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The Transculturation of French Studies: Past, Present, and Future*

In 1992, when I was awarded a personal chair at Loughborough University, at my request I was formally designated as Professor of French and Francophone Studies. To the best of my knowledge this was the first professorship in the United Kingdom, and among the earliest in any country, to explicitly place 'Francophone' alongside 'French' studies.[1] This collocation reflected the span of my research interests, embracing French colonial expansion, post-colonial relations with North Africa, and populations of North African immigrant origin in France.[2] In 2001, I moved to Florida State University (FSU) to direct a new institute. Formally designated as the Winthrop-King Institute for Contemporary French and Francophone Studies, this was one of the first institutional initiatives to give equal billing to 'French and Francophone studies'.[3] In 2011, during an MLA Convention Panel entitled 'What's in a name? Débat sur la francophonie',[4] I suggested that the time may have come to go beyond the collocation 'French and Francophone' and consider renaming the field, perhaps as that of Transcultural French Studies. These three moments of personal and institutional history, each separated by almost exactly a decade, attest to the rapidity of change in the field of what used to be generally known as French Studies and the complexity of the issues at stake. Although no one can say with certainty exactly what the future may hold, I believe that these changes will prove to be irreversible and that within the space of a further twenty years or so we will see the old paradigm of the diachronically structured study of the literary culture of the Hexagon largely supplanted by a multidisciplinary field of study embracing the full spatial expanse of French-language cultures around the globe.

While inconceivable without the energies of 'Francophone' specialists, these trends also reflect fundamental changes in geo-politics and in the demography and financing of higher education. Far from declining with the end of empire, native speakers of French outside France have grown to become almost as numerous as those within the Hexagon according to statistics compiled by French officials, and when speakers of French as a second

* I am grateful to Dominic Thomas for his comments on an initial draft of this article.

[1] I of course stand to be corrected for any inaccuracy here or elsewhere in this article. In France and elsewhere, during this period a number of professors carried the word 'Francophone' in their titles, distinguishing them from colleagues in other departments or programmes focusing on 'French' literature. Professors at Louisiana State University were unusual in being affiliated in a centre that explicitly integrated French and Francophone studies as early as 1983 (see below, note 3).

[2] Alec G. Hargreaves, *The Colonial Experience in French Fiction* (London: Macmillan, 1981); *Immigration in Post-War France: A Documentary Anthology* (London: Methuen, 1987); and *Voices from the North African Immigrant Community in France: Immigration and Identity in Beur Fiction* (Oxford: Berg, 1991).

[3] The earliest research institution of which I am aware bearing the collocation 'French and Francophone' in its name is Louisiana State University's Center for French and Francophone Studies, founded in 1983. The Société des Professeurs Français d'Amérique (SPFA), a professional association founded in 1904, changed its name in 1992 to the Société des Professeurs Français et Francophones d'Amérique (SPFFA). In the course of the 1990s, the debate surrounding the relationship between 'French' and 'Francophone' became increasingly vigorous, as was amply attested by a conference held at Yale University in 1999 that resulted in a special issue of *Yale French Studies*, 103 (2003), entitled 'French and Francophone: The Challenge of Expanding Horizons', edited by Farid Laroussi and Christopher L. Miller. The French Department at UCLA redesignated itself as the Department of French and Francophone Studies in 2001, the same year in which FSU's Winthrop-King Institute was launched, and similar changes of departmental names have been made in other Anglophone universities. In 2004 *Sites: The journal of 20th-century/contemporary French Studies*, founded in 1997, changed its title to *Contemporary French and Francophone Studies/Sites*, and at the invitation of the journal, I served as guest editor of the first edition to appear under the new title, an issue devoted to France's multi-ethnic *banlieues*, a key site of cultural mixing traversing the French/Francophone divide; *Contemporary French and Francophone Studies/Sites*, 8.1 (2004).

[4] The Panel was organized by Aliko Songolo on behalf of the MLA's Division of Francophone Literatures and Cultures.

language are included by far the majority of those who speak the language are now situated outside France.[5] Enrolments in French programmes, still dominated by the literary history of the Hexagon, fell during the 1990s in US universities,[6] while they grew in languages such as Spanish, Arabic and Chinese. With the benefit of new dynamics in global politics these languages made further gains in the 2000s while French experienced further erosion at the graduate level.[7] A generation or more ago, for young men and women who enrolled in (by today's standards) relatively well-financed university programmes, transferable skills seemed a bankable commodity even if acquired in the study of a historically distant foreign-language culture. With the widening of access to higher education at the price of growing student debts, the perceived marketability of university diplomas in today's world is of ever greater import in guiding the choices of students when selecting their degree programmes, and concerns of this nature have intensified in the wake of the financial crisis of 2008. With dwindling numbers seeking to enter traditional programmes in French because of concerns over their utility in relation to the job market, university departments that fail to recruit in sufficient numbers have been under growing scrutiny from administrators preoccupied with the efficient use of financial resources.

It was against the backdrop of these transitions that, in 1997, FSU received a substantial endowment from the estate of Ada Belle Winthrop-King enabling the university to create an Institute for Contemporary French Studies, conceived as

> a center of interdisciplinary scholarship focusing on developments in the francophone world, dating approximately from the French Revolution to the present, but with a heavy emphasis on the contemporary world. [...] The guiding principle of the Institute is that the study of French culture cannot be limited to the Hexagon, nor exclusively to literary texts. The Institute, through its courses, conferences and research, will seek to address cultural developments throughout the francophone world, be they in philosophy, art history, culture, history, political science, etc., as well as literature.[8]

This vision was unmistakably conceived in terms of a paradigm shift in which interdisciplinary studies extending spatially across the whole of the modern French-speaking world would take precedence over a more traditional diachronic model built around the language and literature of metropolitan France from the medieval period to the present. After a three-year search for a Director who fully shared this vision and had the necessary experience to put it into practice, FSU invited me to head the new institute. In the decade since then I have often reflected on my good fortune at being asked to lead an initiative with which I was in complete accord, and with truly outstanding support thanks to the generosity of the donor.

When I took up the position in 2001, it was agreed that for clarity the institute would be formally designated as the Winthrop-King Institute for Contemporary French and Francophone Studies, thereby acknowledging the donor and making explicit in its title the inclusion of the French-speaking world as a whole, as articulated in the Institute's mission statement. This was not the first institutional initiative in North America to incorporate the word 'Francophone' in its name. But it made FSU one of the first universities to explicitly

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[5] France diplomatie: http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/actions-france_830/langue-francaise-francophonie-diversite-linguistique_1040/langue-francaise_3094/les-priorites_20237/francais-langue-internationale_83179.html; consulted 14 March 2012.

[6] The decline was particularly sharp at the graduate level, where enrolments in French fell by 28 per cent between 1995 and 1998: *Foreign Language Enrollments in United States Institutions of Higher Education, Fall 2002*, Table 2a (http://www.adfl.org/resources/enrollments.pdf; consulted 1 March 2012).

[7] Between 2002 and 2009, graduate enrolments in US universities rose by 22 per cent in Spanish, 8 per cent in Chinese, and 47 per cent in Arabic; during the same period, they declined by 8 per cent in French: *Enrollments in Languages Other than English in United States Institutions of Higher Education, Fall 2009*, Table 2a (http://www.mla.org/pdf/2009_enrollment_survey.pdf; consulted 1 March 2012).

[8] Mission statement circulated in 1998, 1999 and 2000 to candidates for the position of Winthrop-King Eminent Scholar Chair in French and Director of the Institute for Contemporary French Studies.

reconfigure its priorities in the field of French studies around the new, spatially inclusive interdisciplinary model of French *and* Francophone studies.

The earliest uses of 'Francophone' as an institutional descriptor in academia date back to the 1970s. In France, Paris-XIII and the Sorbonne established research centres devoted to Francophone studies, and similar centres were created in Quebec and Louisiana, fuelled initially by the local status of French as a minority language within predominantly Anglophone countries. Launched in 1970 by Sherbrooke University's Centre d'étude des littératures d'expression française, *Présence francophone* is probably the oldest and longest-running academic journal in the world to incorporate the word 'francophone' in its title. The University of Southwestern Louisiana's Center for Louisiana Studies, founded in 1973, secured a large grant ten years later to support the creation of a multidisciplinary programme in Francophone Studies.[9] This in turn paved the way for the establishment in 1987 of the Conseil International d'Etudes Francophones (CIEF), which expanded rapidly in the 1990s to become a global forum for 'Francophone' studies. What all these initiatives had in common was their focus on French-speaking areas outside France and on literary and cultural movements that were perceived as ethnically non-French even when their practitioners migrated to France. Their treatment of this as a separate ('Francophone') field of inquiry left the literature of the Hexagon and its diachronic evolution to continue to occupy the heartland of 'French' departments in the English-speaking world and of 'Lettres modernes' in France. Until the late 1990s, French-language cultures associated with countries other than France were generally treated as secondary elements in British or American departments of French while in France they were relegated to programmes in comparative or 'Francophone' literatures.[10] Louisiana State University's Center for French and Francophone Studies, founded in 1983, was at the time exceptional in placing 'Francophone' on an equal footing with 'French' studies.

The creation of the Winthrop-King Institute in 2001, like the re-designation of French departments at UCLA and in other Anglophone universities as departments of French *and* Francophone Studies around the same time, marked a quantum leap in which the full spatial expanse of the 'Francophone' world was transformed from an appendix of the old Hexagon-centred diachronic paradigm into a component of equal status alongside traditional studies of 'French' literature. The dynamic at work here may be illustrated by adapting, as a co-editor and I did on a previous occasion, the title of what is generally regarded as the founding treatise of postcolonial studies.[11] Just as the empire 'wrote back' in the works of postcolonial authors who had been all too often relegated to a secondary space—'Commonwealth' or 'Francophone' literature—seen as distinct from 'English' or 'French' literature, so, in the works of post-migratory cultural practitioners within France, the focus shifted to 'the empire riding in, traversing the centre itself';[12] now, in like fashion, the collocation 'French and Francophone' planted the 'Francophone' flag in the institutional heartland of what had previously been known as 'French' studies.

This shift was not universally welcomed. Traditionally minded colleagues were often insistent that the old curriculum had to be maintained in its entirety and agreed only grudgingly to make space for new areas of specialism. Maintaining the requirement that all students take courses in every period of French literature from medieval times to the present

[9] The University of Southwestern Louisiana was subsequently renamed the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

[10] David Murphy, 'De-Centring French Studies: Towards a Postcolonial Theory of Francophone Cultures', *French Cultural Studies*, 13 (2002), 165–85.

[11] Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures* (London: Routledge, 1989).

[12] Alec G. Hargreaves and Mark McKinney, 'Introduction: The post-colonial problematic in contemporary France', in *Post-Colonial Cultures in France*, ed. by Alec G. Hargreaves and Mark McKinney (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 3–25 (p. 5).

made graduate programmes increasingly unattractive to prospective entrants. During discussions at FSU, in a position paper in 2003 I wrote:

> In a recent e-mail, [a colleague] recognizes that Francophone areas are now a key element in the job market for students engaged in doctoral programs and [our colleague] urges us to capitalize on this trend. Yet that is precisely what our course requirements prevent us from doing. At both the Masters and PhD level, those requirements oblige students to spend the vast majority of their time on a traditional diet of courses and by the same token prevent them from benefiting to the full from new and increasingly important areas of expertise which we are in a strong position to offer. In our discussions so far, there appears to be a general consensus in favor of discontinuing course requirements at the PhD level. I believe that we should also take this step at the Masters level. As long as the current rigid requirements remain in force, we will be competing in the market place with one hand tied behind our backs and simultaneously squandering a unique opportunity to steal a march on our rivals. [...]
>
> If we open up to the full the range of truly exciting course opportunities that we can offer to students, together with all the enhancements provided by the Institute, we will be in a strong position to expand our graduate student population. As all our students, whatever their areas of specialization, will continue to take a wide range of courses even when requirements are removed, a larger graduate population will benefit all our courses, including those which are currently threatened by relatively low student demand.[13]

After lengthy debate, colleagues agreed to create a new Masters track in Contemporary French and Francophone Studies freed from the old requirements. Together with the national and international recognition gained by the Institute, offering an attractive environment for graduate study, this shift has enabled FSU to buck the national trend towards declining enrolments in French. The quality and quantity of our graduate enrolments have improved significantly,[14] enabling us to continue running classes in traditional areas of the curriculum in parallel with a marked expansion of courses in newer fields. And, at a time of exceptionally low employment opportunities, the contemporary French and Francophone focus of our PhD students has enabled them to find jobs in Modern Languages departments across the US that are themselves reorienting their limited staffing resources in the same direction.

All the signs are that, irrespective of the intellectual pros and cons of old versus new curricular models, when making new appointments universities will in practice be led by market forces to prioritize scholars working in the modern period of French and Francophone studies, leading to the *de facto* eclipse of the old diachronically structured curriculum in the absence of replacements for retirees in more traditional literary fields. FSU's experience attests both to the benefits of a contemporary focus and to the fact that embracing the full spatial expanse of French and Francophone studies does not mean limiting research and teaching solely to the contemporary period. A great deal of important work in 'Francophone' as well as 'French' studies has been done by scholars working on earlier periods. Within the new model, there remains ample room for diachronically oriented studies, though these will no longer dominate as they did in the past. Colleagues working in traditional areas of specialism will thus continue to make valuable contributions and these will work with greatest success where they take account of the overall direction in which the field is moving.

How may the new institutional model now emerging best be labelled? Looking back over the past twenty years, it is clear that the collocation 'French and Francophone' has been a necessary and effective means of gaining institutional recognition for a reconfiguration of the research and teaching agenda in what used to be generally known as 'Departments of French'. There are nevertheless significant problems associated with this collocation. While

[13] Position paper circulated on 9 November 2003.

[14] Between 2002 and 2009, graduate enrolments in French at FSU increased fourfold: MLA Language enrollment Database, 1958–2009 (http://www.mla.org/flsurvey_search; consulted 1 March 2012).

deployed within Anglophone institutions to place 'Francophone' on an equal footing with 'French' studies, it is often misunderstood—or in some quarters more or less deliberately used—to imply a hierarchical relationship and/or a divisive or artificial distinction that is far less inclusive than one would wish. With many writers and other cultural actors rejecting the 'Francophone' label on the grounds that it connotes second-class status, we have to ask ourselves whether the institutional gains that have unquestionably been made by placing 'Francophone' alongside 'French' may now be at risk of being outweighed by the drawbacks.

How long can we continue to use for scholarly purposes a label that is rejected by many of the cultural practitioners to whom it is applied? How, in present circumstances, might we label the global space of French-speakers and the cultures and societies which they inhabit without appearing divisive and/or hierarchical? There are, I think, three main options. One is to adopt a neologism or relatively little-used term that is untainted by the baggage of old prejudices and debates, 'Francographie'[15] and 'Francosphères'[16] being among those floated. A second is to draw on alternative but relatively cumbersome terms that have enjoyed wide circulation, such as 'French-speaking' or 'of French expression'. A third is to refashion 'French' or 'Francophone' in such a way as to divest it of divisive connotations inherited from the past and turn it into a genuinely all-encompassing term.

Neither of the first two options strikes me as very viable, not least because of their limitations in an academic environment where the forces of competition are such that programmes need to market their wares in a clear and attractive fashion. Can one really imagine students flocking to a Department of Francographie or a Department of Countries of French Expression? A Department of the French-Speaking World or a Programme of World Studies in French might perhaps fare better but all such formulations run the risk of sounding like the proverbial camel designed by a committee.

An alternative would be to attempt to refashion either 'French' or 'Francophone' in such a way as to serve as a single all-embracing marker of the French-speaking world. True, each of these terms is at present weighed down by baggage from past and, in some cases, still current battles, tainting them with divisive ethnic and political connotations. Yet it could in principle be argued that each has the potential to be understood as referencing the use of the French language in an all-encompassing value-free sense.

While a literal understanding of 'Francophone' ('French-speaking') might in principle appear particularly well suited for this purpose, it has in practice almost always been used in an ethnically marked sense, whereas 'French' has a much longer history of referencing the use of the French language in a wider and more pliable fashion, notwithstanding its frequent usage to denote the more narrowly circumscribed notion of the French polity and the ethnic identity associated with this. It is therefore conceivable that with care and determination it might be possible to rebrand satisfactorily our field of study as that of 'French', provided this is understood to embrace all cultures of French expression. In practice, there is a serious risk that such a move might, on the contrary, be misread as a return to the old Hexagon-centred model. For this reason, if 'French and Francophone' were to be relabelled as 'French', it would probably be wise to qualify 'French' so as to make

[15] Roger Little, '"La Francographie": A New Model for "La Francophonie"', in *Littératures francophones: la problématique de l'identité*, ed. by Christine O'Dowd-Smyth (Waterford: Waterford Institute of Technology School of Humanities Publications, with the collaboration of the Embassies of France and Canada in Ireland, 2001), pp. 101–10.

[16] *Francosphères*, launched by the University of London Institute in Paris in 2012, describes itself as 'a journal of transcultural and intercultural French Studies. It is therefore a journal that is about liminal spaces rather than operating within the hierarchy of 'French' or 'Francophone' culture'; see http://www.liverpool-unipress.co.uk/html/publication.asp?idProduct=4027, consulted 14 March 2012. While *Francosphères* aims to focus on liminal zones of French-language cultures, its title could in principle be used as an all-inclusive term for all aspects of cultures of French expression, comparable in expanse to *Littérature-monde* and at the same time embracing other cultural forms in addition to literature.

explicit its inclusive span. Possible formulations of this nature might be World French Studies, Transnational French Studies, or Transcultural French Studies. Within this vision, the unifying thread in the object of study lies in the use of the French language irrespective of political or ethnic differences, and diachronic lines of investigation have their place alongside the synchronic.

Among such possible labels, 'transnational' is probably the most canvassed. One of its advantages is that the concept of 'transnationalism' is increasingly prevalent in many fields of study in both the humanities and the social sciences. Its adoption by 'French' departments would thus be fairly readily intelligible to the wider university community and perhaps (though less certainly) to prospective students. There are nevertheless significant drawbacks in the 'transnational' label. To the extent that nations are broadly regarded as cultural communities that aspire to or achieve political sovereignty (statehood), which other cultural spaces may neither seek nor attain, there is a risk of transnationalism being misunderstood to mean the privileging of interconnections between state-bounded spaces, relegating other cultural fields to secondary status. While this is not the intention of its proponents, for whom the 'trans' in 'transnationalism' means transcending as much as crossing national boundaries,[17] it would seem preferable to use a less ambiguous term to reflect the fact that France and the wider French-speaking world are shot through with linguistic and other cultural currents whose contours do not match up with state boundaries. The boundaries of many former colonies were drawn up by France and other imperial powers that were more preoccupied with their own political, economic and diplomatic interests than with local ethnic or cultural criteria. In most so-called Francophone countries, fluency in French tends to be confined to élite segments of the population, and other languages are widely spoken on a regional basis though they are denied recognition in the face of a single official language. Thus the experiences of Berber-speaking minorities are significantly different from those of Arabic-speaking populations in North African states, where Arabic is the only official language while French retains a significant presence with varying degrees of fluency. On a larger scale, another important cultural field that is not primarily national in nature (though it has national variants) is Islam, whose French-speaking adherents are increasingly large in number. Moreover, cultures defined on the basis of political geography, language or religion are commonly traversed by differences of class, gender, generation, racialization, and so on, that further augment the diversity of which we need to take account, and which have inspired rich seams of research in recent decades. It therefore seems a pity to label our field of study in terms of what it is moving beyond (the outmoded privileging of 'national' distinctions) when we might do better to try to signal the breadth of the cultural horizons we are embracing.

In these circumstances, 'transculturation' has much to commend it as an all-encompassing concept of inter-cultural contacts that includes those referenced by transnationalism without the limitations that are sometimes associated with this term. As originally conceived by Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz,[18] transculturation denotes processes of cultural change—in some cases creative or synergistic and in others conflictual or destructive—arising from contacts between different cultures. If we understand 'transcultural studies', to span all forms of cultural contact, expressed in social as well as

[17] Thus in their editorial introduction to *Minor Transnationalism*, Françoise Lionnet and Shu-mei Shih write: 'The transnational [...] can occur in national, local, or global spaces across different and multiple spatialities and temporalities'; Françoise Lionnet and Shu-mei Shih, 'Introduction: Thinking through the Minor, Transnationally', in *Minor Transnationalism*, ed. by Françoise Lionnet and Shu-mei Shih (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), pp. 1–26 (p. 6).

[18] Fernando Ortiz, *Contrapunteo cubano del tabaco y el azúcar* (Havana: Jesús Montero, 1940), trans. by Harriet de Onís as *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar* (New York: Knopf, 1947); cf. Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), and Charles Forsdick, '*Etat Présent*. Between "French" and "Francophone": French Studies and the Postcolonial Turn', *French Studies*, 59 (2005), 523–30 (p. 530).

artistic forms, from the most harmonious and hybrid to the most conflictual and polarizing, be they national, sub-national or supra-national in scale, and with variations reflecting gender, class and other differences, this can offer an all-encompassing lens through which to view cultures of French expression both in interaction with each other and in dialogue with cultural spaces articulated in other languages. In this way, Transcultural French Studies—in its full synchronic *and* diachronic expanse—might potentially become an umbrella for the interdisciplinary study of all French-language cultures free from the ambiguities of the 'French and Francophone' label.

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Postgraduate Work in Progress

Rwandan Women's Testimonial Literature: *Une écriture du silence*

During the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, acts of unspeakable violence, including rape, were committed against women. Without any form of official documentation, how can their experiences be communicated? How can the horrors of genocide be expressed? This article proposes to analyse the responses to trauma in the testimonial literature of Rwandan women genocide survivors, focusing in particular on the testimonies of three women: *Nous existons encore*, by Annick Kayitesi (2004), *Demain ma vie*, by Berthe Kayitesi (2009), and *SurVivantes*, by Esther Mujawayo (2004).[1] While there are large numbers of oral testimonies bearing witness to the genocide, notably those collected by the Genocide Archive of Rwanda,[2] housed at the Kigali Genocide Memorial Centre, my own research is primarily concerned with the handful of published testimonies, which have been largely overlooked in the existing scholarship on memory work in post-genocide Rwanda.[3]

The written testimonies resonate with a palpable tension between the spoken and the unspoken. All three testimonies also confront the issue of the continued ideological and cultural silencing of survivors in present-day Rwanda. From a perspective of trauma theory, this article will first develop a reflection about silence in relation to the problematic notion of the 'impossibility of testimony', the 'unsayable' at the heart of the traumatic experience. It will then go on to examine the framework in which the silencing of survivors occurs and to explore the physical manifestations of silence within the women's testimonies in order to show how the leitmotiv of silence has become an integral part of Rwandan women's writing. On the one hand, women write about silence, whether it be the silence of the victims ('le silence absolu des victimes'[4]) or that of the survivors who are still denied a voice. On the other hand, the texts themselves are punctuated by heavy silences, filled with inexpressible pain and the weight of loss. Through a variety of narrative strategies, these authors are calling on the reader to listen attentively to the silences and accord them meaning. While a number of critics have drawn attention to the role of testimony in combating silence, notably Alexandre Dauge-Roth in his *Writing and Filming the Genocide of the Tutsis in Rwanda* (2010),[5] this article will also shed light on the ways in which Rwandan women attempt to express that same silence and to give it form. I will argue that writing has a double function for women

[1] Annick Kayitesi, *Nous existons encore* (Paris: Michel Lafon, 2004); Berthe Kayitesi, *Demain ma vie: Enfants chefs de famille dans le Rwanda d'après* (Paris: Laurence Teper, 2009); and Esther Mujawayo and Souâd Belhaddad, *SurVivantes: Rwanda dix ans après le génocide* (Paris: Éditions de l'Aube, 2004).

[2] Launched in December 2010, the Genocide Archive of Rwanda is in the process of collecting and digitizing an extensive number of both survivor and perpetrator testimonies, as well as documenting remembrance events and *gacaca* court proceedings, with the view to making the 1994 genocide in Rwanda 'one of the most thoroughly documented mass killings ever'; see Xan Rice, 'Never Again: Rwandan genocide archived', *Guardian*, 10 December 2010, p. 39. The testimonies and other documentation can be consulted on the Archive's website: www.genocidearchiverwanda.org.rw.

[3] Filmic and literary responses to the genocide (such as the fictional works produced by African authors as part of the Fest'Africa initiative in 1998) are also the focus of a number of critical works. See, for example, Josias Semujanga's *Le Génocide, sujet de fiction? Analyse des récits du massacre des Tutsi dans la littérature africaines* (Quebec: Nota Bene, 2008).

[4] Philippe Forest, 'Quelques notes à la suite de Giorgio Agamben sur la question du témoignage littéraire: Pacte autobiographique et pacte testimonial', in *Littératures sous contrat*, ed. by Emmanuel Bouju (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2002), pp. 213–25 (p. 220).

[5] Alexandre Dauge-Roth, *Writing and Filming the Genocide of the Tutsis in Rwanda: Dismembering and Remembering Traumatic History* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2010).

survivors: the act of writing itself is a means not only of breaking the silence but also of giving form to this silence, testifying to its existence.

The Genocide in Rwanda

In just one hundred days, between the months of April and July of 1994, official figures show that between 500,000 and 1,000,000 Rwandans were systematically slaughtered as decades of social tension came to a bloody culmination.[6] Although the genocide primarily targeted the Tutsi, tens of thousands of so-called 'moderate' Hutu were also massacred as being 'traitors' to the state. Parallels have been drawn between the genocide in Rwanda and other genocides, notably the extermination of the Jews during the Second World War, and such comparisons are often made by scholars, journalists, and human rights groups, as well as by survivors themselves.[7] Nevertheless, it is important to bear in mind the specificities of the situation in Rwanda and to avoid a universalizing, normalizing approach to the question of genocide. The genocide in Rwanda was unique in terms of the organization and rapid execution of the massacres and the mass participation in the killings.[8] Moreover, it was not enough simply to kill: the perpetrators resorted to torture, rape, and other atrocities as part of a 'pratique collective de l'extrême cruauté'.[9]

Despite the fact that most of the survivors of the genocide were women, only ten women (and even fewer men) have published testimonies in French to date.[10] It is important to note that all these women are now living in exile in the West, and their testimonies have been published in France or Belgium and seem to be targeting a predominantly Western audience. These texts are not widely available in Rwanda and have not been translated into English.[11] Moreover, only a few of these authors have been written about in existing scholarship: the works of Esther Mujawayo, Yolande Mukagasana, and Scholastique Mukasonga—arguably the more 'high profile' survivors—have received the most critical attention to date. By considering Mujawayo's work alongside that of two relatively unknown authors, I hope to raise the visibility of these testimonies and highlight the shared concerns of survivors throughout the Rwandan diaspora.

While the reception of the published testimonies remains limited,[12] in Rwanda itself, the act of giving testimony is often restricted to a judicial context, as Catherine Coquio

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[6] See Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), p. 5.

[7] For a discussion of the various analogies drawn between the Holocaust and the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, see the chapter entitled 'The Holocaust: The Comparative Debate' in Nigel Eltringham's *Accounting for Horror: Post-Genocide Debates in Rwanda* (London: Pluto Press, 2004), pp. 51–68.

[8] Prunier estimates that 100,000 civilians assisted the FAR (Forces Armés Rwandaises), the Presidential Guard and the *Interahamwe* militia in their campaign of genocidal violence; Gérard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide* (London: Hurst, 1997; first publ. 1995), p. 342, n.60.

[9] Claudine Vidal, 'Les politiques de la haine', *Les Temps Modernes*, 583 (1995), 6–33 (p. 26).

[10] As well as the three authors discussed in this article, the remaining women to have published testimonies are Pauline Kayitare (Brussels: André Versaille, 2011), Yolande Mukagasana (Paris: Fixot, 1997; Paris, Robert Laffont, 1999), Madeleine Mukamuganga (Roissy-en-Brie: Éditions Cultures Croisées, 2005), Scholastique Mukasonga (Paris: Gallimard, 2006; 2008), Marie-Aimable Umurerwa (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000), Chantal Umutesi (Paris: Klanba, 2000), and Marie Béatrice Umutesi (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000). There are also several edited collections of testimonies available, including Yolande Mukagasana and Alain Kazinierakis's *Les Blessures du silence* (Paris: Actes Sud, 2001) and the trilogy by Jean Hatzfeld (Paris: Seuil, 2000; 2003; 2007), although these are not the object of this study.

[11] There are a few testimonies that have been published in English, such as Immaculée Ilibagiza's *Left to Tell* (London: Hay House, 2006). Published collections, such as Jean Hatzfeld's trilogy, have been translated into English, and Esther Mujawayo's testimonies have been translated into German.

[12] Issues of publication and reception of Rwandan women's testimonies are extremely rich fields for discussion. However, due to lack of space, this is not something which will be developed in the present article.

explains, 'suscités par les institutions judiciaires nationales et internationales'.[13] This underlines the double character of memory in Rwanda: while the memory of the genocide is omnipresent (through the existence of memorials, commemorations, etc.),[14] certain aspects are being occulted from collective memory, notably the tension between Tutsi and Hutu that has existed since the colonial period.[15] Indeed, a 'culture of silence' seems to have been established around the genocide; survivors are only permitted to tell their stories in certain circumstances. In the current climate of cohabitation and reconciliation, the present situation of each individual survivor determines whether they are able to testify or whether they must keep silent. Most survivors in Rwanda are preoccupied with the daily task of survival and do not necessarily have the time or resources to make artistic or other representations of their experiences. Moreover, many Rwandan women are reticent about testifying, particularly survivors of rape and sexual violence. Besides the shame these women often feel in sharing their personal experiences, the fear of repercussions following the reintegration of former perpetrators into communities can also prevent them from bearing witness. This underlines the importance of published testimonies, where those texts published outside Rwanda can speak for those in Rwanda and raise awareness of the ongoing silencing survivors face in their everyday lives.

Testimony, trauma, and the 'unsayable'

In order to gain a better understanding of the difficulties survivors face when speaking out about their experiences, it is important to examine the relationship between testimony and trauma. Testimony plays an essential role in the transmission of human experience, and has become an important mode of expression for survivors of trauma. As Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub write, 'testimony has become a crucial mode of our relation to events of our times—our relation to the traumas of contemporary history'.[16] If we consider testimony as a response to a traumatic historical event, the magnitude of the catastrophe the individual has survived means that he feels 'historically appointed' to bear witness.[17] This view is supported by Tzvetan Todorov, who claims that every survivor has a right and a duty to speak out about what happened; witnesses of trauma are responding to an historical imperative of memory: 'Lorsque les événements vécus par l'individu ou par le groupe sont de nature exceptionnelle ou tragique, ce droit [à la parole] devient un devoir: celui de se souvenir, celui de témoigner'.[18] Coquio confirms this in relation to the experience of genocide in particular:

> La radicalité génocidaire et sa visée raciale, en particulier, placent les témoins dans une situation singulière: les membres de la collectivité visée ont la certitude d'être *tous* destinés à mourir—ou de survivre par miracle—et de mourir *pour rien*. S'ils survivent, c'est alors pour écrire.[19]

[13] Catherine Coquio, 'L'émergence d'une "littérature" de non-écrivains: les témoignages de catastrophes historiques', *Revue d'Histoire Littéraire de la France*, 103.2 (2003), 343–63 (p. 347).
[14] The Kigali Genocide Memorial Centre was opened in April 2004, on the tenth anniversary of the genocide. There are a number of other memorial sites across the country, including those located at Bisesero, Murambi, and Nyamata.
[15] For a discussion of the ideological silencing under the current government, see Claudine Vidal, 'La commémoration du génocide au Rwanda: Violence symbolique, mémorisation forcée et histoire officielle', *Cahiers d'études africaines*, 175 (2004), 575–92.
[16] Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History* (New York and London: Routledge, 1992), p. 5.
[17] Felman and Laub, *Testimony*, p. 4.
[18] Tzvetan Todorov, *Les Abus de la mémoire* (Paris: Arléa, 1997), p. 16.
[19] Coquio, 'L'émergence d'une "littérature" de non-écrivains', p. 343.

Nevertheless, in models of trauma theory, silence is shown to be a predominant response to trauma and is often equated with the incommunicable nature of pain, or the 'impossibility of testimony'. As Susannah Radstone succinctly summarizes:

> Theories of testimony's impossibility link it not to the impossibility of complete self-knowledge, but to the impossibility of communicating—even to the self, sometimes—an experience of an event. [...] the central question posed by testimony concerns whether any meaningful sense can be made and communicated of traumatic experience.[20]

Survivors of trauma are caught in a constant struggle between the desire to testify and the inadequacy of language to convey the traumatic experience. On an individual level, keeping silent is often seen as a form of denial or repression, what Dori Laub refers to as an 'internal silence',[21] which can be broken in the act of testifying. However, as Laub ascertains, in the context of the Holocaust, silence rather than testimony is the norm: 'To *not* return from this silence is rule rather than exception'.[22] This is because 'the imperative to tell the story of the Holocaust is inhabited by the impossibility of telling and, therefore, silence about the truth commonly prevails'.[23] The survivor-witness is thus caught in a paradox or double bind, between the imperative of memory and the impossible telling of the experience.

How to communicate, then, this unsayable experience? As Régine Waintrater explains: 'Après chaque expérience extrême, se pose la question d'une forme capable d'en rendre compte pour ceux qui ne l'ont pas vécue'.[24] For Rwandan women genocide survivors, this poses a double challenge: the difficulty of writing, of saying their experiences, is coupled with a life in exile and the difficulty of finding an audience in the host country. As Véronique Bonnet notes: '[l]a prise d'écriture fut inévitablement douloureuse. Il fallut un temps pour que les survivants, après avoir échappé aux massacres et quitté le Rwanda, parviennent à écrire, à trouver un éditeur et à rendre lisible leur vécu'.[25]

In the case of extreme trauma, such as the genocide in Rwanda, the witness has lived through something unimaginable, an experience which often goes beyond the understanding of an ordinary (Western) reader. Rwandan women genocide survivors consequently figure among those Paul Ricœur describes as the '"témoins historiques" dont l'expérience extraordinaire prend en défaut la capacité de compréhension moyenne, ordinaire. Il est des témoins qui ne rencontrent jamais l'audience capable de les écouter et de les entendre'.[26] The difficulty for these women resides not only in the impossibility of saying their experience, but also in the impossibility of making that experience heard. Hence the importance of an 'empathic' response on the part of the receiver of testimony, for, as Laub writes, 'if one talks about the trauma without being truly heard or truly listened to, the telling might itself be lived as a return of the trauma—a *re-experiencing of the event itself*'.[27]

Moreover, as Leigh Gilmore observes, the act of bearing witness to trauma requires the individual 'to make public and shareable a private and intolerable pain'.[28] This passage from private to public can be extremely painful for the witness, and many of the Rwandan women genocide survivors are plagued by the fear of not being believed. This dilemma is

[20] Susannah Radstone, 'Cultures of Confession/Cultures of Testimony: Turning the Subject Inside Out', in *Modern Confessional Writing: New Critical Essays*, ed. by Jo Gill (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), pp. 166–79 (p. 175).
[21] Felman and Laub, *Testimony*, p. 67.
[22] Felman and Laub, *Testimony*, p. 58.
[23] Felman and Laub, *Testimony*, p. 79.
[24] Régine Waintrater, *Sortir du génocide: Témoignage et survivance* (Paris: Éditions Payot et Rivages, 2011), p. 49.
[25] Véronique Bonnet, 'La "prise d'écriture" de Rwandaises rescapées du génocide', *Notre Librairie*, 157 (2005), 76–81 (pp. 76–77).
[26] Paul Ricœur, *La mémoire, l'histoire, l'oubli* (Paris: Seuil, 2000), p. 208.
[27] Felman and Laub, *Testimony*, p. 67.
[28] Leigh Gilmore, *The Limits of Autobiography: Trauma and Testimony* (Ithaca, NY, and London: Cornell University Press, 2001), p. 7.

evoked in Berthe Kayitesi's testimony when she writes: 'Car moi-même, il m'arrive de ne pas croire à ce que j'ai vécu, traversé, surmonté. Que toute cette trajectoire est mienne. Or elle est bien mienne. Y croira-t-on?'[29] The horrors of genocide are 'unimaginable' to such an extent that sometimes even survivors themselves can scarcely believe what happened. This is reflected in Esther Mujawayo's *SurVivantes* when she writes: 'Parfois, tu te demandes pourquoi ça s'est passé, tu te demandes comment c'est possible que ça se soit passé, comme ça, de façon aussi folle, parfois, tu te demandes même si ça s'est *vraiment* passé, tellement ça te dépasse… Et tu ne trouves jamais de réponse.'[30]

Cultural Silencing

Beyond the numerous difficulties inherent in communicating their experiences, survivors of the genocide who wish to tell their story must face another obstacle: the silencing of survivors which is occurring both in Rwanda and across the diaspora. Alexandre Dauge-Roth appropriately refers to this as 'cultural silencing', in which survivors are 'being silenced by discourses claiming to speak in [their] name'.[31] My reading of the testimonies will show that the authors, by exposing this silencing process, are challenging the indifference of the international community and are struggling against a silence that is intended to impose forgetting.

Mujawayo's *SurVivantes* is particularly enlightening on the question of cultural silencing in Rwanda as she describes how survivors felt the need to keep silent in the months following the genocide, and how, in the current climate of reconciliation in Rwanda, they are once again being silenced. She explains how, after the genocide, the survivors quickly began to be perceived as an inconvenience: 'Je pourrais dire, en une phrase, pourquoi, rescapé, on s'est tu après le génocide: on sentait qu'on dérangeait.'[32] Survivors were—and continue to be—a 'disturbing presence',[33] both for the former *génocidaires* and for the Tutsi returning from exile after the genocide:[34]

> Au Rwanda, on nous dit aujourd'hui: 'On en a assez parlé.' On est coincés, nous les rescapés, entre les Hutu, nos voisins de toujours qui nous ont tués, et les Tutsi, nos frères qui sont rentrés d'exil après plus de trente ans, après les vagues de massacres de 1959 et de 1973, qui ont toujours rêvé de rentrer au Rwanda mais ne s'attendaient pas à y revenir marchant sur les cadavres.[35]

For the latter group, the much dreamed-of homecoming was tainted by the horrific circumstances in which it occurred (a civil war and genocide) and survivors were a constant reminder of this. Survivors are encouraged to remain silent and move on with their lives.

In post-genocide Rwanda, survivors silence their experiences in order to be able to cohabit with the former *génocidaires*, a coping mechanism Susanne Buckley-Zistel describes as 'chosen amnesia':

> to choose amnesia serves a particular function deriving from particular needs of the present. […] *Amnesia* is hence *chosen* as opposed to coerced, since it signifies less a public denial than a coping

[29] *Demain ma vie: Enfants chefs de famille dans le Rwanda d'après*, p. 59.
[30] *SurVivantes*, p. 21.
[31] Dauge-Roth, *Writing and Filming the Genocide*, p. 46.
[32] *SurVivantes*, p. 20.
[33] See Dauge-Roth, *Writing and Filming the Genocide*, p. 92.
[34] Many Tutsi fled Rwanda in the decades preceding the genocide, notably during the 'social revolution' of 1959, and the wave of massacres in 1962 and 1973, returning after the genocide once a predominantly Tutsi government was in power.
[35] *SurVivantes*, p. 19.

> mechanism to avoid antagonisms and to be able to live peacefully. Remembering to forget is thus essential for local coexistence. [36]

While Buckley-Zistel speaks of choice, this term is problematic given the necessity of survivors to remain silent about their experiences in order to achieve peaceful local coexistence. Moreover, survivors often risk their own lives by speaking out against the *génocidaires*. Thus, I would suggest that the particular 'amnesia' at work in post-genocide Rwanda resembles rather what Luisa Passerini describes as 'imposed' amnesia. Passerini argues that, in such circumstances, silence can be a way of preserving a memory and projecting it into the future. The traumatic memory is not spoken until it is safe to do so. In this case, silence is connected with remembering rather than forgetting: 'there can be memory within silence and memory through silence'.[37]

Furthermore, as Dauge-Roth explains, cultural silencing is a form of 'symbolic violence' enacted on the witness by the audience who is unable to hear her story and cuts off the speaker before they have finished. This silencing constitutes a form of cultural resistance on the part of the audience to the encounter with the 'ob-scene', 'with what is culturally excluded, a disruption that is—and should remain—beyond the realm of what is commonly accepted as legitimate'.[38] As Mujawayo writes: 'Les gens ne pouvaient pas supporter d'entendre, c'était trop pour eux. Trop quoi, je ne sais pas. Tu commences à raconter, raconter, et ils n'acceptent pas d'écouter, c'est terrible. Ils disent: "C'est trop horrible." Ils disent: "C'est trop, c'est trop…".'[39] To show the extent of this cultural silencing and its effects on survivors, Mujawayo gives the example of her friend Alice, whose story was particularly disturbing to listen to and who was therefore frequently met with a refusal:

> Quand Alice racontait son histoire, on l'arrêtait toujours quand elle arrivait au moment des bébés qui pleuraient et qu'elle ne pouvait pas prendre avec elle, dans le trou où elle avait été jetée vivante parmi les cadavres. Ce moment, c'était trop horrible pour les gens et on l'arrêtait au milieu parce que c'était trop dur. 'C'est trop horrible, arrête!' Mais c'est encore plus horrible pour elle de ne pas terminer. Alice, son histoire, elle a jamais pu la raconter jusqu'au bout.[40]

Dauge-Roth observes that Mujawayo mimics the censuring of Alice's story by leaving it unfinished in the first chapter of her own narrative, but finally telling it to the end in a later chapter, 'Pour une fois, raconter l'histoire d'Alice jusqu'au bout…', which is devoted to Alice's story: 'By doing so, Mujawayo's testimony performatively undoes the cultural silencing Alice faced each time she tried to testify'.[41] This constitutes, I would argue, a challenge to the Western reader, forcing them to confront their own complicity in the silencing process.

While this form of cultural silencing often occurs on an individual level, it also occurs on a national—and even international—scale. The continued silencing of the events of 1994 at this level appears to assuage a certain sense of guilt. Kalí Tal argues that, for outside observers, 'the survivor who bears witness serves as an embarrassment to those whose lives have been untouched by atrocity'[42] and they would prefer not to hear these unsettling accounts. Many of the authors express a sense of abandonment in their testimonies and reproach the international community for its passivity. In the opening prologue of her testimony, Mujawayo writes: 'Un million de personnes a été exterminé en moins de cent

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[36] Susanne Buckley-Zistel, 'Remembering to Forget: Chosen Amnesia as a Strategy for Local Coexistence in Post-Genocide Rwanda', *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 76 (2006), 131–50 (p. 132).

[37] Luisa Passerini, 'Memories Between Silence and Oblivion', in *Contested Pasts: The Politics of Memory*, ed. by Katherine Hodgkin and Susannah Radstone (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), pp. 238–54 (p. 248).

[38] Dauge-Roth, *Writing and Filming the Genocide*, p. 48.

[39] *SurVivantes*, p. 20.

[40] *SurVivantes*, p. 23.

[41] Dauge-Roth, *Writing and Filming the Genocide*, p. 46.

[42] Kalí Tal, *Worlds of Hurt: Reading the Literatures of Trauma* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 38.

jours dans un silence assourdissant et une indifférence totale.'[43] Similarly, Annick Kayitesi claims: 'En parlant des rescapés, je veux montrer l'abandon des survivants par la communauté humaine, pendant et surtout après le génocide.'[44] She goes on to state that: 'Abandonner ainsi des êtres humains, c'est la honte de l'humanité. Il faut le dire, il faut le clamer.'[45] For Kayitesi, the act of testifying functions as a means of denouncing the indifference of the international community and of making the experiences of survivors visible to a global audience.

Breaking the Silence

It would seem, then, that Rwandan women's *prise de parole* is borne first and foremost out of a desire to break the silence surrounding the events of 1994 and which is still propagated in the West. Annick Kayitesi is perhaps the most explicit in her desire to break the silence surrounding the genocide and expose the indifference of the international community: 'Si je témoigne, ce n'est pas pour me confiner dans un rôle de victime mais pour briser le pacte d'indifférence et de silence érigé autour de ce génocide.'[46] For Kayitesi, silence is synonymous with forgetting and erasure, and the act of bearing witness constitutes a combat against forgetting, a way of honouring the memory of the victims and of making their occulted histories known. She declares: 'Je lutte pour que la mémoire des miens ne sombre pas dans l'oubli.'[47]

The heavy silence of the dead is omnipresent throughout the testimonies as is the weight of loss. One of the principal aims of the *génocidaires* was to eradicate any trace of their victims, and descriptions of violent destruction frequently return in the women's testimonies. Annick Kayitesi speaks of entire families who have been wiped out and whose memory will be lost forever:

> Chez nous au moins, ma sœur et moi sommes là pour honorer nos disparus, mais qu'en est-il de ceux chez qui il n'y a aucun rescapé? Les souvenirs s'en vont et, avec eux, la certitude de leur existence. Ils sont morts doublement. Ils n'ont même pas la possibilité de se perpétuer dans le cœur de leurs proches. Il n'y a plus personne pour honorer leur nom ou cultiver leur mémoire.[48]

According to Philippe Forest, in testimonial writing, 'c'est le silence d'un autre qui semble justifier la prise de parole de l'écrivain'.[49] The witness speaks on behalf of the victims; it is the absence or silence of the latter which creates the necessary conditions for writing. Indeed, Berthe Kayitesi speaks of the 'dette morale' she feels towards the dead that pushes her to testify.[50] For Kayitesi, '[s]on malheur reste de ne pas savoir les circonstances de leur mort, leurs derniers moments, leur agonie. Il n'y a même plus de chemin qui mène où ils ont vécu, et c'est comme s'ils n'avaient pas existé.'[51] Writing her testimony becomes a way of remembering those who died, of speaking their silence and writing their existence: 'Et ce témoignage aille jusqu'à les faire vivre ne fût-ce qu'un instant.'[52]

In such circumstances, the naming of the dead takes on the utmost importance. For,

[43] *SurVivantes*, p. 13.
[44] *Nous existons encore*, p. 240.
[45] *Nous existons encore*, p. 245.
[46] *Nous existons encore*, p. 20.
[47] *Nous existons encore*, pp. 24–25.
[48] *Nous existons encore*, pp. 190–91.
[49] Forest, 'Quelques notes à la suite de Giorgio Agamben', p. 220.
[50] *Demain ma vie*, p. 286.
[51] *Demain ma vie*, pp. 74–75.
[52] *Demain ma vie*, p. 76.

with all other documentation destroyed, the testimonies of the living remain the only way of telling their existence. These women accord a great deal of importance to evoking the names of those who died. From the opening pages of her testimony, Berthe Kayitesi bombards the reader with the names of people she knew during her childhood who were killed during the genocide, including families of which not one single member survived: 'Et en cette page, il me revient de dire qu'ils ont existé, qu'ils étudiaient, comme toi, comme tes proches; qu'ils travaillaient comme toi et tes proches, qu'ils jouaient, qu'ils avaient des noms, des visages, une vie avec tous les projets qui vont avec.'[53] In addressing the reader directly here, Kayitesi is implicating the (Western) audience in her testimony, forcing them to acknowledge their shared humanity with the victims. Similarly, at the end of her testimony, Esther Mujawayo lists the 291 members of her extended family who were slaughtered. As Véronique Bonnet observes, each Rwandan woman's testimony becomes a depository for the names of the absent victims, demonstrating 'la nécessité de rappeler, inlassablement, les noms de tous les proches [...] pour que tous puissent reposer en paix'.[54] The act of bearing witness allows these women to bury their dead, to offer them the sepulchre which was denied to them.

As well as bearing witness on behalf of those who died, these women also speak out on behalf of the living, for the survivors who are still being silenced today, both in Rwanda and beyond. Annick Kayitesi writes:

> Selon les chiffres officiels, du 6 avril au 4 juillet, on a dénombré en cent jours entre huit cent mille et un million de victimes... Mais on ne parle là que des morts. On oublie les handicapés, les traumatisés, les seuls au monde qui jamais ne se remettront et les soixante-dix pour cent de femmes, ces fillettes rescapées, atteintes du sida à la suite de viols. Oui, on compte les défunts et, dans une politique d'effacement, on occulte les survivants.[55]

For Kayitesi, her own 'besoin de témoigner est d'autant plus intense que nombre de rescapés, de filles violées, d'adolescents incompris sont condamnés au silence.'[56] Here, Kayitesi expresses a strong desire to break the silence which dominates the lives of many survivors in Rwanda; she is testifying not only to honour the memory of the dead but also to give a voice to those forgotten survivors. Similarly, when Kayitesi evokes her experience of rape, she claims to be breaking the silence not just for herself ('il est important pour moi de ne pas le taire. Ça me déculpabilise'[57]) but also for other victims of rape: 'Toutes les victimes, même les rescapées des génocides, souffrent de cette culpabilité. [...] Dans ce cas encore, il est de mon devoir de témoigner. Je n'ai pas d'autre choix. J'aurais honte à présent de me taire.'[58] Speaking out about her own experiences of sexual violence is crucial in breaking the silence of the existing taboo surrounding rape which stills persists in Rwandan society.

Writing Silence

While testimony functions as a means of breaking the silence surrounding the genocide, silence itself also becomes an integral part of the narratives. Esther Mujawayo's testimony is perhaps the most unusual in this respect as much of the text actually consists of interviews transcribed and reworked by her co-author, Souâd Belhaddad. In the writing process, Belhaddad indicates where there were silences—and the length of these silences—in the original interviews: *(silence)*, *(long silence)*, etc. In the same manner, Belhaddad also indicates

[53] *Demain ma vie*, p. 59
[54] Bonnet, 'La "prise d'écriture" de Rwandaises rescapées du génocide', p. 80.
[55] *Nous existons encore*, pp. 129–30.
[56] *Nous existons encore*, p. 245.
[57] *Nous existons encore*, p. 149.
[58] *Nous existons encore*, p. 153.

laughter, bodily gestures, and the tone of voice and volume in which Mujawayo is speaking. In so doing, Belhaddad explains that she intended to preserve 'le ton de l'oral':

> non pas par effet de style mais afin de traduire au plus près les tremblements, les hésitations, les nœuds et la sidération de cette parole. Une parole associative qui tente de dire l'indicible: le génocide, et le chaos qu'il a imprimé à l'intérieur de tout rescapé.[59]

This occurs, for example, when Mujawayo recounts the death of her adoptive sister, Rachel, who was thrown alive into a latrine and had her arms cut off when she tried to climb out: 'cette image des membres coupés de Rachel m'était encore plus intolérable… *(long silence)* Mais combien de temps ça a bien pu prendre avant qu'elle ne soit étouffée dans cette merde?…'[60] The silence in this passage indicates a memory that is too painful, forcing the narrator to temporarily halt her narrative. In this manner, silence is written explicitly into the narration, allowing the reader to follow the pace and tone of the narrative as well as giving greater insight into the emotions of the survivor.

Similar narrative strategies are elsewhere adopted by the authors to integrate silence into their testimonies. The narration of *Nous existons encore* is often punctuated by ellipses, for example when Kayitesi recounts the murder of one of her friends as she is talking to him through a closed door: 'Et Victor s'est tu. Brutalement. Reste le bruit des os qui craquent et d'un corps qu'on brise… Hébétée, je réalise que là, derrière la porte, c'est mon ami qu'on est en train de dépecer. Toute vie me quitte. […] Victor ne criait pas…'.[61] The ellipses in this passage indicate a hesitation, a silence in the speech. Rather than limiting understanding, the pauses in the narration here allow the reader to imagine the sounds of the man being butchered on the other side of the door. A tacit understanding between the narrator and the reader is thus established; the imagination of the reader fills in the gaps left in the narration. As Michaël Rinn observes, the ellipsis is a rhetorical figure often used in the context of genocide and evokes a tacit knowledge:

> Elle consiste à ne pas remplir le programme narratif dont le lecteur a pourtant identifié le déroulement et les codes internes. La charge émotive soulevée par le non-dit est telle qu'elle crée une sorte de consensus culturellement déterminé, comme si l'auteur et le lecteur se mettaient d'accord pour ne pas prendre acte de détails insoutenables. Ainsi, au-delà de la vérité des faits, l'ellipse cache des émotions que l'auteur sait pertinemment partager avec son lecteur: ce qui manque dans le texte est censé être d'autant plus présent dans l'acte interprétatif.[62]

In this way, the unsaid/unspoken occupies a central place in the narration, and the reader is invited to hear and understand the silence at the heart of the testimony.

Dauge-Roth highlights how survivors appropriate such rhetorical and narrative strategies to pass on their 'ob-scene' knowledge to their audience, in an endeavour 'to forge social recognition for the personal and collective trauma that continues to haunt the victims of this genocide, so that their loss and suffering can no longer be ignored'.[63] Despite the obstacles, it is vital for the authors to attempt to put the unsayable into words and facilitate understanding. For Annick Kayitesi,

> La difficulté est d'arriver à dire que le pire a existé, que c'est vrai. Admettre soi-même qu'on a vécu cela et que l'on continue malgré tout à être debout représente une étape capitale. En parlant des autres, on

[59] *SurVivantes*, p. 10.
[60] *SurVivantes*, p. 249.
[61] *Nous existons encore*, pp. 117–18.
[62] Michaël Rinn, 'Rhétorique de l'indicible', in *Parler des camps, penser les génocides*, ed. by Catherine Coquio (Paris: Albin Michel, 1999), pp. 391–400 (p. 397).
[63] Dauge-Roth, *Writing and Filming the Genocide*, p. 26.

> exprime un peu de soi. Si l'on met l'infamie en mots, elle devrait se dissoudre un tout petit peu.[64]

The attempt to put the silence into words is a key feature of the testimonies of Rwandan women survivors, and is necessary in exposing the ongoing silencing of survivors in Rwanda and throughout the diaspora. Moreover, the act of bearing witness constitutes an essential stage of the continued process of surviving trauma, and the testimonial literature of Rwandan women plays a crucial role in the preservation and the transmission of the memory of the genocide.

Nevertheless, I would argue that Rwandan women genocide survivors continue to inhabit a space of double impossibility, in which silence is as much an impossibility as speech. As witnesses to an 'unsayable' horror, survivors of the genocide in Rwanda struggle not only to put their experiences into words, but also to overcome the silencing process that appears to be engrained in Rwandan society and the international community. In his essay *The Genocide of the Tutsis Explained to a Foreigner*, Jean-Marie Vianney Rurangwa writes:

> Testimony is not always easy. Testimony is synonymous with exposing oneself and exposing one's people. [...] For those who are afraid of the truth, the genocide survivor is a disturbing presence. This is why some prefer his silence. But it is this very silence that kills the survivor. To bear witness to his people, to speak for them and in their name, gives the only meaning to his survival. And some want him to remain silent! But to remain silent is for him synonymous with death.[65]

Bearing witness becomes necessary both for honouring the memory of the victims and for breaking the silence which governs the lives of survivors since the genocide. The long-term consequences of imposing silence on survivors cannot yet be fully grasped, but, in exposing this silence, Rwandan women authors are underlining the importance of creating a space in which survivors can testify freely to their experiences, to an audience that is prepared to listen to the whole story. And yet, even for those survivors who have succeeded in telling their story, the act of testimony itself remains insufficient. As Mujawayo claims towards the end of *SurVivantes*: 'Je n'avais pas imaginé, ou tout simplement je n'y ai pas réfléchi, que la fin de ce livre allait me donner un tel sentiment d'inutilité.'[66] She nonetheless concludes: 'Je suis certaine que, toute ma vie, je vais continuer à témoigner—ne serait-ce que parce que tout le monde ne demande qu'à oublier...'[67] This tension between futility and necessity is a contradiction at the heart of the testimonial process that all survivors must negotiate. As Belhaddad resumes so effectively in her essay 'Dire est impossible':

> La mémoire se construit et se perpétue par des témoignages, des récits, des écrits, des images, de la production, des marques. Il faut laisser des marques, absolument. Absolument. Mais en sachant bien que, pour un rescapé, dire ne suffira jamais. Écrire ne suffira jamais.[68]

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[64] *Nous existons encore*, pp. 239–40.
[65] Quoted by Dauge-Roth in *Writing and Filming the Genocide*, pp. 91–92.
[66] *SurVivantes*, p. 244.
[67] *SurVivantes*, p. 265.
[68] Souâd Belhaddad, 'Dire est impossible', in *Rwanda: Pour un dialogue des mémoires*, ed. by in Jean Mouttapa (Paris: Albin Michel, 2007), pp. 165–79 (p. 166).

BOOK REVIEWS

***Screening Morocco: Contemporary Film in a Changing Society*.** By VALÉRIE K. ORLANDO. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2011. xxii+190 pp. Pb £25.50. ISBN: 9780896802810

Scholarship about Moroccan cinema is arguably scarce despite the steady growth in the number and quality of films produced over the last two decades. For this reason alone, Valérie Orlando's latest book is a welcome introduction to a burgeoning and extremely diverse tradition of filmmaking whose social history and aesthetics await original research to divulge their secrets and make critical contributions to postcolonial film studies, a discipline where the thematics and modes of production of North-western African cinema are under-represented. Despite questions about the sustainability of state funding for national cinema and the ever-present spectre of censorship, Moroccan filmmaking today represents a good model of postcolonial film production in both qualitative and quantitative terms.

Orlando's study is focused on the place and politics of cinema in the 'new' Morocco, that is, the country since 1999 when the king died, his son ascended the throne and expectations for political and socio-economic change were said to be high among the Moroccan populace. Feature and documentary films made between 1999 and 2010 are, as Orlando puts it in the preface to the book, 'significantly more critical and candid about Moroccan socio-cultural and political issues than in the past' when, '[d]uring the Lead Years [1961–99], films would metaphorically or symbolically criticize the social situations, but filmmakers learned never to be overtly critical' (p. xii). Expanding on the general theses of Manthia Diawara on African cinema, on the one hand, and on her own interviews with filmmakers and the body of local film journalism, on the other, the author affirms that the predominant social realism of Moroccan cinema has both registered and contributed to socio-cultural change in the country. The book's introduction briefly surveys Moroccan cinema's evolution in different stages after independence in 1956: the heyday of short documentary films between 1958 and the early 1970s, the emergence of feature filmmaking and national cinema in the late 1960s, the political and social climates in Morocco during King Hassan II's authoritarian reign (1961–99), and the increasing number of films produced in the last decade. Orlando also invokes 'Francophone cinema' in relation to the book's subject, and suggests that the deployment of this conceptual framework for film analysis is critically unproductive in a country where the French language is only eclectically part of the cultural landscape (confined to a tiny polyglot elite as film dialogues often demonstrate).

After this historical sketch, Chapter 1 introduces some dominant themes and debates in Moroccan postcolonial cinema while situating them within the post-independence era as well as within the larger history of the Maghreb countries and the rest of the 'Third World'. Frantz Fanon and Third Cinema questions are smoothly brought in despite the fact that Moroccan cinema in the 1970s and 1980s was far more *auteurist* than *engagé* in the tradition of Third Cinema. Although the scope of this book does not allow for an exploration of the political economy and a close analysis of the films made during this important decade, Orlando rightly surmises that filmmakers began to adopt a more audience-focused politics of social-realism in the 1990s (p. 32). The next chapter sees the author at home in the new millennium and her primary research focus; this chapter looks into the place of language and transnational connections in post-1999 cinema, which is largely in Darija (Moroccan Arabic) and/or Tamazight (Berber) with the presence of French and other international idioms in films made by cineastes from diasporic backgrounds. Orlando also discusses three films by domestic filmmakers to show how daring the last decade's cinema was in tackling burning

issues in Moroccan society and politics. Chapter 3 is devoted to close analyses of films which have tackled social questions in cities, where over half of the population lives today. Taking a selection of four films made after 1999, Orlando argues that these works 'draw on the ills of urban milieus to study the unravelling of the sociocultural fabric of the country' (p. 73). The following chapter is entirely devoted to a burgeoning sector of Moroccan cinema: memories of the Lead Years and the wounds that refuse to heal. Orlando deals with five films which have delved into the history of torture and the 'disappearance' of thousands of political dissidents under King Hassan II's reign. She focuses on how these works remember the past while engaging with the present of a country whose transition to democracy has been hindered by political stagnation and socio-economic problems. The last chapter of the book zooms in on five women filmmakers and shows how their often social-realist cameras have reframed many of the same issues tackled by their male peers yet through more gender-sensitive lenses 'by focusing on once taboo and controversial topics, from rural poverty and prostitution to divorce and repudiation' (p. 152).

Despite Orlando's conviction that history is a crucial element for an adequate understanding of film, her investigation of the historical framework in which post-1999 Moroccan cinema has evolved its forms and thematics is confined to a few general references and reportage in Morocco's Francophone press, which, by its very nature, can be opinionated and never subtle enough for in-depth analysis. While the author never fails to put her finger on the large issues that have defined the historical evolution of this cinema, her coverage remains rather cursory and leaves us with the conviction that more research would have yielded even more incisive film analyses. Moreover, a full account of the production circumstances behind every film discussed in this book (funding schemes and censorship, to cite but two) would have enriched the factual and contextual coordinates of Orlando's book and supplanted her wide range of critical insights. However, given the large scope of this book, these points of criticism are probably not deficiencies but rather cleared spaces for future research in postcolonial film and cultural studies.

Orlando's *Screening Morocco* is essential reading to anyone interested in Moroccan cinema in the new millennium. It is also a useful reference book, full of insights for students and researchers working on the shifting landscapes of postcolonial cinema where up-and-coming filmmakers have been creatively screening changing societies through a medium which is in flux in its own turn.

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Interpreting the Republic: Marginalization and Belonging in Contemporary French Novels and Films. By VINAY SWAMY. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2011. 173 pp. Hb £39.95. ISBN: 978-0-7391-6536-2

The notion of French national identity continues to fascinate researchers and politicians alike. In this elegant study Vinay Swamy focuses on the specificities and contradictions of 'Frenchness' as it is posited in republican ideology in order to draw out the complexities of citizenship and identification in the contemporary Hexagon. His chosen corpus is drawn from those literary and cinematic texts which appeared during the mid-1980s and in the twenty years which followed; it takes in titles from so-called *Beur* novels to more mainstream films such as *Gazon maudit* (1995), *Ma vie en rose* (1997), and *Le Placard* (2001). As he

persuasively argues, these representations shed light on two aspects of the contemporary Republic: first, as the vehicles of varied minority discourses, they interrogate the intersection between factors such as ethnicity, religion, gender, and sexual orientation, and their place within republican conceptions of the nation and its citizens; second, the high proportion of texts from artists of minority ethnic origin (which Swamy reads as 'French') are shown to work against the persistence of the segregating categories of 'French' and 'Francophone'. In his analysis, Swamy works to map the practices which bridge the gap between conventional republican conceptions of 'Frenchness' and the more tactical interpretations which circumvent or subvert established norms, and emerge through the repeated enactment of daily performances.

Although he draws on the work of theorists including Homi Bhabha and Jean Baudrillard, Swamy's approach relies primarily on close analysis of specific literary passages or film sequences. Here his discussion is detailed and articulate but, while convincing, his conclusions frequently recall the work of earlier critics writing on the same texts. His chapter on the works of Azouz Begag, in which he discusses the place of ethnicity in interpretations of citizenship, recalls the ground-breaking work of Alec Hargreaves, while his argument (with reference to Soraya Nini's *Ils disent que je suis une beurette* (1993) and Farida Belghoul's *Georgette!* (1986)), that the dominant discourse around the category of *Beur* identity has excluded considerations of gender and age, follows the path traced by critics such as Susan Ireland and Siobhan McIlvanney. Similarly, his discussion of sexuality and the PaCS, and cinematic representations of their place *vis-à-vis* the republican model, shares much ground with Cristina Johnston's recent *French Minority Cinema* (2010), which deals with the same elements of ethnicity, gender, and sexuality, and their contribution to new notions of citizenship, albeit from a purely cinematic perspective.

Such criticism is an inevitable response to the choice of a popular and well-researched corpus, and Swamy's volume is perhaps strongest when focused on more recent texts, such as Y.B.'s *Allah Superstar* (2003), where he examines the intersection of religion and ethnicity in post-9/11 France. Here he has the advantage of offering a fresh perspective on the impact of contemporary events on a field which has been well mapped out in terms of the social phenomena, such as immigration and the PaCs, which continue to shape contemporary France. In bringing together many of the intersecting variables which condition the evolution of minority discourses, Swamy's work makes a welcome contribution to current debates on the nature of French identity and citizenship.

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Cultural Globalization and Music: African Artists in Transnational Networks. By NADIA KIWAN AND ULRIKE HANNA MEINHOF. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011. 273 pp. Hb £58. ISBN: 978-0-230-22129-1

Through a series of ethnographic examples, personal experiences in cultural policymaking, and an interdisciplinary theoretical focus on movement and migration of individuals, the study by Nadia Kiwan and Ulrike Hanna Meinhof analyses the varying trajectories that African (and African-European and Afro-European) musicians follow to professionalize their musical practices. The authors offer a compelling narrative, showing great sensitivity as they pay attention to how musicians engage in, and often also disengage from, the communities

that enable their music-making. Their analysis of the ways in which the market, cultural policy, and notions of 'heritage' (p. 51), 'ethnicity', and 'locality' (p. 31) interact to produce new musical genres, as well as contemporary interpretations of 'traditional' music (p. 29), demonstrates their privileged relationships with the artists and their extensive familiarity with the rapidly changing music industry. The authors reject the binary structure implied by the term 'world music' (p. 81), and its attendant counterpart 'European' or 'Northern' music, and replace it with a multifaceted, yet clear and compelling, theoretical model for the functioning of global networks among contemporary musicians. If Achille Mbembe's work in *On the Postcolony* seeks to theorize the African/European 'entanglement' in politics, society and culture, research by Kiwan and Meinhof illustrates the intricacy of the relationship between the two continents, revealing the complex networks of musicians, concert managers, and cultural policy makers who enable cultural exchange and production.

The book makes three scholarly contributions in the form of distinct methodologies, which in turn weave themselves in and out of an extremely detailed study of contemporary African musicians working both in Africa and in Europe. First, the authors look closely at the movement of two groups of musicians: those with a connection to Madagascar and Malagasy music and those with a connection to Morocco and Moroccan and/or North African music. The authors consider musicians born in Madagascar and Morocco; performers who are immigrants or consider themselves of Malagasy or Moroccan heritage; migrants living between locations; and/or musicians who are not ethnically Malagasy or Moroccan, but engage with either of the two musical communities. Second, the authors examine the role of cultural policy in shaping the musical experiences of the musicians, offering a wide-ranging discussion of the role of diplomatic organizations (such as embassies, consulates, the circuit of Alliances françaises and Goethe-Institutes, the British Council, and CulturesFrance), non-profit groupings, and governmental institutions in cultivating and shaping policy. Lastly, the authors contribute to both existing and emerging scholarship on the formation, movement and development of diasporic groups. Kiwan and Meinhof propose a model that implements useful (and catchy) terminology to analyse the 'toing and froing' (p. 143) of musicians from communities in the periphery to intermediary urban centres (e.g. Morondava and Toliara in Madagascar, and Fez and Béchar in Morocco) and large metropolitan areas (e.g. London, Paris, Vienna) in Europe.

The introduction to the book as well as the introductions to the third and fourth chapters set up the theoretical framework that undergirds the ethnographic analysis of musicians circuiting between their African and European localities. So as to develop a 'transnational networks' model (p. 2) that accounts for the 'social and cultural processes and practices' (p. 87) of the production of music by African artists, the authors consider the work of scholars in ethnomusicology; music history; migration, diaspora, and hospitality studies; and, more generally, in global network studies. Their model functions around key terms: 'human hubs', 'spatial hubs', 'institutional hubs', and 'accidental hubs', some of which constitute spaces that are *passage(s) obligé(s)* for musicians who seek to professionalize their performance and production. In a sense, the authors ask: who or what enables emerging musicians to engage in professional activity? The notion of 'hubs', which 'borrow[s] a metaphor from electronic circuit designs' (p. 2), emphasizes that 'highly significant musicians and cultural organizers'—that is, 'human hubs'—are just as important in facilitating a musician's success as are certain institutions. 'Spatial hubs' refer both to physical places that cultivate musical practice, such as cities, as well as to 'virtual technologies' that 'bundle and focalize these flows' of activity (p. 5). The 'accidental hubs' refer to the complicated relationship between the observer and the observed. In the case of the production of African music, the researchers who study the musicians are often also involved in facilitating the artists' 'opportunity for practising and supporting their arts' (p. 7).

The subtitles of the book's three parts employ vocabulary related to geographic

orientations. The first part looks at 'hubs' in 'the South', mostly in Madagascar and North Africa. The second section addresses 'hubs' based in Europe, including Amsterdam, London, and Paris, as well as activity in smaller cities such as Nantes, Toulouse or Southampton. The third part examines the 'mutual support' provided by mostly European-funded institutions and organizations and the 'vital role' they play 'in supporting artists who do not easily survive in competition with the fast-changing fashions of Western pop music' (p. 169).

The book abounds in examples of music collectives and groups, with a stunning privileging of individual musicians' lived experience of contemporary musical practice, performance, and recording. A reader who does not have an intimate knowledge of Malagasy or Moroccan music would have benefited from some sort of rhizomatic graph mapping out emerging musicians' connections to the most prominent 'hubs', as Edouard Glissant does with musical genres and migration patterns in his 'Tableau de la diaspora' in the appendices of *Le discours antillais*. Alternatively, a map of Europe and of Africa, rather than just maps of Madagascar and Morocco might have further illustrated the anatomy of the transnational networks outlined by the authors. The title uses the word 'African' to designate its body of work and although the concentration is mostly on Malagasy and North African musicians, the book will be extremely useful to scholars interested in the processes that create contemporary transnational artists' networks.

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***France's Lost Empires: Fragmentation, Nostalgia, and* la fracture coloniale**. Edited by KATE MARSH AND NICOLA FRITH. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2011. 175 pp. Hb £37.95. ISBN: 978-0-7391-4883-9

For the *Hexagone*, 2005 marked a period in which postcolonial anxieties came to the fore. The attempt by the French parliament, in February of that year, to legislate in favour of the 'positive role' of French colonialism was followed, in November, by a series of riots throughout the nation's *banlieues*. These events, symptomatic of the contentious *guerre des mémoires* that continues to haunt the nation, speak to France's vexed and often aporetic relationship to its former colonies. The excellent and wide-ranging essays in *France's Lost Empires: Fragmentation, Nostalgia, and la fracture coloniale* offer a timely and insightful contribution to the debate, examining how colonial memory has been deployed as a rhetorical device in historical, social, and political configurations since the eighteenth century. With reference to the rubrics of fragmentation, nostalgia, and *la fracture coloniale*, the contributors demonstrate how decolonization and its attendant tropes of loss have, somewhat paradoxically, been deployed to French advantage, serving as rallying points for increased colonial expansion. The essays challenge the conventional departmentalization of French expansionism into two distinct historical periods (the 'first' empire of the *Ancien Régime* and the 'new' colonies of the nineteenth century), postulating the need for a more nuanced and multidirectional approach to colonial historiography. A case in point is the Indian *comptoirs* of Pondichéry, Karikal, Mahé, Yanaom, and Chandernagor, whose secession was imbricated in the decolonization of both Indochina and Algeria.

Kate Marsh's excellent introduction provides a useful overview of the historical and ideological issues underpinning the essays, which are structured thematically under four headings. In Part I, 'Nostalgic Reflections on France's First Overseas Empire', the

contributors treat the nostalgic legacies of the lost territories of Saint Domingue, India, and Canada, revealing how romanticized images of these former colonies have brought to bear on later discourses of empire. Yun Kyoung Kwon's consideration of the narratives put forth by the *colons* in the wake of Haitian independence is an important reminder that loss is always deployed strategically in the ideological battles between and within nations. The second chapter by Kathryn Dale develops this thread by demonstrating how *Chocolat Suchard*'s romanticized images of a largely lost and geographically insignificant Indian colony served to promote the benefits of empire to the French public during the 1930s. In chapter 3, Olivier Courteaux then investigates how Charles de Gaulle's nostalgia for French Canada served as a rhetorical tool in the political battle against Anglophone hegemony in North America. In Part II, 'Narratives of Loss: Decolonization under the Fourth and Fifth Republics', the contributors turn to the medium of literature and film to problematize the relationship between (de)colonization, mythology, and *nostalgérie*. John Strachan considers how Albert Camus's *Le premier homme* posits a fragmented Algerian space that challenges historical accounts of the pedagogical *francisation* of the colony, while Sophie Watt traces the nostalgic remembrance of the Maghreb in the films of Alexandre Arcady. Arcady's cinematic representations are shown to portray a sentimental vision of the *pieds-noirs* that seeks to rehabilitate, rather than interrogate, France's colonial past.

In Part III, '*L'Inde perdue*: France and Colonial Loss', the contributors examine French representations of India as part of a tripartite framework that comprises France, India, and Britain. Through an examination of a legal case study and several literary texts, including novels by Louis Rousselet, Jules Verne, and Alexandre Dumas, they reveal how France's marginal position in India was—and indeed continues to be—instrumentalized in order to challenge British hegemony. The highly nostalgic '"special" relationship' (p. 84) imagined between France and India is posited as a compensatory mechanism designed to counter British rule and alleviate France's sense of loss. Nicola Frith, Akhila Yechury, and Indra N. Mukhopadhyay all underscore the importance of examining the intersections between French and British rule in India, and their contributions do an excellent job of paving the way for collaborative scholarship in the future.

Part IV, 'Memories of French Colonialism in the Late Twentieth and Early Twenty-First Centuries', interrogates the afterlives of empire, demonstrating how colonial loss both problematizes, and is absorbed by, the narrative of the nation-state. Claire Eldridge discusses the interesting case of Carnoux-en-Provence, a predominantly *pied-noir* town that was constructed in the aftermath of the *guerre d'Algérie*. As a nostalgic and mimetic space that incorporates the scents and sounds of the lost homeland, Carnoux marks both a disavowal of loss and an attempt to continue the partisan traditions of the *pied-noir* community in France. Emile Chabal's contribution situates the postcolonial turn in France within the often contested paradigm of the nation-state, revealing how neo-republican discourse has successfully adapted to incorporate various postcolonial demands. As these so-called marginal narratives threaten to destabilize the concept of the nation, Chabal demonstrates how proponents of neo-republicanism continue to employ loss, fragmentation, and *la fracture sociale* to their advantage, reframing these issues within the shifting parameters of nationalism in order to promote a cohesive vision of contemporary France. His contribution is an important reminder of the complexities inherent to the field of Francophone postcolonial studies.

As the title of the volume suggests, the predominant *point de repère* in *France's Lost Empires* remains the *métropole*, yet this predilection towards a specifically 'French colonial lexis' (p. 6) is deliberate as the contributors seek to analyse how failure and loss can validate imperialist discourse. An examination of the trope of loss as it pertains to the intersecting discourses of both colonizer and colonized may be a fruitful avenue for future research.

Collectively, the volume insists upon the value of transnational and comparative accounts of empire that take into consideration the complex relationships between imperial nations. As they begin to dismantle fixed oppositions between temporalities and historiographies, the contributors remind us of the importance of a collaborative and transdisciplinary approach to history that simultaneously problematizes and enriches the field of Francophone postcolonial studies.

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Edwidge Danticat: A Reader's Guide. Edited by MARTIN MUNRO. Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2010. 222 pp. Pb £19.50. ISBN: 978-0813930220

It is strange that there has been so little sustained criticism on Edwidge Danticat's work, given its unparalleled popularity on the Haitian literary scene. Perhaps one reason for this is, as Martin Munro suggests in his introduction to the volume, a consequence of her resistance to the usual types of classification reserved for Haitian writers: into which area of the bookstore does she fit—Caribbean, African American, ethnic, black, women's, world literature, or general fiction? Munro is quite right to point out that Danticat goes beyond all of these pigeonholes. Indeed, Danticat has taken Haitian literature beyond its orthodoxies. No longer, Danticat has shown us, is Haitian literature written only in French or *Kreyòl*, but in other languages too, such as English and Spanish. While Munro suggests that her use of English implicitly weakens bonds between the *Kreyòl* and French languages and Haitian identity, her employment of *Kreyòl* expressions is actually more prominent than in most contemporary (and largely Francophone) Haitian writing.

The stated aim of the volume is to act as a point of departure, and it offers excellent and thorough contextualization of Danticat's work. Its layout is geared towards students and is divided into four main sections: 'Contexts', 'Texts and Analyses', 'Danticat and Her Peers', and 'Interview and Bibliography', each of which is prefaced by a short introduction. A brief biography opens the volume, which works well in this instance, given that literal referentiality and fiction blur in Danticat's work, as J. Michael Dash also comments in his chapter. Biographical information here is largely based on Danticat's family memoir *Brother, I'm Dying* (2007) and, as Munro observes in the first chapter, many of these experiences resurface elsewhere in her writing in a commuted fictionalized form. Focus on contexts here is especially welcome as Danticat is often talked about as if her works come *ex nihilo* and belong in a vacuum, and her Haitian literary baggage is often ignored by critics. As Dash insists, Danticat is constantly making reference to her Haitian precursors. Situating her work within a Haitian literary tradition is also the purpose of the bibliography at the end of the volume, which will be an essential for any student or scholar of Danticat. A cursory read through the bibliography underlines that scholarship on Danticat is rather fragmented, and *Edwidge Danticat: A Reader's Guide* goes a long way towards filling this critical void.

Analyses in the second section frequently draw thematic links between the different sections of Danticat's work and the way she reworks themes across a variety of narrative genres. Focus on critically neglected elements of Danticat's work, such as her children's literature and travel writing, is particularly enlightening, as are the explorations by Nick Nesbitt and Mary Gallagher of the functions of short works and testimonial writing in Danticat's literary praxis. Style is a preoccupation of many of the essays in this section.

Gallagher argues that the theme of fragmentation in *The Dew Breaker* is also enacted through the structure of that book, and that her political engagement and stylistics are intimately connected. Kiera Vaklavik examines didactic functions of the epistolary form and intimate first-person narration in Danticat's fiction for young readers. It would be interesting to extend Nesbitt's overview of the blurring of the personal and the political in Danticat's fiction to the work of other Haitian writers, particularly in light of recent denunciations of Lyonel Trouillot, Yanick Lahens and Frankétienne by Peter Hallward and Chris Bongie.

Rape is represented prominently throughout Danticat's works and, as Mireille Rosello discusses, it is the difficulty of dealing with this subject within the context of literary criticism which can leave the critic or student with little to say. This is clearly one reason why, despite being such a popular writer—indeed, *the* Haitian writer with the most extensive readership—Danticat has been strangely overlooked by literary criticism. This is, I would argue, a wider problem in Haitian literature: there is similar critical neglect of Marie Chauvet, in particular the horrendous rape scenes represented in the *Colère* novella of her trilogy *Amour, Colère et Folie*. Students and teachers find it very difficult to find the words to speak and write about this novella and *Breath, Eyes, Memory*, despite their popularity.

A third section 'Danticat and Her Peers' has been contributed by fellow-novelists from the Caribbean and North America. Moving away from scholarly analyses towards personal responses, the merit of this section is that writers, namely Maryse Condé, Évelyne Trouillot and Lyonel Trouillot, highlight Danticat's significance by dint of penning short pieces that are ostensibly connected in some way with her work. What is frustrating here is that these writers tend to focus on their own importance while using rather tenuous takes on Danticat's fiction as a prism through which to discuss their own works. A case in point is Madison Smartt-Bell's essay in which he mentions that his book was nominated for a National Book Award alongside Danticat's *Krik? Krak!*, noting modestly that 'my book outweighed hers, in a certain respect' (p. 175). Condé reads Danticat obliquely when she considers her work in the context of Aimé Césaire and Patrick Chamoiseau—not the most obvious points of comparison.

Overall, the stress on understanding Danticat in all of her contexts, particularly that of other Haitian writing, the attention to particularities of her style and their functions, and the quality of the thematic analyses make this book essential introductory reading for students and all new readers of Danticat. Those already familiar with current Danticat scholarship will also find in this volume an excellent overview of key concerns and a useful bibliography, and the focus on contexts is indispensable. Attention could perhaps now be devoted to what singles Danticat out from other Haitian writers: her prolific preface-writing (particularly for translations which bring important or little-known Haitian novels to a larger Anglophone audience) and her patronage of anthologies, of other Haitian women's writing and of grassroots campaigns.

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Haiti Unbound: A Spiralist Challenge to the Postcolonial Canon. By KAIAMA L. GLOVER. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2010. 262 pp. Hb £65.00. ISBN: 978-1-84631-499-5

As part of the 'Contemporary French and Francophone Cultures' series, alongside works by literary critics and scholars of the Francophone Caribbean such as Munro, McCusker, and Britton, Kaiama Glover has contributed the first full-length study of the Haitian literary collective known as Spiralism with the publication of *Haiti Unbound*. Glover's work foregrounds the idea of a 'challenge to the postcolonial canon' in order to contextualize theoretically the work of the three key Haitian Spiralist writers—Frankétienne, Jean-Claude Fignolé, and René Philoctète—within the Francophone postcolonial literary world. While acknowledging the context that has enabled the dominance of self-theorizing French Caribbean giants like Glissant, Chamoiseau, and Césaire, the introductory Part I of *Haiti Unbound*, 'The Consequences of Ex-Centricity', insists on the need to reaffirm the place of Haitian writers within this theoretical dynamic. Key concepts such as Glissant's opacity, Glover posits, find a parallel expression in Haitian literary production of the same era and can profitably be re-examined within this alternative sphere.

Giving an overview of the phenomenon of Spiralism, which developed in the 1960s under the totalitarian regime of François Duvalier, Glover's analysis focuses on a primary corpus of Spiralist novels: three by Frankétienne, *Mûr à crever* (1968), *Ultravocal* (1972), and *Les Affres d'un défi*, (1979); two by Fignolé, *Les Possédés de la pleine lune* (1987) and *Aube Tranquille* (1990); and finally one by Philoctète, *Le Peuple des terres mêlées* (1989). While thematically diverse and ranging widely across space and time, these six novels have nonetheless emerged from a specifically Haitian literary tradition, acknowledged in the critical framework within which Glover situates herself.

Glover successfully balances the 'Haitianness' of her corpus with its global theoretical import by evoking a number of key thematic points which recur across the work of the three Spiralists. In terms of characterization, the prominent instability which results in doubling, schizophrenia, personality fragmentation, and zombification, for example, is given extensive consideration in the work of all three writers. The recurrent theoretical approaches to space and time in the Caribbean novel are picked up and analysed in relation to the Spiralists in Part III of *Haiti Unbound*, 'Space-Time of the Spiral'. This section looks particularly at the function of the spiral in understanding Caribbean histories, arguing that this is an active process of living the past in the present through cyclical repetition.

A final key problematic, to which Glover returns from different angles throughout, is the exclusion of the non-elite—and often non-literate—majority from theory, and the associated challenge of developing a productive dialogue between writer and reader. This point could have been usefully developed via a parallel discussion of audience reaction to linguistic complexity in the theatre, a genre within which both Frankétienne and Philoctète have invested, and indeed the author flags this up in the preface to this work as a potential area for development. In conclusion, *Haiti Unbound* offers the reader a closely-observed and detailed series of insights into an important, under-studied literary corpus as well as targeted links towards the 'regional postcolonial and global postmodern aesthetic' (p. 241) within which this study of the Spiralists is situated.

KATE HODGSON
UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL

Colonial Metropolis: The Urban Grounds of Anti-Imperialism and Feminism in Interwar Paris. By Jennifer Anne Boittin. Lincoln, NB, and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2010. 321pp. Hb: £29.99. ISBN: 9780803225459

Over the past decade or so, important critical interventions—not least those by Bennetta Jules-Rosette, T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting and Brent Hayes Edwards—have begun to give greater prominence to the role played by women in the black *and* anti-imperial movements of the interwar period. (I stress the word 'and' for not all black movements were explicitly anti-imperial but more on that below…). Jennifer Anne Boittin's highly impressive volume, *Colonial Metropolis*, builds upon such research in innovative fashion, tracing the ways in which figures involved in anti-imperialism and feminism interacted within the colonial space of the imperial capital, leading to a complex interweaving of the emerging discourses on both topics. Following the lead of other scholars, such as Edwards and Christopher L. Miller, Boittin combs the colonial archives with an historian's eye, and then reads this material against the evidence found in literary representations from the era. To my mind, the book is more authoritative in terms of its historical than its literary analysis, for some literary texts are read a bit too literally as sources of historical information rather than as *representations* (for example, the reading of Ousmane Socé's Mirages de Paris (1937) on the 1931 *Exposition coloniale*) but, on the whole, Boittin is an incisive and sensitive reader and the analysis of works by, for example, Lucie Cousturier and Louise Faure-Favier is compelling. This contrapuntal approach of reading the archives against the literature is highly productive and underscores the originality of a volume exploring a period that has already been the subject of extensive scrutiny in recent times.

One of the central arguments underpinning Boittin's thesis (reflected in the volume's main title) is the idea that Paris, in the aftermath of World War One and the mass influx of colonized subjects, became a 'colonized', interstitial space that was progressively transformed by its direct encounter with the colonial other. As Boittin explains in her introduction, a key inspiration for the project was the desire to uncover connections between the French *vogue nègre*, the radical anti-colonial figures scrupulously tailed by the informers working for the colonial authorities (CAI), reformist black activists who were seen as less 'dangerous', and finally those white French 'feminists' who found common cause with critics of empire. It is this bringing together of material that has in the past largely been examined under separate and mutually exclusive headings that constitutes the real strength of the volume: for example, bringing together anti-imperialism and feminism allows Boittin to explore the masculinist world of much radical anti-colonial groupings. In exploiting a vast body of archival material for new ideas, she understandably relies on received wisdom for what are background areas in her study: this means that the material on some topics, for example on communism, is slightly thin (apart from the excellent exploration of the politics of having a woman serve as chair of the PCF committee overseeing the Union Intercoloniale); equally, there are occasional factual errors that have slipped in from these secondary sources; for instance, there is no clear evidence that Lamine Senghor studied at the Sorbonne, nor was his body brought to Paris for burial). However, these are very minor flaws in what is otherwise an exemplary piece of historical scholarship.

In the opening chapter—which achieves the not insignificant feat of managing to develop an original approach to the career of Josephine Baker—Boittin begins by reading Baker's career as a 'conscious' performance of empire, and then examines how the black press, radical or otherwise (from which Baker usually kept her distance) interpreted such performances. Chapters 2–4 trace the physical presence of black colonial subjects within the space of the 'colonial metropolis', as Boittin displays a meticulous eye for telling detail in the archives. She uses the colonial secret police files to discover the addresses of known radicals

and thereby to begin the process of tracing a map of the black presence in the city (colonial subjects were situated across the entire city and not just in the traditional working-class strongholds of the north and east). She examines the location of 'black' nightclubs and reads various contemporaneous accounts of them to ascertain whether they catered largely for a colonial or a Parisian audience (or both). She also begins to tease out some of the questions surrounding the nature of the interracial relationships in which the vast majority of black activists were involved. These chapters provide a material exploration of the extent to which the *vogue nègre* impacted on daily life in the colonial metropolis and constituted a key part of the critical and intellectual environment in which black activists were living and working.

The final two chapters focus more centrally on the position of women within the black movement: they were virtually absent from the more radical groups but heavily involved in more reformist newspapers such as *La Dépêche Africaine*. Particularly fascinating is Boittin's analysis in Chapter 6 of the ways in which certain French women (e.g. Lucie Cousturier, Denise Moran, Marthe Oulié) articulated a critique of empire in which the status of women was central. In this closing chapter, Boittin rightly highlights the complex and at times paradoxical nature of the gendered critique of empire, for it often reveals a view that women were better equipped to undertake the civilizing mission than men. However, given the range of positions in relation to empire that she identifies, the term 'anti-imperialism', used in the volume's sub-title, seems rather ill-suited, for certain key figures analysed quite clearly desire to reform rather than oppose empire *per se*. My slight critique here refers to the terminology used rather than to the quality of Boittin's analysis, as for the most apart she shows herself to be well aware of such nuances in the critical stance of her subjects.

In conclusion, this is an excellent volume that should be of interest to anyone working on empire in the interwar period in France. It challenges our understanding of this period and obliges us to look at many ideas that have long been taken for granted. One cannot ask for more in a work of history, especially one by an emerging scholar, whose writings we should follow with interest.

DAVID MURPHY
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La francophonie ou l'éloge de la diversité. Edited by MICHAEL ABECASSIS, GUDRUN LEDEGEN AND KAREN ZOUAOUI. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011. 194 pp. Pb £39.99. ISBN 978-1-4438-2934-2

La francophonie ou l'éloge de la diversité brings together a wide range of contributions, the majority issuing from a day conference of the same title held at the Maison française d'Oxford in October 2009. Bernard Cerquiglini's observation that French is a '[langue] rétive à la diversité' (p. 179) could have served as the epigraph to the volume. On the one hand, most of the essays demonstrate that variety and varieties abound in French, as in any language; on the other, they also implicitly illustrate a stubborn unwillingness to accommodate diversity on the part of French speakers world-wide, as those articles discussing Francophone cinemas tend to reveal.

Neither the title of the book, connoting Glissant, nor its actual epigraph, a quotation from Senghor, are directly addressed, nor is the problematic history of the word 'f/Francophonie'. Diversity is perhaps best evidenced in the contents and their authors: the latter, from emerging scholars to veterans of the topic, represent a broad geographical spread

of Francophone academia, equally diverse in both approach and subject matter. Their essays, from the tentative to the well-rehearsed, in French or in English, brief or monumental, are gathered under two broad headings: 'Le cinéma francophone, entre Bollywood et Hollywood' and 'Le français, entre théorie et pratique'. The notion, or conceit, of 'between' remains ambiguous, particularly with regard to the first part since the questions concerning Francophone cinema set out by the editors in the first four paragraphs of their introduction (p. 2) are not specifically discussed in the articles that follow. These are mostly poised between issues of reception and descriptions of linguistic variation—this last topic the subject of a long article (representing two thirds of this first part and more than a quarter of the entire book) by Alena Pordhorná-Polická and Anne-Caroline Fiévet on 'banlieues' film. It might just as readily have come under the heading of the second part 'theory and practice', since cinema, or more precisely scripts, are envisaged as a source of linguistic material for research and pedagogic purposes. The article hints at a fascinating reciprocity between linguistic practices represented on the screen and in the street, the former influencing the latter and vice-versa.

Specific attention to a particular area (La Réunion) and to linguistic variation is the subject of an article by Gudrun Ledegen in the second part of the book which is otherwise dominated by contributions on broader topics: the relative positions of languages worldwide, with special attention given to French (Louis-Jean Calvet); plurilingualism within France (Bernard Cerquiglini—who proves more optimistic than most observers in anticipating France becoming a 'pays franco(poly)phone' (p. 184)); and French cultural diplomacy (Philippe Lane). Calvet's research has previously been presented in English and in French (and is already published in French by L'Harmattan, 2009). Leaning on statistical analyses based on factors often overlooked in assessing the position of French in the linguistic world order, his work provides a new slant on approaches to language management and promotion.

The book would have benefited from a more active input on the part of the editors, not only stylistically (typos, errors, and repeats mar a number of chapters) but also through an engagement with the contents of each article. The kind of dialogue that usually takes place among scholars during a conference might have found its expression here and perhaps clarified that tantalizing 'between' notion. While this book is neither a complete survey nor review of *francophonie* in its diversity, and nor does it claim to be, it offers a number of useful individual perspectives.

GABRIELLE PARKER
MIDDLESEX UNIVERSITY

Manuel d'ingrédients culturels camerounais. By JEAN-CLAUDE MBARGA. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2011, 283 pp. Pb €27,50. ISBN: 978-2-296-55314-9

Manuel d'ingrédients culturels camerounais nous plonge dans les us et coutumes du peuple camerounais. A partir de phénomènes apparemment anodins, Jean-Claude Mbarga cristallise de façon originale ce qui constitue aujourd'hui la quintessence de la vie au Cameroun sans pour autant tomber dans des généralités. Le cas du Cameroun est instructif à plusieurs égards, notamment en ce que l'observation des habitudes culturelles camerounaises transcende les frontières du Cameroun comme en atteste l'auteur lui-même: 'Le Cameroun, berceau de mes ancêtres, considéré géographiquement et comportementalement comme l'Afrique en miniature, et comme le pays des contradictions' (p. 17). En effet, pays des contradictions, car bien qu'il possède plus de deux-cent-cinquante ethnies les Camerounais à l'étranger ne s'identifient pas à leur ethnie, mais bien à leur nation, si bien qu'il n'est pas déplacé de parler dans cette critique de peuple camerounais. En cinq chapitres, l'auteur endosse le risque de nous présenter chacun de ces 'ingrédients' idiosyncratiques, saisis pour leurs travers et incohérences notoires.

Le premier chapitre se concentre sur la question du regard actuel et proleptique de la diversité culturelle posée dans le contexte de mondialisation. La notion d'identité prend-elle le sens d'altérité? Ainsi, la notion de mondialisation selon Mbarga 's'accommode mal de la pensée unique du strict capitalisme' (p. 29). Il suggère donc une redéfinition de la société planétaire résumée en plurivocité idéologique, où la diversité serait acceptée comme réalité inéluctable. A son tour, cette diversité culturelle s'ancre dans un groupe social déterminé qui renvoie à l'héritage culturel d'un peuple. En définitive, Mbarga conçoit le village planétaire comme une succession d'espaces résidentiels où se côtoient des cultures qui proviennent de différents pays, où le libéralisme culturel permettrait d'opérer librement ses choix. La portée de l'interculturalité ici espérée revisite les relations humaines affranchies de toute notion de territoire.

Tout en retraçant l'évolution du costume à travers les siècles, le chapitre deux souligne l'importance de l'habit au sein de la vie sociale, signe de théâtralisation et instrument de colonisation du Cameroun. L'auteur entreprend une étude du vêtement qui se veut à la fois morpho-syntaxique et sémantico-pragmatique, et qui élève un regard nouveau sur la mode vestimentaire au Cameroun. Le kaba retient particulièrement l'attention avec ses déclinaisons au gré de la technologie: le kaba cellulaire doit son nom à la forme du portable et le kaba internet dévoile aux Européens les formes des Camerounaises (en quête d'Européens) par webcam. Cependant, les analyses morpho-syntaxique et sémantico-pragmatique sont quelque peu redondantes tant elles reprennent les mêmes modèles d'étude (par exemple, les codes vestimentaires des forces du maintien de l'ordre, des membres du clergé et des uniformes associatifs).

Le chapitre trois est consacré au phénomène de la mendicité que l'auteur décrit sous couvert de récits ou d'effets narratologiques. Curieusement, l'auteur envisage la mendicité comme 'un phénomène normal, et même noble spirituellement parlant, si l'on s'en tient par exemple au Coran ou à la Bible' (p. 159). Pourtant, si ce phénomène est abondamment relaté dans les Saintes Ecritures, c'est pour reconnaître au mendiant une égale dignité et le sortir de son état de mendicité. En aucun cas la Bible ne glorifie la mendicité, distincte de la sollicitation du pèlerin ou du désintérêt matériel de soi pour s'ouvrir aux autres. Quant à l'islam, si l'aumône est une obligation morale, elle est réservée aux musulmans à travers une banque qui recense les nécessiteux et gère la zakat'. Or une telle institution n'existe pas au Cameroun et les préceptes coraniques n'autorisent nullement la mendicité publique. Une méprise est donc sous-jacente. Néanmoins, l'originalité de ce chapitre tient aux différentes formes de mendicités illustrées par l'auteur qui s'empare du phénomène au sens large, présenté comme l'action de demander des faveurs et qui n'est plus l'apanage des seuls

invalides ou nécessiteux. Ainsi, de nombreux Camerounais sont des mendiants qui s'ignorent. L'auteur épingle la mendicité des fonctionnaires auprès des usagers pour faire avancer leur dossier ou encore des agents de sécurité des supermarchés et boulangeries qui, sous une apparente gentillesse et sans l'accord du client, portent ses paquets en quémandant quelques pièces.

La musique, apparentée à un ingrédient sexuel avec en exemple caractéristique le cas du Bikut-sí, fait l'objet du chapitre quatrième chapitre. Cette musique et la danse qui lui est associée emportent un succès national, voire international. Le Bikut-sí est originaire du centre du Cameroun, typé par le groupe ethnique Beti. La métaphore et l'allusion font partie intégrante du Bikut-sí pour désigner les organes et les rapports sexuels qui tissent la trame de toutes les chansons. Par exemple, le coït est assimilé à une perfusion à cause du sperme introduit dans le corps de la femme, et les amants à des bonbons alcoolisés, évoquant ainsi le plaisir du moment avec son compagnon assimilé à un aliment sucré. Le Bikut-sí sera considéré par certains comme une parade aphrodisiaque, préambule aux relations amoureuses et par d'autres, comme de la pure pornographie.

L'examen factuel du comportement des Camerounais dans les espaces publics alimente le cinquième et dernier chapitre de cet ouvrage. Ainsi, sont présentés les Camerounais pressés dans les transports publics, légaux ou clandestins, habituellement surchargés de passagers. L'auteur nous emmène également dans les banques où tous les guichets fonctionnent en périodes creuses, alors que c'est l'inverse aux heures de forte affluence. L'espace public motive dans ce chapitre un florilège des incohérences quotidiennes de la société camerounaise.

Par une stigmatisation volontaire et risquée de ce qui constitue l'idiosyncrasie camerounaise au quotidien, Jean-Claude Mbarga entend doter le *Manuel d'ingrédients culturels camerounais* d'un effet miroir. L'ouvrage lance un appel courageux en faveur d'une prise de conscience, source d'un Cameroun meilleur. La réception de cet ouvrage et les actions qui s'ensuivront montreront si ce pari est réussi. Mais d'ores et déjà, ce manuel culturel apporte au lecteur une connaissance actualisée des us et coutumes des Camerounais et donne matière à réflexion sur leur quotidien et devenir. Nul doute que cet ouvrage sera un outil utile aux chercheurs.

LAURENCE RANDALL
UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER

Globalizing the Postcolony: Contesting Discourses of Gender and Development in Francophone Africa. By CLAIRE H. GRIFFITHS. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2011. 323 pp. Hb £49.95. ISBN: 978-0-7391-4384-1

Even a furtive glance at the Human Development Index reveals that a staggering majority of Francophone African countries consistently underperform in terms of social development. Most of them are to be found languishing in the bottom tier of its ranking, in the low human development category. Although Anglophone African countries do not shine by their performance (South Africa was ranked 123rd out of 187 in 2011), they usually outdo their Francophone counterparts. The picture gets even bleaker when taking into account gender differences, argues Claire Griffiths with an arsenal of statistical figures to support the fundamental idea underpinning this book.

Naturally, this situation did not remain unnoticed among national and international bodies, and specific discourses have emerged in an attempt to explain and solve this problem.

Globalizing the Postcolony looks in the first instance at the development of these discourses within international institutions (such as the UN, whose commitment to the question was reiterated in the 2000 Millenium Summit through its eight Millenium Development Goals) as much as within the *Francophonie*, particularly active since the 2000 Luxembourg declaration which attempted to offer a specifically Francophone response to this situation. But the book does a lot more than just following the long itinerary of these ideas from the Second World War until the twenty-first century. It also offers a useful appraisal of the situation in two case studies, namely Senegal and Gabon, which demonstrate the limits of both the one-size-fits-all policies enforced by international organizations and the prevalent numerical approaches which have remained the key tool of developmentalists in spite of the fact that they ignore local contextual peculiarities. This observation paves the way for the third main line of investigation followed in this book, and probably the most interesting: the historical legacies which explain the persistence of gender inequalities, and local strategies of reaction to them in academic discourse, civil society, and literary production.

This subtle combination of approaches allows *Globalizing the Postcolony* to offer a comprehensive survey of the discourse of gender and development in Francophone Africa since its beginning, in the aftermath of the Second World War. Adopting an interdisciplinary approach, the author alternates sections relying on statistical data produced by international and African national bodies, and others emphasizing a qualitative approach (stemming from interviews, historical research, or literary analysis) offering a much-needed attempt at contextualizing. Though the hybridity of the sources on which Griffiths bases her research is quite unusual, it is entirely justified by the thematic approach adopted in the book, which made pluridisciplinarity desirable. Readers of this *Bulletin* will find the chapters on Francophone African writers (chapters 16–18) particularly inspiring: the analyses of Mariama Bâ's *Une si longue lettre* and *Un chant écarlate* and Mame Younousse Dieng's *La Voie du Salut*, *L'Ombre en feu*, *Le Miroir de la vie*, and *Brisures de vies* provide a thorough insight into gender issues prevailing in Senegal, which these two feminist authors have tried to denounce in their works. These two chapters demonstrate the merits of interpreting African literature through the prism of gender inequalities and feminism.

Globalizing the Postcolony is a very fine piece of scholarship, which reflects the author's evident familiarity with the region discussed. It fittingly highlights the usually ignored gender implications of international developmental policies in relation to Francophone Africa. It offers a comprehensive overview of a discourse which has taken shape over more than sixty years, and does so from a variety of angles: this is in itself a *tour de force*. Yet, from a purely geographical perspective, it seems that the subtitle, which refers to Francophone Africa, generates expectations which could have been more fully met: readers might regret that former Belgian colonies in central Africa, which are Francophone, are entirely left out of the project. The case of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (the largest single country of sub-Saharan Africa and the largest Francophone country in the world) would have provided a useful comparison with French colonies, whilst Rwanda and Burundi would have offered the opportunity to factor in discourses on war, conflict, and genocide when considering gender and development. It was not unreasonable to expect these cases to be examined (even in passing) somewhere in the book, especially because Gabon also belongs to the Central African region. Those familiar with the Africanist academic literature may regret that, in spite of a clear attempt to engage with key contributors to this field (see for instance references to Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch or Terence Ranger), some authors whose work is directly relevant to the book have not been taken into account. This is the case, for instance, of Pascale Barthélémy's historical reading of Bâ's *Une si longue lettre*, Odile Goerg's edited special issue of *Cahiers Afrique* on 'Perspectives historiques sur le genre en Afrique' (2007), or Frederick Cooper's *Decolonization and African Society: The Labor Question in French and British Africa* (1996) and *Africa since 1940* (2002), which could all have been usefully discussed

in this book. There are also a few factual errors (for example, p. 107, the 1990 La Baule summit was a *sommet franco-africain* and not a Francophonie summit), some typographical mistakes, and missing accents in the transcription of French book titles or expressions, which tend to indicate that the book would have benefited from more thorough copy-editing. Yet, these minor issues do not prevent this work from being a stimulating intellectual opus, opening new lines of academic inquiry with the potential to have an impact on future policy-making in the region.

Claire Griffiths has attempted a perilous but necessary exercise in interdisciplinarity. In so doing, she also sets a potentially fruitful research agenda for the future. The impact of gender divide on developmental questions had long been identified, but it had never been explored from the discursive and Francophone angle that Griffiths adopts in her ground-breaking study. By adding the gender parameter to the study of development (and its corollary, underdevelopment), this volume throws light on a key dimension of many of the problems that Francophone Africa has recurrently had to face. This is a timely addition to the literature, which will be of much interest to all those concerned with postcolonial transitions in Africa and the place of Francophone Africa in our globalized world of the twenty-first century.

BERNY SÈBE
UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

CONFERENCE REPORTS

Rethinking the Modern: Colonialism, Empire and Slavery

The British Sociological Association
Birmingham Midland Institute, 11–12 July 2011

This international conference, organized by the British Sociological Association, explored how colonialism, empire and slavery made the modern world. Setting itself the task of taking a critical perspective on the tendency in existing scholarship to analyse colonialism and decolonization through the prism of European and US exceptionalism, the conference emphasized the role of minorities and a non-western approach in rethinking colonial modernity. Gurminder K. Bhambra (University of Warwick) convened more than eighty participants from various disciplines to address this particular problematic. Covering a range of themes, the panels were entitled: 'Minorities', 'Slavery', 'Imperial Enlightenment', 'Migration', 'De-colonial Thought', 'Colonial Desires', 'Anti-colonial Movements, 'Coloniality vs. Modernity', 'Reinterpreting Colonialism', 'Neo-imperialism', 'Global Historical Sociology', and 'European Integration'.

Five keynote speakers set up the theoretical framework of the various panels and discussions. Walter Mignolo (Duke University) opened the conference by interrogating the notion of 'coloniality' with reference to cases of exploitation without colonialism in nineteenth-century South America and contemporaneous capitalist societies. He called for the 'de-westernization', or deconstruction, of the single world narrative of coloniality and argued for the need to work towards building a post-modern world by readopting a poly-centric understanding of the world. For another keynote speaker, Patricia Hill Collins (University of Maryland), it is the very notion of racism that needs to be modernized. She introduced new language concepts to analyse racial inequalities, contending that modernity erased biological racism while post-modernity highlighted ethnicity as a cultural phenomenon. Although the term 'race' is avoided, cultural racism still exists: a notion she called 'colour-blind racism'. Nikhil Pal Singh (New York University) argued that the permanent war by the United States against migrants, terrorists or mujahideen, both inside and outside its frontiers, constitutes a new form of coloniality and reconstitutes racial disparities despite the fact that the US officially disavows colonialism. The keynote by Catherine Hall (University College of London) offered a historical perspective on debates. Taking Thomas Babington Macaulay's *History of England* (1848) as its starting point, her paper analysed the similarities between Macaulay's ignoring of imperial influence on British history and the ways in which minorities are forgotten in today's history of the empire. Along with Priyamvada Gopal (University of Cambridge) she stressed the importance of recognizing the role of colonized minorities in British historiography. The final keynote, by Gopal, demonstrated the reciprocal exchanges involved in colonial encounters: while British imperialism certainly had a great impact on the world, colonized anti-imperialism nevertheless influenced British values.

The two-day conference was preceded by a film showing: 'Empire Pays Back' by Robert Beckford. The film demonstrated how Britain profited from slavery and suggested that the country must apologize and financially support the development of the territories it exploited in the past.

LAURA KOTTOS
READING UNIVERSITY

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 autumn 2012 issue is 31 August 2012.

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