

## EDITORIAL

The Morocco that gave birth to Souffles in 1966 has changed significantly. The country has witnessed major political and socio-economic transformations that have, in some ways, challenged the pessimistic predictions of the Moroccan opposition press regarding the country's future during the period Souffles was published. However, there are also constants and continuities that resist change and which continue to have a lasting and reverberating impact on the country's diverse populations, social classes, and geographic regions. Aware of both change and resistance to transformation, this first issue of Souffles Monde builds on the analytical cultural, political, historical, and social legacy of the original Souffles journal to capture change, assess continuities, and tap into emerging topics of societal and political concern to Morocco and to the entire African continent. By focusing on issues of race and equity, the trans-Atlantic, African, Arab, and Amazigh identities and cultures of Morocco in and without direct dialogue with other spheres, where these same issues are being debated, we offer our readers a glimpse into a transformed society and country that is still attempting to find its way to enshrine and accommodate difference.

This first issue engages both the stable and fluid facets of a national identity that has shed several of its erstwhile self-representations to finally confront its marginalized constituencies. Through the categories of race, religion, ethnicity, music, geography, education, and gender our readers will discover how these categories intersect in a vibrant cultural scene, where the constants are questioned and the boundaries of the possible are pushed wider to create space difference. These concise essays take us from the Amazigh hinterlands to Gabon and from California to the Saharan regions of Errachidia, stressing one common trait: a desire to question, probe, and shed new light on critical questions of concern in the scholarship about North Africa. Combining academic inquiry with testimonies and personal reflections, this first issue of Souffles Monde aims to speak to generations of Moroccans, Africans, and global readers for whom amnesia, in some cases, and lack of intimate knowledge of the country, in others, may have created an unreal image of the crucial questions that Moroccan society is navigating as it deepens its integration into a fast-globalizing world. Instead of specificity, we emphasize difference, and instead of uniqueness, we focus on shared concerns and dialogue with the world.

By dedicating this first issue to writings by Moroccan scholars, we have made a conscious decolonial act. Scholars and scholarship from the Global South need to have their own venues in widely-read languages to circumvent gatekeeping practices and open the road wide for a new generation of scholars and readerships, and creative writers and thinkers, who cannot transcend the glass ceilings and effective boundaries imposed on them by the prevalent publication conventions in influential languages. Decoloniality starts from language and translation for us, and in recognizing and highlighting cultural production in Arabic and Tamazight we aspire for a decolonized Academia that listens to and dialogues meaningfully with authors and content creators from the Global South. We will pursue this line of inquiry by soliciting contributions from African

scholars and creators and by translating into English and French domestically-generated theory in the months and years to come. Our aim is to model an approach that does justice to ongoing efforts to produce knowledge in local languages and draw attention to the fact that the current publication culture has failed to adjust its modus operandi to the ways in which knowledge is produced and circulated in the Global South.

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