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Quentin Deluermoz, ed., *D'ici d'ailleurs: Histoires globales de la France contemporaine*. Paris: Éditions La Découverte, 2021. 344 pp. Notes. €23.00; \$33.42 U.S. (pb). ISBN 9782348060106.

Review by Emily Lord Fransee, University of Mississippi.

This collection of collaboratively-written essays takes up an interesting challenge: how to interrogate narratives of French exceptionalism while still highlighting France's place within global history? In addressing this question, Quentin Deluermoz and his co-authors take particular care to reject the persistent "*nationalisme méthodologique*" (p. 20) that they argue characterizes much of French public history while still historicizing a specific process that they call "*franco-mondialisation*" (p. 50). The resulting volume is therefore intended to be inclusive of a more general reader to better illuminate the connections between global, imperial, and national history. Chronologically, the essays begin in the mid-eighteenth century to track the development of the French "*État-nation impérial*" and, with a few minor exceptions, end before the mid-twentieth-century upheavals connected to the Second World War (primarily European integration and postwar decolonization). The reader is encouraged to skip around through the different chapters, which are themselves organized into intersecting themes with varying chronologies in order to avoid a depiction of an overly linear progression and to better "appréhender la pluralité des temporalités en jeu" (p. 18). Contributors also reinterpret some traditional periodizations to show how the last few decades of research into global and imperial histories have reconfigured larger narratives and conceptual frameworks.

One of the more compelling aspects of the volume is its collective construction, as each chapter is collaboratively written by a group of two or more predominantly French scholars of different specializations within social, economic, and cultural history. For the authors, this "*collective et plurivoque*" aspect is an essential dimension of their contribution to expanding the possible forms of historical writing (p. 18). In his postface, Christophe Charle similarly frames this approach as an "*entreprise audacieuse*" that represents the culmination of multiple fields of historical methodology, including subsequent generations of the Annales school along with other recent approaches to social, cultural, and comparative history (p. 330).

Along with establishing the larger goals of the volume, Deluermoz's introductory essay sets out preliminary definitions and provides an overview of the "*dédale des historiographies*" that are relevant to the volume's intervention (p. 19). Despite a substantial expansion of literature that situates French history within a global context, he argues that an uneven geographical distribution of research persists, along with other methodological and definitional challenges. For example, the contributors urge greater clarity in explaining transnational or global concepts

such as *mondialisation*, *internationalisation*, globalization, and colonization. Distinguishing between these dynamics can help scholars better account for the ways in which French colonization cut off pre-existing global linkages in an attempt to sequester territories within a space of French sovereignty.

Deluermoz and other contributors also emphasize the important and often-overlooked role of cultural and social history in better explaining France's place as a driver and beneficiary of globalization. At the same time, they argue against taking the "Frenchness" of the ostensibly "French" state, republic, or revolution for granted, and instead resituate these histories within larger transnational contexts. This push to decenter and reinterpret the very idea of France from a global perspective asks what precisely the "French" qualifier means as a cultural, legal, and political category or identity.

In chapter one, Rahul Markovits, Pierre Singaravélou, and David Todd take off from this point by providing a definition of imperial *franco-mondialisation* based on formal and informal types of domination. The authors acknowledge that this "*expression provocatrice*" (p. 86) may exaggerate the coherence and centrality of France's role within globalization, but usefully complicates the more predominant Anglobalisation narrative. They focus on the global circulation of French people, capital, language, and ideas as major vectors in early or archaic globalization that existed beyond formal territorial acquisition and loss. By opening up such lines of inquiry, they clarify the linkages between continental and overseas conquest, as well as France's role within a larger "*dynamique impérialiste collective*" that emerged in Europe (p. 78). This recontextualizes the process of decolonization as a moment of reinvention for *franco-mondialisation*, seen in part with the emergence of *Françafrique* and other policies of informal or neocolonial forms of monetary, military, or cultural domination. In such a framework, more recent French criticisms of globalization are rooted less in a hostility towards all things global and more within an "*nostalgie inavouée*" for specific older forms of *franco-mondialisation* (p. 89).

In chapter two, Manuel Covo, Quentin Deluermoz, and Delphine Diaz frame France as a crossroads of national and global revolution. Despite a growing body of research on the global context of 1789, they argue that there has been less work to situate later revolutionary upheavals beyond the national prism. In suggesting some pathways for future research, the authors emphasize the importance of understanding how French revolutions acted as a positive and a negative reference point within other global transformations. Focal points for such an inquiry include the study of the circulation of individuals (the role of foreigners in different movements in France in addition to French individuals abroad) as well as ideas (such as examinations of global media reception of French revolutionary upheaval). A more precise understanding of the return echoes of non-French revolutionary and counter-revolutionary movements could also better demonstrate the historical palimpsest of French Revolutionary memory. As the very idea of France was shaped by such waves of revolutionary dynamics, there are additional difficulties in establishing what exactly is French about these movements. The imperial context is important in this regard; such a view could, for example, widen the *moment Commune* to better consider the 1870 uprising in Martinique and the 1871 Mokrani resistance movement in Algeria.

In chapter three, François Jarrige and David Todd examine global commodity chains of garments and textiles to demonstrate how France participated in, profited from, and was constrained by new forms of industrialization and global capitalism in the long nineteenth century. The trajectory of trade in raw and processed fiber, fabric, and clothing allows the authors to specify

France's often-overlooked place in early globalization by demonstrating the linkages between producers and consumers in the French metropole, the empire, Europe, and the world. This extra-national framework highlights the influence of external factors to show how deeply entwined French textile capitalism was within larger global circuits, not only in the trade of goods but also in the circulation of people, money, techniques, equipment, and style. The empire played a key role, including as a source of raw materials, an imagined reference point within Orientalist fashion trends, and a protected market for metropolitan exports. French high fashion contributed to the creation of a “*nouveau régime vestimentaire mondial*” (p. 140) that developed a French national reputation for luxury but depended on foreign demand, a high-end specialization that exposed the industry to external shifts. French textile industries were therefore dependent on, yet made vulnerable by their place within the international textile industry.

In chapter four, Nicolas Delalande and Stephen W. Sawyer examine the transnational development of the state and the exercise of French sovereignty to challenge narratives of French exceptionalism. Overly-simplified representations of the French state present it as uniformly centralized and autonomous and therefore resistant to transnational historical inquiry. The authors outline a multi-scalar framework for a more precise historical analysis of the creation of the French state as a product of the global circulation, borrowing, adaptation, and redeployment of people, objects, and ideas. They focus on questions of territory, the economy, and the population as transnational targets of state action. The constantly changing territory of the state itself complicates any attempt to focus only on national state sovereignty. Similarly, cross-border exchanges of capital and goods challenge the existence of an exclusively national market. Finally, the study of the people who cross borders and influence national territory also shows that mobility has long shaped the state itself, demonstrating the ahistoricism of more recent fears that global population movements have the power to make the state dissolve or disappear.

In chapter five, Anne-Sophie Bruno, Jean-Numa Ducange, and François Jarrige continue with the question of population mobility to show the importance of working-class and popular forms of cross-border movement in French history. While work from the 1970s to the present has challenged the distinction between mobile elites and a rooted popular class, the history of working-class mobility has not sufficiently informed the development of transnational history in France. Popular histories that are written “from below” can show the limited capacity of the nation-state for defining identities and usefully highlight the importance of individual over institutional factors in shaping the dynamics of social change. French industrialization was structured by multiple worlds of work made by the circulation of workers as well as the transfer of training, techniques, equipment, and political ideologies (including transnational working-class identities). Economic connections did not necessarily coincide with administrative definitions of the limits of population or territory, exposing a tension between transnational worker mobility and the territorially bound forms of national social administration and regulation. This raises the question of how to better historicize how mobile popular and working classes experienced state-level dynamics, as well as how successive xenophobic crises forged the nationalization of identities through definitions of “foreign” versus “French” laborers.

In chapter six, Jean-Numa Ducange, Silyane Larcher, and Stephen W. Sawyer take on the transnational history of the “*République multiple*” to complicate the idea of a French republican form that is both exceptional and isolated. The authors acknowledge the “part proprement ‘française’ de l’histoire républicaine internationale” (p. 250) while also drawing attention to the plural, critical, and transnational histories (including those of race and gender) that went into

their formation. While the Republican project was framed as something to be projected or spread into an assimilated empire, the authors caution against a model of the French Republic that was stabilized in an isolated metropole and then diffused across the colonies. Similarly, it is not possible to separate imperial and Republican models of France or posit a contradiction between a “pure” French Republic and the “troubled” or “corrupted” colonial regime. Definitions of French citizenship and nationality upheld the racial and colonial hierarchy of power while, at the same time, crucial innovations occurred within the colonies themselves. Events such as the Haitian Revolution show that “l’universalisme comme projet politique émancipateur révolutionnaire n’est pas une propriété européenne” (p. 262). The multiple meanings of the Republic continue to be expressed in the present through the ways that different and often opposing groups claim its legacy, further indicating the historical complexity of the model as “un champ de possibles et d’expérimentations” (p. 284).

In chapter seven, Matthieu Letourneux and Michela Passini examine the multifaceted production of French culture by showing how commercial, diplomatic, and artistic exchanges developed French identities. Nineteenth- and twentieth-century nationalism emerged as a response to global forces and was constructed within a broader transnational framework of circulating objects and practices (including media cultures, artistic productions, and other forms of mass culture). The empire was particularly important for structuring French national identity by presenting an oppositional relationship between distinct “metropolitan” and “colonial” cultures. French culture thereby emerged through a process of borrowing and influence in a context of both international and national constraints and opportunities. The widespread use of the French language across Europe, for example, was made possible only through the mediation of other European actors and media cultures (such as Swiss, Dutch, or Belgian booksellers). French cultural heritage also developed through a transnational exchange of objects and practices (such as artistic movements, museum collections, and academic methodologies), as well as people (such as curators, diplomats, scientists, and carriers) that were understood to define specific national identities despite their more accurately hybrid or internationalist character.

The preface by Mary Lewis and postface by Christophe Charle both further situate the historical questions of the volume within recent debates about French identity. Mary Lewis’s preface emphasizes that the “*villages traditionnels*” (p. 6) and countryside regions now considered to be “*extrêmement lointain*” (p. 5) or even “*isolée*” (p. 6) are, in fact, the products of a thoroughly modern and global history of trade, industrialization, mobility, and exploitation. The volume’s closer consideration of the multiplicity of the “*Frances (au pluriel)*” that were produced through this imperial and transnational context sheds new light on classic themes of French history as well as our current moments of political crisis by contradicting ahistorical and nostalgic narratives about the origins of an eternal France. Christophe Charle’s short postface also examines the dangers of nostalgia amidst contemporary anxiety about French national decline. In particular, he commends the value in disputing the “*narcissisme fondateur*” (p. 324) that animates political movements feeding on a longing for a lost France that historically never existed.

Some generalizations are necessary for a book that takes on such large-scale questions in a way that is legible to a non-specialist audience, but the detailed notes and further reading suggestions would aid any reader in search of greater specificity. The book is largely intended for the French public, yet it would be useful to have it in an English translation, not least due to its incorporation of both French- and English-language historiography and its ability to introduce readers to France’s role within larger histories of empire and globalization. While this effort to make the

history of “global France” more approachable means that some of the conclusions might be unsurprising to specialists, the volume provides a concise summary of the state of the field and sets out clear possibilities for future research within a compelling collaborative format. In this, Deluermoz explicitly connects the volume to the controversy initiated by Patrick Boucheron’s *Histoire mondiale de la France*, particularly by suggesting specific methodologies that could contribute to a more precise historicization of how multiple definitions of “France” and ways of “being French” have emerged in the contemporary era.[1] While this book does not claim to offer a definitive solution, it is a publicly minded and optimistic collection that lays the groundwork for future study and elaboration, and usefully so.

NOTE

[1] Patrick Boucheron, ed., *Histoire mondiale de la France* (Paris: Seuil, 2017).

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