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H-France Review Vol. 20 (July 2020), No. 139

Michael Gott and Thibaut Schilt, eds., *Cinéma-monde: Decentred Perspectives on Global Filmmaking in French*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018. 392 pp. 25 b+w illustrations. £80.00 (hb). ISBN 978-1-4744-1498-2. £24.99 (pb). ISBN 978-1-4744-3184-2. £75.00 (eb). 978-1-4744-1500-2.

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Over the past thirty years or so, Film Studies as a discipline has rejected national, Western-centric frameworks in favour of a more transnational<sup>[1]</sup> and de-Westernized<sup>[2]</sup> approach that accounts for globalised production, distribution and exhibition patterns, as well as films that negotiate the relationship between the local and the global, and treat themes such as borders, “migration, loss and displacement”.<sup>[3]</sup> This global turn has been mirrored by a shift towards a broader outlook in French Studies, which has not only rejected the nationalist and monocultural agenda its disciplinary name implies, but has also sought to “relativize and provincialize metropolitan France within a wider Francospheric frame”.<sup>[4]</sup> Sitting at the intersection of these two disciplines, Michael Gott and Thibaut Schilt’s edited collection, *Cinéma-monde: Decentred Perspectives on Global Filmmaking in French*, brings together specialists in the field in an attempt to establish a new conceptual category that overcomes the critical impasse in debates over the identification and categorisation of Francophone film. This timely and welcome collection makes the case for a de-centred view of French and Francophone cinema that encompasses a range of films, filmmakers and film markets from across French-speaking Europe, the Maghreb, West Africa, the Middle East, Québec and beyond.

Early on, Gott and Schilt acknowledge their collection’s debt to Bill Marshall’s work in “*Cinéma-monde? Towards a Concept of Francophone Cinema*,” in which he calls for a reconsideration of the usefulness of a de-centred concept of Francophone cinema. Though he acknowledges the limits of the signifier Francophone, including its tendency to be used “as the ‘Other’ to ‘French’,”<sup>[5]</sup> Marshall prefers it to the notion of *cinéma-monde*, which he sees as “counter-intuitive”<sup>[6]</sup> because of the French film industry’s disproportionate access to and power over funding, production and distribution structures within and across the Francophone world. He thus proposes the term Francophone (or indeed post-Francophone) cinema (or cinemas of the Francosphere) as a means to capture the porosity, dynamism, centrifugality, and lateral connections that are lost within the more nation-specific and culturally reductive term “French”.<sup>[7]</sup> Engaging with, but also extending Marshall’s intervention, Gott and Schilt structure their collection around the concept of *cinéma-monde*, which they describe as a “critical framework or optic through which to approach a flexible corpus of films that are linked to the francophone world by some combination of linguistic or cultural affinities, geographic contacts,

production connections, or reception networks” (p. 2). Unlike the signifier Francophone, which, in their view, creates a hierarchy and fails to account for the diversity of French-language productions both across Europe and within France itself, *cinéma-monde* holds the potential to encompass a diverse body of films that falls inside and outside of the borders of French-speaking nations, may be multilingual or contain very little French, and has a cultural or economic link with the Francophone world or with Francophone production networks and hubs. While not as broad as the world or transnational cinema categories, *cinéma-monde* is nevertheless interested in lateral, transnational connections, and in transcultural solidarities and exchanges. It includes films, filmmakers and film markets that belong to what the editors call “franco-zones”; that is, “physical spaces within or across francophone or non-francophone countries or even virtual, ideational spaces where these cultural and linguistic connections might occur” (p. 9).

The protean, polycentric and de-centred nature of the editors’ conceptualisation of *cinéma-monde* is captured in the diversity of the collection’s fourteen chapters, which are written by leading authors in the field and include studies of films and filmmakers linked to the aforementioned “franco-zones,” either through language or culture, production networks, exhibition pathways or funding practices. The collection is structured around three main sections that focus on a.) *auteurs* and actors whose films have helped to shape the paradigm of *cinéma-monde*, b.) films that foreground the journeys and border crossings that characterise the interstitial, decentred and polycentric aspects of the concept, and c.) production hubs and funding practices. These sections bring a logic and coherence to a necessarily diverse set of contributions, while at the same time avoiding prescriptiveness and allowing adequate space and freedom for original approaches to the concept to be taken and explored.

Entitled “From Local to Global: The Cinéma(s)-monde(s) of Auteurs and Actors,” part one focuses on four directors and an actress whose films and career give definition to the concept of *cinéma-monde*. Opening this section, Joseph Mai examines the idea of *cinéma-monde* as an encounter via the tropes and viewing positions evoked in Rithy Panh’s *Site 2* (1989). Mireille Rosello looks at the representation of terror in Rachid Bouchareb’s films, arguing they not only blur distinctions between the global and the local, and the mainstream and the political, but also reframe terrorism for an audience that reaches far beyond the Francophone world (p. 57). Laura Reeck’s chapter engages productively with Marshall’s work on Francophone film, but addresses the limited attention his article pays to minority, displaced or diasporic filmmakers operating within the boundaries of French national cinema. Accordingly, her chapter examines the guerrilla filmmaking practice of Rachid Djaïdani as an example of the diverse, multi-layered and polycentric nature of hexagonal France’s film industry. In the next chapter, Danya Oscherwitz examines the emphasis on open borders and freedom of movement in the films of Abderrahmane Sissako, while in the final chapter in this section, Leslie Kealhofer-Kemp provides an original take on the concept of *cinéma-monde* by examining the transnational career of actress Hafsia Herzi. According to Kealhofer-Kemp, Herzi represents a new brand of French actress whose films are global in terms of roles and languages, but link to France at a production level, thereby providing “a model of what a *cinéma-monde* path within the French film industry can look like” (p. 125).

Part two, “Voyages, Limits and Borders,” brings together five chapters on films about journeys, spaces and practices that take place within, between and beyond the so-called “franco-zones” of the Francophone world. The section begins with Michael Gott’s chapter on the usefulness of the *cinéma-monde* label for films that are set at sea. These “floating films” (p. 132), as he calls them, compel us to reconfigure both our understanding of Europe and our physical and mental maps of

the French-speaking world. The next two contributions are Vlad Dima's psychoanalytic reading of football in West African cinema and Gemma King's exploration of the reconstruction of European space in Christian Carion's *Joyeux Noël* (2005). In this latter chapter, King contends that Carion's representational strategies combine with his film's transnational production history and cross-cultural, multi-lingual narrative to provide an example of what a *cinéma-monde* film might look like. The section's penultimate chapter belongs to Thibaut Schilt who looks at contemporary Québécois road movies and analyses their negotiation of the relationship between the local and the global. Leïla Ennaïli concludes part two with her analysis of two films--*Le Havre* (Aki Kaurismäki, 2011) and *Samba* (Olivier Nakache and Eric Toledano, 2014)--that are united by their focus on clandestine migration and that offer alternative mappings of France in a globalised world.

Political and activist filmmaking, funding practices and production hubs form the focus of the four chapters that make up part three on "Hubs and Spheres of Production." Beginning this section, Alison Rice examines films that can be viewed as activist interventions, encouraging viewers to recognise the contribution of minorities in Paris from all over the world. In contrast, Jamie Steele's chapter focuses on the production industry, showing that the Dardenne brothers' hometown of Liège has become a veritable hub for regional, national and international (co-)productions, operating, in his words, "on a scalar level that floats between the local and a francophone-specific understanding of the transnational" (p. 275). Michelle Stewart's chapter looks at the French *Images de la diversité* fund, launched to promote and increase diversity in French film. For Stewart, the films funded under this scheme are testament to the cultural diversity within metropolitan France and contribute to attempts to diversify French language and culture. Providing a loop back to the section's initial focus on activist film, the final chapter by Carina Yervasi examines Francophone documentary representations of youth-led movements in West Africa. Her chapter concludes this section by seeking to broaden the concept of *cinéma-monde* to include "its most minorising and democratising forms" (p. 317).

The collection closes with three epilogues written by specialists in French and Francophone film. Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the importance of his work across the collection, Bill Marshall is the author of the first epilogue, in which he advocates that the concept of *cinéma-monde* be approached not just as a space for exploring language, ethics, industry and texts, but as "an archive of cinematic memory and practice" that may "create new circuits and juxtapositions" and "carry forward debates in teaching and research" (p. 334). Lucy Mazdon, by contrast, sees in *cinéma-monde* "a call to arms" (p. 339) that is particularly necessary in a post-Trump, post-Brexit era in which nationalisms and divisive rhetoric about borders and identities are resurging. She praises the collection for its rejection of binary, hyphenated identities, and wonders whether a focus on the reception of *cinéma-monde* could provide avenues for future research. Finally, Will Higbee argues that *cinéma-monde* needs to be read and understood as "a subset of transnational cinema" (p. 346), an allocation that would allow us to identify connections and solidarities--both within but also beyond the Francosphere--that challenge Eurocentric practices and representational strategies. He uses the example of Moroccan cinema to show how and why it is valuable to examine cinematic production through a transnational lens that prioritises "the multi-directional context of *cinéma-monde*," but also looks beyond "the 'franco-zones' of the French-speaking world" (p. 353).

The inclusion of these epilogues is a welcome addition to the collection as it indicates an openness on the part of the editors to debating the value of their proposed concept, and as it attests to the

porosity and flexibility the term embodies. Meanwhile, the breadth of contributions functions as evidence of the collection's commitment to a de-centred agenda and highlights the diversity of *cinéma-monde*, which ranges, as we have seen, from guerrilla filmmaking in France, to global stardom, the road movie in Quebec and *média engagé* in West Africa. And yet, despite this diversity, the chapters within this collection possess a certain cohesiveness, with many of them tackling similar themes (borders, migration, movement, multilingualism, minoritarian politics, solidarity, encounters and transcultural exchanges etc.) and drawing on related approaches (such as accented, de-centred and transnational theories). This suggests that there is indeed a need for a term like *cinéma-monde* that captures this plurality while also highlighting the connections—be they economic, cultural or linguistic—to a Francophone geography. However, this is also where the potential limitation with this term lies. As Higbee acknowledges in his contribution, the concept's focus on the French language and on a Francophone geography made up of countries and contexts that have some historical or cultural link to France means that “the spectre of Franco-centrism still exerts an influence” (p. 351), despite the contributors' attempts to move away from binary hierarchies. While Higbee is right to identify this as a stumbling block, the editors and contributors are aware of the potentially paradoxical nature of the concept and work hard to de-centre France's dominance in this cinematic equation.

*Cinéma-monde: Decentred Perspectives on Global Filmmaking in French* makes a significant contribution to debates in the interconnected fields of French and Film Studies, by compelling us to de-centre our cinematic maps and engage with the plurality of films, filmmakers and film markets from France and the Francophone world. As is perhaps the case with all edited collections, there is a slightly uneven tone to the contributions, whereby some chapters are more convincingly and effectively engaged with the overarching concept of *cinéma-monde* than others. With that being said, all of the essays contribute to articulating the diversity of languages, cultures and identities at play within *cinéma-monde*, and many of them identify exciting new pathways for researching the concept, which include, but are not limited to, reception studies, star studies, activist and documentary filmmaking, and production studies. *Cinéma-monde: Decentred Perspectives on Global Filmmaking in French* offers a rich, timely and thought-provoking examination of the theoretical, linguistic, cultural, aesthetic, ethical and economic dimensions of *cinéma-monde* that will prove invaluable for researchers and students of French and Film Studies.

#### LIST OF ESSAYS

Michael Gott and Thibaut Schilt, “Introduction: The Kaleidoscope of Cinéma-monde”

Joseph Mai, “*Site 2*: Style and Encounter in Rithy Panh's Cinéma-monde”

Mireille Rosello, “Globalisation, Cinema and Terrorism in Rachid Bouchareb's Films: *London River*, *Baton Rouge* and *Little Senegal*”

Laura Reeck, “Guerrilla Filmmaking with Rachid Djaidani”

Danya Oscherwitz, “Globalisation, Cinéma-monde and the Work of Abderrahmane Sissako”

Leslie Kealhofer-Kemp, “The Career of Actress Hafsia Herzi: Crossing Borders, Challenging Barriers”

Michael Gott, “Lost at Sea or Charting a New Course? Mapping the Murky Contours of Cinéma-monde in Floating Francophone Films”

Vlad Dima, “The Beautiful Fantasy: Imaginary Representations of Football in West-African Cinema”

Gemma King, “Merry Christmas in No Man’s Land: European Borders, Language Barriers and Front Lines in Christian Carion’s *Joyeux Noël*”

Leïla Ennaïli, “Accented Mappings of France in a Globalised World: *Le Havre* (2011) and *Samba* (2014) through the Lens of Cinéma-monde”

Alison Rice, “Activist Cinéma-monde in Paris: Filming Foreigners in the French Capital”

Jamie Steele, “Cinema Made in Liège: A ‘Hub’ of Francophone Belgian Filmmaking”

Michelle Stewart, “‘Images of Diversity’: Film Policy and the ‘State Struggle’ for the Representation of Difference in French Cinema”

Carina Yervasi, “Youth and *Média-engagé*: Is This West Africa’s Heterolinguistic Cinéma-monde?”

Bill Marshall, “Worlds Within; In the World”

Lucy Mazdon, “Cinéma-monde as a Call to Arms”

Will Higbee, “Cinéma-monde and the Transnational”

## NOTES

[1] Tim Bergfelder, “National, Transnational or Supranational Cinema? Rethinking European Film Studies,” *Media, Culture & Society* 27/3 (2005):315-331; Elizabeth Ezra and Tim Rowden, “General Introduction: What is Transnational Cinema?” in *Transnational Cinema: The Film Reader* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), pp. 1-12; Will Higbee and Song Hwee Lim, “Concepts of Transnational Cinema: Towards a Critical Transnationalism in Film Studies,” *Transnational Cinemas* 1,1 (2010):7-21.

[2] Will Higbee and Saër Maty Bâ, eds., *De-westernizing Film Studies* (Oxford and New York: Routledge, 2012); David Martin-Jones, “Introduction: Film-Philosophy and a World of Cinemas,” *Film-Philosophy* 20,1 (2016):6-23.

[3] Higbee and Hwee Lim, p. 10.

[4] Charles Forsdick, “What’s ‘French’ about French Studies?,” *Nottingham French Studies* 54,3 (2015):312-327 (p. 319).

[5] Bill Marshall, “Cinéma-monde? Towards a Concept of Francophone Cinema,” *Francosphères* 1,1 (2012):35-51 (p. 39).

[6] Marshall, p. 37.

[7] Marshall, pp. 41-42.

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ISSN 1553-9172