

## 7.2. DIY in Morocco from the mid 90's to 2015: back to the roots?

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### Abstract

This article shows how an artistic underground movement was born in the 90's, mostly in Casablanca, Morocco's "Economic Capital", starting with isolated groups in several neighbourhoods, some dedicated to hip hop (dancing, DJ-ing and later rapping), others to hard rock and metal. After gathering around a Festival for alternative music called L'Boulevard founded in 1999, a cultural movement called "Nayda" emerged and the media coverage grew with the development of private radios from 2006. A (very limited) number of artists became famous, asking for very high fees, and adopted a more mainstream style that served as a model for the next generation. In 2011, with the 'Arab spring', the #Feb.20 movement emerged as a kind of DIY in politics, making the best use of the new media (mostly facebook and youtube), although novices in the domain. At that time, artists were trying to live from their art and to become professional, but, due to the setback that followed the Arab spring, a number of recently created festivals disappeared, and with them, the only chance to earn enough money to live throughout the year. The access to the new media helped mediatize emerging artists and they started using the new techniques, computers, cameras and cell phones, to produce music and to shoot and edit clips, immediately published on the social networks. In 2015, DIY- "Debber Rasek"(manage on your own) in 'Darija' (Moroccan Arabic) - is back at every level, from kids with no money at all who manage to buy and arrange clothes from the flea market to produce flamboyant punk looks, to groups who own their instruments and try to find spots to rehearse and create, to directors who produce clips with hardly any means and a lot of creativity, and to Feb.20 youths who have invested in new forms of solidarity in culture, like Summerlab and Open Culture. The alternative art scene showed how 'fragile' (see Miller & Caubet 2013 and Barone 2015) it was, even at its height in 2006-2007. They are back to DIY, but with the means of 2015 - with a desire for independence and with no other choice, for most artists- in order to be able to create and to express themselves.

**Keywords:** underground, diy, music scene, fragile scenes, metal, punk, hip hop, Morocco, Arab Spring.

### Introduction

A lot has been written after the "Arab Spring" and the development of new cultural practices, but in the case of some Arab countries like Morocco, the emergence of an underground scene dates back to over twenty years ago in the early 90's. Under the reign of the previous king, Hassan II (he died in July 1999), only a real DIY spirit could set it going, because it was imposed by the circumstances, when nothing was easy and you had to fight for it. With the help of satellite TV at the beginning of the 90's, the travelling back and forth of the children of migrants in Europe, and a slight loosening of the political grip of "les années de plomb", from 1996, and the kids stepped into the breach that was opening up.

### The beginnings of an Urban Counterculture in the streets: the 1990's to the 1990's

They started as isolated groups of music or dance lovers, in some neighbourhoods of the metropole, Bourgogne and Hay Mohammadi for Hip Hop, Hajajma, CIL for metal; they did not meet and developed in their own small circles.

#### Isolated groups, each with their own skills: Hip hop, metal

In the 90's in Casablanca, very young urban artists, around the age of 14-16, started training in the street. They had to do everything by themselves, teaching each other how to dance or play the guitar, duplicating audio and video cassettes and photocopying old music magazines that reached the country, printing fanzines. They bought their T-shirts and clothes from the flea markets and avidly watched recently introduced satellite televisions, on the

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French channels TF1 (“Hip Hop” with Sidney) and M6 (“Rapline”) or on MTV (“Headbangers’ Ball”). Followed by their group of fans, they also organized their first concerts in schools, via friends who were students there, or renting wedding halls for the occasion, sharing the expense among three or four groups. They even took part in festivals of more traditional music (like “Le Printemps de Bouskoura”), where they had problem fitting in<sup>2</sup>!

### *Hip Hop and rap*

Hip hop started in the early 90’s with dancers who would form a circle in the street, when the shops or the cafés were closed, or at night in the storefront of the Autohall. They only needed a sound-machine - bought from the flea market and endlessly repaired - or even human beatmakers. They taught each other smurf, popping or breakdance. When DJ-ing started, disco’s like “La Cage” or “Club 84” opened in the afternoons, when teenagers boys and girls could attend safely and when no alcohol was served<sup>3</sup>. In the summer the migrant workers’ children would join in and exchange steps or techniques.

Rappers came in much later, and they would use side B of the cassettes to practice their cover of famous American or French groups. They only started rapping in *Darija* (Moroccan Arabic) later, with pioneer *Double A* from Salé around 1996. Groups also appeared in Casablanca, *Amine Snoop*, *Koman*, *Barry*, *Masta Flow* (who started as a dancer but converted to rap after an injury) and his first group *Vampire’s Killer Squad* (VKS) in 1997, or *Thug Gang*, *Afia* or *Hell Laouef* in Sbata in 2000, or *Mafia C* with *Caprice* and *Bigg* in 2001; at the same time *Zanqa Flow* started in Tangiers (with *Muslim*) and *H-Kayne* (formerly, *The Dogs*) in Meknes.

### *Metal*

But, if the dancers and the rappers were satisfied with portable cassette players, the rockers had to find spaces where they could plug-in their amplifiers and play drums; on the street, you could only listen to cassettes, learn a few chords and rehearse covers on an acoustic guitar. In the absence of any official space dedicated to youth culture<sup>4</sup>, practice, rehearsal and creation, all had to take place in “*Debber Rasek*” or “*Système D*”<sup>5</sup> places: the garage of a friend’s family, borrowed recording studios normally used for traditional music, or in the bedroom of one of the members when the parents were out, provided the neighbours did not complain.

They learnt the titles by heart on their Walkman, and trained to play back some guitar solos. Metal groups nearly all sang –or mumbled! - in English, with a few exceptions that decided to write in *Darija*. Much later, Punk groups adopted *darija* from the start, from 2004.

Back in the mid 90’s; when the pioneer group *Immortal Spirit* (*I.S.*) felt the urge for public concerts, they asked the private schools attended by friends, like “El Jaber”, the Spanish school in Casablanca who also had a metal group, *KDB*, or the French Lycée Lyautey. They used all their family contacts and managed to rent *Bab el-Bahr*, the medina wedding hall, which became the legendary venue of the first rock-metal concerts in Casablanca although of course, it was not intended for rock concerts!

Amine Hamma, one of the founders of *I.S.*, also testifies about the importance of satellite TV:

À partir de 1993, l’influence de MTV a été déterminante pour découvrir le deathmetal. Je pense en particulier aux chocs éprouvés face à des groupes tels que *Orbituary*, *Carcass*, *Entombed*, *Morbid Angel*, *Death* ou *Cannibal Corpse*.<sup>6</sup>

### *The role of graphics*

Just as they were very concerned to reproduce the jackets of the original cassettes, to find the original T-shirts or posters, the groups also paid much attention to graphics. For example the logo of *I.S.* was designed long before, when Amine Hamma was practicing and drawing on his notebooks at school; when the friends decided to put up

<sup>2</sup> They were booed when they first came on stage.

<sup>3</sup> Special thanks to “The Twins”, Taha and Yassine, who were star dancers of the 90’s, for their testimony.

<sup>4</sup> There are some buildings, called “Maison des Jeunes”, but they have no budget to run them and the directors have aged with the structure and are often well over 60.

<sup>5</sup> *Debber Rasek* means “manage by yourself” in *Darija*; the French equivalent “*Système D*” is also used in Morocco: both close equivalents to DIY.

<sup>6</sup> “From 1993 onwards, the influence of MTV was crucial and allowed us to discover deathmetal. I’m thinking of the shock I felt when I saw groups like *Orbituary*, *Carcass*, *Entombed*, *Morbid Angel*, *Death* ou *Cannibal Corpse*.”

a group, they immediately adopted that name (e.g. Figure 1). Later they drew flyers which they photocopied to advertise their concerts. Music and graphics were linked from the start, and still are.

### *The link with skating and surfing*

All these musicians also had another passion, skating and surfing which they practiced together with music: they skated to “Pepsi Beach”, where they had found an old reservoir which became their spot where they would play for hours, on their skateboards. Most were also fans of surfing and some of them are now professional surf instructors.

To sum up the period of the end of the century, there was no money involved, there were no festivals, no venues and the artists were all playing, singing or dancing for the pleasure of it. The music industry was completely absent from their preoccupations.

### **Le “Boulevard des Jeunes Musiciens” 1999**

From 1999, most of these artists who had each evolved in their own local spheres, came together around what was at first a theatre that held four hundred people in central Casablanca, la F.O.L. Soon rehearsal could take place there, and a competition was set up in 1999, known as “Le Tremplin” (the springboard), where the groups could confront the others. In 2000, it became “Le Boulevard des Jeunes Musiciens”, a DIY Festival for urban alternative music driven by its founders, Momo (Mohamed Merhari) and Hicham (Bahou).

*L’Boulevard* gathered all the underground styles, and thus created an original community of open-minded underground artists who rehearsed, played and made progress together, where rappers, metalheads and fusion could mix.

In July 1999 the former king died and his son Mohammed VI took over, bringing hopes of change. From 2000, the Festival grew together with a group of volunteers who came to help, some of them students at the Beaux-Arts, others who were to become journalists or work in communication; it remained underground and self-organized, in the old DIY spirit with very little means obtained from a series of small private sponsors (rather than a big one who could take control), in order to keep its independence.

Graphics were important from the start and the black and white (because it was cheaper) posters became the trademark of *L’Boulevard*.

But in 2003, when the festival had decided to play in a rugby stadium because la F.O.L. had really become dangerously small (the glass doors had been broken by angry fans who could not get in), an event contributed to give the festival much bigger – unwanted - media attention.



Figure 1 – The original stage canvas used by Immortal Spirit during their concertes © D. Caubet 2011



Figure 2 – L’Boulevard posters at la F.O.L.

### 14 metalheads arrested and tried in Feb. 2003

In 2003 *L'Bolevard* was growing and starting to get public attention when an event shook their world: 14 young metalheads were arrested on 16 February, interrogated and charged with very serious accusations: "shaking the faith of Muslims" and "detaining and spreading immoral music". They were tried and sentenced to up to one year of prison.

Unexpectedly, this trial triggered a reaction from various social groups, associations and journalists, who came together in their defence, organized sit-ins; publicized the case internationally and launched a petition that collected over 15.000 signatures. Most people had not taken part in a mobilization for decades, after Hassan II's "années de plomb" and the 5000 people who gathered in front of Casablanca's wilaya, asking to "free our musicians now", came as a huge surprise.

#### *2003 a key year in Morocco*

These arrests and the trial (Feb.-April 2003), was followed on 16 May by the attack of 14 suicide bombers. All this came as a shock for the Moroccan society, and people started to speak up, to debate publicly, making 2003 a key year for the country and for what was to be called the alternative music scene: a takeover by a **new civil society**. Subjects aspiring to become citizens, and the growing development of the media coverage, were to lead to a wider visibility in the public sphere (Caubet, 2008).

### Growing media coverage leads to "Nayda" 2006-2007

2004-2005 were years when the Moroccan society became aware of this existence of these kids with tastes different from their parents, in terms of music, clothing and looks. A certain press, and magazines like *Telquel* and *Le Journal Hebdomadaire*, opened public debates on sensitive questions, like the real Moroccan identity and its plurality<sup>7</sup>, the place and role of the language shared by nearly all Moroccans, *darija* (Moroccan Arabic), as an important element of that identity, although it had (and still has) no official existence nor recognition.

Morocco seemed to be outspoken and flourishing in 2006-2007, creativity was at his peak, and there was hope that a "movida" was taking place in Morocco.

#### **Private radios and festivals in lieu of a perennial cultural policy**

The real media craze started with the opening of new private radios in the second half of 2006, among which some were designed for young audiences. Suddenly, groups that had no media coverage and only relied on small concerts, groups of local fans or internet, became well-known, and a few of them even grew to be stars. This was accompanied by the development of numerous free-entry festivals<sup>8</sup> from 2007, officially sponsored by local authorities, or private firms dealing with sodas and mobile phones. Founding yearly festivals became the trademark of the Moroccan cultural policy, with no development envisaged along the year.

From 2006 onwards, the groups who got to be very well-known and, for some of them, well-paid, left behind the old DIY spirit and revised their music, which tended to be more consensual and mainstream; both in its form and its content.

Fees went up fast, from 3000€ to 15.000€ for some, and they ended up being more paid than the artists coming from abroad. The quality of the technical equipment for concerts grew rapidly; it even developed as an industry in Morocco because of the demand from all the newly created festivals, each town or region wanting their own festival where the new Moroccan stars performed on stage. The artists had the ambition to live from their art, although the situation is very precarious in Morocco, with no payment of copyrights<sup>9</sup> when the songs are broadcasted or played in public places (bars, hotels, supermarkets and malls), and the only solution for them is to be paid for performing on stage.

<sup>7</sup> Stressing the importance of the African and Berber components and the plurality of religions with the Jewish elements.

<sup>8</sup> This has become a Moroccan habit, which is very damageable on the long term, giving the impression that culture is for free.

<sup>9</sup> The "Bureau Marocain des Droits d'auteur" (BMDA) exists but does not pay the copyrights to the authors; a long fight has been going on since 2007, but no solution has yet been found.

### Some styles are not present on the radio

Being broadcasted on the radio does not bring money in Morocco, but it can bring fame, together with TV programmes. From the start, some styles were nearly completely excluded, except from the programmes dedicated to rock. The metal scene never gained recognition and neither did punk, because of their music and of their looks (Mohawk, long hair, earrings, black T-shirts and plaid pants were never accepted). On the contrary, rap and world music appeared to be much more consensual and to get widely broadcasted.

Prejudices die hard, because, after all these years, after all these festival editions, *L'Boulevard* was still described a "défouloir" (an outlet) for metal fans, in a TV programme on September 2014<sup>10</sup>. It is still very much underground in its spirit, although the metal concerts attract the greatest audiences.

### *Nayda*<sup>11</sup>, a Moroccan *movida*?

There was so much enthusiasm and hope and so much creativity, compared to the Morocco of the 1970's to the 1990's, that a parallel was made, in the press and in public debates, with the post Franco era of Spain in the 1980's. There was hope that a movement was actually taking place and it was called the "Moroccan Movidá" (2005-2006), before finding its own label at the beginning of 2007: "*Nayda*".

*Nayda* was then presented as a phenomenon "in development", but when nothing really emerged after three or four years (2009-2010), the movement started to die out, presenting no outcome, no professionalization, no possibility to earn money on a year-long basis for the artists. Many also realized that *Nayda* had been used by the ruling class to present a positive image of Morocco on the international level, and was being overused by advertising agencies; in 2007-2009, everything was "nayda"! Suddenly the Moroccan youth, and especially this youth in movement, changed status in the society: long considered only as mouths to feed, they were becoming the core target of advertisers.

Disappointment followed this momentum of hope<sup>12</sup>, and *Nayda* failed to materialize.

### The "Arab spring" in 2011: *DIY in politics*

The so-called "Arab Spring" took the form of the 20 February, #Feb20 movement, which emerged late in January 2011. I analyse the Moroccan experience as a manifestation of DIY in politics: with no training, no experience and no political culture, a group of young novices launched a page on facebook - that then counted 2.65 million Moroccan profiles (Caubet, 2013). It was a dream of democracy, dignity and freedom, calling for pacific sit-ins or demonstrations in all the country on 20 February 2011, and it never questioned the monarchy. Still, the regime felt threatened in the context of revolution in the Arab world, and became very nervous, deploying disproportionate means to fight these "cheeky" newcomers. The immediate response, took the form of violent cyber-attacks (even personal ones) on facebook aiming at destabilizing the #Feb20 and scaring the country.

The first demonstrations took place on 20 February in fifty three towns, gathering over 200.000 people, peacefully in most places and with a few incidents whose responsibility is not clear, in the North of Morocco. After this first success, they held peaceful demonstrations every Sunday and The King made a very long speech as early as 9 March, saying he had heard what as being said and set up a commission to revise the constitution which worked for three months. The number of demonstrators went down for a while but never ceased, with a revival on 24 April, where a hundred towns were concerned and 10.000 people gathered in Casablanca.

After the cyber-attacks on facebook, they repressed the demonstrations, very suddenly, choosing the time when they left the city centres to go to popular neighbourhoods, like in Sbata for Casablanca (29 May 2011). The constitution project was presented on 17 June, and rapidly voted via a referendum on 1 July 2011 with 98.5 % of the votes. It contains some openings, but they are slow in being implemented, four years later.

Carles Feixa in his keynote address at the KISMIF 2015 conference also made a link between "Los indignados", a movement that started in Spain on 15 May 2011 - inspired both by the Arab streets and the book by Stéphane

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yI7iWgvxEps&feature=youtu.be>, retrieved on 31 July 2015.

<sup>11</sup> *Nayda* is originally a feminine participle meaning "It is getting up, It is raising"; it was used at the beginning of the years 2000 by the underground music scene to mean: "We're feeling good" and "it's rocking!", before becoming a noun and the name of this movement, in 2007, "*nayda*", Caubet (2010)

<sup>12</sup> Also see the documentary film, *Casanayda!*, Caubet (2007).

Hessel, *Indignez-vous!* (2010) - and DIY. He referred to both as an awakening of networks and of public squares and called them the "New new social movements" (see his paper in the proceedings).

Soon the political class – who remained silent and motionless for six months during the events – regained consciousness and deployed their skills to fight the "cheeky ones" and take back their places. A number of very young militants were jailed under false accusations and spent months in prison; some are still there in 2015. The motives used to arrest them went from "aggression", public drunkenness, participation to unauthorized demonstration during an authorized demonstration (by trade unions), etc.

## Post #Feb20, back to the DIY spirit?

Everything is now back to normal in the world of Moroccan politics with a Prime Minister from the PJD, a fundamentalist conservative party. Repressed, jailed in a rather impressive indifference and deceived by the politicians, the #Feb20 militants have often chosen to invest in alternative cultural projects where they feel they may have a direct influence on the people. Sensing this, the regime has decided to fight them tooth and nail, banning events in different ways: cutting off electricity in the building, shutting the gates, or sending the police forces to intimidate the audience.

### Back to the roots? DIY

The #Feb20 militants had no financial means, but good national and international networks, a good sense of organization learned over the months of self-governance in 2011. They started off on the cultural level in May 2011, by holding a stall at the "Souk Associatif" held by *L'Boulevard* during their festival; for the 2011 demos, they had invented very efficient slogans in *Darija* which were chanted, and spread via videos posted on youtube. They also trained in the framework of the "Theatre of the Oppressed" (in link with the international organisation), where they learned to improvise on social topics close to the people's interests; they passed on the techniques, students becoming tutors, all this in a DIY spirit.

They also connected with other international networks, like *Summerlab* or *Open Culture* in 2013 and organized the Casablanca version of it, in order to "share knowledge, teach each other", just like in the spirit of the beginnings in the mid 90's (see above). *Open Ta9afa* (Culture) aims at mastering more technical aspects, like recording sound, web radio, DJ-ing, etc.

Other groups created clubs where they met and exchanged regularly, among which "The Students' Awareness Club", and later started organizing small public events, involving reading and sharing books or playing music on the street, like "ConcerTrottoir"<sup>13</sup> organized on Saturdays at the *Parc de la Ligue Arabe* in Casablanca, just like they used to do, nearly twenty years ago, but with the communication of 2015, internet, mobile phones that helped widen the circle.

### New forms of art, new collaborations

In that same spirit, new exchanges emerged in Morocco, when artists decided to do things together, as well as new forms of art, like "slam" or "spoken word poetry". The artists are mostly of working class origin and have very little, or no means.

### Spoken Word in Darija, and also Standard Arabic and French

Simultaneously Slam artists appeared on facebook, coming from very different paths: a former rapper belonging to the pioneer generation and known then as Steph Raggaman, changed his name to Mustapha Slameur, producing monthly videos called "Le slam de Mustapha". He was the first to fill this niche, slamming mostly in *Darija*, but also in French and Standard Arabic and is now connected to an international network and travelling abroad. A much younger artist, coming from the #Feb20 movement, began to produce videos in *Darija* from 2014, under the name "Mssati" (Crazy), and in February 2015, he created a regular event every other Saturday, called "Café Slam", taking place in *L'Uzine* (see below), where everyone can share poetry and slam in the language of their choice.

<sup>13</sup> See <http://diapazone.net/2015/08/09/concerttrottoir-quand-les-casablancais-jouent-de-la-musique-dans-la-rue/> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2eNKaf9uiq8>; retrieved 14 August 2015.

### ***New collaborations born in places destined to creation, or taken up***

Places destined to creation appeared, such as the former slaughterhouse, “Les Abattoirs” (opened in 2009 as a “Fabrique culturelle”), or le “Boul’tek”, *L’Boulevard’s* centre for alternative music (opened in 2009), or the last one, “l’Uzine”, founded by the “Touria and Abdelaziz Tazi Foundation” in the autumn 2014, which offers free rooms, halls and studios for rehearsals, practice and creation in the urban arts (music, theatre, dance, graffiti, comic strips, etc.) . Although it is quite far, the infrastructure and the freedom which can be found there, make it a popular place<sup>14</sup>.



Figure 3 – Summerlab 2014, DIY workshop



Figure 4 – The poster for Café Slam n. 4, April 2015: “Bring a book and read”  
Source: retrieved from facebook

Artistic encounters have taken place in these places, and a cartoonist, Rebel Spirit, working with rapper/singer, Khalid Hoummas, produced a clip in the form of a cartoon based on his lyrics and on drawings from Rebel Spirit’s comic strip album “Le Casablancais”, *Darbida* (Casablanca)<sup>15</sup>.

Musicians meet at L’Uzine and decide to mix styles, like they did at la F.O.L. in the early 2000’s: rappers play with punk vocalists and guitarists, slammers need musicians for their performances; they all help each other and enjoy each other’s productions.

Graffiti artists like ED Oner or Rebel Spirit graff a wall at l’Uzine during a residence with international artists. Cartoonists decide to launch a comic strip magazine called *Skefkef*, with around twenty artists coming together and they are presently working on issue n. 4.

But everything is not running as it could and a lot of energy has to be spent fighting for basic rights.

### **Ban and repression in the cultural field**

When rapper Mouad L’Haqed was arrested in September 2011, there was a taste of “déjà vu”, and everyone remembered the fourteen metal musicians in 2003, the last time artists had been jailed. L’Haqed, who was a member of the Creation Committee of #Feb20, was tried and spent four months in jail, then arrested again two months later in March 2012, spending a full year, and finally in June 2014 when he spent another four months in jail. Each time the charges were made up (violence, insulting the police in a video posted on youtube (not by him) and which later mysteriously disappeared, illegally selling tickets for a football match).

In February 2014, the organizers of the Festival “Resistance et alternatives”, found the gates of the Abattoirs shut. They were refused access and had to find a last minute shelter at the *Boul’tek*, which only holds 150. The official excuse was the lack of an authorisation, but the intent behind this decision was to signify the #Feb20 that,

<sup>14</sup> L’Uzine’s facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/uzine7?fref=ts>

<sup>15</sup> See the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p7G9MYkp06w>; retrieved 14 August 2015.

as the magazine *Telquel* wrote at the time: "Mais récemment, une tendance de fond se dessine: on cherche à bâillonner les artistes qui se déclarent proches du mouvement."<sup>16</sup> This followed the banning of L'Haged's press conference in a bookshop to present his album *Waloo* (Nothing)<sup>17</sup>, again for lack of an authorisation on 13 February. To keep up appearances, the banning is never direct and the excuse is always administrative.

Mouad L'Haged is free for the moment, but not free to express himself in public, apart from what he publishes on youtube and facebook. On 19 June 2015, he was supposed to appear with a group of artists close to him, *Okacha Family*, in his first concert in his hometown, Casablanca, at *L'Uzine*. Two hours before the concert, police forces surrounded the place, and the electricity was cut off. When the director, Karim Tazi, asked for an official banning there was none and the police kept asking for an authorisation, when the place is a cultural foundation and does not require one. *L'Uzine* was closed down for two months.

The message is clear: people linked to #Feb20, even four years later, will never be forgiven for what they have done; thus reaching a situation where Mouad, for example, can only go on stage when he is not announced in advance, which he has done a few times under the protection of rapper L'Moutcho or at Café Slam.

## Conclusion

The alternative art scene has shown how *fragile* (see Miller & Caubet, 2013 and Barone, 2015) it was, even at its height in 2006-2007, when everyone thought Nayda was going to prevail. Coming from the underground in the Hassan II era, after a presence on the public square, most artists are now back to "*Debber rasek*" (Manage for yourself), but a different type of DIY. The artists use new technical means, with a new scope in communication and exchanges via facebook and youtube, computers and mobile phones, so that they are not isolated anymore like the pioneers. They have also acquired, year after year, a form of social, if not political, consciousness, claiming to be citizens and actors, and not just subjects anymore.

They are still in a very fragile situation where the regime can decide to stop them (with indirect means), at any time if they cross the "red lines"<sup>18</sup> in politics; they are still full of hope, energy, inventiveness and creativity. They have acquired a form of technical competence where groups of friends are now able to record a track, shoot and produce a clip, and post it on facebook, where you can get the largest audience. Going on stage is another matter, not mentioning living from your art, which is now clearly not possible any more. In that sense also, they are back to the ages of amateurism, of the love of art, but with a message.

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<sup>16</sup> See Telquel, 1 March 2014: [http://telquel.ma/2014/03/01/lart-de-la-censure\\_11535](http://telquel.ma/2014/03/01/lart-de-la-censure_11535) "But recently, a trend is emerging: they're trying to muzzle the artists who declare themselves close to the movement".

<sup>17</sup> See the album online <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PlyBPywAxXuuKE4lftAlmoQHkuY2I6NZq> - retrieved 14 August 2015

<sup>18</sup> The red lines being the Moroccan Sahara, the person of the King and religion.