The book "Return to the Postcolony: Specters of Colonialism in Contemporary Art" was written by T.J Demos, who is a professor of Visual Culture at the University of California. Demos explores the idea of colonial hauntology, which denotes the repressed yet persistently emergent legacy of colonial injustices in European consciousness, in contemporary photography and film dealing with postcolonial Africa.

He argues that in many ways the colonial era never really ended, as evidenced by the representation of Africa in contemporary media, which often portrays "seemingly senseless violence and poverty" without acknowledging the complicity of European nations in creating these conditions. Demos looks at five artists who each approach the postcolony from a different angle in their work, but who all consider European narratives and representations of African experiences to varying degrees. The case studies include:

1. Augustijnen's film Spectres, which addresses the trauma of Belgium's past by examining the narrative of the perpetrator
2. Meessen's cinematic archaeology of the iconic image of a young African saluting the French flag
3. Bhimji's film on the historical intersection of colonialism and migration by looking at Indian migration to East Africa during the expansion of the British Empire
5. Hugo's documentary photography depicting the contemporary reversal of years of colonial resource exploitation of African countries.