

introducing French values and concepts too quickly, had to be avoided at all costs if “pacification” was to be successful. Abi-Mershed does a fine job of detailing the ideological and political tensions between the differing French approaches within the administration, both in France and Algeria, toward educating and “civilizing” the local population.

If the early chapters lay the groundwork for the study, the real strengths of the work become apparent in its second half. Here Abi-Mershed illustrates how the three-stage project to create a “Franco-Algerian” civilization by gradually bringing together the “traditional” Arabo-Islamic and “modern” French socio-cultural spheres was undercut by administrative scandals, bureaucratic politicking and dissent among the Saint-Simonians. But this is not just a story of administrative practices. Abi-Mershed demonstrates how the emergence over time of indigenous elites willing to cooperate with the French, and the increasing numbers of civilian settlers prompted the administration repeatedly to rethink and reshape their policies and the institutions responsible for them.

During the 1860s, the last decade of military ascendancy, Napoleon III, influenced by Ismaïl Urbain and other Saint-Simonians, promoted the notion of French Algeria as a *Royaume Arabe* in which the advancement of the Arab towards “civilized modernity” could progress unhindered. The decade is usually depicted as one of an antagonistic binary confrontation between military arabophiles and civilian arabophobes, which eventually led to the replacement of the military administration by that of the civilian one. Abi-Mershed complicates the picture considerably by demonstrating that there were numerous other interests, military and civilian, that united to challenge what they perceived as imperial Arabophilia. Local revolts and natural disasters added to the turmoil and Abi-Mershed does an excellent job of tying together the social, political and cultural dynamics of the period without losing sight of the developments with regard to education.

The text is enhanced by maps, tables and statistical charts as well as a number of useful appendices, all of which make this a valuable contribution to the existing literature on Saint-Simonianism in Algeria and the erratic trajectory of colonial policy during the military administration.

Writing Tangier in the Postcolonial Transition: Space and Power in Expatriate and North African Literature. By Michael K. Walonen.

Farnham: Ashgate, 2011. Pp. 163. ISBN 10: 1409433811; ISBN 13: 9781409433811.

Reviewed by Ziad Bentahar, Université Internationale de Rabat

E-mail ziad.bentahar@uir.ac.ma

doi:10.1017/S1479591413000168

Centering on the city of Tangier and the notable expatriate authors that called it home in the mid-twentieth century (1945–1969) – namely, Paul and Jane Bowles, William Burroughs, Brion Gysin, and Alfred Chester – Walonen’s study offers a stimulating view on the interactions of space, writing, and power in a postcolonial context.

The conceptual approach to space as a social entity in this book is a suitable premise to a study of the Maghreb, in itself a region that disciplines alternately place in various spaces (African, Arab, Islamic, Mediterranean . . .) but seamlessly fits in none. This is particularly relevant for Tangier, an archetypal cosmopolitan city with a unique history, in that it fell under international administration after 1924, and its foreign population expanded rapidly after World War II. Tangier’s multidimensionality is further problematized when an outsider negotiates the spatial codes governing its population, and renders them in travel or expatriate literature, which Walonen terms “the formulations of the Elsewhere” (p. 5). Ultimately, by looking mainly at expatriate American and British writers’

representations of Tangier and the broader Maghreb, Walonen asks: “to what extent someone coming from outside a given place can come to lay claim to, understand, and become attuned to its spaces” (p. 11).

While Walonen acknowledges that Tangier is not particularly representative of the rest of Morocco or the Maghreb, his choice to focus on this city is befitting on two levels. First, with the broad idea of “elsewhere” being important to the Beat Generation, Tangier has in fact historically been a preferred destination for many. Second, the city provides an interesting illustration of spatial dynamics given its peculiar colonial history and the social impacts of Moroccan politics in the years immediately following independence. Even though the rest of the Maghreb is largely absent from this study (only brief, passing mentions are made of other North African locations), the focus on Tangier makes Walonen’s book a welcome addition to the broader field of Maghreb studies. Indeed, the region has mostly been studied from a francophone perspective, which has meant that the Spanish-speaking northern Morocco where Tangier is located has in comparison been the object of less critical attention.

Another point of importance is the presence of lesser-studied authors (Gysin and Chester) alongside the better-known Bowles and Burroughs, as well as the inclusion of Moroccan authors (Mohammed Choukri, Tahar Ben Jelloun, Anouar Majid), and mentions of some literary figures who sojourned in Tangier during the period at hand without necessarily being traditionally associated with the city as the others (Truman Capote, Tennessee Williams, Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, and Gore Vidal).

The first two chapters serve as an introduction and provide some background on post-World War II Tangier respectively. The four chapters that follow are each dedicated to one expatriate author, the final one to Moroccan perspectives, and the book ends with a short afterword in lieu of a conclusion. This structure is particularly effective. Individual chapters can stand alone as studies of the authors on which the focus is placed, but they also come together coherently, not only illustrating Walonen’s take on cultural dynamics of space, but also painting a larger picture of Tangier in the mid-twentieth century.

In the chapter on Paul Bowles, Walonen explores the way in which his work, both in terms of his own writings and eventually his collaborations with Moroccan storytellers, was impacted by Morocco over time while he remained paradoxically close to but detached from Moroccan society. For Walonen, Bowles’s works gradually show evolving feelings towards Morocco, moving away from seeing it as an alien place, and engaging with and adapting to the spatial change occurring with the formation of the Moroccan nation.

The cases of Burroughs and Gysin show a similar evolution, albeit with different outcomes. Walonen argues that changing space and culture dynamics led Burroughs and Gysin to lose interest in Tangier after Morocco’s independence. This also applies to Chester who, never having lived in Morocco before independence and therefore free from any nostalgia for a bygone era he would have known, still finds himself frustrated when trying to negotiate postcolonial social spaces.

The chapter on Jane Bowles offers an interesting counterpoint by presenting a female expatriate approach to Tangier. In addition to Bowles’s arguably failed attempts to make Morocco her home, Walonen’s analysis of her negotiation of feminine space in Tangier as a lesbian as well as a Jew (presumed Christian by most Moroccans) and an expatriate is especially noteworthy.

While these authors all represent Tangier in flux between its past and its future in a period of transition in its history, the chapter on more recent works by Moroccan authors offers some perspective on the city and its renowned expatriate literary scene. For Ben Jelloun, postwar Tangier saw the exploitation, at once sexual, economic and literary, of Moroccans at the hands of expatriates, whom Anouar Majid portrays as occupying adjoining but separate spaces from the Moroccans with whom they shared the city.

The nuance offered by the inclusion of these Moroccan voices is most welcome. However, Walonen's otherwise excellent book is not entirely free of moments that could cause those particularly familiar with Moroccan literature to raise a dubious eyebrow. For instance, calling Mohammed Choukri "highly literate" (p. 59), though he may have become so, misses the crucial point that his literary identity was based on him having been an illiterate who only learned to read and write as an adult. Other times, some crucial aspects of North African society, from language to religion, are over-simplified. Granted, a lengthy discussion of these subjects could fall beyond the scope of the study, but those more interested in Morocco than the Beat Generation may be left wanting more. That being said, they will appreciate the analysis of Anouar Majid's *Si Yussef*, a lesser-known novel and a noteworthy example of Moroccan literature in English.

While Walonen focuses more on expatriate writers and the Beat Generation than North Africa in and of itself, it also provides him with a distance that allows him to offer a stimulating and refreshing take on the region. As such, this comparative approach to the Maghreb, while remaining largely grounded in American studies, is reminiscent of another recent book: Brian Edward's *Morocco Bound* (2005), which is extensively cited by Walonen. This growing interest in approaching Morocco from a comparative American standpoint rather than the usual French or (far more rarely) Arab or Amazigh perspectives is sure to stimulate North African literary studies, and spark new directions in the field.