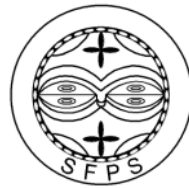


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A Special Issue in Memory of Kate Marsh

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Pondichéry: Archive of 'French' India¹

Visiting Puducherry, the Tamil name by which the historic chef-lieu of l'Inde française, Pondichéry, has been officially known since 2006, BBC reporter Jon Sopel observed in 2012: 'The buildings in this part of town are all French colonial style. The sun has not quite set on this little outpost of the French empire'.²

Pondichéry, with its development arrested somewhere in the French colonial past and its urban landscape evoking former imperial glories, is not a new one, resonating as it does with numerous French-language travel accounts and novels produced throughout the twentieth century.³ Indeed, from its definitive return by the British to French rule in 1815 until its absorption into the Union of Indian States in 1954, Pondichéry, on the Coromandel coast, functioned as a convenient shorthand for a French colonial lobby which maintained a mythologised notion of a 'lost' French Indian empire. Deploying the rhetoric of imperial nostalgia to define what was promulgated as a French colonisation douce against the practices of the other colonial powers, particularly the British, proponents of empire such as Fernard Hue and Georges Haurigot (1884) used the material reality of the town to reinforce imaginings of what French imperial rule on the subcontinent might otherwise have been.⁴ The purpose of this article is to examine how the urban landscape (the buildings, monuments, streets) and images (both textual and photographic, produced between c.1890 and the present day) of this former outpost of the French empire have been, and can still be, considered as an archive. Such a metaphorical use of the archive is neither new nor unproblematic. In her 2009 article 'Embracing Urbanism: The City as Archive', Vyjayanthi Rao, following Simmel, postulates that if the city is understood as a place which generates 'social exchanges', then the archive can become 'an emergent notion, a principle of ordering stimuli upon which future transactions are imagined and made present rather than a given notion of the past that has been deemed significant and marked for preservation'.⁵ Emphasising the transformative power of the archive, she continues: 'The new city, coming into being, can then be read as an archive, and urban political struggles might be repositioned in the zone of anticipation rather than in the zone of nostalgia.'⁶ Since Foucault, as Arjun Appadurai pithily puts it, 'destroyed the innocence of the archive and forced us to ask about the designs through which all traces were produced',⁷ the archive has ceased to be viewed, if it ever was, as a tool by which historians can triangulate the 'truth' about the past. For Appadurai, the archive functions as 'an aspiration rather than a recollection' and thus, instead of being 'the tomb of the trace', it is 'more frequently the product of the anticipation of collective memory'.⁸ In exploring how the town of Pondichéry might be read as an archive of French imperialism, this article will interrogate, first, how the *ville blanche*, even under colonial rule, never functioned simply as a

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² Jon Sopel, 'Bienvenue à Pondicherry, the Indian town where you'll find plenty of joie de vivre', *Daily Mail*, 18 November 2012 <<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/travel/article-2234717/Pondicherry-Indian-town-youll-plenty-joie-vivre.html>> [accessed 3 January 2013].

³ For a discussion of the role played by imperial nostalgia in French-language writing about *l'Inde française* produced during the first half of the twentieth century (the period commonly viewed as the apogee of French imperial culture), see Kate Marsh, *Narratives of the French Empire: Fiction, Nostalgia, and Imperial Rivalries, 1784 to the Present* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2013), pp. 65–94.

⁴ Fernard Hue and Georges Haurigot, *Nos petites colonies*, 3rd edn (Paris and Poitiers: Lecène and Oudin, 1887 [1884]), p. 284.

⁵ Vyjayanthi Rao, 'Embracing Urbanism: The City as Archive', *New Literary History*, 40 (2009), 371–83 (p. 374).

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 380.

⁷ Arjun Appadurai, 'Archive and Aspiration', in *Information is Alive: Art and Theory on Archiving and Retrieving Data* (Rotterdam: Nai Publishers, 2003), p. 16.

⁸ *Ibid.*

depository of traces of the past; and, second, how it has continued to function since decolonisation by the French as a place with which to rethink the present. While Pondichéry was a French possession, it was used as a place to imagine an alternative temporality to the linear narrative of the French presence in India, which began in 1673, was circumscribed by the British in 1763 and again in 1815, but persisted until 1954. Accordingly, the article will address three key ideas: how the town functions within French colonial texts and images as a ‘lieu de mémoire’ of what French rule in India *might* have been;⁹ the role played by such French imperial nostalgia in the Tamil-dominated town of today; and how these elements might combine to facilitate an imagining of a postcolonial future. In doing so, it will question the role of nostalgia, specifically the role of imperial nostalgia,¹⁰ and, in contrast to the work of Rao on the city of Mumbai, show how urban landscapes and political struggles might use nostalgia as a means of anticipating an alternative future.¹¹ For, while Rao postulates that viewing the ‘city-as-archive’ with a preservation agenda could possibly diminish the understanding of globalised urban politics in present-day Mumbai,¹² in Pondichéry acts of conservation have the potential to facilitate a transformative urban project that privileges a transnational future.

As with its European rivals, Britain, Portugal, the Dutch Republic, Denmark, and Sweden, France’s encounter with India began through trade in the seventeenth century, and with the establishment of trading posts. In comparison with their European counterparts, however, the French arrived relatively late on the subcontinent — *La compagnie des Indes* was created in 1664, sixty-four years after the foundation of the English East India Company — and trade with the East did not enjoy the same levels of prestige or royal protection as did that with the Antilles.¹³ Even at the height of French expansionism in India, under the governorship of Dupleix (between 1742 and 1754), revenue from trade was negligible in comparison with that generated by sugar grown on the *colon*-owned slave plantations of Saint Domingue.¹⁴ The *chef-lieu*, Pondichéry, was not a cohesive unit, consisting of outlying hamlets which were effectively stranded in the neighbouring British territory, and all the trading posts, or *comptoirs*, were dependent upon the surrounding British Indian towns for essential supplies and communications. During the eighteenth century, there had been a strong possibility that the Indian subcontinent might have succumbed to French control, but defeat in the Seven Years War (1756–63) saw French ambitions permanently curtailed. The Treaty of Paris of 1763 restored the original five *comptoirs*, Pondichéry, Karikal, Mahé, Yanaon, and Chandernagor, to French control, but stipulated that French influence be limited to these areas alone.¹⁵ Occupied again by British East India Company troops in 1778 and in 1793, the *comptoirs* were definitively returned to the French in 1815.¹⁶ Small and remote, these vestiges of the *Ancien*

⁹ For Nora, *lieux de mémoire* are places where national memory embodies itself. Pierre Nora, ‘Présentation’, in *Les Lieux de mémoire*, ed. by Pierre Nora, 3 vols (Paris: Gallimard, 1997 [1984]), 1, pp. 15–16. Conversely, France’s *comptoirs* generally, and Pondichéry specifically, symbolised the memory of a French empire which was largely imaginary.

¹⁰ Following Lorcin’s recent work, ‘imperial nostalgia’ is being used here to suggest a loss of political power and in contradistinction with colonial nostalgia, which, for Lorcin, is ‘emblematic of the loss of a certain life-style and is embedded in the colonial period as a mental survival strategy of recuperation as much as it is in the post-independence period’: Patricia M. E. Lorcin, *Historicizing Colonial Nostalgia: European Women’s Narratives of Algeria and Kenya, 1900–Present* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 2.

¹¹ Rao, p. 380

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 382.

¹³ James Pritchard, *In Search of Empire: The French in the Americas, 1670–1730* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 12.

¹⁴ Kate Marsh, *India in the French Imagination: Peripheral Voices, 1754–1815* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2009), pp. 10–11.

¹⁵ Article 11 of the Treaty of Paris (10 February 1763). These terms were reiterated and reinforced in the First Treaty of Paris of 30 May 1814 and then ratified by the Second Treaty of Paris of 20 November 1815: Paris, Archives diplomatiques, Quai d’Orsay, série: Asie-Océanie (1944–55), sous-série: Inde Française, vol. 5. Henceforth, in official parlance, these French territories were known as ‘les Établissements français de l’Inde’, but more popularly termed ‘les comptoirs’.

¹⁶ For a more expansive narrative of the French in India during this period, see Marsh, *India in the French Imagination*, pp. 13–18.

Régime empire nonetheless had a remarkable longevity. The French occupied their *comptoirs* until 1 November 1954, although this *de facto* withdrawal was not ratified by the Assemblée nationale until July 1962.¹⁷ By the time of the *de jure* secession of the *comptoirs* in 1962, the French presence in India had persisted for almost 300 years—longer than had been the case in certain areas of metropolitan France, notably Nice and the Savoy.¹⁸ Yet this long-drawn-out coda to the French colonial adventure in India, with *de facto* withdrawal taking place seven years after the states of India and Pakistan were created out of the British Indian Empire, and *de jure* cession occurring a further eight years later, also shows how *l'Inde française* was imbricated in France's more violent processes of decolonisation in Indochina and in Algeria. The *tricolore* was officially lowered for the last time in Pondichéry on 1 November 1954, after the Geneva Accords that brought an end to French involvement in Indochina, and the day that hostilities broke out in Algeria; the Treaty of Cession remained unratified by the Assemblée nationale until after the signing of the Evian Accords and the creation of an independent Algeria.¹⁹

The French first established Pondichéry on the Coromandel coast in 1673 when Bellanger d'Espinay obtained from Chircam-Loudy, governor of the province, the right to create a trading post or *comptoir*. This was followed by the creation of *comptoirs* at Chandernagor in Bengal (1688); Mahé on the Malabar coast (1721); and Yanaon (1731) and Karikal (1739), both on the Coromandel coast. Following the Treaty of Ryswick (1697), which saw Pondichéry returned to the French following its capture by the Dutch fleet in 1693, the *Compagnie* decided to make Pondichéry the *chef-lieu* of all French territory in India. Work began on the construction of a fortress in 1702, and under governor François Martin's supervision Pondichéry developed a certain air of prosperity which was the envy of British traders situated in neighbouring Madras.²⁰ The *ville blanche* (the seat of French trade and where, in subsequent centuries, colonial administrators would live) was constructed on a grid pattern, with four boulevards separating it from the *ville noire* (the 'black city'), which was inhabited by the locals. Laid out in an oval shape, with parallel streets intersecting at right angles, the town, according to the *Gazetteer of Pondicherry* in 1982, could not help but provoke in a visitor the feeling 'that he [*sic*] is seeing a little piece of France set down in India'.²¹ Besieged by the forces of the British East India Company during the Seven Years War, and occupied again in 1761, Pondichéry was in ruins when Jacques-François Law de Lauriston presided over its return to French possession on 11 April 1765.²² Although reconstruction of the town itself took place rapidly, that of the fortifications, which had been destroyed by the occupying British forces, took longer, hampered by severe shortages in funds. Further occupations, during the American War of Independence and the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, resulted in renewed damage to the fortifications and the boulevards.

The first *mémoire* written by the comte du Blanc to the new government of the Restoration on 7 April 1814, considering the state of France's overseas commerce and its remaining scattered colonial possessions in the Antilles and on the subcontinent after the First Treaty of Paris, bemoaned the parlous material and political state of the town of Pondichéry; lamenting it as 'naguère si florissante', a place 'qui dictait la loi aux princes de l'Inde', he described it as being

¹⁷ On 18 October 1954, at Kijéour, a small commune of Pondichéry, 170 out of 178 members of the municipal councils and the Representative Assembly of the remaining *comptoirs* voted to secede (Chandernagor, the smallest trading post, and effectively little more than a suburb of Calcutta, having already decided by referendum on 19 June 1949 that the 'ville libre' should withdraw from the *Union française*). See Kate Marsh, *Fictions of 1947: Representations of Indian Decolonization, 1919–1962* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2007), p. 36.

¹⁸ A point eloquently made by the *député* Henri Caillemer during the debate surrounding the *de jure* secession: Henri Caillemer, 'Discussion d'un projet de loi', 2e séance du 12 juillet 1962, *Journal Officiel de la République française: Débats parlementaires, Assemblée nationale*, 13 July 1962, p. 2409.

¹⁹ Marsh, *Fictions of 1947*, pp. 37–38.

²⁰ George B. Malleon, *The History of the French in India, From the Founding of Pondichéry in 1674 to the Capture of that Place in 1761* (Delhi: Gian, 1986 [1868; rev. edn, 1893]), p. 37.

²¹ Francis Cyril Anthony, *Gazetteer of Pondicherry*, 2 vols (Pondicherry: Administration of the Union Territory of Pondicherry, 1982), II, p. 1559.

²² Jacques-François Law de Lauriston, 'Observations sur l'état politique actuel de l'Inde', February 1777, in *État politique de l'Inde en 1777*, ed. by A. Martineau (Paris: Champion, 1913), p. 138.

‘aujourd’hui dans une misère extrême’.²³ The situation in Pondichéry in 1814 was indeed desperate, but in du Blanc’s *mémoire* the exaggerated portrayal of the ‘flourishing’ trading post prior to the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars is linked uncritically with a reflection on France’s former influence (‘dictating to all the princes in India’). The traces of the past, the creation of the citadel and the bustling entrepôt, followed by occupation and desolation, are emplotted by du Blanc in a linear narrative: the rise and subsequent fall of a French ‘Indian’ empire. The salient point here, however, is that the linking of the town with a grandiose vision of French political power is erroneous. Dupleix’s political and geographical domination of the Deccan peninsula of India was neither unchallenged by the British nor was it permanent. French control may have increased under his governorship to cover a vast territory in the south, including a large part of the Deccan peninsula, the Carnatic region, and the province of Masulipatam, but this territory was not annexed, and Dupleix did not create protectorates; rather, French influence relied on a loose and, as demonstrated by the events of the Seven Years War, expedient collection of alliances with local rulers. In other words, as early as 1814, the vestiges of Dupleix’s building works, the fortifications and colonial villas, were being ‘read’, and mobilised, to imagine an alternative past: one of imperial grandeur and domination. As a consequence, the physical remnants of French power on the subcontinent, the five *comptoirs* that were restored to France under the first Treaty of Paris of 1814,²⁴ assumed an important role: they became, for metropolitan commentators, a ‘lieu de mémoire’ of what French rule in India *might* have been, a notion which was reified in the historic *chef-lieu*, Pondichéry.²⁵ If, as Castells has succinctly argued, ‘Cities are the products of history, both of the urban forms and functions inherited from the past, and of the new urban meaning assigned to them by conflictive historical change’,²⁶ the historical changes wrought by competing European colonialisms on the subcontinent created the ideal circumstances for the generation of a particular meaning for Pondichéry: the material evidence of past glory, and a safe haven from British rule. For, as the *mémoire* by the comte du Blanc also noted, the French were viewed as potential liberators of India: even if ‘sans cesse notre ennemi jaloux [les Anglais], cherche à empiéter et à proscrire, le nom Français beaucoup plus aimé que le leur’.²⁷

This use of the urban landscape to produce an alternative history of the French presence in India, and imperial rule more generally, became a recurring theme in cultural production under the Third Republic, in novels, travel writing, and colonial photographs. In the short colonial novel *Désordres à Pondichéry*, by Georges Delamare, published with great commercial success in 1938 (in its year of publication alone it went through seven editions), the urban landscape of the *ville blanche* in Pondichéry is used to offer a counternarrative to that of the British Indian Empire.²⁸ In the letter which serves as the preface to the first edition of the novel, Claude Farrère, the author who styled himself, and who was viewed by his contemporaries, as France’s answer to Rudyard Kipling, congratulates Delamare on the realism of his plot and his accurate depiction of the small French *comptoir* on the edge of British India:

Mais l’intérêt principal m’apparaît surtout dans la peinture que vous faites de ce Pondichéry pittoresque et suranné, qui s’efforce ingénument de devenir moderne et qui n’y réussit guère, étant donné le handicap terrible que lui vaut son isolement au milieu de l’Inde actuelle, tout

²³ Le comte du Blanc, ‘Mémoire sur le commerce de l’Inde: Précis de celui que faisait l’ancienne compagnie des Indes et celle établie en 1785’, 7 April 1814; Paris, Archives nationales: Affaires étrangères, B³ 459.

²⁴ The First Treaty of Paris of 30 May 1814 restored the *comptoirs* to France according to the conditions laid out by the 1763 Treaty of Paris; Paris, Archives diplomatiques, Quai d’Orsay, série: Asie-Océanie (1944–55), sous-série: Inde française, vol. 5.

²⁵ Pierre Nora’s term is not without problems, encouraging as it does a monolithic approach to France’s past. It does, however, usefully convey how the *comptoirs* crystallised a certain nostalgia and a tendentious view of French influence before 1763: Nora, I, pp. 15–21.

²⁶ Manuel Castells, *The City and the Grassroots: A Cross-Cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), p. 331.

²⁷ Du Blanc, ‘Mémoire sur le commerce de l’Inde’.

²⁸ Marsh, *Narratives of the French Empire*, p. 68.

entière anglaise, et qui ne cessera vraisemblablement de l'être que pour tourner au communisme ou à l'anarchie.²⁹

According to Farrère, author of *L'Inde perdue* (1935), a polemical history of France's conquests and losses in India and the subsequent creation of French Indochina, Delamare's novel evokes nostalgia for what might have been for the French in India; this reading of the text allows Farrère to reflect on the comparative failures of French colonial expansion: 'Pondichéry [...] La vieille capitale de Dupleix aurait pu devenir une grande ville'.³⁰ For Delamare, meanwhile, the urban landscape of the town itself is used as a convenient narratory and rhetorical device to reflect the disappointment of his protagonist, Gourdieu, at being sent to a small colonial outpost and not to Indochina. His feeling of disappointment resonates with the topography of Pondichéry, a town redolent of glories long since past and now suffering from general neglect:

Gourdieu prend contact avec les larges rues coupées à angle droit, les maisons à architecture pompeuse qui font penser à un Versailles tropical. La place Dupleix garde encore le tracé des jardins à la française, mais une herbe poussiéreuse a effacé les nobles parterres d'antan; la statue du conquérant de l'Inde ne domine plus qu'une vaste esplanade calcinée. Parallèlement à la mer, la Ville Blanche s'étend, avec ses demeures élégantes aux toits égaux, avec ses belles lignes d'une régularité grandiose, cité bâtie dans l'ivresse de la victoire, en l'honneur de Louis le Bien-Aimé, mais dont la splendeur n'est plus qu'un fantôme. Les façades montrent des plaies profondes, les balustrades, les acrotères, d'un exquis dessin, s'effritent lentement sous les massives pluies de novembre... Faute d'argent, faute de main d'œuvre et surtout d'ambition, nul effort de restauration n'est entrepris et, peu à peu, les palais élevés par les émules de Gabriel entrent dans le néant des gloires évanouies.³¹

Such a description not only operates as a narrative device which sets the scene; it also permits the insertion of a historical overview with an overt political agenda. The characterisation of Pondichéry as a 'tropical Versailles' was a common one;³² by the 1930s, nevertheless, as travellers' accounts attested, the impressiveness of the town came from what it evoked of past imperial glories. For Douglas Taylor, for example, in his popular travelogue *De Lanka à Pondichéry* (1931), 'cette vieille colonie exhale un parfum d'antiquité, de splendeurs disparues et de moisie'.³³ Delamare's description, in which the *place Dupleix* has gone to ruin while the statue of the 'conquérant de l'Inde' has remained standing, employs a number of tropes that resonate across texts on *l'Inde française*, regardless of genre, throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: loss, abandonment, and neglect.³⁴ Pondichéry is the site of what French colonial rule could have become—before, in the words of the historian Alexis de Saint-Priest, writing in 1845, 'un gouvernement pusillanime sacrifia l'Inde à l'Angleterre',³⁵ an explanation for defeat that conveniently locates culpability in the colonial centre, and absolves the 'peripheral' Pondichéry from any responsibility for its defeat and destruction.³⁶

²⁹ 'Lettre préface de Claude Farrère de l'Académie française', in Georges Delamare, *Désordres à Pondichéry* (Paris: Les Éditions de France, 1938), p. i.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Delamare, p. 4.

³² Jacques Weber, 'La "société franco-indienne" en péril: *Désordres à Pondichéry* de Georges Delamare (1938)', in *Désordres à Pondichéry* (Paris and Pondichéry: Kailash, 1997), p. 250.

³³ Douglas Taylor, *De Lanka à Pondichéry*, 2nd edn (Paris: Nouvelles Éditions Argo, 1931), p. 182.

³⁴ See Kate Marsh, 'Territorial Loss and the Construction of French Colonial Identities, 1763–1962', in *France's Lost Empires: Fragmentation, Nostalgia, and the fracture coloniale*, ed. by Kate Marsh and Nicola Frith (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2011), pp. 3–4; Nicola Frith, 'Compensating for *l'Inde perdue*: Narrating a "Special Relationship" between France and India in Romanticized Tales of the Indian Uprisings (1857–58)', *ibid.*, pp. 97–98.

³⁵ Cte Alexis de Saint-Priest, 'Études diplomatiques sur le dix-huitième siècle. II. La perte de l'Inde sous Louis XV', *Revue des deux mondes*, 10 (1845), 389–446 (p. 391).

³⁶ While contemporaneously the devastation of Pondichéry in 1761 at the hands of the British was imputed entirely to Lally's incompetence by both the *Compagnie des Indes* and French military personnel in India, resulting in his trial

Aside from these commonplace tropes and ideas, however, Delamare's text includes marked similarities with Taylor's *De Lanka à Pondichéry*, whose success merited two editions in 1931. Compare, for example, the syntax and ideas in Delamare's description of Pondichéry, 'La place Dupleix garde encore le tracé des jardins à la française, mais une herbe poussiéreuse a effacé les nobles parterres d'antan; la statue du conquérant de l'Inde ne domine plus qu'une vaste esplanade calcinée', with Taylor's description: 'Les rares pousses, et les vieilles victorias délabrées encore plus rares, qui la traversent quelquefois, ne font qu'accentuer son air d'abandon. Au milieu se dresse la statue de Dupleix'.³⁷ Both descriptions end by making reference to the former governor of Pondichéry, and to his statue, which was erected in the town in 1870. Although recalled to France in 1754, and then entangled in a protracted legal dispute with the *Compagnie des Indes*, Dupleix was invariably and unquestioningly portrayed in French historiography of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (and particularly under the Third Republic) as a founding figure of French colonialism.³⁸ Delamare endorses this French imperial myth. The circumscribed and ephemeral nature of Dupleix's colonial achievement is omitted from the opening scene-setting: the former governor is uncomplicatedly adduced as the 'conquérant de l'Inde', with subsequent defeats and the rise of British influence conveniently excluded from the description.

Colonial photographs, produced at the end of nineteenth century to promote this small outpost of French rule clinging on to the edges of the British Indian empire, use the urban landscape and the architecture of the *ville blanche* to facilitate an imagining of a different past, one of French imperial grandeur in India, and to propagate an alternative to contemporaneous British rule on the subcontinent. A series of photographs taken by the French photographer C. (possibly Charles) Moyne, and of which the remaining three now form part of the Alkazi collection housed in Delhi, focuses on key monuments in Pondichéry between 1870 and 1890: the cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, built by the Jesuits and completed in 1791; the statue of Dupleix; and the Hôtel de Ville, the foundation stone of which was laid in 1870.³⁹ Moyne's image of the vast cathedral gives an impression of the grandeur and the longevity of the French colonial presence, although the building itself was the fourth incarnation, following the destruction of the previous three by first the Dutch and then (twice) the British. The focus on the statue of Dupleix, the governor credited both by French historians writing under the Third Republic and by British historians such as Thomas Macaulay with creating the modern system of imperialism,⁴⁰ recalls past imperial adventure. As with travel accounts, by Londres (1922), Viollis (1930), and Taylor (1931),

and eventual execution in 1766, historiography produced during the nineteenth century unsurprisingly held the monarchs of the *Ancien Régime* responsible for the defeat of the French at the hands of the Dutch (in 1693) and subsequently the British. Lally's culpability was, however, not undisputed. His son, Trophime-Gérard de Lally-Tolendal, launched a campaign to restore his father's reputation after his execution in May 1766, a process which generated numerous *mémoires* and which benefited from Voltaire's intervention in the form of the tract *Fragments sur quelques révolutions dans l'Inde, sur la mort du comte de Lally, et sur plusieurs autres sujets* (1773). For a discussion of explanations for the French defeat in India produced by politicians, travellers, and historians during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, see Marsh, *India in the French Imagination*, pp. 81–84.

³⁷ Taylor, p. 201.

³⁸ For a brief overview of the historical appropriation of Dupleix, see Marc Vigié, 'La politique de Dupleix 1742–1754', in *Trois siècles de présence française en Inde*, ed. by Philippe Decraene (Paris: Centre des hautes études sur l'Afrique et l'Asie modernes, 1994), pp. 17–18. See also Alfred Martineau, *Dupleix et l'Inde française*, 4 vols (Paris: Champion, 1920–28); G. Jouveau-Dubreuil, *Dupleix ou l'Inde conquise* (Marseille: Imprimerie marseillaise, 1942); and Henry Dodwell, *Dupleix and Clive: The Beginning of Empire* (London: Cass, 1967). Indra Narayan Mukhopadhyay makes reference to the 'afterlife' of Dupleix during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; Indra Narayan Mukhopadhyay, 'Imperial Ellipses: France, India, and the Critical Imagination' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 2008), p. 43.

³⁹ The collection of photographs is held by the Alkazi Foundation but was recently displayed in an exhibition in Puducherry <<http://www.indiaart.com/exhibitions/exhibitions-list/Mastering-the-Lens-Before-and-After-Cartier-Bresson-2.asp>> [accessed 27 June 2013].

⁴⁰ According to Macaulay, 'the arts both of war and policy, which a few years later were employed with such signal success by the English, were first understood and practised by this ingenious and aspiring Frenchman': Thomas Babington Macaulay, *Critical and Historical Essays*, 2 vols (London: Dent, 1907 [1843]), 1, p. 489.

these photographs also stress the spaciousness and tranquillity of French India.⁴¹ The vast boulevards are empty, tidy, and immaculate. British India is, in contrast, characterised by heat, dust, and confusion. Writing in 1922, for example, Londres compares the overcrowded railway stations of British India, and the streets of Calcutta, covered with ‘snoring corpses’, with the historic tranquillity of Pondicherry. Whereas, in Calcutta, ‘Les dormeurs sont allongés sur le bitume comme des cadavres. Il y en a qui sont nus, et d’autres ficelés dans un drap blanc; un suaire. Il ne manque que l’odeur du phénol. Mais ce ne sont pas des macchabées: ils ronflent’, in Pondicherry, ‘tout date de Duplex’ and the town is ‘loin des vains bruits du monde’ (see Figure 1).⁴² According to Londres, while British India goes up in flames, in the wake of the Amritsar massacre and with the increasing influence of Gandhi’s *hartal* movement, ‘L’Inde peut flamber, après le sinistre, on retrouvera Pondicherry intact, comme un coffre-fort au milieu des centres. Ici, Gandhi n’a pas déboulonné Duplex.’⁴³ The same impression is conveyed by Moyne’s photographs: two colonial functionaries are conveyed in a *push-push* in an empty and tidy street.



Figure 1 Bourne & Shepherd. Pondicherry – Hotel de Ville and the Duplex monument. c.1890. Albumen print. Photographer’s Ref. 2806. 212 x 284 mm. ACP: 95.0015(02).

If the remnants of the past in Pondicherry were evoked by French colonial-ists to imagine an alternative history in India, this ‘archive’ was not viewed in the same way by the populations of India. According to Frank Upward, ‘In the conceptualization of the records continuum, recordkeeping objects are marked by their processes of formation and continuing formation’; consequently, ‘each interaction with the archive contributes to its infinite meaning’.⁴⁴ Thus, viewing the town as an archive of the encounter between the French and the Indian populations, be they Hindu or Tamil, has produced, and continues to produce, several meanings. During the period in which Pondicherry remained a French territory, the material remains of past French imperial grandeur offered an alternative *mise-en-valeur* of the success of the French colonial mission. But for the colonised, the town represented a political alternative to British rule. As the Indian

⁴¹ Albert Londres, ‘En Inde’, in *Visions orientales* (Paris: Éditions de Londres, 2012 [1922]), pp. 111–50; Andrée Viollis, *L’Inde contre les Anglais* (Paris: Éditions des Portiques, 1930); Taylor.

⁴² Londres, pp. 123 and 145.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

⁴⁴ Frank Upward, ‘The Records Continuum’, in *Archives: Recordkeeping in Society*, ed. by Sue McKemmish, Michael Piggott, Barbara Reed, and Frank Upward (Wagga-Wagga: Charles Sturt University, 2005), p. 206.

National Congress pursued its claims for independence after 1885, the tranquil haven of Pondichéry was used as a refuge for Nationalists fleeing the British police. In 1908, for example, the Indian nationalist Charu Chandra Roy took refuge from the British authorities in this French territory,⁴⁵ while Gandhi in 1936 mobilised the town as an icon of freedom. Visiting the town in that year, he famously stated: 'Je suis surpris et heureux de constater que les libertés pour lesquelles nous luttons aux Indes depuis tant d'années sont déjà depuis longtemps accordées aux Indes françaises.'⁴⁶

Pondichéry, like all archives, is open to historical and memorial interpretation. For the BBC commentator quoted at the outset, French imperial nostalgia can be 'read' from the traces of the past in the urban landscape of the *ville blanche* of Puducherry today. The restored colonial buildings are, however, the product of investment, since 2000, by the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage. Marketed as a tourist destination, 'The French Riviera of the East' (*La Côte d'Azur de l'Est*), Pondichéry, and particularly the colonial villas and buildings which form the imperial legacy, have been renovated and restored to ensure that this image of colonial grandeur is embedded within the city. The American travel writer Matt Gross has suggested that the 'current superficial Frenchifying' be viewed as an act of postcolonial recuperation, 'a subtle revenge on the French'.⁴⁷ Although, superficially, the Francophone legacy is in evidence, with the continuing presence of the Institut français and the bilingual road signs, French is, after all, officially the second language, the number of French speakers outside the *ville blanche* is small, and the linguistic landscape does not accurately reflect the linguistic and social reality of the Tamil inhabitants of Puducherry.⁴⁸ Could this 'Frenchifying' be just a cynical marketing ploy to exploit French tourists?

Yet nostalgia, as Stewart argues, 'is a cultural practice, not a given content; its forms, meanings and effects shift with the context — it depends on where the speaker stands in the landscape of the present'.⁴⁹ While allowing European visitors to experience a form of imperial nostalgia with the material evocation of a 'lost' past by the urban landscape, this invitation to revisit the past, I would argue, also provides Pondichéry, a territory whose 'postcoloniality' is contested, with a means of articulating a social critique of postcolonial India. The *comptoirs* did not gain outright independence in 1954; instead, they were merged with an already existing state, the Indian Union, on 1 November 1954, retaining a special administrative status and becoming known as the Union Territory of Pondicherry, now called Puducherry. Part of the Treaty of Cession allowed for the inhabitants of the former establishments to opt for French citizenship but remain living in southern India. Constitutionally different from neighbouring territories in India, the town has used this anomalous status to articulate political and cultural difference. Since 1962, the municipality has argued, without success, that rather than being part of the Indian Union it should see its difference accorded legal recognition and be awarded the status of an independent state.⁵⁰

If the town of Pondichéry is an archive of French rule in India, it offers the opportunity to imagine a postcolonial future outside the political dominance of Delhi-ruled India. Throughout the lifespan of French India, as it clung on to the fringes of a British-dominated subcontinent, the town was used, imaginatively by the French colonisers, to conceptualise a French *colonisation douce*, and, materially by the Indian population, as a refuge point for those fleeing British rule. Research carried out by Tata Economic Consultancy Services for the Indian Government's Department of

⁴⁵ Georgette David, in a brief but comprehensive article, explores the relationship between the Indian Congress and Paris: see Georgette David, 'Chandernagor et le Swadeshisme au début du XXe siècle: L'affaire Charu Chandra Roy', *Revue française d'histoire d'outre-mer*, 78 (1991), 92. For a more detailed analysis of how the *comptoirs* were used as a political refuge during India's struggle for independence, see Akhila Yechury, 'Identities, Frontiers and Citizenship in French India, c.1848–1963' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Cambridge, 2011), *passim*.

⁴⁶ Quoted by Michel Raingeard in his intervention in the *Assemblée nationale*, 'Établissements français de l'Inde: Fixation de la date de discussion d'interpellations', 2e séance du 10 août 1954, *Journal Officiel de la République française: Débats parlementaires, Assemblée nationale*, 11 August 1954, 4032–37 (p. 4035).

⁴⁷ Matt Gross, 'French Connection: In the Colonial City of Pondicherry Southern India Meets the South of France', *New York Times*, 30 March 2008, p. 8.

⁴⁸ William F. S. Miles, *Imperial Burdens: Countercolonialism in Former French India* (London: Rienner, 1995), pp. 57–81.

⁴⁹ Kathleen Stewart, 'Nostalgia: A Polemic', *Cultural Anthropology*, 3 (1988), 227–41 (p. 227).

⁵⁰ S. Chandni Bi, *Urban Centers of Pondicherry* (New Delhi: Icon, 2006), p. 143.

Tourism (New Delhi) in March 2003 concluded that Pondichéry's interest as a 'spiritual' site and its 'French linkages, lifestyles and lingering customs' were among its most culturally and economically attractive assets,⁵¹ while in 2006 *India Today* listed the city as one of India's 'living treasures'.⁵² Activating this archive, and marketing nostalgia for French imperial rule as a means of creating a tourist haven, offers an alternative to an Anglophone India characterised by untrammelled industrial expansion, continuing poverty and, in recent years, social unrest and uneasy sexual politics.

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⁵¹ Tata Economic Consultancy Services, '20 Year Perspective Plan for Tourism in Union Territory of Pondicherry [sic]', p. 43 <<http://tourism.gov.in/CMSPagePicture/file/marketre-search/statewise20yrsplan/pondicherry.pdf>> [accessed 20 August 2013]. These findings have also been suggested by other economic commentators; see, for example,

<<http://www.thehindubusinessline.in/2002/07/20/stories/2002072002430500.htm>> [accessed 20 August 2013].

⁵² S. S. Jeevan, 'Pondicherry: French Accent', in 'Priceless Heritage: Thirty Living Treasures that Binds India with its Eternal Past', *India Today*, 2 October 2006 <<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/heritage-sites-of-india/1/180483.html>> [accessed 2 April 2013].

Souvenirs de Kate

J'ai fait la connaissance de Kate Marsh il y a dix ans. Venait alors de naître à l'Université de Liverpool l'idée d'un projet autour de l'Inde. De façon tout à fait fortuite, j'apparus dans le projet comme « bibliographe ». Il s'agissait de dépouiller tout le fonds des œuvres écrites en français sur l'Inde, avec l'idée d'une triangulation avec la Grande-Bretagne. Il est peu de dire que je maîtrisais peu le sujet, non plus que la méthodologie. Mes voyages à Liverpool étaient toujours teintés d'angoisse et d'attente : une fois passée la première angoisse du vol EasyJet (partira ? partira pas ? avec combien de retard ? vers Liverpool, vraiment ?), il fallait se confronter à des résultats qui n'allaient pas bien, pas vite, à des fonds qui se révélaient de plus en plus sans fond, à des « bruits », dans la recherche bibliographique, de plus en plus sonores, sauvages, inquiétants, divers. Mais il y avait aussi l'exaltation, réelle, de revoir les gens de l'équipe: Ian Magedera, Charles Forsdick, Nicki Frith... et Kate. Tous ces gens brassaient avec une maîtrise et un brio qui me semblaient hors de ma portée les liens entre la littérature et l'histoire, la chronologie et la politique, les théories subalternes, le postcolonial et les fonds d'archives... ; et ils le faisaient avec une humilité et une simplicité, et, disons-le, une cordialité et une convivialité qui ne pouvaient que laisser coïte toute chercheuse française habituée à des univers moins policés et moins courtois — à moins évidemment que le fossé de la langue ne m'ait tenue à l'écart de certaines subtilités langagières et relationnelles — mais j'en doute.

Je ne sais exactement à quel moment, au cours de ces deux ans, et après, j'ai commencé à me lier *un peu plus* à Kate. Je ne peux pas me vanter d'être devenue une de ses amies, à mon grand regret, mais j'aime à penser que s'était tissé entre nous un lien fragile et sûr de complicité, de connivence, de tendresse, et, de ma part, de grande admiration. Était-ce parce que je me noyais au milieu de ces corpus, qu'elle l'avait vu, empathique et fine comme elle l'était, et qu'elle avait tendu un jour, au coin d'un ascenseur, au détour d'une conversation, une main secourable? Brillante, elle l'était — est-ce la peine de le dire, de le répéter, c'est une évidence pour tous ceux qui l'ont connue. Mais ce lien s'est tissé ailleurs, à côté, en biais, de ce projet de recherche, pour qui d'autres brillants sujets étaient mes interlocuteurs — Ian, Charles, Nicki, de qui j'ai tant appris. Évidemment, Kate a été *aussi* pour ce sujet une ressource, une mine incroyable: sa connaissance des planches françaises n'est pas pour rien dans ce goût pour le théâtre qu'elle a contribué à faire émerger chez moi. Et je me souviens de ma lecture de son ouvrage sur l'Inde, et des « oh » et des « ah » que faisaient naître chez moi la finesse de ses remarques, son écriture ciselée, son incroyable érudition. C'était donc cela la recherche! — j'avais fréquenté des gens terriblement savants, précis, enthousiastes — mais ils s'étaient rarement incarnés dans la fine silhouettede d'une jeune femme rayonnante, aux sourires brusques et déchirants, aux rires francs et si sincères. À côté d'elle, désormais, les sachants sont bien tristes, et les mandarins encore plus insupportables.

À côté donc de ce projet, je vis Kate — toujours un peu en secret, rien que nous deux, je ne sais même plus pourquoi. Elle me donnait rendez-vous dans ce Liverpool qu'elle aimait. Pour moi, Liverpool se résume désormais à ces pubs, ces bars, ces restaurants, que Kate connaissait et dans lesquels elle m'emmenait. Des endroits élégants, meubles en bois doux, atmosphère feutrée, bière fraîche et conversations drôles et gaies. Je me souviens de nos échanges, si riants. Germaine Tillon! Nous nous découvriions la même admiration pour cette femme. Les anecdotes s'enchaînaient. Et j'ai encore cette ponctuation katiennne dans l'oreille : « Exaaaaactly! » ; une approbation tonitruante, comme si ce que je venais de dire rencontrait une vérité universelle, une forme d'attention à l'autre, une façon de le mettre en valeur, de montrer que l'on est important, pour elle, que cette conversation a du poids, de la valeur, du sens – dans ces carrières qui en manquent tant.

Elle ne m'a jamais manqué, même après ces années de Liverpool, parce qu'elle a toujours été là. Un mail retissait le lien par-dessus la Manche, elle était la même, toujours là, pleine de projets, joyeuse. Avec sa vie, sa vie pas facile, dont elle parlait, mais la tenant pudiquement à distance.

Lorsque j'ai reçu les mails de Ian et de Charles, qui annonçaient de mauvaises nouvelles, quelque chose s'est lentement fissuré en moi. Les mails avec Kate ont repris. Pleine de projets, de

joie et d'avenir, elle répondait, elle était là; tandis que je pense qu'elle savait, qu'elle savait que je savais, que je savais qu'elle savait, mais que nous n'en dirions rien. Le mail suspendu, ne restait que le temps de l'indignation et de la colère. Pourquoi elle? Cette si fine chercheuse en littérature, elle connaissait les ficelles du mélodrame. Quel Dieu vengeur et cruel applique ces règles à la vie?

Dix ans après notre première rencontre, elle n'est plus là. Nous avons souvent évoqué cette thématique de la perte. « *Loss* ». Celle de l'Inde, en l'occurrence. Comme ce mot est sombre et vide quand il s'applique à Kate. A moins qu'elle ne nous ait donné cela aussi, en offrande, pour mesurer la fragilité des choses, et que tout est précieux. Parce que, vraiment, cela ne peut pas être pour RIEN.

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Mot juste?: A Thoroughly Un-Nostalgic Eulogy to my PhD Supervisor, the Late, Great Professor Kate Marsh to Whom I owe my Livelihood

There are certain words and phrases that I will always associate with my PhD supervisor Professor Kate Marsh. Eschew, elide, *comptoirs*, 'subaltern colonizer', diachronic, synchronic and, of course, '*mot juste?*' often accompanied by a question mark that felt like a raised eyebrow. These are words and phrases that she used liberally, the latter to correct any attempt on my part to wield big, academic words without a proper handle on their meaning.

Almost immediately, Kate sussed out that I was not an academic (she had a nose for these kinds of things), but in the weeks leading up to our first supervision, I had fooled myself into thinking that I was. Those weeks were spent in the British Library's India Office Records in the hope of finding a place to start by the osmotic process of at least being in the right place. I remember walking up to the front desk and announcing my intention to write a thesis on the French in India. The receptionist wearily congratulated me and pointed me in the direction of the 'Reader Pass Office'.

I set about preparing for my first meeting with Dr Marsh (as she was then) by reading my way through the postcolonial works of Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Although I only partly understood what I was reading, it began a process that would bring the already-wobbly edifice of school-taught facts about the great Age of Exploration and the wonders of the Industrial Revolution tumbling to the ground. But no sooner had I got my head around the idea that there existed a colonial binary (through which the colonized 'other' was constructed in opposition to the western 'self') was I presented with Kate's work, which turned the whole thing on its side.

Already in her very *real* thesis (as opposed to the fictional one I carried about in my head), she had identified the limits of Anglophone postcolonial theory, particular when applied to any analysis of French colonial history. While I was busy grappling with the very basics of postcolonial discourse, Kate was leading the way in comparative colonial research, boldly taking on the so-called 'Holy Trinity' of colonial-discourse analysis (the aforementioned Said, Bhabha, and Spivak) and its focus on a binary opposition between the colonizer and the colonized by offering 'an alternative model with which to examine [French] colonialism'.⁵³

She did this, quite brilliantly, by taking the example of 'the little-known French colonial presence on the Indian subcontinent until 1962' and showing how this history offers a new model for analysis: 'French-language writing on India,' she wrote, 'cannot be examined and appreciated fully without engaging methodologically with France's politically subordinate status in India.'⁵⁴ Published two years into my PhD, her single-authored monograph *Fictions of 1947:*

⁵³ Kate Marsh, *Fictions of 1947: Representations of Indian Decolonization 1919-1962* (Oxford and New York: Peter Lang, 2007), pp. 12–13.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

Representations of Indian Decolonization 1919–1962 set out to challenge ‘the commonly accepted binary between colonizer and colonizer, proposing in its place a triangular model composed of the colonized (India), the “subaltern” colonizer (France), and the dominant colonizer (Britain).’⁵⁵

It would take me at least two years of reading and re-reading her thesis to really and truly understand what she meant by that. Until that point, I merely said what she said in the hope that no one would spot the difference. You see, there are lots of us around, masquerading as academics, and only very few are the genuine article. When I met Kate, I was absolutely certain that she was the real McCoy. Die-hard. Hard-core. Book-reading. Book-loving. Intellectual.

I found her utterly terrifying.

Her response to the first piece of work I ever submitted set the tone for our initial supervisions. The chapter concerned E.M. Forster’s *A Passage to India*. I was convinced I’d discovered something terribly clever about the all-important scene in the Marabar Cave from which the young Adela Quested inexplicably flees, resulting in Dr Aziz being wrongfully accused of molestation by the white colonial Britishers. My submission was excessively long and written in a swirling, flowery poetic prose, crammed to the margins with big words like ‘interstitial,’ ‘monolithic’ and ‘Hegelian dialectic’. After Kate reminded me that ‘a thesis is not a creative writing course’ and recommended that I both ‘read and thoroughly absorb some academic articles’ and ‘digest the MHRA Style Guide’ before submitting the next piece, she handed over her comments, which we worked through with agonizing meticulousness.

Examples included: ‘Please avoid mixed metaphors. They are inappropriate in academic writing’; ‘Are you SURE that you are using the correct term here?’; ‘I do not understand your title. REWORK’; ‘Please be careful of this willy-nilly use of the term “subaltern”’; ‘Unpack!’; ‘You need TEXTUAL EVIDENCE’; and ‘Evidence for this???’ There were times when she sounded almost desperate in her disbelief at my ignorance: ‘Please, please, please be careful of such terms.’ I could receive as many as six ‘?????’ which meant I’d done something spectacularly stupid. At other times, she would bellow her frustration through a liberal use of capitalization: ‘WHAT EXACTLY DO YOU MEAN BY THIS?’; ‘CHECK THIS PLEASE’; ‘WHAT IS YOUR PURPOSE HERE?????’; ‘WHOSE THEORIES ARE YOU EMPLOYING??’. But my personal favourite was always ‘*Mot juste?*’; a phrase she always italicized in accordance the correct MHRA Style Guide regulations. When I received the occasional **GOOD** in bold, I would be ridiculously delighted.

The problem, as I soon began to appreciate, was that Kate’s knowledge was vast. She had genuinely read, digested and was able to quote from every single reference that I ever came across. Supervisions with Kate were like walking through a living, breathing library that spanned not just the French in India, but also the vast expanse of French and British colonial and national histories. She once told me that she had read more or less every book on India available in the *Bibliothèque Nationale de France*. I could picture her sat in that behemoth of a library, chewing through the books for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Even in my final year, when I laid my hands on a copy of this obscure, early twentieth-century pornographic ‘novel,’ it turned out she’d read that too. ‘I needed a good wash after reading that one!’ she said.

Her rigorousness could be exhausting, but it went hand-in-hand with everything that made her an outstanding academic and, ultimately, someone on whom I could always rely. I have yet to come across anyone who would respond to emails so quickly, almost as if she was just waiting for the request to come in. Even in the last weeks of her life (even then!), she was still answering emails with far greater speed than the vast majority of people I know. I marvel at how she managed to fit it all in, making mincemeat out of the hours in the day, even as she lived on borrowed time.

Her exacting demands were counterbalanced by the other side of Kate that emerged outside of the confines of academia. She would regularly take me and my fellow PhD student, Katy Dale, out for lunch. We would try to pay our share, but she would dismiss us like naughty school children. We’d go to the Everyman Theatre Café where she’d indulge us with the latest departmental gossip and we’d complain about the lot of PhD students, or where she’d explain the

⁵⁵ Ibid.

purpose of the upcoming strike action and we'd seek her advice on any manner of personal crises. She often liked to say, 'I'm sorry' at the beginning of sentences, but she almost never meant it. It was just a prelude for a blistering attack against the paucity of someone's opinion, the feebleness of their actions, the deficiency of their intellect, or the patriarchal nature of their behaviour. She would tell us stories accompanied with a laugh that was full of sounds, words and thoughts, tripping over each other too fast. And when people asked her to clarify her name, she would say, without a hint of mirth, 'Marsh, as in Bog.'

By the time I was transitioning from my third to my fourth year, with my new-born son in tow, Kate's second book was already out and published: *India in the French Imagination: Peripheral Voices, 1754–1815* (2009). Having already written on twentieth-century representations of Indian decolonization, this second monograph focused on the eighteenth- and early-nineteenth period in which India was 'lost' under the empire of the *ancien régime*. Since my research was located in the mid-nineteenth century (on the first war of Indian independence, 1857–59), I found myself sandwiched between two centuries. I could hardly claim to be the meat, of course: more like a thin layer of butter, or perhaps a bit of mustard, between the hefty doorstops of Kate's thought.

It is unsurprising then that, in reading back over her work, I now see how much she influenced me, not just in terms of the immediate PhD thesis (the real one this time), but also in terms of my thought processes, my ways of working and my future research interests in memories of slavery, the afterlives of empire and the ways in which (post-)colonial nostalgia continues to weedle its way into contemporary life.

Her focus on the nostalgia for India's 'loss' and the ways that it marked the French colonial imagination was fully explored in her second monograph, as well as our co-edited collection, *France's Lost Empires: Fragmentation, Nostalgia and La Fracture Coloniale* (2011). In both of these works, she challenged what she termed the 'infelicitous periodization' that had resulted in a convenient separation between the empires of the *ancien régime* and the Third Republic.⁵⁶ 'Eschewing traditional periodizations,' she wrote, means revealing the 'continuities in representational strategies and cultural preoccupations' across time.⁵⁷ It also means illuminating, as she wrote in the introduction to *France's Lost Empires*, 'how perceptions of territorial loss sustained continuities [...] which informed subsequent manifestations of French imperialism, and which, indeed, are evident today in metropolitan representations and memories of empire'.⁵⁸ Nostalgia, she stated, was sewn into very fabric of French empire building, its 'tropes of loss' revealing 'much about the complex persistence of ideas concerning France's identity as a colonial power both during and after the periods of colonization'.⁵⁹

In the introduction to her second monograph, she describes her work as diachronic in terms of its time span, but synchronic in its ability to reach down into the specificities of particular events within that longer history. This oscillation between understanding history at both the macro level of the *longue durée* and at the micro level of the specific event was typical of her ability to move between different kinds of materials (historical texts, fictional works, travelogues, administrative reports, philosophical and theoretical writings, and commercial and political tracts), across different time periods (from the eighteenth century through to the present day) and into different geographical locations all connected by the history of colonialism and exploitation.

I found the same considered eclecticism in the selection of texts that she requested be put together for her 'Memorial Celebration'. Baudelaire's melancholic 'spleen' poems appears three times like a supporting structure, and is interspersed with Philip Larkin, Hayden White, John Donne, Seamus Heaney, Robert Louis Stevenson, Simone de Beauvoir, Henry Rousso

⁵⁶ Kate Marsh, *India in the French Imagination: Peripheral Voices, 1754–1815* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2009), p. 2.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Kate Marsh and Nicola Frith, *France's Lost Empires: Fragmentation, Nostalgia and La Fracture Coloniale* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2011), p. 2.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

and Jane Austen: poets, historians, novelists and philosophers capable of expressing all the sadness, passion and desperation of life with wit, insightfulness and piercing resignation. I smiled when a particular quotation brought back memories, like Hayden White, who she insisted I read because it changed everything about the way that she saw history. History writing was nothing more than narrative. Nothing more than representation. ‘Go and read it,’ she said, and I did.

‘Mot juste?’ I use it now with my own PhD students. Sitting at my desk, reading through their latest chapters, I feel the trace of her thoughts and words within me. As I cast a critical eye over my own students’ work, I am acutely aware that it is Kate who trained my eyes to see, and whose training seems to inflect so much of what I do today. As with all those who play such an important role in creating the people that we are, they never truly leave us, but remain in our gestures, thoughts and ways of thinking. Kate’s ghost is a friendly one, but with a powerful presence. I’ve have had her sitting by my side as I write this, her critical eye looking over my shoulder, checking for any hints of self-indulgence, inaccuracy or, god forbid, nostalgia...

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BOOK REVIEWS

Post-Migratory Cultures in Postcolonial France. Edited by KATHRYN KLEPPINGER and LAURA REECK. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2018. 286 pp. Hb £80.00. ISBN Hb 9781786941138.

This edited volume by Kathryn Kleppinger and Laura Reeck brings together recent scholarship in the field of the post-migratory postcolonial. While no precise definition is given of the concept, post-migratory postcolonial cultures stem from artists born to immigrants ('post-migratory', a concept pioneered by Elleke Boehmer and Ahmed Gamal) from former colonial territories ('postcolonial') who bring their specificity to French republicanism. A total of thirteen chapters, an introduction and an afterword, alongside illustrations give the reader an overview of important concepts and developments relating to contemporary French society such as transnationalism, activism, 'high' (and 'low') cultures, and the avant-garde.

In their introduction, the editors indicate the historical background (colonisation and immigration) before devoting an important section to the theoretical underpinnings of the articles, namely the field of study surrounding post-migratory postcolonial minorities. The various contributions to the present publication focus on French cultural production in French, whether seen through a postcolonial or a transnational lens. The editors note that '[s]ince 2005, there has been an intensification of interest around France's internal diversity' (p. 12) in public debate, through exhibitions and opinion pieces in new media, such as the *Bondy Blog* and various Twitter accounts.

The book is divided into four main sections which each form a 'whole' in the sense that all chapters in each section 'talk to each other', and, combined, offer a general view of a particular aspect of these post-migratory cultures. The first section is entitled 'Generations and Designations' and features three chapters on media engagement and the communitarian question (chapter written by Jennifer Fredette); on banlieue writers and their struggle for literary recognition (by Kaoutar Harchi); and on Francophone and post-migratory Afropeans (by Christopher Hogarth). In all these articles, the concept of activism plays a central role. The portrayed emerging artists all strive to make an impact on French society (and beyond) in view of challenging the status quo and proposing new ways of living together.

Section two, 'Postmemory, or Telling the Past to the Present', also has three chapters. Leslie Barnes writes about memory work in Franco-Cambodian cinematographer Dany Chou. A similar approach on the transmission of memory can be found in Catherine Nguyen's analysis of Vietnamese Minh Tran Huy's storytelling through her novels. The third chapter in this section allows Susan Ireland to study narratives which witness the life experiences of harkis. This section coherently brings together questions of memory and how memory links second- and third-generation migrants both to their old and new 'homelands'. It gives a voice to those migratory and post-migratory groups within French society which have been silenced for a long time, mostly because of the trauma their families experienced from war and displacement but also because of the fact that 'traditional' French society never welcomed them with open arms.

The three chapters in the third section, 'Urban Cultures/Identities', all examine questions relating to urban cultures and identities. The first and second contributions, 'Redefining Frenchness through Urban Music and Literature: the Case of Rapper-Writers Abd Al Malik and Disiz' by Stève Puig and "'Double Discourse": Critiques of Racism and Islamophobia in French Rap' by Chong Bretilon respectively, examine the production, both musical and literary, of rappers and youth identities. In the third contribution, Céline Sciamma's film *Bande de filles* is analysed by Will Higbee. The film has been examined prior to Higbee's contribution, but the current study specifically focuses on the intersections of gender and race. This whole third section best exemplifies the post-migratory as an important conceptual category which encourages us, as readers and researchers, to redefine (trans)national identity and to rearticulate relationships between the local and global, as this part of the volume includes young artists' search for identity

(vis à vis gender, race and culture) through music and literature.

Section four, 'Imaginations in Visual Languages', brings together four chapters relating to various visual art forms and the ways in which these cultural expressions deal with race, identity, and history. As such, Felicia McCarren focuses on hip-hop and possible tensions between particularism and universalism in Mourad Merzouki and Katter Attou's hip-hop dances. Leslie Kealhofer-Kemp in turn discusses representations of diversity and difference in minority mixed couples on the big screen in movies like 'Il reste du jambon' (Depetrini, 2010), 'Le nom des gens' (Leclerc, 2010), 'Le Noir (te) vous va si bien' (Bral, 2012), 'Harissa mon amour' (Dantec, 2013) and 'Prêt à tout' (Calache, 2014), among others. Ilaria Vitali argues that cartoonists like Farid Boudjellal, Halim Mahmoudi and the Gargouri sisters 'negotiate the iconographic memories of their families while also exploring the social and geographic exclusion they see around them' (p. 18). In her chapter, Siobhán Shilton highlights the contributions made by El Seed's Arabic graffiti in Paris, Gabès, Rio de Janeiro and Cairo in view of bridging cultural divides. 'Calligrafiti' is the term Shilton and others use to describe contemporary wall art through the relationship between calligraphy or decorative handwriting and graffiti which refers to writing scribbled or scratched onto something. Her conclusion can be read as a general conclusion to the whole volume, namely that various contemporary art works evoke 'cultural identity as multilayered and shifting,' as 'post-migratory' and 'migratory', while at the same time pointing 'to the incongruities and tensions between cultures' (p. 254) but also inviting all stakeholders to coexist and dialogue.

Alec G. Hargreaves and Mark McKinney provide a fitting summary and conclusion in their afterword entitled 'A Long Road to Travel'. As the first major contributors to the debate surrounding postcolonial minorities through their 1997 study *Post-Colonial Cultures in France*, devoted to the creative works by writers, musicians, and other artists born to immigrant parents from former French colonies, these authors are well-placed to list a number of challenges and obstacles such as discrimination, exclusion and subjectivisation, and in particular to full access to the literary and artistic establishment in France. They critically discuss the diverse contributions and the main issues raised in the present volume. They caution us, the readers, that if we want to encounter a more harmonious society, 'a long journey still lies ahead on the road from a neocolonial to a post/colonial France' (p. 271).

In addition to the positive points raised above, citations were kept in their original language and translated in a footnote from French into English when needed. The authors of the chapters are seasoned researchers and PhD candidates; this mix ensures innovation in approaches and sound theoretical bases to the chapters. The writing style of the chapters is clear enough to allow readers from various backgrounds, in particular those interested in contemporary France and (post-)migration studies, to benefit from the wealth of experience and critical thought offered by the different contributors. In all, this is a useful research document which successfully describes and discusses the cultural productions of post-migratory (second- and third generation) postcolonial minorities.

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Over Seas of Memory. By MICHAËL FERRIER. Trans. by MARTIN MUNRO. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2018. xi + 211 pp. Pb \$19.95. ISBN Pb 978-1-4962-1320-4.

In Francophone postcolonial studies, we have long been familiar with the idea that fiction can play a vanguard function in the processes of recovering colonial pasts — and of reflecting on their meanings in the present. Didier Daeninckx's *Meurtres pour mémoire* is exemplary in this regard, foreshadowing—the slow emergence from historiographic and memorial silence the massacre by French police on 17 October 1961 of up to 200 peaceful FLN demonstrators. As the recent publication of *Le Roman noir de l'histoire* (Verdier, 2019), a monumental collection of 76 short stories tracking French history between 1855 and the present (and imagining possible futures until 2030),

makes clear, much of Daeninckx's oeuvre has demonstrated such an approach. This is evident also in key works such as *Cannibale* and *Le Retour d'Atai*, whose role is to explore the entangled stories of France and its former colonies. Numerous other works have used fiction to articulate the unspoken (and often unspeakable), including prominent prize-winning texts such as Alexis Jenni's *L'Art français de la guerre*.

The role of Michaël Ferrier in this wider recent harnessing of the novel to an unsilencing of the colonial past is a significant one. Martin Munro's translation of *Over Seas of Memory* will further consolidate Ferrier's reputation for generically experimental works that grapple with the ambiguities and lacunae of twentieth-century history. Born in 1967 and now resident in Japan, Ferrier remains an outsider figure. His writings are eclectic, ranging from the essayistic descriptions of Tokyo in the kanji-inspired *Tokyo, petits portraits de l'aube* (2004), via the ecological reflection of *Fukushima, récit d'un désastre* (2014), to his most recent work, the ludic and semi-autobiographical *Scrabble* (2019), recollections of his adolescence in war-torn Chad told through fragments associated with the eponymous boardgame he regularly played.

Mémoires d'outre-mer is a text from 2015, written in the wake of Sarkozy's presidency and responding to the instrumentalization of state-sanctioned colonial memory that characterized the opening decade of the twenty-first century. Patrick Chamoiseau's preface to the work sets the tone for the narrative gymnastics that will ensue. The novel, he says, is to be read in a Glissantian frame, with the connections it evokes understood in the context of familiar concepts such as 'Relation' and 'Tout-Monde'. Despite the Indian Ocean context of the work, it is accordingly not surprising that the translator of the novel, Martin Munro, is one of the most important critics of Francophone Caribbean literature currently active in the Anglophone world. Ostensibly a family story, *Over Seas of Memory* is centred on the mystery of three tombs in Mahajanga cemetery in Madagascar: 'three stone rectangles [...] placed on the land like ships cutting across the water' (p. 1). The identity of those buried in two of them is revealed in the opening chapter: the author's grandfather Maxime Ferrier and his friend Arthur Dai Zong. The novel recounts the narrator's quest to discover who lies in the third.

In *L'Archipel de morts* (1989), sociologist and semiotician Jean-Didier Urbain demonstrated how the cemetery may be seen as the most effective way of approaching another culture. Ferrier seems to believe the same as he negotiates this site of memory in which French troops lie alongside the British dead, revealing traces of nineteenth-century colonial rivalry as well as the occupation of the island under Vichy: 'memories do not so much tear each other apart', he notes, 'rather, they reinforce each other' (p. 4). The novel describes a search — in France and in Madagascar; sifting through the colonial ephemera preserved in shoeboxes and suitcases; negotiating the oral memories of those left often anachronistically in the wake of empire — for an account of Maxime's journey from Mauritius to Madagascar and then of his life on the island he subsequently never left. It is an account of 'wanting to trap a ghost' (p. 25). But this is also a tale of interdependency: of the personal and the public, the familial and the collective; but also of France and its *outre-mer*: 'Madagascar, Mauritius and the Indian Ocean are integral parts of the history of France: you cannot understand France if you don't include these places and a few others as well' (13). There is a shuttling between past and present, with an intertextual weaving-in of other contemporary works — Perec and Bober's *Récits d'Ellis Island*, Benguigui's *Mémoires d'immigrés*, Le Clézio's *L'Africain* — that reflect on questions of departure and arrival, of rupture and belonging.

As Ferrier's quest unfolds and as he slowly discovers family histories long silenced, it becomes apparent that his story has transcended the personal to allow reflection on the postcolonial and transnational more generally. One chapter is entitled the 'colonial specter', and the novel actively locates itself in relation to discussions of the afterlives of empire. The author comments knowingly on 'lieux de mémoire' identified by Pierre Nora, but his interest is in their limitations, in the ways in which they 'stop at the borders of the Hexagon' (p. 34). *Over Seas of Memory* is part of an ongoing rewriting of Frenchness, a challenge to the 'root-identities' on which discussions of national identities often depend and an acknowledgement of their replacement with the 'rhizome-identities' that Glissant, via Deleuze and Guattari, would evoke. A journalist

interviewing Ferrier at the end of the novel expresses his confusion: ‘Okay, where were we: Mauritius, Madagascar, Goa, Indians and Portuguese, merchants, tailors, adventurers, Alsace, Germany, Algeria... Your family is a bit complicated then, you might say! And what does that all add up to?’ (p. 206). In response, the novelist cites the Maurice Chevalier song popular during the phoney war in 1939, ‘Ça fait d’excellents Français’. The choice is a striking one, for much of the novel evokes memories that are multidirectional, linking in particular colonial history with that of Vichy, suggesting that occupied Madagascar encapsulated the artificial foreclosure of debates about memory: ‘the French speak to the French and only to the French, without, however, really knowing anymore what exactly is a Frenchman or woman’ (p. 186).

Ferrier’s focus is elsewhere, in part translating to the Indian Ocean the Walcottian concept of sublimated historiography, of history as ‘submarine’:

Maxime and Arthur lived all their lives outre-mer, overseas. A whole life under and beyond the sea. They are there, perched, at the edges. They are aquatic beings, their lives unfold in tributaries, currents of corals and reeds. They are almost always at the same place, and at the same time they travel abundantly. As soon as they can, they grab a boat and take to the seas (p. 98).

Yet at the same time, *Over Seas of Memory* is about the explosive potential of the recovery of personal pasts that resist the official logic of centre and periphery, of the important and the insignificant: ‘Exploring the margins, the silences, such has always been one of the secrets of the act of writing. In the official history of France, memoirs are like bombs – perfectly ingenious devices, cluster bombs or time bombs. They alone reveal the complexity of the times, their animated torment, their secret turbulences’ (p. 131). Ferrier’s novel is an elegantly incendiary work, a reminder that the *outré-mer* is not the ‘confetti of Empire’ to which de Gaulle reduced it, but instead an essential element in understanding France and the wider Francosphere in their complex postcoloniality. Martin Munro has reflected elsewhere on the challenges of rendering Ferrier’s work into English:

[...] the outre-mer remains peculiarly untranslatable, an elsewhere, an ailleurs, and perhaps also a d’ailleurs, a moreover, a besides, an afterthought and an adjunct to France, still not accepted, as Ferrier’s work persuasively and elegantly argues, as it should be, as an integral, vital, sonorous part of France’s transnational history.⁶⁰

We should be indebted to him for making this important work available to a wider audience through such a lucid and thoughtful translation.

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Les Tirailleurs sénégalais entre le Rhin et la Méditerranée (1908-1939) : parcours d’une aristocratie de la baïonnette. By OUSSEYNOU FAYE. Paris, L’Harmattan. 2018. 295 pp. Pb 31€. ISBN Pb 978-2-343-14081-0.

Des tirailleurs sénégalais se racontent. By ABDOUL SOW. Préface du général du corps d’armée Cheikh Gueye, chef d’état-major des armées. Dakar, L’Harmattan-Sénégal. 2018. 407 pp. Pb 38€. ISBN Pb 978-2343-14969-1.

⁶⁰ Martin Munro, ‘The Elsewhere and the Overseas in Michaël Ferrier’s *Mémoires d’outré-mer*’, *Revue critique de fiction française contemporaine*, 16 (2018), <http://www.revue-critique-de-fiction-francaise-contemporaine.org/rcffc/article/view/fx16.11> [accessed 8 November 2019].

Thiaroye 44: scénario inédit. By BEN DIOGAYE BEYE & BOUBACAR BORIS DIOP. Présentation de Martin Mourre avec la collaboration de Roger Little. Paris, L'Harmattan. 2018. xxvi + 227 pp. Pb 21.50€. ISBN Pb 978-2-343-14708-6.

Morts par la France. By PATRICE PERNA (scénario) and NICOLAS OTERO (dessin). Paris, Les Arènes. 2018. 131 pp. Hb 20€. ISBN Pb 978-2-35204-739-1.

Frère d'âme. By DAVID DIOP. Paris, Éditions du Seuil. 2018. 174 pp. Pb 17€. ISBN Pb 978-2-02-139824-3.

The motley group of books listed above — two histories, a film scenario, a bande dessinée and a novel — have in common the various ways in which, in 2018, they revisit the prominent role of the so-called *tirailleurs sénégalais*, both in the two world wars and in other historical events. Ousseynou Faye's book is a notable example of this, covering the involvement of the *tirailleurs sénégalais* in the 'pacification' of Morocco, then in World War I, but also, most interestingly, in the Middle East up to the beginning of World War II. Divided into two parts, each containing three chapters, the book traces chronologically first 'Les premières expériences en Méditerranée (1908-1918)', then 'Défis et nouveautés dans l'entre-deux-guerres'. Four brief appendices are followed by a bibliography but, regrettably, not by an index. Statistical tables, plans and maps help visualise different aspects of the various conflicts. While witnesses from literature can be of value, such as in the case of Raymond Escholier, one of the few novelists who wrote of the 'Front d'Orient' in works such as *Mahmadou Fofana*, Faye seems unaware of his correspondence from the Eastern front (published in 2013 under the title *Avec les tirailleurs sénégalais*). Their testimony is given the same status as that of historians, a practice which inevitably raises doubts. The coverage of the book extends the period and geography usually considered with respect to the *tirailleurs sénégalais* — beyond 1914–18 and the Hexagon — and this alone makes it a valuable contribution for anyone interested in the part they played on behalf of a so-called *mère-patrie* which was not their own.

The late Abdoul Sow's book is more of a pig's ear. Divided into four parts and a total of fourteen chapters, it intersperses synthetic or analytical essays with interviews of individual former *tirailleurs* or their descendants undertaken by his students and is written with the rather heavy hand of a military historian. Case histories delve back into the late nineteenth century (part 1, some 30 pages), relate to World War I (part 2, 40 pages), World War II (part 3, 200 pages, some 150 of which are devoted to the massacre at Thiaroye), Indochina, Madagascar and Algeria (part 4, some 80 pages). The historical and emotional impact of the events at Thiaroye, particularly on a Senegalese writer, are understandable: for a more dispassionate French historian's view, one might turn to Martin Mourre's *Thiaroye 1944: histoire et mémoire d'un massacre colonial* (2017). Mourre also presents, in 2018, the 'scénario inédit' of *Thiaroye 44* of Ben Diogaye Beye and Boubacar Boris Diop's unrealised film. A bibliography rife with errors (forenames being confused with surnames, producing some double entries) is followed by an index of place names and two brief factual appendices. The book provides the author with the opportunity to publish some lectures he had given on various occasions and the interviews give precious insights into the experiences and thinking of former *tirailleurs*. While the horrendous events of 1st December 1944 at Thiaroye are given prominence, they unbalance the book and offer a clear case of an historian unable to remain dispassionate about his subject, so that while they are pored over in the greatest detail, the result is a rather confused picture. No doubt this is partly due to the incomplete, contradictory and downright mendacious documentation available (some archives still being considered 'secrets d'État' and so not made available to scholars). Paradoxically, a clearer picture of the massacre and an état présent of our knowledge of it emerges from the powerful bande dessinée entitled *Morts par la France*, of which Armelle Mabon (the new 2019 edition of whose *Prisonniers de guerre 'indigènes'* contains an additional chapter on the events at Thiaroye) is both the inspiration and the heroine.

Her relentless search for the truth is its very subject, and its condemnation of the massacre is no less passionate than Sow's, but the impact is greater.

Finally, David Diop's superb novel, the qualities of which were recognised by the award of the *Goncourt des lycéens*, revisits the history of the *tirailleurs* in the First World War but does so through an individual's experience, that of the Senegalese Alfa Ndiaye, of the appalling death of his 'plus que frère' friend and compatriot Mademba Diop and the moral dilemma that he faces. In the emotionally powerful start to the novel, Diop's guts are hanging out as he pleads with Ndiaye to finish him off. Should one kill a friend, even knowing that he is suffering intensely and that he is bound to die? Ndiaye cannot bring himself to do so. The resonances of that dilemma course throughout the novel, which provides flashbacks to the friend's life in their village and, in the process, touches on spiritual as well as sexual initiation. But the moral question has broader resonances in colonial societies: atavistic attitudes lead to quasi-apartheid situations; paternalistic ones may well not avoid a similar outcome; abuses must be denounced, but is anyone listening? *Frère d'âme*, a nice play on the military expression *frère d'arme*, is a rare case of a *tirailleur sénégalais* writing, as it were, in the first person, making up for the lack of first-person writings, let alone narratives, by *tirailleurs*, the traditional colonial fear of 'natives' being educated remaining in force. It makes a fine sequel to Diop's first novel, *1889: l'attraction universelle*, in which African visitors to the 1889 exhibition are diverted into a human zoo. In both novels, as in the other works considered here, the authors take a postcolonial view of colonial phenomena.

Historians and creative writers are thus still fascinated by the ambiguities inherent in the colonial situation — and one cannot understand the postcolonial without analyzing the colonial — which is in turn encapsulated in the figure of the *tirailleur*. Reviewing these disparate productions of a single year shows that whatever the mode of expression, the search continues to explore the injustices and violence of colonialism that lie at the heart of racism both then and now.

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Postcolonial Paris: Fictions of Intimacy in the City of Light. By LAILA AMINE. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2018. 241pp. Pb \$44.95. ISBN Pb 978-0-299-31580-1.

Postcolonial Paris by Laila Amine is a study of the representation of Paris in migrant/expatriate literature and visual culture from the Maghreb and the United States of America. It is devoted to writings by authors from the French colonies of North Africa and African American expatriate authors. It focuses on their experiences as 'postcolonial others' in Paris. These include Driss Chraïbi's *The Butts* (1955), the short stories entitled 'Island of Hallucination' (undated) and 'This Morning, This Evening, So Soon' (1965) by Richard Wright and James Baldwin, respectively, William Gardner Smith's *The Stone Face* (1963), and Mehdi Charef's *Tea in the Harem* (1983). In addition, Amine examines a movie entitled *Made in France*, in French *Origine Contrôlée* (2001), by Ahmed and Zakia Bouchaala and photography/graffiti art by artists J.R. and Princess Hijab.

Amine starts her analysis with a focus on the manifestation of 'colonial domesticity' in Chraïbi's *The Butts*. She argues that the novel rejects the idea that the relation between the coloniser and the colonised is harmonious. This denial is elaborated through an analysis of the life of Algerian migrants in Paris during the revolutionary war and their daily struggle against segregation and discrimination. She emphasises two types of segregation: racial and sexual. She argues that Algerians, represented by Waldick, one of the protagonists of the novel, are racially profiled in France. She also underlines the sexual frustration of migrants so as to rebuke the racist claim that Algerians are 'oversexed' (p. 45). This kind of analysis reminds me of the connection Frantz Fanon draws between the sexuality of the black and/or colonized 'Other' with his own race in his *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952).

In the second chapter, Amine moves to Black American expatriate literature written by Wright, Baldwin and Smith in order to debunk the myth of ‘color-blindness’ (p. 66) in Paris. Consequently, she draws to their portrayal of ‘interracial romance’ (p. 66) between black and white people. However, she does not limit her analysis to successful inter-racial relations; in addition, she emphasizes the racial problems that emerge out of them. Amine’s choice of these authors is not accidental since she highlights North Africans’ and African Americans’ shared destiny in ‘postcolonial Paris’. Paris is idealised as a space of freedom by Wright and categorized as an oppressive space by Baldwin. However, what distinguishes Smith from Wright and Baldwin is ‘the correlation he makes between African decolonization and the civil rights movement’ (p. 80). This transnational angle corroborates the idea that the French oppressive structures of power use segregationist policies against North-African migrants and expatriate African Americans. Consequently, they are equally oppressed in their home countries and across the Mediterranean or the Atlantic.

In the third chapter, Amine overturns the colonialist use of the ‘harem’ as a place of fantasy for Europeans in order to view the Paris periphery as a ‘new harem’ (p. 90) but without the fantasy. She compares the patriarchal confinement of women in the ‘harem’ to North Africans’ confinement and segregation in the Parisian banlieue. For this purpose, she analyses Charef’s *Tea in the Harem*, where the author disrupts colonial stereotypes. According to her, because of the segregation and surveillance practices that the marginalized Parisians undergo, they tend to engage in ‘powerful cross-racial solidarities’ (p. 95). Sometimes, these solidarities lead to intimacy. However, she claims that there also emerge ‘generational conflict[s] between older and younger people in the banlieue’ (p. 100). She argues that the gap between generations results from problems related to ‘gender and sexuality’. The novel reverses gender norms, but it also views ‘sexuality as spectacle’ (p. 109). The colonialist use of the ‘harem’ was mainly focused on either European men’s phantasmagorical views of Oriental womanhood or the Oriental men’s subjugation of their women. The ‘new harem’, on the other hand, stretches its scope and puts stress on the marginality of the banlieue and its inhabitants, their deprivation of basic necessities, such as running water and cleanliness, and the social conflicts among these people because of the territorial and social marginalisation to which they are subjected. In other words, the ‘*banlieue* [is seen] as a colony within the metropole’ (p. 104).

Reversing gender norms implies the subversion of traditional family values. Another subversive way is portraying queer relationships. This is the focus of Amine’s fourth chapter in which she deals with immigrant ‘queer intimac[y]’ (p. 127), as portrayed in Maghrebi movies. Amine does not focus on the Paris periphery as in previous chapters because it is an ‘oppressive’ space for ‘queer subjects’ (p. 120). Rather, she emphasizes the manifestation of same-sex relations in the centre of Paris which, according to the author, promises ‘anonymity’ (p. 126) for queer migrants. Amine does not limit her analysis to this distinction, but she elaborates on the extent to which ‘queer narratives’ encapsulate class relations and ‘economic differences between France and its former colonies and between the city and its racialized periphery’ (p. 127). She uses *Made in France*, directed by Ahmed and Zakia Bouchaala, to deal with the ‘economic marginalization’ (p. 128) of the periphery and the colony. She associates it with migrants’ successful integration into French society and values (or lack thereof). It follows that the connecting thread between the third and the fourth chapters is the idea of intersectionality. It is clear that these two chapters relate the condition of being a foreigner in French society to other social constructs like class, gender, and sexuality.

Amine ends her study with an investigation of the subversive power of photography and graffiti art produced by J.R. and Princess Hijab. Taking Leila Sebbar’s *The Seine Was Red* (1961) as the literary background to this type of art, she argues that the major role of J.R.’s and Princess Hijab’s street art work is to ‘make the *minorités visibles* central to the capital, in ways that interrogate Paris’s exclusionary cultural expressions’ (p. 148). Princess Hijab uses the hijab as her primary visual material in order to push back against French secular regulation which forbids wearing distinctive religious signs in public places. The purpose of J. R.’s ‘photo-graffiti’ is to humanize the

banlieue by putting ‘a human face on places that [French] national media caricature as lawless, pathological, or subhuman’ (p. 169). Paris has always been seen as a space of artistic expression and refinement, but the Maghreb communities were excluded from this. Therefore, J. R. and Princess Hijab criticize this exclusion by showing that North-African migrants are capable of artistic expression. Their artistic forms also send messages of disavowal to those who continue to stigmatise migrants.

Postcolonial Paris is a holistic analysis of the ‘other Paris’ in the sense that it deals with ‘otherized’ Parisians belonging to a variety of social and national backgrounds. These include marginalised and racialised North-African migrants from the colonial and postcolonial times, African American expatriates whose experiences are compared to the former, disfranchised women, and queer migrants from the Parisian banlieue. Therefore, along with carrying out a postcolonial study of the Paris periphery and its ‘otherized’ inhabitants, Amine overlaps it with gender studies and queer studies. Moreover, it is at the cross-roads of different areas of analysis in cultural studies, including written literature, film, and photography/graffiti art. This interdisciplinarity is what makes the book an even more appropriate material for academic use in varied research endeavours like migration studies, cultural and media studies and discourse analysis.

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Bulletin of Francophone Postcolonial Studies

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The deadline for the receipt of articles to be included in the spring 2020 issue is 2 January 2020.

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