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At the height of the conflict in Nyeri, Tumutumu was encircled by a battalion of Mau Mau fighters, but local historians have been puzzled by why the mission, a symbol of colonialism in Kenya, was never attacked. Peterson quotes witnesses and government documents that show a deep relationship between the Mau Mau and its assumed protagonists. By encircling Tumutumu, Mau Mau fighters may have protected the mission from destruction by enemies of the mission; similarly, the encircling battalion was fed by members of the women's guild. Peterson even suggests that at one point that the Mau Mau and the Homeguard shared a set of beliefs. Peterson quotes government documents showing that members of the Homeguard sat in Dedan Kimathi's war council. This would appear to be a startling claim for those who have come to see the two sides as structurally and ideologically opposed; still, even when they diverged in means—and often ends—the two sides were products of the same institution. Peterson reminds us that Kimathi had been a reader at Tumutumu in his youth and that General China, the leader of Mau Mau forces in the Mount Kenya forest, and his family were prominent members of the Scottish Church. The history of nationalism in Kenya, already imprisoned by postcolonial disputes, is in desperate need of this kind of revisionism.

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Postcolonial Theory and Francophone Literary Studies

ED. H. ADLAI MURDOCH AND ANNE DONADEY

Gainesville: UP of Florida, 2005.

282 pp. ISBN 0-8130-2776-04 cloth. \$65.00.

Packaging Post/Coloniality: The Manufacture of Literary Identity in the Francophone World

BY RICHARD WATTS

Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2005.

ix + 189 pp. ISBN 0-7391-0856-5 paper.

The emergence of a specifically "francophone" field of postcolonial enquiry may seem unnecessary and even hazardous, especially given the French-language origins of much postcolonial thought and the risks of fragmentation that such monolingual approach may seem to imply. The manoeuvre nevertheless serves a two-fold purpose, strategic and provisional, challenging the anglophone emphases of much postcolonial criticism while at the same time permitting "francophone studies" itself to develop (much in the same way as "Commonwealth studies" moved on a decade or so ago). *Postcolonial Theory and Francophone Literary Studies* is the latest in a series of volumes to map the francophone postcolonial field, its specific aim being to explore the

intersections of postcolonial theory and francophone studies. The volume sees its key terms—"francophone" and "postcolonial," the semantic fields of which are rigorously explored in Coursil and Perret's contribution—as enabling rather than disabling, thus avoiding the taxonomic anxiety that tends to paralyze certain strands of postcolonial inquiry. The result demonstrates the variety of approaches, discourses, and critical positions that constitute the field sketched out, ranging from Hurley's opening demolition of postcolonial appropriations of Fanon to Hargreaves's rehabilitation of Barthes as a postcolonial precursor (albeit a problematic one). The complex origins of the francophone field is suggested by Mudimbe-Boyi's study of Toussaint Louverture, and its potentially wide geographical spread illustrated by Brière's serious consideration of Quebec—as colonized and colonizer—in a comparative postcolonial frame. It is Brière (along with Larrier), who additionally tests the limits of the volume's object of study, and explores the implications for francophone identities of transnational and translanguing displacements: Brière presents Dany Laferrière's early work as that of an author "bypassing *la francophonie*" (166) by writing North American literature; and Larrier studies Haitian novelists such as Edwige Danticat, writing in English yet continuing to perform in Krèyol, and accordingly "disturb[ing] the francophone studies frame" (211).

Haitian exceptionalism—or, in other terms, Haiti's precursory status as the producer of a postcolonial literature that has "always been transnational" (217)—provides a clear illustration of the possible contribution to postcolonial debates of these cultural spaces hitherto peripheral to postcolonial studies. The volume similarly demonstrates the potentially constructive input in the elaboration of critical paradigms of thinkers such as Glissant (as well as Khatibi, whose major work is not yet available in English translation). Prabhu and Quayson relate the former's notion of *Relation* to more mainstream (and now more orthodox) postcolonial discussions of hybridity, suggesting the attenuation of the concept that such a wider field of reference permits. Thomas—foregrounding the work of Achille Mbembe—similarly lobbies for the prising open of the postcolonial field by increased attention to the work of "African theorists [. . .] silenced by the economy of words—distribution of knowledge, economics of publication, circulation of human resources in the global academy" (242). Thomas's essay is additionally concerned with the institutional and disciplinary impact inherent in the issues the volume presents, suggesting that "a traditionally conservative version of French studies," resistant to or ignorant of the postcolonial turn, "will inevitably result in its disappearance" (249).

These wider disciplinary implications underpin two key questions that emerge from the collection: the status of the literary, and the status of France itself. In relation to the first, the title's emphasis on francophone *literary* studies is slightly misleading, especially given the claim in the introduction that "this book is not primarily literary criticism" (2) as well as the inclusion of two essays on post/colonial cinema (Woodhull on Pabst's 1938 *Drame de Shanghai*; Harrow on *Mémoires d'immigrés*). Despite the recent work of critics such as Chris Bongie and Nicholas Harrison, many of those active in the francophone postcolonial area remain similarly unclear as to whether their activity represents an extension of cultural studies or a return to the literary. In relation to the second question—i.e., the role to be played by French national culture—the volume's regular return to issues relating to French immigration and its aftermath reveals the challenge to scholarly paradigms of an inevitably and increasingly transnational francophone space. For pragmatic reasons, the editors

endeavor to present “French” and “francophone” as distinct but interconnected terms, but several of their contributors—especially Laronde in his discussion of “Franco-French” literature, or Harrow’s exploration of the French rural roots of the term “bougnon”—reveal the increasing unsustainability of any such division.

It is striking that two of the essays in Murdoch and Donadey’s collection—endeavoring, in response to this uncertainty, to foreground the objects of study of a decolonized, post-national and newly inclusive French studies—allude to Jean-Paul Sartre’s prefaces to early postcolonial texts (Brière, 152; Thomas, 251). Such crosscultural and paratextual connections form the basis of Richard Watts’s outstanding study, *Packaging Post/Coloniality*, a further addition to Lexington’s increasingly impressive “After the Empire” series. What may be seen as the book’s deceptively narrow focus on the francophone paratext disguises a genuine ambition: i.e., to contribute to the history of the post/colonial book, while at the same time exploring the complexities and interdependencies of a wider francophone literary field. There is consequently no exaggeration in the author’s claim that he produces “a cultural history of the relations [...] between France and the francophone postcolonial world” (3). Watts’s approach is refreshing for it draws primarily not on the orthodoxies of postcolonial theory but on Genette’s notion of the paratext. He thus provides a hitherto absent postcolonial dimension to paratextual studies, a move that allows him to track the evolving struggle for authority over the production and interpretation of literature in French.

The study begins with the excavation of a series of early twentieth-century authors from francophone Africa (such as Ahmadou Mapaté Diagne), whose work was legitimated and domesticated by their “official” French colonial prefaces. In a series of interwar Maghrebi and Indochinese texts and paratexts, Watts detects the emergence of a closely policed discourse of hybridized colonial cultures as a colonialism, “profoundly unsure of its cultural superiority” (57), manifests itself in an apparently less “vertical” relationship between the indigenous text and its French preface. He proceeds to write a narrative of the uneven yet progressive loss of metropolitan control in the postwar period. Watts accordingly moves beyond now standard notions of Sartre as “African philosopher” to relocate the radical intellectual more uneasily in relation to the voices of decolonization, also introducing Senghor’s often ambivalent or self-performative prefatory writings as “models of a dying patronage” and “monuments to the interstitial moment between the colonial and the postcolonial” (72). A careful study of the shifting paratextual apparatus of Césaire’s *Cahier* prepares the ground for the final stage of Watts’s argument, focused on the “more horizontal, feminized, and open” (120) relationship of postcolonial texts (by authors such as Lopes) to their often disconnected paratexts (by authors such as Glissant). A penultimate chapter explores the gendered paratext in francophone women’s writing, and the epilogue moves outside Franco-francophone sphere to consider what happens when the texts in question, extracted from their specific historico-linguistic context, ‘travel’ into English translation, and are “plugg[ed] into new networks of signification” (162).

Watts’s study is exemplary of the new understanding of French studies towards which several contributions in Murdoch and Donadey’s collection gesture. Sensitive to the distinctive zones and periods of French post/colonialism, Watts challenges monolithic misrepresentations of the French Empire (and its discursive manifestations), exploring instead the historical (dis)continuities evident in an inclusively francophone postcoloniality. His eclectic corpus, drawing on a literary archive that is both “metropolitan” and “nonmetropolitan,” rigorously challenges the

binaries that such labels imply. By illustrating the ways in which the foreignness of francophone literature has been mediated for its various audiences, he offers a highly original study of that literature's complex genealogy.

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Le lecteur d'Afriques

BY JACQUES CHEVRIER

Paris: Honoré Champion, 2005.

595 pp. ISBN 2-7543-1192-1.

This collection brings together texts written over a period of thirty years, from the 1970s up until today, with the majority dating from the '80s and '90s. The book is divided into five parts: Africa of the traditional world; representations of Africa in European letters; representations of Africa by African writers (the largest section of the book); literatures of the diaspora; Maghreb and Black Africa confrontations. The chapters are of varying interest; some are mere reports or popular articles from journals such as *Jeune Afrique* or *Notre Librairie*. Sometimes, too, they are simply introductions (for example, to the work of Edouard Glissant or to the literature of Guyana). Most of the chapters have already been published in other collections.

The heterogeneous character of the texts is disconcerting. Important concepts are broached without prior—or with problematic definition: “colonial literature” (or the notion of the “colonial writer”), which is applied broadly, from explorers to Pierre Loti, from Jules Verne to Paul Bonnetain, is evoked without the reader's precise understanding of the author's meaning. The same is true for ideas such as exoticism, marvelous realism, or myth, whose panoramic and fuzzy nature, however, demand careful analysis. The book's third part is the most interesting; at last there are some texts centered on an author (Kossi Effoui, Emmanuel Dongala, or Williams Sassine), and these are the most precise and are most in keeping with the demands of research.

Curiously, critical dialogue with the principal contemporary theoreticians of the francophone African literary domain is almost absent (footnotes are astonishingly few in number), whereas examination of their works would have enhanced the analyses that are offered in the volume. Subjects as important as the Maghreb-Black Africa dialogue or myth in African letters would thus have been able to be treated in a deeper manner. Generally speaking, nonfrancophone critical works, particularly “postcolonial studies” and anglophone African criticism, are ignored—bibliographic entries given at the back of the book disregard them entirely—whereas they have allowed an important renewal of African studies at the time most of this book's texts were being published.

I would nevertheless recommend reading this large volume for some studies of specific authors, but especially as an indication of the state of francophone literary studies in France of the '70s to the '90s. The work has the value of a testimony for