



School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London

Centre for Cultural, Literary and Postcolonial Studies (CCLPS)

International Conference on “The Aesthetics and Politics of Contemporary Cultural Productions in Morocco”

21 March 2014

Room 116 (SOAS Main Building)

Conference Sponsors: The British Council, The University of Cambridge and the Moroccan British Society

Conference Organiser: Dr. Karima Laachir (SOAS, University of London)

Conference Rationale

Morocco’s cultural productions in the form of literature, cinema, music and art have always been at the forefront of popular struggles for freedom against colonialism, political and social repression and corruption. The conference explores the role played by literature, cinema, and music among other genres of cultural products in revealing the complex social and political tensions in a society aspiring to freedom. The goal is to explore the complex way contemporary cultural products engage with and protest against the dominant social and political discourses on gender issues, oppression, and corruption. This conference will be unique in its attempt to explore contemporary Moroccan cultural products in Arabic and French from the perspective of investigating their role in transforming the nature of the

connection between the cultural sphere and the exercise of power. It will explore how the aesthetics of cultural production—i.e. modes and forms of artistic creation and innovation—are intertwined with politics in terms of providing alternative visions to issues to do with the social and political spheres.

Scholarship on this particular topic is scarce; and therefore, this project is important in its endeavour to map the contemporary multilingual context of the cultural scene in Morocco in its artistic engagement with social and political contexts. Morocco is a strategic North African country which is geographically and culturally situated between Africa, Europe and the Middle East and therefore, it provides a unique context in its amalgamation of various artistic traditions and trajectories.

The conference will be a platform where academics working on these topics based in Moroccan universities, in the UK and elsewhere will debate these issues. It will also host a number of Moroccan writers and artists who will offer their experiences in the field of cultural production.

Registration

This conference is free and open to anyone with an interest in the subject. If you wish to attend, please email Karima Laachir (kl19@soas.ac.uk) to register.

Contact

Karima Laachir (kl19@soas.ac.uk)

Conference Programme

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| 8.30- 8.45 a.m. | Registration +coffee/tea |
| 8.45- 9.00 a.m. | Welcome and Opening Remarks Karima Laachir (SOAS, University of London) Martin Rose (British Council, Morocco) Paul Anderson (University of Cambridge) |
| 9.00- 11.00 a.m. | Panel 1: Oppositional Aesthetics Larbi Touaf (University Mohamed I, Oujda) The Legacy of Dissent: Mohamed Khair-Eddine and the Ongoing Debate on Cultural Diversity in Morocco |

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| | <p>Karima Laachir (SOAS, University of London) The Politics and Aesthetics of 'Reading Together' the Moroccan Novel in Arabic and French</p> <p>Najib Mohktari (International University of Rabat) The Author and his Doubles: Towards a Poetics of Allegories in Youssouf Amine Elalamy's <i>Nomad Love</i> (2013)</p> <p>Abdelhay Moudden (Mohamed V University, Rabat) What Do Novels Tell About Politics? Reflections from the Perspective of Political Science</p> <p>Chair: Stefan Sperl (SOAS, University of London)</p> |
| 11.00- 11.30 a.m. | Coffee/Tea Break |
| 11.30- 12.30 p.m. | <p>Panel 2: Multilingualism and the Aesthetics of Contention</p> <p>Youssouf Amine Elalamy (Ibn Tofail University, Kenitra) Darija Art: Towards an Aesthetic Rehabilitation of Moroccan Arabic</p> <p>Cleo Jay (SOAS, University of London) The Amazigh Cultural Renaissance in Morocco: Aesthetics of Contention</p> <p>Chair: Karima Laachir (SOAS, University of London)</p> |
| 12.30- 1.30 p.m. | Lunch Break |
| 1.30- 2.30 p.m. | <p>Panel 3: Branding "Morocco": Between the Local, the National and the Global</p> <p>Cristina Almeida (SOAS, University of London) The Politics of <i>Taqlidi</i> sounds in Moroccan Rap: Between Gaining Acceptance and Capitalizing on Moroccanness</p> <p>Maria Angela Jansen (London College of Fashion) Defining Moroccanness: Aesthetics and Politics in Contemporary Moroccan Fashion Design</p> <p>Chair: TBC</p> |

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| 2.30- 4.30 p.m. | <p>Panel 4: Mapping the Politics of Postcolonial Subjectivities</p> <p>Abdellatif Akbib (University of Abdelmalek Essaadi, Tetouan) Flower Freak: How Things Fall Apart in Mohamed Choukri's Short Stories</p> <p>Jamal Bahmad (University of Stirling) Mapping Neoliberal Morocco: Realist Aesthetics and the Politics of Postcolonial Subjectivity in the New Urban Cinema</p> <p>Valerie Orlando (University of Maryland) Vamps & Tramps: From Psycho Wards to Mountain Brothels, or the Conflicted Spaces & Places of Moroccan Women on Screen</p> <p>Soumia Boutkhil (University Mohamed I, Oujda) On their Front Yard: Deconstructing Masculinities in Bahaa Trabelsi's Novels</p> <p>Chair: Ruth Mas (University of Colorado Boulder)</p> |
| 4.30 – 5.00 p.m. | Coffee/Tea Break |
| 5.00- 6.30 p.m. | <p>Keynote Speech Sponsored by the International Prize for Arabic Fiction (IPAF)</p> <p>Mohammed Achaari (Winner of the International Prize for Arabic Fiction for 2011)</p> <p>الإبداع كاختيار سياسي Creativity as a Political Choice</p> <p>Chair: TBC</p> |
| 7.00 p.m. | Conference Dinner |