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ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF CARIBBEAN AND AFRICAN LITERATURE IN FRENCH



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Mongo Beti et l'Europe: des rapports aigres-doux

La littérature africaine de langue française a abondamment exploité le thème du rapport entre la France, ou plutôt entre l'Europe et l'Afrique. On connaît les mésaventures de *Kocoumbo, l'étudiant noir* (1960) d'Aké Loba, les tribulations de Tanhoé Bertin dans *Un Nègre à Paris* (1959) de Bernard Dadié ou encore celles de Samba Diallo dans *L'Aventure ambiguë* (1960) de Cheikh Hamidou Kane. Même *La Nouvelle Romance* (1976) et *Le Chercheur d'Afriques* (1990) de Henri Lopès sont, à bien des égards, des ouvrages qui mettent en exergue les rapports entre l'Europe et l'Afrique.

Evidemment, il y aurait lieu de soutenir que toute la littérature africaine écrite repose essentiellement sur ce type de rapport, tant il est vrai que chaque écrivain s'attache, d'une manière ou d'une autre, à donner sa perception de l'Europe et de la nature des rapports qui lient ou qui devraient lier les deux continents.

Mongo Beti vit en Europe depuis plus de trente ans. Il y a mené une longue carrière d'enseignant et d'écrivain. C'est dire qu'à bien des égards, il aurait pu être considéré comme un Européen. Mais un Africain peut-il jamais devenir Européen? La dialectique colonisateur/colonisé, dominant/dominé, Blanc/Noir qui subsume son œuvre depuis *Ville cruelle* (1954) jusqu'aux *Deux mères de Guillaume Ismaël Dzewatama, futur camionneur* (1982) met pourtant à nu la douloureuse question des échanges entre l'Afrique et l'Europe d'hier, d'aujourd'hui et de demain. Tous les grands problèmes sont pris en compte, depuis le débat sur la christianisation jusqu'à la question de l'urbanisation sans oublier les mouvements de libération nationale.

Qui plus est, au delà même de sa création romanesque, Mongo Beti est l'auteur d'un certain nombre d'essais dans lesquels il analyse plus précisément encore les rapports eurafricains à travers le prisme que lui offre la France. Les dites analyses constituent sans aucun doute le socle idéologique de sa fiction.

Mon objectif ici n'est pas de décrypter de manière exhaustive les arguments que développe Mongo Beti depuis quarante ans qu'il écrit. Je voudrais simplement montrer que le

romancier camerounais, pour qui la littérature est une arme de combat, a mis au point nombre de repères qui permettent aujourd'hui de dire quelles peuvent être les attentes d'un écrivain africain à la veille de l'émergence de la nouvelle Europe.

Un passé douloureux

Traitant justement des problèmes du dialogue entre l'Afrique et l'Europe, Chinua Achebe reconnaît tout de go le caractère étroit de ces rapports. Il affirme notamment:

Les relations entre l'Europe et l'Afrique sont très anciennes et aussi très spéciales. De l'influence exercée par les côtes de l'Afrique du Nord et celles de l'Europe méridionale sont nés les débuts de la civilisation européenne moderne. Plus tard, et avec les effets beaucoup moins heureux, c'est l'Europe qui a engagé l'Afrique dans la voie de la tragique mésalliance entre le trafic des esclaves et le colonialisme, afin que fussent jetées les bases de l'industrialisme moderne en Europe et en Amérique. (*Peuples noirs - Peuples africains*, 11, 1979, p.18)

Et, commentant la vision senghorienne des rapports eurafricains, Achebe ajoute:

Quand le poète Sedar Senghor chante l'Afrique reliée à l'Europe par le cordon ombilical, il donne sans doute à ces rapports une allure par trop sentimentale, en les dépouillant, grâce à l'imaginaire sécurisante de la mère et de l'enfant, de la méchanceté et de la cruauté qui ont souvent marqué la conduite de l'Europe envers l'Afrique. (*PNPA*, 11, 1979, p.10)

Nous ne reviendrons pas sur les controverses créées par l'affirmation de Senghor dans les milieux intellectuels africains. Mais il convient de souligner que les préoccupations d'Achebe rejoignent celles de Beti dont les interrogations peuvent se résumer en quelques points: l'Europe de demain pourra-t-elle faire disparaître le néocolonialisme? Pendant longtemps encore, l'Europe va être maîtresse du destin de l'Afrique, que nous le voulions ou non. Comment entend-elle gérer cette charge? L'Europe sera-t-elle la cause de notre misère persistante ou de

l'amélioration de nos conditions de vie? L'Europe va-t-elle continuer à soutenir nos dictateurs ou va-t-elle au contraire nous aider à instaurer la démocratie chez nous aussi? L'Europe va-t-elle entretenir le népotisme en Afrique et la transparence chez elle?

Mongo Beti estime que pour répondre à toutes ces questions, l'Europe doit se livrer à un bilan sans faux-fuyant de ses rapports avec l'Afrique. Elle se rendrait alors compte que l'Apartheid dont tant d'Africains ont souffert est bel et bien une invention européenne; que "notre rencontre avec le Blanc chrétien" est "à l'origine de la déportation brutale de dizaines, sinon de centaines de millions des nôtres". La suite de l'histoire est connue. Pareille rétrospective permettrait aussi à l'Europe de se rappeler que notre rencontre avec elle a

provoqué l'extermination de communautés entières, balayé des royaumes sans aucun doute florissants, anéanti des empires, manquant de peu d'éteindre notre race, comme [elle] a éteint la race des Indiens d'Amérique du Nord. (*PNPA*, 6, 1978, p.3)

Au terme de ce survol historique, Mongo Beti conclut à la nécessité pour l'Europe d'aujourd'hui et de demain de changer de discours sur l'Afrique. L'écrivain constate pour le regretter que depuis près d'un siècle, l'image qu'ont les Européens de l'Afrique et des Africains est rigoureusement la même. Tout est parti d'une vision ethnologique qui date de la période coloniale et qui a, à jamais, figé les sociétés africaines en mettant systématiquement le voile sur les conflits internes qui les ravagent.

Au discours des administrateurs des colonies se substitua très rapidement celui des journalistes blancs, eux aussi tentés par le regard ethnologique et médiocrement concernés par le martyre des populations noires" (*PNPA*, 2, 1978, p.6) et par la précarité du statut de l'intellectuel africain tant en Europe qu'en Afrique. "L'intellectuel africain en France ou dans son propre pays, écrit Beti, c'est avant tout un homme qui a peur, peur pour sa sauvegarde physique, peur pour son avenir, peur pour les siens" (*PNPA*, 2, 1978, p.7). De là à conclure que l'Europe entière nous fait peur, il n'y a qu'un pas vite franchi. Et pour cause! Les grands réseaux médiatiques européens qui traitent les informations africaines, manipulent

l'opinion et contrôlent le discours tenu sur l'Afrique, ne font pour ainsi dire aucune place aux voix africaines.

Promouvoir des voix endogènes

En effet, aussi bien dans les journaux que dans les institutions politiques, culturelles et économiques du Vieux Continent, on fait peu de place au discours émanant de l'intelligentsia africaine. Encore que parfois, les contre-discours proférés par certains Européens dits de gauche soient rejetés pour délit d'africanophilie. On connaît les cas du géographe français Jean Suret-Canale et du sociologue suisse Jean Ziegler. Sur le plan politique par exemple, l'Europe a continué en Afrique à entretenir des sanguinaires au nom des prétendues différences culturelles. Non seulement on tolère ici des gérontocrates séniles et ubuesques, mais on s'indigne fort peu quand un roi nègre massacre ses congénères. Tout se passe comme si l'Afrique n'était qu'un objet de curiosité, totalement incapable de produire ses porte-parole et les analystes de son destin. C'est en Europe que l'on décide de l'image de nos dirigeants, souvent au mépris de ce que les Africains eux-mêmes pourraient avoir à dire. Beti constate:

Au crépuscule des années 70, les écrivains africains se remettent à produire, [...] jettent sur le marché une quantité relativement massive d'essais politiques, de romans, de poèmes, de pièces de théâtre dont le contenu dément régulièrement [...] les mythes complaisants répandus à propos des dirigeants africains francophiles par les journalistes blancs, les reporters. (PNPA, 41-42, 1984, p.3)

Mais qu'à cela ne tienne! Nombre de ces reporters sont aujourd'hui discrédités. Malheureusement, ils ont été remplacés par une nouvelle génération de laudateurs:

Mieux adaptés au changement des mentalités, plus subtiles, ils se sont montrés infiniment plus efficaces [...]. En effet, ils sont presque tous des universitaires [...] même dépourvus de diplômes officiels, ce sont presque toujours des spécialistes d'un niveau honorable en comparaison desquels les "reporters" paraissent des

minables amateurs. Leur langage est celui de vénérables professeurs, leurs méthodes d'investigation relèvent de la recherche scientifique, du moins en apparence. (PNPA, 41-42, 1984, p.4)

Ainsi, l'Europe secrète-t-elle des spécialistes de circonstance pour entretenir au sujet de l'Afrique des mythes que leurs congénères aiment à caresser. Or, justement la culture de l'ouverture, de la liberté d'expression, du brassage d'idées est l'une des valeurs que les Africains s'attendent à voir l'Europe partager. Assez curieusement cependant, certains pays européens ont aidé à instituer en Afrique le culte de l'interdit. Nombre de coopérants européens sont devenus porteurs de corsets paralysants et meurtrissants. Conséquence, l'Afrique des comptoirs a persisté. Ainsi, nombre de banques africaines ne sont que des succursales des institutions financières européennes; les sociétés coloniales ont pris des noms locaux, les multinationales se sont africanisées en façade. En somme, la colonisation a simplement changé de nom. Elle s'appelle "indépendance".

Mais que l'on s'entende bien, énonce Beti: "Entre hommes et femmes communiant sincèrement dans un idéal de fraternité simplement formulé, l'assistance technique ne soulève aucune véritable difficulté. Il y suffit d'un peu de cœur". (PNPA, 2, 1978, p.10) En clair, Beti accuse l'Europe de trop mentir à l'Afrique. Et tout le monde le sait: de tous les coins de la planète, la situation en Afrique est la plus tragique, bien que le continent dispose d'assez de ressources humaines pour au moins poser clairement le diagnostic de ses multiples maux. Mais comment nous dégager du voile noir dont l'Europe nous couvre? La nouvelle Europe devrait être attentive à donner aux Africains ce qu'elle a de mieux: l'expérience démocratique et la tradition de concertation.

Sous le signe du dialogue

Pour Beti comme pour Achebe, les nouveaux rapports avec l'Europe devraient être fondés sur un dialogue véritable. Et Sony Labou Tansi ne pense pas autrement lorsqu'il s'explique avec une certaine agressivité sur la préférence qu'il a pour les éditeurs français:

Quant aux Européens, j'ai un vieux compte à solder avec eux; le compte des effets indésirables des quatre siècles d'esclavage et d'un de colonisation. Après cinq siècles de concubinage douteux sous régime de biens communs, il est normal, dit-il, que je publie en France, de la même manière, que l'Etat congolais, quoi qu'on en dise et quoi qu'on en pense, reste une manière de théâtre subventionné par qui nous savons. Mettez cette opinion sur le compte de la scène de ménage que l'Afrique doit avoir avec l'Europe, espèce de préalable incontournable, si nous voulons éviter la spécialisation de notre continent en lieu de reproduction du sous-développement des autres. (*Etudes littéraires*, vol. 24, no 2, 1991, p.116)

En effet, le moment semble venu pour l'Europe de reconnaître qu'elle a, dans un passé récent, entretenu sur le continent noir des conseillers sanguinaires et enseigné ce qu'elle ne tolère pas sur son sol: la barbarie de la torture, de la terreur, et de l'assassinat. Nombre de pays européens ont envoyé dans les pays africains des arrivistes qui n'avaient rien à leur donner mais tout à en attendre.

L'Europe peut-elle mettre fin à la marginalisation de la parole africaine en laissant s'exprimer nos révoltes dans ses médias et en favorisant sur son sol la circulation des opinions africaines qui ne correspondraient pas nécessairement aux vérités que véhiculent nos "leaders charismatiques"? Elle l'a fait pour l'Europe de l'Est. L'Afrique n'en attend pas moins. Les Africains devraient être libres de détruire leurs propres mythes et d'élaborer un discours scientifique sur l'Afrique, discours ayant autant droit de cité que celui des experts du Vieux Continent.

Les écrivains africains ne revendiquent ni l'exclusivité, ni la primauté de la parole, mais simplement une égalité de traitement. Que les événements qui concernent l'Afrique soit traités de la même manière que ceux qui concernent l'Amérique du sud, l'Europe de l'est ou même l'Asie. C'est sous forme d'entrefilets dans les journaux ou de flash dans les bulletins d'information que l'on a coutume d'annoncer les convulsions qui secouent l'Afrique. Pour Beti, le moment est venu de

comprendre et d'expliquer qu'il y a des Africains qui ne se reconnaissent pas dans un espace où la prévarication est reine et où "Pour dissuader les roitelets nègres de leur demander des comptes, les multinationales leur versent des royalties de la main à la main au lieu d'en créditer les trésoreries nationales" (PNPA, 37, 1984, p.2). Tout se passe comme si en Afrique, on oublie toute éthique et encourage l'immobilisme tant certains dictateurs sont traités avec "ménagement, chouchouteries, tergiversations, et autres cajoleries" (PNPA, 79, 1991, p.4).

Tous comptes faits, quand les Africains font l'inventaire de leurs priorités spécifiques, ils parlent de "liberté, de démocratie, de survie de leurs familles, de l'avenir de leurs enfants" (PNPA, 59-62, 87/88, p.3). Le vœu de Mongo Beti est que la nouvelle Europe consacre la fin véritable de l'impérialisme occidental sur les pays d'Afrique. Jusqu'ici en effet, l'on avait eu affaire à des dirigeants passablement émasculés par diverses techniques élaborées en Occident. L'ambition communautaire pourrait-elle faire en sorte que le Vieux continent adopte une politique commune au sujet des pays africains? Pareille politique mettrait fin aux ambiguïtés des rapports postcoloniaux qui ont encouragé la corruption, l'extermination de l'intelligentsia au nom de la dissidence et marginalisé les créateurs au profit d'une oligarchie bardée de privilèges.

Pour Beti, enfin, la nouvelle Europe devrait soutenir les peuples africains en lutte pour la conquête de leur deuxième indépendance. Voilà qui jetterait les bases d'une nouvelle coopération fondée sur la défense des droits fondamentaux que sont la liberté et la démocratie. La prospérité de l'Afrique est à ce prix, les intérêts bien compris de l'Europe aussi.

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The Context of *L'Aventure ambiguë*: aspects of the school system in L'Afrique Occidentale Française

L'Aventure ambiguë, like so many African novels of the sixties, has as one of its central themes the uprooting effect of French schooling on its impressionable young hero, largely identified with his creator, Cheikh Hamidou Kane. We see the boy Samba Diallo pass from the Koranic school, through the French Primary system, and eventually to Paris for his higher education. But since this is a novel in which all is internalised, where ideas are paramount, we are given very little detail on the actual form this education took: it was in no way Kane's aim to write a history of French colonial education policy, and what we are given is rather a frequently tantalising series of snapshots of Samba Diallo at various stages of his education, lacking the detail which would flesh out what is at times a somewhat cerebral argument.

In the context of work I have been doing recently on this text, therefore, I have been led to explore more thoroughly the educational background to the novel, trying to set it in some sort of context of French colonial policy in the field of education, generally in the AOF, more particularly, where possible, in Senegal itself. In the latter respect, of course, I have been lucky, as Senegal was always a flagship within the French colonial system: many ideas were tried out there rather than elsewhere, and most of it is well documented, if one is in a position to get at the documents.

Two aspects of what material I have so far seen have come to preoccupy me. Firstly the ambiguities surrounding much educational practice from the 19th century onwards, which in some ways reflect the dilemmas of *L'Aventure ambiguë* itself, in others go way beyond them: one aspect which has particularly surprised me is the degree of pragmatism in so much that was done, resulting in a practice that was frequently at odds with the ideology of the time. The other feature that has proved fascinating is the language in which much of the debate was conducted, and which is at least as revealing as the ideas it is communicating. I propose, therefore, to make extensive use of quotation, especially as many of these texts are now difficult of access, being out of

print and therefore only obtainable in places such as the Bibliothèque Nationale.

This paper is based on some of what I have found to date, most of it indeed collected during three short but intensive days in the BN a couple of months ago. I do not pretend that it is in any way exhaustive or conclusive, nor would I claim to have resolved all the problems of relating it to *L'Aventure ambiguë*.

Dating the events recounted by the novel does not prove to be too much of a problem; critics seem to agree that these events begin around 1936, and that the final chapters take us to around 1950-51. In fact, the important period for our purposes here is that prior to 1948, since that is roughly when the first part of the novel ends. Since the events of the second part take place largely in France, that period is less relevant to the discussion of educational practice in the AOF. In fact, it soon became obvious to me that it was necessary to go back well beyond 1936, and in fact on occasion into the 19th century, in order to get an overview of policy. The period from 1903 onwards, that is to say roughly from the reforms separating Church and State in education, remains the most important, when the debate between *assimilation* and *association* was most acute. Samba Diallo's schooling was clearly in the assimilationist mould: but to what extent does this mirror general practice?

The doctrine of *assimilation* is based on two assumptions: firstly the idea inherited from the Revolution that all men are equal, that under different exterior manifestations there lies a common humanity which has a right to equal treatment; secondly, the conviction that French culture is inherently superior to any other, and in particular to what was perceived as a total lack of culture in the territories that were to become the colonial Empire. Frenchmen therefore were very quickly led to believe in a unique civilising mission whereby, by virtue of their common humanity, natives of other cultures could gradually be brought up to the level of true Frenchmen through intensive and indeed exclusive exposure to French culture. It is easy to see how well this chimes with the central doctrines of Jules Ferry's reforms: in Ferry's view, school is the unique means of suppressing inequalities. In this highly mobile scenario, superior and inferior are provisional terms; it is a

question of two parties under contract with certain rights and obligations, where the superior has the duty to bring the inferior up gradually to his level. Education is the process by which this is done. In the case of most African intellectuals of Kane's generation, the job of assimilation was done extremely thoroughly, but the price paid is clearly indicated in the dilemma which eventually kills Samba Diallo. He feels himself ultimately to belong neither to his native culture nor to his acquired French identity. As he says, "Je ne suis pas un pays des Diallobé distinct, face à un Occident distinct, et appréciant d'une tête froide ce que je puis lui prendre et ce qu'il faut que je lui laisse en contrepartie. Je suis devenu les deux. Il n'y a pas une tête lucide entre deux termes d'un choix. Il y a une nature étrange, en détresse de n'être pas deux" (p.164).

The policy of *association* which superseded *assimilation*, in practice if not always in theory, was based on the conviction that Africans were culturally different from Frenchmen, and therefore impossible to assimilate into French culture. Shades of opinion included frankly racist doctrines of the innate biological inferiority of the Negro, but also the belief that recognition of difference could be beneficial to both sides. Unlike what happened under British colonial rule, however, African institutions were not on the whole used for administrative purposes, since they were perceived as a potential threat to control. I will elaborate a little later in this paper on the contradictions inherent in both these doctrines. For the present, their ambiguities are perhaps best revealed in the remarks of Jules Brévié, Governor-General of Senegal from 1930 to 1936: he speaks of "l'indigène" as "un mineur incapable dont il fallait d'abord entreprendre l'éducation, sans vaine précipitation, en le laissant évoluer dans le cadre de ses institutions coutumières, en l'élevant progressivement par une direction vigilante vers une collaboration de plus en plus interne au fur et à mesure des progrès réalisés".¹ It does not need much interpretation to suspect that many, if not most, of these "mineurs incapables" were destined to remain *incapables*

1. Roland Colin, "Systèmes d'éducation et mutations sociales. Continuité et discontinuité dans les dynamiques socio-éducatives. Le cas du Sénégal". Thèse présentée devant l'Université de Paris V, le 17 décembre 1977. Atelier reproduction des thèses, Université de Lille III, Lille, pp. 265-66.

and that the progress report was likely to be made in the interests of the "educationalist".

I have mentioned already that Samba Diallo's education followed the assimilationist model. It is not certain, but probable from certain references in the text, for example the scene where the geography lesson is taking place, with the teacher questioning his pupils about Pau, that the programmes followed by the young Senegalese were essentially those of metropolitan France. The fact that other novels, written by other *assimilés*, give a similar picture, rather obscures the fact that only a tiny proportion of the again tiny proportion of Senegalese attending school would have followed these programmes in the 1930s. The extension of the metropolitan curriculum in 1927 to the AOF only applied at primary level to the *écoles urbaines*: Samba Diallo, at school at L., far from his native village, would seem to have been attending one of these, the only type of school opening onto normal careers in the public service, and whose final examination, the *certificat d'études primaires élémentaires*, was based on the metropolitan curriculum. But the *écoles de village*, dispensing a very basic knowledge of French, sufficient for communicating with French administrators, plus a rudimentary knowledge of other subjects, gave a very different deal to their pupils, as did the practically-orientated *écoles régionales*, which recruited their pupils from the best elements of the *écoles de village*.²

The reality seems to have been, therefore, that the type of education which Samba Diallo received was extremely rare. There are good reasons for this. Firstly, however much Frenchmen might pay lip-service to *assimilation*, politically it was most undesirable that a substantial number of Africans should benefit from it. The logical result of *assimilation* is, after all, an erosion of the power-base upon which colonialism rested, and in particular an end to the economic exploitation of the colonies by the colonial power. The political dangers of too much high-level education are clearly spelled out in a report from the *Institut Colonial International*, dated from 1931:³

2. Ibid., p.306

3. Institut Colonial International: *Compte-Rendu de la XXIe session*, Paris, mai 1931, p.135

... lorsqu'il s'agira d'organiser les enseignements secondaire et supérieur, il faudra rechercher s'il est possible de donner à ces enseignements un caractère vraiment colonial, vraiment racique, vraiment local; il faudra aussi rechercher les mesures qui devront être prises éventuellement pour éviter qu'une portion trop considérable de la population indigène ne se laisse enivrer par cet enseignement qui, pour des cerveaux insuffisamment préparés, peut présenter de réels inconvénients. Il faudra voir si des mesures ne devront pas intervenir pour que ne se crée pas, dans les pays neufs, un danger que nous commençons à constater dans nos pays de vieille civilisation: je veux dire la création d'une sorte de prolétariat intellectuel.

If a little learning was a dangerous thing, clearly a lot of learning was more dangerous still. As late as 1942 one hears opposition to the idea of opening education to all, and the promulgation of blatant elitism: Le Gouverneur-Général Roume, in an article in the *Journal Officiel de l'AOF*, upholds such a policy.⁴

Considérons l'instruction comme une chose précieuse qu'on ne distribue qu'à bon escient et limitons-en les effets à des bénéficiaires qualifiés. Choisissons nos élèves tout d'abord parmi les fils de chefs et de notables[...] C'est sur ces classes sociales indigènes que s'appuie notre autorité dans l'administration de ce pays, c'est avec elles surtout que nous avons un contrat de service.

A thorough-going assimilationist policy was also economically undesirable. Especially in the recessionary '30s, it became impossible to budget for the number of metropolitan French teachers necessary for staffing the *écoles régionales* in the AOF, and a move towards a more associationist policy became inevitable. What was needed, in practical terms, was a sufficient number of peasants trained in practical skills to

4. Gouverneur-Général Roume, "L'Enseignement en Afrique", *Journal Officiel de l'AOF*, no 1024, 10 mai 1942, quot. Samba Gadjigo, *Ecole blanche, Afrique noire*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1990, p.93.

increase production. But the financing of anything approaching an assimilationist policy had always been a problem. One of the most ingenious solutions, copied from the British in India, had been tried way back in the early 19th century, and that was Bell and Lancaster's "enseignement mutuel". In this system, only one teacher was needed for sometimes as many as 500 pupils, plus an indefinite number of *moniteurs*, recruited from the more advanced pupils. The teacher brought together the *moniteurs* at the start of each day, and outlined the work for the day. The school then assembled all together in one large space, and worked under the guidance of the *moniteurs*, the whole procedure being supervised by the teacher, like some pedagogical ringmaster, elevated on a raised platform, by means of a stick and a whistle.⁵ Fortunately for the education of succeeding generations of young Africans, this experiment did not last long, but it shows how economic considerations frequently dominated policy.

The perpetual under-funding of education in the colonies is also shown in statistics for both schools and school attendance throughout the 3rd Republic. In 1914, for example, in the 8 colonies of the AOF, there were only 35 *écoles primaires*, and in 1921, only 6 *écoles primaires supérieures*. By 1940, there were still only 2 secondary schools, both in Senegal.⁶ In terms of numbers attending school, in 1936 there was a mere 3.5% in the AOF overall,⁷ and by the eve of the 2nd World War this had apparently dropped to 2.4%.⁸ In 1938, there were 9.5 pupils for 1,000 children of school-going age in Senegal, the country with certainly the highest school-attendance. In the light of such figures, Samba Diallo seems a very privileged individual indeed.

Although hard economics clearly played a very important role in educational development or lack of it, sometimes it could be an almost accidental consequence of decisions taken for ideological reasons. This was the case in

5. Georges Hardy, *L'Enseignement au Sénégal de 1817 à 1854*, Paris, Emile Larose, 1920, p.5.

6. Gadjigo, p.81.

7. Colin, p.316.

8. Jean Capelle, *L'Education en Afrique noire à la veille des indépendances*, Editions Karthala et ACCT, 1990, p.32.

1903, when the application to the colonies of the laicisation of education meant that the religious teaching orders, who had during the 19th century played such an important part in the development of education, were suddenly forced to abandon their role. This struck particularly brutally at girls' education, so that whereas in 1903 one girl was in school for every 5 boys, by 1917 the ratio had dropped to 1 to 20.

Ideology did not, however, as we have already seen, always play the leading part in educational policy in the AOF. Even among the most ideologically committed, education was seen as a form of power. One of the most interesting examples of this is Georges Hardy, *Directeur de l'Enseignement de l'AOF* 1913-1919, but exercising a huge influence through his many publications and his constantly high profile in the educational debate right up to the 2nd World War. He was not an assimilationist, believing strongly in the provision of a locally relevant education, but he had an undying belief in the value of French culture, and a total commitment to France's "mission civilisatrice". His vision of education as a form of power is admirably illustrated in a passage from one of his most important works, *Une Conquête morale: l'enseignement en AOF*, whose very title is of course significant:⁹

Pour transformer les peuples primitifs de nos colonies, pour les rendre le plus possible dévoués à notre cause et utiles à notre entreprise, nous n'avons à notre disposition qu'un nombre très limité de moyens, et le moyen le plus sûr, c'est de prendre l'indigène dès l'enfance, d'obtenir de lui qu'il nous fréquente assidûment et qu'il subisse nos habitudes intellectuelles et morales En un mot de lui ouvrir des écoles où son esprit se forme à nos intentions.

He evokes the French conquest of large tracts of Africa "sans grande résistance", and shows how "[elle doit] se doubler d'une nouvelle conquête du pays et des habitants". And the aim of this new conquest?

"Mise en valeur du pays, attachement raisonné de l'indigène à notre oeuvre, tel est donc l'objet de la nouvelle conquête. Conquête moins rapide et brillante que la première, mais aussi féconde et méritoire, et dont l'instrument ne peut être que l'école."¹⁰

One is reminded irresistibly of the passage in *L'Aventure ambiguë* where the narrator evokes the double conquest of the Diallobé people, firstly by the "canon", then by "l'école nouvelle". Speaking of the conquerors, the narrator remarks "On commença [...] à comprendre que leur puissance véritable résidait, non point dans les canons du premier matin, mais dans ce qui suivait ces canons", "l'école nouvelle", whose ambiguous nature included both canon and magnet (p.60). Reciprocally, it seems that the French school was regarded by the colonised themselves as a weapon in the long struggle against the invader. During the phase of militant conquest prior to the 1st World War, the African tended to frequent the French school only when obliged to. After the war, the tactical advantages in attendance were perceived, and there was a rush to take up places.¹¹

While viewing education as a tactic for controlling the indigenous peoples, Hardy believed very strongly, as I have said, in France's civilising mission. The aim of schooling was to "améliorer l'âme indigène [...], augmenter la valeur morale des races que le hasard de l'histoire nous a confiées".¹² The native must understand the generosity of intention which inspires the French to raise him to their level, he must appreciate the honorable role that France has played in the world, "et qu'elle mérite à tous égards la puissance coloniale qui lui est départie [...] Nous aimons qu'on nous aime; l'histoire de nos conquêtes est, tout autant qu'une histoire de guerres héroïques, une aventure sentimentale [...] Confions à l'école [...] le soin de justifier notre action et de semer dans le coeur de nos sujets une affection raisonnée".¹³

10. Ibid., p.3.

11. Gadjigo, op.cit., p.59.

12. Hardy, *Une Conquête morale*, p.10.

13. Idem.

9. Hardy, *Une Conquête morale: l'enseignement en A.O.F.*, Paris, Armand Colin, 1917, p.8.

Hardy's conviction that he was dealing with "des populations tout à fait barbares"¹⁴ helps to explain why he rejected thorough-going assimilationist policies. His paternalistic approach made it difficult for him to see potential equals in Africans: the village school was to be "un instrument de moralisation et de loyalisme",¹⁵ whose function it was to train subordinates, people whose whole destiny was to be seen through a French perspective. Thus the native schoolmaster was to be an example of loyalty and proper subordination for his whole community. In his work *Les Deux Routes*, he outlines the opposing paths that the *instituteur* can take, the one "la voie de la collaboration totale dans la réalisation totale du projet colonial", the other "celle des revendications excessives et inopportunes".¹⁶ Teachers must show themselves to be "polis, déferents, prévenants, aimables sans familiarité envers l'Européen". They must appear "non pas comme un élément de trouble, mais comme un élément de liaison entre les Européens et les indigènes".¹⁷

Hardy's ideas on what subjects should be taught at primary level, and how, is equally revealing. The curriculum should have a strong practical leaning, with subjects such as agriculture and *travaux manuels* playing a major part. It was important to "demeurer modestes, c'est-à-dire adaptés, de ne jamais perdre de vue le peuple de cultivateurs, d'ouvriers et de pêcheurs auquel elle s'adresse, en un mot, de prendre racine dans le pays même, de vivre par et pour le pays".¹⁸ Academic subjects such as history, however, were extremely important in that they were the vehicle for conveying the idea of France's grandeur. "Real" history, as taught by Frenchmen, had several different though interrelated aims: firstly to counteract subversive local accounts told by the *griots* of the colonisation process; secondly to convince the natives of the greatness of France and their need for her protection, and thirdly to dissolve

14. Ibid., p.5.

15. Ibid., p.54.

16. Georges Hardy, *Les Deux Routes*, quot. Colin, p.344.

17. Ibid., p.348.

18. Hardy, *L'Enseignement aux indigènes dans les possessions françaises d'Afrique*, Bruxelles, Etablissements Généraux d'Imprimerie, 1931, p.277.

the blend of fact and superstition, magic and supernatural causation which passed for history among the local populations. On the second point, the critic Samba Gadjigo, in his *Ecole blanche, Afrique noire*, quotes a striking passage from Ahmadou Mapaté Diagne's *Les Trois Volontés de Malic*, in which a schoolboy is reading out in class a passage from his history book. Referring to pre-colonial times, he says:¹⁹

Le Sénégal était très agité, très troublé. Les villages étaient souvent en guerre les uns contre les autres. Tous les ans, les Maures traversaient le fleuve, parcouraient le pays, razziaient et brûlaient les villages, tuaient les hommes et les vieillards, vidaient les greniers de mil et rentraient en Mauritanie avec les femmes et les enfants qu'ils faisaient captifs. Faïdherbe - ancien gouverneur du Sénégal - arriva et mit fin à tout cela... Faïdherbe libéra le commerce et les habitants du Sénégal.

The purpose of history is clear: the conqueror is depicted as saviour, protecting the defenceless African from marauding foreigners, a task for which he is himself manifestly unfitted, since did he also not give himself up to the invading European? The portrait of Faïdherbe here is one with which he would presumably have been not unhappy. Hardy quotes him at a prize-giving at the *Ecole des otages*, his own personal creation, in 1860, declaring sententiously "L'heure de l'Afrique a sonné [...] La barbarie y est assaillie de toutes parts par la civilisation [...] Ne résistez pas au mouvement [...] Acceptez le bien qu'on veut vous faire".²⁰

Regarding other subjects, geography, in Hardy's scheme, was to play a similar role to history. Local features were not to be neglected, indeed, the AOF was to form the early part of the curriculum, starting with the village, the region and the colony, and finally the *ensemble des territoires* forming the AOF. The geography of France was then to be studied, as he says, in terms of "la puissance française étudiée du point de vue géographique".²¹

19. Gadjigo, p.100.

20. Hardy, *L'Enseignement aux indigènes* ..., p.268.

21. Hardy, *Une Conquête morale*, p.185.

Pride of place in the curriculum was to be given, of course, to the French language. Throughout all the debates on what and how to teach, there were few dissenting voices to the conviction that French culture must be disseminated through the French language. There had been an attempt by Jean Dard, the first primary school teacher to be appointed to Senegal after it was taken back from the British in 1816, to use Wolof as *langue véhiculaire*, but the experiment had not lasted long. The use of French in the classroom from the beginning of the education process was never seriously questioned, unlike the British colonial system, which opted for the use of indigenous languages, exclusively for the first three years of schooling, then side-by-side with English. In a report presented to the *Institut International des Langues et civilisations africaines*, in 1930, the sound pedagogical bases for the British position were given:²²

L'enfant doit apprendre et à aimer et à respecter l'héritage mental de son peuple dont l'expression naturelle et nécessaire est le langage. Nous estimons donc qu'aucune éducation susceptible de détourner l'enfant du milieu ancestral ne saurait être légitime et qu'elle ne pourrait atteindre le principal but de l'éducation qui consiste à développer l'énergie et le caractère de l'élève. Négliger le parler indigène fait courir le danger d'entraver et de détruire l'activité productrice de l'écolier en le forçant à s'exprimer dans un langage étranger ne correspondant pas au génie de sa race.

Hardy certainly recognised the validity of some of these arguments, and noted the uprooting effect that schooling in French from an early age had on pupils:²³

Dès qu'il vient à l'école, il appartient [...] à deux mondes séparés: un monde réel, son milieu d'origine, auquel il reste étroitement attaché et qui est représenté par la langue du pays; un monde artificiel, d'une existence intermittente, le monde de l'école, dont il subit

momentanément les conventions et qui est représenté par la langue française.

Ultimately, however, he was not convinced of the practicality of the use of indigenous languages, and opted for French for pragmatic reasons. In the *écoles de village* a simplified form of the language was to be used; genuinely concerned that language should translate reality and not be a source of obfuscation, he counselled that language should never go beyond thought, that at this simple level at least it should not be used as an end in itself, but as a means to the acquisition of ideas and skills. It should serve "à faire pénétrer dans l'esprit des indigènes des idées nettes et fortes et devenir l'instrument d'une civilisation réelle, profonde, sans fausses apparences, sans clinquant".²⁴

The all-embracing nature of the civilisation which arrives with the French language is aptly illustrated in a declaration of Victor Duruy:²⁵

Quand les indigènes apprennent notre langue, ce sont nos idées de justice qui entrent peu à peu dans leurs esprits; ce sont des marchés qui s'ouvrent à notre industrie; c'est la civilisation qui arrive et qui transforme la barbarie.

Similar sentiments were expressed in 1902 by the then Gouverneur Général du Sénégal, Camille Guy, at another prizegiving at the *Ecole des Otages*, now renamed *l'Ecole de fils de chefs*, which was subsequently attended by Cheikh Hamidou Kane:²⁶

Penser en français [...] c'est être quelque chose de plus qu'un homme ordinaire, c'est s'associer à la noblesse de la destinée de notre pays, c'est vivre de notre vie nationale.

22. Institut Colonial International..., p.169.

23. Hardy, *Une Conquête morale*, p.185.

24. Ibid., p.195.

25. Victor Duruy, quot. B. Mouralis, *Littérature et développement*, Paris, Champion, 1981, p.94.

26. Quot. Colin, p.311.

From the end of the 1st World War onwards, however, programmes had been devised and manuals produced to bring both French and the other subjects of the curriculum to the children of the AOF in a form that was relevant to their daily preoccupations. Hardy gives a list in his *L'Enseignement aux indigènes dans les possessions françaises d'Afrique* which dates from 1931; of books currently in use in primary schools:²⁷

Smolet et Pérès, *Méthode de lecture et d'écriture de l'écolier africain* (1916)
Smolet et Pérès, *Moussa et Gigla: histoire de deux petits noirs (livre de lecture courante)* (1917)

Smolet et Pérès, *Le Livre unique des connaissances usuelles de l'écolier africain* (1917)

Monod, *Premier Livret de l'écolier noir* (1928)

Monod, *Deuxième Livret de l'écolier noir* (1928)

R. Rousseau, *Cours de géographie à l'usage des écoles de l'AOF* (1926)

Ahmadou Mapaté Diagne, *Les Trois Volontés de Malik* (1920)

A. Davesne, *Mamadou et Bineta apprennent à parler français*

A. Davesne, *Mamadou et Bineta apprennent à lire et à écrire*

A. Davesne, *Mamadou et Bineta lisent et écrivent couramment*

All this seems at a great distance from "Nos ancêtres les Gaulois avaient les yeux bleus et les cheveux blonds".

The reactions of black intellectuals to this Africanisation of the curriculum is interesting, and brings out some of the contradictions inherent in both *association* and *assimilation*. Blaise Diagne, notably, a *député* and a leading exponent of *assimilation*, strongly criticised the ideas of Hardy, implicitly thereby asserting the superiority of French culture. Throughout the first part of the 20th century we have the rather stange spectacle of black intellectuals demanding more, not less *assimilation*, with the feeling that only thus could they assert their absolute equality. In 1934, the *Association des étudiants sénégalais en France*, whose president was none less than Senghor, demanded in an article in the *Journal de l'AOF* the progressive and total assimilation of the *Ecole Normale de Gorée*, the *Ecole de Médecine de Dakar*, and the *lycées* at St Louis and Dakar to their corresponding establishments in the metropole. The French administration, throughout this period,

were trying to back-track and withdraw from their earlier espousal of the doctrine of *assimilation*, for reasons which we have already outlined, but without losing any of their belief in the superiority of French culture. The suspicions of black intellectuals towards *association* are perhaps understandable, in that it necessarily for them became synonymous with a second-class education, closing all doors to a worthwhile career. But it is ironic, nevertheless, that this formula did at least try to create a system and a curriculum which validated African culture, rather than dismissing it as too flawed to have any relevance to true education. One of the most eloquent early defences of *association* came in fact from a Frenchman, the Gouverneur-Général de Coppet, in 1937, in a speech delivered at the opening of the *Conseil de gouvernement* on 23 November.²⁸ In it he expressed his desire to see the evolution

dans le sens du libre épanouissement de la race noire, bien plus que dans une assimilation étroite et stérile. J'ai trop confiance dans la race noire pour penser que ses représentants doivent borner leurs ambitions à l'imitation servile de notre civilisation. Pourquoi les Noirs se contenteraient-ils de nous imiter? Pourquoi suivraient-ils aveuglément les chemins que nous avons suivis? Pourquoi ne feraient-ils pas confiance à leur merveilleuse jeunesse, à leurs forces vives, raciales, pour essayer à leur tour, en s'appuyant sur notre science et à notre expérience, de concevoir et de fonder une civilisation nouvelle? Il ne s'agit point pour eux d'être des imitateurs mais des créateurs.

It is interesting to note that it was in people such as the young Senghor that de Coppet found a model of the type of African he was seeking. While Senghor was still professeur at the *lycée* at Tours, de Coppet offered him the job of *directeur de l'enseignement en AOF*, which he refused, but not through any fundamental disagreement with de Coppet's position. In an unpublished note dating from 1938,²⁹ he writes of the dangers of subordinating education to economic need and specific

28. Quot. Colin, p.287.

29. Quot Colin, p.290.

27. Hardy, *L'Enseignement aux indigènes ...*

function, culture to politics. He accepts the need for adaptation to the rural or urban environment, but warns against undermining the quality of general education. In this text we have already the idea of *métissage culturel* which was to become a hallmark of Senghor's thinking later, but there is a notable flexibility and good sense in his approach to the assimilation debate. "Ce qui importe", he writes, "ce n'est pas l'identité de programmes avec l'enseignement primaire métropolitain, c'est leur similitude, l'égalité de niveau qu'ils supposent."³⁰ In an effort to mitigate the destructive effect on African culture of an exclusive preoccupation with the French language, he proposed the introduction of local languages at secondary level. Unfortunately, soon after receipt of this text, de Coppet was moved from his post as Gouverneur-Général, and none of Senghor's proposals were put into effect.

No discussion of education in the context of *L'Aventure ambiguë* would be complete without a consideration of Muslim education. We first see Samba Diallo learning his verset in the Koranic school, and the type of education he receives there becomes the focus in the course of the novel for the paradise lost in his contact with the Western world. The very intensity of the dilemma faced by Samba Diallo is indicative of the total Islamisation of his part of Senegal at the time he was writing. In fact, the Foûta Tôro was the first area of Senegal to receive the penetration of Muslim influence from the North in the 9th and 10th centuries,³¹ becoming so intensely Muslim that every village and hamlet tended to have its own scholars and clerics.³² It was indeed this strong identification with Islam which allowed it to hold out to some extent against the European invader,³³ but which also intensified the shock of this *conflit de cultures*. The region is therefore somewhat exceptional in its dealings with the colonising power, but its very atypicality provides a strong focus for the novel. Samba

30. Idem.

31. Patrick Manning, *Francophone Sub-Saharan Africa 1880-1965*, p.95.

32. Oumar Ba, *Le Foûta Tôro au carrefour des cultures*, 1977, p.16.

33. Yaya Wane, *Les Toucouleurs du Foûta Tôro (Sénégal)*, *Stratification sociale et structure familiale*, Dakar: IFAN, 1969, p.184.

Diallo's deep love of his Muslim faith is rooted in the all-embracing culture in which he was brought up.

From the very beginning in its dealings with Senegal, the French administration had to reckon with Islam. The decision in 1856 to send secular teachers to Senegal was based largely on the perception that the previous mission schools were too militantly Christian to be acceptable to Muslims. The most notable feature of French dealings with Islam in West Africa is their pragmatism, which managed to reconcile a deep suspicion of Islam and even a contempt for its West African manifestation, with a perceived need to woo its leaders. Hostility waxed and waned according to the politics of the time: anti-clericalism in France brought about increased pressure on the *marabouts*, who were seen as an Islamic version of the village *curé*. Whereas the Arabic language had been used in transactions between the French and African leaders since the time of Faidherbe, under William Ponty it was identified in the French administrative mind with religious interests, and not to be encouraged. It was seen as a "hypocritical façade", and an obstacle in the way of the triumph of the "civilising work" of French.³⁴ In terms of the Koranic schools, suspicion was sometimes justified, since the *marabouts* were on occasion poorly trained, only semi-literate themselves, and given to running their schools in conditions of great squalor. In 1937, a report was produced on Muslim education in Senegal which was highly critical of the low level of academic achievement by the pupils.³⁵ Attempts at control were frequent. In 1903, a decree by Camille Guy sought to restrict the Koranic schools by

- outlawing schools with less than 20 pupils
- suppressing the practice of begging
- forbidding the schools to teach during French school hours
- requiring evidence of attendance of pupils at a French school if the *marabout* was to be allowed to continue teaching.³⁶

34. Christopher Harrison, *France and Islam in West Africa 1860-1960*, Cambridge, C.U.P., 1988, p.51.

35. Ibid., p.191.

36. Ibid., p.57.

These measures proved impossible to enforce, however. Clearly, in heavily Muslim areas in particular, the very lack of a French alternative would give the *marabouts* total control. There is no evidence in *L'Aventure ambiguë* of a French *école de village* alongside the Koranic school. The irony of the situation from the dissolution of the Concordat between Church and State in 1905 is that whereas the State no longer financed religious education, it continued to support the Muslim schools, a fact which incensed the Church and the teaching orders in Africa such as the White Fathers.

There is little sense of this debate in *L'Aventure ambiguë*. The Koranic school is seen as the summum of the cultural wisdom of the society to which Samba Diallo belongs, the repository of a spirituality which contact with the West threatens to undermine. Only La Grande Royale expresses real reservations, and these are essentially of a practical nature: with his life-denying aspirations, Maître Thierno is in danger of destroying the society he claims to serve. While the image of the Koranic school given by Samba Diallo is certainly harsh and somewhat barbarous to Western eyes, it is loved fervently by the young disciple for the absolute nature of its discipline.

It is probably the case that the more strongly Islamic the society, the more destructive was the effect of French schooling. In the case of the Diallobés, we have an intensely hierarchical society which was thrown into complete disarray by the apparently egalitarian principles of French education which took no account of the caste origins of its pupils. Once again, this phenomenon is little in evidence in *L'Aventure ambiguë*, but this is precisely because Samba Diallo is chosen to attend the French school as a member of an elite, and the French system in the AOF, here differing from its metropolitan parent, sought in spite of its egalitarian principles to woo the natural leaders of the local communities. Hence, as we have seen, the *école de fils de chefs*.

It seems, then, that in spite of generous intentions on the part of at least some administrators, throughout the period under discussion French education, by the tiny proportion of Africans it reached as much as by its obstinate refusal to see in the African population potential equal partners, merely served

to reinforce the inequalities inherent in the colonial system. The contradictions, both ideological and economic, underlying the doctrines of *assimilation* and *association*, made them ultimately unworkable. It is these contradictions which form the texture of *L'Aventure ambiguë*, and which lead finally to Samba Diallo's death, a death which is as ambiguous as the substance of the novel itself.

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A further comment on "nègres blancs"

In the course of my reading on the education system in the A.O.F., I came across the following instance of "nègres blancs", interesting not because of any out-of-the-ordinary usage, but because it is being employed by a Black writer to indicate the very wide ramifications regarding social conduct which their condition imposes upon black intellectuals. In terms of the polygamy which is expected of them by their origins, they are clearly in a no-win situation, at times preferring indefinite exile to the strains and constraints of life at home, attempting to reconcile the unreconcilable. The author does not seem hopeful of an early solution to the problem. The passage comes from Oumar Ba, *Le Foûta Tôro au carrefour des cultures* (Harmattan, 1977), pp 156-7, a subsection entitled "Les "nègres blancs" et la polygamie".

"Et nos éduqués à l'européenne, les nègres blancs, ce problème les touche-t-il? Sur les bancs de l'école, unanimement, ils "content" le **naouligou*. Admirateurs de l'Europe, ces nègres blancs monogames, les étudiants d'une manière générale portent l'empreinte de leurs éducateurs. Lancés dans la vie et loin des leurs, nos intellectuels pratiquent à la lettre la monogamie, mariés à une étrangère. En congé ou servant chez eux, ils sont gagnés par les prôneurs de la

polygamie: "Ta femme, mère de tes enfants, n'est-ce pas une Bambara? L'on ignore sa condition. Il faut une parenté de ton sang". Et voilà la polygamie qui reprend. Adieu les théories scolaires. Des instituteurs, des ingénieurs, des avocats, des députés, des ministres à plusieurs femmes, pullulent.

Une seconde question est sur le point de s'amorcer. Porteurs d'alliances au doigt, ces nègres blancs reviennent d'Europe, en quête de mandat politique. Leurs "oreilles rouges" accepteront-elles une "petite soeur limbel"? La métisse chrétienne fonctionnaire, mariée à un intellectuel et déjà mère, peut se convertir à l'Islam pour éviter une rupture. Bernique! Arrivent une deuxième, une troisième ... Ceux qui sont décidés à conserver leur étrangère, leur Européenne, ne reviennent plus au pays, sacrifiant certaines affections, jugulant leurs ambitions. Autant dire l'enracinement du *naouligou* au Fouta est du même âge que ce Fouta le Samba né en même temps que sa mère."

* polygamie (toucouleur)

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BOOK REVIEW

Claire L. Dehon, *Le roman camerounais d'expression française*, Birmingham, Alabama: Summa Publications, Inc, 1989

Amid the growing corpus of Pan-African surveys of francophone literature South of the Sahara, the specific nature of Claire Dehon's study recognises the wealth and complexity of African literature in French. Her decision to focus on the Cameroonian novel in French issues from a concern with the re-evaluation of African literature as art, rather than as political treatise or documentary.

That is not to say that context is ignored: the first chapter is devoted to a discussion of the ways in which literature in the Cameroon is influenced by the physical geography and history of the country. The colonial inheritance

has led to a mixing of traditional and Western values, and society itself is in a state of flux as the transition from a subsistence economy to a consumer economy is effected (p.28).

As a European critic, based in the U.S.A., Ms Dehon's method proceeds, inevitably, from the referent of Western literary criticism. However, she successfully avoids the trap of cultural imperialism by referring her conclusions to a series of interviews with the writers themselves. Through synchronic discussions of the different genres, and diachronic analyses of themes and narrative devices, the study moves gradually towards an aesthetics of the Cameroonian novel in French.

The novel in Cameroon differs quite considerably from its Western counterpart. According to Ms Dehon, it is generally shorter in length, containing events which are often unprepared and of a general nature, and characters which have little psychological evolution (p.6). These characteristics have evolved from traditional oral literature, writes the author, and should not be disregarded as stylistic weaknesses.

Two main categories of novel are identified: the "committed novel" and the "novel of manners". The genre most commonly associated with African literature, the "autobiographical novel", is rejected on the grounds that it implies a Western conception of humanity. Under the banner of "novel of manners", are a number of smaller categories, including the "popular novel" and the "romance". Each category is presented in the form of thematic analyses which highlight the similarities between the works and not the originality of each one. Although Ms Dehon recognises the diversity of the Cameroonian novel, it is through an examination of the correspondences between the texts that she hopes to define the artistic originality of this literature.

It is not really until chapter 4 that the book begins to address the question of aesthetics. The preceding chapters, full of fascinating observations, focus mainly on the authors' "message", and attempt to explain the content of the texts in terms of socio-political reality in Cameroon. This chapter begins to consider narrative devices as examples of artistic originality: polymorphous imagery and lack of detailed physical description are contrasted with the logical figures and attention to detail of the 19th century realist novel in France. The realism of the Cameroonian novelists is described by the

author as "patchwork": an assembly of a diversity of notations in different forms (p.232). Individual details are interesting only when considered together, as a whole.

The role of the novelist, although a secondary activity in Cameroon, is one of social responsibility. Both the government and the public expect the writer to produce constructive works which will amuse, teach, represent reality, explore abstract concepts and perpetuate a vision of the world (p.244). It is for this reason, writes Ms Dehon, that literature in Cameroon is valued as craft rather than art (p.247). Public demand and fear of censorship allow very little room for a writer's personal opinions and tastes. Thus, according to the author, the Cameroonian novel fails to fit the criteria of a work of art because it responds not to a personal vision, but to the vision of society.

In the tradition of the storyteller, the novelist propagates accepted mores in an interesting and entertaining way. The concern is not with imagination but with "real life" (p. 276): literary innovation is not a priority for the Cameroonian readership. It should, perhaps, be noted that this study only deals with novels published before 1984, and therefore excludes more recent - and indeed more innovative - works by writers such as Yodi Karone, Werewere Liking and Bernard Nanga.

If the Cameroonian novel in French is the work of artisans rather than artists, Ms Dehon does not fail to remind us of the originality of that craft which, through the appropriation of foreign tools has created a new body of literature which represents the intellectual and artistic needs of its society.

Nicki Hitchcott
University of Leeds

(This review originally appeared in *BSOAS*, VOL. 54, Part 2, 1991)

CONFERENCE REPORTS

ASCALF CONFERENCE, LONDON NOVEMBER 1992

The 1992 Ascalf Conference, generously hosted by the *Institut français*, brought together papers covering a wide range of topics and with a variety of approaches. The conference opened on Friday evening, November 29th, with a showing of Jean-Michel Tchissoukou's 1976 film *La Chapelle* (Congo), introduced by James Leahy.

The first session proper was concerned with the writer as a political animal, and his/her relationship to the state and to international power. Ambroise Kom's paper on "Mongo Beti et l'Europe" (published in this Bulletin) began the conference in suitably controversial mode. Nobody present seemed to take exception to Ambroise Kom's strictures on Europe's past and present attitudes. However, it was questioned in debate whether the real dominant force is still Europe, or whether in clinging to the idea of the old adversary, African intellectuals are not failing to see the real powers at work: the US-dominated IMF and the World Bank. Professor Kom's answer was that the immediate interlocutor, often acting as an intermediary for US imperialism, is still France.

Annie Wynchank's paper dealt with the apparent paradox of the relative lack of censorship under colonialism and its increase since independence, attributing the change largely to the fact that under colonialism writers were little read in their own countries. It was when they started addressing their own compatriots that they became dangerous (as in the case of Ngugi, when he started writing in Kikuyu). Writers have responded in a number of ways. One is self-exile. Another is the use of literary disguise, including the use of fable, grotesque exaggeration, and carnival in the Bakhtinian sense. Concentrating particularly on Sony Lab'ou Tansi (*La Vie et demie*) and Henri Lopès (*Le Pleurer-rire*), Annie Wynchank developed a sophisticated Bakhtinian analysis of the way in which the depiction of a world without sense or points of reference is used to subvert reality.

The discussion turned largely on the different forms which censorship can take, and on the role of the writer: does

this stop at subversion or does Sony Lab'ou Tansi (for instance) offer any indication of a way forward? It was pointed out that in Bakhtin, carnival achieves not only subversion but also democratisation. The suggestion was made, and repeated later in the conference, that there should be a conference on modes of censorship in Africa.

The second session was largely concerned with more practical matters. Jean-Louis Joubert opened with a remarkable overview of Malgasy writing. The first part of his paper contextualised the poets featured in Senghor's Anthology. His analysis of the role of French was particularly illuminating. The Malgache language, written in Arabic characters since the sixteenth century, was given notation in Latin characters in the nineteenth century, at the behest of the monarchy and largely for administrative reasons. Later in the nineteenth century and early in the twentieth, written poetry was used as an expression of anti-European and anti-colonial sentiment. There was thus a considerable body of literature which served as a background to the development of a literature in French. After a period of rejection of French, the later Malagasy writers began by using French as a "langue de détour", to express that which is difficult to express in one's own language. French is now the dominant language of literature, a corpus of markedly disillusioned, violent and socially critical work: the literary reflection of the increasing degradation of the social conditions prevailing in the country.

Monique Hugon reported on the range of activities of CLEF (Club des lecteurs d'expression française): an autonomous organisation sponsored by the *Ministère de la Coopération*. Many members were already aware of the value of *Notre Librairie* as a resource both for bibliography and for background information. The new exhibition, *Littérature d'Afrique noire de A à Z* has been purchased by ASCALF and is available for hire (see notice elsewhere in this Bulletin). Other exhibitions available are *Littératures de l'Océan indien*; *Littératures du Maghreb*; *Littératures des Caraïbes*; and *Amadou Hampâté Bâ*. CLEF also organises round tables in France, and is producing a series of manuals on francophone literatures for university students.

The third session of the conference was devoted to the Caribbean. Both presenters insisted that their papers were

tentative, and presenting work in progress rather than firm conclusions. If there was any truth in these disavowals, the lesson is that "work in progress" is a stimulating form in which to present ideas, for both opened up extremely fruitful questions. Roger Little presented the problem of intertextuality in Césaire, demonstrating how, in *La Tragédie du Roi Christophe*, Césaire shows the allegiance of his characters shifting from Eurocentric/Catholic forms to those of voodoo and African identity, and how this evolution is accompanied by a corresponding political shift.

Mary Gallagher traced the recent development of *créolité* in Caribbean literature and thought, showing how Chamoiseau, Confiant and Bernabé, in *Eloge de la créolité*, have sought to supercede Glissant's *Discours antillais*. *Créolité* tries to resolve the problems posed both by *négritude*, which collapses past and present problems into the black condition, positing a false idea of unity and by *antillanité*, with its discourse of pathology, positing the Caribbean condition as a sickness looking for a cure. *Créolité*, by contrast, rejects both singularity and lament and celebrates instead ethnic and cultural plurality.

The ensuing discussion raised significant questions: why are Caribbean thinkers moving towards *créolité* while Afro-Americans are moving in the opposite direction, to Afrocentrism?

In the final session, Pat Little spoke on the colonial education system which forms the background to the early part of *L'Aventure ambiguë*. Her paper, which is published elsewhere in this issue, painted in fascinating details of a system of which the outlines are familiar to everybody but the inner workings have been relatively little researched. Fírinne Ní Chréacháin spoke on the way in which Sembène transformed contemporary Senegalese political realities into literature in *Le Dernier de l'empire*, showing how sharply and critically the contorsions of the government of the time were pointed up in the portrayal of an imaginary event. All attempts to produce a depoliticised reading of Sembène founder on such considerations, and this lively and pugnacious paper, and the discussion it provoked, brought the conference to an end in fittingly stimulating style.

As usual, the atmosphere throughout this conference was relaxed and friendly. Debate was both vigorous and intellectually rigorous, but was characterised by love of the subject rather than personal ambition. It is one of ASCALF's merits that its members generally regard the subject as more than an abstract intellectual discipline. In the three year of its existence, ASCALF has done much to bring together those interested in African and Caribbean literature in French. It was fitting that the Saturday evening of the conference saw a celebration: the launch-party for the long-delayed publication of *Protée noir*, based on the papers of the 1988 conference which gave birth to ASCALF.

Anna Ridehalgh
University of Southampton

French Caribbean Seminar

ASCALF was delighted to welcome Beverly Ormerod, Associate Professor at the University of Western Australia and well-known Jamaican critic, who presented a paper entitled "The Group as protagonist in recent French Caribbean Fiction" at the Institute of Romance Studies on Friday, 15th January.

In the novels of Jacques Alexis and Jacques Roumain, Professor Ormerod traced the beginnings of change in the literary status of the group, showing how Alexis and Roumain gave a new dignity to the proletariat. A brief examination of two novels published in 1975, *Malemort* by Edouard Glissant and *Dézafi* by Frankétienne, showed how Glissant used the collective identity, using the "we" to overcome national fragmentation, and how Frankétienne's use of Haitian creole has had a linguistic influence in the Caribbean. Professor Ormerod's focus was upon texts by Patrick Chamoiseau and Raphaël Confiant, particularly *Solibo Magnifique* and *Le Nègre et l'Amiral*, where she identified the group protagonist as a dynamic force. Lexical variations in standard French convey the voice of the group; folktale traditions and the interweaving of magic and the supernatural with plausible events convey the

collective *esprit*. But the identification of these authors with the group, the fact of their writing of and as the group, raises the question of the intended readership for these novels. As Professor Ormerod pointed out, only a restricted public can be fully alert to every nuance of the text. We may anticipate that in the future, the group will not only be the subject but also the reader of novels from the French Caribbean.

Beverly Ormerod's paper was warmly received and the ensuing discussion was lively and wide-ranging. The seminar proved to be a useful meeting ground for interested parties from a variety of institutions and backgrounds. It was held with the support of the Institute of Romance Studies and in co-operation with the "Caribbean Societies" group at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies.

Bridget Jones/Vivienne Liley

Report on the XIIth Biennial Congress "France/Afrique", of the Association for French Studies in Southern Africa.

University of Cape Town, 9-11 September 1992

The Twelfth Biennial Conference of AFFSA had a very special meaning for me, and I make no apologies for beginning this report on a personal note. Twenty-two years ago, at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, I entertained the idea of founding a French Association for Southern Africa, in the hope that one day it would be possible to see representatives of *all* of Southern Africa, as well as Madagascar, the rest of Africa and other parts of the world, gathering to discuss our common interest in French literature - including that from Francophone Africa.

Of course, the first part of this dream remained unrealizable in the then political climate under the Apartheid régime. In the event, the Colloquium held in Johannesburg in October 1970, from which AFSSA, the Association for French Studies in Southern Africa was born, did include delegates from the Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique as well as Mauritius (all white). The two guest speakers from Madagascar who agreed to attend, failed to appear; those from

independent African states were understandably unable to accept the invitation. The so-called "universities" of the Northern Transvaal, the Western Cape, Fort Hare, etc (popularly known as "Tribal Colleges") simply did not include French in their curricula - as laid down by the government.

My second ambition met with the opposition of the traditionally conservative Faculties, and their prejudice against the literature in French from Africa and the Caribbean which was considered simply the *marotte* of certain eccentric colleagues, and not to be taken seriously.

Now in 1992, after the unbannings, AFSSA has come of age, with its first truly international conference, whose delegates included a total of nine from six different African states (including Ivory Coast), four participants from North America and at least six from Europe. Nearly all the centres for higher education in Southern Africa were represented. I was particularly gratified to see evidence of the teaching of French in the universities of the Northern Transvaal (still predominantly black) and especially that of the Western Cape (no longer exclusively "Coloured"), whose tradition of militant, active opposition to Apartheid had earned the respect of the ANC and allowed it to be exempted from the academic boycott. In the French departments of both of these universities, graduate students are understandably choosing for their higher degrees subjects relating to Negro-African literature. All this, to those who have not known at first hand the effect of apartheid on the educational and academic climate of South Africa, may seem so banal as to be unworthy of comment! ...

The theme of this year's AFSSA conference, FRANCE/AFRIQUE and the large number of the resultant communications inspired by African literature in French, demonstrated the important place this now enjoys in the teaching and research interests of the majority of university departments of French in South Africa. The papers included inter alia an analysis by Denise Godwin (Rand Afrikaans University) of "*Le viol du discours africain, vu par M. A. M. Ngal*"; "*Le parler écrit: un exemple congolais*", presented by Betty O'Grady (University of Western Cape); and Carole Beckett's (University of Natal) paper on "*La langue française en Afrique: le cas de Sembène Ousmane*".

Speakers, other than those from South Africa itself, included Régis Antoine (Nantes/Paris Sorbonne) on "*Une approche française de l'Afrique: la littérature franco-antillaise*"; Edris Makward (Wisconsin), "*Hospitalité française: deux écrivains francophones - Abdelkébir Khatibi et Marie N'Diaye*"; Annie Triaud (Maputo), "*Le français au Mozambique*"; Josiane Tostée, "*La place de la langue française dans le plurilinguisme mauricien*". Unfortunately, we were deprived of the pleasure of hearing Ralph Heyndels from Miami present his paper entitled "*Ecriture, aliénation, extase: Le devoir de violence de Yambo Ouologuem*", since he was prevented from attending when his house was blown away by Hurricane Andrew.

The final day of the conference was hosted by the Trustees of the Huguenot Memorial Museum at Franschhoek (meaning French Corner), setting the seal on the historical connections between France and South Africa. In this seductively beautiful valley in the Cape, the Huguenots found refuge, settled and planted vines, after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685.

In these idyllic surroundings, it was easy to forget momentarily the strife-torn country we were in. Except that on the very first day of this AFSSA Conference, which was to mark the beginning of the normalization of South Africa's situation, we were reminded of her ever-present acute problems. Madame Joëlle Bourgeois, French Ambassador in South Africa, who was due to participate in the official opening of the conference on 9 September, had been unable to attend, having flown to Johannesburg to discuss with Nelson Mandela the tragic events of the previous day: the massacre of ANC peaceful demonstrators at Bisho on the Ciskei border.

Dorothy S. Blair
Brighton

L'Autre et le Sacré: symposium on ethnology, ethnographic cinema and surrealism (1930-1968)

**French Institute, London
September 24-27, 1992**

Conference organised by European Humanities research centre, University of Warwick.

The ambition of this symposium was to explore the ways in which surrealism benefited from ethnological research while itself contributing to the specificity of French ethnology in its approach to African cultures. The conference took as its dual focus the concept of otherness and the definition of the sacred.

The key factor was the presence and work of Jean Rouch, whose films aim to strike a balance between the practice of "le hasard objectif" and the principles of scientific observation. His determining influence, illustrated by eight of his films ranging from 1951 to 1974, along with examples from Bunuel, Resnais, and Godard, in contrast to Poirier's "Croisière noire", served as a meeting ground for the participants whose contributions, coming from very diverse fields of enquiry, often cast doubt on the possibility of real dialogue between surrealism and scientific thought.

Day One

J. Chénieux-Gendron (CNRS) questioned the supposed surrealist consensus concerning the concept of alterity and hinted at their "dabbling" in ethnology. This was further illustrated by S. Ungar (Iowa) with reference to Breton's *Nadja* and to Aragon's *Paysan de Paris*. M. Richardson (SOAS) pointed to contradictions between Breton's anti-colonial stance, on the one hand and on the other his fondness of films notable for the worst stereotypes of exoticism.

C. Thompson (Warwick), exploring the polarisation of fiction and documentary in ethnographic cinema, showed how they came together in Rouch's "use of a realistic approach to the imaginary", thus fulfilling Breton's hope that cinema could

communicate direct experience of the sacred. However, D. Andrew (Iowa), describing French society as "fundamentally suspicious of the sacred", cast doubt on the success of the surrealist attempt to go beyond "aestheticising" the exotic.

The afternoon session opened with three papers on the relation of Surrealism to the pictorial arts in the context of the sacred. R. Cardinal (Kent) spoke of the Surrealists' fascination with naïve, marginal and tribal art (theorized by Dubuffet in *L'Art brut*), as amounting to an aesthetic of the sacred. T. Mathews (Trinity, Cambridge) linked the practice of collage in Max Ernst to Bataille's concept of the sacred as transgression and to psychoanalytical views on the nature of sign and discourse.

R. Adamowicz (Birkbeck) chose to examine the joint preoccupation of Surrealists and ethnologists with masks, showing that where the former posited the immediate universality of masks as the expression of a multiplicity of conflicts between man and his environment, the second questioned the possibility of masks "making sense", once taken out of their context. The final session of the day dealt with the social dimension of ethnology. M. Douglas (University College London) defined four diverging views of the sacred in human societies, all of these views being based on interpretations of the notion of collective identity. Given that religion is based on the group, rather than the individual, only religion can provide a unifying consciousness. Durkheim's definition of sacred otherness ("la transformation collective à l'occasion de cérémonies") was further examined by M. Richman (Pennsylvania) in the light of Durkheim's view that it is from generalized exaltation that religion and the sacred/profane distinction itself arise. This definition was examined in all its implications for the textual representation of sacred otherness.

Finally, L. Speas (Roehampton Institute, London) contrasted (with reference to Rousseau and Sade) the relationship between the self and the other in both ethnology and Surrealism, a relationship which is based respectively on respect and transgression. This paper also showed how J. Rouch, in *Jaguar*, strives to reconcile conflicting views of otherness.

Day Two

The morning session of the second day centred on Georges Bataille and Michel Leiris, two figures who were considered by some as "marginal figures of Surrealism". Bataille was discussed by C. Deliss (SOAS) in the context of his contribution to *Documents*, where he presents ethnology as an alternative philosophical system and holds representations of the erotic and the sacred to be areas of experience denied by Western thought.

M.C. Lala (Paris) selected from Bataille's *Documents* the passages which investigate bull-fighting as a symbol of the sacred comparable to Greek tragedy, while J. Lechte (Sydney) compared on the one hand Bataille's theory of the sacred and on the other the surrealist approach to ethnology, in a study of images evoking death, thus rekindling discussion of Braunberger's film, *La Course de Taureaux*, shown the previous evening.

In the second session, L. De Heusch, (Université Libre de Bruxelles), presented M. Leiris as having succeeded in reconciling Mauss and Rousseau by refusing to separate ethnology from self-portrayal. G. Maubon (Sienna) followed this up by demonstrating that the same quest took him from Surrealism to ethnology in search of "traces of the primeval nucleus in the mundane" and by showing how Leiris's *Phantom of Africa* had played a pivotal role in the careers of L. de Heusch, J. Rouch and G. Dieterlen.

This point was confirmed during the afternoon sessions, which focussed on the historic events and personal encounters which led them to the Bandiagara cliffs in Mali and it was further illustrated by the very relevant films and interventions of J. Rouch and G. Dieterlen. After J. Rouch had outlined the political background of ethnology in the 40s and 50s, P. Stoller (University of West Chester) completed the picture by linking Rouch's films to Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty which confronts the public with unsettling images, seeking to transform its apprehension of reality with a minimum of verbal commentary.

Day Three

On the last day of the conference, the morning session was devoted to Leiris and Godard, opening out in the afternoon into a critical reappraisal of ethnology from contemporary perspectives. S. Hand (Aberystwyth), considered that Leiris's auto-ethnography consists in the acknowledgement of differences within one's own culture, a point previously made by L. Spaas ("les anthropologues recherchent l'autre parce qu'ils sont mal dans leur société"). He showed how Leiris infused ethnology with man's intense desire to transcend his limitations.

M. Sheringham (Kent) looked at the posterity of Breton's ethnographic Surrealism in Leiris, Queneau and Pérec, while M. Witt, (Bath) eloquently demonstrated Godard's acknowledged debt to anthropology and to Rouch in particular. R. Prédal (Caen) surveyed the impact of Rouch's film, *Les Maîtres fous*, firstly on Genet's play *Les Nègres*, where the blacks act out their relationship to the whites, as during the ritual of possession in the film, and secondly on Brook's approach to the way in which his actors should relate to the characters impersonated and on contemporary dance. Prédal referred to Rouch's technique as "automatic writing transposed to the cinema". I. Esien (Newham College, Cambridge) spoke of ethnology's "complicity with psychoanalytical reading", circumcision rites being presented as an exaltation of the phallus, in contrast to the hidden agenda of excision, vindicated by the cultural context even though ethnology's potential role lies in exposing violence on women.

E. de Brigard (Higganum, Connecticut) examined in ethnological terms cross-cultural resonances in American folktales and cinema. To complete the survey of the topics which represented the symposium's focus on the post-war period, C. Johnson (Trinity College, Cambridge) showed how the sacred, a central preoccupation of both anthropologists and surrealists, gradually became marginalised in Lévi-Strauss's work which, under the growing influence of existentialism, came to privilege the sacred as concept over its concrete manifestations in order to present phenomena as systems.

Finally M. Syrotinski (Aberdeen) demonstrated how both R. Caillois and R. Paulhan, allies of the surrealists and

instigators of the *Collège de sociologie*, were influenced by the ethnological approach in their attempt to define the sacred as involving total transgression while maintaining a profane order.

Denise Ganderton

NOTICES

CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT

FRANCOPHONE WRITING: LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE IN NORTH AND WEST AFRICA FRIDAY 16 JULY - SATURDAY 17 JULY 1993

A major conference on literature in the Maghreb and West Africa and on the French language as its medium is to be held next July at the London Guildhall University (formerly City of London Polytechnic)

Guest speakers will include: **Mongo Beti, Albert Memmi, Charles Bonn**

All enquiries to:

Laila Ibnlfassi, Conference Organiser
Department of Language Studies
London Guildhall University
Calcutta House
Old Castle Street
London E1 7NT
Tel: 071 320 1000 ext 2217
Fax: 071 320 1117

FRENCH CARIBBEAN SEMINAR CALL FOR PAPERS

ASCALF would be glad to hear from anyone interested in Caribbean literature and who would like to present a paper or work in progress at an ASCALF French Caribbean seminar. Our gatherings are informal and present an ideal forum for discussion of material and exchange of ideas. Those interested should contact Bridget Jones, Department of Modern Languages, Roehampton Institute, Whitelands College, West Hill, London SW15 3SN, or any member of the ASCALF committee.

CENT ANS DE LITTERATURE AU ZAIRE

Colloque international organisé à l'occasion de l'exposition "Cent ans de littérature au Zaïre".

Bayreuth, 21-24 juillet 1993

(présentation provisoire)

Organisation: Université Bayreuth. Sonderforschungsbereich 214 "Identität in Afrika"

Direction scientifique: Pr. Dr. Janos Riesz.

Contact: Pierre Halen. SFB 214, Universität Bayreuth, Postfach 101251. D-8580 Bayreuth Fax: 0921/553641

La rencontre envisagera l'histoire littéraire du Congo/Zaïre selon trois perspectives:

1. Littérature zairoise

Histoire littéraire, contextes institutionnels et culturels. Littérature de tutelle et postérieure, Oeuvres marquantes: analyses internes et influences. Questions identitaires. Rapports à l'orature. Une table ronde rassemblant des écrivains est également envisagée.

2. Littérature coloniale belge relative au Congo/Zaïre

Histoire littéraire, contextes institutionnels et culturels. Contacts avec la littérature de tutelle, et notamment le théâtre des années 1950. Oeuvres marquantes: analyses internes et influences. Questions identitaires. Contes indigènes.

Littérature et arts plastiques

Problèmes identitaires des artistes coloniaux, congolais et zaïrois. L'africanisme en Belgique. Rapports littérature et peinture. Illustrations des ouvrages littéraires.

POSTER EXHIBITION: LITTERATURES D'AFRIQUE NOIRE DE A à Z

CLEF (Club des lecteurs d'expression française) has produced a highly attractive and informative exhibition of 42 colour posters, some dealing with individual authors (eg Massa Makan Diabaté; Ahmadou Kourouma; Léopold Sédar Senghor) and some with themes (Une Afrique ... des Afriques; Blacks à Paris; Du nous ... au Je; Roman; Vil, Ville, Viol, Violence). Each poster measures 60 by 80 cm and carries text and illustrations. The exhibition is available for hire from ASCALF at £20.00 (first week, £10.00 (second week) and £5.00 (third week), plus carriage and £20.00 returnable deposit.

For further details, contact:
Anna Ridehalgh, Department of French, University,
Southampton SO9 5NH
Tel: (0703) 593403

NEW BOOKS AND JOURNALS

De Homeplace

Poems for renewal by young people of Caribbean origin

This anthology brings together a chorus of impassioned voices with previously unpublished poems from around the world: Britain, Germany, the Caribbean (including Guadeloupe and Martinique), Canada and the USA. It signifies a new generation

writing with new urgency on today's burning issues of Identity, Transmigration, Social Conflict and Love.

De Homeplace is

- edited by Abdul Malik
- published by PANRUN collective, ISBN 0 9513173 1 8 at £3.95
- available from Panrun Collective, 46A Trent Road, Brixton, London SW2 5BL

Questions Actuelles (Culture et société)

A new "revue culturelle interafricaine) journal calling for articles

For more information, contact M. Lucien Houedanou, BP 1431, Cidex 1, Abidjan 06, Côte d'Ivoire

RESEARCH REGISTER II

In this issue we are printing the second installment of the research register. In the next issue of the Bulletin (Issue 7), we shall print the complete research register to date.

*** Agber, Vincent Tarwuese**

French Department, College of Education, Katsina-Ala, Benue State, Nigeria

Research interests: Post-Independence Caribbean literature in French

Courses taught: Francophone Negro-African literature

Aub-Buscher, Gertrud

Language Centre, University of Hull, Hull HUG 7RX

Research interests: French-based creoles (especially that of Trinidad)

Creole folktales

Adebiyi Adebisi, Rauf

Department of French, Ahmadu Bella University, Zaria, Nigeria

Research interests: Francophone Negro-African Literature; French Literature (the novel)

Courses taught: Francophone Negro-African novel, poetry and theatre; French theatre and French novel of 20th century

Belrose-Huyghues des Etages, Allix

Schlossstrasse 75, Francfort/Main 90 Germany

Research interests: langue, culture et société dans les TOM et DOM; Depestre et le panhumanisme

Courses taught: on DOM (history, political and economic problems, etc)

Bonn, Charles

Université de Paris Nord, Centre d'études francophones, Av. J. B. Clément, 93430 Villetaneuse, France

Research interests: Littérature maghrébine

Courses taught: Directeur du centre d'études littéraires francophones et comparées de l'Université de Paris XIII

Cours de licence de maîtrise et de DEA sur la littérature maghrébine

Directeur de thèses sur la littérature maghrébine

Crosta, Suzanne

Dept of French McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, L8S 4M2 Canada

Research interests: Caribbean writings in French; West African writings in French; Theoretical perspectives on African and Caribbean literatures

Courses taught: 3rd yr BA semester course on African and Caribbean writings (Introduction)

4th year BA semester course on African and Caribbean Women Writers

MA course on Caribbean writings (topics vary)

MA course on African writings (topics vary)

Dunwoodie, Peter

European Languages, Goldsmiths' College

New Cross, London SE14 6NW

Research interests: North African novelists (pre 1950)

Courses taught: Final year course w.e.f. Oct. 1993: "La France et le français dans le monde"; Second year course w.e.f. Oct. 1994: "Spain and France in the Caribbean"

Ganderton, Denise

Flat 7, 35 Anson Rd, London N7 ORB

Research interests: African and Caribbean literature; literature of the Maghreb; Surrealism; Contemporary French Theatre

Courses taught: Semester length units on the Humanities degree: African and Afro-Caribbean literature in French at University of North London, School of Languages and European Studies, Prince of Wales Rd, London NW5 3LB

Haigh, Samantha

62 Russell Rd, Forest Fields, Nottingham NG7 6G2

Research Interests: Caribbean Women's writing in French

Courses taught: Post-colonial theory and fiction (V.S. Naipaul, Maryse Condé and Mariama Bâ)

Hitchcott, Nicki

[Change of address from previous register]. Now: Department of French, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT

Courses taught: now include Literature and Politics since 1945

Hurley, E. Anthony

68 Maple Court, Highland Park, New Jersey, USA

Research Interests: French Caribbean literature, particularly poetry; linkages between French Caribbean and African American poetry
Courses taught: French Caribbean literature

Leahy, James

520 Ben Johnson House, Barbican, London, EC2Y 8NH

Research interests: Cinema history in general: Relationship of specific filmic texts to the historical and political context in which they were produced; Cinema of Africa South of the Sahara; French Cinema of the 1930s, especially the work of Renoir; Renoir's later films; The work of Nicholas Ray; Historical research for screen plays; The Paris commune for 1871; The life and times of Pedro VI (of Portugal) and I (of Brazil) for *Seven Sighs*

Courses taught: Currently one in the field of Caribbean and African studies.

Previously: co-tutor of Africa through the Cinema with Ngugi Wa Thiongo, Wanjiri Kiharo and Ahmed Sheikh at the Africa Centre, London.

Tutor Introduction to African Cinema at Museum of the Moving Image, London

Various weekend workshops on African and Third World Cinema in Aberystwyth, Accra, Chittagang, Dhaka, Exeter, Helsinki, Rajshahi, Shaftsbury

Little, Pat

Dept of French, St Patrick's College, Drumcondra, Dublin 9
Ireland

Research interests: Cheikh Hamidou Kane, *L'Aventure ambiguë*

Courses taught:

Final year course in Francophone Afro-Caribbean literature

Ní Chréacháin, Fírinne

20 Roe, Grahame Park Estate, London NW9 5UH

Research interests: Francophone African literature and cinema (focus on Senegal)

Anglophone African literature and cinema; African history and politics

Courses taught: Francophone African literature

O'Grady, Betty

P.O. Box 2091, Dennessig 7601, South Africa

Research interests: African literatures: (i) Congolese literature (PhD on Tchicaya U Tamsi) (ii) Critical theory

Courses taught: Negritude; various texts from West Africa; Chaka theme as treated by French-language African writers; African literary theory

Pellow, David W. H.

2819 Fairlawn Road, Durham, NC 27705-2739. USA

Research interests: 19th century Caribbean history and literature; African history

Courses taught: African literature of French expression; Caribbean literature ditto; Caribbean literature and culture (in English)

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