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yasser elhariry, ed., *Sounds Senses.* Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2021. vii + 312 pp. Notes, figures, references, and index. $143 U.S. (hb). ISBN 9781800856882.

Review by Aimée Boutin, Florida State University.

The twelfth volume of the Society for Francophone Postcolonial Studies' annual publication series *Sounds Senses*, edited by yasser elhariry,[1] aims to "dismantle the oculocentrism [sic] and retinal paradigms of francophone postcolonial studies" (book jacket). Accordingly, the contributions explore a range of case studies that bridge the visual and the aural/oral, such as poetry, cinema, and the graphic novel. Much of the collection focuses on the sounds of languages or linguistic sound (hence, evocative cursive letters grace the cover of the hardcover book) rather than the social history of sound. Indeed, one of the strengths of the volume is that it broadens the narrow bandwidth of the term "francophone"—which can imply French monolingualism--so that the wide range of linguistic frequencies resonating in the French-speaking world can be heard.

Sounds Senses coalescences around the explicit objective of decolonizing sound studies, a field long concentrated on sounding out Western experience in the Global North.[2] It frequently records sound mixing, which effectively facilitates hearing francophone translinguistic diaspora (French, Kreyol, Arabic, etc.) and bridges spaces visually separated by colonial geographies. Accordingly, a distinctive feature of the volume is its geographic breadth, from France, Romania, the Maghreb and the Mediterranean, from China to Iran, from Mali to Haiti (although the Indian Ocean, Polynesia, Quebec, and Louisiana are absent, it's probably not practical to be geographically exhaustive).

Sound and space occupy a central place in the volume where references to sonic mapping, deterritorializing, and layering abound; as Olivia C. Harrison states in chapter seven "Sounds of Palestine," the "plastic qualities of sound" mean that sound exceeds conventional maps and therefore serves as a useful metaphor for diaspora (p. 206). Because sonic experience also fosters belonging, contributors cogently advance sound's formative role in place-making (Jarvis) and in nation-building (Munro). As sounds can be examined in terms of their historicity or temporality, it's noteworthy that so many of the contributors are tuned to sound as potentiality (the last word in the volume is in fact "future" [p. 281]). Affect theory has shown that sounds move us in ways that differ from vision. Although *Sounds Senses* primarily concentrates on hearing, future research could extend postcolonial sound studies in multiple intersensorial directions (and indeed some of the contributors such as Vlad Dima and Edwin Hill are already incorporating the tactility of sound).

The volume *Sounds Senses* is organized into three sections titled Poetry, Cinema, and Voices, plus an introduction by the editor, yasser elhariry; a "Prelude" and "Outro" (or closing) play up the musical analogy. Raphaël Sigal's Prelude on the poetry of francophone Romanian-Jewish poet Ghérasim Luca begins the volume on a playful, even nonsensical, note (or maybe "unsound," used in the title of elhariry's introduction). In his introduction, elhariry emphasizes how ocular language dominates French postcolonial studies and explains that *Sounds Senses* dives deeply into the "unheard... what has been muffled, muted by a cultural, sensorial hardening or ossification, over the course of the past six centuries, as a result of the progressive, philosophical, imperial, empirical, scientific, economic, and technological values placed on sight" (pp. 27-28).The introduction joins the notion of the unheard to the unintegrated, meaning more or less noisy or non-standard. Voice is afforded chief status in the volume and the centrality of voice "stems from an ethical injunction centered around the imperative of hearing the Other" (p. 28). Indeed, questioning the notion of phonocentrism, which equates the voice with presence and transparency, has distinct significance in studies of the invisible/silenced colonial subject and of the enslaved, denied both speech and subjectivity.

In "Sound Capture and Transmedial Resonance: Moncef Ghachem's Lyric," Edwige Tamalet Talbayev pays close attention to the sonic traces of Mediterranean cultures' plurilingualism (French, Tunisian Arabic, Sicilian, Greek). Talbayev peels apart the layers of sound in *Dalle Sponde del Mare Bianco* (2003), a musical transposition of the poetry of Tunisian fisherman-turned-poet Ghachem by the Sicilian band Dounia to uncover how the work "plac[es] the multiple languages...that compose it into resounding tension" (p. 72).

In contrast to Tamalet Talbeyev's focus on phonemic sound, Thomas C. Connolly explores rhythm in "Mohammed Khaïr-Eddine's Secret Music." The Moroccan poet Khaïr-Eddine shouts rather than recites his texts, as can be heard on a 1975 interview on the *Poésie ininterrompue* radio broadcast on France Culture. Juxtaposing the poet's representations of the screaming mouth with the painter Francis Bacon's, Connolly analyzes the "acoustic crack" or "dislocation between the rhythm of the shouting voice and that of the written text," which the poet calls "his secret music" (p. 81).

In "Listening to 19th-Century Haitian Poetry," the last of three contributions on poetry, Martin Munro moves from the physicality of rhythm to a more socio-historical and thematically focused discussion of space, identity, sovereignty, and the legacies of slavery that aims to listen to voices and sounds conventionally silenced in colonial discourses to reconstruct unheard histories of displacement and identity of enslaved peoples. Themes range from voicing freedom, panegyric, female voice, sound as nation building, sound as a conventional trope of epic, and sound as a marker of time for those who were enslaved. These topics are analyzed with reference to the corpus curated by Doris Y. Kadish and Deborah Jenson in their co-edited anthology *Poetry of Haitian Independence* (2015).

The book's section on cinema, perhaps the most coherent grouping of the book, emphasizes the need to consider sound on screen in order to upend the eye/ear hierarchy and "investigate the decolonial potential of sound studies" (p. 146). Accordingly, the contributors build on Michel Chion's theory on film as audio as much as visual image.[3] More than the other two groupings, this section encompasses ambient sound, non-human noises, with occasional discussion of natural soundscapes or elemental sounds, not just spoken languages and human voices. In "Hollowed

Bodies: The Aural Skin of African Cinema," Vlad Dima investigates what voice, especially disembodied or acousmatic voice, means for African subjectivity in film. Drawing from three films--O. Sembène's *Black Girl* (1966), D. D. Mambery's *Touki Bouki* (1973), and J.-P. Bekolo's *The President* (2013)--he argues that they challenge the harmony or fullness conventionally invested in the unified aural-visual image as a cinematic strategy to address or even redress the "hollowing" effect that neocolonialism has had on African bodies (p. 123).

Jill Jarvis's chapter, "*Timbuktu*, Sonic Map of Desert Futures," on *Timbuktu* (2014), a film by Abderrahmane Sissako set in the desert city when it was taken over by jihadists in 2012, invites readers to hear the film as a way of tuning in to its emotional force. For example, ambient rustlings and birdsong captured in the film produce a sense of place and register Timbuktu as "a center" teeming with "interconnected lives" (p. 158) rather than an empty space separating the Maghreb and sub-Sahara. Jarvis develops two of the overarching ideas in the edited collection by attending to linguistic polyphony and by following the "sonic map" of "diasporic frequencies" (p. 146). Maya Boutaghou returns to sound's capacity to shape imaginaries of place in "Listening Back to the Sounds of Algiers in *Pépé le Moko* (1937), *Omar Gatlato* (1976), and *Viva Laldjérie* (2003)." Centered around three films about Algiers, this chapter describes the distinctive type of captivity and threatening resonance that the city represents for the main characters.

The book's last section, Voices, is more eclectic and combines perspectives on film, novels, and *bandes dessinées* to emphasize what is gained by listening closely to the human voice. In "Sounds of Palestine," Olivia C. Harrison wants to "make the Palestinian question *audible* in France" (p. 182). To "analyze the politics of representing the colonized in sound" (p. 184), cautions Harrison, one must assess how effective (or not) cinematic sound design strategies are in avoiding speaking for the subaltern voice. Her three case studies--the visual cut from animation to archival film footage in Ari Folman's animated documentary *Waltz with Bashir* (2008), the gradation of volume in J.-L. Godard and A.-M. Miéville's *Ici et ailleurs* (1976), and the uses of silence in Jean Genet's *Quatre heures à Shatila* (1983) and *Un captif amoureux* (1986)--ultimately suggest that sound does not always enable representation.

Shuangyi Li's essay on Franco-Chinese literature brings us back to some of the linguistic concerns in the book's first section. "Transcending Exoticism? Sound and Voice in Dai Sijie and François Cheng" asserts the need to counter visual approaches to exoticism and orientalism with attention to aurality. Shuangyi Li argues that Dai's sensitivity to exotic linguistics sounds and accents works to aestheticize and defamiliarizing them, whereas Cheng's more philosophic or even Daoist-informed spiritual approach to sound as Orphic experience is oriented toward transcendence. Jennifer Solheim's "A Walk on the Wilde Side" is an original study in sound-image synchretic thinking about listening as a narrative strategy in a section of Marjane Satrapi's graphic novel *Persepolis*, where the character reacts to the English rock singer, Kim Wilde's song "Kids in America" from 1981. The moment fuses what is seen and heard, and it crystalizes a "sonic and psychological synchresis" because of both the sound of the music and the liberation it represents (p. 239). Solheim considers how music fosters complicity with others or with cultural values, in this case the values of Europe and America censored by the Iranian Revolution; the song interpellates listeners so they entertain imaginary relations to the real conditions of their existences (Marjane is not a kid in America). In the last essay Edwin Hill joins Solheim in tuning in to an "earworm" that is contagious and affective (p. 244).

Hill has the closing word in his essay "The 'Tchip' Heard 'Round the World."

He examines controversies in France surrounding the banning of the *tchip* or the practice of kiss-teeth used in the African diaspora and in contemporary France to evoke and provoke reactions ranging from parental reprimand to broader irritation and even contempt, or alternatively to a sense of collusion and pushback among those with the necessary fluency to understand the onomatopoeia. As a verbal gesture that builds its "sonic force" on its capacity to touch and irritate, the tchip draws a "sonic color line" to borrow Jennifer Lynn Stoever's term (2016), and sets (or shuffles) boundaries around race, class, and gender. Indeed, Hill ends on the future potential of the tchip as "rallying cry" and "new untold...modes of social relation in the future" (p. 281).

Readers with backgrounds in sound studies or postcolonial studies will appreciate how *Sounds Senses* broadens their fields by tuning readers in to the sonic diversity of francophone studies and the translingual richness of sound studies.

LIST OF ESSAYS

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Shuangyi Li, "Transcending Exoticism? Sound and Voice in Dai Sijie and François Cheng"

Jennifer Solheim, "A Walk on the Wilde Side: Rock Music and Listening as Narrative Strategy in Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis*"

Edwin Hill, "The 'Tchip' Heard 'Round the World"

NOTES

[1] yasser elhariry eschews capital letters in the spelling of his name.

[2] *Sounds Senses* pursues the projects of scholars such as Martin Munro, *Listening to the Caribbean: Sounds of Slavery, Revolt, and Race* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2022); Jennifer Solheim, *The Performance of Listening in Postcolonial Francophone Culture* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2017); and Jennifer Lynn Stoever, *The Sonic Color Line: Race and the Cultural Politics of Listening* (New York: NYU Press, 2016). All three scholars are cited in elhariry's volume. Other works worth mentioning include G. Steingo and J. Sykes, eds., *Remapping Sound Studies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019); and a blog post by Gustavus Stadler, "On Whiteness and Sound Studies," *Sounding Out*, last modified July 6, 2015, https://soundstudiesblog.com/2015/07/06/on-whiteness-and-sound-studies/.

[3] Michel Chion, *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).

Aimée Boutin
Florida State University
aboutin@fsu.edu

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