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Paraska Tolan-Szkilnik, *Maghreb noir: The Militant-Artists of North Africa and the Struggle for a Pan-African, Postcolonial Future*. Publisher: Stanford, California, Stanford University Press, 2023. Pp. 241. ISBN: 9781503634824 (cloth) – 9781503635913 (paperback) – 9781503635920 (epub).

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Among the numerous misrepresentations of Pan-Africanism is the reductionist perspective that confines the movement to a racially exclusive political and cultural organization. The historian and scholar, Paraska Tolan-Szkilnik, challenges this conception of the Pan-Africanist movement in her book "Maghreb Noir: The Militant-Artists of North Africa and the Struggle for a Pan-African, Postcolonial Future." She argues for an inclusive approach toward the multifaceted and significant contributions of the Maghreb Generation of scholars and militant-artists. For Tolan-Szkilnik, centering prominent figures such as Angolan writer Mario Andrade, Algerian poet Jean Sénac, and Moroccan poet Abdellatif Laabi enable the extension of the movement beyond the color line, while establishing the Maghreb as a central space in the evolution of Pan-Africanism, and redefining the movement as an alternative multilingual, multiracial, and militant artistic project.

The book draws from different literary and artistic sources, ranging from archival documents to interviews with militant-artists and conference proceedings, to unlearn "decades of French colonial dictates and policies that attempted to sever the Maghreb from the rest of Africa" (4). It aims to represent an extensive conception of Blackness that includes Black people, Arab, White, and Amazigh, as well as the marginalized contributions of the members of the Maghreb Generation. Beyond the major arguments of the work, which propose the redefinition of Pan-Africanism into an inclusive lever to break historical, racial, and geographical barriers, and the recognition of the importance of North Africa in the historiography of the movement, the book examines the limits of pivotal Black liberatory ideologies such as Negritude and Black Internationalism. Tolan-Szkilnik draws from an extensive interdisciplinary and multilingual archive (p.6) to map the transnational encounters of the militant artists of the Maghreb Generation and their impacts on the formation of anticolonial and panafrican alliances.

Chapter 1 of her book ("Revolt Respects No Borders Luso-African Revolutionaries in Rabat") focuses on the contributions of a group of Luso-African dissident artists from Lisbon to Paris and then from Paris to Rabat, as well as the establishment of Rabat as a hub for anticolonial activism. This chronological approach allows the author to explore the development of the Moroccan capital city of Rabat as "a home base for anticolonial activism in the Portuguese colonies" and a literary space that bolstered African cultural revolution. Chapter 2 ("A Continent in Its Totality Moroccan Literary Journal Souffles Turns to Angola") reaffirms the importance of Morocco as an example of a "liberated space" of imagination for postcolonial possibilities by focusing on the influential editorial group of the journal *Souffles* (1966-1973). In the following chapter 3 ("Poetry on All Fronts Jean Sénac's Fight for Algeria Airwaves"), Tolan-Szkilnik explores the controversy surrounding the 1969 Pan-African Festival of Algiers (PANAFA) between the Algerian government's pursuit of Pan-African leadership and the radicals, which resulted in what she calls the Off-PANAFA. This chapter provides a platform for both Maghrebi and global poets and artists who believed that the 1969 PANAFA was a façade to hide the political and socio-cultural unraveling of Algeria.

The contrast between the PANAFA and the Off-PANAFA reveals the dissent of Pan-Africanist radicals like Jean Sénac against the Algerian government's politicization of the movement. This chapter also demonstrates how a revolutionary gathering of anticolonial practitioners transformed into a "political aesthetic project" aimed at controlling, manipulating, and inhibiting panafrican cultural networks in Algeria. According to Tolan-Szkilnik, the iconic festival marks the end of "an era of true revolutionary change, one last big hurrah before the descent into censorship and the narrowing of cultural possibilities" (73). Chapter 4 ("Nothing to Fear from the Poet: Hooking up at the Pan-African Festival of Algiers") continues Tolan-Szkilnik's historical journey by highlighting the involvement of the African American community through the presence of the Black Panther movement (specifically the invitation of Eldridge and Kathleen Cleavers by the Algerian government). As the author has mentioned in various public discussions, this section of the book delves into the personal experiences behind the festival: a "window into the carnal underbelly of Algeria's status as the Mecca of the Revolution". It includes detailed interviews about the fond memories of the Maghreb Generation and their encounters with militant artists from around the world.

Additionally, this section culminates in an examination of the role of women in the redefined Pan-African movement. Through the figures of female Black Panther activist Kathleen Cleaver, festival editorialists Jocelyne Laâbi and Toni Mariaini, Tolan-Szkilnik points to the unacknowledged contributions of women in

the revolutionary activism that took shape during the festival in the Maghreb. This "revolutionary masculinity" of the Maghreb Generation is described as a reproduction of the colonial politics of gender and sexuality, which mostly undermined the anticolonial allure of the movement. However, it is important to note that the author's portrayal of the "sexual fantasies" of some members of the Black Panthers about imagined Algerian women does not reflect the esteemed position that Algeria and its population held in the hearts of Black revolutionaries at the time. The presence of the Black Panthers in Algeria can be attributed to the influence of Martinican Frantz Fanon on radical Black militants like the Cleavers. Despite the significant contributions of women such as Miriam Makeba, Nina Simone, and Kathleen Cleaver, the author chooses to focus her interviews on unverified oral accounts of participants' sexual relationships. Kathleen Cleaver herself discussed the significance of Algeria in the Panthers' desire for international expansion in her 1983 Yale graduate thesis. When considering global Pan-Africanism alongside the extensive works of these Black female internationalists, it is difficult to accept Tolan-Szkilnik's depiction of women as "ahistorical and apolitical symbols of Africa to conquer and collect through sex" (102). The final chapter 5 of the book ("The Red in Red-Carpet: The Journées Cinématographiques de Carthage.") displaces the debate to Tunisia, where the author focuses her lenses on the 1966 Journées Cinématographiques de Carthage (JCC), the role played by Senegalese filmmaker Sembène Ousmane and Tunisian Tahar Cheriaa, and Tunisia's attempt to match other Maghrebi Pan-Africanist leaderships (Morocco and Algeria).

Overall, Tolan-Szkilnik has skillfully retrieved and beautifully represented the important histories of the Maghrebi Generation of militant artists and their contributions in the expansion of Pan-Africanist and anticolonial movements. Through a dispersive and multifaceted archive, the author of *Maghreb Noir* has not only rehabilitated the "forsaken child" of the Pan-African movement in their rightful place but also ensured that the scope and variety of the research that produces this work guarantees their continued engagement within the field of African and African American studies. With this spirit, I recommend this book to Africanist scholars, historians of Africa, and Pan-Africanist researchers who are interested in a global representation of the Pan-African movement, its past, and future. Because of its combined interest in the political engagement and artistic literary productions of the Maghreb Generation, this work will be useful for both graduate and undergraduate students in decolonial studies.

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