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Kathryn Kleppinger and Laura Reeck, eds., *Post-Migratory Cultures in Postcolonial France*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2018. x + 288 pp. Illustrations, notes, and index. \$130.00 U.S. (hb). ISBN 9781786941138.

Review by Lucille Toth, Ohio State University.

Post-Migratory Cultures in Postcolonial France, edited and introduced by postcolonial and French Cultural Studies specialists Kathryn Kleppinger and Laura Reeck, provides important perspectives and critical tools for fully comprehending racial tensions in contemporary France. The seventeen authors in this volume offer a unitary theoretical statement by showing the lack of a “social vocabulary to designate the descendants of postcolonial immigrants in France” (p. 6). They broaden the limiting categories of “Francophonie” and “French” by including cultural productions by authors and artists born in France to postcolonial immigrants. The editors coin the term “Post-Migratory Postcolonial Minorities” (PMPM) to describe authors and artists who struggle to be recognized within metropolitan, majoritarian French culture, rather than circumscribed by their shared history with forced migration. This volume conceives PMPMs “as having a history and references of their own” (p. 11); literary productions as well as music, cinema, dance, *bande-dessinée* and calligraffiti (among the arts explored in this volume) by PMPM artists expose the limitations of France’s universalist national identity and the importance of rethinking postcolonialism through migration.

Post-Migratory Cultures in Postcolonial France focuses exclusively on a twenty-first-century corpus, from the 2005 *banlieue* riots to the 2015 terrorist attacks, addressing the political, social and cultural consequences of these events on post-migratory generations. The events of 2005 occurred about ten years after the 1993 and 1998 laws on French citizenship (the Méhaignerie laws), which reformed the nationality code, restricted land rights and halted the automatic bestowal of French nationality to young people born in France to foreign parents. These laws, part of an immigration control agenda aimed at restricting access to French nationality, launched a generational trauma for children born in France to parents that grew up in former colonies. *Post-Migratory Cultures in Postcolonial France* also arrives twenty years after the publication of the seminal volume, *Postcolonial cultures in France*, edited in 1997 by Alec G. Hargreaves and Mark McKinney, who contributed a co-authored afterword to the volume under review.[1] They write: “In the 1990s it seemed possible that the need for postcolonial strategies might decline in the decades that then lay ahead. An essential precondition for this lay in the opening up of genuinely equal opportunities for post-colonial minorities, paving the way towards a truly post/colonial France. That essential step has not been taken” (p. 259). *Post-Migratory Cultures in*

Postcolonial France argues that solutions to this stagnancy are coming from within the post-migratory group of second- and third-generation authors and artists with postcolonial heritage.

The originality of the volume under review resides both in the contemporaneity of its corpus and references and in the post-migratory angle that frames its critical approach. Among the issues it raises is the urgency of naming post-migratory descents and the use of such naming to contest the French Republic's colorblindness. In his chapter, "Francophone and Post-Migratory Afropeans within and beyond France Today," Christopher Hogarth reminds us that the need to name and designate is not new. He explores the lexicon created to designate the work of writers with ties to Africa but born in France: "post-migratory Afropeans," "authors with postcolonial heritage," "banlieue writers" or "Francophone writers" are among these designations. By going beyond the traditional opposition between (ex-)colonizer and (ex-)colonized, *Post-Migratory Cultures in Postcolonial France* addresses the impact of World War II and subsequent waves of migration from former colonies to the Hexagon on what constitutes French identity today.

Many authors in this volume alert readers to another issue that significantly impacts PMPMs: the alarming growth of Islamophobia and anti-immigration discourse present in today's France. Both Stève Puig and Chong J. Bretillon investigate how rap music provides crucial insights into the negotiation of identities. If studying rap music in the context of French postcolonial culture is not new, the discography used by the authors is, as most of the artists cited released their albums within the past ten years. One of the particularities of post-migratory rappers resides in their open practice of Islam and the presence in their songs of references to both their faith and the discrimination they face as practicing Muslims. Siobhán Shilton's chapter on street artist El Seed and his "calligraffiti" exposes how street art—and, more broadly, non-institutionalized practices—can mitigate "fears of visual signifiers of perceived Arabo-Muslim 'difference' in public spaces in France" (p. 239). These chapters shed light on the ways in which PMPM artists talk in terms of racial markers rather than origin to address the structural islamophobia of France under the pretext of *laïcité*, or secularism (also structural to the French Republic). As Jennifer Fredette points out: "*laïcité* has shifted away from a protection of liberty and toward a protection of Islamophobic attitudes" (p. 34). Questioning *laïcité* in relation to islamophobia forces us to question the French Republican model and its adaptability "to a kind of visible pluralism that does not view particular identities and affiliations as necessarily detrimental to a shared civic identity" (p. 40). In their fight against police brutality and state violence, activists of "Le Comité Adama"—also called "French Black Lives Matter" by international media—such as Assa Traoré and post-migratory postcolonial authors such as feminist Rokhaya Diallo "explore the possibility of being French—and (French and black, French and Muslim), without being less French, anti-French or *communautaire*" (p. 38). It would be of merit to address this question of islamophobia through the work of Muslim Feminists, especially with regard to conversations about the hijab. Today's Afro- and Islamic feminisms hold a unique intersectional voice that deserves more space in academia.

In line with this question of *laïcité*, Felicia McCarren's chapter on the cultural economy of hip-hop observes a shift from particularism (being "somebody") to universalism (being "anybody") in the new status of hip-hop in France as an institutionalized dance. Today, hip-hop is moving beyond its confining representation as "a vehicle of transmission for a colonial memory" (p. 187). It would be highly relevant to investigate new artistic trends that characterize twenty-first-century post-migratory France. For instance, the French house dance scene is currently one of the leading in the world and it is primarily performed and curated by PMPM artists.

The lack of racial diversity within the body of scholars that participated in this volume on post-migratory postcolonial minorities must be noted. In other edited volumes published in the last ten years within the French and Francophone field, efforts have been made to ensure greater diversity among the writers. To only mention a few: *Frenchness and the African Diaspora: Identity and Uprising in Contemporary France*, edited by Charles Tshimanga, Didier Gondola and Peter J. Bloom (2009); *Black France/France Noire* edited by Trica Danielle Keaton, Tracy Sharpley-Whiting and Tyler Stovall in 2012; and *Francophone Afropean Literatures* edited by Nicki Hitchcott and Dominic Thomas in 2014.[2]

In conclusion, this volume should interest scholars and postgraduate students in French and Francophone studies, Postcolonial and Decolonial Theory, Literary and Performance studies, Digital Humanities, Critical Theory and Transcultural Studies.

LIST OF ESSAYS

Kathryn Kleppinger and Laura Reeck, "Introduction: The Post-Migratory Postcolonial"

Jennifer Fredette, "Difference-Conscious Critical Media Engagement and the Communitarian Question"

Kaoutar Harchi, "Banlieue Writers: The Struggle for Literary Recognition through Collective Mobilization"

Christopher Hogarth, "Francophone and Post-Migratory Afropeans within and beyond France Today"

Leslie Barnes, "Un cinéma sans image: Palimpsestic Memory and the Lost History of Cambodian Film"

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Chong J. Bretilon, "'Double discours': Critiques of Racism and Islamophobia in French Rap"

Will Higbee, "'Beyond Ethnicity' or a Return to Type? Bande de filles/Girlhood and the Politics of Blackness in Contemporary French Cinema"

Felicia McCarren, "Somebody or Anybody? Hip-Hop Choreography and the Cultural Economy"

Leslie Kealhofer-Kemp, "Mixed Couples in Contemporary French Cinema: Exploring New Representations of Diversity and Difference on the Big Screen"

Ilaria Vitali, "'Nos ancêtres n'étaient pas tous des Gaulois': Post-Migration and Bande Dessinée"

Siobhán Shilton, “Identity and ‘Difference’ in French Art: El Seed’s Calligraffiti from Street to Web”

Alec G. Hargreaves and Mark McKinney, “A Long Road to Travel”

NOTES

[1] Alec G. Hargreaves and Mark McKinney, eds., *Postcolonial cultures in France* (London: Routledge, 1997).

[2] Charles Tshimanga, Didier Gondola, and Peter J. Bloom, eds., *Frenchness and the African Diaspora: Identity and Uprising in Contemporary France* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009); Trica Danielle Keaton, Tracy Sharpley-Whiting, and Tyler Stovall, eds., *Black France/France Noire: The History and Politics of Blackness* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012); Nicki Hitchcott and Dominic Thomas, eds., *Francophone Afropean literatures* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2014).

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