

The representation of popular culture in various forms of artistic expression in Morocco

Responsable

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Résumé de l'atelier

Popular culture is a reflection of the heritage and main cultural forms that characterize each country. It can be seen as the soil in which the roots of societies, each one different from the others in terms of customs and traditions, are planted. The main purpose of this panel is the study of the representation of popular culture in various forms of artistic expressions in Morocco. We will discuss how popular poetry, characterised by orality, is a sign of cultural diversity and richness that need to be further investigated in order to catch all the elements that represent the identity of Moroccan expression. Orality is closely linked to another cultural practise, the *halqa* – the typical circle during which the artist demonstrates his talent while the audience surrounds him. We will focus on how *halqa* has been challenged due to the changes in cultural consumption patterns and on the importance of preserving this artistic expression. Then, we will explore the role played by popular culture in narrative discourse, taking Hassan Bahraoui's *The Vietnamese Tiger* as a case study. In this novel the reader rediscovers some cultural practises still in use today. Finally, the panel aims at defining how popular music is employed in the realization of filmic discourse where different rhythms are able to produce a sort of underlying network of signification, as we will show through the analysis of *Trances* by Ahmed al-Maanouni.

Programme

Hassan Bahraoui

Halqa in Morocco: oral heritage and challenge of survival

Halqa is the name of the popular art that derives its name from the typical way in which the audience spontaneously sits in front of the performer who demonstrates his talent during the performance. *Halqa*, the circle, is undoubtedly one of the cultural phenomena that characterises Moroccan culture and tradition. Our aim is to trace the origin of this peculiar artistic representation as well as to discover the development, between change and continuity, it has undergone over the ages. We will, then, focus on the challenge of survival that *halqa* is experiencing in modern times due to the radical changes in collective cultural consumption patterns that are making the spaces in which *halqa* takes place gradually more restricted.

Malika Maataoui

La poésie populaire signe de diversité culturelle au Maroc

Le Maroc possède certaines formes de poésie populaire transmises depuis les temps reculés et enrichies d'une génération à une autre et aux contacts de nombreuses civilisations. Cette poésie d'expression

dialectale avait à ses débuts un caractère oral, vu qu'elle est née dans un milieu rural ou au sein d'une classe sociale de culture modeste. Elle est portée aujourd'hui par des personnes plus instruites et plus cultivées qui se permettent de traiter des thèmes diversifiés en rapport par exemple avec le *haiku* japonais ou la culture marocaine Gnaoui (le chant des Africains déportés vers le Maroc du temps du roi Mansour Addahbi).

D'ailleurs, cette poésie se base sur un grand nombre de contes et de légendes, de chants populaires, de dictons et de proverbes recueillis dans différentes régions du pays, et elle exprime les sentiments les plus profonds de la vie du peuple.

Angelika Palmegiani

The Rediscovery of Popular Cultural Practices: "Daouar" of Regraga in the novel "the Vietnamese Tiger" by Hassan Bahraoui

The novel *The Vietnamese Tiger* by Hassan Bahraoui is the story of a young boy who narrates how a small cat brought home by his father, who worked at the port of Casablanca, turned into a tiger producing – from that moment – a whole series of events bordering on the unlikely. The second part of the novel is the narration of the personal stories of each of the main characters who appeared in the story, including Hajib, a popular Moroccan singer, very famous in the country. His activity – according to fictional narration – began at the behest of the Nobles of Regraga (a confederation in the Chiadma region where a forty-four – day pilgrimage takes place every year) who appeared to him in a dream. In this contribution, we aim to highlight how narrative discourse becomes a tool to rediscover popular cultural practices by tracing their historical origins. In this perspective, the novel not only entertains the reader, but also educates and informs him about his cultural background, highlighting aspects, practices and rituals that are still in use today.

Abdellah Sardaoui

The role of Folk Music in Moroccan cinema - Film Trances as case study

Moroccan folk music is characterised by a great variety of forms and rhythms realised with typical and traditional instruments that are still preserved and handed down from generation to generation. These rhythms animate spaces and occasions that, by their nature, require a particular type of music. In addition to physical spaces, popular music also occupies other types of spaces such as cinema. In this contribution we intend to analyse how the rhythms of popular music are used in the realisation of the filmic discourse of which they become the background. Furthermore, we will highlight how music is used to create an underlying network of signification that, on a parallel level, is able to produce a certain effect in the spectator. We will discuss these aspects analysing the film *Trances* by Ahmed al-Maanouni.