

Book Reviews

Höfer, Bernadette. *Psychosomatic Disorders in Seventeenth-Century French Literature*. Surrey & Burlington: Ashgate, 2009.

Bernadette Höfer's *Psychosomatic Disorders in Seventeenth-Century French Literature* is an intricate study of maladies of the body and soul, focusing on the problematic issue of constraint under the reigns of Louis XIII and Louis XIV. For courtly subjects, the overwhelming pressure to conform to the politics of absolutism produced widespread repression, which could lead to the onset of somatic disorders such as melancholy, hypochondria, fever and anxiety. Under absolute rule, it was expected that the suffering subject dissimulate his "illness," since the king placed his model of corporeal perfection at the center of his court, thus highlighting the representation of the glorious body. It is this fascinating interrelationship between illness and mind and body which constitutes the core of Höfer's study. However, she deviates from a purely Cartesian model, replacing the idea of the supremacy of reason over the corporeal with Spinoza's ideology, underscoring the union between body and mind. The author examines psychosomatic illness from a multidisciplinary perspective in the works of Surin, Molière, Lafayette and Racine.

Höfer initially looks at the mental disorder of melancholy by examining the intriguing case of Jean-Joseph Surin, a controversial Jesuit mystic was even thought to be mad, and was known to conduct exorcisms in the Church. Nonetheless, he suffered from a mysterious mental affliction, associated with melancholy, and was particularly interested in pursuing a rational explanation for the origin of his disorder. In Surin's *Science expérimentale*, a semi-autobiographical text, he takes a close look at the body in pain, while taking into account the socio-political climate of corporeal suppression under absolutism. Here, Höfer constructs a link between Surin and Spinoza, as the Jesuit, too, subscribed to the belief that the body was inherently connected to the mind's perception of pain, including sensory awareness.

The third chapter explores Molière's comic treatment of illness in *Le Malade imaginaire* and *Le Misanthrope*, situating the problems of hypochondria and melancholy within the repressive climate of absolutism. In particular, Höfer studies the effects of repression on the courtier's body in Molière's theater, mainly his melancholic character, Alceste, and the hypochondriac, Argan. These suffering characters demonstrate resistance to the accepted code of sociability, as their personal ailments deviate dramatically from the dominant 'healthy' model of unity. The author sustains the main philosophical argument of the book by effectively linking Molière's treatment of mental disorders to Spinoza's ideology of mind/body correspondence, highlighting the key role of imagination. As Höfer describes it, "the mind recognizes via the imagination what is happening in the body" (132).

The next chapter looks at Madame de Lafayette's representation of melancholy, which is also grounded on Spinoza's union between mind and body. Höfer shows that Mme de Clève's desiring body tends to imitate the emotional disorder of her mind to such an extent that fever, fainting, or spells of intense melancholy afflict the body. Höfer describes somatic disorder as a "psychosocial illness," especially since the princess must dissimulate before the guilty pleasure of her illicit desire for M. de Nemours from the probing gaze of other aristocrats. Moreover, Mme de Clève is constantly under surveillance by the royals, which reaffirms the patriarchal politics of repression, which, in turn, amplifies her inner turmoil.

Höfer's concluding chapter turns to Racine's representation of melancholy, as she examines the psychological ramifications of illicit love, and how it is transcribed onto the

theater of the body in *Phèdre*. Like Lafayette, the author maintains that Racine emphasizes the importance of the visual fixation with the lover. It is Phèdre's ocular obsession with the object of her illicit desire, Hippolyte, that produces melancholic symptoms such as depression, hallucinations, obsessions, and an inevitable split with reality. Similar to Molière's and Lafayette's, Racine's suffering characters' bodies also reflect the tension and anxiety of the court's political atmosphere; but Phèdre and Hippolyte are particularly disruptive, as they exhibit transgression of patriarchal law in their mental and physiological battle with forbidden desire.

Bernadette Höfer's *Psychosomatic Disorders in Seventeenth-Century French Literature* provides a fascinating discussion of melancholy with particular emphasis placed on the complex interrelationship between physical suffering and mental illness, which is rooted in the repressive culture of absolutism. The underlying influence of Spinoza's holistic mind/body union, sustained throughout the discussion, creates an innovative view on the topic of somatic disorders, while enriching the discourse on rationalism. Höfer's significant contribution offers a contemporary perspective, bringing these seventeenth-century authors into a surprisingly postmodern dialogue with current scientists who work in such medical fields as psychoanalysis and neurobiology.

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Loehr, Joël. *Les grandes notions littéraires*. Dijon : EUD, 2010. 130 p.

À la dernière page, l'auteur qualifie son ouvrage, au titre pourtant très englobant, d'« état des lieux partiel » et « provisoire » (126). Ce n'est pas seulement un artifice de rhétorique ou une *paetitia* de dernière minute pour s'assurer l'indulgence du lecteur après un tour d'horizon (relativement télégraphique) d'un ensemble de sujets qui justifieraient aisément chacun des dissertations dix fois plus étendues que ne l'est ce petit livre. C'est la constatation d'une situation réelle. Les voies de la création, ayant dédaigné les paradis téléologiques que les critiques d'antan aimaient à s'imaginer au bout de leur chemin, sont trop multiples et foisonnantes à l'époque contemporaine pour qu'un traité de l'ordre de celui-ci puisse s'achever sur la réitération de quelques certitudes rassurantes. Histoire à suivre, donc, Il n'en reste pas moins que J. Loehr offre ici quelque chose de plus qu'un pense-bête sur des questions qui ont marqué l'histoire de la lecture, de l'écriture, de la critique et de la réception, et qu'il le fait de manière systématique et utile. L'ouvrage est divisé en cinq parties consacrées respectivement à l'auteur, le lecteur, le personnage, la fiction et le genre. A l'intérieur de chaque section le champ est partagé en une série de sous-sections qui résument le développement historique des notions traitées, offrent des exemples tirés des œuvres d'auteurs canoniques, de l'antiquité au XXe siècle, et détaillent les divers courants de pensée et d'opinion qui ont marqué l'évolution du sujet. Chaque section se termine sur une bibliographie de référence qui renvoie le lecteur à des études essentielles sur les sujets traités. Le style est simple, visant une clarté maximale. Quelques références à des auteurs étrangers, surtout anglo-saxons, viennent parfois élargir un champ de vision qui aurait failli être trop étroit en s'en tenant exclusivement à la tradition française. Des renvois réguliers à des romanciers que l'auteur affectionne particulièrement – Malraux et Zola – ajoutent une note plus personnelle à un volume qui se veut, jusqu'à la conclusion exclusivement, strictement objectif.

La réflexion de Loehr se place sous les auspices symboliques de Blanchot, dont une citation mise en exergue et reprise en clôture boucle partiellement une boucle qu'on ne saurait jamais boucler tout à fait, en suggérant que les chemins de la critique, comme ceux de la création, réservent encore bien des surprises. Loehr termine son panorama sur une réflexion entre généricité et littéarité qui choisit de s'en tenir à la production romanesque de diffusion restreinte. Il évacue par là la question difficile de la nouvelle

légitimité des genres soi-disant « paralittéraires », qui ont vu en ces quelques dernières décennies des éléments de leur esthétique et de leurs thématiques se faire adopter presque universellement dans la création romanesque en langues européennes. Mais cela aurait sans doute exigé un tout autre discours, allant au-delà des intentions clairement explicitées de l'auteur.

Stimulant et bien écrit, ce livre trouvera facilement son public et sera très utile en particulier aux étudiants qui abordent pour la première fois le vaste monde du discours sur la création, en leur offrant un joli florilège agrémenté de pistes pour une réflexion ultérieure.

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Bowen, John R. *Can Islam be French? Pluralism and Pragmatism in a Secularist State*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2010. 232 p.

John R. Bowen is currently the Dunbar-Van Cleve Professor in Arts & Sciences at Washington University in St. Louis. He has been working in France as an anthropologist since 2000 and for many years beforehand in Indonesia. This is his second book on Islam in France, the first being *Why the French Don't Like Headscarves? Islam, the State, and Public Space* published in 2007 by Princeton UP.

The title's provocative question, "Can Islam be French?", is quickly transformed into a false one. A better way to ask the question is rather: "Can Islam become a generally accepted part of the French social landscape?" (3) Bowen practices an "anthropology of public reasoning" (5). His research methodology is based on "interactions in mosques, schools, public meetings, and Internet exchanges" and on "written texts when they enter into social life" (5-6). While stressing the fact that not all French Muslims think about Islam in the same way, he examines "how some Muslims explain, persuade, and offer opinions to other Muslims" (11). He therefore studies certain Islamic public actors (i.e. "men and women who engage in public activity with respect to Islamic concerns") and what they propose to make of Islam. His interest is thus "from within the religious tradition" (11). In this sense, his book is unlike most other contemporary books on the subject, which tend to discuss how Muslims are integrated into French society.

The book is divided into three main parts. Part One, *Trajectories*, discusses Islam and the Republic (chapter one) while insisting on French specificity: though France has welcomed Muslim immigrants longer than any other Western European country, Muslims were not accorded religious recognition without issue and there were more obstacles (than in Britain, for example) for Muslims seeking to create an Islamic way of life. In the second chapter, "Fashioning of the French Islamic Landscape," Bowen focuses on how Muslims adapted to changing socio-historical conditions and describes how the state and municipalities answered practical Muslim questions such as "Where to sacrifice?" and "Where to pray?"

Part Two, *Spaces*, the longest part of the book, contains chapters three to six. Chapter three, entitled *Mosques Facing Outward*, analyzes mosques and their social and political environments. In particular Bowen studies the mosque of Clichy-sous-Bois, the Parisian suburb where the October 2005 riots took place and whose imam is Dhaou Meskine. The mosque is formed by a set of three apartments rearranged into a prayer space. He compares this with the mosque of Saint-Denis, (whose imam is Fouad Imrarraine), which is part of a multi-functional Islamic Center, and with the "cathedral mosque" of Lyon with its director Kamel Kabtane. In chapter four, "Shaping Knowledge to France", he deals with the teaching of Islamic norms to women and men who intend to make their lives in France, and who are looking for answers on how to live their faith

(63). The teachings of Hichem El Arafa at CERSI (Centre d'Études et de Recherche en Sciences Islamiques), regarding the science of Hadith and principles based on Scripture are discussed at some length. Chapter five is concerned with different Islamic schools and considers "directors of all such institutes as pedagogical entrepreneurs, looking for niches to occupy" (85). He focuses specifically on six leaders: Hichem El Arafa's CERSI, which remains a "generalist" institution by addressing real-world problems, Abdelkrim Bekri, the director of Paris' Great Mosque, who is strongly supported by the French state, Ahmad Jaballah, the director of IESH (Institut Européen des Sciences Humaines), who insists on the "middle way," Ahmed Abidi's IFESI (Institut Français des Etudes et Sciences Islamiques) in Boissy St.-Leger, who teaches the four legal schools, Dhaou Meskine, the director of the ISSI (the Institut Supérieur des Sciences Islamiques) which is comparable to El Arafa's CERSI but differs from it in that it aims at a higher level of training, includes courses taught in Arabic, and supports the Mālikī objectives, and finally Abdelkarim Sabri, who teaches at the Iraqi School and who insists "on taking reference to the objectives of the Qu'ran in order to understand the scriptural text" (98). In the sixth chapter, Bowen asks the question: "Can an Islamic School Be Republican?" He responds by amply discussing the example of Dhaou Meskine's Success School (École La Réussite) in Aubervilliers and the school's field trips, which he organizes to his property in Normandy. (He also mentions Dhaou Meskine's arrest and his release. Currently, at the time that I am writing this review, he has again been arrested.) We notice that the bulk of this part is devoted to the views of Dhaou Meskine and Hichem El Arafa who are also the only two Muslim leaders whose pictures appear in the book.

Part Three, *Debates*, consists of chapters seven to nine. In chapter seven, Bowen opens the query: "Should there be an Islam for Europe?" He starts with the issue of Ribā, that is, whether one should take out interest-bearing bank loans to purchase a home. Then the discussion becomes more general and moves to the question of whether different rules should be applied in different countries, and if Muslims living in non-muslim countries should be exempt from certain rules. Chapter eight, "Negotiating across Realms of Justification", treats Halāl marriage and how to properly marry and divorce. Bowen stresses the convergences between Islam and the secular. He then discusses Halāl rules for food while pointing out the convergences between French civil law and Islamic practices. The final chapter, "Islamic Spheres in Republican Space", answers the question whether religious-based associations impede integration. Bowen's answer is "no" and he concludes his book with a pragmatics of convergence. As the book jacket states, "the particular ways in which Muslims have settled in France, and in which France governs religions, have created incentives for Muslims to develop new, pragmatic ways of thinking about religious issues in French society."

The originality of this academic book is that it sheds new light on the general topic of Muslims in France thanks to its approach from *within*. Consequently, it will undoubtedly trigger new debates and will also inspire further original research. The book is written clearly and does not use much jargon. It will therefore appeal to people from various disciplines interested in how Islam is practiced in France. Finally, the book cover shows the main mosque in Paris with the French flag, a stark visual representation of the central idea of the book. A book by Jean-François Bayart published in 2010, *L'Islam républicain, Ankara, Téhéran, Dakar* (Albin Michel), develops similar questions on the compatibility of Islam and the republic and also answers with a "yes." Though the scope of that book is different, it would constitute an interesting complementary reading in French.

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Camiscioli, Elisa. *Reproducing the French Race. Immigration, Intimacy, and Embodiment in the Early Twentieth Century*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2009. xi + 228 p.

In *Reproducing the French Race*, Elisa Camiscioli, associate professor of history and women's studies at Binghamton University, convincingly shows the importance of mass immigration in defining national identity at the beginning of the twentieth century. She demonstrates that "in France the elaboration of a "French Race" was the product of a particular historical moment, coinciding with the onset of mass immigration, preparation for revenge against Germany, and the expansion of the colonial empire." (12) She insists on the importance of the body (its color, gender, potential labor force, reproductive capacity and experience of desire) in the debates around national identity and stresses the relevance of the association of production and reproduction "because it signals the confluence of biopolitical strategies of governance and mass international migrations" (7).

Camiscioli persuasively guides the reader through her argument in five chapters of similar length (about 30 pages each), organized thematically, focusing on five moments in the immigration debate: "pronatalist politics, industrial production, *métissage*, white slavery, and independent nationality for married women." (16) Her prose is clear, with no unnecessary jargon. The sources she used for her research are "parliamentary debates, nationality laws, police and army records on prostitution, feminist newspapers, legal journals, propaganda from the social hygiene crusade, and published works in demography, anthropology, and medicine." (2) She has examined "politicians, industrialists, social scientists, jurists and racial theorists." (22)

In the first chapter, "Immigration, Demography, and Pronatalism," Camiscioli explains that, in early twentieth century France, public and political discourses were concerned with declining population rates, and that, consequently, the dominant discourse on immigration took into consideration the labor power as well as the reproductive value of the potential immigrant. She demonstrates that pronatalist discourses emphasized the need of large families for an economically and internationally recognized nation-state. The pronatalists "explicitly defined France as a white nation whose future depended on the immigration and assimilation of European foreigners alone" (47), particularly Italians, Spaniards and Poles.

The second chapter ("Labor Power and Racial Economy") treats the discipline of work science and shows how labor recruiters and government representatives made a distinction between European labor and colonial labor whose productivity and skill were systematically devalued (72). For example, Jules Amar, an important theoretician of pre-Taylorist *science du travail*, compared levels of energy and fatigue among Italian, North African, and French workers.

In the third chapter, "Hybridity and Its Discontents," Camiscioli considers the question of racial mixing and interracial unions and their perceived consequences for the national body. Referring to the writings of several scientists (Dr. Eugène Apert, Dr. René Martial, Dr. Louis-Laurent Pinon among others), she insists on the distinction between race mixing "between whites" and "perilous" race mixing "between whites and people of color" (75). She concludes that "race consciousness was nothing more than a means to protect the nation's inhabitants and their progeny, or an acknowledgment that while some foreigners had the capacity to rejuvenate the anemic French blood, others could only poison it" (96).

The concern of chapter four, "Black Migrants, White Slavery: *Métissage* in the Metropole and Abroad," is interracial prostitution. It discusses French white prostitutes who worked overseas and in the métropole; in particular, it examines how visits to these white prostitutes by colonial subjects were regulated. Camiscioli discusses the complex

discourses of the regulationists, the social reformers who “focused on the state’s sanctioning of sex work through the doctrine of regulationism” (102), and the abolitionists who were opposed to state-regulated prostitution.

The last chapter entitled “Intermarriage, Independent Nationality, and Individual Rights” examines interracial unions. A large part of this chapter is devoted to the discussion of the 1927 law that allowed French women married to foreigners to keep their nationality while stressing the emergence of the feminist movement.

Finally Camiscioli shows how the populationist politics of the Vichy regime grew out of the Third Republic’s desire to create racial hierarchies.

To conclude, this well-researched academic book with ample footnotes, a profuse bibliography, and an index, is most welcome. By focusing on the intersections of immigration, race, gender and national identity, it fills a gap in the historiography of twentieth-century France. Because of the originality of its approach, this book will appeal to researchers and students from many disciplines. It will be beneficial not only to those interested in French cultural and social history but also to those more generally interested in immigration issues, race studies, nation building, national characteristics and colonial and post-colonial narratives. It could be read in tandem with Elsa Dorlin’s *La matrice de la race. Généalogie sexuelle et coloniale de la Nation française* (Paris: La Découverte/Poche, 2006 and 2009), which develops similar issues but from a philosophical angle. Finally, we should mention the judiciously chosen cover representing a sitting female nude by Brassai, an immigrant from Hungary naturalized in 1949. The picture (*Untitled* 1934-35) represents, against a motley background, a woman seen from the back with geometrical signs drawn on her body, and seems to metaphorically incarnate the core of the book: immigration, intimacy, and embodiment.

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Forrest, Alan. *The Legacy of the French Revolutionary Wars: The Nation-in-Arms in French Republican Memories*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009. ISBN 978-0-521-81062-3. vii + 276 p.

Rather than a history of warfare, this book is a study of the lingering memory, in social and cultural terms, of the ideological fervor and enthusiasm that accompanied the wars of the Revolutionary period. Alan Forrest’s well-documented central argument is that an idealized image of the citizens-in-arms who fought to defend the ideals and values of the first French Republic was produced and painstakingly maintained until the First World War. This iconic representation of “les soldats de l’An II”—transmitted through numerous authors, including Hugo and Michelet—as the military embodiment of the Revolution provided a potent rallying-cry (if not always an effective political instrument) for French Republicans throughout the long nineteenth century, even as changes in the nature of modern warfare rendered it increasingly obsolete.

Forrest traces the memory of the “levée en masse”—what he calls a “Gallic embodiment of an enduring classical myth” (1)—through periods of war and peace, through the successive constitutional regimes of the nineteenth century, and through recurring political debates over the proper size and role of the military in France. The author devotes a chapter to the “blurring of the distinction between the Revolutionary and Imperial army” (39), pointing out that Napoleon, even though he had been mostly concerned with maintaining a well-disciplined fighting force, resorted in 1814, as his regime was crumbling, to emergency measures that were reminiscent of the Revolutionary call to save “la patrie en danger” in 1793. The monarchical Restoration period brought a drastic curtailing of the size of the army, as well as a purge of the military officers who had served the Emperor, but it did not eradicate the nostalgic

mythology that had accreted around the Revolutionary citizen-soldier. The Imperial component of that mythology was partly revived under Louis-Philippe, and of course especially under Napoleon III.

Ironically, as Forrest emphasizes, the Revolutionary policy of universal conscription, equally applied to all social classes, was followed more closely in Prussia than in France, where a high proportion of young men could and did avoid military service. The Prussian army that invaded France in 1870 was thus larger and better-trained. Born after the disastrous defeat of the Franco-Prussian war, the Third Republic, logically enough, sought to return to the Revolutionary symbolism of the citizen-soldier, with military service as a vital component of Republican citizenship: “commemoration of the Revolution was also a reminder of past military triumphs by the French people, which underlined the extent of their debt to their citizen-soldiers as they fought and conquered in the name of liberty” (151). The author convincingly argues that the horrendous conditions and casualties of trench warfare during the First World War signaled an end to the relevance of the Revolutionary-era policy of mass conscription to France and its armed forces: “The Army of the Year II and the legend of the *levée en masse* appeared destined, after over 120 years, to pass into history as the nation turned to the new challenges of the twentieth century” (219).

However, compulsory (and theoretically universal) military service remained official French policy until 1996, when Jacques Chirac called for a transition to an all-professional military, which was completed in 2001. While Forrest details the cases in which the Revolutionary ideal of the citizen-soldier was resurrected during the twentieth century (most notably during the Occupation), he does not provide a thorough explanation for the continuation of the *service national* in France, even after it had become clear that it served no useful purpose. This minor quibble should not detract from a very impressive study of the long-lived historical impact of the Revolutionary wars on French society.

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Coly, Ayo A. *The Pull of Colonial Nationhood: Gender and Migration in Francophone African Literatures*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2010. xxvii + 147 p.

Le livre d'Ayo Coly se veut un correctif aux discours exaltant la migration transnationale et l'hybridité transculturelle, discours produits par plusieurs théoriciens du postcolonialisme, et en particulier par Homi Bhabha : « The arguments upheld in this book explicitly go against the grain of the unfolding postnationalist turn in postcolonial criticism » (125). Coly examine certains livres de trois écrivaines africaines francophones qui ont, chacune à sa façon, connu le succès critique et commercial: Ken Bugul, Calixthe Beyala et Fatou Diome. D'origine sénégalaise, Ken Bugul a vécu en Belgique et en France, est retournée vivre au Sénégal, puis s'est installée au Bénin. Beyala et Diome, respectivement d'origine camerounaise et sénégalaise, vivent actuellement toutes deux en France. La question de l'exil ou de la migration d'Africains vers l'Europe est donc analysée à travers les représentations littéraires de trois femmes qui ont elles-mêmes choisi de quitter leur pays et d'aller vivre et travailler en France. Un des principaux objectifs de l'auteure est ainsi de conceptualiser la tradition du déplacement ou de l'exil littéraire postcolonial à travers le prisme théorique des *gender studies*. Dans cette optique, le déclassement par la critique postcoloniale du foyer, du village, de la nationalité et de tout ce qui constitue l'enracinement local ne correspond guère à ce que l'on peut trouver dans les textes produits par des femmes pour qui la maison et la nation ne constituent pas des catégories dépassées.

La problématique introduite par Coly est doublement intéressante, se situant à la croisée de deux traditions théoriques et brassant des concepts à forte charge idéologique. Les difficultés commencent toutefois dès son introduction, intitulée « Of Uprooted and Deterritorialized Africans ». Des Africains déracinés et déterritorialisés : même s'il s'agit de reprendre de façon quelque peu ironique le discours théorique que l'auteure cherche à subvertir, on entre d'emblée dans un langage à tonalité néo-barrésienne qui risque de réifier à la fois Africains et Européens, de les établir en tant que catégories culturelles monolithiques et immuables dont chacune ne pourrait se réaliser que dans son aire géographique respective. Heureusement, le propos de Coly se révèle bien plus nuancé. On peut d'autre part se demander si la revalorisation du discours critique sur le foyer et la nation, en se focalisant uniquement sur des textes écrits par des femmes, n'encourt pas le risque de virer vers une autre forme de raisonnement binaire réducteur : aux hommes l'attrait de l'hybridité transnationale, aux femmes l'appel ou « Pull » de la fixité locale et nationale. Cependant, comme le démontre bien Coly, le processus migratoire, la question de l'exil et de l'éventuel retour au pays, et surtout la représentation vivace et variable du lieu que l'on quitte, si limité ou si vaste qu'il puisse être conçu (à l'échelle locale, nationale ou continentale), toute cette thématique du départ et de l'émigration est abordée de façons très dissemblables par les trois écrivaines qu'elle a choisies.

Coly répartit d'ailleurs Ken Bugul, Calixthe Beyala et Fatou Diome en fonction de « three distinct political and ideological moments that traverse postcolonial nationhood » (126). En particulier, Ken Bugul représenterait la période qui a immédiatement suivi le processus de décolonisation. Or, Coly ne prend en considération que les livres de Bugul publiés dans les années 80 et 90. Qu'en est-il des livres publiés depuis par cette auteure ? Dans *Rue Félix-Faure* (2005) et *La pièce d'or* (2006), elle porte un regard acerbe sur son Sénégal natal. Quant à *Mes hommes à moi* (2008), qui fait converger plusieurs récits dans un café parisien, ce roman apporterait plutôt de l'eau au moulin à ceux qui promeuvent la migration transnationale. La question se pose de façon analogue dans les cas de Beyala (pour qui le dernier livre mentionné, *Lettre d'une Afro-Française à ses compatriotes*, date de 2000) et de Diome (pour qui seuls deux livres sont pris en considération : *La préférence nationale* (2001) et *Le ventre de l'Atlantique* (2003)). Ce parti-pris de se limiter à une certaine partie du corpus de chaque écrivaine, de ne pas prendre en compte leurs livres publiés plus récemment, risque de laisser les lecteurs sur leur faim, même s'il n'infirme pas nécessairement l'argumentation de Coly en ce qui concerne l'utilité d'une revalorisation du discours critique sur la « nationalité postcoloniale ».

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