

Instead, the pool of Blacks in Germany is artificially enriched by Lusane with other people of colour, some of whom may have been visiting Blacks from the United States like William E. B. Du Bois or, even more transiently, the French citizen Josephine Baker. Others were probably of Arab background, and others again, whom, curiously, Lusane never mentions, could have been transmigrants or their offspring from the German African colonies of yore. Because the author fails, time and again, to identify self-contained groups of Blacks or Mulattoes, either as citizens of Germany or as sizeable groups having been transplanted there from overseas, he has to concentrate on itinerant individuals who, in their singularity and uniqueness, are not representative of any collective that could have been marked for blanket Nazi stigmatization. Lusane spots Black individuals in the German Army no less than in German concentration camps. But in the end the reader wonders how Blacks, as a self-contained, more or less homogenous group, figured ideologically and in daily life vis-à-vis the Jews, and why their treatment at the hands of Nazi politicians and administrators was as incoherent, arbitrary, and inconsistent as it obviously turned out to be, as is shown by this and other sources.

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David Henry Slavin – *Colonial Cinema and Imperial France, 1919-1939: White Blind Spots, Male Fantasies, Settler Myths*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001. Pp. xv, 300.

European colonialism in North Africa and elsewhere was accompanied and facilitated by theories of European racial supremacy. European governments of the 19th and 20th centuries claimed to be entitled to rule non-Europeans. In this impressive and carefully researched book, David Henry Slavin shows how French popular culture helped create and sustain the racial hierarchies that colonial rule and the *mission civilitrice* required.

Slavin argues that films and novels did more than simply romanticize the European hero-adventurer. By inventing a myth of a French “master-race,” fit and destined to rule, popular cinema and novels erased class distinctions that divided metropolitan French society. Slavin painstakingly dissects a number of films and books to show how a variety of colonial themes, such as “whiteness,” anti-Semitism, anti-Arabism, the myth of timeless and empty land, female sexuality, and racial pollution, found their way into popular consciousness, and helped to de-emphasize the achievements, history, and basic human rights of the colonized. These are what Slavin means by the “white blind spots, male fantasies, and settler myths” of the subtitle. Slavin follows the making and remaking of films to show the changing dynamics of the colonial undertaking. As colonized people resisted European domination, the symbolic content of film changed from paternal “sensitivity,” to racialized suspicion and hostility. Multiple remakes of the same screenplay over the decades illustrate the shift.

In his discussion of Algeria, Morocco and France, Slavin argues that the French Left was unable to challenge the heroic colonial narrative and protect the rights of France's workers *as well as* the colonized in North Africa. The Left was relegated to the sidelines as it failed to advocate universal standards at home and abroad. The signal event in the marginalization of the French Left was the Rif War of 1925-26. A movement of Moroccan Berbers fought Spain and then France. Slavin writes that "the Rif War laid a crucial stepping stone on the path to racialization. It soured the goodwill that had accrued from the colonial contribution to the war effort in 1914-18 and it put the entire Left on the defensive as 'race traitors,' particularly the Communists" (p. 73). Slavin argues that criticism of the colonial undertaking became more difficult for the Left, and that, "films respectful of Islamic culture were going out of style" (p. 83). The lines of battle between "western civilization" and its "enemies" were sharply drawn by the mid-1920s.

Slavin concentrates on North Africa, but at precisely the same time as the Rif War in Morocco, France was combating a guerilla war in its new League of Nations mandate of Syria and Lebanon too. The colonial services, like the military, were deeply divided between leftists and more numerous rightists. The Right used the leftist High Commissioner Maurice Sarrail's "failure" to suppress the revolt in Syria as a weapon to discredit leftists in the army and the government. The Left, in power in France, used the rightist Resident-General Louis-Hubert Lyautey's "failure" to suppress the Rif War in Morocco as a weapon against the Right.

French intelligence officers were obsessed with "foreign agitators," who were often claimed to be sowing opposition to the supposedly benign intentions of the *mission civilisatrice*. Such agitators were often identified as Communists. While Slavin mentions the Rif War (ch. 4) and the politics of the Colonial Lobby (ch.5), he does not connect politics, history, and popular culture quite as neatly as the reader might hope. History and politics illustrate the films Slavin discusses, rather than the other way around.

After the Rif War and the dismissal of Lyautey, French cinema changed emphasis. Slavin argues convincingly that the mid-1920s were a watershed in the racialization of French politics. Colonial cinema soon adjusted to the new reality and its emphasis shifted to settler stories, the heroic "thin white line" of the Foreign Legion, and a simple demonization of Muslim colonial subjects. These films were made with the collaboration, endorsement, and massive material assistance of the Foreign Legion and Colonial Lobby. Slavin's argument is compelling but not as carefully drawn as it could be. The Berbers, like North African Jews, and the nominally Catholic Maronites in Lebanon, were a favored minority for French colonial civil servants. French popular culture and colonial scholarship imbued minorities with a host of "good" essential characteristics in direct opposition to the Arab and Muslim majorities, which were claimed to be culturally and racially inferior. When favoured minorities in both Morocco and Syria rose up to lead massive insurgencies in 1925, the delusional nature of the *mission civilisatrice* became clear. Slavin implies that the setbacks of the Rif War, and the militant rejection of colonial paternalism by the Berbers, formerly a favoured minority, led to a racialization of French colonial policy, but he does not explain precisely how the shift occurred or what policies pre-

ceded it. Racially defined nationalist parties were ascendant all over Europe in the late 1920s. Slavin's emphasis is on the films the shift produced, not the reasons behind the shift. This last point leads to the matter of organization. The organization of the book is thematic and based on particular films. Slavin is at his best when discussing details of the plots and political messages of films and novels. The book serves as an encyclopedic treatment of French *cinéma colonial*, including details of writers, filmmakers, actors, and audiences. Yet at times the thematic emphasis changes and a chapter may appear to deal with a chronological period, and the films within it. Despite the periodic chronological framework, the historical context of given films is not always clear. Additionally, the alternating emphasis between themes in popular films and periods of time is sometimes confusing. For example, should multiple remakes of a single film over the decades be discussed within one thematic chapter, as Slavin seems to prefer, or should chronological chapters revisit re-makes of classic films as illustrations of political change over the decades? The emphasis on films and themes rather than on a historical narrative of change illustrated by popular culture, serves to lessen the connections between culture, politics, and history.

These minor concerns aside, this book will surely serve for a very long time as an indispensable guide to French colonial cinema. Slavin shows how film culture popularized a world view that facilitated colonial rule and served to make racial "blind spots" ubiquitous in France. At a time when films such as *Black Hawk Down*, are made with massive free US military assistance, the power of popular film to advance certain worldviews demands attention. David Henry Slavin has contributed a book that accomplishes this task with meticulous research and refreshing passion.

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S. A. Smith — *Like Cattle and Horses: Nationalism and Labor in Shanghai, 1895–1927*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2002. Pp. x, 366.

An historian who has published three books on early twentieth-century China and Russia, Steve Smith has now added another contribution to social and labour history with *Like Cattle and Horses*, a title that derives from the self-conceptualization of Chinese workers and peasants in reference to their harsh life. Smith's primary objective is to probe the "performative nature of national discourse" (p. 7) of nation and class, and of human agency, in the context of labour activism in Shanghai from Japan's defeat of China in 1895 to the destruction of the Communist-dominated General Labor Union in April 1927. He argues effectively that the labour sector, as represented by the men, women, and children factory workers, coolies, rickshaw pullers, and some small shopkeepers and traders who associated with their workers, reconfigured its identity and place in a changed social, economic, and political order primarily through nationalism rather than through class consciousness.

From a massive array of archives, newspapers, periodicals, police records, and