

Scholar, Richard. *Émigrés: French Words That Turned English*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020. 272 pages. Hardcover, \$29.99. ISBN: 9780691190327.

In *Émigrés: French Words That Turned English*, Richard Scholar deals in the identity of the untranslatable. Exploring the linguistic ambivalence that England held and harbors for its continental neighbor, Scholar highlights the following French expressions: *à la mode*, *galanterie*, *naïveté*, *ennui*, and *caprice*. Borrowing from Raymond Williams' *Keywords* (1976), the author contends that the aforementioned five *émigrés* contain within them European power relations that stretch back centuries. Placing these keywords into conversation with Caribbean intellectuals such as Édouard Glissant and Stuart Hall, Scholar argues for "the development of creolization as a conceptual model" to understand the linguistic and cultural dealings between French and English (8). He begins *in media res* in Restoration England where French words carve out distinct wells of cosmopolitanism and nationalism: those in cities spice their exchanges with French turns of phrase while those in rural communities turn inward, prizing exclusion for conservation's sake. However opposed the two attitudes on French foreignisms, they converge on a single question: what does it mean to be English? Scholar responds by highlighting ideologies at odds, placing the *émigrés* in question at the center of "visible site[s] of encounter and conflict between different ways of seeing culture and society" (9-10). Decentering English isolationism by way of French ornament, the author traces these shifting migrant words across the Anglophone cultures of England, North America, and Ireland while exposing their various Latin, German, and Italian entanglements along the way.

Intrigue, conversation, effort—sans italics. As Scholar remarks, these terms of French derivation are, today, seamlessly English. Yet, the handful of *émigrés* that the author identifies—*à la mode*, *galanterie*, *naïveté*, *ennui*, and *caprice*—resist such assimilation. For him, these keywords embody both contradiction and mediation. The author demonstrates this by engaging with the resurgence of Frenchified manners during the restored reign of the Stuarts in mid-seventeenth-century England. John Dryden's *Marriage À-la-Mode* (1673) and George Etherege's *The Man of Mode, or, Sir Fopling Flutter* (1676) set the stage for the English reception of *à la mode* and its varied moods. Scholar reveals the *pièce de résistance* for the *émigré* in question to be that of a dialectical *galanterie*, a site of negotiation between "the decorous and the libertine" (34). The second half of the book, entitled "Migrations," further demonstrates the ways in which *naïveté*, *ennui*, and *caprice* are dynamic by way of their polarity. The author's exploration of *naïveté* crosses multiple borders, English, French, and German, to demonstrate the term's vacillation between "innocence and idiocy" (110). With his vignette of *ennui*, Scholar exposes its inescapably large mouth, whose yawn weaves centuries, geographies, and art forms together, conjuring culturally specific portraits beyond the simplicity of its common English translation of boredom. Lastly, he touches upon *caprice* whose whimsy carries both positive, "the flash of imaginative wit at the heart of cultural creativity," and negative, "temper tantrums," connotations by way of music, painting, poetry, and literature (171).

As Scholar expounds upon his model of creolization *à l'anglaise*, England as both colonized and colonizer comes into focus. While pointing to the Norman conquest of England as the origin of defining French event, he is careful not to conflate this medieval portrait of subjugation with the atrocities of the transatlantic slave trade. Despite this emphasis, the notion of "bringing creolization back home" and its various yields on European soil reads thin (78). Although most denote language as a matter of soft power versus militaristic might, Scholar's departure from the Caribbean paradigm portrays more the anxieties surrounding "Norman yolk" in early modern England than the echoes of the "inequality, hierarchization, control, and resistance that are central to the creolizing process" (87). Instead of relegating Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez and Shirley Anne Tate's collection

Creolizing Europe (2015) to the footnotes, engaging these works in the body of his own would perhaps help to articulate Scholar's creolized Anglo-French relations as they relate to England as a colonial power. Another question of English conquest arises in the author's discussion of George Bowering's *Caprice* (1987). His consideration of "the capricious tradition of border crossing" in the novel could be expanded to include a more nuanced depiction of England's relationship to North American Indigenous peoples and Québec (198). Bowering deliberately orchestrates this triangulation with his poetry-loving, Québécoise cowgirl seeking revenge in British Columbia while two Native people "observe the main action of the novel in the guise of a chorus, commenting with wry irony on the peculiar ways of the white settlers" (200). Perhaps Michèle Lalonde's poem "Speak White" (1968) could serve as a point of reflection for Scholar's theory of creolization *à l'anglaise* in this Canadian context. Both Lalonde and Scholar seem to develop distinct paradigms of subjugation that, in and of themselves, seem imbalanced to those of the Indigenous, Black, and Caribbean models that serve as their basis.

Ultimately, *Émigrés: French Words That Turned English* emphasizes the ties between language and nationalism. While Scholar professes in his conclusion that he has "written not so much in defense as in illumination of émigré words," he offers Theodor Adorno's essay "Words from Abroad" (1959) as a companion to his argument (206). The German-Jewish theorist, in regard to cries from German nationals that his radiocast on Proust was riddled with French foreignisms, positions these linguistic *émigrés* as pockets of resistance against nationalistic ideologies. As Scholar mentions, this assertion holds a sobering, contemporary resonance. In the wake of Trumpism, Brexit, and growing right-wing regimes around the world, campaigns against "the foreign" consistently include language as a focal point. The *émigrés* that Scholar highlights—*à la mode*, *galanterie*, *naïveté*, *ennui*, and *caprice*—don't assimilate and, in this act of resistance, reveal new ways of being. An italicized word is always a question, a crusade of becoming. By way of conclusion, Scholar invites his reader to reflect upon the importance of "asking, at each moment of the history we make for ourselves, how we wish to conceive of, and relate to, that which to us seems alien and strange" (214). Several questions arise in response: In what ways can humanistic endeavor unveil myths of monolithic unity? How can one translate this critical labor for those outside of the academy? How does one embrace a poetics of relation *à la* Glissant in the face of radicalization?