



Writing Tangier in the Postcolonial Transition: Space and Power in Expatriate and North African Literature

Michael K. Walonen

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In his study of the Tangier expatriate community, Michael K. Walonen analyzes the representations of French and Spanish Colonial North Africa by Paul Bowles, Jane Bowles, William Burroughs, Brion Gysin, and Alfred Chester during the end of the colonial era and the earliest days of post-independence. The conceptualizations of space in these authors' descriptions of Tangier, Walonen shows, share common components: an attention to the transformative potential of the conflict sweeping the region; a record of the power relations that divided space along lines of gender and ethnicity, including the spatial impact of the widespread sexual commerce between Westerners and natives; a vision of the Maghreb as a land that can be dominated or imposed on as a kind of frontier space; an expression of anxieties about the specters of Cold War antagonisms; and an embrace of the underlying logic of the market to the culture of the Maghreb. Counterbalancing the depictions of Tangier by Westerners who sought to reconcile their nostalgia for the colonial order with their support of native demands for independent governance is Walonen's extended analysis of the contrasting sense of place found in the writings of native Moroccan authors such as Mohammed Choukri, Tahar Ben Jelloun, and Anouar Majid. In its focus on Tangier and the larger Maghreb as a lived environment situated at a particular spatial and temporal crossroads, Walonen's study makes an important contribution to the fields of urban, transatlantic, and postcolonial studies.

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