



June 2001

Civility, Marriage, and the Impossible French Citizen: From Ourika to Zouzou and Princese Tam Tam

Michelle Chilcoat

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.colby.edu/cq>

Recommended Citation

Colby Quarterly, Volume 37, no.2, June 2001, p. 125-144

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ Colby. It has been accepted for inclusion in Colby Quarterly by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ Colby.

Civility, Marriage, and the Impossible French Citizen: From Ourika to Zouzou and Princesse Tam Tam

By MICHELLE CHILCOAT

THE ENGENDERING OF THE “impossible citizen”¹ can be read at either end of France’s colonizing mission in North and West Africa, in the popular novel, *Ourika* (1824), and in *Zouzou* (1934) and *Princesse Tam Tam* (1935), two widely viewed Josephine Baker films of the interwar period. In each of these works, the ability of the main character—black and female—to marry in France is at issue. That these texts entertain the possibility of marriage only to suggest in a markedly specious fashion its impossibility has much to do with how citizenship was conceived in colonial France.² Beginning in the seventeenth century, when France became fully engaged in the slave trade, the discourses of slavery, colonialism, and scientific racism linked marriage and citizenship through civility, a notion constructed (though never legally or juridically defined) as the set of social behaviors which, if properly emulated, would render the colonial subject a viable candidate for citizenship. One (if not the) crucial measure of civility was the colonial subject’s perceived ability to enter into legitimate marriage, with its concomitant reproduction of the legitimate family.

While these discourses held up “family values” as representative of highest-order civilization, their rhetorical strategies simultaneously generated conditions under which the assimilation of these values, even if desired by the colonial subject, was rendered virtually impossible. One such strategy was to imagine the African as biologically or culturally unfit for marriage. In other words, race was constructed as outside of or incompatible with the social relationships maintained through marriage and family. Constructed as lacking in the capacity for social bonding, Africans in particular could not be conceived as suitable citizens. In these discourses, then, the impossibility of marriage underwrites the impossibility of citizenship. Put another way, the impossible citizen is first an impossible marriage partner, as typified in the characters of

1. This term is borrowed from a work titled *L’Impossible citoyen: L’étranger dans le discours de la Révolution française*. In the work, author Sophie Wahnich does not address race in her analysis of the conceptualization of citizenship, but is interested, rather, in determining how the abstract notion of the “foreigner” (i.e., the “impossible citizen”) figures into the construction of a French national identity. The “foreigners” in Wahnich’s study are other white Europeans who might potentially infiltrate the French nation to subvert or conquer it.

2. In *La nationalité française*, Hugues Fulchiron recalls that in France as of the year 2000, marriage “was and continues to be, without a doubt, one of the most discussed questions concerning the right to nationality” (19, my translation). He also points out that in France, citizenship and nationality are one and the same.

Ourika, Zouzou, and Princesse Tam Tam. The representation of such figures in relation to marriage, civility, and this distinctive notion of citizenship takes on its full significance only through an analysis of the writings of eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and twentieth-century philosophers, scientists, and civil servants as they sought to rationalize colonial governance. This rationalization rested primarily on the construction of a quintessential other—black and female—to embody the negative or opposite of the ideal (white male) citizen.

Published in 1823, Claire de Duras's *Ourika* tells the story of a Senegalese woman, rescued at the age of two from slavery, and deposited into the Parisian home of a nurturing aristocratic grandmother and her two orphaned grandsons. This grandmother, Madame de B., is very fond of Ourika, raising her as a daughter and as a sister to her youngest grandson, Charles. (Approximately the same age as Ourika, and in accordance with the expectations of romantic literature, Charles is poised to become her love interest.) Having been trained from earliest childhood to dance, speak several languages, paint, recite poetry, and appreciate music, Ourika is exhorted to demonstrate her civility before audiences astonished by the extent of the "negress's" assimilation. Nevertheless, she is always dressed by her benefactress "in oriental costume," signaling, one must presume, her "difference," despite Ourika's own admitted "contempt for everything that did not belong in [the] world" of (white) French aristocratic society.³ That Ourika's difference cannot be forgotten is also revealed when Madame de B. organizes a ball "ostensibly for her grandsons, but really to display" Ourika (10). In a dance in which Ourika is to "represent Africa," her partner has to cover his face with a piece of black cloth (8). The staging of this gesture suggests that mixed partnering is not acceptable, even if it is just a performance. The fact that the author does not write in a suitable black male partner for Ourika is also strategic. For what must be made clear in *Ourika* is the "unmarriageability" of the black female in white French society.

Ourika's status as marginal, even as pariah, is made apparent to her early in the story. Only a few days after the dance, Ourika overhears a conversation in which Madame de B.'s friend the Marquise admonishes her for having adopted a young woman who can never hope to have a real place, that is, as married and a mother in white society. The Marquise's interrogation is worth reproducing here:

To whom do you propose marrying her? With her intelligence, with the education you've given her? What kind of man would marry a negress? Even supposing you could bribe some fellow to father mulatto children, he could only be of low birth. She could never be happy with such a man. She can only want the kind of husband who would never look at her. (13)

Once again, the possibility of imagining the presence in France of a suitable black male partner for Ourika is never entertained. Ourika herself can only conceive of such a relationship if Madame de B. would agree to send her

3. Claire de Duras, *Ourika* (New York: MLA, 1994), 8. All further references by page number only.

“back to [her] homeland” (i.e., Africa) (16). This idea, however, is also untenable since Ourika belongs, as she is made to say, “to a race of barbarous murderers” (21). Ourika, the Marquise warns, “flouted her natural destiny” when she “entered society without its permission”; she is responsible for “upsetting the natural order of things” (14).⁴

This “natural order” is one which establishes that it is “unnatural” for blacks to “enter society,” and to seek “a place in the chain of being” (43). Social relationships, relationships established through links or genealogies, are “natural” only to whites. Ourika’s “inability” to establish and be established in terms of familial relationships is the essential element of her difference: “These bonds of family,” she laments, “gave me terrible insight into my own situation” (17). It may appear ironic that Madame de B.’s “family” is anything but intact—there is no father in *Ourika*, no mother, no grandfather. And the white woman that Charles will marry is an orphan. Nevertheless, these characters constitute family by virtue of the fact that they are white. It is only by accepting that marriage and family are not for her—that her love for her “brother” Charles can never be returned—that Ourika would be able, in the Marquise’s words, to “come ... to terms with being black” (42). With the social world of white France completely (and safely) beyond her reach, Ourika becomes a nun, dying alone and broken within a convent’s walls—though not before pledging to dedicate her final thoughts to Charles (and not to God, as might be expected of a nun), the empowered white male whose identity comprises everything that Ourika is not.

Ourika’s tragedy is retold over a century later in Marc Allégret’s 1934 film comedy, *Zouzou*, starring Josephine Baker. In this version of the story of impossible marriage, Zouzou is brought, like Ourika, to French soil where she is displayed by a good-natured benefactor, Papa Mélé, in a circus act, as the unexpected “twin” of a white boy, Jean. Jean and Zouzou are raised by Papa Mélé as brother and sister, and eventually they all move to Paris in search of job opportunities. Jean finds work as an electrician for a grand music-hall production, and Zouzou, besides blissfully keeping house for Jean and Papa Mélé,⁵ becomes a washerwoman—a *blanchisseuse* which, in French, means the one who makes things white. Zouzou delights her white female coworkers with her ability to mimic the music-hall production’s white female star. She, like Ourika, is admired for her ability to perform—to make (like) white.⁶ It is revealed early on in the film that Zouzou’s sibling love for

4. In *Du noir au nègre: L'image du Noir au théâtre (1550-1960)*, author Sylvie Chalaye explains that this justification of racism is not necessarily ironic, but rather characteristic of romantic literature of the French Restoration (when *Ourika* appears): “Far from condemning racial prejudice, one recognizes and publicizes it, turning it into a destiny, and a first order tragic theme” (165, my translation).

5. Chalaye notes that after abolition, “slavery and its laws ... were replaced by ... the paternalistic dominator who ... conceived of the negro as a playful, carefree, naïve grown-up child whose sole ambition is to please and serve the white man” (242, my translation).

6. The name “Zouzou,” as Elizabeth Ezra notes in *The Colonial Unconscious: Race and Culture in Interwar France*, “invokes ... the zouave (native colonial soldier)” (112). The colloquial expression *faire le Zouave* (which Ezra does not mention) is synonymous with *faire le singe*, meaning “make like a monkey,” “clown around,” “engage in farcical behavior.”

Jean has developed into something more. She encourages Claire (meaning light, clear, or without color), a kind and very blond friend with whom she works, to accompany her to make a laundry delivery to the theatre, so that Claire can see the man she loves. But when Jean beholds Claire, it is instant love for the two of them. Shortly thereafter, as Zouzou is playing around on stage to help Jean set the spotlights, her huge black shadow tellingly dances behind her. The music-hall director, taken with her unplanned and spontaneous performance—and, presumably, with her otherness—is instantly convinced that she will be his new star.

The Parisian audience is indeed completely enthralled with Zouzou, and she becomes an overnight sensation. Her success mounts, as indicated by her tasteful new wardrobe, impressive jewelry, and fancy car. But she is overcome with grief when Jean is imprisoned for a crime he did not commit. Eventually, because of her money and stardom, Zouzou is able to convince officials of Jean's innocence and to effect his release. As she hurries to the prison gates to meet him, she is stopped in her tracks by the sight of Jean and Claire in a loving embrace. Jean and Claire walk away together, completely oblivious to Zouzou, who is left alone and heartbroken. In the final and signature scene, Zouzou is again on stage, confined behind the bars of a huge gilt birdcage, clad only in feathers and singing wistfully of her desire to return to Haiti. Like Claire de Duras's *Ourika*, the film *Zouzou* is unable or refuses to imagine either an interracial couple or a suitable black male partner for Zouzou. Josephine Baker herself asked the film script's author Pépito Abatino (her white lover at the time, who, incidentally, Baker would not marry because he refused to have a child with her): "Why does the film end as it does? I could have married Gabin [the actor who plays Jean] ... Or would audiences not like that, because of my color?"⁷

Edmond Gréville's *Princesse Tam Tam*, the film that immediately follows *Zouzou* in 1935, can be read as a response to this question. The film opens with a scene in which Max de Mirecourt, a high-society novelist, is being shut out of his bedroom by his furious wife Lucie (a name which, like "Claire," suggests lightness, whiteness, or the absence of black). Presumably, Max is suffering the effects of excessive civilizing, for he seems to have lost the spontaneous energy that would allow him to perform satisfactorily in the marital bed. Max associates his inability to perform with a loss of inspiration, and so he plans a trip to Africa, claiming that "civilization" and "marriage" have tired him so. What he is suggesting through such a claim is that Africa is where one goes to get away from marriage and civilization. The scene immediately cuts to somewhere in Africa (it is, in fact, Tunisia) where Max and his writing assistant Coton are seated at a bar. A savage native, Alwina (played by Baker), scurries past, having stolen a piece of fruit from one of the bar's attendants. Like the music-hall director of *Zouzou*, Max is inspired by Alwina's spontaneity and proposes to make her the object of his next novel

7. Josephine Baker and Jo Bouillon, *Josephine* (Paris: Editions Robert Lafont, 1976), 133.

which, he explains to his assistant, will be an experiment in assimilation: "We'll clean her up, educate her, and then study her reactions." When the agent complains that "there's no story there," Max enthusiastically responds, "Then we'll make one!"

Max's experiment in assimilation also involves his pretending to be in love with Alwina, again to study her reactions. In the meantime, he has received a telegram from Paris informing him that his wife, Lucie, is being wined and dined by a terribly wealthy maharaja. Max decides he must quickly complete his work so he can return to Paris to reconquer what is his. His novel then becomes his imagining of the transformation of the savage Alwina into the culturally refined *Princesse Tam Tam*, who he can then bring to Paris to make his wife jealous. In his novel, *Princesse Tam Tam* quickly tires of the trappings of civilization and decides to venture out with Dar, Max's black(faced) butler. Tam Tam and Dar make their way to a bar in a seedy area of town where a jazz band is playing. The driving rhythm of the drums possess Tam Tam (her very name recalling the beat that overcomes her), and soon she is dancing in full abandon around the bar, singing that "under the African sky ... all is desire and pleasure." A friend of Max's wife, who is actually spying on Tam Tam in order to ascertain her real identity, reports back to Lucie, and they hatch a plan to expose Tam Tam for the primitive she really is. They arrange for the same jazz band to play at the largest social event of the season. When Tam Tam again hears the drums, she runs up on stage, tears off her white evening gown to reveal the black savage garb she wears beneath, and launches into her most uninhibited dance yet. At first Max hides his face in shame but then realizes that the audience is thrilled with the performance they've just witnessed. As the crowd rushes to congratulate Tam Tam, Max runs after his wife who has fled the scene in a fit of jealous rage.

The scene now cuts to the maharaja and Tam Tam. "You love him, don't you?" the maharaja asks. When Tam Tam admits that she does, the maharaja explains that she must go home, since she "can build nothing in their France." He points out to Tam Tam two windows, one that looks out on the West, the other, on the East. Through the West window, Tam Tam observes Max in a loving embrace with his wife. Through the East window, and barely discernible, is Max's black(faced) butler to whom Tam Tam cries, "I'm coming." At this moment, the scene moves back to "reality" where Max is typing the final words of his novel. "You know," muses his assistant, "things might not have turned out like that if Alwina had really gone to France." In other words, the presence of this African woman in French society could effect two widely varying results. On the one hand, she could provide new blood (i.e., energy) to a country that is withering under the weight of "over-civilization," something evidenced by the fact that it has stopped having children (interwar France is, in fact, engaged in a campaign to counter low birth rates and a declining population). On the other, she could generate social disorder, a reversion to the primitive behavior that civilized society prides itself on hav-

ing conquered or, at least, effectively repressed. This latter is the outcome projected in the film as Max leaves Africa, bequeathing to Alwina the sumptuous manor he occupied there while writing his novel. Back in Paris, Max's novel—which he has titled *Civilization*—is a huge success, as indicated by the long lines awaiting a signed copy, and by Max's wife, who now beams with satisfaction. (Max did not need the savage female for reproduction, only the sexual desire her primitive body inspired.) When Coton suggests that it is "too bad Alwina is not here to sign too," Max muses that "she's better off where she is." The scene turns back to Africa where Alwina is sitting in a field with her baby, and Dar is hard at work at the potter's wheel. Alwina then walks into the once refined or "civilized" dwelling Max left her (it is now overrun with animals). There, in the film's final scene, a mule nuzzles up to a copy of *Civilization* that is lying on the floor and proceeds to devour it.

Reproduction, with its link to primal urges, and civility, a demonstration of the behaviors that render one worthy of French society, are linked in the final scene of *Princesse Tam Tam* in the image of the mule. The mule, from which the French term "mulâtre," meaning mulelike, and the English term "mulatto" derive, is the offspring of the mixed breeding of a horse and a donkey. Bred for its capacity to sustain hard labor, the mule is, as a result of this mixed breeding, sterile and, therefore, incapable of reproduction. The danger of not "keeping to one's own" is thus the message conveyed in *Princesse Tam Tam*'s final image, a not so subtle reiteration of the maharaja's warning that the (African) other can "build [i.e., reproduce] nothing in their France." The fear of miscegenation is also what underwrites the whole of *Ourika*. In fact, the name "Ourika" resembles the ancient Greek noun, "ορίκη," meaning mule, and a closely resembling verb, "ορίζο," meaning "to mark out by boundaries" or "to define." Ourika, then, marks the end of reproduction. Sylvie Chalaye, while not making this etymological connection, uses the term "cultural mulatta" to describe Ourika's predicament in which the "primitive" who has been inculcated in the art of French civility is the analog of the "biological mulatta" who has been infused with white blood. In either case, the result is the same: doomed to a life of solitude, marginalization, and unhappiness, the mulatta is forever out of place.⁸ She "no longer belong[s] anywhere," Ourika observes; she is "cut off from the entire human race."⁹

The suggested but impossible coupling of Ourika and Charles, and Zouzou and Jean, are reconfigured in the absurdist relationships of Tam Tam and Max, and the maharaja and Lucie, people clearly not meant to be married, but whose faux courtships force into the spotlight the "real" married couple, Max and Lucie—two names which, when joined together, create "maximum lightness," the very definition of "white." The novel, *Ourika*, and

8. Sylvie Chalaye, *Du noir au nègre: L'image du Noir au théâtre (1550-1960)* (Paris: Harmattan, 1998), 181.

9. Duras, 16.

the films *Zouzou* and *Princesse Tam Tam*, when taken together, present what Werner Sollors has labeled the tendency of interracial story lines to prepare the way for “alternative endings.”¹⁰ The year after *Ourika* was published, for example, at least four versions of the novel were produced for theater.¹¹ In one play, and most in keeping with the novel, Ourika’s impossible love for Charles leads her to suicide.¹² In another, the “solution” is to separate Ourika from her potential relationship with a white man by “send[ing] the transplanted and therefore heartbroken Ourika back to Africa, her ‘natural’ world elsewhere.”¹³ In yet another, Ourika is happily coupled with a black sailor and the two of them go back to Africa.¹⁴ According to Sollors, “in the different versions of [*Ourika*] the heroine’s fate seems dependent on whether she leaves for Africa (meaning survival) or stays in Europe (signifying death).”¹⁵ I would argue that this logic holds equally well for the Baker films. In the first, Zouzou’s love for her white brother Jean results in her broken heart and the fantasy of her incarceration. *Zouzou*’s “alternative ending” is proposed in *Princesse Tam Tam*, in which the black heroine is happily sent back to Africa to establish a family of her own (kind).

The history of civility in modern France begins, according to Harold Nicolson, in the court of Louis XIV where a code of behavior for *honnêtes hommes* (a term rendered in English as “gentlemen”) was instituted. This behavior, Nicolson points out, was frivolous, often absurd, and constantly changing according to the king’s whim. It was, for these reasons, almost impossible to emulate. Nevertheless, countless civility or behavior manuals appeared in the seventeenth century, largely serving as guides for young noble men on how to see and be seen by the king, something that could only occur if one knew how to avoid behaviors or conversation that the court could find ridiculous or offensive.¹⁶ Nicolson suggests that in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the ideas of civility and the gentleman evolve to signify “an estimate of character rather than ... a definition of status” (174). Whereas the seventeenth century notion of civility “was exclusive, not merely of the rest of the French nation, but also of foreigners” (177), in the eighteenth century, “civility broadened into civilization,” and concerned “a duty towards one’s neighbor as part of a duty towards one’s self” (182). In other words, civility is no longer that which marks out an individual as worthy of the king’s notice; instead, it signals a set of behaviors worthy of and identifiable as belonging to the members of a community or society (whose microcosmic representation will be the family).

10. Werner Sollors, *Neither Black Nor White Yet Both: Thematic Explorations of Interracial Literature* (New York: Oxford UP, 1997), 348.

11. Chalaye, 168.

12. *Ibid.*, 172.

13. Sollors, 347.

14. Chalaye, 171.

15. Sollors, 347.

16. Harold Nicolson, *Good Behavior: Being a Study of Certain Types of Civility* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1960), 173. All further references by page number only.

The French philosophe Voltaire spoke of civility not as an "arbitrary rule of behavior" but as "a law of nature" (cited in Nicolson, 182). In keeping with the common beliefs of Enlightenment thought, all men were created equal by nature; thus, all men were capable of civility, provided social, economic, and educational factors were the same for all. By the early nineteenth century (when Claire de Duras's *Ourika* appears) the notion of "equal by nature" is coming under scrutiny as the discourse of scientific racism gains credibility. According to this discourse, certain biologies, such as those of women, children, and racial others, preclude the kind of rational thought dictating behaviors (namely working and/or maintaining a family) deemed worthy of being called civil(ized).¹⁷ In France of the 1930s, when the Josephine Baker films appear, the colonialist discourse of assimilation is being traded in for that of association. That is, colonial subjects demanding full representation as French citizens are put off with the argument that their difference is too great to allow their assimilation as indistinguishable members of the French nation. Thus, their relationship to France (the terms of which France alone will define and control) can only be by association—as subjects rather than citizens.¹⁸

In the seventeenth century, France claims to be a nation where all men (though subjects and not yet citizens) are free. Even the "slave who touches French soil, regardless of where he comes from, is at that very instant free."¹⁹ In other words, one could not be a man in France and not be free. Nevertheless, France did have slaves in the French West Indies, and it is with the idea of regulating their treatment and exchange that Louis XIV had the Code Noir drawn up in 1685. In its first permutation, one of the purposes of the Code Noir was to address the circumstances under which the slave would be made free. This would be the case, for example, if an owner brought a slave to France (any man touching French soil is free), or if a slave married her owner. But in each of its subsequent forms, the Code Noir further restricted the possibilities for freedom, forbidding mixed marriage and curtailing the

17. William B. Cohen points out in *The French Encounter with Africans: White Response to Blacks, 1530-1880* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1980) that the nineteenth century did not invent scientific racism; rather, it developed from Enlightenment ideas. The difference is in the ambivalence of the eighteenth century regarding the mutability of man's condition, and the idea that environmental factors of all kinds could raise the lowly up to higher levels of civilization. Nineteenth-century scientific racism viewed these differences as more or less permanent (97).

18. In her article, "Le Melting-Pot: Made in America, Produced in France," *The Journal of American History* 86.3 (1999): 50 pars. 19 Dec. 2000 (<<http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/jah/86.3/green.html>>), Nancy L. Green puts into question the commonly reproduced argument that France does not and never did (unlike the United States) consider race in the question of French citizenship. Particularly in the 1920s and 1930s when France was presenting itself as a haven for African Americans seeking refuge from the U.S.'s violent racism, a debate was taking place as to which races were more suitable to be assimilated as French citizens. Green cites by way of example the exhortations of Charles Lambert, "one Radical Republican deputy" and "former high commissioner for immigration and naturalization," regarding this question. Lambert writes that "[w]ithout being hostile, on principle, to the assimilation of Asians or Africans, without feeling toward them the rude hostility that is prevalent in the United States, we believe that in fact such a mixture is not desirable. The aim of any policy to renovate the French race must above all set out to assimilate similar individuals" (from Lambert's *La France et les étrangers* published in Paris in 1928). The idea here is that one must already be French to become French.

19. Louis Sala-Molins, *Le Code Noir ou Le calvaire de Canaan* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1998), 74.

entry of slaves into France, on the grounds that the presence of blacks on French soil would sully the national identity. An ordinance added in 1762 expresses this opinion as follows:

The introduction in France of too great a number of Negroes (Nègres), be it as slaves or anything else, will be of dangerous consequence. We will soon see the French nation disfigured if such an abuse is tolerated. Besides, Negroes in general are dangerous men, and there is hardly a one to whom you have granted freedom that has not abused it, and who has not been given to excesses dangerous to society.²⁰

The ordinance is not any more specific than this; “excesses dangerous to society” are not spelled out further. In fact, it is the excess alone that warrants the black other’s exclusion from a society that, in Enlightenment terms, maintains a natural harmony and equilibrium, provided outside factors, in this case the “nègre,” exert little or no influence. The notion of excess, etymologically what goes outside or beyond, is quite pertinent to French colonization from its inception. According to Louis Sala-Molins, the Code Noir does not legislate for subjects, but for subhumans that are precisely thus because they have no capacity for “self-sovereignty,” living as they do on their instincts and passions, as opposed to the laws of reason.²¹ And so the Code Noir, with no justification whatsoever, names them slaves, and, through the power of the word (the law of the father in Lacanian terms), “simply introduces them into the language of the law, while evacuating them of all juridical action.”²² By dehumanizing the black man (i.e., taking away his status as “man”), France does not have to consider the relationship of this black man and his contact with French soil to liberty. The slave is an element foreign or excessive to humanity, lacking in the self-control that would render him human (and thus free) and in constant need of surveillance, supervision, and containment.

It is important to note that the 1762 ordinance cited above does not use the word “slave,” but rather “black man” (nègre). This is because any legislation issuing out of France containing the word “slave” could be rendered problematic since France, it could be argued when necessary, did not have slaves (its slaves were elsewhere). But the use of this term also had the effect of introducing the question of race and its (in)compatibility with French society. While the institution of slavery was becoming ever more controversial in Enlightenment politics, and the eighteenth-century philosophes as a whole sharply denounced it, these same philosophes did not necessarily believe Africans to be equal to whites.²³ Slavery may have had no justifiable place in French society, but this did not automatically mean that the black man did. The discourse of scientific racism, already taking shape in the seventeenth

20. *Le Code noir ou recueil des reglemens rendus jusqu'à présent concernant le Gouvernement, l'Administration de la justice, la Police, la Discipline et le Commerce des Nègres dans les Colonies Françaises établis à ce sujet* (Basse-Terre: Société d'histoire de la Guadeloupe, 1980), 437-38 (my translation).

21. Sala-Molins, 74.

22. *Ibid.*, 76.

23. As Philippe Haudrère et Françoise Vergès recall in their *De l'esclave au citoyen* (Paris: Gallimard, 1998): “Montesquieu, Rousseau, and Diderot opposed slave trade without, however, putting into question the colonial system itself” (11, my translation).

century,²⁴ was in full force by the eighteenth, and assumed its most virulent form in the nineteenth. This discourse generally contained two currents. One, coming out of the Enlightenment rhetoric of egalitarianism, focused on environmental factors as the cause of racial difference, something that could be modified with education, religious upbringing, moral training, and proper diet. The other current, most pronounced in nineteenth-century positivist science, understood these differences as more or less permanent, and as heritable, that is, as transmittable through blood lines. According to the first current, which might be called "cultural assimilation," blacks could learn to imitate the behaviors of whites, eventually to the point of proving themselves worthy citizens, the same as any other, except in color. According to the second, that of "biological assimilation," blacks could eventually have their less desirable traits bred out of them through generations of interbreeding with whites. But either course of action would take time, and so the admission of any cultural or biological other to full French citizenship would have to be deferred until this other had proven worthy of the status of civilized white men.

Both the cultural and the biological assimilation theories turned on the significance of the institution of marriage and the formation of "legitimate" families. In the instance of cultural assimilation, for example, it was argued that in being permitted to marry one another, Africans, who did not, it was often claimed, have such an institution in their own primitive societies, would erroneously believe themselves to be the equals of whites. In 1785 Girod de Chantrans noted that "we fear that the slave will claim, due to the state of marriage, to be assimilated to Whites, whose behaviors he should respect without ever daring to imitate them."²⁵ According to Chantrans's reasoning, blacks both cannot and should not seek to assimilate white behaviors, due to irreconcilable cultural differences, the very differences used to justify the hierarchical organization of slave society. As concerns biological assimilation, the idea of breeding inferiority out of the black man was considered for the most part untenable, since while the introduction of white blood into black veins might effect the elevation of the one race, it would bring about the degeneration of the other. In 1801, one B. Deslozières, in a work titled *Les égarements de négrophilisme* (The Aberrations of Negrophilism), warns of the danger of mixed marriage (of whites loving blacks), claiming that "through interbreeding [métissage], black blood would attack in France, going straight to the heart of the nation, deforming its traits and its complexion." As a consequence, "morality would take on the color of the physical, and the complete degeneration of the French people would soon become apparent."²⁶ It is important to note here that at the turn of the century, when

24. William Cohen notes that in seventeenth-century France, "marriage with women of color was denounced in terms that bordered on biological determinism." Even if "some lower-class whites did marry women of color, a stigma was attached to interracial unions, and such marriages were forbidden for the higher classes." In fact, "Louis XIV revoked the titles of several noblemen who had married women of color" (51).

25. Cited in Arlette Gautier's *Les soeurs de solitude: La condition féminine dans l'esclave aux Antilles du XVIIe au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Editions Caribéennes, 1985), 102 (my translation).

26. Cited in Sala-Molins, 58 (my translation).

Deslozières is making such claims, a number of texts appear in which the “moral” (what is labeled today as the “psychological”) is figured in direct relation to, and as a product of, the physiological functions of the human body. Those considered to be of inferior physiology are therefore of questionable moral (or psychological) behavior as well and likely candidates for the disruption of social/national order.²⁷

Often, discussions about the possibility of assimilation seamlessly blended both the cultural and the biological in such a way that the one served to further bolster the other, and vice versa. Such is the case with A. Granier de Cassagnac’s 1835 essay, “Colonies françaises: De l’esclavage et de l’émancipation.”²⁸ On the one hand, Cassagnac explains, the “mulatto” is evidence of the African’s inability to build and maintain families of his own race. The mulatto is the incarnate reminder that black men, unable to control the bodies of their own female offspring, are thus verifiably incapable of the responsibilities of the head of a household. Cassagnac underscores his claim by way of a twisted syllogism: “mulattos are born ... of white men and black women” (though never the other way around because white men know how to control white women, and white women know they must control themselves); “there is not marriage ... between a white man and a black woman because the ... constitution [i.e., Code Noir] prevents whites from misalliance”; therefore, “every mulatto is a bastard” (123). Through this “reasoning,” “illegitimate” children are proof that people of color are incapable of proper family life. To remedy this, one would have to force “daughters of color to respect themselves,” and “teach them through respect for marriage that it is only ... in the beds of wives that citizens are born” (129). This inculcation is necessary because “their race is lacking what makes [the white race] superior, what constitutes civilization,” that is, “the feeling for family” [l’esprit de famille]. Legislators are mistaken in thinking that former slaves and colonial subjects can simply be granted equality in the word of the law. Such “declarations of rights will make only artificial men and unnatural citizens.” Instead, one should “give them family,” since “family and the virtues that constitute it will make of them with time a natural, simple, strong, homogeneous, civilized people” (129). Such a process would obviate the need for legislation declaring equality and the citizenship that goes with it. Citizenship will come “naturally” to those who develop “the feeling for family.”

This emulation of white behavior, however, will never quite be enough. People of color are not, Cassagnac reminds the reader, like the white peasants of “Old Europe” who were lucky enough to be “the color of the powerful.” For them, the only requirement was the attainment of wealth since “once dressed like ordinary citizens,” their origins could never be brought into

27. This connection is established, for example, in Pierre-Jean-Georges Cabanis’s *On the Relations Between the Physical and the Moral Aspects of Man*, published in 1802.

28. A. Granier de Cassagnac, “Colonies françaises: de l’esclavage et de l’émancipation.” *Revue de Paris* (September 1835): 103-130. All translations are my own.

question. People of color, on the other hand, must rely on “the intimate and voluntary fusion of races” if they are to be lifted to full equality. For even if they demonstrate “as much intelligence, as much activity, as much economy, [and] as much wisdom” as the white man, “they will wear on their face the color of their skin, the color of their origins, the color of the slave, and, it must be said, the color of the bastard.” This is not, Cassagnac emphasizes, due to whim or “prejudice on our part,” but to the mere fact that “in a society like ours, founded upon marriage and on the dogma of domestic purity, the impurity of origins can never be a matter of indifference” (128).

For Cassagnac, the mulatto is constructed as both culturally and biologically deficient. The mulatto’s very body bears the indelible mark of an act of moral (culturally construed) and biological transgression (which ultimately traces back to the weakness of a black woman), a mark that can never be erased, even should the “intimate and voluntary fusion of the races” come to pass. Cassagnac’s argument exemplifies what Werner Sollors has identified as “the conflict between family and race.” In the rhetoric of French colonization, according to Sollors,

[w]hiteness was ... symbolically identified as the color of all possible origins (and freedom), blackness (into which interracial identity was often folded) as the source of only black origins (and slavery). This set up a contradictory system of accounting for familial identity and for racial identity....²⁹

Accordingly, “any form of ancestry ... could be overruled ... by race,”³⁰ and “[m]ixed-race descendants” could be “classified as belonging to a different ‘race’ from that of the father, and therefore not to his ‘family.’”³¹ “Race,” then, is always a story of problematic origins, while “family” claims a history of clear and certain origins and is thus incompatible with race. Likewise civility, which is contingent on building families, cannot be attributed to (a) race, but only to those not marked (by race).

In *The Inequality of the Human Races* (which, though written in the 1850s, had to wait for the 1880s to receive wide attention), Arthur de Gobineau reconfigures the incompatibility of race and social order as a complex entanglement of civility and miscegenation.³² According to Gobineau, Africans and Arabs in particular “have not been able to take even the first step towards civilization,” because they “cannot overcome the natural repugnance, felt by men and animals alike, to a crossing of blood,”³³ in other words, for miscegenation. That interracial marriage is precisely what Gobineau is referring to is born out in a footnote relaying a French traveler’s account of a “Bedouin girl who will sell her favours for the smallest piece of

29. Sollors, 43.

30. Ibid., 43.

31. Ibid., 44.

32. Interestingly, Gobineau’s text comes into popularity when the Muslim population of Algeria is formally denied all citizen’s rights by the Code de l’indigénat of 1881.

33. Arthur de Gobineau, *The Inequality of the Human Races*, trans. Adrian Collins (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1915), 27–28. All further references by page number only.

money,” and yet, “think herself dishonoured if she contracted a legal marriage with the ... European to whom she contemptuously lends herself” (29). What makes whites capable of civilization, and other races less so, is that whites can “overcome the natural repugnance” that is inherent in their primal nature in order to establish durable social relationships with the peoples that their superior racial quality has driven them to conquer.

The Bedouin girl is exemplary of the “attachment of the Arab tribes to their racial unity,” but it is only where “tribal separation has broken down,” Gobineau argues, that “a national feeling takes its place” (129). “Tribes,” which Gobineau opposes to “societies,” comprise individuals living “side by side in complete independence of each other,” unable to “shake themselves free of their impotence” (27). Whites, by contrast, overcome race (i.e., racial difference) by taking over or conquering other races, particularly their women, producing offspring, and then reminding these offspring of the white male progenitor’s superiority. In so doing, whites institute the hierarchical relations that are the glue of social, as opposed to natural, order. The “black race,” however, “is incapable of civilization” because it “cherishes the deepest feelings of repulsion towards all the others” (50). Blacks fails to recognize the “homogeneity necessary to their life,” and without which it “becomes impossible for them to be brought into harmony and so acquire the common instincts and interests, the common logic of existence, which is the sole justification for any social bond whatever” (211). “Social bonding,” then, is contingent upon the erasure of race that is entailed in the recognition of the superiority of those who have overcome (or taken over) race. As in arguments made over half a century earlier, social bonding and race are rendered incompatible.

For Gobineau, the mixing of blood results in a superior race because it demonstrates an ability to overcome the biological or instinctual repulsion for the other. This ability is necessary for the construction of social organizations, in which individuals recognize relationships of interdependence—albeit hierarchical interdependence. Such relationships are opposed by Gobineau to tribal (dis)order in which each individual, precisely because each is indistinguishable from the other, is a potential adversary of the other. At the same time, an evident paradox in Gobineau’s argument presents itself: whites are superior to other races, and their homogeneity as white society can be threatened by the dissolution of white blood through the introduction of too much black blood. The mixing of blood is acceptable, even necessary, to social ordering, but at the same time, the superiority of the white contribution to this mix must be always recalled. One must not be deceived into thinking that the mixing of blood, required to build the great European nations, entails the conception of the equality of all men.

[W]hen the majority of the citizens have mixed blood flowing in their veins, they erect into a universal and absolute truth what is only true for themselves and feel it to be their duty to assert that all men are equal.... [M]en go on to deny the natural causes of the superiority against which they are declaiming.... They refuse, quite wrongly, to admit that certain qualities are by a fatal necessity the exclusive inheritance of such and such a stock. (36-37)

In summary, Gobineau constructs white both as a superior race and as superior because beyond race. When this superiority is forgotten (i.e., as is the case when the equality of man is imagined), societies decline. This is because the respect for those of a higher order is lost, and with it “the refinement of manners” (104). Civility, in other words, is founded on the ability of a limited portion of a civilized society to serve as models for the masses who strive to be like them. Such assimilation must never take place completely, however, since the equality derived therefrom would mean the demise of social order, which, for Gobineau, ceases to be “social” when it ceases to be hierarchical—when it ceases to recognize difference. Gobineau’s argument rests on the assumption that the black race is incapable of the reproduction of social order, and, therefore, of social reproduction. This race is constituted of individuals who are repulsed by the “foreigner” to such an extent that they are repulsed by each other. These racial others are incapable of reproduction, sterile and paralyzed, to the point of turning in on themselves, eventually disappearing altogether (50). The white race, on the other hand, comprises a mixture of all others, demonstrating its ability to reach outward to others different from themselves (i.e., to be civil) to establish social relations necessary to the reproduction of civilized human beings. The members of this social order recognize and respect the order and understand the importance of its maintenance and reproduction. Essential to Gobineau’s argumentation, then, is the memory of origins, particularly of the contribution of Aryan or white blood to the mix.

In his 1882 essay titled “What is a nation?” Ernest Renan claims that although this mixing must be acknowledged, it is absolutely essential that it be forgotten.³⁴ The remembrance of the act of mixing, since it recalls the existence of difference, is contrary to the task of nation building, which for Renan is built on the erasure of difference. The terms of Renan’s argument shift from those used in Gobineau; the latter’s imagined oppositions of tribe versus society, of white versus black, are traded in for the opposition of race to nation or “spiritual family.” Further, Renan no longer speaks of “white” but of “European” identity. The nation is a “spiritual family” whose members “have many things in common, and also ... have forgotten many things” (11). Renan admits that in the process of building this nation or “family,” “[u]nity is always effected by means of brutality” (11). Nevertheless, those against whom this brutality was directed (one might think, for example, of black women slaves raped by their white masters) must forget the wrongs done, demonstrating instead “the clearly expressed desire to continue a common life” (19).

This common life of homogeneous desire, however, cannot recognize in any way “diverse [ethnic] elements,” because to do so “would destroy European civilization” (13). England, Italy, and France are proclaimed by

34. Ernest Renan, “What is a Nation?” *Nation and Narration*, ed. Homi K. Bhabha. (New York: Routledge, 1990), 8-22. All further references by page number only.

Renan to be the “noblest countries” because they are the ones in which “the blood is most mixed” (14). At the same time, they have been able to forget the “countless unknown alliances [i.e., rapes] which are able to disrupt any genealogical system” (11). But although Renan speaks to the necessity of forgetting, he has no problem defining the nation as a “spiritual family” that shares a “rich legacy of memories” and expresses “the will to perpetuate the value of this heritage that one has received in an undivided [i.e., uncontested] form” (19). Of course, as Benedict Anderson has articulated it, this legacy of memories—this tradition—is an imagined one, and by the logic of Renan’s own argument it has to be, since nations are made up of peoples who were at one time at brutal odds, precisely because they did not share common histories, ethnicities, religions, and so forth. This is where Renan’s and Gobineau’s theorizations dovetail. For in Renan’s way of thinking, warring and violent (uncivilized) countries are in states of civil unrest because they have not evolved socially to the point of being able to forget. Civilized countries, on the other hand, are able to coalesce as nations precisely because they are able to forget, and to put in the place of the memory of brutality and violence an imagined “heritage” or “legacy” of commonly shared desires. Forgetting, then, is a kind of gentlemen’s agreement to “let bygones be bygones”: forgetting is the civil thing to do.³⁵

A half century after Renan’s essay, it is clear in the very title of Georges Hardy’s 1937 essay, “Le noir d’Afrique et la civilisation européenne” (“The Black Man from Africa and European Civilization”³⁶), that the relationship between race and civilization is still not reconciled. It is made further evident that Hardy is considering the appropriateness of granting citizenship to France’s colonized Africans when he recalls the example of the “Senegalese, who, as everyone knows, are French citizens, and who ... have never shown the slightest inclination for separatism” (863). Hardy does not mention that citizenship was not granted to all Senegalese, but only to the communes of Saint-Louis, Gorée, Rufisque, and Dakar. All the rest of French West Africa were considered subjects, and even the so-called citizens did not have all the political rights of citizens of the metropolis, nor did they have representatives in the French assembly. But even if France granted citizenship to a few Africans, Africans as a rule, according to Hardy, are not yet ready for the rights and responsibilities such a status would afford. For Hardy, citizenship can not come to the African through interbreeding with whites, as Cassagnac and Gobineau suggest, and as the theory of Renan takes as a given. Rather, Africans must demonstrate among “their own” that they are capable of living

35. At the moment Renan is writing this essay, Algerians are demanding full citizen’s rights of France, the country that has brutally annexed them, all the while refusing to grant any citizen’s rights to Muslims. Renan uses the term “daily plebiscite” as a “metaphor” to describe a “nation’s existence” (19). This is a particularly ironic choice of terminology, given that Algerians cannot participate in such a “daily vote” (which is what is suggested by “plebiscite”).

36. Georges Hardy, “Le noir d’Afrique et la civilisation européenne.” *Revue de Paris* (March-April 1937): 846-65. All further references by page number only. All translations are my own.

like civilized Europeans, before they can be officially incorporated or absorbed as such. Thus, the notions of "mixing" and intermarriage do not even enter into Hardy's discussion. With the question of biological union completely removed from the equation, Hardy speaks instead of a metaphysical, as opposed to physical, "penetration of European influences into the African soul" (856). The shift in Hardy (already present in Renan) from "white race" to "European civilization," is worthy of note: scientific racism, having reached its zenith in mid-nineteenth century France, is, by the end of that century, and certainly by the beginning of the twentieth, waning in its power of persuasion. It is being replaced by arguments for incompatibilities of cultural or social difference, which, nevertheless, are still connected to notions of race, albeit in a more understated fashion.

Until these incompatibilities can be resolved, the granting of citizenship must be deferred. Hardy, however, holds out hope for the African. Already there are indications, "little gesture[s]," such as the wearing of European clothing, that serve to show just to what extent the African desires to be European: "The cultivated Black man does not dream of reinforcing in himself his ethnic personality"; on the contrary, "his most ardent and admitted ambition is to resemble a European man as closely as possible" (862). But this resemblance will not be fully realized until the African comes to understand marriage as "the most frank and concrete expression of ... moral imitation." The ability of Africans to interrelate through the bonds of marriage will signify a "profound transformation heretofore unknown to the black man of Africa, which promises the coming of a family and a society," and which "indicates more than anything else [i.e., more than modes of dress or speech] a decisive turn in our [European] direction" (857). In fact, such marriages do occur among black Africans, and Hardy refers with satisfaction to the "monogamous household" in which the "[African] wife forces herself to be her husband's companion, sharing his joys and troubles while raising his children in a reasonable manner" (as opposed to giving into the whims of the white master). Hardy warns, however, that one should not be led by these examples to believe that it is possible to "accelerate the process of assimilation" (863), since the "appropriation of the ideas and ways of Europe" by the black man of Africa are, at least for the time being, "more apparent than real" (859).

"[C]olonization," Hardy explains, "can do nothing without time" (860). It must be recalled that colonizers are dealing with groups of humans that "come from a long way off," and by this, Hardy means those who have far to go to reach the status of the European civilized. When he suggests that the colonizer must be careful "not to throw [black men from Africa] off balance by transforming them too quickly" (863), he is referring, it would seem, to an evolutionary scale that measures cultural (as opposed to biological) progress. Hardy implies that the black man of Africa can indeed evolve, but that the process of evolution will take a long, long time. The granting of citizenship, in turn, must be deferred until the "familial and social conditions" (864) of the African are deemed to have reached a level worthy of European civiliza-

tion. Then, and only then, will France be able to “claim Africa” as a “joyous addition to [its] own family” (865). Whereas for Gobineau, Africans must be white biologically to become white culturally, for Hardy, Africans will have to become European culturally in order to be French citizens juridically.

Common to all these arguments from the eighteenth to the twentieth century is their assumption of an empowered member of civilized society against which the noncitizen is defined. This citizen is deemed worthy of society because he knows or has a feeling for family, and, therefore, of how societies cohere and are perpetuated. Further, he is imagined in the most abstract of terms, and, moreover, in terms of what he is not: he is not marked by race—in fact, he appears not to be (dis)graced with a body at all. The focus on his body is all but obliterated by the obsessive preoccupation with the (marks on the) body of the other. The exemplary citizen that Hardy puts forth without actually ever defining in its own right is, according to Robyn Wiegman, “universalized,” something that cannot be “reduced to its own particularities” (i.e., race, gender).³⁷ Wiegman goes on to explain how the notions of the universal and the particular come into play in the formation of the Enlightenment citizen whose empowerment hinges, however deceptively, on the recognition of all human beings’ unalienable equality. Wiegman writes:

It is ... particularity that the philosophical and political discourses of Enlightenment worked so hard to negate, crafting the white masculine as the disembodied norm against which a definitive body of difference could be specifically engaged.... [W]e can approach this body as specifically raced, regardless of the extent to which the public sphere imagined by Enlightenment theory offered a rhetoric of democratic citizenship that pivoted on an abstracted, disembodied equality. (48-49)

The “body as specifically raced” is, it must be noted, also one that is specifically gendered, and just as to be marked by race means “not white,” to be marked by gender means “not male.” Those characteristics so often designated as feminine in eighteenth-century scientific literature—excessive sexuality and passion, lack of reasoning, inability for self control³⁸—are attributed to the black slave in general, whether male or female. The slave, in other words, is also a slave to the impulses of his/her physical body—of “corporeality.” His/her status, thus, is reduced to that of object or subhuman, one that must be controlled because he or she is incapable of self-control. In order to be considered worthy of equality, the black male slave must first come to be seen as human. To do this, he must move from his position as female/object to that of male/subject. Such a transition involves, as Wiegman puts it, “a highly refined rhetoric of sexual difference” (69) in which masculinity connotes the “disembodied abstraction that ascendancy to citizenship routinely

37. Robyn Wiegman, *American Anatomies: Theorizing Race and Gender* (Durham: Duke UP, 1995), 48. Of course, Wiegman is addressing the issue of American citizenship in her study, but see the following footnote for an explanation as to why her work is appropriate to this study. All further references will be cited by page number only.

38. For a very useful critique of the eighteenth-century scientific texts that create this feminine body, see L. J. Jordanova’s “Natural facts: A historical perspective on science and sexuality” in *Nature, Culture and Gender*, eds. Carol McCormack and Marilyn Strathern (Cambridge UP, 1980), 42-69.

confers" (73). The female slave, on the other hand, even if no longer legally a slave, remains "without recourse to the patronymic of citizenship—that right of self-possession—that governed the legal and political discourses of the public realm" (68). With slavery abolished, her irreducible difference—visible, bodily, and specific—is in fact *the* "difference against which masculine disembodiment is achieved" (89), and against which, it should be added, the citizen is defined in general. Of course, whenever it was desired, the "blackness" of the black male could be evoked as a way of recalling his origins as slave or chattel, that is, as female/object. But this could be countered with an insistence on his maleness as the overriding factor in determining his appropriateness for entry into the order of the universal, something to which the black female could never have recourse. In fact, efforts of scientific discourse to equate "blackness with the feminine and the deviantly sexual" (70) only underscore the completeness of the disenfranchisement of the black female, and, therefore, of her opposition to the ideal (white male) citizen.

Wiegman suggests that hierarchies of difference (between black and white, female and male) are fiercely maintained against the "deeply threatening potential of human sameness" that is also implied in Enlightenment egalitarianism. This ideology carried with it, however unwittingly, the promise of a world in which "the white masculine is no longer universalized," but conceived like all others, against which it was previously defined, as a vulnerable and fragile body "with its own corporeal particularities" (48). In *Ourika*, the hypocrisy of Enlightenment egalitarianism is revealed in its most harmful manifestation as entailing the utter annihilation of the black female's psyche. Nevertheless, this tragedy is presented as an injustice of nature, not of society, the sad misfortune of the black not to have been born "the color [or the sex, I would add] of the powerful," as Cassagnac cited above put it. At the same time, Claire de Duras's text exposes the mechanism by which post-Enlightenment society evokes "reason" in justifying its own incivility (i.e., antisocial behavior) with regard to the racial and gendered other.

By the time *Zouzou* and *Princesse Tam Tam* appear, the hypocrisy, while no less evident, is perceived in less tragic terms, a fact of French social life that requires comic acceptance. For with slavery abolished (which it was not at the time of the writing of *Ourika*), the building of the French empire—and, thereby, of France as an imperial nation—requires the willingness of those conquered to engage in the hard labor this building demands. Their willingness, in turn, must derive from the belief that by contributing to the strengthening of this nation, they too will come to be perceived as fully empowered members. To borrow from Lauren Berlant's theorization, such "populations" are "managed by the discipline of the promise ... to become full citizens." It is "the violence of their partial citizenship" (citizens but not quite) that traps them, condemning them to a life of paralysis, objects to be manipulated by a history that they are deemed incapable of making. These populations have enough of something to shoulder the responsibility of citizenship (i.e., "to provide labor"), but not enough of something else (i.e., civility) to enjoy the

privileges (i.e., protection from exploitation, racism, sexism, etc.) that full citizenship would entail.³⁹ The “discipline of the promise,” then, is what keeps France’s almost but impossible citizens both in and out of place, as exemplified in the stories of Ourika, Zouzou, and Princesse Tam Tam—“almost ... but not quite,” to borrow Bhabha’s oft-repeated phrasing, “almost ... but not white.”⁴⁰

Works Cited

- BAKER, JOSEPHINE and JO BOUILLON. *Josephine*. Paris: Editions Robert Lafont, 1976.
- BERLANT, LAUREN. *The Queen of America Goes to Washington City: Essays on Sex and Citizenship*. Durham: Duke UP, 1997.
- BHABHA, HOMI K. *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge, 1994.
- CHALAYE, SYLVIE. *Du noir au nègre: L'image du Noir au théâtre (1550-1960)* Paris: Harmattan, 1998.
- Le Code noir ou recueil des reglemens rendus jusqu'à présent concernant le Gouvernement, l'Administration de la justice, la Police, la Discipline et le Commerce des Nègres dans les Colonies Françaises établis à ce sujet*. Basse-Terre: Société d'histoire de la Guadeloupe, 1980.
- COHEN, WILLIAM. *The French Encounter with Africans: White Response to Blacks, 1530-1880*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1980.
- DE CASSAGNAC, A. GRANIER. “Colonies françaises: De l'esclavage et de l'émancipation.” *Revue de Paris* (September 1835): 103-30.
- DE DURAS, CLAIRE. *Ourika*. New York: MLA, 1994.
- EZRA, ELIZABETH. *The Colonial Unconscious: Race and Culture in Interwar France*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2000.
- FULCHIRON, HUGUES. *La nationalité française*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2000.
- GAUTIER, ARLETTE. *Les soeurs de solitude: La condition féminine dans l'esclave aux Antilles du XVIIe au XIXe siècle*. Paris: Editions Caribéennes, 1985.
- DE GOBINEAU, ARTHUR. *The Inequality of the Human Races*, trans. Adrian Collins. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1915.
- GREEN, NANCY L. “Le Melting-Pot: Made in America, Produced in France.” *The Journal of American History* 86.3 (1999): 50 pars. 19 Dec. 2000 (<<http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/jah/86.3/green.html>>)
- HARDY, GEORGES. “Le noir d'Afrique et la civilisation européenne.” *Revue de Paris* (March-April 1937): 846-65.

39. Lauren Berlant, *The Queen of America Goes to Washington City: Essays on Sex and Citizenship* (Durham: Duke UP, 1997), 19. Like Wiegman, Berlant focuses on class, race, and gender as they play into the formation of nation and citizen in the United States. But Wiegman and Berlant are both working from theories proposed by authors such as Etienne Balibar, Homi Bhabha, Susan Bordo, Michel Foucault, Julia Kristeva, Jean-François Lyotard, and Monique Wittig, all of whom address in one way or another the question of French national identity. Further, the United States is deeply indebted to French Enlightenment philosophy in its quest to define itself as a nation.

40. This turn of phrase comes from Homi Bhabha's essay titled “Of mimicry and man: The ambivalence of colonial discourse” in *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 89. He further observes that “[b]lack skin splits under the racist gaze, displaced into signs of bestiality, genitalia, grotesquerie, which reveal the phobic myth of the undifferentiated whole white body” (92). This “undifferentiated whole white body” belongs, of course, to the “universal citizen” Wiegman describes.

- HAUDRÈRE, PHILIPPE and FRANÇOISE VERGÈS. *De l'esclave au citoyen*. Paris: Gallimard, 1998.
- NICOLSON, HAROLD. *Good Behavior: Being a Study of Certain Types of Civility*. Beacon Press, 1960.
- RENAN, ERNEST. "What is a Nation?" *Nation and Narration*, ed. Homi K. Bhabha. New York: Routledge, 1990, 8-22.
- SALA-MOLINS, LOUIS. *Le Code Noir ou Le calvaire de Canaan*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1998.
- SOLLORS, WERNER. *Neither Black Nor White Yet Both: Thematic Explorations of Interracial Literature*. New York: Oxford UP, 1997.
- WAHNICH, SOPHIE. *L'Impossible citoyen: L'étranger dans le discours de la Révolution française*. Paris: Albin Michel, 1997.
- WIEGMAN, ROBYN. *American Anatomies: Theorizing Race and Gender*. Durham: Duke UP, 1995.