

# *Bulletin of Francophone Postcolonial Studies*

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## Recovering and Mapping Harki Memory through Narrative

The publication in 2003 of a cluster of narratives gave voice to an emerging Harki memory in France and established renewed approaches to contesting tensions arising from decolonization and Algerian independence in 1962. In their common focus on a recovery of collective memory, works by Dalila Kerchouche (*Mon père, ce Harki*), Fatima Besnaci-Lancou (*Fille de Harki*), Zahia Rahmani (*Mozè*) and Hadjila Kemoum (*Mohand le Harki*)—authors all either born in France or who moved from Algeria at a young age—reflect concerns around a problematic inheritance and a persistently marginal status as Harki daughters. They represent a population whose resettlement was administered directly by French authorities, around half of the estimated total of 85,000 former auxiliary troops who fought on the French side—and their families—that fled Algeria in the aftermath of independence.<sup>1</sup> The narrative combination of personal testimonies and accounts of the experiences of the parental generation has influenced the critical categorization of these texts. Most notably, Nina Sutherland’s term ‘collecto-biography’ encompasses the processes of recovering and reinterpreting memory that demonstrates the ways in which ‘each writer’s entire identity has been shaped by their status as the child of a Harki.’<sup>2</sup> In addition to the awareness shown by the authors of the historical context surrounding formative experiences, a significant aspect of the originality of their approaches to Harki collective memory lies in the spatial and geographical references that they employ. Narrators focus their critical attention on the French policies of resettlement of families organized around a series of camps and employment in forestry settlements in the years after 1962. While these texts work on individual levels to question the lasting personal effects of an inherited status, they also cast a broader focus by engaging in what Martin Evans has identified as the significant ‘reimagining’ of Harki collective memory in recent years on the strength of renewed approaches to history and the complexity of positions during the Algerian war.<sup>3</sup> With a focus on two of these texts, *Mon père, ce Harki* by Dalila Kerchouche and *Fille de Harki* by Fatima Besnaci-Lancou, this article will assess how Harki collective memory is ‘reimagined’ and mobilized around factors of physical space and, in turn, assess the broader implications of these approaches to framing connections to the colonial past in contemporary France.

As these narratives emerged in the context of increased memorialization and representation of the Algerian War and its legacies in France, the generational shifts in perspectives that they signal are important to renewed interpretations of the public position of Harki collective memory. Where recognition of the Harkis at official levels in France has developed in recent years, it has been focused largely on themes of loyalty to France in military service and remained bound by matters of compensation and dependence on the state.<sup>4</sup> In seeking to establish a clear and independent position for Harki memory in France, however, these narratives challenge the limited recognition and contextualization of what was, consistently, a civilian population of colonial subjects. As they develop their critical approaches, Kerchouche and Besnaci-Lancou both identify the particular utility of reference to camps—and the geographical peripheries on which they were located—in clarifying and expanding understanding of Harki experiences following the War of Independence and flight from Algeria. In assessing

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<sup>1</sup> Abderahmen Moumen, ‘La notion d’abandon des harkis par les autorités françaises’, in *Les Harkis: Histoire, mémoire et transmission*, ed. by Fatima Besnaci-Lancou, Benoît Falaize and Gilles Manceron (Paris: Éditions de l’Atelier, 2010), pp. 47–62 (p. 59).

<sup>2</sup> Nina Sutherland, ‘Harki Autobiographies or Collecto-Biographies? Mothers speak through their Daughters’, *Romance Studies*, 24 (2006), 193–201 (p. 196).

<sup>3</sup> Martin Evans, *Algeria: France’s Undeclared War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 363.

<sup>4</sup> A national day of commemoration (25 September) in France honouring the Harkis was first observed in 2001 and was fixed by decree as an annual date in 2003: ‘Décret du 31 mars 2003 instituant une Journée nationale d’hommage aux harkis et autres membres des formations supplétives’; <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cid=Texte-JORFTEXT000000419142&categorieLien=cid> [accessed 20 October 2015].

the critical focus provided by physical sites in these narratives, this textual analysis will be informed by Lefebvre's conceptualization of space as a product of social relations.<sup>5</sup> While an awareness of spatiality is demonstrated by both authors, their respective approaches also vary on the basis of personal connections to the system of camps, as well as their requirements for recovering and ultimately repositioning memory. Kerchouche, born in France a decade after her family's arrival, starts from a position of distance and aims, by visiting the sites relevant to family memory 'abolir cette frontière...' and 'toucher du doigt ce passé que je n'ai pas vécu'.<sup>6</sup> In contrast, Besnaci-Lancou presents a direct personal account of resettlement, yet also recognizes the importance of a critical process of interpreting traces of her family's past from a temporal distance. This is particularly important in relation to the centrality of the French administrative system to her formative experiences. She explains how, having arrived in France as an eight-year-old, the family was subject to a series of moves between several institutional environments: 'je n'ai vraiment quitté l'univers des camps qu'à vingt-cinq ans.'<sup>7</sup> The central contention of this article, therefore, is that these successive peripheral locations—relevant to the Harki experience of resettlement and associated confinement to social marginality—serve as crucial reference points for developments in the transmission of memory.

Further to the processes of questioning past experiences and forms of inheritance that characterize the genre of 'collecto-biography' outlined by Sutherland, both authors develop their narrative approaches from an initial stimulus to clarify their perspectives in the present. At the outset of *Mon père, ce Harki*, Kerchouche identifies a specific topography that corresponds to her family's passage through the French administrative system: 'Ils ont traversé six camps disséminés en France, en un trajet qui forme comme une étoile sur la carte de France.'<sup>8</sup> As with the engagement by Kerchouche with the structures within which Harki families were contained in France, Besnaci-Lancou's personal account in *Fille de Harki* is also marked by her recognition of a collective experience and an interest in the broader social implications of these environments. Faced with the lasting effects of confinement, she equally frames her narrative as a performative endeavour that would address how 'comme beaucoup, j'ai tenu ma douleur enfermée. À présent, il faut que je raconte. Il faut stopper la chaîne du malheur.'<sup>9</sup> A critical examination of the dispersal of families proves central to definitive efforts to resolve tensions surrounding Harki memory. Géraldine Enjelvin emphasizes how, in assessing the course of Harki experiences since 1962, these 'daughter' narratives 'constitute dialogical acts' through their reconstruction of past events and the gathering of testimony.<sup>10</sup> This article will now turn to consider how a form of critical dialogue based on exchanges with family members retracing their experiences, as well as engagement with physical sites relevant to Harki collective memory between France and Algeria, is established by both authors.

After her initial identification of the itinerary of her family's moves around a succession of camps, a critical spatial awareness informs the process throughout Kerchouche's text of recovering and reframing Harki memory. The stated desire for reconstruction of the past in relation to tangible physical traces finds an effective outlet in her style that combines travelogue with archival investigation. This approach is valued as it enables her 'errer autour des miens, invisible, omnisciente, cheminer autour d'eux comme un fantôme du futur.'<sup>11</sup> The particular importance of this mobility in engaging critically with the lasting implications of her family's experiences is also demonstrated by the difficulty of breaking the reluctance of her father and other family members to address their past and the lasting effects of confinement. Lila Ibrahim-

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<sup>5</sup> Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), p. 116.

<sup>6</sup> Dalila Kerchouche, *Mon père, ce Harki* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2003), p. 26.

<sup>7</sup> Fatima Besnaci-Lancou, *Fille de Harki* (Paris: Éditions de l'Atelier, 2005), p. 103.

<sup>8</sup> Kerchouche, *Mon père, ce Harki*, p. 26.

<sup>9</sup> Besnaci-Lancou, *Fille de Harki*, p. 20.

<sup>10</sup> Géraldine Enjelvin, 'Harki Daughters "Righting" Narratives: Resistance Identity and *Littérature Naturelle*', in *A Practical Guide to French Harki Literature*, ed. by Keith Moser (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014), pp. 83–99 (p. 94).

<sup>11</sup> Kerchouche, *Mon père, ce Harki*, p. 33.

Lamrous argues that the consistent interest of the generation of Harki children in France that Kerchouche reflects is in finding a clear and effective voice in which to express memory, as the Harki community has long been ‘mutique plutôt qu’amnésique’.<sup>12</sup> Where the silence of the father and consequent difficulties for the transmission of memory provoked by this system are identified by Kerchouche as obstacles to a clear understanding of experiences, her mother has, by contrast, long been ‘avide de confier ses tourments’.<sup>13</sup> Continuing her gradual increase in understanding of the context of the family’s experiences, Kerchouche identifies a particular tension between efforts made by the family at social integration and the consistent obstruction imposed by prevailing conditions in the camps and administrative system. In assessing, for example, her mother’s efforts to establish a functioning family home and degree of independence in light of the discoveries made during her own archival investigations of the welfare and aid of which they were deprived, she expresses frustration at how: ‘Si seulement j’avais été là... J’aurais pu dire à ma pauvre mère ce qu’elle ignorait alors.’<sup>14</sup> The spatial frame of reference that Kerchouche employs therefore consistently informs her sense of responsibility to act on behalf of the previous generation.

Over the course of her journey around a series of camps, the advantage of generational distance that the narrator holds in reinterpreting events is also made evident. This is noted, in particular, in the contrast with her elder siblings, who grew up in these environments: ‘... mes frères et sœurs plus âgés me traitent souvent de “privilegiée.” Eux ont connu les “camps”. Pas moi.’<sup>15</sup> In her simultaneous role as both a distanced observer and active investigator, Kerchouche charts a process of a cumulative gain in understanding the lasting effects of the camps and their systems. The investigations of the family’s experiences and the cross-referencing of testimonies with visits to relevant sites enable Kerchouche to advance her critical perspective through what she identifies as her technique of ‘télescopage entre le passé et le présent’.<sup>16</sup> This effort to reconnect experiences with persistent tensions and divisions also aids her broader structural understanding of the Harkis caught between France and Algeria. As Todd Shepard has argued, the closing-off of connections to the Algerian past by France from 1962 onwards was exercised through political and legal measures, enabling the nation to distance itself from colonial legacies.<sup>17</sup> Such definitive closure and transition to an actively post-colonial state, however, had particularly stark consequences for the Harkis, a population representing significant legacies of the conflict. Faced with the crisis of the mass arrival, ‘...the harkis were classed as outsiders whom the French Republic welcomed and assisted only out of charity and only in unavoidable circumstances’.<sup>18</sup> The centrality of such policies to the system of camps that combined spatial and social marginality is identified clearly by both narrators and reinforces their awareness of the separation of the Harkis within France as an exceptional, ethnicized population. This also serves to heighten the importance that the authors attach to dialogue and testimony for their renewed interpretations and critical responses.

The investigatory form of Kerchouche’s narrative takes on further significance when, motivated to assess a broader structure of relations by which the Harkis have been defined, yet frustrated by a persistent lack of clarity, she travels to the former family home in Algeria. In crossing both a geographical border and the symbolic division posed by the Mediterranean, Kerchouche approaches Algeria as the site of a definitive transformation, as she sets out with awareness of how: ‘c’est là-bas que la vie de ma famille a basculé... Là-bas, aussi, que je poursuis,

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<sup>12</sup> Lila Ibrahim-Lamrous, ‘*Mon père, ce harki* de Dalila Kerchouche: une posture testimoniale ambiguë pour dire la guerre d’Algérie’, *Expressions Maghrébines*, 11:2 (2012), 177–91 (p. 182).

<sup>13</sup> Kerchouche, *Mon père, ce Harki*, p. 25.

<sup>14</sup> Kerchouche, *Mon père, ce Harki*, p. 101.

<sup>15</sup> Kerchouche, *Mon père, ce Harki*, p. 26.

<sup>16</sup> Kerchouche, *Mon père, ce Harki*, p. 102.

<sup>17</sup> Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), p. 2

<sup>18</sup> Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, p. 234.

après les camps, ma quête “harkéologique” dans le passé, mon voyage à la source du drame.<sup>19</sup> In this context, the tying of memory to factors of geographical place and its presentation as a matter to be recovered after a passage of time informs Kerchouche’s efforts to re-establish connections presumed lost since 1962, as well as negotiating tensions that persist in the present. The most significant results of the memorial excavations that she carries out arise from the testimonies gathered from relatives who remained in Algeria. Indeed, the transformational point of her father enlisting and becoming an Harki—with the consequences for the family this would later provoke—is found to have been contextualized by the family’s circumstances and the financial incentive of short-term employment by French forces. The understanding attained by Kerchouche, on the basis of her critical spatial awareness, of a continually precarious and marginal status for Harki families, including her own, therefore informs analysis of this population as subjects of a broader crisis, beyond any notion of lasting loyalty to France. As Gilles Manceron argues regarding the position of this group throughout the conflict, ‘le désarmement final des harkis en 1962 apparaît en continuité avec leur utilisation par l’état-major durant la guerre comme auxiliaires, objets d’une surveillance constante.’<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, Kerchouche’s discovery at the end of her visit to relatives in Algeria that her father, as with many who served the French side, acted on his sympathies at a local level and aided nationalist forces, leads to an eventual breaking of his silence and a further, clarified transmission of memory.

The personal account provided by Besnaci-Lancou of the family’s trajectory from Algeria to France also points to the requirement of a broader assessment of a status as colonial subjects and their consistent marginalization. While, in their home village, the service of local men with French forces in Harki units had been recognized as common practice during the War, she questions the sudden transformation in status of her family after independence and the imposition of stark dualities over which they had no control: ‘Du jour au lendemain, nous étions devenus des marginaux.’<sup>21</sup> Subsequent experiences are framed by increased awareness of the consistency of their marginal status in relation to French authorities, as much as official rejection in Algeria.

Further to the efforts made by Kerchouche to assess the factors surrounding her family’s uprooting through direct questioning and investigation, the approach adopted by Besnaci-Lancou to both personal and collective experiences stemming from a sudden transformation is concerned with long-term silence and confinement to margins. In her account of the family’s move from Algeria after independence, the lasting effects of their uprooting form the basis of her perspective, as she describes how ‘ma vie s’est jouée en une année, l’année 1962. Cette année de sang, je l’ai tenue jusqu’à aujourd’hui bien emprisonnée, au fond de ma mémoire, comme un secret honteux, douloureux, indicible.’<sup>22</sup> She dates her motivation to recover her past, however, precisely to her reaction to the comments made in 2000 by President Bouteflika of Algeria, comparing Harkis to French collaborators during the Second World War and thus condemning them as an untouchable aspect of a national history. Besnaci-Lancou explains the resurgence of this memory: ‘Près de quarante ans après, alors que je l’avais presque oublié, sa phrase, comme une gifle, est venu réveiller mon passé et toutes ses horreurs.’<sup>23</sup> In developing her narrative as a challenge to the continued instrumentalization of such post-independence dividing lines, premised on a clear separation from the colonial past, Besnaci-Lancou’s approach to Harki experiences is framed by her awareness of how this population has been caught between fractures in both France and Algeria and, as such, requires a clear, renewed position. As Claire Eldridge has noted, ‘unlike the homeland they left behind, the harkis themselves were never decolonized.’<sup>24</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Kerchouche, *Mon père, ce Harki*, p. 201.

<sup>20</sup> Gilles Manceron, ‘Un abandon et des massacres aux responsabilités multiples’, *Les Temps Modernes*, 666 (2011), 65–89 (p. 71).

<sup>21</sup> Besnaci-Lancou, *Fille de Harki*, p. 27.

<sup>22</sup> Besnaci-Lancou, *Fille de Harki*, p. 20.

<sup>23</sup> Besnaci-Lancou, *Fille de Harki*, p. 13.

<sup>24</sup> Claire Eldridge, “‘We’ve never had a voice’: Memory Construction and the Children of the Harkis (1962–1991)”, *French History*, 23 (2009), 88–107 (p. 103).

On the basis of the mobility and critical insight possessed by this younger generation, both narrators proceed with efforts to contest this status as an unresolved postcolonial remainder by developing alternative, broadened frameworks for collective memory.

While a contrast in perspective with Kerchouche is clear in Besnaci-Lancou's direct experience of exile from Algeria and the camps, a common interest is, nonetheless, identifiable in the effort to assess these environments with the benefit of temporal distance. In *Fille de Harki*, she recalls the particular despair at being caught between both newly post-colonial nations and the loss of perspective resulting from this absence of reference points. After their initial uprooting from home, their status is found to have been decided in the French military holding camp where they had sought refuge before passage to France: 'Nous étions coupés du monde extérieur. Nous n'étions nulle part.'<sup>25</sup> The lasting effect of their displacement is, however, contested clearly by the narrator's act of retracting and contextualizing this confinement. In reflecting on her eventual passage out of the camps, to the position of successful integration from which she narrates at a distance of four decades, Besnaci-Lancou emphasizes awareness of her own status as the most successful child of the family and a sense of responsibility, also found by Kerchouche, to interpret experiences on behalf of the previous generation. For Besnaci-Lancou, the often carceral conditions of the peripheral environments experienced by her family, and many others, have remained particularly significant owing to the ways in which senses of guilt and condemnation were internalized: 'Cette culpabilité fut favorisée et entretenue jusqu'à aujourd'hui par le rejet dont nous avons été l'objet des deux côtés de la méditerranée.'<sup>26</sup> Although she assesses how a lack of agency exacerbated the effects of the Harkis' marginalization, Besnaci-Lancou resists a turn to repetition of claims of victimization and, instead, seeks to develop a more productive critical perspective.

The spatial frames of reference established by both narrators remain central to their efforts to assess the full implications of Harki resettlement and the lasting connections to traces of colonial legacies in France. Abderahmen Moumen has also observed how, in emphasizing claims to visibility as a group and seeking inscription into public space, newer, narrative approaches to Harki memory have sought the 're-appropriation' of the original spaces of settlement in order to advance forms of memorialization.<sup>27</sup> As memory is found to be rooted so significantly in reference to physical space and connections to a marginal, silenced position, the utility of a site-specific approach in France is identifiable in the particular significance that both narrators accord to their families' arrival from Algeria at the camp at Rivesaltes (near Perpignan, Pyrénées-Orientales). It is from the case of this particular site that details and conditions are analysed closely. For example, the visit by Kerchouche to the ruins of the camp at the start of her journey around France in *Mon père, ce Harki* sets the tone for both the intensity of connections found in specific locations and the broader critical reinterpretation motivated by encounters with physical place. The narrator's judgement is particularly stark due to the contrast between her own position in France and her newly found awareness of the conditions to which her parents were subject: 'En marchant dans cette ville fantôme, j'ai l'impression d'avoir perdu une grande partie de l'amour que j'éprouvais pour ce pays.'<sup>28</sup> From the start of the process of French authorities managing Harki populations in 1962, as Nicolas Lebourg and Abderahmen Moumen explain in their recent history of the camp, 'Rivesaltes devient très rapidement l'épicentre des structures d'accueil mises en place par les pouvoirs publics.'<sup>29</sup> For Besnaci-Lancou, equally, a point of origin for her experiences in France can be traced to Rivesaltes. She recounts how the administrative system determined the family's environment, as the camp provided a measure for classifying Harki men fit for work and possible further redeployment:

<sup>25</sup> Besnaci-Lancou, *Fille de Harki*, pp. 53–54.

<sup>26</sup> Besnaci-Lancou, *Fille de Harki*, p. 75.

<sup>27</sup> Abderahmen Moumen, '1962–2014: The Historical Construction of Harki Literature', in *A Practical Guide to French Harki Literature*, pp. 1–15 (pp. 9–10).

<sup>28</sup> Kerchouche, *Mon père, ce Harki*, p. 72.

<sup>29</sup> Nicolas Lebourg & Abderahmen Moumen, *Rivesaltes: Le camp de la France, 1939 à nos jours* (Perpignan: Éditions Trabucaire, 2015), p. 109.

‘Nous attendions patiemment notre tour. Le camp ressemblait à une immense salle d’attente.’<sup>30</sup> The provisional nature of all stays at Rivesaltes, furthermore, set the tone for the subsequent dispersal of Harki families across France.

The focus employed in these texts on the locations of camps and the implications of the containment of Harki families as a postcolonial burden for France establishes a response to frustrations over limited recognition. In addition to their establishment of dialogue and broadening of connections, the assessments by both narrators of the multiple traces of this memory across France also offer a textual means for exploring what Lydie Moudileno has recently called for in her positing of a form of ‘provincialization’ in postcolonial France. For Moudileno this would involve ‘a multifocal tracing of the nation’s postcolonial dimension’ and examination of sites of postcolonial encounter in peripheral locations.<sup>31</sup> In this way, localities such as Rivesaltes could be approached as sites constitutive of France’s plural postcolonial status rather than simply as exceptions to a Parisian centre that, as Moudileno contends, has become crystallized as location of France’s postcolonialism. For Kerchouche, a questioning of the full implications of Harki memory is carried out after what she identifies as a necessary process of recovering the accounts of the previous generation and negotiating her initial response to the site of the camp. For Besnaci-Lancou, equally, the source of problematic experiences in France since 1962 is identified in the conditions of arrival at Rivesaltes. As she argues in her reflection on this confinement: ‘Nous représentons la mauvaise conscience et l’échec de la France. Ceci explique notre difficulté d’intégration.’<sup>32</sup> In this context of Harki memory and the search for a clear position, an assertion of control over physical space through narrative representation can also be aligned with renewed interpretations that would have an effect of de-centering collective memory. For Moudileno, furthermore, a specifically spatial approach to factors of memory rooted in peripheral locations could serve to ‘rework the cartography of postcolonial France’ and form part of an initiative to emphasize plurality and a multi-lateral frame of remembrance.<sup>33</sup> The approaches in these two texts turn, above all, to geographical place as they aim to establish a means for assessing civilian Harki memory in a nuanced and independent manner beyond the continually contested and fractious afterlives of colonialism and the Algerian War in France. The identification and subsequent reinterpretation by narrators of the site at Rivesaltes as a central reference point for collective memory therefore highlights their motivation to contest its lasting effects and imposition of a marginal status.

The practice in these texts of rooting memory in factors of physical space also motivates the responses pursued by both authors to resolving the divisions of colonial memory that they identify at the outset of their narratives. In this case, the significance of Rivesaltes as a critical reference point established by both Kerchouche and Besnaci-Lancou can be read effectively in light of the recent commemorative and museological project established at the site (inaugurated in October 2015).<sup>34</sup> A renewed mobilization of a plural, collective memory is sought by the *musée mémorial de Rivesaltes*, a project that was funded and developed primarily at a regional level, yet which also presents directions for a broadening of forms of commemoration across France.<sup>35</sup> A particular value is identifiable in its development as a site of plural memory that engages with all of the successive groups of marginal and refugee populations (of which the Harkis were one among several) to have been housed there over several decades of the twentieth century. It is, furthermore, awareness of the palimpsestic quality of the site that enables Harki experiences to be assessed not only as products of a crisis of decolonization but also, more broadly, as one aspect among several layers of the history of what Lebourg and Moumen have recently termed

<sup>30</sup> Besnaci-Lancou, *Fille de Harkî*, p. 78.

<sup>31</sup> Lydie Moudileno, ‘The Postcolonial Provinces’, *Francosphères*, 1 (2012), 53–68 (p. 54).

<sup>32</sup> Besnaci-Lancou, *Fille de Harkî*, p. 104.

<sup>33</sup> Moudileno, ‘The Postcolonial Provinces’, p. 60.

<sup>34</sup> ‘Rivesaltes: en mémoire des “indésirables”’, *La Dépêche du Midi*, 16 October 2015; <http://www.ladepeche.fr/article/2015/10/16/2198923-rivesaltes-en-memoire-des-indesirables.html> [accessed 19 October 2015].

<sup>35</sup> ‘Le Mémorial du Camp de Rivesaltes, témoin des drames du XXe siècle’; <http://www.laregion.fr/307-le-memorial-du-camp-de-rivesaltes-temoin-des-drames-du-xxe-siecle.htm> [accessed 19 October 2015].



'le camp de la France.'<sup>36</sup> Alongside the original approaches demonstrated in these narratives, this memorial form at Rivesaltes could, in line with a form of 'provincialization', equally provide an effective basis for the inscription of Harki memory into space in France that would avoid polarizations and serve as an alternative to persistent postcolonial tensions that have been centred on demands for singular and exclusive recognition.

Overall, the efforts pursued by Kerchouche and Besnaci-Lancou in their respective narratives to reframe experiences of Harki exile from Algeria and resettlement in France since 1962 highlight the significant and interconnected dynamics of space and memory for this group, shaped directly by the continuing political and social afterlives of decolonization. Their methods of addressing and attempting to resolve tensions of collective memory nonetheless reflect consistent frustrations over the profile and public representation of Harki families. In her study of the conceptualizations of Harki memory provided by authors representative of a younger generation, Giulia Fabbiano finds that 'if the literary space reflects the memorial space, it also contributes to its transformation.'<sup>37</sup> The ways in which they set the findings of their investigations into family memory in dialogue with relevant geographical locations also enable a renewed and broadened critical contextualization of experiences. This article has sought to contend, therefore, that beyond serving simply as reference points for the consistent marginal position of Harkis and crystallizing claims of abandonment in France, the attention accorded to sites of resettlement by the narrators of both of the texts analysed provides a significant measure by which to assess lasting implications of decolonization and substantiates a clear position in contemporary France. The initial motivation felt by both Kerchouche and Besnaci-Lancou to interrogate conditions of Harki experiences arose from awareness of an inherited and persistent marginal status in France that was exacerbated, more broadly, by a continually tense connection in France to a postcolonial collective memory and the active traces of an Algerian past. The clarifications and resolutions pursued, initially on an individual level, therefore involve the reinterpretation of a contemporary Harki position through the critical frames of spatial reference that they develop. In her conclusion, having charted specific factors of family memory and established independent connections to the Algerian past resulting from her mobility and distanced perspective, Kerchouche describes the intended result for her narrative to serve as 'une faille ouverte dans le passé, une petite résistance contre le rouleau compresseur de l'Histoire.'<sup>38</sup> The dynamics of memory charted in relation to space expose lasting fractures, are also found in Besnaci-Lancou's assessment of her experiences and upbringing in the camps and their lasting effects: 'Il m'a fallu des années pour prendre conscience des effets destructeurs de notre mise à l'écart et de toutes ses conséquences.'<sup>39</sup> In moving from the narrative recovery of accounts of past experiences to a process of actively mapping present connections to Harki sites in France, the role of space as a vector of transmission is therefore central to assessing their significance as constitutive aspects of collective memory.

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<sup>36</sup> Lebourg & Moumen, *Rivesaltes: Le camp de la France, 1939 à nos jours*, p. 9.

<sup>37</sup> Giulia Fabbiano, 'Writing as Performance: Literary Production and the Stakes of Memory', in *A Practical Guide to French Harki Literature*, pp. 17–35 (p. 33).

<sup>38</sup> Kerchouche, *Mon père, ce Harki*, p. 277.

<sup>39</sup> Besnaci-Lancou, *Fille de Harki*, p. 116.



## BOOK REVIEWS

***On the Edge: Writing the Border between Haiti and the Dominican Republic.*** By MARIA CRISTINA FUMAGALLI. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2015. 430 pp. Pb \$25.95. ISBN: 9781781381601

Maria Cristina Fumagalli's *On the Edge* is at once an extremely thorough catalogue and an invaluable analysis of narratives that have determined and continue to define the border between two nations, Haiti and the Dominican Republic, which are notoriously known, on the surface, for tragically *not* getting along. Fumagalli's inquiry into Haitian–Dominican relationships juxtaposes texts from the colonial era alongside others from the present day, looking at over forty texts whose authors or cinematographers lived, travelled, or currently transit in or between Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and, in some cases Algeria, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, France, Haiti, Japan, Mexico and the United States of America. Most importantly however, in drawing on an expansive notion of the word *narrative*, Fumagalli considers as *literary*, texts that take the form of poetry, novels, theatre, cinema and visual art, and reads them at once as historiography, as legend and as historical fiction. In so doing, she identifies the 'sources' of many of the troubling narratives that dictate the present-day relationship between the two countries, but she also brings to the fore less well-known stories that attest to a culture of camaraderie that has constantly existed among those Dominicans and Haitians who are aware of and promulgate the cosmopolitan virtues of those who live on the border.

*On the Edge* owes its success to three methodological choices: first, its author strikes a harmony between a chronological and thematic organization of the texts selected; second, Fumagalli uses pithy, yet incisive analyses of visual and theatrical art to illustrate her literary analyses (notably her analyses of Jean Philippe Moiseau and David Pérez Karmadavis's visual and performance art); and finally, she goes to great ends to describe the many 'sides' that determine a polyvalent border, one that is far more complex than the oppositional relationship that is so often used to describe the relationship between Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Each of the eleven chapters clearly lists the texts that it will juxtapose. For the most part, each chapter title suggests the specific analytical prism that Fumagalli uses to consider the 'border': as a political reality (i.e. discussions of treaties and business deals); as an idea (i.e. borderland as 'ambidexterity', p. 149); as specific appellations (i.e. 'the communality of the *raya*', p. 178; '*la línea*', p. 148; 'cordon sanitaire', or 'Voodoo Curtain', p. 273); through theories offered by other writers such as Silvio Torres Saillant's *quicio* [hinge] (p. 165), René Philoctète's *terres mêlées* (p. 178), or Evelyne Trouillot's 'blue of the island' (p. 287); and even as an ethics that might be powerful enough to transcend the seeming immutability of the fraught pasts of the island. Fumagalli orders the texts mostly chronologically, whereby the chronology is defined either by the moment the author composed the text or the historical event depicted in the novel. By organizing the texts according to both their 'origin' and the event that the text recounts, Fumagalli is often able to offer renditions of 'the event', which are contemporary to the event, side-by-side with more recent representations of the event that sometimes benefit from hindsight, or suffer from the erasure of politically informed constructions of national narratives.

For example, Fumagalli's second chapter, entitled 'The 1791 revolt and the borderland from below', analyses two versions of *Bug-Jargal* as well as a second text entitled 'The Saint Domingue Revolt' by Victor Hugo, who never visited the island; two texts by the Frenchman Jean-Baptiste Picquenard, who had spent a couple of years in Haiti during the Haitian Revolution (p. 74); and a superbly successful late-twentieth-century English-language novel by US author Madison Smartt Bell, who speaks Kreyòl and knows Haiti well. In so doing, Fumagalli does not just juxtapose the varying positionalities of each author as he attempts to make sense of

the Haitian Revolution, but in focusing on a study of *the border* in the three writers' work, Fumagalli recounts a history of an ever-changing border: at times a border between the French and the Spanish; at other moments a border that divided powers into three or more political entities—that is, the French; the Spanish; the Haitian revolutionary and post-revolutionary nascent Black Republic, as well as King Henri Christophe's monarchy, which also included many on the Spanish side who were against any colonial presence on the island; and also at times a borderless unified space, in the words of Jean Métellus an 'Ayti-Quisqueya-Bohio' (p. 102). The border thus served as a sort of thermometer, which took the temperature not only of which European power was fairing the best at any given moment, but also recorded how anti-colonial powers were changing the dynamics of power in countries that Europeans considered their colonies. In other words, Fumagalli argues that if Hugo was interested in Saint-Domingue, it was not because he cared so much about universal emancipation, but rather he was interested in how different classes held on to, and also lost power (p. 73). Fumagalli writes of Hugo's narrative attention to Saint-Domingue's revolution:

*Bug-Jargal* is a productive exploration of both the tension between the vertical borderline and the horizontality of kinship that characterizes the borderland and the global forces that play a part in constituting both borderline and borderland. (p. 59)

In proceeding, then, chronologically, Fumagalli introduces theoretical terminology that later in her book supports her analyses of twentieth- and twenty-first-century border relations.

In the above citation, Fumagalli draws on the notion of 'horizontality of kinship' to describe the border in the 1790s, but later uses the term to describe how certain trans-border dynamics continue to perpetuate themselves. In her analysis of the early 1990s photography of Polibio Díaz, Fumagalli evokes the tragic extreme poverty of 'the *rayana* condition' of Dominicans, Haitians, and stateless people living on the border (p. 149), but also the extreme wealth of the economic elite who use the border to their advantage (p. 171 and p. 180). Fumagalli organizes most of the chapters around one event or place (i.e. the Haitian Revolution, the Parsley Massacre, the dynamism of the city Montecristi), and as such she is then able to argue convincingly that the colonial border has constantly informed contemporary politics on the island, whereby politicians are often necessarily puppets of a border politics controlled by the complicity of the elite classes of the two countries. More hopefully, in focusing on the border, Fumagalli's analyses reveal on the one hand that so much of Haiti's most celebrated literary production is firmly grounded in references to, and protest of the manipulative *simagrées* of the island's elites, while on the other hand, the very poetics of Jacques Stephen Alexis's Haitian Marvelous Realism or René Philoctète's Spiralism find their cosmopolitan gesture in the dynamic relationship between supposed 'Haitians' and supposed 'Dominicans', who have never conceived of themselves as exclusively one, but rather as constantly living on an 'island which has the *raya* at its core' (p. 167).

In short, Fumagalli's masterful investigation is valuable both for scholars who are unfamiliar with the difficult relationship between the two nations, as well as those who consider themselves specialists of Dominican and/or Haitian Studies. It complements the important recent work of Maja Horn and Dixia Ramirez. Fumagalli's most distinct contribution is to offer an especially poised and equable approach to an extremely fraught, if not seemingly hopelessly divisive, debate not just in Caribbean Studies, but more largely in the Caribbean public sphere. In other words, all the while taking account of the tragic and seemingly immutable consequences of 'xenophobia, raciological categories, and pigmentocracy' (p. 374), Fumagalli also reveals the realities of a border that not just promises to be, but has already proved itself to incarnate a Glissantian *poetics* (and everyday lived politics and economics) *of relation*, by which Dominicanness and Haitianness are 'forged in relation with and not in opposition to' each other (p. 374). Fumagalli goes to great pains to understand the various points of view that inform the extremely vexed relationship between what it means to be 'Dominican' or 'Haitian'; and in so doing, she at once problematizes the Manichean exigencies of the nation-state construct, and also accounts for

the complex matrix between an often distorted legacy of colonialism and the manipulative realities of neo-colonialism.

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***What Postcolonial Theory Doesn't Say***. Edited by ANNA BERNARD, ZIAD ELMARSAFY and STUART MURRAY. New York and London: Routledge, 2016. 284 pp. Hb £90.00. ISBN: 9780415857970

One might expect a book entitled *What Postcolonial Theory Doesn't Say* to launch a critique of, if not dismiss, the field of postcolonial studies. However, in this respect, the title is misleading. More accurately, this collection might be called *The Most Exciting Current Innovations in Postcolonial Theory*, and the self-flattery of such a title would be well justified. This is not to say that the book does not critique postcolonial theory, most of which follows Neil Lazarus's line of argument in his article, 'What Postcolonial Theory Doesn't Say' (2011)—after which this collection is presumably named—, that attacks postcolonial theory for its lack of materialist grounding. Lazarus points to postcolonial theory's reluctance, if not failure, to understand the phenomena of colonialism and formal imperialism as phases in the development of the capitalist world-system. The main response to Lazarus's original thesis was not a disagreement with the centrality of capitalism and materialism to the phenomenon of postcolonialism, but rather that the idea that postcolonial theory *more often* appears in its poststructuralist guise was in fact false. Many reactions to Lazarus's article argued that postcolonialism and materialism were, in fact, deeply interrelated and that most postcolonial work acknowledged this. Lazarus's attack was most probably focused on the work of Homi Bhabha, and on occasion that of Gayatri Spivak, and, his critics suggest, he mistakenly took these two authors to be representative of what is in fact a much more diverse, and distinctly anti-capitalist, field of research and study.

Though editors Anna Bernard, Ziad Elmarsafy and Stuart Murray argue that the 'poststructuralist formations' of postcolonialism 'are often seen as the predominant manifestation of theory in the discipline' (p. 2), the essays included in this collection, comprising contributions from leading figures in the field, clearly demonstrate the materialist grounding of the field. Though the editors nod in the direction of 'the so-called holy trinity of Edward Said, Homi Bhabha [and] Gayatri Spivak' (p. 4), who dominated postcolonial theory in the 1990s, it is refreshing to see them swiftly left behind as they introduce the numerous ways in which postcolonialism has developed, and is developing, a quarter century later. The decision to choose the term 'postcolonial theory' rather than 'postcolonialism' is undoubtedly a tactical one. Robert Young's *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (2001), which is also cited repeatedly throughout the collection, had already successfully re-linked 'postcolonialism' to traditions of anti-colonial (if not anti-capitalist) resistance, while 'postcolonial theory' as a distinct label was perhaps more often associated with the poststructuralist tendencies of the field. Though the editors do not address their choice of the term 'postcolonial theory' directly, then, it undoubtedly informs the political project of the book, which is the rejuvenation through reassessment of a versatile cross-disciplinary methodology and critical perspective that emphasizes its materialist underpinnings.

This is what makes this collection truly innovative. Many of the contributors point to the capacity of postcolonial theory for self-reflexive thinking, as both a weakness (its constant self-reassessment restricts its ability to adopt a firm, anti-capitalist/anti-imperialist position), and a strength (ongoing reevaluation allows a nimble thinking that can respond to the shifting dynamics of global capital). Though this is not a particularly new problem—indeed, it has probably been one of the central debates in postcolonial theory over the last two decades—the

self-conscious acknowledgement of this debate by *What Postcolonial Theory Doesn't Say* transforms a potentially stifling dilemma into a productive point of contention that moves postcolonial theory forward in exciting and pioneering ways. The oscillation between these two polarities constitutes what might be seen as the defining dialectic of the collection, and the editors pin this down in one of their introductory sentences: 'The collection thus makes a claim for what postcolonial theory can say through what it still cannot or will not say' (p. 7).

Many of the individual chapters are standalone, breakthrough studies worth reading in isolation. Combined in one collection, however, readers are asked to note the numerous thematic intersections that emerge between them, resulting in what can be described, without hyperbole, as a revolutionary reassessment of postcolonial theory. The contributions are organized into three sections which each tackle one of the major oversights of postcolonial theory to date. The first, entitled 'Disciplinary Constellations: New Forms of Knowledge', focuses on the institutional context of postcolonial studies and recent interdisciplinary migrations. Simon Obendorf highlights the political imperatives of a postcolonial reading of International Relations, whilst Mrinalini Greedharry and Pasi Ahonen use postcolonial theory to shed light on the field of Management and Organization Studies. But the highlight of this section is undoubtedly Claire Westall's intervention, which uses the self-reflexivity of postcolonial theory to interrogate the ongoing hypocrisies of its institutional makeup. Despite 'some movement in the demographic makeup of university staff and students along the lines of gender, race and class', Westall points out that 'the dominant white, middle-class staff and student pattern holds' (p. 17). This implies that the emergence of postcolonial theory has perpetuated the ability of English Literature to contain, rather than to facilitate, resistance to itself, as a discipline historically tied to formal imperialism and its various discriminations. More importantly, this suggests that the subsequent emergence of fields such as 'world literature' or 'Anglophone global literatures' are simply further stages in this institutional containment—a return to postcolonial theory, with its ability to self-critique so thoroughly, is thus necessary to recover the politics of resistance that informed the field in the first place.

The second section, 'Case Studies: Geocultures, Topographies, Occlusions', turns to the silence of postcolonial theory around certain geographical spaces that do not fit neatly into a binary imperial/anti-imperial formula, from Zimbabwe to Cuba and Germany to Eastern Europe. In the spirit of the collection, these chapters draw on the historical complexities of these spaces not to discredit postcolonial theory but rather to develop new directions in which it can move. The most important chapter in this section is Patrick Williams's excellent essay on the failure of postcolonial theory to address satisfactorily the issue of Israel/Palestine, today the oldest and most violent examples of colonial occupation. His assessment of the various institutional and global hegemonic pressures that account for this silence looks back to the first section of the collection, dismantling the complicities of postcolonialism in ongoing colonialisms in order to reignite potentially resistant trajectories.

The third and final section, 'Horizons: Environment, Materialism, World', turns its attention to the recent intersections of postcolonial theory with ecocriticism and world literature, which have tended to replace rather than rejuvenate it. In the final chapter, Sharae Deckard calls for a 'world-literary criticism', the hyphen in which emphasizes a 'world-systemic approach [that] offers analytical tools through which to comprehend the present restructuring of the uneven geographies of the capitalist world order within a world-historical context, as well as the ways in which emergent literary forms mediate the effects, dispositions and social relations produced by these transformations' (p. 240). The editors' decision to conclude with such an assertion returns to the dialectical dilemma that informs their whole project. Even though, as postcolonial critics, we should be re-conceiving the geographical dynamics that inform the theory's prime sphere of analysis by paying attention to the shifts in forms of global injustice, it is ultimately the self-reflexive, materialist and political motivations of postcolonial theory which have always been central to its stated aims and practices, that allow such lines of thought to be pursued. The essays in this collection highlight the silences of postcolonial theory not to dismiss it, but to create

space for future research trajectories that are increasingly necessary if it is to continue the imperative political project that has been its goal since its inception: resistance to global capitalism.

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***Postcolonial Comic: Texts, Events, Identities.*** Edited by BINITA MEHTA and PIA MUKHERJI. New York and London: Routledge, 2015. 235 pp. Hb £90. ISBN: 9780415738132

For the past three decades or more, the development of French cultural studies as a distinct field of enquiry has permitted exploration of cinema, television and radio, the press, the visual arts and indeed popular culture more generally in France and the wider Francosphere. The emergence of this area constitutes part of what Christophe Campos called in 1992 the ‘cracking of coherence’ of French studies in the 1960s and 1970s, and as such it occurred alongside the parallel evolution of Francophone (and more recently Francophone postcolonial) studies. Despite the prominence of *bande dessinée* within French-speaking cultures, study of this academically marginalized genre (and the industry and institutions with which it is associated) has been slow to emerge, and it is only over the past fifteen years that the pioneering work of Laurence Grove, Ann Miller, Mark McKinney and others has given the phenomenon the visibility and scholarly respectability it has long merited. Much work on *BD* has nevertheless concentrated closely on the ‘franco-belge’ school, including useful work on the representation of exoticism and colonialism, without necessarily extending its purview to analyse the rich production in the wider French-speaking world. In a 2003 article in *Postmodern Culture*, Chris Bongie called for postcolonial studies to engage more actively with popular forms, and postcolonial attention to visual culture has now been extended to film. Bongie’s observations could and should, however, be extended to *BD* and graphic fiction. It is encouraging as a result to see new work such as the volume under review emerging at the intersection of postcolonial studies and comic art.

*Postcolonial Comics: Texts, Events, Identities* is published in Routledge’s Research in Postcolonial Literatures series. It contains a substantial introduction by its editors, Binita Mehta and Pia Mukherji, specialists respectively in Francophone and Anglophone postcolonial literatures, and this is followed by twelve essays divided into four broadly thematic sections, each of which encompasses a range of graphic events in specific geographical contexts: ‘Geographies of Contact: Gibraltar / Malta / Asia-Pacific’; ‘Francophone Post-Histories: Algeria / Congo / Gabon’; ‘Postcolonial Politics: India’; and ‘War, Nationhood, and Transnationalism: The Middle East’. The editors provide a useful overview of comics scholarship, successfully bridging the gap between English- and French-language traditions across which this work is often divided. The chapters gathered in the volume are by their nature eclectic (including in one case a study not of comics *per se*, but of press cartoons), but they share an interest in ‘multimodal comics narratives and their surrounding postcolonial moments’ (p. 1), and respond to a core question: ‘how do comics studies connect to postcolonial histories, criticism, and writing?’ (p. 2). Mehta and Mukherji usefully explore the ways in which comics can act as a creolized space of postcolonial production, and as a site in which often radical alternative cultures, practices (not least memorial and autobiographical) and ideas can emerge. For them, the form is also one which challenges the ‘first-in-the-West-and-then-elsewhere’ model of postcolonial rewriting and revisionism (as critiqued by Dipesh Chakrabarty and others). At the same time, the contributors make a clear case for comics—in terms of their subject matter, their production and the dynamics of their circulation—as a genre in which the postcolonial and transnational are enmeshed, an aspect

particularly apparent in the chapters on graphic interventions in Middle Eastern and Arabic contexts which reflect on ‘postmodern trauma, the possibility of solidarities and protest in transnational communities, or the politics of the new visual technologies’ (p. 13).

Despite the wide range of geographical contexts foregrounded in the collection (notable chapters are, for instance, devoted to India and Japan), half of the chapters focus on French-language material, reflecting the important contribution that Francophone postcolonial studies can make to this area. Michelle Bumatay reads Jean-Philippe Stassen’s exploration of global migration from a plurality of perspectives in *Les Visiteurs de Gibraltar*; Ann Miller analyses postmemory in Morvandieu’s *D’Algérie*; Véronique Bragard studies the representation of colonialism in Belgian and Congolese albums, studying these in the light of postcolonial melancholia and the humanitarian ideal, and describing ambivalent forms of engagement with Hergé’s *Tintin au Congo*; and Binta Mehta provides a detailed reflection on the three volumes of *La Vie de Pabé*, by the Gabonese *bédéiste* Patrick Essono Nkouna, tracking questions of politics, schooling, migration and return. Finally, chapters by Massimo di Ricco and Lena Irmgard Merhej, on comics in the Arab Middle East (and in particular Lebanon), describe a complex, unstable but transnational industry that manages to capture stories of violence and resistance. In this particular translation zone, French is part of a multilingual context where linguistic choices also factor in varieties of Arabic.

The collection reminds the reader that if postcolonialism is predominantly or exclusively seen as a mode of literary analysis, it fails to engage with key works of popular culture that play a key role in the documentation of history as well as of the everyday. With their complex interplay of the visual and the verbal, *BD* and graphic fiction provide eloquent examples of what this collection’s editors call ‘postcolonial textuality’ as well as ‘aspects of public culture in the postcolony’ (p. 2). The volume points fruitfully towards new material and fresh approaches for those committed to analysing Francophone postcolonial (con)texts in their geo-historical breadth as well as in their cultural and political complexity.

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***Fathers, Daughters, and Slaves: Women Writers and French Colonial Slavery.*** By DORIS Y. KADISH. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012. 186 pp. Hb £65.00. ISBN: 9781846318467

In *Fathers, Daughters, and Slaves: Women Writers and French Colonial Slavery*, Doris Y. Kadish seeks to accomplish a number of valuable scholarly tasks, including presenting some relatively unknown French authors to an English-speaking readership. This volume draws from a substantial body of work previously published by Kadish on the theme of French slavery and women writers, including an edition of Sophie Doin’s *La Famille noire suivie de trois Nouvelles blanches et noires* (2002) and Charlotte Dard’s *La Chaumière africaine* (2005) published in Harmattan’s ‘Autrement mêmes’ series, a translation of Marceline Desbordes-Valmore’s *Sarah* (2008), and the two co-edited volumes *Translating Slavery Volume 1: Gender and Race in French Abolitionist Writing, 1780–1830* (2009) and *Translating Slavery Volume 2: Ourika and Its Progeny* (2010). In *Fathers, Daughters, and Slaves*, Kadish brings together the works of five French women writing on slavery during the last decades before its legal abolition in the French empire.

The book draws our attention back to the long-established argument that slavery and abolition are historical constructs whose timeframes have been poorly represented in thought and practice. As abolition has come and gone, legalized slaveries have disappeared only to return in different guises, and with work towards eradicating the latter still in progress, the subjects

alluded to in this volume remain contemporary, relevant and far from exhausted in academic scholarship. Furthermore, as Kadish observes in her introductory chapter, the attitudes, norms and conventions that framed educated white women's literary lives in the early nineteenth century, positioned their writings on the margins of French anti-slavery writing, where, until very recently, some have remained. She argues convincingly for including abolitionist writing hitherto excluded from the anti-slavery literature because it fell short of standards set by the literary canon, on the grounds that these writings can make a valuable contribution to our understanding of the social history of French slavery.

Two of the writers, Claire de Duras and Germaine de Stael, are already well known. Kadish adds to the literature in English on European abolitionist writing by drawing our attention to three relatively unknown writers: Marceline Desbordes-Valmore, Charlotte Dard and Sophie Doin. The presence of all these women together is explained by the title of the book: they are all daughters, located within this text in relation to fathers, and they write about enslaved Africans. Fathers operate in this book, as in the societies that created them, at the apex of a patriarchal triangle. The identities of the other protagonists in this social hierarchy, the enslaved (Africans) and the free (Frenchwomen), are defined in relation to the patriarchal figure (Frenchmen) as subject populations. At several points in the discussion the reader's attention is directed to the parallels drawn by the Frenchwomen writers between the condition of women and that of enslaved Africans. The question of what commonality of experience existed between a *salonnière* of the status of Germaine de Stael or Claire de Duras, and unfree women working on the slave plantations raises one of many interesting questions for further discussion. Furthermore, given what we know of the physical and psychological methods that made up slave management culture in European plantation colonies in the pre-1848 era, many if not most of which would today classify as torture, an exploration of the sources and research methods these white women writers were using in compiling their slave narratives would add a valuable dimension to the study of abolitionist writing. We learn something of how Marceline Desbordes-Valmore, another early-nineteenth-century *salonnière*, first encountered slavery in Guadeloupe, and we know that Claire de Duras's maternal family ran a plantation estate in Martinique. Discussing the writings of the latter, Kadish argues that Duras, through *Ourika*, enables the slave to speak: 'What Ourika does succeed in doing is presenting issues of oppression from the perspective of daughters and slave women' (p. 113). There is a substantial body of literature, from Fanon to Spivak and beyond, that suggests further examination of the writings looked at here from a postcolonial perspective would be fruitful. While Kadish concedes at the outset that in the absence of slave narratives in French the writings of these women provide useful insights into attitudes towards slavery, this in itself does not render the issues of voice and agency of the enslaved irrelevant. Indeed, the question of what constitutes a commonality of perspective and positioning between writers, 'the women considered here made unique contributions through their empathetic impulses and strategies' (p. 26), raises a number of issues that invite deconstruction and reflection. By defining the writers in relation to a concept, and in a wider sense an ideology, of femaleness, the approach adopted here by definition does not invite an exploration of diversity. We are left wanting to know more about the differences that will have separated Charlotte Dard from Claire de Duras or Germaine de Stael, and the impact of these on their lives as writers of slavery.

Readers interested in continuing this reading of abolitionist texts by French writers, including women writers, may wish to explore the *Europe-Esclaves* website ([www.eurescl.eu](http://www.eurescl.eu)) which references authors such as Anne Bignan, and Clarisse Coignet, representative of *L'association des Dames françaises en faveur des esclaves affranchis*, and of interest also are the full text versions in English and French by Staël. Duras, Doin, *et al.*, that have been assembled and uploaded by Doris Kadish and colleagues on the University of Georgia's Francophone slavery website: [www.slavery.uga.edu/](http://www.slavery.uga.edu/).

In conclusion, the volume presents material of considerable interest to scholars of patriarchy and of slavery in nineteenth-century France and the colonies, and helpfully opens up



numerous avenues for further theoretical reflection and primary research.

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***Blacks and Blackness in European Art of the Long Nineteenth Century.*** Edited by ADRIENNE L. CHILDS and SUSAN H. LIBBY. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2014. xiii + 240 pp. Hb £70.00. ISBN 9781409422006

This handsomely produced book builds on such wide-ranging work as the Menil Foundation's multi-volume series on *The Image of the Black in Western Art* without having pretensions to offer 'an encyclopaedic narrative of modernity and race' (p. 4). Rather it probes specific cases drawn from high and popular art, from performance and photography, to explore further, as David Bindman puts it in a review, 'the complexities of European racial attitudes in an age of commercialism and empire'. The aesthetics of difference is viewed against the background of Eurocentric assumptions of superiority, and while the temptation of binary interpretation haunts some of these essays, just as a danger of over-interpretation and special pleading is sometimes detectable, there are also many outstanding instances which deconstruct the obvious polarities of black/white, master/slave and Oriental/Western. 'Presenting a diverse array of scholarly approaches and topics, they demonstrate the complexities inherent in representing race in visual material for which the description of "racist" does not suffice' (p. 13).

Eight US-based art historians bring their expertise to bear on the question, and it is noted more than once that whereas nineteenth-century Europe represents 'Blacks' individually, the United States tend to propose 'over-simplified and unabashedly racist caricatures' (p. 2). All clearly subscribe to the idea that blackness 'was not a fixed idea or imposed category, but something [...] negotiated or traded among those who assumed it or those who consumed it' (p. 13).

Curiously, the shorthand of the word 'black' is not deconstructed in the editor's otherwise fine introductory essay. The editors might have taken their cue from Earnestine Jenkins's comment that Ira Aldridge's skin was 'deep brown or bronze rather than black' (p. 115), or even from Jean Genet's celebrated epigraph to *Les Nègres*: 'Qu'est-ce que c'est donc un noir? Et d'abord, c'est de quelle couleur?' One has to wait for the final study in the book, Wendy A. Grossman's subtle and illuminating analysis of Robert Demachy's pictorialist photographs, dating from the first years of the twentieth century, for an in-depth exploration of the term. This is all the more curious in that all the other contributors rightly describe and illustrate 'Blacks' in varying shades of brown, the only exceptions being where cartoonish black stick-men figure in pen-and-ink or similar sketches. The signature of eight colour plates demonstrates this clearly: even in the hand-coloured Revolutionary engraving (Plate 1), the dark-brown Negro does not share the blackness of the stockings of the soldier standing beside him. Yet in her essay investigating racial identity and visibility in French anti-slavery imagery of the period 1788–94, Susan H. Libby apparently has no qualms in referring to this 'black figure' (p. 32). Other contributors follow suit, something which is regrettable in such a volume with such a title. It is as if escaping from the binary assumptions of political and cultural domination by Whites remains ineradicably difficult.

This shows in other ways. In the visual and plastic arts, protruding chins were once, as Albert Alhadeff amply demonstrates in his study of 'Camper's odious *ligne faciale*', a marker of the African Black and *therefore* of inferiority. The fallacious syllogism needs teasing out: we have to recognize the physical fact that some African ethnic groups have jaws that protrude more than those of many Westerners, but not then make the illegitimate assumption of White superiority.

Judged by the criteria of a good carrot, even a good cucumber makes a pretty poor showing... and vice versa. Alhadeff makes the point when arguing acutely that a white man's head, that of a redhead with a notably receding brow, absent from Géricault's preparatory studies for *Le Radeau de la Méduse* but added to the final painting (Plate 2), suggests a rebuttal of Camper's theories: 'the wind-swept youth is assigned a profile whose slant calls to mind men of dark skin, while the dark-skinned man at his side is assigned an all but acute profile' (p. 60).

Paul H. P. Kaplan presents all that one might need to know about the little-known *mulâtre* Eugène Warburg (New Orleans 1825/26–Rome 1859), who has left only two known sculptures. Like his fellow biracial from Louisiana, Victor Séjour, Warburg developed his talent in Europe, shown here in a Parian-ware version of his 'Uncle Tiff'. To have it illustrated in full and in detail provides a useful record. Was it also appropriate to devote a colour plate to it? The whiteness of Parian scarcely warrants it, and indeed one is surprised at the duplication in black and white of *all* the coloured plates except one. Such luxury potentially deprives the reader of illustrations of other works to which reference is made in the essays.

James Northcote's portrait of the actor Ira Aldridge as Othello is brought under scrutiny by Earnestine Jenkins. He broke from the tradition of blackface and so effected a revolution in audiences' attitude to theatrical representations of the 'other'. No such claim is or could be made for Gérôme's paintings, and Adrienne L. Childs is content to focus knowledgeably on his studies of African women within the Orientalist conventions, maintaining the binary representation. More unusual are the 'racial antics' studied by James Smalls in popular shows and prints ranging from the pranks of the *Incohérents* to the 'nigger minstrels'—I use the term familiar from my childhood—imported to France from the US via England, from the clowning of Chocolat, paired to contrast with Footit, to Toulouse-Lautrec's masterly lithographs and posters.

Just as I had everything to learn about Eugène Warburg, so Edvard Munch's images of 'Sultan' Abdul Karim were unknown to me. Alison W. Chang explores their relationship to specific human zoos which Munch had visited before engaging Karim as his chauffeur and model. If any portrait of a 'Black' shows multi-coloured skin texture, it is the one of him reproduced as Plate 7b (and pointlessly again in black and white, p. 177). Demachy too was a new name for me, but as elsewhere in the volume, Grossman's essay is written in such a way as to present the subject for the novice while reserving new analyses for the specialist. Often, it is simply by focusing on the 'Black' rather than on the relevant aesthetic alone that these essays offer new insights.

One understands that American spelling has been respected throughout, even in a British publication; less acceptable is the litter of proof-reading errors where French is used. Nor do all the contributors provide the original French when quoting in American or English translation, which means that checking the translation is difficult or impossible: the indented quotation on p. 149 is an egregious case in point, since the English is so odd. There are very occasional factual errors, such as the suggestion that 'the rapid rise of the trans-Atlantic African slave trade [occurred] in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries' (p. 20) rather than, exponentially, after 1750. The name of Josiah Wedgwood is consistently misspelt. And to end my gripes, I should mention that the index is incomplete, although the present reviewer is in good company—that of Samuel Beckett—in being excluded.

From '*Ne suis-je pas ton frère?*', a question which, as Libby observes, 'presupposes the difference it claims to cancel out' (p. 26), to Grossman's bracing final essay, this rich volume offers stimulating insights, carefully documented reflections, and much to ponder. One hopes that if sales are good enough the publisher will take the opportunity to correct the errors when producing a paperback edition.

ROGER LITTLE  
TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN

***Souffles-Anfas: A Critical Anthology from the Moroccan Journal of Culture and Politics.***

Edited by OLIVIA C. HARRISON and TERESA VILLA IGNACIO. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2015. 286 pp. £15.99. ISBN: 9780804796156

The recent volume *Souffles-Anfas, A Critical Anthology from the Moroccan Journal of Culture and Politics*, edited by Olivia C. Harrison and Teresa Villa Ignacio (Stanford University Press, 2016) is a valuable publication for three main reasons. To start with, it brings to an English-speaking audience for the first time one of the most original and influential reviews in post-colonial Maghreb and North Africa: the Moroccan review *Souffles*, founded in the spring of 1966 by Abdellatif Laâbi and a small group of poets and artists, and banned in 1972 by the Moroccan regime. Three years after Kenza Sefrioui's monograph dedicated to the review (*La revue « Souffles » 1966–1973. Espoirs de révolution culturelle au Maroc* (2013)), this anthology confirms the growing interest in post-colonial Morocco and Moroccan cultural production. As noted by the editors in their introduction, 'this growing interest can be attributed to Western curiosity about North African cultures following the recent upheavals in the region as well the burgeoning market for "world literature"' (p. 8). Exploring the dynamics of cultural production during the 'the years of lead' is likely to help understand the current challenges facing Morocco in both social and political spheres. As the country is about to celebrate, in March 2016, the fiftieth anniversary of *Souffles*, this new publication offers an international dimension to a literary and cultural review that served in the late 1960s and early 1970s as 'a conduit for experimental art and progressive politics in Morocco and beyond' (p. 1).

Second, the anthology has the merit of offering a varied and eclectic bunch of texts selected from both *Souffles* (twenty-two issues published between 1966 and 1972) and its Arabic counterpart *Anfas* (eight issues all published in 1971). These include poems, articles, reviews and interviews. The contributors that have been selected constitute a diverse group of writers in which well-established figures (Abdellatif Laâbi, Abdelkebir Khatibi, Albert Memmi, Tahar Ben Jelloun) are brought together with some other names, potentially unfamiliar to Anglophone readers (Mostafa Nissabouri, Abdallah Stouky, Mohammed Berrada). The diversity of this volume can also be seen in the judicious inclusion of a series of illustrations (twenty-three in total) excerpted from the review and which include 'reproductions of contemporary Moroccan artwork, posters commissioned for special issues [...], cartoons, and facsimiles of issue covers and particularly visually striking poems' (pp. 8–9). This iconographic material adds a further dimension to the anthology and underlines the original visual work in *Souffles-Anfas*. As Kenza Sefrioui puts it, 'l'aspect graphique est à la hauteur du travail littéraire, il l'accompagne' (*La revue « Souffles » 1966–1973. Espoirs de révolution culturelle au Maroc*, p. 37).

Third, this publication is more than a mere selection of texts and excerpts from a Moroccan review. As suggested by the subtitle, it is rather a 'critical' anthology, concerned with introducing and reconnecting the cultural and literary material from *Souffles-Anfas* with the history of the review and its political and cultural contexts. While the anthology is organized into four chapters referring to the four phases of the journal's evolution, each selection of texts is preceded by a short introduction highlighting the stylistic features and intellectual aims of each phase. Furthermore, the anthology is presented as a collective work by a team of translators offering a literary counterpart to the teamwork of original contributors. Being 'the product of a multi-year, virtual translation workshop' (p. xi), the anthology is a collaborative project which regenerates the spirit of the review and reproduces its energy.

Beyond these successful achievements, one might see in this publication some limitations which, in my view, have more to do with the genre of anthology and the challenge of translation than with the direct choices made by the editors. First, we can argue that the vast experience of *Souffles-Anfas* cannot be reduced to a limited selection of texts and excerpts. While the dynamics of the review should be seized through the themes and the structure of its various issues, the specific format of the anthology involves an unavoidable cut through both the continuity and the diversity of the publication. For each issue of *Souffles-Anfas* features a thematic and cultural

richness which clearly exceeds the selection made in this anthology. This is particularly true if we note that the publication does not include any text from issues 19 and 20–21 of *Souffles* or from issues 1, 3–4, 5 and 6 of *Anfas*. In their introduction, the editors explain that, due ‘to the constraints of space and [their] editorial vision, [they] chose not to include several features of historical interest, such as numerous book reviews, art exhibitions reviews, readers’ correspondence, several vividly Marxist–Leninist documents [...] and even advertisements for cigarettes and the like’ (p. 8). In reading this volume, one should keep in mind that any anthology is the result of an editorial selection which cannot reproduce the original work but only gives an extended overview of its tone and contents.

Second, we can argue that English translation might fail to grasp the very linguistic energy of this ‘iconoclastic and incendiary cultural review’ (p. 1). This might be more relevant in the case of experimental texts which offer, as defined by Laâbi, ‘a literature that on all levels (syntactic, phonetic, morphological, graphical, symbolic, etc.) shatters the original logic of the French language’ (p. 4). In transposing the original texts of *Souffles*, there is indeed an inherent risk of losing, or at least misrepresenting, the process of shattering the logic of the French language. Dealing with such intricate and puzzling texts as Mohammed Khaïr-Eddine’s ‘Bloods’, translation becomes a multidimensional challenge. In this respect, we can only acknowledge the effort of translation carried out throughout the volume. As we read this anthology, it becomes evident that the transposition of *Souffles-Anfas* into English is unlike any other translational project. The revolutionary and unsettling contents of the journal require special efforts to reproduce the texts without sacrificing their originality.

Despite these minor comments which do not affect the overall value of this publication, we can certainly join the editors in foreseeing that this anthology will inaugurate a new stage in Moroccan and North African studies. *Souffles*, which literally means ‘breaths’, is all about subversion and regeneration. By translating a large and varied corpus of texts from the francophone review and its Arabic counterpart, this anthology will definitely ‘breathe’ new life into academic research and encourage ‘critical scholarship that explores how the exigencies of these texts speak to the concerns of Anglophone readers today’ (p. 8). Re-reading *Souffles-Anfas* from an Anglophone perspective will definitely help to shed light on the universal values of the journal and contribute to the growing interest in Moroccan and North African literature.

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***Remembering French Algeria: Pieds-Noirs, Identity, and Exile.*** By AMY L. HUBBELL. Nebraska: Nebraska University Press, 2015. 296 pp. Hb \$55.00. ISBN: 9780803264908

The colonial and postcolonial relationship between Algeria and France has frequently been explored from either the perspective of the French or from that of the autochthonous Algerian population. However, Amy L. Hubbell focuses on a less-explored perspective, taking into consideration a group of people who were caught in a somewhat liminal position between the two sides; *Remembering French Algeria: Pieds-Noirs, Identity, and Exile* deals with the *pied-noir* community’s literary writings and the use of a technique of repetition in the articulation of their identity struggle.

The disputed origin of the term ‘Pied-Noir’ is discussed in the introduction (chapter one) of the book. On the one hand, there is the story of native Algerians seeing the French soldiers with their black boots during the invasion in 1830, and therefore calling them ‘pieds-noirs’ (p. 9). On the other hand, and in this study, ‘Pieds-Noirs’ is an epithet for the French who lived or were born in colonial Algeria (1830–1962) and then ‘were exiled to France during and after the

Algerian war of Independence (1962)' (p. 7). Though *Français d'Algérie* is used to refer to French born in colonial Algeria, 'Pieds-Noirs' has become a term of preference, highlighting their dual identity and creating a sense of belonging.

Chapter two explains how the technique of repetition is used by writers such as Daniel Michel-Chich and Marie Cardinal to preserve memories (p. 48). This technique lays the groundwork for the creation of a stable stereotype for the *Pieds-Noirs*, which helps in forming a united community in order to protect their memories and identity from external influences. For instance, the idea that they are not 'colons' is repeated by the *Pieds-Noirs* to separate themselves from the reputation associated with colonization. An example of this comes in the way that Cardinal shows her tender feelings towards Algeria by opposing French norms: 'I was against what my family represented: France and its conquests, its colonial empire, its morgue, its mistrust, its racism, its hypocritical humanitarianism' (quoted on p. 62). Nonetheless, they maintain a claim to the land by repeating expressions as 'ma terre', 'mon pays' (p. 66).

In the third chapter, Hubbell discusses contemporary difficulties experienced by the *Pieds-Noirs*, which cause them to 'reproduce' memories as an 'act of casting the present situation to the past' (p. 79). From a psychological perspective, the author explains how this phenomenon is a result of trauma, constituting the recreation of something that had been ended by past events. Critic Joelle Hureau illustrates that repetition in the writing of *Pieds-Noirs* is a means by which one may create stability and find relief after the trauma of exile (p. 77). A different use of repetition by the *Pieds-Noirs* is elucidated in chapter four, in which it is seen as a way to produce different interpretations of the same event. Hubbell uses the example of how Cardinal narrates the painful realization of her mother's attempt to abort her in different works with different settings, which enables the event to be more easily dealt with psychologically. Even though this event is mentioned first in her fictional work *La Clé sur la Porte* (1972), Cardinal confirms it as a real event in her autobiography *Au Pays de mes Racines* (1980) (p. 104). Another repetition technique used by *pied-noir* writers is the adoption of symbols to refer to painful memories. For instance, Hélène Cixous uses 'Vélo, Chien, Aïcha' as a representation of her main life-events. These three symbols are a reflection of the writer's past, a past that is related to absence, resistance and independence (p.133).

Throughout the second part of *Remembering French Algeria*, also in three chapters, Hubbell narrates real 'returns' undertaken by some *Pieds-Noirs* and the impact they had on them. Chapter five gives insights into these pilgrimages back to Algeria made by *pied-noir* writers, where they were unable to see present-day Algeria and instead continually projected their own memories onto the present surroundings. As Hubbell acknowledges, 'Herein lies the complication of the Pied-Noir identity: the shift in time and location is often unrecognizable' (p. 139). This psychological anguish is created when the *Pied-Noir* returns to France after the exile and finds him/herself caught between two identities—French and *Français d'Algérie*. Returning to the 'more certain' past is their only solution. Thereby they tend to 'confuse' their present with the past in order to create 'more "solid" foundations and a greater sense of permanence' (p. 155).

The inability to acknowledge the present is discussed thoroughly in chapter six, in which Hubbell refers to the impotence of the *Pieds-Noirs* to see beyond their memories to the present Algeria as 'blindness'. Despite the suggestion by Maurice Porot that the *Pieds-Noirs* should take a journey back to Algeria in order to help them discover how they no longer belong to their 'homeland', some *Pieds-Noirs*, such as Marie Cardinal, were unable to see beyond their own memories and did not pay attention to the changes that occurred in the places where they once lived, instead relating it as they remembered it. Hence, *Pieds-Noirs* prefer to keep their blindness rather than to recognize the changes to their old houses and neighbourhoods, for these remaining ruins are a representation of their internal trauma. Chapter seven compares the nostalgia of the *Pieds-Noirs* for Algeria to the amputee's feelings who has lost a limb—a painful feeling that cannot be cured, for a lost limb and a lost past can never be re-attached and returned to again. Despite this, some *Pieds-Noirs* keep their attachment to their lost parts as it is the only way for them to maintain their memories. The final section of *Remembering French Algeria* illustrates how repeating

and mentioning Algeria over and over again, for the *Pieds-Noirs*, is like imagining an amputated limb is still attached to their bodies.

Hubbell gives a full account of the struggle of the *Pieds-Noirs*, returning to their conflicted historical background and drawing on psychoanalytical analyses to understand their literary work. The study is rich with fictional and biographical examples to reveal the implications of dual identity and the consequences of psychological trauma for writing.

ZOHRA MEHELLOU  
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***Créativité intermédiatique au Togo et dans la diaspora togolaise.*** Par SUSANNE GEHRMANN et DOTSE YIGBE. Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2015. 298 pp. Hb €37.32. ISBN: 9783643131331

L'ouvrage collectif *Créativité intermédiatique au Togo et dans la diaspora togolaise* s'intéresse à la situation actuelle de la production culturelle, littéraire et artistique du Togo et de sa diaspora. Structuré en quatre chapitres, le recueil aborde successivement les 'Intermédiatités de l'oral au digital', les 'Écritures intermédiatiques', 'L'art de Senouvo Agbota Zinsou et les médias' et se referme sur des 'Interviews: Créateurs et médiatrices culturels'. Étant donnée la richesse des contributions de ces onze articles et quatre interviews, nous proposons, non pas d'en livrer une revue détaillée, mais de présenter ici les points saillants de chacun des chapitres.

Dans 'Intermédiatité de l'oral au digital', les quatre articles illustrent les formes que revêt l'intermédiatité. L'attention est alors portée sur la création la plus sensible aux évolutions, à savoir le conte populaire. Traditionnellement destiné à une transmission orale, il est aujourd'hui diffusé par d'autres supports tels que le livre, la télévision ou la radio. Cette intermédiatité engendre des mutations tant du point de vue du contenu du conte que de son public.

Akila Ahouli rappelle que le Togo est une nation constituée d'une mosaïque d'ethnies ayant chacune leurs propres langue, traditions et coutumes. En ce sens, il convient d'envisager la pluralité des contes togolais tant du point de vue ethnique, que de la langue qui en est le support. Ahouli a bien cerné la transformation du conte dont la forme et le temps sont inéluctablement altérés par la mise en image à la télévision. Le support audiovisuel le fige, le prive de ses marges d'improvisation et de sa spontanéité, ne serait-ce qu'en raison de la limitation dans le temps des émissions. Les contes animés, joués sur scène avec des marionnettes, attestent de la transformation de la forme du conte. L'article révèle ainsi le phénomène d'hybridation du conte auquel nous assistons.

La deuxième partie du recueil, 'Écritures intermédiatiques', comporte une approche originale de l'intermédiatité proposée par Gbandé Daré dans 'La fusion du récit littéraire avec l'art, la presse et la correspondance administrative: *Der Blues in mir* d'El Loko'. Ce poème relate les déboires de l'auteur en proie à des difficultés d'ordre juridique en Allemagne lors d'un séjour d'étude. La retranscription de ses démêlés allie au récit des gravures sur bois, des extraits de journaux et de correspondances administratives qui marquent la volonté de l'auteur de marier poésie et art plastique. La fonction de ces média est repensée par Daré qui s'attèle, précisément, à approfondir le sens même du terme *média*. Il renvoie ainsi le lecteur à l'étude de Joachim Paech où le média est défini comme une possibilité, un intermédiaire ou un entre-deux (1998, p. 23), alors que le sens commun pointe vers le cinéma, la presse, la télévision ou la radio. La définition de l'intermédiatité est replacée au cœur même du terme média. Ainsi ce nouveau éclairage du média—moyen de communication et support sémiologique—enrichit notre vision et montre comment l'intermédiatité est le lieu d'une fusion choisie des modes d'expression: récit littéraire et gravures sur bois se complètent et, par la conjugaison de leur originalité, confèrent au message

une force nouvelle.

Le troisième volet est consacré à 'L'art de Sénouvo Agboda Zinsou'. Alain Ricard en fait une lecture comparée à la lumière de l'œuvre de Wole Soyinka. En effet, des similitudes unissent les œuvres de ces deux dramaturges. Chacune est le fruit d'un processus réflexif, autobiographique. Ils sont également tous deux des auteurs pragmatiques en matière de linguistique, leur monde est plurilingue et polyphonique. Mais à la différence de Wole Soyinka, l'œuvre de Zinsou figure un syncrétisme à la source, à partir de la bible et non à partir des religions traditionnelles. Il s'agit d'un monde éthique avant tout, où les vodous n'ont pas leur place comme dans le théâtre de Soyinka. Alors que ce dernier garde une réserve quant aux religions, Zinsou, lui, est guidé par les récits bibliques: ils sont pour lui source de libération. Il envisage la tradition comme un univers de fantaisie. Ses personnages féminins caractérisent une attitude de libération et d'égalité, alors que le pouvoir masculin est prédominant chez Soyinka. Tandis que l'univers de Zinsou est une création fantastique, celui de Soyinka reflète la réalité sociale de son pays, le Nigéria. Ce contraste est enrichissant et donne un aperçu des œuvres des deux auteurs qui s'inscrivent tous deux dans une réflexion sur la transformation du monde.

La dernière partie du recueil présente les interviews menées auprès des auteurs du corpus d'étude sur le thème 'Créateurs et médiatrices culturels'. La parole est donnée à Sénouvo Agboda Zinsou, El Loko, Kangni Alem, ainsi qu'à Christiane Tchotcho Ekué et Yasmîn Issaka-Coubageat. Ces entretiens sont l'opportunité d'en apprendre plus sur leurs œuvres et lèvent le voile sur l'orientation de leurs futurs travaux. Ainsi par exemple, on apprend s'ils ont jamais pensé à une carrière de cinéaste, ou quelle est leur position personnelle sur l'actualité politique de leur pays respectif.

*Créativité intermédiale au Togo et dans la diaspora togolaise* est un recueil dense, où chaque contributeur analyse l'intermédialité sous un angle différent dans le contexte de la scène culturelle au Togo et dans la diaspora togolaise. Il permet donc au lecteur non averti du caractère polymorphe de l'intermédialité de mieux appréhender ce concept. Le chercheur aura plaisir à lire un collectif riche qui ouvre de nombreuses pistes de recherche.

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## CONFERENCE REPORTS

### Repairing the Past, Imagining the Future: Reparations and Beyond... University of Edinburgh, 5–7 November 2015

On 5–7 November 2015, the University of Edinburgh (UoE) and Wheelock College (Boston, US) joined forces to organize an international conference and networking event in Edinburgh to examine the question of reparations for the enslavement of peoples of African descent and other crimes against humanity. Reparations—or repairing for harm done—is an ancient concept that has recently resurfaced in public debates. In 2013, Caribbean governments formed the Caricom Reparations Commission (CRC) tasked with seeking reparatory justice for the crimes against humanity committed by the former slave trading nations of Europe. In 2014, the CRC unanimously approved a ten-point justice programme that called for Europe to address the ongoing effects of slavery upon Caribbean communities. These demands have coincided with the sudden increase in public awareness concerning the slave past, notably following the recent spate of high-profile films, such as Steve McQueen’s Oscar-winning *12 Years a Slave* (2013).

Set within the wider context of the US’s 150th anniversary of the abolition of slavery (2015), the conference aimed to explore reparations from a broad disciplinary base with panels crossing between law and justice, ethics and philosophy, history, politics, cultural and literary studies, and the social sciences. Its central theme was to look at the question of ‘reparations and beyond...’; that is, to examine the potential of reparations to offer a way of engaging more actively in overcoming the legacies of slavery beyond that of memory and commemoration. Importantly, we actively sought to include papers from both academics and activists involved in reparation movements in the UK, as well as other practitioners, such as artists, curators, teachers and journalists. The lively discussions that arose between academic and activist positions, notably over questions of language usage and voice, were testament to the very real living consequences of this important history.

In total, seventy-five papers were offered across fifteen parallel panels, with speakers coming from sixteen countries, making it a truly international event. In addition, there was a plenary panel with leading US experts on reparations and a student panel sponsored by Wheelock College, as well as film screening of Katrina Browne’s *Traces of the Trade* (2008). Sponsorship included internal funding from the UoE, the Scottish Centre for Diaspora Studies (UoE), the Centre for African Studies (UoE), the Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights (CRER, Glasgow), the Association of Modern & Contemporary France and the African Studies Association UK. Around 250–300 people attended the conference and its related public addresses. The event was opened and closed with public lectures by two leading figures in the fight for reparations: the eminent historian and President of the Caricom Reparations Commission, Sir Hilary Beckles (University of the West Indies), and the Chair of the Jamaican Reparations Committee, Professor Verene Shepherd. The conference was concluded with a roundtable discussion, chaired by the editor of the *Journal of African American History*, V. P. Franklin, in which attendees discussed ways to take the reparations’ agenda forward. A ‘Conference Summary of Recommendations’ was produced, which includes six broad action points, including a mandate for a follow-up conference to be held in West Africa in November 2017 and calls for the need to develop ongoing working linkages between community-based organizations and academia to conceive and implement an effective reparations strategy.<sup>40</sup>

NICOLA FRITH  
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<sup>40</sup> The summary and further information can be found on our conference website: <http://conferences.hss.ed.ac.uk/-reparations/>. You can also follow us on our Facebook page ‘Reparations Network’, or through our Twitter link: @MemoriesEnslavement.

**SFPS Annual Conference 2015: Postcolonial Mobilities in the Francophone World  
Institute of Modern Languages Research, 13–14 November 2015**

The SFPS Annual Conference took place on Friday 13 and Saturday 14 November 2015 in Senate House, London, hosted by the Institute of Modern Languages Research (IMLR) and sponsored by Liverpool University Press. The theme for the conference was 'Postcolonial Mobilities in the Francophone World', selected to enable an exploration of how processes of movement and mobility have radically re-shaped the Francophone world in the twenty-first century and how these same processes also produce immobility, exclusion and disconnection. The conference sought to address questions relating to the role mobility plays in relation to the creation of new transcultural and transnational identities, and the challenges of new forms of social and cultural practices.

A total of thirty papers and two keynote lectures were included in the programme. Three parallel sessions were held on the first day of the conference, with papers focusing on topics as diverse as mobility and the body, mobility within music and the creative arts, forced mobility and clandestine migration. At the end of the afternoon, Dr Kate Averis (ULIP) gave the first keynote lecture on the theme of 'Rethinking Mobilities in/through Francophone Women's Writing', examining the articulation of mobility in the works of four writers: Nancy Huston, Silvia Baron Supervielle, Malika Mokeddem and Linda Lê.

On the second day of the conference, the parallel sessions focused on themes of mobility and gender, immigration and belonging, mobility and the diaspora, and the limits of the nation. Papers considered a wide range of topics, from African diasporas to Algerian decolonization, the Jewish avant-garde, and a rethinking of mobility from a Glissantian perspective. Professor Mireille Rosello (University of Amsterdam) gave the closing Dorothy Blair Memorial Lecture, offering a nuanced reading of mobilities and mobilizations in the recent film *Intouchables* (2011).

Overall, the conference attracted an encouraging number of postgraduate students, with participants primarily hailing from the UK, France and the US. As conference secretary, I must express my frustration with the fact that we initially had numerous participants from African countries on the programme, none of whom were able to obtain visas to attend the conference. This seems to be one of the key difficulties with organizing academic conferences in the UK, and continues to limit international dialogue, particularly when so much of Francophone Postcolonial Studies focuses on the African continent.

It would be impossible to report on the conference without mentioning the Paris attacks that occurred on Friday 13 November 2015, which greatly affected everyone present, particularly those who had come from Paris and who were concerned with the safety of their friends and family back home. Much of the discussion during the second day centred around these terrible events, and in a way it was comforting to be able to share our thoughts with others who all know Paris well and have an attachment to the city. A minute of silence was held on Saturday morning out of respect for the victims of the attacks.

The 2016 SFPS Annual Conference is scheduled to take place in London on Friday 18–Saturday 19 November, on the theme of 'Francophone Postcolonial Studies in the Twenty-First Century'. The call for papers is available here: <http://sfps.ac.uk/conferencestudy-days/annual-conference-2016/>.

CATHERINE GILBERT  
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## ***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 2016 issue is 15 August 2016.**

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The SFPS logo, designed by Caomhán Ó Scolaí, is based on a Téké mask from the Upper Sanga region (Congo-Brazzaville).

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