicit with, the modes of production that allow it to exist.

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[59] Hoefert de Turégano, p. 24.
[60] Millet, p. 163.

BOOK REVIEWS

Cultural Crossings: Negotiating Identities in Francophone and Anglophone Pacific Literature—À la croisée des cultures: De la négociation des identités dans les littératures francophones et anglophones du Pacifique. Edited by RAYLENE RAMSAY. Bruxelles: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2010. 301 pp. Pb €38.50. ISBN 978-9-05201-655-9

'No one can be the insider to the vast range of experience, time and place represented in any Pacific anthology [...] when reading anthologies we spend more time being tourists, visitors, guests than being at home [...] we spend more time being unfamiliar than being familiar' (p. 223). Alice Te Punga Somerville's comment in her essay about the values and shortcomings of Pacific Ocean literary anthologies fittingly illustrates the position of the (untrained) reader's first encounter with *Cultural Crossings*, a series of sixteen scholarly contributions written by specialists in the field of Pacific Ocean literary and cultural production. This bilingual edition analyses the complicated processes at work in the on-going attempt of identity construction in Anglophone, Francophone, and Lusophone texts that, as Karin Speedy indicates, move towards 'the notion of a shared past, based on shared memories, stories and experiences [...] in a Pacific center, rather than on the French periphery' (p. 194). With this goal in mind, the collection seeks to explore various forms of cultural expression that range from indigenous writing to paintings, photography, and performance poetry. Recurring topics include the problematic influence of preconceived notions (such as the European myth of the Oceanian female or *vahiné*) as well as the challenging process of presenting and (re)writing historical facts and oral traditions in various formats such as digital electronic media, translation, or literary anthologies. The well-structured arguments introduce the reader to a number of foundational works written by figures of the colonial past such as travel writers (Robertson and Loti), missionaries, administrators, and contemporary Oceanian mainstream authors (Chantal Spitz, Déwé and Waia Gorodé, Jean-Marc Tera'ituatini Pambrun, and Albert Wendt), while also branching out to consider those who might be less well-known (to Western readers that is), such as East Timorese writer Luis Cardoso. This volume covers multiple geographic island regions within the Pacific, including Tahiti, New Caledonia, Independent Samoa, New Zealand, and East Timor.

Raylene Ramsay's introduction skilfully summarizes this broad collection of case studies, placing considerable emphasis on the multiple routes and roots of 'transformations and (re)constructions of traditional Pacific identities' (p. 11) which manifest themselves through various 'layers of hybridity and [...] the specificities that mark individual literary texts, "national" or group literatures' (p. 24). The wide-ranging fields of interests brought together in this collection highlight a list of key issues in what Ramsay considers an 'emerging' canon (p. 9) of contemporary cultural productions, for example the value of texts produced by female writers and the cultural specificities of Pacific peoples such as their oral traditions or spiritual connections. Despite the rich gamut of findings and several points of convergence between some essays, it would have been helpful in terms of the structure of the volume to divide contributions into three or more chapters, each preceded by a short preface, to help readers chart their paths through the abundance of material. Overall though, *Cultural Crossings* is a much needed contribution to, and manifestation of, the growing diversity of approaches in the field of Francophone Postcolonial Studies. This volume represents an invaluable resource for scholars, teachers, and students—for beginners and experts alike. The density of critical perspectives, relevant use of postcolonial, Oceanian key concepts (Kanak, Caldoche, etc.), and detailed bibliographies at the end of each study provide a helpful compilation of information and ideas for thought-provoking reflection, cross-reading, reference, and research. It also points the reader to new directions and engagements within the field of

comparative studies of Oceanian literature.

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Écritures mauriciennes au féminin: penser l'altérité. Edited by VÉRONIQUE BRAGARD and SRILATA RAVI. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2011. 315 pp. Pb €29.50. ISBN: 978-2-296-54211-2

While the burgeoning field of Indian Ocean postcolonial studies has attracted increasing scholarly attention in recent years, this edited volume marks a pioneering moment: it is the first to be dedicated solely to literary works written by Mauritian women. Covering the rise of authors such as Lindsey Collen, Natacha Appanah-Mouriquand and Shenaz Patel, whose works have been published over the past two decades, the volume retains a predominant focus on the works of Ananda Devi, the most prolific of this new generation of women writers. Devi, whose works have been the subject of international acclaim (including the 2006 *Prix des cinq continents de la Francophonie* for *Ève de ses décombres*), can also be seen to have influenced actively the development of contemporary Mauritian literature. In this volume, the editors resist the temptation often experienced by academics working in new fields of research to provide an anthology of all relevant literary works; instead, they focus on providing a wide-ranging and pertinent analysis of contemporary literary representations of identity, alterity, and femininity in the Mauritian context. The collection of essays presented here serves both as an excellent introduction to Devi and to the new generation of women writers mentioned above, and as a valuable resource for all researchers considering issues of identity, alterity, marginalization, and female subjectivity in the Indian Ocean world.

The introduction, by Srilata Ravi and Véronique Bragard, briefly situates this volume in relation to a long history of Mauritian Francophone literature, dominated at first by the colonial elite. Identifying the significance of Marie-Thérèse Humbert's *À l'autre bout de moi* (1979) in the development of the first wave of Mauritian postcolonial novels, Ravi and Bragard also posit that Devi's first novel *Rue de la Poudrière* (1989) marks, in turn, a new narrative approach to Mauritian female identity. In its refusal to privilege ethnic and cultural boundaries, this new approach can be said to oppose the 'ethnicized' nature of Mauritian literature prior to the 1990s which reflected the spirit of communalism entrenched in Mauritian society. Ravi and Bragard then go on to outline an understanding of alterity grounded in the Mauritian context, where the multiethnic make-up of the population means that interaction with the Other is, to an extent, inevitable. They position the analyses included in this volume at the intersection of feminist and postcolonial studies: all advocate a critical examination of the potential agency of the Other for change within existing patriarchal/colonial frameworks.

As the second part of the title of the volume—'Penser l'altérité'—would seem to suggest, the representation of alterity and identity in Mauritian women's writing is approached from a wide range of theoretical perspectives. This culminates in the final essay of the volume by Françoise Lionnet, which aims to outline a theory of fiction in relation to Devi's literary corpus. In her interrogation, Lionnet conceptualizes the sari in Devi's *œuvre* as functioning on three levels: as a 'secret motif' in Devi's fiction; as a structuring principle for the unravelling of the narrative; and, finally, as an apposite and 'ideal' metaphor for a hybridized writing process situated in a position of alterity and marginality (pp. 293–95). Lionnet concludes that the sari metaphor, far from representing Devi's rejection of Western cultural heritage, must be understood, instead, as a means

of reworking dominant cultural paradigms and bringing them into dialogue with feminist, Eastern and/or 'Third World' ones. In this respect, Devi can be said to aim 'not to appropriate or reject culturally divergent frames of reference, but to embrace their intersections' (p. 310).

If Lionnet's contribution constitutes the most extensive literary analysis of Devi's corpus, Devi's works are interrogated, to a greater or lesser extent, in all of the essays presented in this volume. Some consider her work alongside that of other contemporary Mauritian women writers. Peter Hawkins's chapter, for example, provides a comparison of marginality in the first novels by both Devi and Lindsey Collen. Tracing the careers of the two novelists from 'Third World' obscurity to international renown, Hawkins concludes that despite the different interventionist strategies practised by the authors, both have only been able to carve a space for their works in the Mauritian literary field by breaking away from the supposed marginalization of Mauritius and aiming instead for international success. In a similar vein, Ailbhe O'Flaherty's chapter examines the representation of the island space in selected works by Devi, Natacha Appanah and Shenaz Patel. She argues that these authors undertake a complex negotiation and contestation of the island as an exotic feminine space. O'Flaherty concludes that the image of the island is a powerful one—but one which also risks being reductively interpreted in terms of escape or nostalgia, a process which Devi, Appanah and Patel recognize as 'ingrained' in the human imagination (p. 56).

A number of other essays make extensive use of what have become canonical works of feminist and/or postcolonial theory. Alison Rice's chapter, looking at mother-daughter relationships in novels by Devi and by Appanah, draws on critical writings on motherhood by both Nancy Huston and Julia Kristeva. Emile Fromet de Rosnay uses Frederic Jameson's concept of 'national allegory' in developing her reading of Devi's *Moi, l'Interdite* (2000) as a heterogeneous or multiple allegory. Meanwhile, by drawing on the writings of Luce Irigaray, Amaleena Damlé's chapter applies a feminist reconsideration of conceptualizations of nomadism developed by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari to her analysis of nomadic female subjectivity in Devi's novels.

The strongest contributions to the volume are those which analyse identity and alterity in relation to specific aspects of the texts with which they engage. Notable essays include Julia Water's examination of the preparation and sharing of food as represented in Devi's novels, processes, which she argues, serve as trigger situations for conflict between characters of different genders and of different generations, and Markus Arnold's analysis of novels by Devi and Collen in relation to the problematic nature of representations of the female body in feminine or feminist postcolonial writing. All contributions within the volume, however, succeed in bringing together the issue of female alterity with wider experiences of marginalization and negotiations of difference in Mauritian society and beyond. The principal strength of the volume lies in its varied analysis of the complexities which arise from the intersections between ethnicity and gender, between feminist and postcolonial literature—without ever implying that one aspect must be privileged at the expense of the other.

NATALIA BREMNER
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Transnational French Studies: Postcolonialism and Littérature-Monde. Edited by ALEC G. HARGREAVES, CHARLES FORSDICK and DAVID MURPHY. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2010. 307 pp. Hb £65. ISBN: 978184631483-4

Cet ouvrage collectif se propose de revenir sur un débat littéraire déclenché en 2007 lors de la parution du manifeste *Pour une littérature-monde en français*. Célébrée par les signataires du manifeste comme la victoire sur le francocentrisme littéraire et comme l'abolition de la francophonie, la notion de Littérature-Monde a toutefois été très controversée depuis son entrée dans le champ discursif. Pendant que dans le monde anglophone ces propos ont enfoncé des portes ouvertes dans la mesure qu'on pouvait, au premier abord, projeter dans le manifeste le décentrement indispensable des études littéraires en France, voire même l'ouverture des études francophones aux théories postcoloniales, l'accueil du manifeste en France a été plus retenu. Néanmoins, trois années de recul, plusieurs colloques internationaux et des éditions spéciales de revues littéraires amènent à la mise en cause de la pertinence de la notion de Littérature-Monde comme catégorie d'analyse littéraire. C'est dans une perspective résolument transnationale qu'un ensemble de chercheurs et de chercheuses, basés presque exclusivement dans des universités anglophones, entend éclairer les liens éventuels que la Littérature-Monde entretiendrait avec une critique littéraire postcoloniale.

Divisé en trois grandes parties, l'ouvrage aborde les enjeux de la Littérature-Monde sous des angles différents. Toutefois les contributions différentes partagent une appréciation réservée de la notion de Littérature-Monde et tendent à converger vers certains aspects estimés problématiques. À côté du constat général d'un manque de profondeur qui s'expliquerait vraisemblablement par un souci de marketing proéminent, plusieurs contributions relèvent un apolitisme qui fait contraste dans un contexte socio-culturel français marqué par la question postcoloniale (David Murphy, Chris Bongie). Ainsi, par exemple, Thomas Spear relativise l'élan révolutionnaire du manifeste en retraçant les lentes mutations et les changements de stratégies éditoriales des maisons d'éditions parisiennes à l'égard des auteurs non-français (pp. 164–77). En revanche, Jane Hiddleston reproche aux tenants du manifeste d'avoir trop facilement remaniés d'autres discours postcoloniaux humanistes afin de mieux placer leur manifeste sur le marché des biens culturels (pp. 178–91). Quant à la contribution de Laura Reeck, celle-ci procède à une mise en parallèle entre le manifeste *Qui fait la France?* et le manifeste *Pour une littérature-monde* afin de soulever que la notion de *périphérie* relève d'un rapport concurrentiel implicite entre les deux textes. Tandis que le lieu de l'énonciation du manifeste *Qui fait la France?* est la banlieue française, le manifeste *Pour une littérature-monde* ne semble pas percevoir cette 'périphérie interne' (p. 259) à l'hexagone, à la fois trop proche, trop familière et trop revendicative pour pouvoir prendre le pas sur les francophones, les 'périphériques externes' (p. 259), plus exotiques et plus commercialisables. Reeck en déduit que la reconnaissance des francophones par le centre parisien est largement conditionnée par leur apolitisme mais aussi fondée sur la marginalisation de la littérature beur (pp. 258–73).

Le deuxième sujet central ressortant des contributions est le rapport ambigu entre Littérature-Monde et exotisme. À cet égard, l'analyse de Mounia Benalil montre que l'historique de la Littérature-Monde est étroitement lié au parcours individuel de son initiateur, Michel Le Bris. Porte-parole et éditeur du recueil d'essais *Pour une Littérature-Monde*, ce spécialiste de la littérature de voyage serait en effet à l'origine d'une nostalgie de l'exotique, caractérisant sa vision d'une Littérature-Monde (pp. 49–66). Comme le montre par ailleurs Jean-Xavier Ridon dans sa contribution, la stratégie de marketing du festival Étonnants Voyageurs est fondée sur l'exaltation d'un désir d'exotisme, mis en scène à Saint-Malo de manière anhistorique et dépolitisée. Cette stratégie inhérente à la Littérature-Monde consiste aussi, selon Ridon, à légitimer le festival en accordant la parole aux écrivains et écrivaines de la périphérie, qui, à leur tour, endossent le discours exotique et disculpent l'événement de tout soupçon idéologique (pp. 195–208). En ce qui concerne en outre la présentation des différents auteurs ayant contribué un essai au manifeste,

Jeanne Garane notamment souligne avec justesse qu'une logique ethnicisante y est à l'œuvre dans la mesure où chaque contribution est accompagnée d'une note précisant l'origine ethnique de son auteur (pp. 227–39).

Finalement on retiendra de cet ouvrage que les incohérences inhérentes à la notion de Littérature-Monde et au manifeste du même nom sont essentiellement liées au souci prédominant de marketing d'un produit, ou événement culturel, qui s'approprie le discours différentialiste ambiant à cet effet. On retiendra également que le mouvement littéraire de la Littérature-Monde est issu du système qu'il prétend critiquer ce qui explique son aveuglement à l'égard des réelles inégalités dans le champ littéraire.

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Science Fiction from Québec: A Postcolonial Study. By AMY J. RANSOM. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2009. 265 pp. Pb £35.50. ISBN: 978-0-7864-3824-2

The stated, ambitious aim of this monograph is to unfold the way in which science fiction that has been produced in Québec, this Canadian province 'at the edges of what might rightly be called postcolonial' (p. 1), reflects and delineates the colonial venture from inception all the way to the Québec crises of identity, nationhood, and separatism. In this respect, the objectives Ransom set out to achieve belong at once to Québec studies, science fiction, and postcolonial theories. The author draws on Spivak's and Fanon's work for inspiration in that those acclaimed critics each in their own right deal with the trope of the alien nation and the alienated individual, respectively. In a thorough introduction entitled 'Québec, Science Fiction, and the Postcolonial', Ransom seeks to identify those types of discourses within science fiction, largely published since the year 2000, that can actually be construed as postcolonial. Hence, Patricia Kerslake's *Fiction and Empire* (2007) is credited for having provided a good example of an analysis of the manner in which space colonization has been depicted and not just whether it occurred at all. Also evoked in this respect is Cherry Clayton's 1999 reading of Doris Lessing's *The Four-Gated City* (1969) wherein the white settler is seen as representing a post-modern fiction subservient to postcolonial ends. While the lengthy introduction articulates the place Québec occupies in the heart of postcolonial discourse, the first chapter, entitled 'SFQ: History and Themes' does a splendid job providing a historical and thematic overview of science fiction in Québec from the 1930s until 2010, moving from such early writers as Emmanuel Desrosiers and Armand Grenier in the thirties and forties to Suzanne Martel and Maurice Gagnon in the sixties; to Denis Côté and Francine Pelletier in the eighties; to the more recent novels by Daniel Sernine and Jean-Pierre Guillet in the nineties and the early years of the new millennium, respectively. The second chapter, 'Alien Nations: Dominance and Oppression in the SFQ Saga' thoroughly analyses the various tenets embedded in the very concept of alienation in postcolonial theory, and scrutinizes the links the latter maintains with science fiction theory. A collection of trilogies and tetralogies are studied, including Jacques Brossard's *L'Oiseau de feu* (1989–97) and Esther Rochon's *Le Cycle de Vrénalik* (1974–2002). These novels embody what the author dubs 'The SFQ saga' in that they investigate tropes belonging to the alien nation and alienation (with particular emphasis on the power struggles of oppression and domination), and illustrate colonial history in its multiple facets of conquest and resistance. The third chapter, and perhaps the best one, 'Utopia and New World Myth in Québec's Science-Fiction Sagas', is a scrutiny of how the

binary tropes of utopia/dystopia are used by such authors as Brossard, Vonarburg, and Rochon. The work of Dario Suvin (more specifically his definition of the literary utopia and cognitive estrangement) is drawn upon to set up a theoretical framework for the analysis thereby undertaken. The fourth and last chapter, '*Logiques métisses*: Hybridity and Transculturalism', as the title indicates, delves into the manner in which the authors studied in the previous chapters approach questions of multiculturalism and plurality. 'The strategies of accommodation' exploited by Brossard and like authors are regarded from a theoretical standpoint, though, in my view, Ransom fails to delineate the racism embedded in the necessity of the very existence of such strategies. Instead, buzz terms *en vogue* among Québécois intellectuals, such as *braconnages* and *le transcultural*, are invoked within the complex problematic of race and the Other, more specifically, the racially different Other. At the conclusion of the study, the author makes a statement on the 'disalienation' achieved in 'the SFQ saga' by the alien nations via the truly postcolonial society, namely that of the imagined utopian communities thus constructed. Overall, in this book, Ransom has managed to open up new fields of inquiry by posing serious and legitimate links between postcolonial discourse and *Science Fiction From Québec*.

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Beyond the Slave Narrative: Politics, Sex, and Manuscripts in the Haitian Revolution. By DEBORAH JENSON. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2011. 322 pp. Hb £65. ISBN: 978-1-84631-497-1

For the most part, studies of, and responses to, the Haitian Revolution have tended to privilege philosophical, historical or political perspectives. Scant attention has been paid to any form of literary culture emergent during the revolutionary and early independence era produced by newly emancipated Haitians themselves. Deborah Jenson's *Beyond the Slave Narrative* responds to this gap in the field by piecing together a collage of textual artefacts from the French archives in order to foreground the distinct authorial voices of non- or partially literate Haitian leaders, performers, and participants in the transitional period of late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century Saint-Domingue/Haiti.

Jenson's monograph, as the title suggests, moves beyond narratives of the lived experiences of slavery to explore cultural production from former slaves whose participation in print culture has documented the crucial process of 'unbecoming' (p. 279) slaves and the subsequent unravelling of racial and social hierarchies in pre- and post-revolutionary Haiti. These textual reversals upset the presumed dialectics of domination and subjugation as highlighted in the Anglophone slave narrative tradition, due to their framing within anti-colonial thought and the lived realities of independence and freedom from slavery.

The monograph is divided into two seemingly incongruous yet thoroughly complementary parts. The first part deals with political texts, most notably from revolutionary leaders Toussaint Louverture and Jean-Jacques Dessalines. The knotted, mediated and veiled modes of literary expression are disentangled here by Jenson to reveal the historical weight and political awareness behind the designed, often contentious authoring of such texts. The second much shorter part is

devoted to lyrical accounts of the libertine underworld of Haitian courtesans during the colonial period and their intersecting racial, sexual, and social transactions.

In the first section Jenson questions whether a mediated participation in print culture through the dictation, translation or transcription of proclamations, correspondence and other political documents, can be considered genuine literary participation. Challenging varying claims of authorship and appropriation of Creole texts by colonial publishers, Jenson's work unearths the complex redactive processes involved in producing literature in the colonial and early post-colonial period while querying perceptions of what constitutes an 'authentic' text. In doing so the monograph reveals how Western print culture at the time was mastered (most persuasively by Toussaint), subverted (most radically by Dessalines), and remodelled by the formally uneducated political leaders to communicate with their audience and aid in their progress towards sovereignty. Yet it is important to consider the relatively privileged status of the majority of print participants discussed by Jenson here. All literary contributions available are from former and/or freed or emancipated slaves, many of whom were of mixed race. However, as Jenson herself points out, while it is widely acknowledged that revolutionary actors such as the maroon leaders proved pivotal in inciting the slave insurrection, there exists no textual evidence from within the maroon camps themselves (p. 85). Their participation in literary fields can only be symbolic.

What is of particular interest from the outset of this study is Jenson's relationship with the archival material and specifically her conception of the texts as objects or historical artefacts. Her presentation of the texts through photography, her preservation and direct rendering of the original texts in Creole, and attempts at literal transcriptions into non-standard French/English is to be commended. Through her detailed analysis of writing styles and handwriting, and her careful assemblage of this myriad material from the revolutionary period Jenson is able to reveal the idiosyncrasies and slippages of these works, further reinforcing their distinctive authorial voice and their potential as literary tactics in the larger revolutionary project.

While the heteroclite assembly of the chapters mirrors the heteroclite fragments of archival material available to Jenson, the marriage of politics and sex could perhaps be more closely interwoven within the monograph. As it stands, the politics of the body and that of the nation are adjoined and aligned in the volume. Yet the return to the realm of sex—or rather the politics of sex—in the final chapters allows Jensen to emphasize the opportunities and social openings that were arising in the colony at the time to which the subsequent appearance of these textual objects of political affect in post-revolutionary Haiti bear testament. The emphasis on social hybridity and the political consciousness informing the speech acts of the courtesans enables us to read them as an important precursor to the revolution.

The majority of the material explored in this volume covers Dessalines and his non-Western manipulation of Western print culture. In addressing the leader's complete refusal of the colonizer's culture through counter-mimetic tactics such as his denial of the French language and allusions to African derived spirituality, Jenson portrays him in Fanonian terms as one of the most 'unmasked voices of the Afro-diasporic tradition' (p. 86). The effects of the leader's contestatory political voice, no less significant, as Jenson attests, in its syncretic union with that of his secretary Boisrond Tonnerre, are shown to resonate both within and beyond Haiti. The proclamations and correspondences discussed by Jenson provide a necessary Francophone addition to the existing Anglocentric corpus of African diasporic literary voices. Jenson's study is therefore not limited to a monolingual Caribbean discursive sphere as it explores the subversive potential of Dessalines's documents in their decolonizing mission across the archipelago, linking political events in Santo Domingo, Trinidad, and Venezuela. The rigorous analysis of Dessalines's successful exploitation of print communication in the US, which reveals a postcolonial, almost egalitarian dialogue between the neighbours, has profound implications for contemporary considerations of Haitian/US relations.

Essentially it is through Jenson's thoroughly convincing commitment to Dessalines's continuing textual legacy, tying in comparisons with the vengeance of Malcolm X or the im-

possibility of the inauguration of the first black president in the United States, that we are able to gain a better understanding of how historical events have marked the current circumstances in Haiti. It is this underlying project to relate the historical challenges overcome by this former colony to present day conditions and the trajectory ahead which makes this excellent monograph a much needed contribution to Haitian studies.

CHARLOTTE HAMMOND
ROYAL HOLLOWAY

Enduring Negativity: Representations of Albinism in the Novels of Didier Destremau, Patrick Grainville and Williams Sassine, Modern French Identities, 96. By CHARLOTTE BAKER. Oxford, Bern, Berlin, etc.: Peter Lang, 2011. viii + 218 pp. Pb £32. ISBN: 978-3-0343-0179-4

The very expression 'black albino' challenges our normal categories of understanding: an albino, by definition, cannot be black. But a Black can be albino. So the apparent oxymoron represents a reality, itself challenging to society's comprehension, and it is this rare and seemingly marginal reality that Charlotte Baker brings to the centre of her study, using the fictional representations by three recent French-language authors as springboards for exploring key questions not only of identity for people with albinism but also in an important general way.

The book is organized thematically, clearly signposted in advance and summarized in retrospect. The five chapter titles give a good idea of the scope and subtlety involved: 'The Albino Body', 'Myth and Stereotype', 'Inclusion and Exclusion', 'Inhabiting the Margins', and 'Power and Identity'. While this approach avoids a lit-crit trot through the four novels studied (Didier Destremau's 2002 *Nègre blanc*, Patrick Grainville's 1998 *Le Tyran éternel*, and Williams Sassine's *Wirriyamu* and *Mémoire d'une peau* of 1976 and 1998 respectively), its interleaving of themes runs perilously close at times to overlapping repetition, to the point where over a dozen lines from pages 97–98 are repeated verbatim on pages 175–76. Such perils apart, the thematic approach allows Dr Baker to worry the bone tenaciously from all pertinent angles and extract every ounce of *substantifique moelle* from her subject. She draws refreshingly on studies, mostly from outside the French-speaking world, in biomedical sciences, genetics, anthropology, sociology, and postcolonial theory to bring definition to the primarily visual phenomenon of the albino, or 'person with albinism' as she prefers to term him (for her cases are exclusively male).

She observes that for 'black African people with albinism, the body, skin and identity are intimately bound up' (p. 25). Apparently blank sheets, they are not necessarily passive in waiting to be written on but can actively inscribe their own messages. Sassine shows the former position when writing of Rama, the albino hero's lover in *Mémoire d'une peau*: 'Je tape comme une folle sur la machine comme si c'était ton corps que j'avais sous les doigts' (quoted on p. 166), reminiscent of a memorable passage, no less sexually charged, in *Les Liaisons dangereuses*. But Milo, the hero in question, refuses the negative charge and asserts himself aggressively. Unlike the albino characters in the other novels considered, he is not hunted, nor does he live on the geographical margins of society, but hunts his victims (both sexual and literal) from within the town. 'The albino body emerges as a multiply inscribed body, which is repeatedly written and rewritten, but which contains layers of residual meaning' (p. 170). The authors are in turn doing the writing.

All of the albino characters challenge the largely binary classifications of difference and notably those set in concrete under colonialism: the whiteness of albinism is thus 'both disruptive

and subversive' (p. 34): 'it is a body defined not in terms of its own qualities and character, but by its difference' (p. 39). Disorderly and resistant, it is perceived as a disability and a deviance, and is all the more disturbing because it calls the 'normal' into question. What figured in eighteenth-century *cabinets de curiosités* and later in *zoos humains* breaks the colonial stereotype, the perpetuation of which 'promotes the stigmatisation of people with albinism' (p. 71), allowing existing beliefs to persist even when the genetic explanation is accepted. The very fact that stereotypes are, in Bhabha's words, 'a complex, ambivalent, contradictory mode of representation, as anxious as it is assertive' problematizes, as Dr Baker recognizes, 'the possibility of challenging them' (p. 84) and so leads to a denial of individuality. Exclusion is the almost invariable result. The individual's efforts at inclusion, notable—and even relatively successful—in the case of Samate in Destremau's novel, fall foul of received notions in the communities (first black, then white) in which he finds himself. Referred to on occasion as a 'nègre pie' (skewbald, perhaps, more accurately than piebald) in the novel, Samate presents this additional dimension to the problem, but it is not addressed squarely by Dr Baker.

Condélo, the albino in *Wirriyamu*, dreams of a society comprising 'les albinos de toutes les couleurs et de toutes les espèces' (quoted on p. 107). It reminds me of Genet's epigraph to *Les Nègres*: 'QU'EST-CE QUE C'EST DONC UN NOIR? ET D'ABORD C'EST DE QUELLE COULEUR?' It is much to Dr Baker's credit that she pursues unremittingly the work of the novels in question to 'interrogate the essentialism in which identity politics is grounded' (p. 112). By presenting 'protagonists who experiment with multiple and varied subject positions in order to cross boundaries that would otherwise exclude them', they 'postulate opportunities for the creation of alternative identities' and resist 'the tendency to portray the marginality of people with albinism as purely negative' (pp. 112–13). The reference to Mary Douglas's classic 1966 study of *Purity and Danger* strikes me as particularly apt, as are Dr Baker's comment—'Her analysis of pollution recalls colonial notions of the purity of race and culture, inherent in what was an abhorrence of racial assimilation' (p. 117)—and subsequent analysis of individual examples. If I am less comfortable with the application to albinos of Bhabha's concept of hybridity (cf. p. 121 *et seq.*) because it cannot apply genetically to people with albinism, it undoubtedly helps in general terms to go beyond the binary thinking which the authors deploy in order to highlight the albino's 'unruly and resisting' otherness (p. 140).

Empowerment is all. Resistance takes various forms, but one of the most notable is subversive humour, as adumbrated by Bakhtin or, again, Mary Douglas, who writes of it as 'a victorious tilting of uncontrol against control [...] an image of the levelling of hierarchy, the triumph of intimacy over formality, or unofficial values over official ones' (quoted on p. 154). In the wake of Fanon, Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o suggests that 'an articulation of resistance requires an examination of how we participate in our own oppression' (p. 157), an idea whose application clearly goes well beyond the position of albinos in society or literature. 'One of the most significant forms of power held by the weak is the refusal to accept the definition of oneself that is put forward by the powerful' (bell hooks, quoted on p. 174 and again on p. 185). Easier said than done. Yet it has to be done, and the effort has to come from both 'sides'. The marginalized has to refuse its definition as irremediably other, to insist on its inclusion. Part of Dr Baker's conclusion is that 'the inclusion of people with albinism opens up positive implications for the reconsideration of African identity, for this figure demands a re-examination of what constitutes the postcolonial African self, a self not simply defined in terms dictated by the colonisers' (p. 187). I believe that the implication is even broader than that, since the case of the albino is emblematic of that of any outsider in any society. 'Plural, fluid and changing' (p. 191) albinos' identities undoubtedly are, but they are not alone in that.

I cannot conclude without mentioning that, apart from infelicitous *coquilles* and references to a non-existent Paris publisher called 'Broché', the index is worse than useless. Strings of up to 62 unqualified references are unacceptable, as is the omission of almost all references to critics. The latter would have allowed the author to weed out inappropriate repetitions. Such a shame in an

otherwise most stimulating book.

ROGER LITTLE
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Aimé Césaire à l'œuvre. Edited by MARC CHEYMOL and PHILIPPE OLLÉ-LAPRUNE. Paris: Éditions des archives contemporaines, AUF, ITEM, 2010. 270 pp. Pb €34. ISBN: 978-2813000408.

This volume constitutes the proceedings of an international conference organized under the same title at the École Normale Supérieure in Paris, Césaire's alma mater from 1935 to 1939, on 8–9 October 2008 by the Agence universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF) and the Institut des textes et manuscrits modernes (ITEM). A homage to Aimé Césaire who had died a few months earlier, the event focused on a scientific project begun in 2003 in consultation with the author himself: the production of a scholarly edition of his complete works. Given that the call for papers was very specific and prescriptive, with tight deadlines (http://www.fabula.org/actualites/aim-eacute-c-eacute-saire-agrave-l-oeuvre_24042.php), the conference acted as a public rehearsal for a project already well in hand: the forthcoming volume of Césaire's edited works coordinated by Professor A. James Arnold for the series 'Planète libre' of CNRS editions (Paris).

The conference programme (http://www.item.ens.fr/index.php?id=377311) confirmed that the parameters of the project outlined were closely adhered to. The volume itself leaves out a number of the papers given then—including those by Koulsy Lamko, Romuald Fonkoua, Alido Songolo, and Justin Bisanswa—while others, such as Alex Gil and Antoine Tshitungu Kongolo, have been added. The editors make no comment on the texts they include, or on their selection. They state that editorial intervention has been limited to inserting appropriate page numbering to the collated papers and that full editorial responsibility for each text rests with the individual authors. This is no vain claim, as witnessed by overlaps, contradictions between chapters, repetitions (occasionally within the same text), misprints, and a lack of consistency in providing references or lists of works cited (the latter missing altogether in all the chapters dealing with Césaire's poetry, for instance). This collection of, at times fascinating, texts is very much a work in progress about an on-going project. An earlier paper by Jacqueline Leiner, 'Au travail avec Aimé Césaire' (2005), has been included by way of homage to one of his most 'vaillante exégète', perhaps a slightly patronizing epithet.

This book stakes out the systematic approach and methodology of the proposed volume, building on a model pioneered by the Archivos collection for Latin American writers. It sets itself a triple mission: scientific, aesthetic, and ethical, and claims its originality in providing a critical, genetic edition of particular texts: from *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal*, which saw at least five different publications between 1939 and 1956 (Lilian Pestre de Almeida), to *La Tragédie du Roi Christophe* (Paola Martini), or again the various avatars of the *Discours sur le colonialisme* (Alain Ruscio). Ruscio establishes 1950 as the first date of publication of the *Discours*, by Réclame, a publishing house linked to the PCF (*Parti communiste français*), the PCF leader, Jacques Duclos, having received a signed copy from Césaire. This approach is sustained by the discovery of hitherto unknown manuscripts—such as the Ur-text of *Les chiens se taisaient* found in a library in Lorraine (Alex Gil)—and hampered by Césaire's alleged lack of interest in the after-lives of his texts once written. The contents of this volume follow the order of the conference: a study of the politics and poetics of Césaire's language and of his relationship to Creole (Lambert-Félix Prudent, André Thibault, René

Hénane); his poetry; the plays. His relationship to the Communist Party and the reciprocal influence between the Surrealists and Césaire's poetry are also explored, as are the various contexts of his writing. In his chapter on political, intellectual, and artistic itineraries, A. James Arnold notes that the understanding and experience of Césaire's schooling and education that could once be taken for granted must now be historicized. Writing on Césaire's literary and political commitments, Christian Lapoussinière provides a mini 'l'homme et l'œuvre'. Thomas A. Hale and Kora Véron announce a complementary project, *Les Ecrits d'Aimé Césaire: bio-bibliographie commentée*, which will provide extracts and analyses of some 950 texts Césaire published between 1935 and 2008 (Editions Cendres, forthcoming 2011/ 2012).

Scholarly rivalries, differing standpoints, and actual disagreements should make for interesting and no doubt productive editorial meetings and exchanges. As Patrice Louis, the author of *Aimé Césaire : Rencontre avec un nègre fondamental* (2004), observed at the time of Césaire's funeral, 'chacune et chacun a un Césaire à raconter. Son Césaire'. The reader is left with contrasting and at times contradictory impressions of the writer: absent-minded to the point of carelessness with his texts (Ollé-Laprune, Kesteloot, Hale and Véron); or, mindful of details and fretting about their fates (Cheymol, Gil, Martini). Some are openly critical of the oversights of other fellow-contributors or their apparent inaccuracies. Thus Prudent attacks Lilyan Kesteloot's 'problematic' biography of Césaire (p. 22, p. 25 and p. 36), and Ruscio chides Georges Ngal for mistaking the name of a publishing house (Réclame) for that of a journal (p. 195).

As much a study of the genesis of Césaire's works, *Aimé Césaire à l'œuvre* is about another book in the making. As such, it conveys a sense of built-in obsolescence: once the proposed volume is out this tentative or preliminary work on the part of individual researchers will become redundant. Yet, in allowing useful insights into the thought processes that underpin research, the development of a methodology, the staking out of questions, and the frustrations and problems that arise in testing possible interpretations in order to arrive at a hermeneutics, this preview ensures that the work will remain useful to scholars and that its interest will endure.

GABRIELLE PARKER
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Décors des corps. Edited by GILLES BOËTSCH, DOMINIQUE CHEVÉ and HÉLÈNE CLAUDOT-HAWAD. Paris: CNRS Editions, 2010. 397 pp. Pb €30. ISBN: 978-2-271-07013-5

Décors des corps consists of the proceedings of the 2008 CNRS conference *Couleurs sur corps*, held in the Trocadéro Gardens in Paris. It follows a series of conferences and books, organized and edited by a CNRS team of researchers who, over the past few years, have been focusing on the cultural significance of the human body. In their introduction to *Décors des corps*, the editors identify the practice of applying colours to the body as a means of 'producing the human' (p. 11): chromatic encodings define specific orderings of the world and perceptions of the self which differ according to human groups and periods of time. Co-written by anthropologists, sociologists, philosophers, historians, physicists, chemists, archaeologists, and linguists, this multidisciplinary book deals with very different societies, from the Aïr mountains to Papua New Guinea, and very different times, from European antiquity or fifteenth-century Mexico to contemporary Europe, Africa, Brazil or Samoa (to name a few). Following the chronological organization of the 2008 conference, the book starts with three introductory lectures which set out the multidisciplinary framework of the

project: the first two papers study light and colours from the point of view of 'hard sciences' (physics and chemistry), and the third from that of social sciences (anthropology). The following thirty-seven articles are divided into four thematic chapters: 'Couleurs, matières et symboles'; 'Couleurs, transformations et esthétiques'; 'Couleurs, pratiques et identités'; and 'Couleurs, corps et cosmos'.

Though *Décors des corps* is far from limited to French-speaking postcolonial societies, many papers might be of interest to SFPS members, particularly those written by anthropologists. We could linger over a few of them, which belong to each of the above-mentioned chapters respectively. Marie-Luce Gérard's paper deals with marriage rites in the Moroccan South-East. She focuses on Berber collective weddings in which white, red, and yellow, enhancing the primordial functions of femininity, play a central role in strengthening the group. Céline Emeriau's piece deals with the lightening (not to be mistaken for 'whitening') of the skin by African women in Western Africa and in the diasporic communities living in Marseilles. Emeriau sheds an interesting light on this cosmetic process which is intimately linked with social identity and its transformation through chromatic contrast. Later in the volume, Patrick Bruneteaux and Véronique Rochais try to identify the various meanings of colours in the carnival of Martinique in a highly original socio-anthropological study. Hélène Claudot-Hawad writes about the cultural significance of using blue dye in Touareg society, a practice which, far beyond mere fashion, is part and parcel of a codified world-view. In her detailed study to which language is central, she shows how the dyeing of the skin, but also of clothes, books, objects, and places is a key to the process of 'humanizing' (p. 324).

Other interesting articles include several papers on Western understanding of body painting and tattooing, whether it be the interpretation of Native American body paint by European explorers from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century (Jérôme Thomas), Polynesian tattoos as seen by French travellers in the nineteenth century (Viviane Fayaud), or the staging of the 'savage' body in theatrical versions of Jules Verne's novels (Sylvie Rocques, Georges Vigarello). Monique Vervaeke's work on glasses and Marianne Barthélémy's piece on sportswear apply anthropological analysis to everyday life, thus broadening the horizon of more familiar critical intervention. Stressing the necessary interdisciplinary nature of cultural studies, *Décors des corps* enables us, by the disciplinary, geographical, and historical variety of the case studies it offers, to look at the body as a primordial cultural agent, which is first and foremost historical, as Michel Blay asserts in the conclusion of the collection. Blay points to an 'archaeology' of the body (p. 386) which remains to be carried out, an archaeology which would take into account different societies, times, and beliefs and which could be, by extension, a wonderful allegory for postcolonial research.

FANNY ROBLES
UNIVERSITY OF TOULOUSE/ST JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

CONFERENCE REPORTS

Technology in Text and Context

SFPS Postgraduate Workshop
Maison Française, Oxford University, 6 June 2011

Organized by Alain Ausoni, Lucy Brisley and Rush Bush for the Society for Francophone and Postcolonial Studies, this interdisciplinary postgraduate workshop aimed to discuss the ways in which technology has been represented (and appropriated) within a postcolonial and Francophone context. Dr Roxanna Nydia Curto opened the forum with a dense and wide-ranging keynote addressing questions of technology in Francophone literature; the questions raised included Marxist technology as metaphor, animism as an ecological discourse and the ways in which postcolonial literature often destabilizes established binaries between tradition and modernity. A stimulating paper by Silvia Baage in the first panel traced the continuation of the colonial topos of the island within postcolonial literature and popular cultural media, drawing on the writings of Edouard Glissant to approach the popular online video games 'Second Life' and 'Myst', while Maria Flood presented a thought-provoking paper on representations of community, narrative space and cultural loss in Assia Djebar's *La Nouba des Femmes du Mont Chenoua* (1978). Finally, Catherine Gilbert raised questions concerning online technology in Rwanda and its use within the transmission of testimony, collective memory and trauma.

The workshop also addressed the practical pedagogical uses of technology in the academy, with Dr Louise Hardwick proposing a highly innovative strategy to accompany the study of literary texts with an online resource, encompassing associated texts and images, and a glossary. In the final panel of the workshop, Mani Sharpe discussed the ways in which Alain Resnais's *Muriel* (1963) evokes the visual logic of the colonial harem through its emphasis upon voyeurism and domesticity, while Claire Peters focused upon how François Maspero's *Les Passagers du Roissy Express* (1990) blurs and subverts binary conceptions of the postcolonial metropolis (Self and Other, periphery and centre), and the relationship between modernity and trauma. The keynote delivered by Dr Jane Hiddleston addressed issues of globalization, technoscience and auto-immunity in relation to a Derridean conception of the global community. Focusing specifically upon three texts, Slimane Benaïssa's *La dernière nuit d'un damné* (2003), Yasmina Khadra's *A quoi rêvent les loups* (1999) and Khadra's *Les Sirènes de Bagdad* (2006), Dr Hiddleston demonstrated how myths of communal belonging are constructed according to hegemonic, monolithic and Eurocentric discourses of power. A wide-ranging and thought-provoking workshop, Technology in Text and Context ultimately provided a valuable platform from which further academic research into this area of research might be pursued in the postcolonial field.

MANI SHARPE
NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY

Remembering Slavery, Forgetting Indenture?

Bangor University, 9–10 September 2011

'Remembering Slavery, Forgetting Indenture?' brought together academics working in the fields of international slavery and indentured labour from Francophone and Anglophone perspectives. Sponsored by Bangor University, the Centre for the Study of International Slavery at the University of Liverpool, and the Society for Francophone Postcolonial Studies, the conference aimed to connect global research perspectives on slavery and indenture in order to foster a comparative understanding of how these different, but interrelated forms of labour exploitation have been remembered on a worldwide scale. The timing of the conference was deliberate—May 2011 marked the ten-year anniversary of French legislation (the Taubira Law) that recognized slavery and the slave trade as a crime against humanity, and thus provided an opportunity to reflect upon the ways in which memory and commemorative practices are reshaping our current understanding of the slaving and indentured past.

The necessarily interdisciplinary nature of this subject matter attracted academics from a wide variety of backgrounds. The panels represented a breadth of scholarship that ranged chronologically from seventeenth-century memories of indentured servitude to contemporary memorial practices surrounding slavery and indenture, while moving geographically across the Americas, the Indian Ocean, West Africa and European metropolitan centres, and crossing academically between postcolonial theorization, historical analysis, material praxis and artistic representation.

This diversity was echoed by each of the addresses given by the four keynote speakers. Professor Charles Forsdick (James Barrow Professor of French, University of Liverpool, UK) opened the conference on day one by presenting a critical history of the memorialization of slavery in metropolitan France. This day was brought to a close with a plenary session by Professor Verene Shepherd (University of the West Indies, Jamaica) that explored the fracture lines between the dominant memory of slavery and the largely overlooked legacies of indenture that have given rise to divisions in Jamaican society today. Day two opened with an address by Professor Srilata Ravi (University of Alberta, Canada) that focused on the work of the Mauritian author, Ananda Devi, and the use of imaginative literature as a cultural space of remembering and forgetting indenture. Finally, the conference was concluded with a plenary paper by Dr Françoise Vergès (Goldsmiths College, University of London, UK) that called for the need to move beyond memorialization and refocus attention on predatory economics in order to re-inscribe slavery (and indenture) within a much longer history of human rights abuses and economic exploitation.

In bringing these different voices into dialogue, the conference highlighted several key concerns, such as the ongoing tensions at work between different colonial legacies and their processes of memorialization, the importance of engaging with the amnesia that continues to surround other forms of both pre- and post-abolition slavery and bonded labour, and (as Professor Forsdick so pertinently observed) the need to de-nationalize memories of slavery and indenture through a much more transnational and transhistorical approach.

NICOLA FRITH AND KATE HODGSON
BANGOR UNIVERSITY AND UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL

Bulletin of Francophone Postcolonial Studies

Contributions on any topic related to Francophone Postcolonial Studies are invited for inclusion in future issues. Authors should submit electronically two copies of their article, 4,000 words maximum, in English or French to a member of the editorial team. Articles should conform in presentation to the guidelines in the *MHRA Stylebook*, providing references in footnotes, rather than the author-date system. All articles submitted to the *BFPS* will be refereed by two scholars of international reputation, drawn from the advisory and editorial boards. To facilitate the anonymity of the refereeing process, authors are asked that their manuscript (other than the title page) contains no clue as to their identity. Book reviews (between 600 and 1000 words in length) and conference reports (500 words max.) should also be sent to the editorial team.

The deadline for the receipt of articles to be included in the spring 2012 issue is 31 January 2012.

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