

section on the township and queer citizenship Munro looks at K. Sello Duiker's novels *Thirteen Cents* (2000) and *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* (2001), and the contemporary photographs of the queer activist Zanele Muholi. Munro builds her concluding remarks, "Unrequited Utopia," around an analysis of Ashraf Jamal's novel *Love Themes from the Wilderness* (1996).

Munro finds that the texts she examines operate in often contradictory and ambiguous ways; they employ as well as evade, reproduce as well as resignify "Western language of sexual identity" (xix) because of "specific historical, political, and racial meanings that are bound up with the words 'homosexual,' 'gay,' 'lesbian,' and 'bisexual.'" She suggests that the texts, with their "seismic shifts, contradictory and competing structures of feeling" have helped make possible the recent emergence of a more nuanced gay rights discourse (xix). Here the reader finds a queer reading practice that deftly enmeshes the textual with the sexual, historical, biographical, comparative, theoretical, and intertextual, producing original, and at times scintillating, interpretations.

Munro's readings of her texts are at their best when she uncovers ambiguous, encoded, masked, and contradictory perspectives on sexuality and gender—for example, in the works of Brutus, Rive, Head, and Sello Duiker—as opposed to readings of the works of writers who consciously script gayness—for example, Achmat, Gordimer, and Coetzee. The final subject in the book, an examination of Muholi's photographic images of black women's bodies, particularly of black lesbians, is a sensitive appreciation of Muholi's activist aesthetic, committed to both making visible previously elided and stereotyped noncitizens and helping us reconstitute the "new" in South African/global culture" (233).

I reluctantly mention one criticism of this remarkable book—the uneven quality of the concluding remarks at the end of each chapter. While they often provide astute and helpful summary comments on the contents of the chapter and its significance for the contemporary and possible future state of queerness and the nation, they are occasionally perfunctory. I imagine that these concluding sections are either a hangover from the work's origins in a doctoral dissertation or else an editorial imposition on the author.

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Fazia Aïtel. *We Are Imazighen: The Development of Algerian Berber Identity in Twentieth-Century Literature and Culture*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014. xviii + 306 pp. Photographs. Maps. Bibliography. Index. \$74.95. Cloth. ISBN: 978-0813049397.

In her meticulously researched volume, Fazia Aïtel writes with passion about a topic close to her heart: Berber identity and its representations in

Kabyle twentieth-century cultural productions. Her goal is to probe Berber identity in contemporary times and to situate “the Berber question” (4) at the center of debate, rather than considering Berbers from a position of marginality, where she claims they are mostly located, and often in opposition to other groups such as Arabs. Using this centering strategy, she examines the social and political roles of Kabyles in Algeria as well as their presence in Algerian song, poetry, and literature from the 1930s to the end of the twentieth century, with a sustained focus on the work of Lounès Matoub, Tahar Djaout, and Assia Djebar.

In the introduction Aïtel describes the geographical spread of the Amazigh people throughout the Maghreb, and not just in Algeria. She then shepherds the reader through the thorny issue of terminology and language and replaces the term “Amazigh” with “Berber,” because the etymology of the latter term includes the notion of foreignness, a core experience of Kabyle identity and culture. The volume is organized into five chronological chapters spanning four significant periods, beginning in the 1930s with the emergence of a Kabyle–Berber consciousness in both France and Algeria; the Berberist crisis of 1949 and the split within the Algerian nationalist movement; the emergence of the so-called 52 generation, or the Berber Francophone writers; postindependence and the emergence of the “Beur writers of Berber origin” (15); and the 1990s, often termed “the Black Decade” for its civil war following the cancellation of the 1991 elections.

A major strength of this volume is the intricate way in which Aïtel weaves political, social, and historical background information through her discussions of the cultural landscape. She cautions against easy essentialist gestures while acknowledging the “*dédoublement*” (23), or divided being, of the Berber subject. She draws on the insights of Toni Morrison in regard to the African American presence in American culture to describe a Berber form of Du Boisian double consciousness. Indeed, she teases out this notion of a conflicted and complex identity for the writers and artists she examines, which is connected to a shared commitment to anticolonialism and Algerian nationalism and is also “inseparable from their notion of Berber identity,” which “has [been] transformed over the years and evolved in content and meaning” (18, 241).

Aïtel traces the burgeoning indigenous Berber cultural production from the early twentieth century, when Berber writers began to distinguish themselves from the Ecole d’Alger writers of European origin such as Albert Camus, Emmanuel Roblès, and Gabriel Audisio. Pioneers include the Amrouche family and writers such as Mouloud Feraoun, Malek Ouary, and Mouloud Mammeri, who viewed themselves as Berber writers, albeit through the French language. Kabyle music and song, forbidden for so long and often relegated to clandestine events and meetings in homes and cafes, was brought to the fore in the 1970s and 1980s. Aïtel describes how both the Beur and Berber movements of the 1980s coalesced through the work of contemporary Kabyle musicians and singers, including Meksa, Idir, Menad, Chenoud, and Brahim Izri. An interesting aspect of these artists’

work was the link it managed to forge between Algeria and France, thus fulfilling a function beyond that of remembrance, endurance, and resistance found in traditional Berber poetry and song. Chapter 4 is especially innovative in its comparison of two Berber “rebels”: Tahar Djaout and Matoub Lounès. The author’s rationale for this juxtaposition is that although both fought for democracy and secularism (and both were ultimately assassinated), they complemented each other in the ways in which they engaged with the local and global Berber communities. In the final chapter Aïtel focuses on the literary contribution of the renowned author and filmmaker Assia Djebar and her project of giving voice to those Algerians, especially Algerian women, whose voices have been suppressed. Aïtel contends that for Djebar, “the Berber language is at the center of her being” (207) and is also the language of resistance, positioned in a dialectic relationship with French and Arabic and constituting what Aïtel calls “Berber ruptures” (204). As a film scholar, I was happy to see some pages devoted to a sophisticated analysis of the complex hybrid space of Djebar’s landmark film *La nouba des femmes du Mont Chenoua* (1979) and its relationship to the Berber language. Aïtel concludes her impressive study with a welcome and necessary challenge to Berbers and the rest of the globe for further “debate, tolerance, and conciliation” (246).

This rich volume was a pleasure to read and is a welcome addition to the fields of postcolonial French studies (African, Middle East, and North African) and cultural studies. The volume is accessible to both the general informed public and academic audiences and is a wonderful research tool for anyone working specifically in Kabyle studies.

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