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Stenner, David. *Globalizing Morocco: Transnational Activism and the Postcolonial State*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2019. xv + 289 pp. Notes, bibliography, and index. \$90.00 U.S. (cl). ISBN 9781503608115; \$30.00 U.S. (pb). ISBN 9781503608993.

Review by Mark Drury, Princeton University.

Early in David Stenner's transnational history of Moroccan decolonization, the reader meets Kenneth Pendar. A former diplomat who served in North Africa during World War II, Pendar subsequently built upon his connections to cofound a Coca-Cola bottling plant in Morocco. As we learn from Stenner's detailed account, Pendar's business interests led him to develop contacts across both French and Spanish zones of rule as he traveled between factories in Tangier and Casablanca. These contacts brought Pendar into the orbit of Moroccan anticolonial politics. Stenner notes that the former OSS agent was actively involved in Morocco's anticolonial movement, receiving advance copies of a nationalist brief prepared for a 1952 International Court of Justice case contesting French monopoly over foreign imports to the Protectorate. During this time, Coca-Cola incorporated iconography of the Alaoui royal family in its advertising campaigns, thereby associating the soft drink with the symbol of Moroccan nationalism. Aside from illustrating the complex political geography of colonial rule in Morocco, in Stenner's account Pendar's import business and Moroccan anticolonialism intersect in a mutually beneficial manner.

In *Globalizing Morocco*, Pendar serves as an example of a "broker." He is but one of many introduced to the reader as the study moves, chapter by chapter, from Tangier to Cairo to Paris to New York City to Rabat, or from one node of diplomatic activity to the next. In addition to former OSS agents-turned-businessmen, we meet British journalists, French public intellectuals, Egyptian politicians, the former Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Hajj Amin al-Husseini, and a Polish emigré cum Orientalist, Rom Landau, among others. This eclectic series of actors support Moroccan anticolonialism through a variety of mechanisms, most of which involve generating publicity (books, articles, public lectures and letters of protest) before various national and international audiences. Few of these figures relate to one another directly. Some—such as OSS agents and US labor union representatives—would seem to be at odds. However, together they form a transnational advocacy network by way of their connection with Moroccan anticolonial activists. In a telling example, Abderrahman Youssoufi, the Moroccan nationalist (and future prime minister) then living in Tangier, contributed materials for François Mauriac, a Nobel Laureate, to use in his influential weekly columns appearing in *Le Figaro*.

It would be misleading to suggest that this global history of Morocco's decolonization foregrounds a coterie of foreign supporters at the expense of Moroccan actors. Rather, Stenner focuses on the points of convergence between Moroccan activists and their transnational supporters, from the Moroccan monarchist Abdellatif Sbihi organizing a Roosevelt Club in Tangier in the 1950s to Allal al-Fassi the leader of the nationalist Istiqlal Party whose advocacy took him from Cairo to Latin America. Stenner devotes particular attention to Mehdi Bennouna, whom he labels the "networker-in-chief" (p. 129) for bringing the Moroccan cause to the attention of the UN, as well as US civil society, while serving as a lone delegate of (and lobbyist for) Morocco's nationalist Istiqlal Party in New York City in the late 1940s. Meticulously researched and drawing upon state and private archives in Morocco, France, Spain, the United States and the United Kingdom, Stenner's account makes a strong case for a global history of Morocco's decolonization, conceptualized as a process of "continuous cross-border cooperation" (p. 138).

Globalizing Morocco models this networked, transnational space in form, as well as argument. Moving spatially, rather than temporally, from one hub of activity to the next allows certain patterns to emerge. At each metropolis, Moroccan activists establish an office for the dissemination of information and propaganda: Maktab al-Arabi in Cairo, Comité France-Maghreb in Paris, the Moroccan Office of Information and Documentation in New York. This pattern reinforces Stenner's assertion throughout *Globalizing Morocco* that the anticolonial movement depended upon capturing the attention of, and persuading, a broader public. By focusing on the forms of publicity produced and circulated by these offices, we learn how anticolonialists reached audiences and shaped public opinion outside of Morocco in the interest of advancing Moroccan nationalism. The book's strength lies in its narrative of how non-state actors constituted transnational spaces during the post-World War II period. Abstractions such as "the global stage" and "world public opinion" take form and content in such a grounded, empirically rich account.

Stenner's study contributes to the historiography of decolonization, a literature that has flourished over the past decade by revisiting the complexity of this globally transformative process. Studies that examine the French Union have emphasized the fluidity of post-World War II political formations, as well as the range of potential political futures that emerge during this time, including but not limited to the nation-state.[1] Concurrently, just as the Algerian struggle for independence became paradigmatic in influencing contemporaneous political movements throughout the Third World, so too has this case become influential in the historiography of decolonization as a historical concept.[2] Likewise, studies of the Algerian struggle have established the significance of utilizing a global framework that presents decolonization as a struggle over world public opinion and the terms of human rights and humanitarianism.[3] Stenner's study, indebted to Matthew Connelly's and Jennifer Johnson's diplomatic histories of the Algerian FLN, applies some of these approaches to Morocco. Most significantly, a global framework and diplomatic history make the case that decolonization cannot simply be reduced to a dyadic power struggle between the French Protectorate and the Moroccan nationalist movement. For one, Stenner notes how the presence of Spanish and French protectorates constituted a "bifurcated colonial regime" (p. 77), which cannot be ignored in Moroccan colonial history. But second, and more significantly, Stenner's emphasis on how Moroccans sought to bring "global attention" (p. 45) to their cause foregrounds the transnational network as an object of study in processes of decolonization. *Globalizing Morocco* also provides a corrective to the almost exclusive focus on Algeria that has characterized the new historiography of decolonization in North Africa. Although discussed only in passing (p. 157), aspects of Moroccan

efforts before the UN serve as a kind of pre-history to the FLN's subsequent diplomatic successes, potentially providing some insight into how networks, forms and strategies of political action transferred between movements during this period.

As impressively thorough as *Globalizing Morocco* is in its documentation of the transnational publicity efforts made by members of this anticolonial advocacy network, certain concepts and terms occlude more complex dynamics and fields of power than those acknowledged in this account. Stenner's use of the term "broker," for example, is used to highlight how a diverse range of individual actors helped to connect the Moroccan cause to broader publics external to the colony. Stenner uses the Bourdieusian concept of "social capital" to frame the actions of these brokers. Social capital presumes a unified field of action in which social actors pursue the same ends: the accumulation of status and influence within a defined field of power. This has the advantage of bringing a wide-ranging cast of characters—some of whom I listed above—into Stenner's field of analysis. In defining the role, Stenner writes that brokers perform multiple functions simultaneously: translator, coordinator and articulator (p. 11). The second role comes through in spades. However, in establishing a functional equivalency between individuals with widely disparate politics, levels of influence, and motivation, the concept of translation falls out of the frame of analysis. What did Moroccan decolonization substantively mean to Kenneth Pendar, Coca-cola magnate? And how did Moroccan activists variously articulate, or translate, their conception of Morocco and its future in order to convince everyone from Eleanor Roosevelt to the former Mufti of Jerusalem? Perhaps most perplexingly, the Sultan Sidi Mohammed ben Yousef is treated like any other node in the network, seeking to accrue social capital. In its focus on the network form, we learn in detail about the many publications issued, speeches given, actors involved and gatherings convoked. But we learn very little about how Moroccan activists and their advocates sought to define themselves to the world, and whether those representations included any contradictions, ambiguities or deceptions.

Having defined the field in terms of free agents interacting in order to accrue social capital, Stenner's framework presents politics as an ever-expanding public sphere of rational argument and persuasion. Thus, the network is characterized in terms of its "constant expansion," (p. 27) and the reader is introduced to new characters who, despite coming from widely disparate backgrounds, are assumed to know and agree on what constitutes "Morocco" and why its case against colonialism was compelling. The emphasis on an ever-inclusive network leaves no room for discussion of internal disagreement or factionalism within the movement. French colonial archives provide the material for the opposition viewpoint, but differences within Morocco's advocacy network over tactics or ideology are absent. Most telling are the parties who complicate this story, and are referred to only obliquely: Gamal Abd al-Nasr's radio *Sawt al-'Arab* and prioritization of military backing and training, for example, stunt the Moroccans' efforts to establish a node of diplomatic activity out of Cairo. *Sawt al-'Arab* was a tremendously influential transnational mode of diffusing anticolonial sentiment across the Middle East and North Africa, but it does not align with the network described here. The entire chapter on Cairo, with passing reference to Bandung, militant anticolonialism and Third World sovereignty, does not fit as seamlessly into the narrative of Morocco's all-inclusive transnational anticolonial advocacy network.

If Morocco's non-Western ties appear somewhat out of place in this narrative, *Globalizing Morocco's* strength lies in tracing the emergence of a close relationship between Moroccan nationalism and US intelligence and civil society during the post-World War II period, through

such figures as Kenneth Pendar, Rom Landau and others. This insightful and important empirical contribution to Moroccan, US and French history documents the enduring centrality of public relations work to Moroccan diplomacy. Missing from this account, however, are two concepts that underpin and sustain this emergent relationship: ideology and imperialism. The convergence of labor representatives and OSS agents with anticolonial Moroccans is not only a matter of shared "interests." From the perspective of US empire (and not simply, Pendar, Landau, or other individuals), the success of the endeavor entails not only Moroccan independence, but that this independence emerges in the image of the United States' "self-interested globalism."^[4] The significance of decolonization as a framework lies in its capacity to capture the complexities and contradictions that continue to underlay political formations in the present, regardless of the scale of study.^[5] In terms of Moroccan nationalist historiography, an account of transnational advocacy overcoming colonialism helps foreground the work of the figures who were subsequently sidelined by the King of Morocco, once he consolidated power. In terms of the historiography of decolonization, a narrative of individuals accruing social capital through mutually beneficial relationships cannot fully account for the complex power dynamics involved in this process, nor how they continue to shape contemporary global politics.

NOTES

[1] Frederick Cooper, *Citizenship between Empire and Nation: Remaking France and French Africa, 1945-1960* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014); Gary Wilder, *Freedom Time: Negritude, Decolonization, and the Future of the World* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015).

[2] Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2006).

[3] Matthew Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); Jennifer Johnson, *Battle for Algeria Sovereignty, Health Care, and Humanitarianism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016); Jeffrey James Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution: Algeria, Decolonization, and the Third World Order* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

[4] Neil Smith, *American Empire: Roosevelt's Geographer and the Prelude to Globalization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), p. 389.

[5] Gary Wilder, "From Optic to Topic: The Foreclosure Effect of Historiographic Turns," *The American Historical Review* 117/3 (2012): 723-745.

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