

FPS

Volume 2, Number 1

Opinion Pieces

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**SOCIETY FOR FRANCOPHONE
POSTCOLONIAL STUDIES**

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Editorial: Why 'Francophone Postcolonial Studies'?

Despite the impact of postcolonial theory on different academic disciplines over recent decades, the insight it can provide with regard to Francophone Studies has yet to be fully assessed. Equally, the contribution that French and Francophone Studies can make, and indeed have made, to a postcolonial theory largely perceived as Anglophone frequently remains unexplored.

By providing a forum for postcolonial perspectives, *Francophone Postcolonial Studies* aims to promote theoretically driven, analytical studies of the Francophone world, which both question and reinvigorate the more established fields of French and Postcolonial Studies. The privileging of the postcolonial is in no way intended to imply that Francophone cultural production will be approached according to a single theoretical framework. On the contrary, *Francophone Postcolonial Studies* acknowledges the different theoretical trends within this multidisciplinary field, and believes that the complexity of postcolonial theory is best served by encouraging a variety of approaches. This theoretical complexity and multidisciplinaryity is ideally suited to studying Francophone cultural production, which is frequently situated at the intersection of different historical, linguistic and social phenomena where synthesis is neither desirable nor possible.

As outlined in our first issue, *FPS* envisages an approach that highlights a distinctive but reciprocal relationship between Francophone Studies and Postcolonial Studies. In the first three issues of the journal, contributors have been invited to write short position pieces, laying out their vision of the challenges facing the emerging field of Francophone Postcolonial Studies. We had originally envisaged only two special issues devoted specifically to this critical debate but the response was so overwhelming — with over 40 contributors in total — that we decided to produce a third volume of opinion pieces. The current issue thus marks the

conclusion of an extremely vibrant and challenging series of debates that augurs well for the future of the field.

Finally, we would like to invite contributions on any topic related to Francophone Postcolonial Studies for inclusion in future issues (beginning with issue 1.1 in 2004). Suggestions for themed issues to be co-ordinated by guest editors are also welcome. Authors should submit two copies of their article, of 6,000 words maximum, in English or in French, to a member of the editorial team (full contact details are given below). Articles should conform in presentation to the guidelines in the *MHRA Stylebook*, providing references in footnotes, rather than the author-date system. All articles submitted to *Francophone Postcolonial Studies* will be refereed by two scholars of international reputation, drawn from our advisory and editorial boards. To facilitate the anonymity of the refereeing process, authors are asked to ensure that the manuscript (other than the title page) contains no clue as to their identity. The editorial team will endeavour to inform contributors of the decision regarding the publication of their articles within 12-15 weeks of receiving the piece. Book reviews, conference reports (700-800 words max.), calls for papers, should also be sent to the editorial team.

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'Je ne crois pas beaucoup à la littérature comparée': Universal Poetics and Postcolonial Comparativism

In a chapter of his book of essays *Petit Manuel d'inesthétique* (1998) devoted to a comparison between the poets Labid ben Rabi'a and Mallarmé, the philosopher Alain Badiou stridently emphasizes the chasms and gulfs of untranslatability that make the enterprise of comparative literature so tenuous. The chapter's opening line — 'Je ne crois pas beaucoup à la littérature comparée' — prepares his case for 'disbelief' in matters of literary comparatism, placing the onus of skepticism on the overdetermined failure of translations to transmit the genius of a source text. In Badiou's view, translation itself is tantamount to a writing of disaster; and yet, for all the obstacles posed by translation, 'great poems' surmount the difficulty of being worlds apart and manage to achieve universal significance. This textual universality, against all odds, challenges the laws of linguistic territorialization that quarantine language groups in communities 'of their own kind' (as in 'Romance languages') or enforce a condition in which monolingualisms co-exist without relation.

Badiou's literary universalism, built on affinities of the Idea ('une proximité dans la pensée') rather than on philological connections or shared cultural trajectories, defines a kind of 'comparativisme quand même' that complements the militant credo of his political philosophy (indebted to Beckett's formula for existence — 'I can't go on, I will go on'). It argues for the ability of art to release the revolutionary possibility of an 'Event' by making manifest 'Truth;' a truth that surges forth unexpectedly from art's most 'inaesthetic' philosophical expressionism. A comparison between two wildly divergent authors — one a nomad writing in classical Arabic in the pre-Islamic period, the other a bourgeois saloniste of Second Empire France — has just as much

credence for Badiou as a comparison between authors hailing from a shared tradition. Indeed, it would seem that the greater the arc of radical dissimilitude and incomparability, the 'truer' the proof of poetic universalism.

Badiou's iconoclastic suggestion that comparativity with the least relation guarantees the maximum of poetic universalism challenges shibboleths of translation theory and comparative literature alike. Translation and Comp Lit have traditionally supported each other in arguing for enhanced freeways of linguistic and cultural exchange. The principle of *adequatio*, based on values of equivalence, commonality and aesthetic measure, has led to the professional triage of literary fields, with comparisons favored among language groups with a shared philological heritage. Even newer forms of postcolonial comparativism have inadvertently perpetuated neocolonial geopolitics in carrying over the imperial carve-up of linguistic fields. So, for example, in the case of the Caribbean, Haiti, Martinique, and Guadeloupe are placed under the rubric of Francophone studies, Cuba falls under the purview of Spanish and Latin American studies, and Jamaica remains sequestered in Anglophone fields. While there is an obvious historical and pedagogical rationale for maintaining geopolitical relations between dominants and their former protectorates (one wouldn't want, for example, to encourage French studies to throw off its commitment to literature in the Francophone world), there are equally compelling reasons for establishing modes of comparativism that traverse colonial linguistic borders. Francophone, as a term of literary studies, might, then, no longer apply simply to the extension of French to languages and cultures in former colonies; but also, to the extended reach of postcolonial comparativism (to, say, the Hispanophone and Anglophone islands in the case of the Caribbean).

Badiou's comparison of French and Arabic authors promotes a comparative literature based on ideas rather than on languages. It

is a comparative literature that seeks out rather than shies away from parallels between languages of great discrepancy. Though he himself is not interested *per se* in making an argument about comparative literature as a discipline, his provocative opening salvo 'Je ne crois pas beaucoup à la littérature comparée' hitched to a tempering 'Et pourtant!' stakes its claim on a Comp Lit willing to embrace linguistic non-identity and large swathes of cultural space (evident in the recent tendency to compare by oceans — the Black Atlantic, the Pacific Rim, Archipellican discourses, the literary Chunnel, or North-South patterns of global hegemony). Badiou's insistence on a one-world, universal poetic dialectics strangely complements Gayatri Spivak's planetary model of literary studies, or Edward Said's reinvention of Goethean Welt-literature. Though Spivak and Said do not share Badiou's belief in poetic universals they too seem to be, so to speak, communists of the Idea, following 'le grand écart' of cultural comparison in the name of militant principles of worldly dialectics and the transformative power of cognition in the historical process.

For Badiou, comparative literature — even when it relies on the imperfect vehicle of translation ('toujours presque désastreuse') — contributes to the unpredictable release of a revolutionary Truth-Event; this is what makes it an important 'inaesthetic' praxis. But there is also theoretical significance accruing to the specific comparison drawn between the Arabic ode (the *mu'allaqa*) of Labid ben Rabi'a and Mallarmé's symbolist poem (*Un Coup de dés*). 'We remain, Badiou insists, between Mallarmé and the *mu'allaqa*'. The choice to compare these particular French and Arabic texts is thus revealed to be far from arbitrary: questions of democracy and subjectivation, terrorism, despotism, the nature of mastery, the seduction of sacred language, the influence of clans (the 'call' of the tribe), the intoxicating desire for collective destiny and a *vita communis*, the sacrifice of civilization to science and technology, the spiritual 'desert' or empty set of subjectivity,

decampment, exile, and the defection of place — these ideas of paramount mutual concern to Labid ben Rabi'a and Mallarmé constitute an Event in Badiou's sense of that term, even as they announce a universalist, deterritorialized poetics relevant to a planetary conception of comparative literature today.

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W(h)ither Francophone Postcolonial Studies?

The first two numbers of *Francophone Postcolonial Studies*, published in 2003, form an impressive collection of contributions from a wide range of 'constituencies': these include researchers working from within a variety of different disciplines and researchers from Anglophone and Francophone academic 'traditions', while those who have, in conceptual terms, journeyed beyond 'postcolonialism' write alongside those who are (perhaps somewhat inaccurately) portrayed as still struggling to arrive there. This diversity of opinion, perspective and methodological approach is, of course, what the editors of the journal and the members of the Society for Francophone Postcolonial Studies were seeking to engage with when the decision to rename and reorientate ASCALF was taken a couple of years ago. So, in many respects, the two volumes already published go a long way to answering (one reading of) the question I sketch in the title of this contribution: 'W(h)ither Francophone Postcolonial Studies?' In so far as Francophone Postcolonial Studies is understood to mean the journal itself there is every hope that its onward trajectory is clear and that it will develop into a significant forum for critical debate on all aspects of postcoloniality.

But Francophone Postcolonial Studies is not merely the name of the society's journal. It is also the name of an activity (the study of the various interfaces between the Francophone and the postcolonial) and, somewhat more parochially, of a reconfiguration of an academic discipline. Each of these 'names' has its particular genealogy and imaginable teleologies and I propose to interrogate some of these in due course. As a lead-in to doing so, however, I would like to give some consideration to the preoccupation with terminology that is discernible in so many of the essays. It is not surprising that an invitation to contributors to lay out 'their vision of the issues facing the emerging field of

Francophone Postcolonial Studies' should involve attempts to define more closely the meanings ascribable to the terms being used.¹ This merely extends a debate about the terms 'Francophone' and 'postcolonial', which has been pursued for decades. In any event, articulating the problematic nature of the terms we are reduced to using is a *sine qua non* of serious intellectual enquiry. My point is not to go over well-trodden ground: a re-reading of the first two numbers of *FPS* will provide references to many of the historical traces of these debates. Instead I would like to moot the question as to whether or not a withering away of both terms might be a desirable eventuality.²

Why should this be? In so far as the term 'Francophone' is concerned I would suggest it is impossible to ignore the fact that there is a marked difference between the semantic content that can be deduced from its etymology and the semantic content that has accrued through usage during the latter half of the last century. Etymologically the word has a neutral value signifying 'French-speaking'. But since the word was launched on an unsuspecting public in the mid-nineteenth century it has done what all useful

¹ Editorial, *Francophone Postcolonial Studies*, 1.2 (2003), p.5. The word 'emerging' here awakens echoes of Raymond Williams analysis of 'cultural process' and the interrelationship between emergent cultural elements and the dominant cultural order. Without wishing to overstate the case it is worth rereading this argument in the context of the reconfiguration and realignment of French Studies/Francophone Studies that has taken place in North American universities and which is currently underway in the British university system. Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977) pp.121-27. See also David Murphy, 'Decentring French Studies: Towards a Postcolonial Theory of Francophone cultures', *French Cultural Studies*, 13.2 (2002), 165-85.

² I have difficulty imagining a historical moment when Marx's 'withering away of the State' might have been entertained as a plausible eventuality. The 'discussion' that follows, therefore, should be read as an attempt to imagine the impossible possibility of such an eventuality in the domain of 'Francophone Postcolonial Studies'.

neologisms do: it has mutated through usage and accumulated a number of extended meanings. The original geo-linguistic usage that Reclus had in mind when he coined it was, appropriately enough, as a tool for *mapping* the world in an innovative way. In a figurative sense, the variety of accrued socio-politico-cultural meanings that the word now simultaneously covers are also ways of 'mapping' reality (and, by extension, reflect ways of imposing coherence and order upon the world it purports to describe). If it is true that the word 'Francophone' is generally used to express a distinction in relation to the notion 'metropolitan French' and is thereby indissociable from value-laden notions of hierarchy; if it is true that the word carries with it connotations of state intervention in the linguistic and sociocultural policies of a range of populations throughout the world; if it is true that the word not only derives its meaning almost exclusively from historical, colonial relationships but also perpetuates their shadow into actual and potential future relationships, then it is clear that it continues to *map* the world for its users whether they like it or not. Even those academics whose sensitivity to the word's problematic resonances is most acute and who seize upon every opportunity to resist its being hijacked by various vested interests groups, even they, despite their vigilance about the vocabulary they use, are not 'outside' language. They constitute simply another interest group and represent one of the vectors in the dynamic.

More often than not, the 'problematisation' of the term 'Francophone' involves, or is accompanied by, calls for the term to be 'decolonised'. What exactly does this mean and can it in any way be seen as an 'answer'? In practice, what is usually meant is a refusal to use the word as a qualifier for 'non-Metropolitan French speakers' alone. Decolonisation here then, means breaking down the barriers which separate the centre and the periphery in respect of linguistic usage (a split which perpetuates the colonial conception of territoriality) and reclaiming the original neutral sense of the word to designate French-speakers of whatever ethnic,

socio-cultural or geographical origin. Well and good, but can this be seen as an answer? It really depends on how the question is formulated. If the question is, 'Does such usage make the term inherently less problematic?' I would suggest the answer is 'No'. Laudable as such 'decolonising' efforts are, in my view, they merely serve to clarify two of the conflicting lines of force, which traverse this particular semantic field, rather than radically modify it or create a new one.

So it would seem that the problematisation of the term 'Francophone' runs the risk of becoming a circular, self-perpetuating activity, not least because legislating on language matters (or adopting a censorious, prescriptive, in short, *legalistic* approach to usage) would not appear to be particularly effective as a way of impacting upon the meanings conveyed by words. And there is a certain irony in the fact that the figure of circularity and self-perpetuating, repetitive activity is so precisely antithetical to the whole impetus of the intrusion of Francophone Studies into the domain of French Studies in British universities in recent years. Within French departments, Francophone Studies has been championed as a dynamic form of curriculum renewal, which reconnects the various sub-disciplines making up French Studies in new and interesting ways to the changing realities of France's place in the world and changing definitions of 'Frenchness'. (Its potential for destabilising established metropolitan-based French studies has been more or less overtly acknowledged and/or incorporated into the campaign, just as it has been more or less clearly grasped by colleagues who have 'chosen' to make a career investment in the more traditionally configured discipline of French Studies.) My own experience leads me to suggest that the creeping intrusion of 'Francophonie' into 'French' comes about in two distinct phases. (I use the present tense because, like the process of development, it occurs at different speeds in different locations.) Firstly, it proceeds by accretion: courses are added to mainstream programmes in a spirit of supplementarity. The

Québec novel or Francophone African Cinema simply join the nineteenth-century novel or 'La Nouvelle Vague' in the list of options on offer. During this phase, there is no substantive change in the ethos of the department, no fundamental questions are asked about the nature of the activity in which all are engaged. But there comes a point when the questions raised about the status of African cinema or the Québec novel, and the nature of the relationship between such objects of study and comparable objects of study from the metropolitan-based canon, lead on to more general, politicised questions about the nature and status of culture (or politics, society, etc.) as a whole. Beyond this, and thereby linking preoccupations shared in different ways by Said and Derrida, they link such questions to the institutional location within which the questioning is taking place. In the passage from the first to the second phase a paradigm shift has occurred and one consequence is that the task in which academics are engaged can be more clearly identified as the *production* of knowledge rather than a mechanical transmission of it across generations.³

The emphasis on production is quite simply an acceptance of the fact that knowledge, as opposed to information, can only exist within a structured framework, which gives it coherence. It is, in a sense, *narrativised* information. It is also structured in response to an identifiable series of ethical, political and ideological choices and assumptions, which may or may not be explicit, but which, in theory, are susceptible of being articulated. What I choose to see as

³ Edward Said writes of Derrida: 'On at least one occasion he has also pointed out that a teacher of philosophy working in a state-run institution bears a special responsibility for understanding the system by which ideas get passed on mechanically from teacher to student and back again.' See 'Criticism between Culture and System', in *The World, the Text and the Critic* (1984; London: Vintage, 1991) p. 208. Another 'occasion' I would cite was Derrida's seminar entitled (if memory serves) 'La philosophie comme institution' held at the *École normale supérieure* in 1974-75. The recurring figure of circularity here presumably needs no underscoring.

a paradigm shift, occurring when the theoretical and methodological underpinning of French Studies is challenged by another account offering a more apposite or appropriate model of how coherence might be achieved, is in fact a reconfiguration of a whole landscape; a new method of narrating it is proposed, not in order simply to incorporate a new feature (accretion) but because the realisation that a hitherto unidentified feature actually exists and is casting a longer and longer shadow over the terrain such that including it in the narrative requires a retelling of the whole story.

Some paradigm shifts are more radical than others, of course, and some paradigms are themselves more radically *alien* than others. So it is worth pointing out that we are still very much on campus and the earth continues to rotate on its axis. Even if we could employ some magical, global 'find and replace' button to substitute 'Francophone' for 'French' in every known occurrence, past, present and to come, would much of significance have altered? Quite possibly the interplay of residual cultural features and the power of the dominant cultural order would largely ensure the assimilation of whatever is emergent in this particular example of a paradigm shift. Once we have realised this, we might do well to remind ourselves that our argument has barely moved beyond the realm of British academic life.

In her recent book, *Death of a Discipline*, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak sketches some of the ways in which 'comparative literature' might reconstitute itself as a 'new' discipline. The more practical among these include building synergies between literary study and aspects of Area Studies, Ethnic Studies and Development Studies. But the diffuse argument she develops is less concerned with practicalities than with a conception of the 'new Comparative Literature' grounded in a respect for 'the literary specificity of the autochtone' and involving not 'learning about cultures' but 'imagining yourself, really letting yourself be imagined (experience that impossibility) without guarantees, by

and in another culture'.⁴ Time and again the concept of 'teleopoiesis' is invoked, as are the cognate notions of imagining, 'imaginative making' and 'the transforming work of imagining the impossible other as that figured other imagines us'.⁵ I refer to this book not because it outlines a programme I would necessarily advocate but for two other reasons which allow me to extend my own argument. Firstly, in the course of the discussion, Spivak operates a reversal which relegates the various '-phonies' (languages of the former imperial powers) to what is effectively a subaltern status: she writes, 'In the field of literature, we need to move from Anglophony, Lusophony, Teutophony, Francophony et cetera. We must take the languages of the Southern Hemisphere as active cultural media rather than as objects of cultural study by the sanctioned ignorance of the metropolitan migrant' (p.9). Secondly, and this is perhaps the same point summarised, Spivak's conception of a 'new Comparative Literature' announces a rather more radical paradigm shift than the one I have alluded to above. The engine for change in Spivak's version is not the restructuring of the hierarchy within the Senior Common Room but the overriding ethical concern to counter the market forces of globalisation with 'planetarity'. 'Otherwise,' she warns, 'who crawls into the place of the "human" of "humanism" at the end of the day [...]?' (p.23).

The second element of the term that I have suggested might usefully 'wither' is of course 'postcolonial'. *Mutatis mutandis* many of the points I have tried to make about the term 'Francophone' could be adapted and applied to 'postcolonial'. Both words map the territory with an eye to past realities rather than present and future threats. They implicitly conjure up

⁴ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Death of a Discipline* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), pp.15, 52.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.98. The term 'teleopoiesis' is borrowed from Derrida's *Politics of Friendship* (New York: Verso, 1997).

historical and geographical boundaries which are counter-productive rather than productive in the processes of knowledge production that are increasingly an ethical imperative in academic life. To advance the point just a little further before abandoning it, I would like to focus discussion not on the significance of the prefix 'post' (or the 'optional' hyphen and/or oblique) but on the semantics of the stem 'colonial'. What changes, in fact, would flow from tapping our magical 'find and replace' button in order to substitute 'imperial' for 'colonial'? It is probably worth reminding ourselves here of Edward Said's comments on the distinction between imperialism and colonialism:

'imperialism' means the practice, the theory and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory; 'colonialism', which is almost always a consequence of imperialism, is the implanting of settlements on distant territory. [...] In our time, direct colonialism has largely ended; imperialism lingers where it has always been, in a kind of general, cultural sphere as well as in specific political, ideological, economic, and social practices.⁶

As Said intimates, the term 'postimperial' has an oxymoronic flavour precisely because imperialistic urges, tendencies, practices and policies are so patently alive and well. They are displayed daily in the news in every conceivable domain of human activity, whether it be in the recent militaristic adventure of Bush and Blair in Iraq, ostensibly motivated by a chimeric threat to national security and retrospectively 'justified' as a furthering of a restricted and selective agenda of (uncharacteristic) benevolence and concern for the population of a country in the global South; whether it be in the myriad examples of the economics of globalisation, intertwined as they are with a range of moral and

⁶ Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Vintage, 1993), p.8.

ethical issues to do with inequalities of access to technology and technological expertise in agriculture, pharmaceuticals, health care, genetics, communications and so on. (Not to speak of empire-building within academia!) But the clear advantage of such a substitution would be to switch the focus from the 'other' (the peripheral/colonial) as the object to be viewed by a metropolitan 'self' (the central/imperial), alone endowed with meaningful agency, to a focus on the methods by which that agency has been (and perhaps continues to be) exercised to the detriment of the global South.

It is, of course, debatable whether this provides a more useful model for the study of these relationships, entangled as they are with power relations. Until the term Francophone Postcolonial Studies withers away under the combined onslaught of paradigm shifts in progress and yet to come, I fear we have little alternative but to continue to use it (and similar terms), not in order to refer to specific realities but as a signpost pointing in the direction of a field of criss-crossing significations and a complex bundle of interlocking issues. As Spivak rightly asks, 'Is it not trivially true that the word 'comparative' in 'comparative literature' is more a distinguishing mark than a signifier?''⁷

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⁷ *Death of a Discipline*, p.108n.

La littérature québécoise: francophone et postcoloniale¹

Au moment même où les études postcoloniales francophones se lancent dans un effort de théorisation, il est frappant de constater les hésitations à intégrer la littérature québécoise dans ce champ encore mal défini. Bien que, par exemple, l'ouvrage de Charles Forsdick et David Murphy, *Postcolonial Francophone Studies*, et la revue du même titre incluent le Québec sans ambiguïté, un numéro spécial de *Paragraph* publié en 2001 n'en faisait rien.² C'est que la littérature québécoise, bien que francophone et postcoloniale, constitue un cas à part, dont le statut est souvent mal compris.

La première question à trancher consiste à déterminer si la littérature québécoise constitue bien une littérature postcoloniale. Il ne fait aucun doute que les Canadiens-français, puis les Québécois ont subi une oppression coloniale, explicité par exemple dans le rapport Durham,³ dans lequel l'assimilation de

¹ Cette note est une version modifiée et écourtée d'un article publié dans un numéro spécial de *Québec Studies*, 35 (Fall 2003) sur le postcolonial.

² Voir Charles Forsdick and David Murphy, eds, *Francophone Postcolonial Studies: A Critical Introduction* (London: Arnold, 2003), et *Paragraph*, 24.3 (2001). On retrouve cette attitude par exemple dans l'énumération des prix littéraires français décernés à des auteurs francophones (on exclut implicitement les auteurs québécois) dans l'article de Beate Burtscher-Bechter et Birgit Mertz-Baumgartner, 'La France et les théories postcoloniales: quelques observations à propos d'un rapprochement timide', *Francophone Postcolonial Studies*, 1.2 (2003), 25-28.

³ Le *Report on the Affairs of British North America* fut présenté par le Earl de Durham à la chambre des Lords britannique en 1839. Deux années plus tôt, en 1837, l'armée britannique avait écrasé une rébellion de la population canadienne française. Durham estimait que le futur de la colonie demandait l'assimilation de la population française au sein de l'empire. Il ne semblait pas croire que ce serait difficile: 'There can hardly be conceived a nationality

l'élément francophone est jugé nécessaire à la stabilité de la colonie. Cette oppression coloniale s'est aussi manifestée par des inégalités économiques ou par le déni de droits linguistiques dans les institutions gouvernementales et éducatives. Une grande partie de notre littérature en porte le témoignage. Rappelons ici l'incipit de *La Détresse et l'enchantement* de Gabrielle Roy: 'Quand donc ai-je pris conscience pour la première fois que j'étais, dans mon pays, d'une espèce destinée à être traitée en inférieure?'⁴

Mais peut-on parler du Québec actuel comme d'une colonie, comme le suggéreraient les parti-pristes des années 1960?⁵ La plus grande partie des manifestations de l'oppression coloniale qu'ils dénonçaient est aujourd'hui disparue ou si atténuée qu'elle ne soulève plus les mêmes passions. Les succès économiques du Québec des quarante dernières années et surtout le nouveau consensus linguistique bâti sur la loi 101 ont fondamentalement altérés le paysage politique et culturel. Jacques Godbout pour sa part n'a pas hésité à affirmer que la littérature québécoise est désormais décolonisée.⁶

Pourtant le contentieux politique entre le Québec et le Canada n'a jamais été résolu; le Canada demeure officiellement trudeauiste, refuse toujours de reconnaître l'existence d'une nation québécoise et maintient la fiction d'une seule et grande nation canadienne incluant tous ses citoyens, amérindiens ou québécois.⁷

more destitute of all that can invigorate and elevate a people, than that which is exhibited by the descendants of the French in Lower Canada, owing to their retaining their peculiar language and manners. They are a people with no history, and no literature.' Voir *Lord Durham's Report* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1963).

⁴ Gabrielle Roy, *La Détresse et l'enchantement* (Montréal: Boréal, 1996).

⁵ Animant la revue *Parti-Pris*, un mensuel publié à Montréal de 1963 à 1968.

⁶ Jacques Godbout, 'Le Chevalier errant', *L'Actualité*, 15.19 (1990), pp.100, 101.

⁷ Curieusement, c'est la position que défend Kathleen Gyssels, dans 'Haitian Literature at the Crossroad of Postcolonial Theory and Francophone Studies', *Francophone Postcolonial Studies*, 1.2 (2003), p.59, qui déplore que le

Le concept même de nation, ou celui de littérature nationale, qui en dépend, n'est pas résolu dans l'ensemble canadien. En pratique les Québécois de toutes tendances reconnaissent de façon consensuelle que le Québec constitue une nation et que la littérature québécoise constitue bien l'expression d'une culture nationale. Aussi figée qu'elle soit par des siècles de chicanes politiques et de mises en forme idéologiques des deux nationalismes en présence, nous ne pouvons toujours pas évacuer la question, qui constitue bel et bien l'héritage du colonialisme britannique. Cette absence de résolution saute aux yeux lorsqu'on considère l'éventail des pratiques discursives et critiques regroupées sous l'étiquette 'Canadian Literature'. L'embarras est évident: doit-on se limiter à la littérature anglophone, quitte à ajouter dans les préfaces que la littérature québécoise, à tout le moins francophone, échappe au cadre défini et parle par elle-même?⁸ ou faut-il plutôt tenter une approche inclusive, voire bilingue et tirer des conclusions s'appliquant à l'ensemble canadien?⁹ Plus pernicieuse peut-être serait l'attitude qui tente de sauver la chèvre et le chou et qui, tout en excluant de façon implicite la littérature québécoise (ou en ne l'incluant que par

Québec ne tente pas de «struggle together with English-speaking Canada for a single, crosscultural and crosslinguistic nation». S'il est certain que les échanges interculturels et interlinguistiques sont désirables, il faut aussi faire l'effort de comprendre les racines historiques des résistances québécoises.

⁸ On pourrait ici citer de nombreux exemples, dont Linda Hutcheon, qui écrit dans sa préface à *The Canadian Post-modern: A Study of Contemporary English Canadian Fiction* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1988): '[The] focus [of this book is] on only English-Canadian fiction, though the Québécois context is invoked at various points. This deliberate limitation reflects an unwillingness on my part to obscure what I see as the important differences between French- and English-Canadian culture and literary history' (p.ix).

⁹ Pour un exemple de cette attitude, voir Eugene Benson et William Toye, eds, *Oxford Companion to Canadian Literature* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), dont la première édition, en 1967, coïncidait avec le centenaire de la confédération.

tokenism), ne dissipe pas l'impression que la portée des observations critiques (ou de l'effort de définition canonique) s'étend de facto *mari usque a mare*. N'est-ce pas là le propre d'une voix hégémonique? Ce sont là des écueils dont une critique comparatiste attentive (qui peut nous apporter beaucoup) doit se garder avec vigueur.

Si le Québec actuel n'est plus une colonie (ou très imparfaitement) s'est-il pour autant affranchi de toutes formes de domination culturelle? Évidemment non. La culture et la littérature québécoises 'émergentes' demeurent celles d'une petite nation, minoritaire dans l'ensemble canadien, excentrique dans l'espace francophone et marginale dans la perspective impériale états-unienne. Comment ce statut pourrait-il ne pas s'inscrire dans les pratiques culturelles? Comment en théoriser les conséquences?

La distinction bien connue entre les colonies dites de *subjugation* et celles d'*occupation* (settler colonies) s'applique bien sûr au Québec, territoire amérindien colonisé par la France de 1534 à 1763. Mais le cas du Québec est particulier parce que ces colons ont subi une oppression spécifique sous l'empire britannique (qui ne fut ni douce ni bénigne), ce qui nous rapproche beaucoup plus de l'Irlande, dont personne ne songe à contester le statut postcolonial. Bien entendu, dans la saga américaine, les seuls colonisés sans équivoque demeurent les amérindiens, qui revendiquent aussi pour eux-mêmes le statut de nations et pour qui les Québécois sont et ont toujours été des colonisateurs, au même titre que les Canadiens-anglais ou les colons américains, malgré certaines complicités à l'époque de Louis Riel par exemple. D'un autre côté, les développements politiques des quarante dernières années au Québec tendent à s'éloigner avec le temps de la thématique coloniale pour se rapprocher de celle d'identités nationales émergentes dans les pays industrialisés d'Europe comme dans le cas de la Catalogne ou de l'Écosse. Même dans ces exemples, cependant, le Québec se distingue par l'exercice répété

(mais aujourd'hui nié par la loi C-20, dite de 'clarté'¹⁰) du droit à l'autodétermination, par les référendums de 1980 et de 1995, et l'importance critique qu'a joué le discours décolonisateur au moment crucial de l'émergence des institutions littéraires. Nous pouvons aussi, à l'exemple de Gérard Bouchard et Pierre Nepveu,¹¹ situer la particularité du Québec dans son appartenance au Nouveau Monde. La question du postcolonial peut-elle se poser dans ce cadre? Marie Vautier, pour sa part, propose une équivalence entre 'Nouveau Monde' et 'settler cultures'.¹²

À cette image composite se superpose l'arrivée récente d'importantes communautés immigrantes, surtout à Montréal, qui s'ajoutent à des vagues d'immigration plus anciennes. L'apport de ces nouveaux immigrants a déjà eu pour résultats de modifier les paramètres culturels et littéraires; nul doute que cette tendance de fond se poursuivra. Jocelyn Maclure démontre que ce qu'il nomme 'nationalisme mélancolique' repose sur une exigence d'authenticité, non pas nécessairement ethnique mais étroitement

¹⁰ La loi C-20 a été adoptée en 2000 par le parlement fédéral canadien. Elle impose, entre autres choses, le consentement préalable du parlement canadien à une éventuelle question référendaire sur la sécession du Québec. La loi rejette ainsi explicitement la possibilité d'un référendum portant sur un partenariat entre les deux nations. Le parlement d'Ottawa se donne aussi le droit de décider ce qui constituerait une majorité 'claire', rejetant ainsi le principe de la majorité absolue. Si, malgré ces obstacles, un référendum souverainiste réussit à s'imposer, la loi définit un processus d'accession à la souveraineté nécessitant l'accord de l'ensemble du Canada. Cette loi a été rejetée par tous les partis politiques représentés à l'Assemblée Nationale à Québec.

¹¹ Voir Gérard Bouchard, *Genèse des nations et cultures du Nouveau Monde: Essai d'histoire comparée* (Montréal: Boréal, 2001) et Pierre Nepveu, *Intérieurs du Nouveau-Monde* (Montréal: Boréal, 1998).

¹² Marie Vautier, 'Les Pays du nouveau monde, le postcolonialisme de consensus et le catholicisme québécois', *Québec Studies*, 35 (Fall 2003), 13-30.

définie sur le plan culturel.¹³ Ce noyau culturel implicite se trouve ainsi décentré, ou pour mieux dire continuellement recomposé de façon dynamique par ces nouveaux substrats culturels.

Comment situer l'apport colonial (et postcolonial) dans les rapports historiquement chargés entre la culture québécoise et les vagues immigrantes successives? En prenant le contrôle (partiel) des leviers de l'immigration par la loi 101, en 1977, l'état québécois freinait efficacement une tendance lourde à l'assimilation instituée par le pouvoir colonial. La complexité de ces rapports s'en est trouvée encore accrue. Le pluriel, l'hybride, le transculturel ont désormais changé la nature du rapport québécois à l'altérité. On peut aisément concevoir l'intérêt des théories postcoloniales pour analyser ces nouvelles réalités, tout comme la pertinence des exemples québécois pour en développer notre compréhension théorique. D'autre part, notre analyse ne peut faire abstraction du contexte plus général de la mondialisation forcenée des marchés et du capital. Situé dans les marges de l'empire états-unien, qui roule agressivement ses biceps au début du nouveau siècle, la société québécoise élabore de nouvelles stratégies de résistance à l'uniformisation et à la satellisation, qui, paradoxalement, semblent mettre en veilleuse les efforts pour définir un pôle identitaire québécois.

Ces questions sont débattues depuis longtemps au Québec, où de nombreux ouvrages problématisent la 'question identitaire', sans pour autant se référer aux théories postcoloniales, largement ignorées, comme en France. C'est pour palier à cette lacune et pour élargir le débat que plusieurs d'entre nous ont tenté de broser la liste des applications possibles des théories postcoloniales au Québec. Cette programmation pourrait inclure: la renégociation continue du passé colonial ou du passé récent, celles des

¹³ Jocelyn Maclure, *Récits identitaires: le Québec à l'épreuve du pluralisme* (Montréal: Québec-Amérique, 2000), p.209.

espaces, le discours sur l'américanité, l'étude du travail textuel sur la langue, sur les diglossies français/anglais, vernaculaires/français normé (et normé par qui?), les dialogues culturels initiés par les voix immigrantes, les voix et les luttes des femmes, elles-mêmes provenant de plusieurs horizons culturels, la remise en question des rapports réels ou perçus entre l'identité sexuelle et l'identité nationale, les rapports entre institutions littéraires parisiennes et québécoises, canadiennes et québécoises, canadiennes françaises hors Québec et québécoises, états-unien et québécoises, la réflexion sur le nationalisme, toute la dynamique identitaire et culturelle en somme. Dans les processus de refonte ou de renégociation continue du 'canon' littéraire à l'étude dans nos départements de français, où la grande littérature française conserve toujours la part du lion, il est crucial en effet de s'appuyer sur un cadre théorique pouvant décrire les conditions d'émergence de l'ensemble des littératures post-européennes, pour reprendre un terme suggéré dès 1974 par Max Dorsinville dans une étude comparatiste entre les littératures québécoise et caraïbes francophones.¹⁴

À cet égard, l'insertion de la littérature québécoise dans le corpus postcolonial francophone exige de nous un effort majeur de théorisation pour déterminer quels éléments des théories postcoloniales peuvent rendre compte des réalités québécoises et francophones et quelles pratiques de lecture devraient être proposées pour ces littératures émergentes.

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¹⁴ Max Dorsinville, *Caliban without Prospero: Essay on Quebec and Black Literature* (Erin, Ontario: Press Porcépic, 1974).

***Les Soleils des indépendances* d'Ahmadou Kourouma: de la théorie au roman**

En 1968 paraissait le roman *Les Soleils des indépendances* de l'Ivoirien Ahmadou Kourouma. L'impression du roman au Canada s'explique par l'absence de reconnaissance littéraire en France, où il avait été jugé trop innovateur. Mais quelles innovations pouvait bien apporter ce roman, écrit entre 1961 et 1965, et que sont «les soleils des indépendances»?

Le terme désigne la période de turbulence au cours de laquelle, au début des années soixante, les anciennes colonies africaines ont accédé au statut d'états souverains, période sur laquelle Kourouma jette, un des premiers, une lumière plus crue, plus vraie: les gouvernements mis en place ne valent pas beaucoup mieux que ceux des colonisateurs.

Mais la nouveauté du livre tient également à son langage et à son style. Kourouma contamine le français classique par sa langue maternelle, le malinké, procédé qui lui permet d'exprimer son identité africaine dans un langage accessible à un grand public, et de régler ses comptes, à sa manière, avec le passé colonial de son pays. Ainsi, Kourouma joue un rôle de lien modéré entre les mondes africain et occidental, et son écriture s'accorde mal avec le parti pris anti-occidental pour lequel est censée opter la littérature postcoloniale.

Ashcroft, Griffiths et Tiffin, en effet, dans le fameux livre *The Empire Writes Back*, théorisaient cette littérature dans ce sens, tendant par un excès de généralisation à quelques simplifications.¹ Désormais, l'on peut nuancer un peu plus la résistance des ex-colonisés, critiquer le manque d'ouverture aux littératures postcoloniales non-anglophones, et plus généralement le manque

¹ Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back* (1989; Londres & New York: Routledge, 2003).

d'études de détail recontextualisant mieux les textes étudiés. Ashcroft, Griffiths et Tiffin reconnaissent d'ailleurs eux-mêmes ce fait dans la dernière édition de leur ouvrage.² Toutefois, *The Empire Writes Back* fournit toujours aux chercheurs une base théorique solide s'ils savent la compléter de travaux plus récents et détaillés. Ce n'est donc pas contre lui que mon travail s'inscrit, mais dans sa perspective, et pour contribuer à l'enrichissement de la recherche.

Cet article vise en effet à mettre en parallèle l'étude d'un texte postcolonial spécifique, *Les Soleils des indépendances*, avec la théorie postcoloniale. Pour ce faire, j'utiliserai le concept du dialogisme, développé par Mikhaïl Bakhtine. Carol Adlam suggère que Bakhtine utilise ce concept compliqué pour distinguer trois aspects caractéristiques de tout texte. Le premier aspect est la relation dialogique intertextuelle: le dialogue qu'entretient le texte avec son contexte. Le second est le dialogue entre l'auteur et le lecteur du texte. Le troisième aspect correspond aux relations dialogiques intratextuelles, soit les intersections de différentes voix à l'intérieur du texte même.³

Les trois parties qui composent cette étude dégageront, dans *Les Soleils des indépendances*, ces trois aspects du dialogisme de Bakhtine. Ils me permettront de répondre à la problématique suivante: comment une étude dialogique des *Soleils des indépendances* d'Ahmadou Kourouma peut-elle compléter la théorie postcoloniale?

² Ibid., pp.193, 210-11.

³ Carol Adlam, 'In the Name of Bakhtin: Russian and Anglo-American Readings of the Literary Writings 1900-1996', *Exploiting Bakhtin*, édité par Alastair Renfrew et Graham Roberts (Glasgow: Strathclyde Modern Languages Studies, new series, 2, 1997), p.88.

1. La relation dialogique intertextuelle

Tout roman s'inscrit dans son contexte historique et culturel en le contenant et en le transformant en même temps, et Mikhaïl Bakhtine souligne l'importance de connaître les voix idéologiques de l'époque pour mieux comprendre le roman.⁴ Les auteurs de *The Empire Writes Back* mettent l'accent sur la spécificité du contexte d'énonciation des littératures postcoloniales et le désir des auteurs de transcender, de changer ce contexte, qui porte le marque du passé colonial. Le roman de Kourouma permet de nuancer cette position. Il fait référence à bon nombre de problèmes nouveaux, qui ne sont pas tous le simple résultat du passé colonial de son pays. Ainsi, il montre que l'histoire a poursuivi son cours, que le temps ne s'est pas arrêté au moment de la libération.

Tout d'abord, en effet, Kourouma fait référence à la vie politique de son époque, entraînant à plusieurs reprises une comparaison de l'ancienne domination coloniale avec la nouvelle situation politique, qui se termine le plus souvent en faveur de la première.⁵ Un des premiers, Kourouma contredit donc l'euphorie de l'époque des indépendances en s'opposant à la formule politique contemporaine du parti unique. Ses descriptions des prisons politiques sinistres du parti rappellent *Une Journée d'Ivan Denissovitch* (1962) de l'écrivain russe Soljénitsyne, dans lequel ce dernier révèle l'existence des camps soviétiques. Même si certains articles de la revue africaine *Présence Africaine* contemporains des *Soleils* exposent des problèmes politiques de l'époque, rares sont ceux qui critiquent directement le parti unique.

À côté de son engagement politique, *Les Soleils des indépendances* s'inscrit dans les débats linguistiques de l'époque. En effet, le roman est paru dans le contexte de la construction de la

⁴ Sue Vice, *Introducing Bakhtin* (Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press, 1997), p.60.

⁵ Ahmadou Kourouma, *Les Soleils des indépendances* (Paris: Seuil, 1970), p.23.

francophonie, prise de conscience de l'espace linguistique mondial ayant la langue française en partage. Le terme ayant souvent été associé à une volonté néo-colonialiste de la France, il a soulevé maints débats. Faut-il garder le français en Afrique? comment? étaient les grandes questions. Le linguiste sénégalais Pathé Diagne proposait une solution pour les pays francophones: africaniser, sur le modèle des pays anglophones, la langue française.⁶ Par son roman, Kourouma prend ce parti d'une manière très personnelle, en mélangeant un français classique au malinké, solution double, qui rejette la francophonie tout en l'élargissant par une meilleure adaptation.

Mais *Les Soleils* se mêle aussi aux débats littéraires de l'époque. Ceux que Kwame Anthony Appiah appelle les «nativists», jugeaient qu'une véritable indépendance africaine exige une littérature propre.⁷ Kourouma, contrairement à eux, montre comment la culture africaine traditionnelle est pénétrée par la modernité européenne, ce qui rend impossible le véritable retour aux sources.

En dernier lieu, *Les Soleils* se mêle à un débat contemporain autour de l'ethnographie européenne. Les ethnologues français Michel Leiris et Claude Lévi-Strauss, avec le poète antillais Aimé Césaire essentiellement, ont critiqué une ethnographie européenne qu'ils jugeaient hautaine et méprisante. Dans de nombreux articles parus entre 1960 et 1965 dans *Présence Africaine*, on retrouve ce désir de «réduire l'hégémonie [culturelle] de l'Occident».⁸ Je reviendrai plus tard sur la manière dont Kourouma se mêle à ce débat. Mais concluons d'abord cette première partie, qui a montré que même si, globalement, *Les Soleils des indépendances* s'inscrit

⁶ «L'Afro-franglais», *Présence Africaine*, 52 (1964), 150-57.

⁷ Kwame Anthony Appiah, *In My Father's House. Africa in the Philosophy of Culture* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp.56-58.

⁸ *Présence Africaine*, «Éditorial», 1964, no. 4, p. 4.

dans son contexte postcolonial, l'étude contextuelle permet de voir que son auteur y dépasse le simple souci «postcolonialiste».

2. La relation dialogique entre le narrateur et le lecteur

Dans *Le Principe dialogique*, Bakhtine suggère qu'il peut être utile de décrire le roman comme un genre rhétorique, plutôt que comme un genre artistique. La rhétorique s'adresse à quelqu'un, et c'est selon Bakhtine ce qui caractérise le roman.⁹ En effet, dans *Les Soleils des indépendances*, Kourouma adresse sans cesse la parole au narrataire et implique ainsi le lecteur dans le texte.¹⁰ Ainsi suggère-t-il un dialogue entre narrateur et lecteur.

En outre, Bakhtine affirme que chaque mot subit l'influence de sa réponse, en ce sens que le narrateur l'anticipe.¹¹ Dans *Les Soleils*, Kourouma prête une grande attention à la réponse du lecteur, ce qui est liée à son entreprise ethnographique. Afin de faciliter la compréhension, étudions brièvement le narrateur et le narrataire des *Soleils*. Dans ce roman, il est question d'un narrateur hétérodiégétique, malinké, qui raconte l'histoire selon le mode narratif de la diegèse.¹² Le narrataire peut être identifié comme un étranger, non-malinké, puisqu'on lui dit: «vous n'êtes pas Malinké», et qu'on essaye de l'instruire.¹³

Par ce caractère ethnographique, le roman se mêle au débat concernant l'ethnographie européenne. Une lecture attentive des *Soleils* révèle que Kourouma a suivi ceux qui ont voulu détruire la

⁹ Mikhaïl Bakhtine, *The Dialogic Imagination*, traduit du russe par Caryl Emerson et Michael Holquist, édité par Michael Holquist (Austin & Londres: The University of Texas Press, 1981), p.269.

¹⁰ Kourouma, *Les Soleils des indépendances*, p.152.

¹¹ Bakhtine, *The Dialogic Imagination*, p.280.

¹² Yves Reuter, *Introduction à l'analyse du roman* (Paris: Bordas, 1991), pp.59, 64.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p.141.

hiérarchie sur laquelle reposait cette ethnographie, ainsi que l'autorité dont elle jouissait. Ainsi, par exemple, le narrateur, qui contrôle le récit et fait l'ethnographie de son propre pays et peuple, souligne l'ignorance de son narrataire étranger pour critiquer le penchant européen qui prétend mieux comprendre l'Afrique que les Africains eux-mêmes.

En outre, dans *Les Soleils*, le narrateur n'est pas le seul à jouir d'une autorité ethnographique. Ainsi, Kourouma n'échange-t-il pas simplement l'autorité européenne, étrangère, contre une seule autorité africaine, autochtone: diverses voix fournissent des informations ethnographiques sur la culture malinkée.¹⁴ Ainsi, Kourouma propose un nouveau modèle ethnographique, basé sur un dialogue inter- et intraculturel, modèle du nouveau contact entre l'Afrique et l'Europe souhaité par Kourouma. Ce contact serait fondé sur un dialogue égal et réciproque entre les deux continents, désir qui rappelle les idées de contemporains, tels Mircea Eliade, Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon et Léopold Senghor.

Pour autant, le dialogue que propose Kourouma n'efface pas toute différence, toute distance entre les cultures africaine et européenne. Au contraire, l'auteur souligne cette distance sans toujours essayer de la couvrir par des explications ethnographiques ou linguistiques. Ainsi, il empêche le lecteur européen de croire, encore une fois, qu'il peut entièrement comprendre, posséder intellectuellement un monde étranger au sien.

Dans *Les Soleils*, il est donc question d'une oscillation entre le rapprochement et l'éloignement de l'Afrique et de l'Europe. En outre, *Les Soleils* devrait contribuer au dialogue à l'intérieur de la société africaine. Ce dernier dialogue devait remplacer «le dialogue fraternel permanent», promu par Félix Houphouët-

¹⁴ Christopher L. Miller, *Theories of Africans: Francophone Literature and Anthropology in Africa* (Chicago & Londres: The University of Chicago Press), pp.215-17.

Boigny, président de la Côte d'Ivoire, dialogue qui servait de couverture à ses activités non-démocratiques.

3. Les relations dialogiques intratextuelles

Dans son roman, Kourouma traite différents aspects de la réalité qui l'entoure d'une façon originale, délicate, tranchante: son emploi du style direct, et, plus encore, du style indirect libre créent une polyphonie à l'intérieur du récit, résultant dans un véritable dialogue entre ses nombreux personnages. Si nous suivons Bakhtine, ce dialogisme intratextuel n'est pas propre à ce roman particulier: [le] roman peut être défini comme [...] une diversité de voix individuelles.¹⁵ De plus, une alternance de perspectives intensifie encore la polyphonie du roman: la perspective flotte entre celle du narrateur (focalisation zéro) et celle de différents personnages (focalisation interne).¹⁶

Figures exemplaires et hétérogènes, les personnages des *Soleils* incarnent différentes positions idéologiques de l'époque. Ils propagent leurs idées dans une confrontation dialogique. Ainsi, ils permettent à l'auteur de traiter les problèmes et discussions contemporains dans leur complexité et empêchent le roman de transmettre un message ou une vérité simples, univoques. Le sens du texte «émane plutôt de la friction dialogique que de l'explication» il devient clair *entre* plutôt que *dans* les voix, comme le veut Bakhtine.¹⁷ Ceci confère au lecteur une tâche responsable: comme un juge, il reçoit des informations de différents personnages et juge ensuite.

Ainsi, Kourouma a mis en écrit la querelle entre «conservateurs» et «progressifs» par le couple des protagonistes

¹⁵ Bakhtine, *The Dialogic Imagination* (c'est nous qui traduisons).

¹⁶ Reuter, *Introduction à l'analyse du roman*, p.66.

¹⁷ Vice, *Introducing Bakhtin*, pp.49, 54 (c'est nous qui traduisons).

Fama et Salimata. Tandis que Fama représente l'Africain traditionnel méprisant la modernité «bâtarde», Salimata est enracinée dans la réalité moderne. Cette femme, violée jeune fille et vivant avec un homme stérile, symbolise la nouvelle Afrique, qui doit se libérer des traumatismes que furent les viols de la traite négrière et de la colonisation, et se détacher de son passé désormais stérile (incarné par Fama) pour concevoir son propre avenir.¹⁸

Ainsi, Kourouma fait subtilement transparaître son opinion personnelle. La fin du roman, notamment, nous fait comprendre comment, pour cet écrivain engagé, le pays doit construire son identité nouvelle entre tradition et modernité. La nostalgie du passé précolonial, de la tradition, que symbolise Fama, est fondamentale, mais insuffisante pour l'épanouissement moderne des populations. La grandeur réelle du personnage est teintée d'anachronisme, voire de ridicule, et quoique la description de ses souffrances permette une critique virulente de la société africaine indépendante, la mort de Fama, à la fin du récit, semble indispensable pour qu'une amélioration se réalise. Salimata, elle, survit, et aura peut-être enfin l'enfant tant désiré. Et il est remarquable que Kourouma, sans rejeter pour autant ni tradition ni Islam, confère à une femme la force nouvelle par laquelle un avenir meilleur pourra prendre forme.

Si la discussion du dialogisme intratextuel des *Soleils* a montré, encore une fois, que, dans son roman, Kourouma dépasse la simple révolte contre les anciens colonisateurs, il est important de remarquer que la véritable résistance (constructive plutôt que destructrice) contre les anciens «maîtres» se trouve dans son «mariage» contre nature» du français et du malinké.¹⁹ Cet effort

¹⁸ Jean-Claude Nicolas, *Les Soleils des indépendances d'Ahmadou Kourouma* (Issy de Moulineaux: Éditions Saint-Paul, 1985), p.60.

¹⁹ Moncef S. Badday, 'Ahmadou Kourouma, écrivain africain', *Afrique littéraire et artistique*, 10 (1970), 8.

linguistique est renforcé par la polyphonie intratextuelle, par les nombreuses voix qui parlent ce français malinkisé.

Par son refus du français classique, Kourouma rappelle un concept de Bakhtine, qui veut que toute langue fasse preuve d'hétéroglossie par les nombreuses voix qui la parlent. Ce qui veut dire que, malgré l'imposition fréquente d'une langue unitaire, celle-ci comprend de nombreux langages.²⁰ La subversion linguistique de Kourouma constitue une revendication de l'hétéroglossie manifeste dans le français, une remise en question de la langue officielle canonisée qui reste, officiellement, le seul moyen d'expression littéraire acceptable.

Dans cet article, je suis partie de l'insuffisance d'une théorie postcoloniale programmatique, telle qu'elle est décrite dans *The Empire Writes Back*, qui néglige les spécificités et originalités de tout texte individuel. J'ai voulu montrer la nécessité d'études complémentaires de la théorie générale, détaillées, localisées, telle celle-là des *Soleils des indépendances* d'Ahmadou Kourouma.

Ce roman ne s'accorde pas avec la «doxa» postcoloniale, qui veut que la littérature des ex-colonisés se soit développée contre les ex-colonisateurs. Tel n'est pas le propos premier de Kourouma, qui considère certainement que la situation actuelle de l'Afrique ferait mieux de s'occuper du présent. Les techniques narratives employées par lui, ainsi que sa création d'un langage particulier lui permettent de transmettre ce message: ils font de ce roman un texte à différents niveaux extrêmement dialogique.

Je terminerai sur cette fonction communicative des *Soleils*. Or dans un dialogue, il faut à la fois se rapprocher de l'autre et rester ce qu'on est. L'entreprise de Kourouma relève de ces deux composantes: il se rapproche du lecteur européen en lui montrant sa culture malinkée, tout en lui faisant sentir sa différence; il utilise la langue française, mais la déforme pour faire en sorte d'y pouvoir manifester son identité. Ainsi, son entreprise s'inscrit dans

²⁰ Bakhtine, *The Dialogic Imagination*, pp.270-71.

une perspective extrêmement moderne de la mondialisation. Là est son originalité. Il incite les composantes de l'espace linguistique transculturel qu'est la francophonie à la diversité des pratiques, à l'enrichissement culturel, ouvrant l'Afrique au monde moderne, chose qui ne s'était jamais faite, et préparant l'Occident à cela.

Le roman s'est donc écrit à un moment crucial de l'histoire de l'Afrique, où l'échange réel est enfin imaginable. Moment complexe et ambigu, car la tentation du dogmatisme était aussi grande que dangereuse. L'avenir qu'il souhaite, c'est un rapprochement afro-européen renouvelé, c'est le dialogue par l'affirmation véritable de l'identité des hommes. Cette ouverture difficile ne peut se faire que par une position nuancée et non-dogmatique. Et c'est pourquoi, aussi, le lecteur reste seul juge de ce qui est écrit. Dans sa mise-en-écrit du dialogue interculturel, Kourouma lui donne tous les éléments de réflexion, mais ne lui donne jamais directement la réponse. Cette tension entre présentateur et bénéficiaire prévient *Les Soleils* de tomber dans les rets d'une quelconque théorie.

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Interdisciplinary Measures

Postcolonial studies — whether Anglophone, Francophone or, preferably, polyglot — is, or at least should be, interdisciplinary. This is a bold claim on several fronts, and risks being seen as little more than an empty promise. Interdisciplinarity, after all, has something of a talismanic status, holding the torch for intellectual progressivism while disguising, or even legitimising, a series of less desirable institutional effects. Institutional constraints on interdisciplinarity are well known, and the term continues to have an idealistic ring to it. But interdisciplinarity — in a classic case of the faultline between high-minded academic theory and hard-nosed managerial practice — may also serve as a convenient pretext for institutional downsizing and cost-cutting, providing the opportunity for hard-pressed university administrators to 'recoup interdisciplinary ventures as cost-effective programmes'.¹

What *is* interdisciplinarity anyway? As Julie Thompson Klein has argued, the term is almost inherently contradictory, with strategic appreciation often substituting for substantial knowledge: 'Even today the interdisciplinary approach is often praised with no clear indication of what it is'.² A fairly comprehensive, but not altogether helpful definition is provided by the international advisory body, the OECD: 'Interdisciplinarity ranges from the simple communication of ideas to the mutual integration of organising concepts, methodology, procedures, epistemology, terminology, data, and organisation of research and education in a

¹ Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996), p.280; See also Joe Moran, *Interdisciplinarity* (London: Routledge, 2002), pp.182-85.

² Julie Thompson Klein, *Interdisciplinarity: History, Theory, Practice* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1990), p.12.

fairly large field'.³ Joe Moran echoes the sense of interdisciplinarity's semantic slipperiness: 'It can suggest forging connections across the different disciplines [...] but it can also mean establishing a kind of undisciplined space in the interstices between disciplines, or even attempting to transcend disciplinary boundaries altogether'.⁴ And Roberta Frank, tongue firmly in cheek, sees interdisciplinarity as a familiar form of academic hedge-betting:

'Interdisciplinarity' has something to please everyone. Its base, *discipline*, is hoary and antiseptic; its prefix, *inter*, is hairy and friendly. Unlike fields, with their mud, cows, and corn, the Latinate *discipline* comes encased in stainless steel: it suggests something rigorous, aggressive, hazardous to master; *inter* hints that knowledge is a warm, mutually developing, consultative thing.⁵

The notional 'warmth' of interdisciplinarity, however, has often been noticeably lacking in practice; Klein resorts — albeit ironically — to military and geopolitical metaphors to describe it,⁶ while Graham Huggan points to the discrepancy 'between the apparent neutrality of definitions of interdisciplinarity and the ideological ferocity with which the [historical] struggles to establish [it] have been fought'.⁷ While there is some evidence to

³ Quoted in G. Berger, 'Opinions and Facts', in L. Apostel et al., eds, *Interdisciplinarity: Problems of Teaching and Research in Universities* (Paris: OECD, 1973), pp.23-74. See also Klein, *Interdisciplinarity*, p.63.

⁴ Moran, *Interdisciplinarity*, p.15.

⁵ R. Frank, "'Interdisciplinarity': The First Half-Century", in E.G. Stanley and T.F. Hoad, eds, *Words: For Robert Burchfield's Sixty-Fifth Birthday* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1998), pp.91-101; also quoted in Moran, *Interdisciplinarity*, p.3.

⁶ Klein, *Interdisciplinarity*, pp.77-78.

⁷ Graham Huggan, 'Postcolonial Studies and the Anxiety of Interdisciplinarity', *Postcolonial Studies* 5.3 (2002), 245-75 (p.255).

suggest that 'disciplinary structure[s] [are increasingly] cracking under the pressure of market imperatives',⁸ interdisciplinarity — in both theory and practice — continues to attract a good deal of anxiety, even hostility, as several recent examples in the particularly muddy field of postcolonial studies show. Postcolonial critics, by and large, have been suspicious of interdisciplinarity's glibly integrative rhetoric. Gayatri Spivak, in combat mode, sees interdisciplinarity cross-culturality as primarily a 'form of pretentious internationalism', and warns against the easy assumptions of a text-based, allegedly 'interdisciplinary' practice that effectively 'neutraliz[es] the vocabulary from one discipline, [then takes] it to describe yet again what happens between reader and text'.⁹ She remains firmly committed, however, to the 'disciplinary transformation of university-based English literary studies, and to the "transnational study of culture" that works toward undoing disciplinary boundaries and divisive ideologies of expertise' (Huggan 2002: 266). The late Edward Said, similarly, is more inclined to *anti-* than to *interdisciplinarity*, seeing the knowledge formations of the traditional disciplines as reinforcing, at the epistemological level, the imperialist practices of territorial boundary-marking and political divide-and-rule.¹⁰

Postcolonial critics may be wary of practising 'undisciplined' forms of interdisciplinarity, but this hasn't prevented them from being attacked for having done so. A number of effective counterblasts from the established disciplines show this. Said himself has been targeted, most notably by historians for having

⁸ Bill Readings, *The University in Ruins* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), p.174.

⁹ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Outside in the Teaching Machine* (London: Routledge, 1993), p.278; and *The Post-Colonial Critic*, ed. by S. Harasym (London: Routledge, 1990), p.55. See also Huggan, pp.262-68.

¹⁰ Edward W. Said, 'Orientalism Reconsidered', in Bart Moore-Gilbert, Gareth Stanton and Willy Maley, eds, *Postcolonial Criticism* (Harlow: Longman, 1997), pp.126-44. See also Huggan, pp.264-66.

done bad history.¹¹ Exchanges between postcolonial criticism and anthropology have been similarly frosty, with Trinh Minh-ha among others being held accountable for substituting 'complaint for scholarship', and for assuming that 'personal responses to a few carelessly read anthropological texts constitute a critique of an entire discipline'.¹² Said, and, particularly, Minh-ha are admittedly vulnerable to such criticisms; but the frequency and ferocity of the attacks suggest a territorial protectiveness that replicates the tactics of the would-be 'aggressor', and that risks turning even milder forms of interdisciplinary (perhaps better, interdiscursive) scholarship into opportunities for intellectual one-upmanship and quotidian cross-departmental abuse.¹³

What chance is there in this harsh climate for a functional (postcolonial) interdisciplinarity? This depends on the willingness of university researchers in different fields to communicate and cooperate with one another, and on the ability of programme directors to identify general areas and — more important still — *specific* case-studies that are likely to profit from an exchange of informed disciplinary perspectives. A distinction needs to be made here, I believe, between *interdisciplinarity* and *interdiscursivity*. The former, teamwork-based, works toward addressing common sets of issues and problems, and is defined by collaborative initiatives in the pursuit of socially applicable research goals. The latter, individually oriented, borrows discerningly from the

¹¹ See, for example, the vitriolic responses of Dewey and MacKenzie to Said's *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1978). C. Dewey, 'How the Raj Played Kim's Game', *Times Literary Supplement*, 9-10 April 1998; J. MacKenzie, *Orientalism: History, Theory and the Arts* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995). See also Bart Moore-Gilbert, 'Postcolonial Cultural Studies and Imperial Historiography', *Interventions* 1.3, (1999).

¹² M. di Leonardo, *Exotics at Home: Anthropologists, Others, American Modernity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), p.45. Trinh T. Minh-ha, *Woman, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1989), p.65.

¹³ See Huggan, p.259.

language(s) of different disciplines, looking to effect a combination of intellectual 'border-crossings' in which established fields of knowledge are directly or indirectly challenged in the interests of anti-authoritarian critique.¹⁴ To some extent, this distinction is already contained in the difference between *synoptic* (theoretical, integrative) and *instrumental* (practical, goal-oriented) forms of interdisciplinarity.¹⁵ As Ato Quayson argues, postcolonial studies has been mainly characterised by the first (synoptic) form of interdisciplinarity — a form in which the *theoretical* identification of common aims does not necessarily entail the *practical* pursuit of collaborative scholarship, and in which the lines between interdisciplinarity and interdiscursivity are effectively blurred.¹⁶ Although Quayson eventually concludes that the synoptic and instrumental dimensions of postcolonial interdisciplinarity exist in productive tension with each other, I would argue that this is largely wishful thinking, and that his original diagnosis (that goal-oriented modes of interdisciplinarity continue to be lacking in postcolonial research) is correct.

The diagnosis may be correct, but the question still remains as to how to treat the patient. I am certainly not arguing here that interdiscursive forms of postcolonial theorising are necessarily invalid or intrinsically self-serving, nor am I making a reactionary plea for the current configuration of the disciplines to remain forever unchanged. I would agree with Spivak, Said and several others that postcolonial studies has its part to play in the broader process of epistemic decolonisation: a process that inevitably gestures beyond existing disciplinary boundaries, and that

¹⁴ See Huggan, p.263. See also Henry A. Giroux, *Border Crossings: Cultural Workers and the Politics of Difference* (New York: Routledge, 1992), and P. McLaren, 'Critical Literacy and Postcolonial Praxis: A Freirian Perspective', *College Literature* 19.3 (1992), 7-27.

¹⁵ See Klein, *Interdisciplinarity*.

¹⁶ Ato Quayson, *Postcolonialism: Theory, Practice or Process?* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000).

eventually looks toward the emancipatory possibilities of a genuinely non-sectarian, 'decentred' post-disciplinary critique.¹⁷ Nonetheless, I would make the case for an instrumental approach to postcolonial interdisciplinarity, as currently practised in such diverse experimental fora as the University of Essex's MA in postcolonial criticism or the University of Munich's international PhD programme in postcolonial studies (*Graduiertenkolleg*). The existence of such programmes indicates a practical way ahead for a field still prone to fits of self-reflexive agonising; it also suggests that interdisciplinary teamwork *is* institutionally feasible, even if the considerable problems involved (methodological disagreement and divergence; the structural imposition rather than mutual negotiation of common goals and interests) cannot simply be wished away.

As Benita Parry has pointed out in a recent essay, there is a pressing need for more empirical work in postcolonial studies; this might help counteract the theoretical pretensions and — in her view — the political quietism of the field.¹⁸ An interdisciplinary frame might provide the opportunity for such work, bringing together the findings of — say — economists, sociologists and political scientists on recent immigration patterns in Western Europe, and combining these with more obviously discursive literary/cultural studies approaches, e.g. Mireille Rosello's Derrida-inspired book *Postcolonial Hospitality: The Immigrant as Guest*.¹⁹ Interdisciplinarity is *a* future, if not *the* future, for postcolonial studies. (Other futures might include linguistic pluralisation, a retooled transnational/global comparatism, and the paradoxical return of postcolonial criticism to its origins in an

¹⁷ See Said, 'Orientalism Reconsidered'.

¹⁸ Benita Parry, 'Directions and Dead Ends in Postcolonial Studies', in David Theo Goldberg and Ato Quayson, eds, *Relocating Postcolonialism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), pp.66-81.

¹⁹ Mireille Rosello, *Postcolonial Hospitality: The Immigrant as Guest* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001).

expanded metropolitan Europe.) What seems certain is that interdisciplinarity, despite the fuzziness and malleability of its rhetoric, will have a larger part to play in the future of the academy; and that interdisciplinarity — like postcolonial studies itself — has a *transformative* capacity, providing a means, in Moran's words, 'of living with the disciplines more critically and self-consciously, and [of] recognizing that their most basic assumptions can always be challenged or reinvigorated by new ways of thinking from elsewhere'.²⁰

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²⁰ Moran, *Interdisciplinarity*, p.187.

An Alternative Reading for the Maghrebi Text?

Teaching Francophone Maghrebi literature to British-based university students and researching this area of study within British institutions has always been rewarding. As an academic, I share knowledge of the discipline with students and colleagues, but as someone of Maghrebi origin I also bring my 'patrimoine' and culture to the critical debate. Or so I thought, because, in fact, what I learnt and what I practised was how to interpret the Maghrebi text using Western critical theories and philosophies. Knowing the culture from which the Maghrebi text stems (the same can evidently be said of all cultures) is fundamental if not compulsory. The requirement that one should be able to read the texts concerned in their target language is based on a certain assumption that one is less likely to miss out on the subtleties which are sometimes lost in translation.¹

The same argument can — and should — be extended to the level of culture.² How many researchers (both academics and students) in the field of Maghrebi studies have visited the

¹ A friend and colleague teaching philosophy at Cork University once suggested (and rightly so) that he would have reservations about supervising a PhD on a German philosopher if, for example, the research student had no knowledge of German.

² While attending a recent conference where an eminent critic gave a paper on a North African film I became convinced that a certain (albeit minimal) amount of knowledge of a culture and the differentiation between the different languages spoken within that same culture should be of importance if one is to do justice to the culture one researches. The conference paper in question focused on the translation of film songs into French subtitles, which, according to the author of the paper, communicate the Arabic culture to the French audience. However, the argument would not have lost its impact and validity had the critic taken the time to find out that the songs in the film were actually in Berber.

Maghreb? How many can differentiate between Moroccan, Algerian and Tunisian cultures? How many are aware of the 'real' situation of women in the Maghreb which bears very little, if no resemblance to the women depicted in Driss Chraïbi's *Le Passé simple* and Rachid Boudjedra's *La Répudiation* to name but two well-known North African texts.

Most important is the question of Islam within the Maghrebi context. It is a culturally specific Islam. When, generally speaking, a Maghrebi defines him/herself as a Muslim, he/she is mostly providing a cultural definition of identity; but when he/she is so defined in a Western context he/she is inscribed solely with a religious identity. Encapsulating the Maghrebi identity mostly in the religious sphere of interpretation can lend itself to misrepresentation and misunderstanding. The Maghrebi identity, as a number of authors endeavour to highlight, has a complex relation to religion, for the latter is followed more often (leaving aside religious fundamentalism which forms a minority) as a path of life (in a philosophical sense) than as a devout practice.

Authors, such as Khatibi, Meddeb and Ben Jelloun amongst others, have all attempted to demonstrate how the mystic Sufi path of Islam could provide a better reading of Maghrebi identity and culture.³ The numerous references in their work to mystic poets and philosophers such as Al Hallaj and Ibn Al Arabi, and the

³ For example, as an alternative reading, rather than use elements of psychoanalysis and/or feminist thought to study Ben Jelloun's androgynous character Ahmed/Zahra in *L'Enfant de sable* and *La Nuit sacrée*, an interpretation based on the precepts of Sufism allows us to have a fresher/different perception of the formation of subjectivity. The dichotomy between male/female identity becomes thus notions of *Zahir* (external) and *Baten* (internal); the two virtues the Sufi is to transcend during his/her journey to plenitude (or Oneness in Sufi terms). Sufism offers different reading platforms in this case: the Oneness the individual aims to reach is both on the spiritual level (i.e. proximity to God as to become one with him) and on the existential level (in line with Sartrean philosophy) whereby the individual negates his/her worldly situation for the benefit of a spiritual one.

intertextual relation that exists between the Francophone Maghrebi text and Sufi Arabophone thought are of tremendous wealth in terms of interpretation. However, very often, whether on the part of a Western critic or a Maghrebi one, North African literature (among other literatures as a matter of fact) is studied, analysed and interpreted solely with Western critical tools. Western theories are used for this end and the results are always enriching; however, they are also restrictive for while they demonstrate the universalist aptitude of Western thought, they deny postcolonial literature the philosophical heritage from which it stems. This is the notion of *Açala* (authenticity) that most influential North African intellectuals, headed by Khatibi and Laroui, yearn to attain.

In different academic clusters in the postcolonial field there is an ongoing debate about whether or not one should use the language of ex-colonial powers, but very little has been expressed about the use of Western theoretical approaches. The latter have their limits when dealing with the non-Western text, but perhaps there is a window of opportunity for the translation of old and contemporary Arabophone philosophies, which would stretch the boundaries of critical theories.

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Cultural Studies into Francophone Postcolonial Studies: towards a 'disciplined' interdisciplinarity

In the first issue of this journal, Charles Forsdick forcefully argues that:

Francophone Postcolonial Studies does not exist, at least not as a discrete discipline. Like the fragmented academic or critical traditions to which it is most closely cognate, from which it has clearly emerged and of which it is perhaps even a hybrid amalgam — French and Postcolonial Studies — it exists between other disciplines and reveals a complex genealogy whose dominant aspects and affiliations appear to vary according to individual scholars' needs, interests and preconceptions.¹

Forsdick's relational reading of Francophone postcolonial studies is particularly helpful in terms of the way it refuses to invest the subject with a foundational status, or intrinsic disciplinarity, while raising important questions regarding interdisciplinarity.

Cultural studies may well prove instructive here as both a model of interdisciplinarity and as a fragmented critical tradition that looks set to contribute to the hybrid disciplinary amalgam of French and postcolonial studies. As David Murphy suggests, Francophone postcolonial studies is likely to 'enable new comparative research extending far beyond literature to encompass

¹ Charles Forsdick, 'Challenging the monolingual, subverting the monocultural: the strategic purposes of Francophone Postcolonial Studies', *Francophone Postcolonial Studies*, 1.1 (2003), 33-41 (p.36).

historical, political and cultural studies'.² The relationship between cultural studies and postcolonial studies in many ways seems axiomatic. Both followed a boom-bust trajectory during the course of the 1990s as they were rapidly institutionalised and then subjected to intense criticism for betraying their 'political' roots. More substantively, the work that goes on under the heading postcolonial studies is being increasingly referred to as postcolonial *cultural* studies, while cultural studies has been recognised as an essentially postcolonial discourse intimately bound up with the decline of empire and post-war migrations between 'centre' and 'periphery'.³ It is worth noting in this context that if Edward Said's *Orientalism* is a foundational text in Francophone postcolonial studies, then one of the earliest recorded uses of the term 'postcolonial' appears in a publication by the Paris-based organisation UNESCO, *Race and Class in Post-Colonial Society* (1977), to which Stuart Hall, one of the founding figures of cultural studies, contributed.

Yet if cultural studies is one of the disciplines Francophone Postcolonial Studies 'exists between', then interdisciplinarity is not the sum total of what it has to teach us. Interdisciplinarity has played a valuable role in helping to challenge and deconstruct traditional institutional and epistemological structures, opening up new points of comparison, questioning the insularity, the recourse to origins, the exclusivity of conventional disciplines. These are all challenges that foreground something of the promise of

² David Murphy, 'Choosing a Framework: The Limits of French Studies/Francophone Studies/Postcolonial Studies' *Francophone Postcolonial Studies*, 1.1 (2003), 72-80 (p.73).

³ On Postcolonial Cultural Studies, see Diana Brydon 'Postcolonial Cultural Studies', in *The John Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory and Criticism* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003). On cultural studies as a postcolonial discourse, see for example Bill Schwarz, 'Becoming Postcolonial' in Paul Gilroy et al., eds, *Without Guarantees: in honour of Stuart Hall* (London: Verso, 2000), pp.268-81.

Francophone postcolonial studies. However, it might be worth proceeding with caution given some of the accusations against interdisciplinarity that have already emerged in relation to cultural studies.

Bill Readings and others have questioned the idea that there is anything intrinsically progressive or radical about interdisciplinarity. In *The University in Ruins*, Readings points out that interdisciplinarity has come to serve the managerial values of the modern university, helping to down-size and cost cut across departments/disciplines while providing a more flexible 'package' for potential customers.⁴ Cultural Studies, he suggests, has helped to produce a nebulous and indiscriminate interdisciplinarity that resists its own specific locations, becoming little more than a transcendental signifier.

Francophone postcolonial studies might avoid similar accusations in the future by (as Tony Bennett has already proposed in relation to cultural studies) pursuing a more 'disciplined' interdisciplinarity.⁵ By urging discipline, Bennett is not advocating a return to more regimented, traditional disciplinary boundaries that would fence French and postcolonial studies back in their own respective fields. Rather he is proposing a more distinctive, nuanced, situated account of cultural studies in which interdisciplinarity is not allowed to evade its conjunctural specificity. In order to briefly illustrate the possibilities of this approach, I now want to suggest what interdisciplinary Francophone postcolonial studies might contribute to a more 'disciplined' account of British cultural studies' emergence.

British cultural studies did not appear out of the blue on a curriculum at the University of Birmingham in 1964. It emerged out of the New Left movement of the 1950s, a political

⁴ Bill Readings, *The University in Ruins* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996).

⁵ Tony Bennett, *Culture: A Reformer's Science* (London: Sage, 1998).

organisation that brought together some of the founding figures of cultural studies such as Raymond Williams, E.P. Thompson and Stuart Hall. Hall has since contextualised the rise of the New Left in 1956 in terms of Britain's declining imperial status and the Suez Crisis, to which the movement was a direct response. From this perspective, cultural studies might be said to appear at a key (Francophone) postcolonial conjuncture: the British and French invasion of Egypt. Certainly Hall was not just politicised by British imperialism (as is often acknowledged), but by French imperialism, and he has recalled his celebrations with other Caribbean students at Oxford following the expulsion of France from Indochina in 1954. The New Left took its name from the French *nouvelle gauche*, an independent political movement in French politics associated with the editor of *L'Observateur*, Claude Bourdet, whose anti-colonialist politics emerged in articles like, 'Y a-t-il une Gestapo algérienne?' (1951), and who met Stuart Hall and other New Left members in Paris in the 1950s.

The Francophone flavour of the early New Left became increasingly apparent in the dominant version of cultural studies that emerged at the legendary Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies during the late 1960s and 1970s. 1968 and the student uprisings in Paris had a major impact on the CCCS's development: 'from this rupture there emerged new kinds of questions about the politics of culture [...] which gave the Centre a new relevance to contemporary advanced societies'.⁶ The events of this period contributed to the anti-authoritarian, anti-establishment climate at the CCCS, which rejected traditional pedagogical paradigms in favour of collectives drawing together staff and students. It also contributed to the Centre's new theoretical orientation, most notably in terms of its critical

⁶ Stuart Hall, 'Cultural Studies and the Centre: Some Problematics and Problems', in Hall et al., eds, *Culture, Media, Language* (London: Hutchinson, 1980), pp.15-47 (p. 26).

engagement with Francophone theory. Much of the Centre's energies during the 1970s were devoted to explaining, applying, developing and questioning the work of Louis Althusser and Michel Foucault, the 'Tel Quel' group, Lacan, Derrida. Among the now famous series of Stencilled Papers that emerged from the CCCS in this period, there are pieces by Roland Barthes, Pierre Bourdieu and Julia Kristeva.

Overall, the Birmingham Centre played an influential role in translating the debates of Francophone theory to the post-war scene in Britain during the late 1960s and 1970s. At the same time such radical theoretical developments did not go unchallenged. The turn to French structuralism by certain influential figures at the CCCS like Stuart Hall prompted a serious rift in British cultural studies that dominated the field into the 1980s. However, as Bill Schwarz notes:

this 'moment of theory' — of Paris in Birmingham as the jibes went — requires no apology: it represented a necessary relocation of British thought in the intellectual revolutions of the twentieth century, and might also be said to have encouraged the conditions for dispatching a naturalized, unselfconscious attachment to the codes of English intellectual life.⁷

Schwarz's account here is suggestive of the postcolonial implications of 'Paris in Birmingham' as a kind of foreign presence capable of denaturalising England and exposing the ethnicity of Englishness. Significantly, the rift in cultural studies has been ritually presented as a divide between the 'indigenous' and characteristically empirical English culturalism and the overseas import, structuralism. As Graeme Turner describes it:

⁷ Bill Schwarz, 'Where is Cultural Studies?', *Cultural Studies*, 8.3 (1994), 377-393 (p.381).

'[w]here structuralism took on a particularly European, even "foreign" image, culturalism seemed to be the homegrown alternative'.⁸

Of his early days at Birmingham, Stuart Hall has said 'we taught no anthropology [...] and besides, the English on whom we wished to turn our inquiring, ethnographic gaze had not yet learned to conceive of themselves as "the natives"'.⁹ Hall's encounter with the structuralist anthropology of Claude Lévi-Strauss and the semiotics of Barthes would irrevocably change things. By the late 1970s 'race' had become a significant area of study at the CCCS and early collaborative projects such as *Policing the Crisis* reveal an indebtedness not just to the rise of black consciousness in the United States, but to pioneering Francophone postcolonial intellectuals such as Frantz Fanon and Aimé Césaire.

Since the 1980s Francophone postcolonial discourse has played a substantial and explicit role in black British cultural studies. There is not space to go into the full extent of its role here. However, in sketching some of the potential connections between early British cultural studies and Francophone postcolonial studies I have tried to suggest some of the possible routes that, with more research, a 'disciplined' cultural studies might make available.

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⁸ Graeme Turner, *British Cultural Studies: An Introduction* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1990), p.31.

⁹ Stuart Hall, 'Race, Culture, and Communications: Looking Backward and Forward at Cultural Studies', *Rethinking Marxism*, 5.1 (1992), 10-18 (p.10).

Non-lieu: d'hexagone en polygone (étoilé ou non)

Je connais un couple de bricoleurs extraordinaires qui habitent un univers de clous, de boulons et d'écrous dont la liste ne cesse de s'allonger au fur et à mesure qu'ils construisent de nouveaux objets¹ et que leur imagination et leur expérience mais aussi leur sens du travail bien fait les poussent à se procurer les derniers outils en date.² Ce qui m'intéresse dans leur histoire n'est pas tant que ce soit deux bricoleurs (après tout, Claude Lévi-Strauss ou Michel de Certeau nous ont habitués à envisager la pensée [mythique] et le travail intellectuel comme une forme de bricolage ou même de braconnage),³ mais plutôt le fait que leurs pratiques de bricolage dans le même atelier, dans le même cadre institutionnel, les sépare autant qu'elle les rapproche. Ils cohabitent harmonieusement, mais c'est un petit miracle étant donné leurs tendances radicalement opposées à organiser leur espace de recherche.

Le premier ne cesse d'acheter ces ensembles de petits tiroirs en plastique transparents où l'on peut ranger tous les objets qui risquent de s'accumuler sur l'établi où il travaille. L'autre, à la même vitesse, fabrique des étiquettes de plus en plus précises: 'vis

¹ Ils écrivent respectivement un livre sur 'les droits de l'Homme considérés du point des animaux marins hermaphrodites' et sur le rapport entre 'globalisation et francophonie'.

² Les critiques littéraires canaques sont désormais traduits dans une des langues qu'ils lisent et ils en profitent pour s'instruire.

³ On aura reconnu les références de textes qui eux-mêmes font désormais partie du canon (ou de l'un des canons) des études francophones postcoloniales interdisciplinaires: *La Pensée sauvage* (Paris: Plon, 1960) et *L'Invention du quotidien*, 1: *Les arts de faire* (Paris: UGE, 1980), auxquels je rajoute toujours mentalement le *Room for Maneuver* de Ross Chambers (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

de 20, vis à bois, vis courtes à tête fraisée' ou alors 'charnières en laiton pour le meuble suspendu de la cuisine d'été' qui seront collées sur les tiroirs.

Le premier ne supporte pas le moindre objet errant sur l'établi où est installé le projet en cours et fourre, en vrac, tout ce qui dépasse, dans n'importe lequel des petits tiroirs, comme s'il n'y avait pas d'étiquettes. Résultat: dans les cases, les romans d'Amélie Nothomb cohabitent avec ceux de Calixthe Beyala, ou avec la littérature néerlandaise indonésienne; quant aux romans d'Edwidge Danticat traduits en français, ils sont dans le même tiroir que *Le Polygone étoilé* d'Abdelkebir Khatibi, les poèmes d'Anne Hébert ou les textes théoriques de Gayatri Spivak ou Hélène Cixous. La raison pour laquelle ces unités se sont trouvées un jour ensemble sur l'établi lui échappe ou plutôt ne stimule pas son gène théorique. Si on le pousse dans ses retranchements, il reconnaîtra que ses 'goûts' (qu'il sait tributaires des schémas théorisés par Pierre Bourdieu), ses rencontres de 'hasard' (qu'il traite mentalement d'objectif et de surréaliste), les rééditions (ou leur absence), les achats ou envois de livre à titre gracieux contre échange implicite de compte-rendu (qui augmentent en même temps que ses années d'ancienneté) relèvent d'une alchimie historico-canonique qui mêle résolument hasard et nécessité. Il sait aussi que la composition et la stabilité du mélange, qui ne le passionnent pas, sont les sujets mêmes des recherches de sa collègue bricoleuse.

Pour lui, l'enfer, consisterait à devoir travailler au milieu de cet éparpillement de richesses en souffrance sur son plan de travail mental. En revanche, que le chaos règne ou non au sein des tiroirs ne l'émeut guère.⁴ Quand il a besoin d'une 'vis de 20 à bois à tête

⁴ Il a d'ailleurs trouvé, chez Édouard Glissant, un discours qu'il s'approprie volontiers (qu'il 'cite' dit-il, mais je crois qu'il a plutôt tendance à l'utiliser)

fraisée', il n'a pas la moindre idée de l'endroit où en trouver une, ne sait pas nécessairement à quoi exactement elle pourrait servir, et il ouvre très vite tous les tiroirs un après l'autre jusqu'à ce qu'il trouve son bonheur. On n'a jamais su si l'article qu'il a écrit sur le rôle des enfants biographes⁵ était la cause ou l'effet d'un tiroir mal rangé où *Allah n'est pas obligé* d'Ahmadou Kourouma (2000) s'était retrouvé en compagnie d'un *Aller simple* de Didier van Cauwelaert (1994). À l'époque, son amie avait subodoré qu'avec un nom 'pareil', il y avait de la Belgitude flamando-francophone dans l'air et avait ouvert une nouvelle niche hypothétique. Je m'empresse d'ajouter que depuis, la vérité géographie politique a remplacé les suppositions phonétiques — à moins que ce ne soit la contingence du lieu de naissance et son cortège d'autres présupposés nationaux identitaires.

Elle préférera ne pas travailler à son projet en cours s'il le faut mais prendra le temps de mettre chaque clou dans le tiroir adéquat, même s'il faut créer un nouveau tiroir et déplacer les objets dans ceux qu'elle vient de ranger: parfois, ce travail-là l'occupe longuement et elle en parle avec autant d'intelligence interdisciplinaire que de passion historique. Par ailleurs, elle laisse volontiers l'établi s'encombrer de ses dernières trouvailles: le dernier roman de Maryse Condé qu'elle n'a pas encore lu ou bien un article sur la captivité de Cervantes en Alger, sujet apparemment ni post-colonial ni même francophone mais qui lui fait vaguement penser à une autre façon de raconter la colonisation française de l'Afrique. Lorsqu'elle aura besoin de ressortir une vis, elle trouvera sans doute au moins la quantité voulue derrière l'étiquette adéquate qu'elle a elle-même créée, même si, dans le tiroir qu'elle ouvre, elle a pris l'habitude de s'attendre à des

pour justifier des pratiques qui engendrent une version du 'chaos monde' et favorisent l'opacité.

⁵ Je fais ici allusion à la thèse en cours de rédaction de Kristin Musselman.

surprises: elle doit faire face à un excès de sens, de genre ou d'auteurs, à cause des habitudes de son collaborateur.

Le lecteur aura deviné qu'en remplaçant mentalement l'atelier par *Francophone Postcolonial Studies*, on déplie le modèle métaphorique qui me tient lieu de 'prise de position'. Certains objecteront que c'est un peu un non-lieu. Je suppose que je l'entends bien ainsi, dans tous les sens du terme, qui vont de l'utopie au refus du procès. Disons que l'atelier est l'idée que je me fais de la place d'une nouvelle revue dans le laboratoire de recherche. Nous y sommes conviés, grâce au travail d'une équipe qui a créé les conditions propices, à mettre nos pratiques en pratique et en commun, mais aussi à réfléchir aux présuppositions qu'elles comportent. Et pour rendre ma position rêvée mais théorique plus précise, j'ajouterais ceci: j'imagine que mes deux bricoleurs ne se disputent pas, ou lorsqu'ils le font, c'est au sujet de tout autre chose que la fonction des étiquettes (leurs opinions politiques divergent par exemple, leur discipline ne se résume pas, loin s'en faut, à un hypothétique consensus anticolonialiste, altermondialiste ou nouveau-marxiste). Naturellement, mes deux bricoleurs, souvent, ne font qu'un, ou une.

Tout va bien dans le meilleur des mondes possibles, c'est-à-dire que tout continue à y aller très mal en fait, mais j'ose espérer que la planète 'francophone postcoloniale' est un système qui, en lui-même, ne mérite ni cet excès d'honneur ni cette indignité: l'important, contrairement à ce que dit la publicité, ce n'est pas ce qu'il y a dans la boîte mais la valeur (sans doute provisoire) de ce qui sera créé dans l'atelier grâce à ces unités plus ou moins (in)classables.

J'imagine ces créations critiques ou théoriques, comme des instruments de musique inversés: si elles sont réussies, elles nous permettront, non pas de produire de nouveaux sons, mais d'entendre des voix poétiques ou romanesques restées inaudibles (pour cause de canon qui parfois s'ignore en tant que canon). Ce

sont des chambres d'écho au sein desquelles les littératures dites francophones, qu'elles soient ou non raturées, qu'elles soient ou non 'scotomisées'⁶ par l'institution pourront 'résonner dans leur pluralité' (comme le dit Khatibi de son 'Maghreb pluriel').⁷

Le modèle des tiroirs n'est certes pas sans risque: supposons qu'un ignorant de mon acabit ouvre le tiroir 'vis à tête fraisée à bois et de 20' (plein de rondelles vu les tendances de l'un des bricoleurs) pour se faire une idée de ce à quoi ressemble une 'vis à tête fraisée à bois et de 20', et aille ensuite colporter des bêtises sur leur apparence, leur ethnie, leur religion ou leur tendance au communautarisme (elles cohabitent avec des clous et des rondelles sans s'assimiler), on peut certes envisager quelques catastrophes académiques.

La peur de la catastrophe fait d'ailleurs un peu partie intégrante de la discipline: les textes qui émanent de chercheurs spécialistes et qui entreprennent un état des lieux contiennent souvent des mises en garde: 'Gare au gaufrier' avertit par exemple Lorna Milne qui craint les effets délétères des 'cookie cutters' sur la cuisine francophone postcoloniale.⁸ Gare à l'amateurisme semble

⁶ Voir Réda Bensmaïa, 'Francophonie', trans. by Alyson Waters, *Yale French Studies*, 103 (2003), 17-23 (p.19).

⁷ Les textes critiques francophones postcoloniaux pourraient alors servir de 'troisième oreille', cet organe imaginaire que le même auteur imagine comme le propre de ceux et celles qui vivent dans la 'bi-langue', dans l'espace vibrant de l'intraduisible entre les langues. Voir son *Amour bilingue* (Paris: Fata Morgana, 1983).

⁸ Lorna Milne, 'Gare au gaufrier', *Francophone Postcolonial Studies*, 1.1 (2003), 60-63. Sa recommandation implicite est de ne pas créer de cuisine séparée (car ici, la métaphore de l'atelier a fait place à un autre champ sémantique), mais de traiter les études françaises et francophones d'un point de vue comparatiste: 'One might look forward, for example, to more and longer analyses of the intertextual echoes between, or shared qualities and preoccupations of "Francophone" and "French" writers: Gisèle Pineau and

dire Josias Semujanga dans un article qui fait l'histoire des débuts de l'enseignement des littératures francophones au Québec.⁹

Pour autant, il me semble qu'il serait encore plus indésirable de transformer l'atelier de bricolage en camp retranché, ou d'en retirer l'accès à ceux qui risquent de se tromper de casier ou de tirer des conclusions hâtives de leur contenu. Peut-être est-il prudent d'envisager qu'une partie importante de la recherche postcoloniale francophone consistera (toujours) à gérer ce rapport entre l'atelier et ses multiples utilisateurs, ce qui est une façon de dire que les études francophones postcoloniales se trouveraient bien d'être (par choix plutôt que par nécessité) sous auto-rature et autoréflexives alors même qu'elles sont en train 'd'étendre leurs horizons' comme le suggèrent Farid Laroussi et Christopher Miller, qui modifient implicitement nos visions de pionnière marginale et marginalisée.¹⁰

Peut-être faut-il ne pas systématiquement craindre les effets de l'absence de supervision qui a marqué les débuts de la discipline ou le fait que les études postcoloniales francophones sont encore souvent le fait de quelques 'individus isolés'.¹¹ Certes, la réhabilitation théorique d'un certain type d'amateurisme doit aussi être soigneusement pensée.¹² Si j'ai la mauvaise idée d'utiliser ce

Lydie Salvayre; Linda Lê and Marie Nimier; Patrick Chamoiseau and the long list of literary mentors declared in his *Écrire en pays dominé* (p.62).

⁹ Josias Semujanga, 'The Fortunes and Misfortunes of Teaching Francophone Literatures in Canada', *Yale French Studies*, 103 (2003), 72-80.

¹⁰ Voir leurs contributions à 'French and Francophone: The Challenge of Expanding Horizons', *Yale French Studies*, 103 (2003).

¹¹ Voir Samba Gadjigo, 'Teaching Francophone African Literature in the American Academy', traduit par Christopher Miller, *Yale French Studies*, 103 (2003), 33-40 (p.35).

¹² Voir les craintes exprimées par Amadou Koné qui écrit: 'My own experience permits me to say that, too often, professors specialist in another field, having read one or two African novels and a few articles on Orientalism and

qu'il y a dans les tiroirs que je n'ai pas rangés moi-même en présupposant que l'étiquette se contente de dire la vérité, toute la vérité, et rien que la vérité, je n'ai qu'à m'en prendre à moi si les 'vis à bois à tête fraisée' sont des rondelles et si j'accumule les stéréotypes sur 'la littérature antillaise' ou 'la beuritude de Paul Smail' (dont on sait bien à présent que c'est un personnage de roman et non un autobiographe d'origine ou de culture franco-marocaine). Ceci dit, on sait bien que les erreurs de génie sont parfois des ratés du système et pour ce qu'il apporte à ce moulin-là, je me propose de laisser traîner sur l'établi francophone postcolonial le film d'Agnès Varda, *Les Glaneurs et la glaneuse*, qui rend hommage aux 'trouvailles' des recycleurs et des grappilleurs sans perdre de vue les difficultés qu'ils ou elles rencontrent en fonction de leur position sociale.

Grappillons donc pour conclure. En fait, un des tiroirs pris au hasard dans l'atelier francophone postcolonial porte comme étiquette: 'Globalisation et transnationalisme'. Ce tiroir-là est énorme, il déborde, il est plein d'un fouillis qui fait le désespoir de l'amoureuse des étiquettes. Mais depuis cinq ou six ans, il est aussi le tiroir où le premier bricoleur cherche d'abord quelque chose dont il ne connaît encore ni le nom, ni l'utilité. Souvent, il y trouve ce qu'il ne savait pas qu'il cherchait. Voici ce que j'y ai trouvé: que les déplacements transnationaux des études francophones postcoloniales sont souvent de nature imprévue, ingérable et imprévisiblement ironique. La littérature francophone a tendance à se coller à la semelle des voyageurs comme le pollen aux pattes des abeilles, si bien qu'elle se transnationalise de façon à la fois collective et individuelle. Parfois, un étudiant (ou un André Breton) rencontre un auteur au cours d'un voyage (d'étude) limité

postcolonialism, declare themselves Francophone literature specialists'. Koné, 'Teaching Francophone Literature: Remarks from Two Continents', traduit par Ryan Poynter, *Yale French Studies*, 103 (2003), 64-71 (p.70).

dans le temps, sur un autre continent. Ainsi, Ronnie Scharfman raconte-t-elle comment elle a découvert Aimé Césaire à Aix-en-Provence lors d'une année de bourse et dans le contexte d'un cours sur le surréalisme. Mais lorsque 'Césaire' revient dans ses bagages et devient un sujet de thèse à Yale dans les années 1970, le projet marginalise l'étudiante qui se sent accueillie tantôt par de l'indifférence, tantôt par de l'incrédulité ou du dédain.¹³ D'aucuns trouveront ironique que la découverte d'un des grands monuments canoniques de la littérature francophone postcoloniale, telle qu'elle est désormais enseignée aux États-Unis ou au Royaume Uni, ait eu lieu en France, c'est-à-dire dans un espace que les spécialistes continuent à décrire comme globalement peu enclin à favoriser ce genre d'entreprise intellectuelle,¹⁴ bien longtemps avant que le poète ait été inscrit au programme du baccalauréat ou joué au festival d'Avignon. D'autres diront que l'aventure pourrait, tout bonnement, être l'imaginaire mythe d'origine de la francophonie postcoloniale, celui que Barthes aurait pu bricoler dans son *Mythologies*.

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¹³ Ronnie Scharfman, 'Before the Postcolonial', *Yale French Studies*, 103 (2003), 9-16 (p.12).

¹⁴ Daniel Delas suggère que 'the teaching of Francophone literatures remains a fragile entreprise and does not reflect the blossoming of these literatures in publication, in literary criticism, and in the media'. Delas, 'Francophone Literary Studies in France: Analyses and Reflections', traduit par Christopher Rivers, *Yale French Studies*, 103 (2003), 43-54 (p.49). Jean-Marc Moura choisit une métaphore presque militaire lorsqu'il suggère que le 'champ intellectuel français fait de la résistance' face au 'caractère multiculturel' de la critique postcoloniale et 'son ouverture à la globalisation'. Moura, 'Sur l'étude postcoloniale des lettres francophones en France', *Francophone Postcolonial Studies*, 1.1 (2003), 64-71 (p.64).

A Brief Critique of Theories of 'Neocolonialism' and 'Cultural Imperialism'*

*[L]'époque coloniale s'est caractérisée par
l'occupation des terres et non de l'intérieur des têtes.¹*

Ousmane Sembene

It seems to be a commonplace, even an article of faith, on the Left that Third World countries could not develop economically while linked to the capitalist system. The aim of this piece is to question this assumption by way of a critique of 'neocolonial' and 'cultural imperialist' tags attached to France's involvement in the African cinema industry. This will be not so much a broadside against the impressive work of Walter Rodney (or Manning Marable) — though there are dangers of this article of faith in their work — but against the *logic* of the use of these tags.

The use of these terms is no more apparent than in work on African cinema. Jonathan Haynes has made the link between cultural imperialism, neo-colonialism and postmodernism explicit in his work on African cinema. He argues that, with the collapse of the USSR and socialist ideas in Africa, cinema has had to adjust: 'It is not that neocolonialism and cultural imperialism have disappeared as basic structuring realities — they certainly have not — but that it has become difficult to imagine how to confront them

* This is an edited version of a forthcoming chapter in Peter Wilkin, ed., *Globalisation and the Political Economy of Media* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004).

¹ Samba Gadjigo, Ralph H. Faulkingham, Thomas Cassirer, Reinhard Sander, eds, *Ousmane Sembene: Dialogues with Critics and Writers* (Amherst, MA: Massachusetts University Press, 1993), p.90.

directly.’² In his view, resistance has taken on a ‘Foucauldian, post-modernist form, in which political resistance is far from dead but takes numerous dispersed forms, often at lower levels of political expression: in “the popular”, the politics of everyday life, a “politique par le bas”’.³

Before we consider the logic of Haynes’s cinema criticism, it is worth first setting out briefly the arguments deployed for the use of ‘neocolonial’ and ‘cultural imperialist’ categories. These are no more evident than in the issue of language. In a recent article (and under the telling sub-heading, ‘Francophonie: a neo-colonial concept?’), Gabrielle Parker gestures towards the debate in a nutshell: ‘[I]f French is deemed necessary for the “development” of emerging economies, what does it say about their dependency and colonial continuities?’⁴ David Crystal by contrast deems the ‘linguistic imperialism position’ to be ‘naïve’. Rejecting the ‘naïve liberal idealism’ charge against himself, Crystal hits back at linguistic imperialism — and we could take this as analogous to cultural imperialism —, asserting that it disregards ‘the complex realities of a world in which a historical conception of power relations has to be seen alongside an emerging set of empowering relationships in which English has a new functional role, no longer associated with the political authority it once held’.⁵

² Jonathan Haynes, ‘African Filmmaking and the Postcolonial Predicament’, in Kenneth W. Harrow ed., *African Cinema: Post-Colonial and Feminist Readings* (Trenton, NJ, & Asmara, Eritrea: Africa World Press, 1999), p.22.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Gabrielle Parker, “‘Francophonie’ and “‘universalité’: evolution of two notions conjoined”, in Charles Forsdick and David Murphy, eds, *Francophone Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction* (London: Arnold, 2003), p.97.

⁵ David Crystal, *English as a Global Language* (1997; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp.23-25. Crystal’s dialectical stance on the survival of other languages, notwithstanding his desire for a global language of dialogue fulfilled by English (p.xiii), is a convincing one, even for someone such as myself working in a department of French.

This is an important issue if we are looking at French language and culture within global media, and especially in relation to so-called ‘cultural imperialism’. For the ambivalent role played by France is summed up perfectly when we consider that, just as a wave of anti-Americanism (nothing new of course) returns — in which Hollywood and American cultural dominance in the cinema for example is starkly criticised and legislated against — France itself could be seen to be ‘dumping’ its own film industry on Africa and inhibiting the growth of indigenous cinema.

It is worth putting this view into some kind of context of political economy. Whilst he is happy to characterise France’s arrangement with the newly-independent Francophone states as ‘neocolonial’ — noting how Britain ‘studiously’ avoided such a tie —, Bernard Waites points out that the French neocolonial system could not survive the oil crisis of 1973 (not to mention the death of de Gaulle), and that the term ‘neocolonialism’ actually suited African leaders in the 1960s and 70s who wanted to control their own economies.⁶ But here Waites stops short — something which suits his own liberal argument — for he does not then consider the key route to understanding the Third World since this period: the expansion of, and its incorporation into, the global economy. Nor does he consider the political role of ‘neocolonialism’ in helping corrupt and nationalistic African leaders to head off challenges from their own people. In the latter case (Senegal’s own 1968 riots were a good example), African peoples were beginning to realise that independence had brought them nothing except further inequality, but now in relation, not to Europeans alone (as under colonialism), but also to their own leaders, to their own ruling class. In the former case, and this is the central issue, Waites wishes to ignore the reality of the Third World, especially Africa, in relation to debt and economic exclusion. The utter failure of the

⁶ Bernard Waites, *Europe and the Third World: From Colonisation to Decolonisation, c. 1500-1998* (London: Macmillan, 1999), pp.290-93.

IMF and the World Bank to relieve (let alone remove, and in some cases increase) the debt burden, not to mention the unequal playing field in food production (it is amazing how farming subsidies in the West can be maintained in a so-called free market) is not something that Waites wants to include in his argument.

If we factor these realities in, France's role in geo-politics and economic debates over the Third World appears as a Janus-faced one. On the one hand, France now plays a dissident function within the new Imperialism, checking and appearing to thwart American and British imperial designs. On the other, it plays a perfidious role (as in Iraq or Côte d'Ivoire) by appearing to broker deals and save lives, but only in as much as this advances French interests. To characterise this as 'neo-colonial' misses the crucial point about imperialism: like capitalists (as Lenin had pointed out), imperialists are a 'hostile band of brothers'. Indeed, Marc Ferro is one of the few critics to have recognised the weakness of the term 'neocolonialism'. In his survey of colonial systems, he lands upon the idea of 'neo-imperialism', but even this, he argues, no longer holds in an integrated world economy; so he hazards instead: 'multinational imperialism'.⁷

This has an important bearing on how we consider the French cinema industry's involvement in Africa since independence. It seems to confirm the idea that Third world industries *can* grow under capitalism. Indeed, according to David Murphy, the 'chief irony of the development of Francophone African cinema is that it has been almost entirely dependent on the financial support of the French authorities (although better-known directors such as Sembene can now avail of independent sources of finance). French government investment has allowed this cinema to survive but hardly to thrive', though, he adds 'Anglophone African cinema, by comparison, which has received no British support, has only

⁷ Marc Ferro, *Colonization: A Global History* (London: Routledge, 1997), p.350.

emerged in the past fifteen years'.⁸ Now, of course, I am not going to suggest that there is a stark choice between a paternalistically controlled, but economically viable, cinema in Francophone areas of Africa on the one hand, and a weak and barely existent 'free-market' cinema in Anglophone counterparts on the other: this is like choosing between a poorly funded national health service which works at minimum levels for comprehensive care, or a private-public finance arrangement which cruelly excludes whole sections of the population. Neither is acceptable, but one is preferable to the other, if a choice has to be made. But the argument about cultural imperialism perhaps reaches its most forthright, ridiculous and (paradoxically) crucial point when we consider respective film industries and attitudes towards foreign domination.

Cinema theorists have indeed been quick to knock down the more chauvinist arguments emerging from France, on how its film industry is threatened. As Ian Jarvie puts it, 'the underlying puzzle is why mass culture should attract the cultural defence argument, when products of high culture do not';⁹ and, as Jean-Pierre Jeancolas underlines, the real problem for the French (and European) cinema industry is not production but distribution.¹⁰ Suddenly, the 'cultural imperialist' content of Hollywood cinema seems strangely irrelevant. Indeed, France's rearguard actions during GATT and more recently, to defend the French cinema industry not only has '[s]omething sinister', in Jarvie's words, in

⁸ David Murphy, 'Beyond tradition versus modernity: Postcolonial thought and culture in Francophone sub-Saharan Africa', in Forsdick & Murphy, eds, *Francophone Postcolonial Theory*, pp.227-28.

⁹ Ian Jarvie, 'Film trade as cultural threat: American film and TV exports in the post-war period', in Geoffrey Nowell-Smith and Steven Ricci, eds, *Hollywood and Europe: Economics, Culture, National Identity, 1945-1995* (London: BFI, 1998), p.43.

¹⁰ Jean-Pierre Jeancolas, 'From the Blum-Byrnes Agreement to the GATT affair', in Nowell-Smith & Ricci, eds, *Hollywood and Europe*, p.60.

its rhetoric of cultural invasion and cultural sovereignty, but it also smacks of hypocrisy. It is clear that what France has complained about in relation to Hollywoodisation, i.e. dumping, flooding and monopolising, France could be accused of performing (to a lesser degree) in its former African colonies since their independence. As Elizabeth Mermin points out with respect to Senegal, though the 1990s were announced by President Abdou Diouf as 'the decade of Senegalese cinema', little has changed to alter the domination of Senegalese cinema by foreign imports, especially French; as Mermin puts it, 'French involvement has never been disinterested and the film industry is no exception.'¹¹ This points less to neocolonial (though obviously France has maintained strong links) than wise business-sense. That African cinema is as much dominated by Bollywood and martial arts movies from the Asian regions, as anything else, speaks volumes on the huge profits to be made on a continent in which cinema plays a crucial social role. Furthermore, imperialism today is as much about finding new markets and the marketing spin-offs, as it is about extracting raw materials and exploiting cheap labour. This is not as new as it sounds: it was the case in the Opium Wars for example. However, it is clear that good old-fashioned colonialism will no longer do: it is the market — backed often by interested parties — that imposes the might and will of the imperialist powers (amongst which France must be included).

We can now return to cinema criticism. We have seen how Haynes uses 'neocolonialism' and 'cultural imperialism' to invoke a post-modernist perspective. He is keen to show how resistance has shifted in African cinema, from macro- to micro- political conclusions, in good post-modernist fashion. His accounts may appear inspiring, but in failing to provide a political economy of distribution, audience and reactions to the films analysed, his

¹¹ Elizabeth Mermin, 'A Window on Whose Reality? The Emerging Cinema in Senegal', in Harrow, ed., *African Cinema*, p.205.

conclusions are politically disarmed. Even his dismissal of Sembene's critique of aid in the 1992 film *Guelwaar* seems rather disingenuous (seemingly the film is too informed by 'grand narrative').¹² For his trick is to read the credits of the film and suggest the irony of how many European agencies have aided Sembene's anti-aid film. But he does not even point out that Sembene cleverly mixes the 'everyday' — 'the micro' — (a mix-up over two corpses in the Muslim and Christian communities in Senegal) to show how religious realities also impinge upon popular and political consciousness.¹³ Haynes is in such a hurry to see anti-imperialist cinema in Africa — and of course Sembene's maverick Marxism — as a thing of the past, to put forward his view of postmodernist cinema. Clearly film form and sociology have not been joined here, merely juxtaposed: I would prefer Sembene's radical films such as *Guelwaar* or *Xala*, knowing that they have been watched by millions in Africa, to a more cynical, 'postmodern' cinema championed by Haynes, and which has spoken to very few in Africa.

It is not simply the cultural (here cinematic) criticism category that is inflected by theories of 'neocolonialism' or 'cultural imperialism'. The political consequences of a critique of 'neocolonial' theory then become stark for dependency theorists. 'Far from the prosperity of capitalists (and workers) in the advanced countries depending on the poverty of the Third World', argues Alex Callinicos, 'the main flows of capital and commodities (by far the largest share of world trade takes place between developed economies) pass the poor countries by'.¹⁴ If Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri mean by 'empire' the

¹² Haynes, 'African Filmmaking and the Postcolonial Predicament', pp.22, 32.

¹³ See Mermin 'A Window on Whose Reality?', for a much more subtle and politicised reading of *Guelwaar*, in which she shows how Sembene both caters for and resists European demands in this film (pp.208-12).

¹⁴ Alex Callinicos, 'Imperialism Today', in Alex Callinicos et al., *Marxism and the New Imperialism* (London: Bookmarks, 1994), p.31.

untrammelled and seemingly uncheckable spread of a stateless neo-liberalism around the globe — not an unuseful thesis given the manner in which the USA and the UK hope to impose neo-liberal mechanisms of control in Iraq, and thereby avoid 'classical' colonial control — then cultural imperialism and neocolonialism look even more exposed as meaningless.¹⁵ To suggest that African — or any other Third-World — countries are in a different set-up in relation to world political economy is now irrelevant: Kwame Nkrumah's 1965 definition — 'the State [...] is, in theory, independent and has all the outward trappings of international sovereignty. In reality its economic system and thus political policy is directed outside' — could be applied to France, Britain and increasingly the USA.¹⁶ To criticise American and British interventions in Iraq for example for their cultural imperialism acts merely as a fig leaf to mask the real battle for control of resources: 'culture' is an irrelevance in the wider scheme of things. Indeed, there is a link between Cultural Imperialist theory and left nationalism: a defence of indigenous culture and the hermeticist mistakes of the recent past.

So what then of neocolonialism in Franco-African relations? If, and it is a big if, neocolonialism is a useful term, then it could describe 'the pursuit of colonialism by other means'. And it may be that neocolonialism referred to a phase, 1958-75 — arguably inaccurately — in which France maintained its close links with its former colonies, and for which it is now looking, in vain, for some kind of payback.

¹⁵ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2000).

¹⁶ Kwame Nkrumah, *Neo-colonialism: The last stage of Imperialism* (1965; New York: International Publishers, 1966), p.ix. It is worth noting the development of Nkrumah's thought away from 'neocolonialism' to a much more Marxist view of class and economics, evident in his final book *The Class Struggle in Africa* (London: PANAF, 1970); see especially pp.86-87.

Fortunately, the global anti-capitalist movement, whilst recognising (and originating in) the need to 'drop the debt', increasingly sees a solution to injustice and suffering as much here — in the industrial and working-class heart-lands of advanced world capitalism, where, objectively, exploitation is higher than anywhere in the world — as in those countries which are victims of imperialism. And indeed people in those countries accept and resist the ideologies vehicled in European cinema as much as they did in colonial times. It is then up to all of us who work from within metropolitan academies to take sides, and to make sure the West and neo-liberalism have not colonised *our* minds.

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Albert Camus, ou la critique postcoloniale face au 'rêve méditerranéen'

J'aimerais commencer par féliciter le comité de rédaction pour cette nouvelle revue qui comble une lacune importante dans le domaine des études francophones. Car, comme plusieurs contributions préalables l'ont déjà constaté, la théorie postcoloniale, à quelques exceptions près — je pense notamment aux travaux de Jean-Marc Moura — n'a jamais vraiment 'pris' en France. Tandis que les études francophones et même les *cultural studies* sont souvent citées comme le moyen de raviver les études françaises au dehors de la France, le bilan de la théorie littéraire ou plutôt les théories littéraires qui s'y rapportent, reste à faire. Tout ce qu'on peut constater pour le moment, c'est qu'ici comme ailleurs, une approche extrinsèque de la littérature semble l'emporter.¹

Comme l'a fait remarquer David Murphy dans le premier numéro de *FPS*, du côté français il est parfois question d'un refus tranché de la théorie postcoloniale telle qu'elle s'est développée dans le monde universitaire anglo-saxon depuis la fin des années 1970. La datation n'est pas ici sans importance. Car elle montre que les études postcoloniales sont nées au moment même où en France la théorie littéraire teintée de marxisme et de formalisme, commence à régresser. De plus, rappelons que les pionniers anglophones de la théorie postcoloniale se sont largement inspirés de ce même courant d'idées, bientôt connu sous le nom de *French Theory*, et dans lequel le politique et le culturel étaient étroitement mêlés. En témoignent Edward Said, tributaire de Foucault et de Barthes; Homi Bhabha subissant l'ascendant de Fanon; Gayatri

¹ Je me réfère ici aux différentes propositions et contributions qui ont été faites à l'occasion du Séminaire International sur les Études Françaises, organisé par le ministère des Affaires Étrangères, qui a eu lieu à Paris, du 24 au 26 juin 2003.

Chakravorty Spivak, lectrice assidue de Lacan et de la critique (anti-)féministe française.² Même si Spivak réfute dès le début ses modèles français, et notamment Julia Kristeva, pour leur caractère eurocentriste, il faut reconnaître qu'elle leur doit quand même beaucoup.³

C'est dans ce contexte que doit être considérée la résistance française à la théorie postcoloniale. Elle fut tout simplement *too French* pour les Français, qui, à l'époque où le poststructuralisme partait à la conquête des universités américaines, commençaient à se désolidariser des idéologies qui avaient dominé la vie intellectuelle des dernières décennies. Autour de 1975, la structure intellectuelle héritée des années soixante se décompose. L'avènement des 'nouveaux philosophes' marque la rupture du gauchisme d'avec le marxisme-léninisme. Ce virement politique entraîne aussi un changement du paradigme philosophique, comme l'atteste le succès incontesté de trois publications parues à cette époque: *La Pensée* 68 (1985) de Luc Ferry et Alain Renaut; *Le Sanglot de l'homme blanc* (1983) de Pascal Bruckner; *La Défaite de la pensée* (1987) d'Alain Finkielkraut. Ce qui relie ces ouvrages, c'est qu'ils sonnent le glas du mythe révolutionnaire sous tous rapports: le structuralisme chez Ferry et Renaut; le tiers-mondisme chez Bruckner; la philosophie de la décolonisation d'un Fanon et d'un Lévi-Strauss chez Finkielkraut. L'Humanisme, longtemps décrié par la gauche, reprend du terrain, de même que remontent ses représentants, comme Raymond Aron et Albert

² Anti-féministe, car ses représentantes ont voulu se distinguer des courants féministes antérieurs, comme les suffragettes du début du siècle. S'inspirant des travaux de Lacan, elles travaillaient dans une perspective psychanalytique, centrée sur la différence sexuelle.

³ Voir à ce sujet sa contribution au numéro spécial de *Yale French Studies* sur le poststructuralisme français. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'French feminism in an international frame', *Yale French Studies*, 'French Texts/American Contexts', 62 (1981).

Camus, qu'une intelligentsia communiste ou communisante avait relégués au second plan.

Cela explique également pourquoi ce dernier occupe une place de choix dans *Les Aventures de la liberté* (1991), 'histoire subjective des intellectuels', dont l'auteur est un ancien 'nouveau philosophe': Bernard-Henri Lévy. Ce qui est tout de même frappant, c'est que dans le chapitre qu'il lui consacre, Lévy parle surtout de Camus et de l'Algérie. Sur ce point, il se démarque de la pratique courante en France qui est de considérer Camus comme un auteur franco-français, champion de l'universalisme et de l'humanisme, sans prendre en compte ses antécédents algériens. Lévy en revanche, en insistant sur son travail de journaliste, montre très bien que Camus en tant qu'intellectuel, fut engagé à fond dans l'histoire coloniale de son pays:

Camus et l'Algérie, oui. Camus et le colonialisme. Il faudra traiter la question, en effet. [...] Il faudra reprendre les articles de 37. Relire cette *Misère en Kabylie* qui est, avec le *Voyage au Congo* d'André Gide, l'un des classiques de la tradition anticolonialiste. Il faudra dire qu'il a été le premier. Longtemps le premier.⁴

Pour Lévy, le Camus qui-ne-parle-pas-d'indépendance pour l'Algérie, n'entache donc nullement son estime pour le Camus dénonçant la misère qui règne dans la colonie et, plus tard, l'oppression dont fut victime la population indigène. Bref, Camus fait figure ici d'écrivain *anti-colonial* qui fut en avance sur son temps.

Cette appréciation paraît significative du gouffre qui sépare les chercheurs francophones et anglophones dans le domaine des études coloniales. Car, rappelons-le, deux ans après la parution de

⁴ Bernard-Henri Lévy, *Les Aventures de la liberté: Une histoire subjective des intellectuels* (Paris: Grasset, 1991), pp.293-94.

l'essai de Lévy, Edward Said publie *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), dans lequel l'œuvre de Camus occupe également une place importante. S'appuyant notamment sur la biographie de Conor Cruise O'Brien, Said campe l'auteur français, pied-noir d'origine, parmi les écrivains européens qui, représentant la position subordonnée du sujet colonisé comme inaltérable, ont contribué à consolider une vision impérialiste des rapports entre l'Occident et l'Orient.⁵ À l'opposé de Lévy donc, et sans le savoir probablement, Said regarde Camus comme un auteur *colonial*, et qui plus est, comme un écrivain dont l'œuvre fait preuve d'un esprit colonialiste *daté*, car rattrapé par l'histoire.⁶

Comment expliquer cette différence d'opinion? Afin de mieux la cerner, comparons d'abord, bien que brièvement, l'approche respective des deux auteurs en question. Lévy ne prend en considération que les écrits politiques de Camus et se montre surtout sensible à l'évolution de ses idées concernant l'Algérie. Il essaie donc de retracer le développement intellectuel de Camus à travers le temps, tout en soulignant son rôle d'intellectuel dans un contexte français. S'il considère Camus comme l'un des premiers anticolonialistes, c'est que son histoire des intellectuels ne comprend que des Français de souche, laissant de côté ceux qui, en Algérie par exemple, se sont opposés au régime colonial dès les années 1920, et même avant.

Le travail de Said a le mérite de traiter aussi, et surtout, des romans et nouvelles de Camus, en insistant sur le rôle qu'y joue l'espace algérien (et à moindre degré le personnage de 'l'indigène'). À l'encontre de Lévy, il aborde l'œuvre camusienne dans une perspective européenne, où la question de la représentation culturelle joue un rôle primordial.⁷ On conclura

⁵ Voir Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (1993; Londres: Vintage, 1994), pp.73-95.

⁶ Ibid., pp.209 et 213 (c'est moi qui souligne).

⁷ Ibid., p.95.

donc que chez Lévy, c'est la *présentation* de la réalité coloniale qui domine, tandis que Said s'intéresse surtout à la question de sa *représentation*.

Il n'y a pas de doute que l'analyse proposée par Said est plus complète, car plus ambitieuse, que celle de Lévy. Afin de déconstruire le choix fait par Camus de situer une partie de son oeuvre littéraire en Algérie, il suggère de confronter celle-ci d'une part au roman colonial du début du siècle, et d'autre part à des textes écrits par des auteurs algériens dans les années qui ont suivi l'indépendance. Ce qui manque néanmoins à cette lecture 'en contrepoint',⁸ c'est la référence au contexte spécifique qui a nourri la pensée de Camus sur l'Algérie et qui par sa complexité, sa fluidité si l'on veut, ne se laisse pas réduire à l'antagonisme entre colonisateurs et colonisés.

Pour commencer, Said prend Camus pour un auteur qui représente la communauté des colons en Algérie, ce qui est en fait inexact. Comme il en témoigne dans son roman autobiographique inachevé *Le Premier homme* (1994), le milieu franco-espagnol misérable dont Camus était issu et auquel il restera fidèle toute sa vie, occupait plutôt une place intermédiaire entre colons et indigènes. Ensuite, et cela me paraît plus important encore, dans sa jeunesse, Camus faisait partie d'un réseau d'auteurs algériens de différentes origines qui, s'opposant au conservatisme et au racisme de la société coloniale, rêvent d'un réveil de la culture méditerranéenne. Il ne s'agit certes pas de cette latinité prônée par l'extrême-droite au début du vingtième siècle, mais d'un projet qui vise un rapprochement des différentes communautés en Algérie, et au-delà, des populations du bassin méditerranéen.⁹ Puis, grâce aux

⁸ C'est ainsi que Said appelle la pratique interprétative prenant en compte à la fois le discours métropolitain dominant et celui des dominés, le non-dit, qui se trouve en quelque sorte dissimulé dans le texte.

⁹ Voir Emile Temime, *Un Rêve méditerranéen: Des Saint-Simoniens aux années trente* (Arles: Actes Sud, 2002), pp.136-49. Parmi ces jeunes, il y avait, à part Camus, Jean Amrouche, Armand Guibert et Gabriel Audisio.

liens multiples qui le rattachèrent à la fois à l'intelligentsia parisienne et à ses amis d'Alger et d'Oran, Camus fait figure de médiateur, plutôt que de porte-parole des colons. Il compte parmi les intellectuels, qui, pour reprendre la formule d'Elleke Boehmer, 'se situent entre l'Europe et l'Autre colonisé'.¹⁰ Enfin, on doit supposer que chez Camus ce positionnement était lié aussi à ses origines modestes, d'où le sentiment d'occuper une place à part dans le milieu intellectuel parisien, qu'il considérait pourtant comme le sien.¹¹

Dans les *Chroniques algériennes* (1939-58), on trouve à plusieurs reprises l'écho de l'idéal d'une coexistence de l'Orient et de l'Occident que Camus et ses amis avaient chéri pendant leur jeunesse algéroise. L'auteur y exprime son admiration devant les cultures arabe et berbère, plaide pour leur égalité devant la loi et évoque l'affinité qui l'unit à la population arabe.¹² Mais ce qu'il refuse de comprendre, à la différence de la plupart de ses camarades d'autrefois, c'est qu'au moment où l'Algérie bascule dans la guerre ouverte, l'idée de la Méditerranée comme 'continent liquide fédérateur',¹³ n'a plus cours. Elle cédera la place, provisoirement du moins, au panarabisme, ce qui signifie que l'Algérie se détourne progressivement de la mer, ou de l'autre rive de la Méditerranée, pour diriger son regard vers l'Orient.

Said a parfaitement raison lorsqu'il reproche à Camus journaliste son incompréhension devant le fait que vers 1957, le

¹⁰ Elleke Boehmer, *Empire, the National, and the Postcolonial, 1890-1920* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p.4.

¹¹ Je me suis basée ici sur les remarques de Boehmer sur Leonard Woolf, par rapport à l'anticolonialisme de celui-ci et sa position relative d'*outsider* auprès des intellectuels de Bloomsbury. Voir Boehmer, *Empire*, p.182.

¹² Albert Camus, *Chroniques algériennes (1939-1958)* (Paris: Gallimard, 'Folio', 2002). Voir, par exemple, la fin de 'Misère de la Kabylie' (1939) et 'Lettre à un militant algérien' (1955).

¹³ Jeannine Hayat, *Jules Roy, ombre et présence d'Albert Camus* (Paris & Caen: Lettres Modernes, Minard, 2000), p.116.

conflit colonial se fut envenimé à tel point, que son concept de fraternité fut périmé.¹⁴ Mais cela n'empêche que l'idée de la permanence des relations entre deux mondes antagonistes pourrait très bien constituer le point de départ d'une lecture des nouvelles algériennes de Camus. D'abord, parce que, nonobstant leur date de publication, elles ont été conçues à une époque où il était encore possible de garder quelque espoir sur la possibilité d'un état algérien associé à la France.¹⁵ Ensuite, vu qu'elles appartiennent au genre fictionnel, leur fonction est quand-même différente, et leur effet moins direct si l'on veut, que celui des écrits journalistiques.

L'interprétation que j'aimerais proposer ici, ne partira donc pas de la différence culturelle, mais aura son principe dans l'affirmation profonde de l'unité méditerranéenne. Les deux nouvelles en question, 'La femme adultère' et 'L'Hôte', ont été recueillies dans *L'Exil et le royaume* (1957). Leurs protagonistes respectifs, une femme, Janine, et un instituteur qui s'appelle Daru, sont tous les deux d'origine française mais nés en Algérie. Ce qui rend ces textes encore plus intéressants du point de vue qui est le nôtre ici, c'est qu'ils ont pour sujet la rencontre avec 'l'autre': Janine, visitant pour la première fois le Sud algérien en compagnie d'un mari dont elle s'est aliénée, semble entièrement préoccupée par les inconnus arabes — un Arabe entrevu dans le bus, des hommes dans la rue, des nomades aperçus au loin — qui croisent son chemin; Daru, vivant en solitaire sur les hauts plateaux dans la

¹⁴ Voir 'Algérie 1958' *Chroniques algériennes*, pp.199-207, et Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, pp.216-17.

¹⁵ Je me réfère ici à la biographie de Jean Lacouture sur Germaine Tillon, dans laquelle l'année 1957 est en effet considérée comme le moment, 'où les antagonismes sont devenus trop implacables pour permettre des attermoissements.' Voir Jean Lacouture, *Le Témoignage est un combat: Une biographie de Germaine Tillon* (Paris: Seuil, 2000), p.270. Pour comparer, 'La Femme adultère' date de 1952, tandis que 'L'Hôte', étant en projet depuis la même année, fut écrit en 1954 (informations fournies par Roger Quilliot dans l'édition Pléiade, 1962).

même région, se voit contraint d'héberger pour la nuit un prisonnier arabe qu'il devra livrer aux autorités françaises le lendemain.

Dans la scène finale de 'La Femme adultère', Janine vit un moment de communion intense avec le paysage qui l'entoure. Edward Said, dans *Culture and Imperialism*, explique cette union intime de 'l'étrangère' avec la géographie comme un acte d'appropriation coloniale: 'Son histoire personnelle de femme française vivant en Algérie n'a pas d'importance, car elle accède de façon immédiate et directe à cette terre et ce ciel particuliers.'¹⁶

Pourtant, si l'on rapproche l'histoire de Janine de celle de Daru, dans laquelle le problème de communication entre Arabes et Français a été élaboré plus en détail, il se trouve que c'est le paysage, justement, ou plutôt le sentiment qu'il fait naître, qui y rend possible l'échange interculturel: 'Dans ce désert, personne, ni lui ni son hôte n'étaient rien. Et pourtant, hors de ce désert, ni l'un ni l'autre, Daru le savait, n'auraient pu vivre vraiment.'¹⁷ D'après Camus, la géographie sert donc de ciment entre Arabes et Européens. Incapables de communiquer directement par la langue (ou, comme dans 'La Femme adultère', d'assouvir leur désir sexuel pour 'l'autre'), ils ne se retrouvent que dans leur amour commun pour cette terre qu'ils habitent, et qui, dans une acception plus large, signifie également l'univers méditerranéen.

L'idée de lire les nouvelles algériennes à la lumière du concept d'unité culturelle présente plusieurs avantages. D'abord, elle nous permet de tenir compte de la spécificité du contexte historique et géographique de ces textes, tout en évitant de les réduire à la seule expression de la relation binaire entre colonisateurs et colonisés. Ensuite, et cela me paraît plus important encore, une telle approche rend justice à la tendance actuelle, qui est de considérer la

¹⁶ *Culture and Imperialism*, pp.213-15 (traduit par l'auteur).

¹⁷ Albert Camus, 'L'Hôte', *L'Exil et le royaume* (1957; Paris: Gallimard, 'Folio', 2001), p.91.

littérature algérienne d'expression française dans son unité, plutôt que de regarder la guerre d'indépendance comme une fracture, séparant les auteurs coloniaux des auteurs postcoloniaux. En témoigne Assia Djebar, qui dans son récit commémoratif, *Le Blanc de l'Algérie* (1995), convoque indistinctement parmi les morts de la 'première espérance': Albert Camus, Frantz Fanon, Mouloud Feraoun et Jean Amrouche.¹⁸ Plus significatif encore est l'essai *Camus à Oran* (1995) où l'auteur, l'Oranais Abdelkader Djemaï, reconstitue le lien qui unissait Camus à sa ville natale. Bien que la ville d'Oran soit encore marquée au sceau du passé colonial — ainsi, l'auteur nous apprend que la rue Elisée-Reclus où a vécu Camus, fut rebaptisée rue Ho Chi Minh — la littérature a le pouvoir de créer une continuité, là où la géographie marque une rupture:

Et j'imagine toujours et encore Camus écrivant, solitaire et discret, dans la chambre du fond dont la fenêtre donne sur la petite terrasse aux carreaux grenat, au-dessus des arcades, face à la mer 'qu'il faut toujours aller chercher'.¹⁹

Acte de dé- ou de réappropriation postcoloniale, ou geste d'une fraternité retrouvée par delà des vicissitudes de l'histoire?

On conclura que pour ce qui est de la théorie postcoloniale, les universitaires français ont un retard incontestable sur la pratique universitaire anglo-saxonne. Compte tenu cependant de l'intérêt croissant que suscite actuellement le passé colonial dans le débat public français, il me semble que l'heure est propice de suivre l'exemple anglo-saxon, sans hésiter pourtant d'y apporter une note critique stipulant que les études postcoloniales devront être plus attentives aux particularités historiques et géographiques des œuvres en question.

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¹⁸ Voir Assia Djebar, *Le Blanc de l'Algérie* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1995), p.122.

¹⁹ Abdelkader Djemaï, *Camus à Oran* (Paris: Michalon, 1995), p.109.

Contextualising 'Métissage' in Duras's Indochinese Novels

The term 'métissage', like the closely related 'hybridity', has gained general currency in recent post-colonial theory. 'Un texte métis', like 'la musique métisse', for instance, connotes a new, synergistic cultural form, issuing from the productive meeting of, and interchange between, different cultures. Yet in many ways, 'métissage' has become a convenient, cover-all term to describe those elements which, in a multicultural, multi-ethnic and often multilingual context, elude straightforward, either/or classification. Contemporary theory's celebration of diversity and cross-cultural exchange has gone hand-in-hand with the blossoming and recognition of powerful new forms of creative expression. Yet the mixing of races and cultures has not always been seen in such a positive light. In colonial ideology, 'métissage' was seen to pose a risk to racial purity and was used to justify discrimination and segregation. It is important that we resist the temptation to apply the term 'métissage' indiscriminately or anachronistically, and that we remain vigilant to the earlier, pejorative meanings of the term, from which its current, positive usage has grown, and against which it has reappropriatively asserted itself.

Marguerite Duras's representations of colonial Indochina are illustrative of this need for critical caution when using the term 'métissage' to describe literary texts. Her 'Indochinese', semi-autobiographical novels, *L'Amant* (1984) and *L'Amant de la Chine du nord* (1991), were written in the post-colonial era of the late twentieth century, but are set in 1930s colonial Indochina. In their focus on the interracial relationship between a young white girl and her Chinese lover and, particularly in *L'Amant de la Chine du nord*, on the girl's in-between, 'French-but-not-quite' status, they

explicitly appeal to contemporary (to the time of writing) interest in issues of marginality and 'métissage'. Yet, at the same time, other aspects of the novels betray attitudes towards racial difference and 'métissage' that are more in keeping with colonial-era racist ideology.

On occasions, colonial-era prejudices towards 'métis' are made quite explicit, as when the headmistress at the *pensionnat* where the 'petite Blanche' is boarding grants her special treatment because, as the young girl says, 'je suis blanche et que, pour la réputation du pensionnat, dans la masse des métisses il faut quelques blanches' (*L'Amant*, p.88). Elsewhere, however, colonialist racial attitudes are more implicitly revealed: in Duras's silencing of the non-individuated Indochinese characters, for instance, or in her depiction of the 'métisse' prefect who is forced into prostitution, on account of her social ostracisation and limited opportunities.

In *L'Amant de la Chine du nord*, which reworks much of the same, semi-autobiographical material as *L'Amant*, an interesting, underlying opposition is set up between the young girl's racial ambiguity, on account of her constant exposure to the alterity of Indochina, and her Chinese lover's racial purity and whiteness. Whilst he is repeatedly and emphatically signalled as northern Chinese, the girl's physical appearance is described as non-European, almost 'métisse': 'Cette gracilité du corps la donnerait comme une métisse, mais non, les yeux sont trop clairs' (p.39). In many senses, the French *colon* girl is seen to have been 'contaminated' by her childhood spent in the colony and her constant contact with the 'indigènes'. The Chinese lover, in contrast, like the French colonial elite of the 'haut quartier', maintains his distance and hence his racial purity.

Whilst it might be tempting, as many critics have done, to read the girl's 'métisse' identity in late twentieth-century terms, as a celebration of ethnic diversity and cross-cultural exchange, there are frequent contradictory elements in Duras's portrayals of racial

difference — both in relation to the Chinese lover and to secondary, Indochinese characters — that hint at the persistence of colonial-era conceptions of 'métissage' as synonymous with bastardisation, contamination and regression. It is, I would argue, impossible to separate the opposing views of 'métissage' present in Duras's texts: their stance oscillates between the two poles, incorporating elements of both, whilst refusing easy categorisation in terms of either.

Post-colonial theoretical approaches to literary texts tend to assume that a text is either 'colonial', since written during the colonial era and deploying topoi of Orientalist literature, or *post-colonial*, since written after the fall of empire and so distanced from its colonial structures and rhetoric. Duras's 'Indochinese' novels, *L'Amant* and *L'Amant de la Chine du nord*, written in the late twentieth-century, post-colonial era, complicate such distinctions, particularly when read in association with their colonial-era precursor, *Un Barrage contre le Pacifique* (1950). They are at once post-colonial, appealing to late twentieth-century theorists' taste for literary 'métissage' and marginality, and colonial, implicitly rooted in the racist discourse of the colonial era in which they are set.

That Duras should be inconsistent and ambivalent in her engagement with colonialist ideology does not diminish her worth as a writer or, indeed, as a retrospective commentator on French empire. The many ambiguities and contradictions in Duras's literary representations of Indochina and colonial-era race relations are, after all, inherent to the fraught relationship between the colonial and the post-colonial. Her work does, however, illustrate the need for critics to think beyond over-simplified oppositions, to contextualise their readings, and to be constantly vigilant towards connotational shifts in the ideological or theoretical terminology that they, or the writers they study, employ. That the term 'métissage', originating in colonial racist discourse, has been reappropriated to celebrate the productive, inter-cultural

possibilities of the post-colonial world, should not blind us to the possibility of the persistence of its original, pejorative sense, even in texts which explicitly disrupt colonial structures. Just as it is impossible to separate the *post*-colonial from the colonial, it is, at the very least, unwise to assume that 'métissage' has entirely shaken off its own colonial past.

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Deterritorializing Francophone Studies

However sincere its commitment to cross-cultural and interdisciplinary work, Francophone cultural studies tends to examine cultural expression in the context of a single nation (Algeria, Martinique, Senegal). Moreover, whether or not the objects of analysis spring from a single national context, the interpretive frame that is adopted rarely relates those forms of expression to any sociocultural reality beyond the one that ties France to its former colonies. Clearly, such an interpretive frame dates from and is symptomatic of the colonial period. Indeed, colonial relationships deeply structure French and Francophone Studies to this day insofar as they perpetuate the compartmentalization of French Studies. Colonial power structures police the borders between North African, Sub-Saharan African, Caribbean, and Southeast Asian literatures, ensuring that texts from different parts of the former French empire be considered in isolation from one another, as if the old imperative to divide and conquer were destined eternally to shape critical inquiry.

Compartmentalization in Francophone cultural studies is especially troubling in light of the groundbreaking work of thinkers such as Kateb Yacine, Albert Memmi, Léopold Sédar Senghor, Aimé Césaire, and Frantz Fanon between 1945 and 1965. As writers and as public intellectuals, they were often at pains to bridge the distance between subjected peoples, not only within the French empire but in other parts of the world as well. For example, Kateb wrote on the establishment of Israel, Fanon wrote volumes about Algeria and West Africa, and the *Présence Africaine* group, which included the African-American novelist Richard Wright, adopted an explicitly internationalist stance during the Cold War years when the concept of the 'third world' emerged. In sum, the peoples consigned to the third world, as well as American Blacks, actively and publicly sought ways to support each other and to

forge symbolic ties between their bodies of work, while resisting control by the two superpowers and their imperial masters alike. Why, then, should scholars in our own day persist in rigorously separating texts emanating from various parts of the Francophone world? This question might equally be posed with respect to scholarship on the literatures of immigration in France, which are invariably considered in terms of carefully segregated ethnic groups, even though there is much to be gained by putting the many Francophone literatures of immigration in dialogue with each other. Why define each of them in terms of the ethnicity of their authors? Why restrict the individual 'ethnic' text to a *tête-à-tête* with 'French' identity, whose whiteness/Europeanness usually remains untheorized, except in the exemplary work of Étienne Balibar?

Even more to the point at present, why persist in segregating the Francophone world from the rest of the planet in thinking about literature and culture, particularly when the most interesting Francophone writers of our time are expressly drawing connections between Francophone arenas and other parts of the world? Whether we think of the Haitian Dany Laferrière in Montreal, the Algerian Assia Djebar in New York, or the Lebanese Etel Adnan in Paris and San Francisco, we can see that many Francophone writers are living in and writing about countries outside the French-speaking world, as well as publishing in venues outside of France and their homelands. I believe that recent literature suggests some new directions not only for Francophone studies but for postcolonial studies generally, which have, by and large, focused on relations between a colonized or formerly colonized space and a corresponding imperial or neo-imperial metropole, drawing on the center-periphery model favored in political theory of the 1960s and 1970s. In the age of transnationalism, it seems more fruitful to consider both minoritarian writing's relations to an array of 'metropolitan' locations *and* its relations to other minoritarian spheres, that is,

relations of margin to margin. It also seems important to link Francophone literatures to other types of cultural production (television, *rai*, commercial film, comics, new media), as is now more frequently being done in immigration and diaspora studies.

One example of the connections that could be drawn concerns the writing of migrants from a particular region, such as the Maghreb, to other parts of the world. Of course, the majority of North African immigrants are still living and writing in France. Increasingly, however, North Africans are emigrating to Italy and Spain, Canada and the United States, and are writing in the national languages of these countries. Francophone scholarship needs to take account of these recent changes by re-examining the very notion of North African literature. The same would apply to Senegalese, Lebanese, or Guadeloupian literature, since writers from those countries have taken up residence not only in France but in Canada, the United States, Italy, and elsewhere.

Another example of new connections to be drawn concerns the relation between culturally diverse immigrant/minority groups in a given national arena, for instance, the writing of Haitians, Lebanese, Algerians, Trinidadians, Indians, or Japanese in Canada. Scholars could ask whether and how the experience of immigration is registered in the writing, as well as how and why figurations of geographic and cultural displacement differ. A third example concerns Francophone literature's relation to other literatures in a region such as the Caribbean. Tulane University in New Orleans has secured a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation to fund research dealing with literature, performing arts, material culture, and visual culture of the Caribbean and Deep South/Gulf region, which includes Louisiana and Mississippi. The aim is to draw scholars who examine cultural cross-fertilization throughout this region in various historical periods. Presumably much of the research would cross boundaries of language, for instance in comparing figurations of the Haitian Revolution in Anglophone, Francophone, and Hispanophone texts, or in looking at the ways

Spanish, French, and British colonialism, as well as Native American and Caribbean slave cultures, have shaped writing in Louisiana. The notion of transculturation could come into play here in new ways, moving beyond the bounds of French/Caribbean relations to include migratory and cultural flows across heterogeneous Caribbean/Gulf spaces. The challenge, in undertaking studies of this sort, would be to respect the difference that language makes, and to account for the distinctive colonial histories that shape cultural expression in various parts of the Caribbean/Gulf region. More generally, the challenge would be to make postcolonial studies a multilingual, multicultural enterprise without allowing, say, the specificity of Francophone literature, or of Caribbean/Gulf literature to be swallowed by the great sea of 'world literature' read in English translation and interpreted in ways that do little more than to advance the careers of scholars in wealthy countries.

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Ahmadou Kourouma, 1927-2003

In recent years Ahmadou Kourouma, who died in Lyons on 11 December 2003 following brain surgery, had come to be generally recognised by fellow-writers and critics alike as the 'doyen' of the Francophone African literary scene. The reputation he enjoyed bears testimony to the quality and significance of the relatively small corpus of works he produced during an uneven and somewhat chequered career, marked by major upheavals and long periods of displacement and exile. He was not a prolific writer, publishing only four novels, a single play and a handful of tales for children over a career spanning some 40 years. So the status he enjoyed as the patriarchal figure of African letters cannot easily be explained except by the peculiar qualities of his writing, the acuity of vision and the generosity of spirit which he brought to his work. Perhaps more than any other writer of his generation he provided a voice for the African continent, which was one of measured wisdom, pitiless objectivity and absolute integrity. His fiction was deeply rooted in the specificity of Malinké cultural traditions without becoming a prisoner of local interest and local colour. The constantly repeated *tour de force* of Kourouma's writing lies in the paradox that it achieves universal relevance by focusing on the stories of disempowered minorities and the experiences of marginalised individuals and communities. More recently his work has sought its subject matter in the most extreme situations, delving into the world of African dictatorships or the deployment of child soldiers in recent wars, as though seeking to explore types of behaviour which place his characters on the wavering borderline between savagery and shared humanity.

Kourouma was born in 1927 in an area of the former Afrique Occidentale Française which would now be identified as the north-eastern region of the Ivory Coast. Much of his childhood was

spent with his extended family in Togobala (Guinea) before his parents placed him, at the age of seven, with an uncle who supervised his education, first at Boundiali and subsequently at Korhogo and Bingerville. When he succeeded in entering the École technique supérieure at Bamako (Mali) in 1947 his education seemed to be progressing smoothly, but two years later he was expelled and sent back to Ivory Coast after being arrested for his involvement in pro-RDA demonstrations.¹ Immediately drafted by the colonial authorities to serve a three year stint of military service he opted to enter Officer School but only a few months later he was returned to the ranks after refusing to participate in a mission to quell a disturbance by demonstrators. The reaction of the authorities was swift and Kourouma was enrolled into the expeditionary forces bound for Indochina where he served from 1951 until 1954. These examples of Kourouma's principled truculence are typical of the quiet courage and stoical outlook that typified him in later life. The consequences of his actions as a student and young soldier seriously inflected the course of his life but Kourouma was never one to dwell on adversity, particularly of his own making. Indeed his readiness to gloss over such difficult times is a profoundly typical character trait. Later experiences of imprisonment and exile (he spent virtually the whole of his working life in more or less forced exile) are recounted as though they were mere inconveniences rather than with any real sense of indignation.

In 1955, after completing his military service, he returned to France to continue his studies first in Paris and then in Lyons, eventually qualifying as an actuary in 1959. Kourouma has since spoken of this time as a period when he also read a great deal of both literature and sociology. In 1961, Kourouma returned to the Ivory Coast to a position as Assistant Director of a bank in

¹ RDA — Rassemblement Démocratique Africain, the first African political party, founded in 1946.

Abidjan but soon fell foul of Houphouët-Boigny's 'policy' of imprisoning the educated élite of the country on trumped-up allegations of conspiracy: a policy designed to ensure that no opposition to his régime could emerge. Kourouma was imprisoned for a time along with many of his friends and acquaintances. He has since explained that his own stay in prison in 1963 was undoubtedly shorter than most because of the fact that his wife was French. Houphouët-Boigny feared bad publicity in France almost as much as he feared political opposition of any sort. Unable to find work on his release from prison, Kourouma eventually accepted a post in Algeria and a first period of 'exile', which lasted from 1965 to 1969. In 1970, the political climate in Abidjan having softened, Kourouma was offered an important post in an Ivory Coast bank. Shortly after taking up the position, Kourouma's stock with the Ivorian establishment seems to have fallen dramatically, in part at least because a play which he successfully staged in Abidjan in 1972 led to demonstrations and was eventually banned.² The Houphouët regime rid themselves of Kourouma's troublesome presence by moving him to an alternative position in the world of insurance in Yaoundé (Cameroon) where he remained in post for nine years until 1983 before transferring to Lomé (Togo) where he worked until his retirement in 1993. Since then, he had devoted himself to his literary activities and shared his time between Abidjan and Lyons.

As this potted biography illustrates, Kourouma's professional life was subject to brusque about-turns and disruption. His career as a writer appears in many ways to have been equally disjointed and uneven. His reputation was very largely made by his first novel, *Les Soleils des indépendances* (1968), but despite this success a 'silence' of some twenty years or so ensued before he published again. *Monnè, outrages et défis* appeared in 1990, by

² *Tougnantigui ou le diseur de vérité*. The play was eventually published in 1998 under the title *Le Diseur de vérité*.

which time Kourouma was already in his sixties. Following his retirement from professional activity in 1993, Kourouma went on to publish two further novels, *En attendant le vote des bêtes sauvages* in 1998 and *Allah n'est pas obligé* in 2000. This latter novel, which missed out on winning the Prix Goncourt by a single vote (winning instead the Prix Renaudot), was written at the request of children whom Kourouma had met on a visit to Somalia: they had begged him to write about the plight of child soldiers and Kourouma responded by transplanting 'their story' into a different political context and a region of West Africa he knew well. Prior to the attempted coup d'état of September 2002 which forced him to flee the Ivory Coast for what transpired to be a final period of exile, Kourouma was deeply engrossed in a project to write a novel on the life of the Guinean dictator, Sekou Touré, amassing documentation on the tyrant and reading long volumes of his speeches. On his arrival in Lyons he was persuaded by his own children to shelve this project and write about the unfolding events in the Ivory Coast. He envisaged doing so in the form of a sequel to the experiences of Birahimi (the protagonist of *Allah n'est pas obligé*) and was well advanced with the work on this novel when his own death cruelly intervened.

The trajectory of Kourouma's career as a novelist was somewhat unconventional: he undoubtedly bore witness to the experiences of the Africa he knew (colonisation, the disillusionment of post-independence rule, the cold war, African dictatorships and the numerous ills — war, civil strife and genocide —, which have marked its more recent history) but he had a disconcerting tendency to do so at a pace and rhythm which was unrelated to the taste and fashion, ideological or otherwise, of the moment. *Les Soleils des indépendances* was, for example, clearly embarked upon as a conscious attempt to speak out on behalf of imprisoned friends and denounce the ills of Houphouët-Boigny's regime, in particular the 'faux complots' affair that was at its height

in 1963. Yet by the time the novel achieved a wide readership (the early 1970s) even Houphouët-Boigny himself had publicly admitted that there had been no substance to the conspiracies that had led to such mass imprisonment and torture. Moreover, the original version of the novel had been substantially edited at the request of the Canadian publishers with the result that the 'contemporary' politics which had fed its writing were significantly diffused and attenuated.³ But if *Les Soleils des indépendances* has since become established as one of the classic texts of the Francophone African literary canon, it is very largely because of the innovative style Kourouma employed to convey the particularity of his protagonist's (Fama's) world view. Having tried to write the novel in 'standard' French, Kourouma found that the book did not work and so he opted for a hybrid 'interlangue' which shared features (the rhythms, syntax and lexis) of his mother tongue, malinké, with French. Indeed his use of language in this and subsequent novels has always been distinctive and has provided a focus of attention for much of the critical interest that his work has aroused.

The taste for epic, which is latent and implicit in *Les Soleils des indépendances*, asserted itself more openly in the sweeping fresco of the life of Djigui, the subject of his second novel, *Monnè, outrages et défis*. In scope and ambition, *Monnè, Outrages et défis* is a far more impressive work than *Les Soleils des indépendances* but paradoxically it has never quite received the critical acclaim it deserves, despite the award of three separate prizes including the Grand Prix du roman de l'Afrique noire. The novel traces the life story of a Malinké patriarch, Djigui, from youth to old age and in

³ The manuscript of *Les Soleils des indépendances* was judged the winning entry in a competition organised by the Université de Montréal and originally published by Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal in 1968. It was subsequently bought for a single 'symbolic' franc by Éditions du Seuil who republished it in 1970.

the margins of this personal history there unfolds the history of his people and the nature of their contact with the world of the French colonial forces, ranging from the time of colonial conquest to the period of colonial disengagement and independence. Hence the narrative simultaneously follows two tracks but the history it recounts is not the history of European history books. The perspective is firmly that of Djigui, the Malinké prince, and the people of Soba preoccupied with their efforts to understand the traumatic events they are called upon to live through. The narrative thus constitutes a counter-discourse, not through its ideological content (the all-too-human and imperfect Djigui wavers between proud defiance and self-serving subservience in his relations with the colonial forces), but through its reversal of the power structures inherent in the way narrative codes function. However 'inglorious' the reality of this period of Malinké history, Kourouma effectively reclaimed it for the Malinké people and in this act of narrative reappropriation, simultaneously recuperated some of the sense of dignity that the colonial enterprise as a whole had stifled and ultimately denied.

If it is reasonable to consider *Monnè, outrages et défis* as instigating a form of counter-hegemonic history, then Kourouma's third novel, *En attendant le vote de bêtes sauvages*, may be seen as a continuation of the same process but carrying it into a different period of African history, that of the dictatorships, which endured in so many African states throughout the cold war period. In this novel too the overtly political content, the critique of dictatorships, is not structured in accordance with any single coherent ideological position. There is no recognisable authorial voice behind the narrative but instead an extremely complex narrative framing device, modelled on the ritual *donsomana* of the Malinké hunting fraternity. By engaging with his subject through such complex techniques of the staging of the narrative, Kourouma effectively distributed shares in its 'ownership' among a range of

actors, thus defusing any simplistic binary opposition, which could be seen as setting one political opinion against another. A further consequence of this strategy is that the undeniably political content of the novel thus tends to melt into the background and the more broadly human dilemmas in which the various characters find themselves embroiled become the centre of attention. At one and the same time, the political dimension is trivialised and individualised while the horizons against which events are interpreted and judged are broadened and involve grander, perhaps more spiritual notions of communal destiny working themselves out over a longer time scale than the modernist concern for the immediate present.

The last novel Kourouma wrote, *Allah n'est pas obligé*, continued his journey 'upstream' in terms of African history and brought him a step closer to contemporary events: its central character is Birahima, a child soldier involved in the civil war which raged in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the mid-1990s.⁴ Birahima's own Malinké origins allowed Kourouma to rely once again on Malinké cultural realities and language to provide a filter through which events and experiences are narrated. *Allah n'est pas obligé* is consistent with his earlier work in that it draws upon the tensions that exist between radically opposed world-views, mind-sets and cultural systems (and the role played by language in both constructing and articulating these). It nevertheless goes beyond merely interrogating an extraordinarily acute example of ethical alterity (what mechanisms and processes bring these children to engage in such extreme forms of behaviour?) by implicitly raising questions about the nature of culture, society and shared humanity. The journey from cultural specificity to questions of universal

⁴ *Allah n'est pas obligé* is one of a spate of recent novels that have taken child soldiers as their subject. Other notable examples are Tierno Monénembo's *L'Ainé des Orphelins* (2000), Emmanuel Dongala's *Johnny Chien Méchant* (2002), and Abdourahman A. Waberi's *Transit* (2003).

relevance that is mapped out by his final novel is ultimately emblematic of Kourouma's whole project as a novelist.

Given the importance of Malinké culture in Kourouma's work there is something of a grim circularity to the fact that his life ended in an exile which was directly related to his regional origins. This most 'non-ideological' of political novelists was caught up in the spurious and divisive political ideology of 'ivoirité' which had been cooked up in the early 1990s by the entourage of Houphouët-Boigny's successor, Henri Konan Bedié, as a way of disenfranchising political opposition.⁵ The logic of 'ivoirité' as much as Kourouma's readiness to speak out against the horrors recently perpetrated under the regime of his former friend, President Laurent Gbagbo, explain why he was unable to remain in Abidjan where he risked becoming a prime target for the killers he had denounced. He fled the Ivory Coast in autumn 2002. In the minds of many observers, then, the last months of Kourouma's life will be inextricably and tragically linked with the chaotic civil strife that has been the hallmark of the beleaguered Gbagbo regime. Despite Kourouma's efforts to defuse ethnic and regional rivalries and promote national reconciliation by systematically calling for a national conference, he was portrayed by sources close to Gbagbo as a 'traitor' with close links to rebel forces. Thus, in September

⁵ Henri Konan Bedié succeeded Houphouët-Boigny in 1993 without any formal elections taking place to ratify his position as President of Ivory Coast. A year before elections did take place in October 1995, the National Assembly voted a new electoral code which prohibited those whose parents were not Ivoirians from standing in the presidential elections. This disqualified the leader of the main opposition party and former Prime Minister, Alassane Ouattara of the RDR (Rassemblement des Républicains), from presenting himself as a candidate. This example of political expediency and the whole ideological debate around the question of national identity ('Ivoirité') on which it was posited have thus become imbroiled in the contemporary politics of the Ivory Coast in ways that have exacerbated regional and ethnic divisions and led to the present military confrontation.

2002, Kourouma began yet another period of exile, which was to prove to be his last, taking up residence in Lyons, a town where he had long-standing family links. To his great chagrin the situation in the Ivory Coast worsened and he was unable to exercise a restraining influence on the parties concerned, becoming instead something of a symbolic pawn in the country's internal, internecine squabbling.⁶ If Kourouma's final exile cast something of a tragic shadow over the last months of his life, it also repeated a pattern that was constant: it provided simply another example of

⁶ A press release by *Agence France Press* in November 2002, entitled 'L'écrivain ivoirien Ahmadou Kourouma pris à parti dans la crise ivoirienne', provides a summary of how quickly attitudes to Kourouma polarised in the weeks following the attempted coup d'état of 19 September and illustrates the fickleness of government sources in Ivory Coast in its pronouncements about the writer. Virtually overnight, from being a source of national pride for the international reputation he enjoyed, Kourouma was demonised in an article by Séry Bailly in *Fraternité Matin*. The Malinké world view, which his work often implicitly celebrates, came in the eyes of those loyal to Gbagbo to be aligned with the cause of the rebels, who are portrayed not as a political opposition demanding reform so much as a 'nordiste', Muslim faction. Central to any understanding of these conflicting positions is what the press release describes as 'la nouvelle politique d'identification des Ivoiriens' ('Ivoirité' under another name). Thus the association of Kourouma with the rebel cause is one step away from declaring him 'unpatriotic' or the functional equivalent 'un-Ivoirian'. And on cue, the Ivoirian credentials of Kourouma were immediately called into question by a journalist on the privately owned daily paper *L'Inter*, who wrote, 'Comble du ridicule, notre écrivain n'est pas en mesure de dire à ses interlocuteurs s'il a obtenu la nationalité ivoirienne par adoption ou par naturalisation. [...] Kourouma dissimule publiquement depuis un certain temps la nationalité guinéenne de ses parents comme s'il en avait honte.' In short, the article in *L'Inter* questions Kourouma's claim to Ivoirian nationality and suggests he is a stateless person ('apatride'). I am indebted to Abdourahman A. Waberi for providing me with a copy of the AFP press release. For a succinct account of Kourouma's involvement in the events preceding 19 September, see Carrol F. Coates, 'Le bilakoro à l'honneur: les prix et les titres honorifiques d'Ahmadou Kourouma', *Présence francophone*, 59 (2002).

Kourouma's refusal to compromise his beliefs and convictions for the sake of political expediency. It is easy to imagine him reflecting on such difficulties with the stoical fatalism that he once used to describe the ineluctability of colonisation itself: 'la flèche qu'on ne peut pas éviter, la flèche qui vous est destinée, on se bonde la poitrine pour la recevoir'.⁷

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Book Reviews

Tous azimuts III: Contemporary Francophone Identities, edited by Peter V. Davies with the collaboration of Catriona Cunningham and Christina Johnson (Glasgow: University of Glasgow French and German Publications, 2002), 250 pp.

Tous azimuts III is the proceedings of an international postgraduate conference held in Glasgow University. The book has many merits not least the way in which chapters move from metropolitan French writers to Caribbean writers in French, and from recent Belgian writing to contemporary French Canadian literature. There are also welcome contributions from a variety of specialist fields such as linguistics, film studies and the art/writing of Sophie Calle. The geographical range of subject matter results in a range of articles that set up a number of possible cross-readings. In their introduction Cunningham and Johnston draw our attention to this and to the recurring issues raised by the conference papers: the failure of attempts to fix identity, the proximity of memory and literature, the questioning of fact and fiction. These themes are ranged beneath the broader categories of hybridisation and transcultural exchanges.

The papers accommodate such a dialogue. Marie-Annick Gournet's article 'Identity and language of literary expression in the francophone Caribbean' offers a context within which one might read Landry-Wilfrid Miampika's chapter on Glissant's *identités-rhizomes*. Sally Stephens's article on the *je* in Mohammed Dib's Nordic novels finds amplification in Marta Lee Perriard's 'Algerias of the mind: Assia Djebar, *L'Amour, la fantasia*, and Hélène Cixous, *Les Rêveries de la femme sauvage*'. Perriard's piece argues that the Algeria of the mind is one of both trauma and nostalgia — a place every bit as sundered as the self. It

⁷ *Je témoigne pour l'Afrique* (Grigny: Paroles d'aube, 1998), p.6.

is a close reading of the two texts, and it is particularly interesting on autobiography and hegemonic discourse, nodding in the direction of Emma Webb's convincingly argued article 'Theorising French women's autobiography: intentions and interpretations in the works of Marie Cardinal and Annie Leclerc'. Many of the articles, such as Siobhán Shilton's article on contemporary French travel writing and postcoloniality, delineate the ways in which hierarchies established between self and other, coloniser and colonised, regional identities and national politics are destabilised through political endeavour and creative response.

What characterises all of the articles is an attention to detail and a concern for clarity. True, some of the articles emphasise thematics over form and are balanced in favour of exposition rather than critique. This sounds damning but is not meant to be as those same articles offer a summary of ideas and insights into subject areas that might not be familiar to the reader. The articles in this collection draw our attention to recent explorations of identity in a number of fields and in doing so implicitly point to the potential that lies within an expanded area of francophone studies. Francophone identities are not simply textual and filmic; they find expression in art (Christian Boltanski's installations, the work of the Congolese painter Trigo Piula) and in contemporary forms of music that mix hip hop, raï, zouk, rap, bikutsi (such as Seba, Djoloff, or Saïan Supa Crew).

This book would be an excellent purchase for any university library: it will be useful to postgraduates and to university teachers who wish either to expand their knowledge of contemporary works or to introduce contemporary material into their courses.

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Gertrud Aub-Buscher and Beverly Ormerod-Noakes, eds, *The Francophone Caribbean Today — Literature, Language and Culture* (Mona: University of the West Indies Press, 2003), 260 pp. ISBN: 9766401306. US\$25.00.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, when academic interest in Francophone studies continues to expand, this collection of essays provides a timely consideration of the past, present and future of the Francophone Caribbean. Written in memory of Bridget Jones — one of the pioneers of the area — the volume manages to bring together the multiple strands that inform and mould contemporary Francophone Caribbean thinking. The volume as a whole centres on the form of cultural identity that has emerged from the vast political, linguistic, literary and social changes that the Francophone Caribbean has undergone since the 1920s. The main focus throughout is upon the way in which writers in particular have adapted to and reacted against these changes. As a result, the editors have succeeded in highlighting the common problems and tendencies facing Francophone writers at the turn of the millennium.

One of the particular strengths of the volume is the breadth of the geographical area covered under the term 'Francophone'. Rather than focus in on Martinique and Guadeloupe with an occasional mention of Haiti — as is often the case — this collection includes an essay on Francophone speakers in Dominica. It is therefore able to utilise the word 'Francophone' in its broadest definition, and also to give readers as wide a comparison as possible. The essays combine to depict an overall image of the Francophone Caribbean riddled with paradoxes and tensions, of a society that is teetering between the unresolved traumas of the past and an increasingly decreolised future.

Although all the essays centre on society and textual production, they can be loosely organised into broad categories. There are

those that engage with the broad theoretical concerns facing contemporary authors in the light of influential past and current movements such as *Négritude*, *Antillanité* and *Créolité*. These essays serve to situate Francophone Caribbean intellectual thought and point to the constant theoretical 'problem' of history. This can be seen either in its representation as fiction through, for example, a reconstruction of childhood memories (Gallagher) or as calling into question the validity of such a literary project (N'Zengou-Tayo); or indeed, in the generational differences that emerge in the adaptation from novel to film, revealing the way in which Francophone Caribbean identity has evolved (Jones). Dash in particular examines the 'apocalyptic' language and thought that currently defines writing and emphasises the impossibility and futility of attempting to categorically define Francophone Caribbean identity. Haigh's brilliant essay continues in a similar vein, and indeed her argument could be taken as a central metaphor for the volume as a whole. For *errance* seems to emerge as the only viable option that expresses the fluidity and continual movement of Francophone Caribbean identity.

My only slight criticism would be that in order to justify the breadth of the title, an additional essay on other aspects of Francophone culture such as music would have been especially welcome. Yet this is only a minor quibble and given the extensive framework that this volume establishes for those working on the Francophone Caribbean, the collection will become — I believe — a key text in the area. In addition, the constant emphasis on memory, history, language and politics connects it to post-colonial studies more generally. Finally, the inclusion of a comprehensive 'Select Bibliography of Texts and Critical Material' at the end of the volume would be invaluable for undergraduates and anyone beginning research in the area.

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Celia Britton, *Race and the Unconscious. Freudianism in French Caribbean Thought* (Oxford: Legenda, Research Monographs in French Studies 12, 2002), 144 pp. ISBN: 1900755688. £19.50.

This is a scrupulously researched, authoritative and original investigation of the complex relationship between Freudianism and race in French Caribbean thought from the 1940s to the 1980s. Celia Britton identifies psychoanalysis as a persistent, if often overlooked, connecting thread linking diverse currents in Antillean cultural history. As she notes, although international movements such as Marxism and Surrealism have enjoyed a higher profile in the French Caribbean, it is striking that most of the major intellectuals of the region have been influenced by, and have positioned themselves with reference to, psychoanalysis. This persistence is all the more surprising given psychoanalysis's reputation as a Eurocentric theory with universalising tendencies, apparently blind to social variables and to cultural difference.

In four succinct chapters Britton offers a definitive account of her topic, exposing in detail the perspectives of Aimé and Suzanne Césaire, Frantz Fanon, Édouard Glissant and Fritz Gracchus, before teasing out inconsistencies, ambivalences and blind spots. In the process, existing critical work is persuasively reinterpreted, problematised and nuanced. The opening chapter explores the initial, Surrealist-inspired conceptualisation of the unconscious as an authentic repository of blackness, a primitive state of emotion, spontaneity and irrationality repressed by colonialism. Britton traces how the contradictions which came to bear on this view meant that the *Négritude* writers (the Césaires and René Ménil) could 'identify neither with their European colleagues seeking to identify with the otherness of primitive culture, nor with the primitive other that this process presupposes' (p.20). Equally, this view failed to adequately account for the lurking and increasing desire for assimilation with the White, a desire which is a keystone

of Fanon's argument. Chapter Two revisits the often-noted contradictions and ambivalences in Fanon's view of the unconscious. Britton argues that these are due not to a half-hearted investment in psychoanalysis nor, necessarily, to the incompatibility of his belief in both the unconscious and in revolutionary social change, but emerge rather from a more basic non-belief in the existence of the Oedipus Complex — and hence repression — in Black peoples. Britton concludes that rather than misunderstanding repression — and its corollary, neurosis — Fanon in fact suggests, much more negatively, that disavowal and psychosis determine the Caribbean psyche, and therefore that psychoanalytical explanations are valid for Europeans but not for Blacks. Chapter Three looks at the criticisms of psychoanalysis made by the figures mentioned above — criticisms which centre either on the political reductionism of the movement, or on its lack of awareness of cultural difference; indeed, Césaire, Fanon, Glissant and Gracchus were painfully aware of the risk that psychoanalysis could end up colluding with 'more openly repressive forces in the social order' (p.51). Chapter Four provocatively asks 'Is a universal Oedipus complex good or bad for racial equality?' (p.82). Mobilising the perspectives of Malinowski, Ernest Jones and Deleuze and Guattari, Britton proceeds to give a close reading of Fanon and Gracchus. Although Gracchus's belief in a universal Oedipus Complex — albeit one in which the White master has supplanted the Black male as object of the mother's desire — appears to counter the much more sceptical Fanon, he is shown to collude in the latter's negative view of the Black woman. The attempt to refute the concept of matrifocality simply shifts the blame from coloniser to Black mother.

The focus throughout this book is on the political and ideological mobilisation of the unconscious in terms of racial identity, and as such it is a necessary and timely complement to the burgeoning number of studies dedicated to the literature of the French Caribbean. While 'disciplinary boundaries have created an

illusory separation' between figures such as Césaire, Fanon, Glissant and Gracchus (p.1), the prism through which this study is cast allows for surprising and new connections, allegiances and divergences to emerge. One of the major strengths of this book is to re-locate these Antillean intellectuals both in relation to each other, and with respect to wider cultural forces. The breadth of the frame of reference in terms of primary and secondary sources, the acute understanding — and lucid explanation — of both the European and the Caribbean cultural contexts, and the unerring insight into, and subtle problematisation of, the theories analysed, make this an assured, provocative and challenging study.

Maeve McCusker

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Pascal Blanchard and Sandrine Lemaire, eds, *Culture coloniale: la France conquise par son Empire, 1871-1931* (Paris: Autrement, 2003), 254 pp. ISBN: 274672991; €19.00.

The members of ACHAC (Association Connaissance de l'Histoire de l'Afrique Contemporaine) have been at the forefront of the recent explosion in research into the legacy of France's colonial Empire, not solely in the former colonies, but also within the metropolitan centre itself. This volume, *Culture coloniale*, edited by two ACHAC stalwarts, continues the process already begun in works by various members of the team, such as *De l'indigène à l'immigré* (1998) and *Zoos humains* (2002). This extremely dynamic and prolific group of researchers has consistently sought to highlight the centrality of Empire to the development of modern

France, a fact little acknowledged in contemporary public discourse or popular memory. As Blanchard and Lemaire argue in their introduction, 'Les Français ne se pensent pas coloniaux, bien au contraire' (p.18). Building on the pioneering work of the American historian Alice Conklin, ACHAC argue that, far from being 'something that happened overseas', the late nineteenth-century construction of Empire was inextricably bound up in the construction of the Republic, and French culture of the period — both elite and popular — was saturated with ideas, concepts, images linked to France's colonial 'adventures'.

This approach is evident throughout *Culture coloniale*, in which Blanchard, Lemaire and their extremely eminent contributors seek to explore the complex interplay between Republic and Empire. In their choice of themes and contributors, the editors strike a delicate balance between the cultural and the political. Several contributors examine the place of empire in exhibitions, literature, music, theatre, cinema, highlighting the fact that these media not only reflected popular stereotypes about the colonies but also helped to reinforce the hegemony of colonial discourse in this period. On the political side, there are contributions examining the ways in which Empire, at first a highly contentious issue, gradually became the subject of a remarkable (and unprecedented) unanimity amongst most politicians by the time of the major Exposition Coloniale of 1931. Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch's chapter on the economics of Empire is an exemplary exploration of the myths surrounding this subject.

Throughout the book, contributors are keen to highlight the ongoing nature of certain 'colonial' debates, thus refusing to think of Empire as a closed, completed 'History'. Françoise Vergès's chapter on the highly complex links between education and colonisation is perhaps the most incisive and complex example of this approach. She sets out to explore the ways in which France's 'mission civilisatrice' both informed policy in the colonies and was used to shape French schoolchildren's vision of colonisation.

In discussing the resurgence of racism in contemporary France, Vergès makes a telling link between the absence of debate in French schools on the very colonial discourse that produced these stereotypes and the absence of any sustained effort to understand the processes by which Republican culture — in which education plays a central role — was formed through the trial and error of the 'mission civilisatrice'.

Each of the chapters is relatively short and they are deliberately aimed at a non-specialist market, although such is the range and scope of the work that it will also provide plenty of interest for scholars and researchers. Published as part of Autrement's excellent 'Collection Mémoires' series, the book is the first in a trilogy — the second volume, *Culture impériale, 1931-61*, will be published in Spring 2004 —, which will take the reader from the beginnings of France's modern colonial conquests, through the splendour of its imperial reign and the ignominy and violence of its ultimate decline, concluding with an examination of post-colonial France. Once completed, the trilogy should feature on the recommended reading list of any course seeking to introduce students to the complexity of the French imperial legacy.

David Murphy
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Books Received

Centro de Estudios del Caribe/Casa de las Americas, *Anales des Caribe*, 19-20 (1999-2000) (Havana: Centro de Estudios del Caribe/Casa de las Americas, 2000)

Lucie Cousturier, *Mes Inconnus chez eux, I: Mon amie Fatou, citadine*, and *Mes Inconnus chez eux, II: Mon ami Soumaré, Laptot*, both edited with an introduction by Roger Little (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003)

Histoire de Moulay Abelmeula, edited with an introduction by Roger Little (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003)

Melissa Thackway, *Africa Shoots Back: Alternative Perspectives in Sub-Saharan Francophone African Film* (Oxford: James Currey, 2003)

Black Paris/Paris Black A One-Day Conference Institute of Romance Studies Saturday 1 May 2004

Organisers: Nicki Hitchcott (Nottingham) and Sam Haigh (Warwick)

When France won the World Cup in 1998, the former colonial power and long-time proponent of integrationist immigration policies appeared to be reinventing itself as a multicultural nation. As a riposte to Jean-Marie Le Pen's co-option of the *tricolore*, the notion of contemporary France as the land of 'blacks, blancs, et beurs' has gained more and more media coverage in recent times. In a parallel movement, the post-revolutionary, Enlightenment traditions of hospitality and cosmopolitanism have undergone something of a revival in recent French literary and theoretical writing. However, despite such steps towards a recognition of the Republic as multiple rather than indivisible, the specificity of black French culture has largely been ignored.

For over a century, Paris had been a meeting point for artists, musicians and writers from the African diaspora. From jazz and Josephine Baker through the Negritude era to contemporary visual and written media, black artists have played an important, if often neglected, role in the cultural history of the French capital. This conference will bring together eminent international scholars of black culture to discuss what the concept of 'Black Paris' means today.

Keynote Addresses: Daniel Maximin (in conversation with Peter Hallward, KCL); Bennetta Jules-Rosette (San Diego)

Speakers: Charles Forsdick (Liverpool); Alec Hargreaves (Florida State); Nick Hewitt (Nottingham); Marie-France Malonga (Paris 2/Institut Français de Presse); H. Adlai Murdoch (Illinois); Mireille Rosello (Northwestern); Dominic Thomas (UCLA).

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Republic and Empire
SFPS Annual Conference
French Institute, London, 26-27 November 2004

Organised jointly with the Centre for French and Francophone Cultural Studies, University of Leeds

According to Bancel, Blanchard and Vergès (2003), the conjunction of the French Republic with colonies around the world was nothing more than a 'utopia': a 'democratic imperialism' would always be a contradiction in terms. And such are the paradoxes at the heart of 'Republic' and of 'Empire' that there has been, in recent years and is still now, a veritable deluge of research and publications on France's colonial and imperial era, and of which it is perhaps now time to take stock. Of course, this newer research has focussed centrally on the historical and political dimensions of the interface between Republic and Empire, but scholars have also examined the legacy of the Republican Empire in the area of culture: from Edward Said's assessment of Camus to Bernard Mouralis's work on African literature. The aim of this conference is thus to draw together scholars from a range of disciplines — politics, history, anthropology, cultural studies, literature, sports studies —, in order to assess the paradoxes and complexities of France's Republican Empire, not only in relation to France itself but also for its former colonies.

Papers are invited for the following panels:

a. *Entente coloniale*?

This year is the centenary of the *Entente cordiale* between France and the UK, and an apt moment to ask how this once rival relationship, especially in colonial terms, now managed to adapt to the newly-formed alliance. How *incompatible* are/were colonial bi-polarities, such as France and the UK, in maintaining imperial(ist) ventures? The oft-cited, received idea is that France and Britain operated vastly different control mechanisms in their respective colonies ('assimilation' versus 'self-rule'), but are Monarchy and Republic mutually exclusive colonialist categories? Was the difference between Republican and Monarchical

colonialism to be replicated in Belgium's colonial system? How did the 'subjects' of Anglophone and Francophone empires perceive their colonial masters, especially in relation to the fundamental differences in their political constitutions? Papers are invited on all aspects (historical, literary, political) of the topic, and need not be entirely comparative.

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b. Nation and Race

Renan's definition of the nation as a 'plébiscite de tous les jours' in opposition to the biological determinism of race has become the classic paradigm for distinguishing the national and the racial communities. Republicans have made capital from this opposition to proclaim the French model of the nation as 'race-free' (in opposition to the German model as founded on the criterion of race). Recent work has challenged the dualism inherent in Renan's definition and uncovered a far more confused slippage between 'nation' and 'race', not only in Renan's own discourse but also in republican mythology as a whole. This slippage is often far more apparent in relation to the colonies than it is in relation to metropolitan France. So how do these slippages manifest themselves in republican and colonial discourses? Do French writers, thinkers and political activists adopt a different perspective in relation to the colonies (or former colonies) compared to their perspective on France? Do writers, thinkers and political activists in the colonies (or former colonies) reproduce or subvert the republican opposition between nation and race, or simply propose models which have nothing in common with the western dualistic framework? The topic can be approached from a variety of disciplines — literary, historical, political etc.

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c. Republic and Colony: Different Legal Spheres

Republican colonial ideology was able to justify the very different regime of rights in the various colonial territories (outside of metropolitan France), whether in the area of civic rights or (for example) questions of law and order. But how did the tensions in the discourses of successive Republics — exhorting the need to extend rights as part of 'emancipation' on the one hand and the realities of maintaining strong colonial governance and hegemony on the other — convince anti-

colonial groups that independence, not reform, was desirable? How, in periods of major social unrest, did colonial hegemony exert itself? To what extent did the presence of large numbers of migrants in Metropolitan France reveal the two-track deployment of state power or, indeed as during the Algerian War, lead to the importation of exceptional legislation from Algeria to Metropolitan France?

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d. Africanism and Literary Imagination: Ethnography of Republic and Empire

In the last two decades of the 19th Century ethnography went through a profound mutation. Gradually it distanced itself from polygenic theses, in which, on the basis of craniological and anthropometric data, Gustave Le Bon and Vacher de Lapouge had attempted to establish the primacy of the 'white race' over others. The emergence of Durkheimian sociology at the turn of the century and the refutation by Marcel Mauss of the 'primitif-civilisé' dichotomy generated a more open-minded, less deterministic set of paradigms that were to influence ethnographic inquiries until the advent of structuralism. French Africanism benefited from this new epistemological climate. Maurice Delafosse's ground-breaking *Haut-Sénégal-Niger* (1913) became the symbol of this renewal. Simultaneously the French and Francophone literary world bore witness to the emergence of decisive 'ethno-fictions': Segalen's *Les Immémoriaux* (1907), both Leblond's *En France* (1910) and, later, René Maran's *Batouala* (1921). In the 1920s and 1930s this trend intensified, as reflected by the literary experiments of *Négritude*, *Le Collège de Sociologie* and, more generally, by a number of 'naturalist' colonial novelists (See Robert Delavignette, Paul Hazoumé, Georges Hardy or Bakary Diallo). How did this new Africanism fit with the Republican notion of Empire and what were the main features of these Africanist fictions? How and why did they (not) contribute to the constitution of the 'colonial library' (Mudimbe), and how do they inform contemporary writing on Africa by 'metropolitan' and/or African authors?

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e. Occupation and Colony

To understand better the Republican colonial system, it is salutary to look at the moment when the French Republic was suspended under Vichy, and how the colonies were used during the Second World War. If Martinique suffered under Admiral Robert's brief but cruel Vichyist reign, then by contrast France's equatorial colonies were quick to rally to de Gaulle. Others have suggested however that Senegal under the Free French after 1942 was little different to its pre-1942 Pétainist regime. In North Africa, attitudes towards the Nazi Occupation were deeply split, some favouring Pétain's paternalism, others keen to return to Republican values. How have historiography, political thought and cultural production in France's former colonies come to terms with the complex set of experiences of the Nazi Occupation? What parallels with the Liberation from Fascism could be drawn by those caught up in debates over decolonisation and Independence? How have former colonial subjects 'represented' the *années noires* in the six decades since? Is there a 'Syndrome de Vichy', to borrow Henry Rousso's metaphor, in the Francophone world outside of the Hexagone?

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f. Haiti

In the year that marks the two-hundredth anniversary of the declaration of Haitian independence, this panel aims to assess the historical emergence of the Republic of Haiti as well as the impact of Haiti on the formation of French republican identity. Questions it might address include: what was the role of the Haitian Revolution in redirecting the French Revolution? how are the events surrounding the foundation of the Republic of Haiti represented in French-language literatures and cultures? how are the founders of the Haitian Republic represented in French-language literatures and cultures? what are the implications of the Haitian Revolution for contemporary French republican identity?

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Individual issues of both *Bulletin* and *Yearbook* can be purchased and their prices are listed below. However, we are also proposing a **special offer of £60 (inc. p&p)** for individuals and libraries purchasing the entire back catalogue (21 *Bulletins* and 3 *Yearbooks*). Cheques, made payable to Society for Francophone Postcolonial Studies, should be sent to: **Dr David Murphy, School of Modern Languages, French Section, University of Stirling, Stirling FK9 4LA, Scotland.**

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