'Nass el Ghiwan'

An audience research of the Moroccan Popular Music in the 1970s

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on the audience of Nass el Ghiwan who experienced the 1970s in Morocco coming from a poor social class. The goal of the thesis is to understand the engagement of this social class with Nass el Ghiwan and how the interviewees could identify with their songs and the socio-political and economic memories triggered about the 1970s when they were listening to the songs of Nass el Ghiwan. Through the ten interviews in Morocco, Marrakesh, this thesis could create a correlation between the social status of the interviews and the songs of Nass el Ghiwan. This study is built theoretically on the notion of cultural citizenship (Stevenson Nick), popular culture (Joke Hermes, 2005), spectrum of engagement (Annette Hill, 2017), identity (Stewart Hall, 1996), and nostalgia (Zhou et al., 2012). It gives a social, political and economic and cultural context to understand the affective and cognitive engagement of the audience with Nass el Ghiwan; and the national, Maghreb identity in addition to the aspects of nostalgia.

The findings show that Nass el Ghiwan was not considered by its audience just as an entertainment but as a social movement and a phenomenon who could represent the poor social class when no one did. The interviewees testified engaging with Nass el Ghiwan more than with any other bands, because they broke the codes and challenged the repressive rules instore by the monarchy after the independence of Morocco in 1956. The informants testify that Nass el Ghiwan was the first band in Morocco to use popular language that only the poor people could identify with and understand. Also, the interviewees reflected on the ability of Nass el Ghiwan to create a sense of collectivity with Algeria; even though in the presence of the political tensions between Morocco and Algeria. The findings were revealed by the memories of that time; which were provoked from when the informants listen to the songs of Nass el Ghiwan nowadays.

Keywords: *audience engagement, cultural citizenship, Morocco, identity, sense of collectivity, nostalgia, Nass el Ghiwan, popular culture, spectrum of engagement, 1970s, music, social class.*

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

Choice of the case, aims of the study and research questions

There are three motivations to carry this study. The first motivation that made me choose this topic for my thesis is because since I was a child, I was taught the same historical events and names in my history classes. However, when I came to Sweden, I met people who were more knowledgeable than I about a part of the Moroccan history. Therefore, I started to question myself, how come I do not know those historical events, and I came to a conclusion that the government controlled what kind of information should be released in our books. I felt that I was controlled for so many years and I was able to see things only from the government's perspective. Consequently, I have been thinking on how I can learn more about the history of my country and build my own perception.

The opportunity came when I had the popular culture class and we started talking about popular music. During that class, I realized that studying history through music would be a suitable way to discover more about Morocco. Moreover, the second reason that made me choose this thesis is that Morocco is quite popular among international students, from my experience with friends and classmates. However, some did not know, for example, that Morocco is a monarchy, they thought that Marrakesh was the capital of the country since it is the most touristic city and they were not aware that Morocco is an African country. Therefore, popular music can be a good way to make people know more about Morocco.

Furthermore, since I was a child, I have heard people saying that Nass el Ghiwan is a great band and very creative. Nevertheless, when I was young, I was not interested in Nass el Ghiwan but as I took my time to listen to the music, instruments and the lyrics it turned out to be an amazing band that has a noble goal of giving a voice to the poor people. Furthermore, the third reason that made me choose to study this topic is because there is no research done on the audience of Nass el Ghiwan that is why I intend to fill that gap. Therefore, this thesis can create curiosity in order to conduct more research about the audience of Northern African music in general or Maghreb, Moroccan music specifically.

On the other hand, the first academic motivation that made me chose this topic is the ability of the audience of Nass el Ghiwan to express their engagement, nostalgia, and identity through the concepts such as identity, cultural citizenship and popular culture into the songs of Nass el Ghiwan. The second academic motivation that made me choose this topic is that

through the usage of these concepts, one can discover the lifestyle of Moroccans in the 1970s and their level of engagement to Nass el Ghiwan specifically; thus, their identity and the social and political situation of the country. These personal and academic reasons made me passionate to explore this topic for my thesis. I will focus on Nass el Ghiwan in the 1970s who was, if not, the most popular and influential band in Morocco. In fact, a career of forty years, Nass el Ghiwan recorded 80 songs and 25 albums among which five of them were awarded with gold disc (BestEverAlbums, no date). Also, the members of Nass el Ghiwan were decorated by the French Minister of Culture and Communication, Frédéric Mitterrand, (magazine, L.P, no date) with *Chevaliers des Arts et des Lettres*. This order is intended to reward people who have distinguished themselves by either their creations in the artistic or literary field or by the contribution they have made to the influence the arts in France or in the world (Gouv.fr, 2020). This Moroccan band remains widely known in northern Africa and elsewhere, they even managed to fill the hall of Olympia in Paris (Takadoum, 2012)

Nass el Ghiwan was also described by, the movie director, Martin Scorsese as the "Rolling Stones of Africa" with their music they managed to cross the borders of Morocco and the Maghreb to reach the world. Indeed, one of their songs was used by Scorsese for the soundtrack of his film "The Last Temptation of Christ". Moreover, Martin Scorsese decided to have their cult film "Transes" of 1981 rehabilitated. The "Rolling Stones of Africa" also inspired music stars like Jimmy Hendrix, Bob Marley, the Rolling Stones, Robert Plant and many others (Takadoum, 2012).

Furthermore, Nass el Ghiwan got inspired from the rich and varied Moroccan repertoire such as the *Malhum*, *El Aita*, *Hassani 'Sahara'*, *Gnawa* music, and *Aisawa*. The variety of rhythms of this band can be explained because of the reason that they originally came from different regions of Morocco. Nevertheless, all the members of the group were all living in the same neighbourhood in Casablanca, the biggest city in Morocco, in a poor area called *Hay Mohammadi* (Simour, 2016:129). Through their songs, Nass el Ghiwan were successful in mixing different genres, styles, and instruments. In their songs we can hear some *Malhun*, which is known for using oral and folkloric poetry, and listened to during important religious days. *Malhun*, is inspired from an Andalusian Moorish music (Takadoum, 2012). *Malhun* is still very popular in Morocco particularly in religious celebrations, for example, during Ramadan (Simour, 2016:129). Moreover, Nass el Ghiwan has included *El Aita* that is mostly dominated by women who sings about the heart break and is played with using Moroccan instruments (Bougrine, 2017). *Hassani* music has rich rhythms which consist of a mix of

African and Arab music. *Hassani* music use instruments such as 'wooden drum made of large jars whose crater is covered with a piece of leather well stretched on the borders' (Kapchan, 2007:2). While *Gnawa*, through its night ceremonies, is a healing music for those who are possessed with spirits. Those ceremonial nights come with animal sacrifices, incense and lot of colours. With its 'heavy metal castanets (*qraqab*)' the *hajhuj* that provides bass melodies, the *Gnawa* provides a regular rhythm that provoke *jedba* (trance) (Kapchan, 2007:2). Moreover, *Gnawa* music started to be popular in the world music industry like co-operating with American rock and roll musicians, French artists and Afro-American jazz artists, and at the same time the *Gnawa* musicians participated in international festivals all over the world such as in the United States of America and Europe (Kapchan, 2007:2). The music of *Aisawa* is played to make the audience enter the trance. The *Maalem*, the experts of this music style, sing poems that have religious meaning with synchronized dance for people to enter into trance. Consequently, people can either pass out or lose the control of their body. Therefore, it is believed that these people are possessed by the devil or the demons and that the *Faqih*, a man who is considered to be religious and able to master the demons and let people free of them. Furthermore, Moroccans like either to attend or organize *Aisawa* nights in which the band will sing the whole night to be able to be connected with the divine and get the blessing from God (Kapchan, 2007:13).

Nass el Ghiwan gained their popularity in the country not only because they were able to do an extensive study of Moroccan music, but also because they were able to write expressive lyrics inspired from the oral heritage of Morocco. In fact, Nass el Ghiwan through their songs tried to express the social and political situation of Morocco. The band tried also to express the hardship and struggle of the Moroccan poor social class, which they used to belong to (Simour, 2016:138). Nevertheless, during the 1970s Morocco used to censor any content that could criticize people in power, therefore, the band had to use metaphors, 'allusive images' and symbols not to be sanctioned (Simour, 2016:18).

My aim of this thesis is to study the legendary Moroccan band of Nass el Ghiwan. I want to investigate their audience who are living in Morocco. I want to analyse the reason behind the engagement level that those people have with this Moroccan band. Also, I want to study, among people who experienced the 70s, the reasons that made Nass el Ghiwan unique and remembered after many years. In fact, people nowadays are being nostalgic because they miss to hear some good Moroccan music that holds a lot of meaning and creativity. Therefore, my research questions will be:

- How do Moroccans in their 50s and 60s engage with the music of Nass el Ghiwan?

- What do their songs make them remember about the 70s?

- What kind of identities and sense of collectivity is articulated by the Moroccan audience who listened to Nass el Ghiwan?

Context

Literature and popular cultural products in Post-colonial in Morocco

Post-colonial Moroccan literature was linked to the construction of Moroccan identity and nationalism. According to Graiouid (2008:147) who mentioned the study of Khatib about the Maghreb literature during the French colonial ruling, was able to identify three trends in the production of literature before the second World War which is defined as modernist, reformist and Arabization trend (Graiouid,2008:147). This genre evolved to the extend to become the most important genre of post-colonial literature in Morocco (Graiouid, 2008:147). The modernist movement was oriented more into the style of journalistic writing especially the short story format that was the most dominant genre in the Arab world. This genre evolved to the extent to become the most important genre of post-colonial literature in Morocco. Therefore, short story genre started to be mediated by all sort of the media which made it accessible to a wider audience. Since this genre was developed during the post-colonial period, the short story in Moroccan dialect was associated with the issues related to the independence and to building the national culture. Indeed, some of the popular themes at that time was about social issues such as poverty. 23 short stories were released, from 1947 to 1970, which means one collection per year (Graiouid, 2008:147).

Post-colonial history in Morocco

After Morocco gained its independence from the French and Spanish colonial due to people who sacrificed their life and family. Nevertheless, these people were neither awarded nor recognized for their efforts and contribution. On the contrary, the Moroccan bourgeoisie who gained more power and earned key job positions in the society were able to determine the Moroccan culture; which lead to an under representation of the poor Moroccans who remained only as a voice (Moukhlis,2008: 352) and the creation of a society made of hierarchical layers was constructed (Taylor,2004:16).

The focal point of King Mohammad V after Morocco gained its independence was to restore the sovereignty and the autonomy of the kingdom. Therefore, six years after the

independence of Morocco, the constitution had been re-written three times, 1970, 1972, 1992 and 1996 to be able to create law and regulations that would give an absolute power to the kingdom and make it a holly establishment beyond questioning and critics (Moukhlis, 2008: 352). In fact, the hierarchical layers were very present among the poor social class and the leaders, who are in managerial positions and made sure to maintain these hierarchal layers. The people in power took a range of strategic decisions to increase the expenses and build schools, especially in rural areas, so the poor social class especially the children would drop out from school in an early age to help their parents and because they had to walk long distances in unsafe conditions. As a result, the poor got poorer and the rich got richer (Moukhlis, 2008: 352)

 Consequently, a social protest was organized by the oppositions, students and political parties who belong to the left institutions. For example, *Li-nakhduma al-shaab* (let's serve the people), 23 March movement, and *Ila al-amam* (Let's move forward). They were challenging the legitimacy of the monarchy and required from the government to have a democratic country that offers equal opportunities (Moukhlis, 2008: 352). As a result, these organisations were considered a threat to the monarchy; therefore, they were charged of causing a threat to the national security and being part of 'outlawed institutions. Thereby, they were arrested, persecuted, tortured for long years or even decades (Moukhlis, 2008: 352).

So, the monarchy had to create the excuse of 'sacred institutions' to be beyond the criticism and being challenged regarding their private interest and about delicate subjects (Moukhlis, 2008: 352). As a result, Moroccans could go to jail for questioning or challenging the legitimacy of the fairness of *Shari'a*, Islamic law (Moukhlis, 2008: 352). The establishment of these new regulations gave the right and power to the monarchy the usage of repressive ways such as torture, killing and jailing people for long years; which was the case for the political opponents of the monarchy. For example, the *Union Socialiste des Forces Populaires- Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP)* is a Moroccan political party that was created in 1975 and which claims to be socialist (JeuneAfrique.com, no date). The case was also for the *Istiqlal* which is the very first Moroccan political party, founded in 1944 with the aim to obtain the Independence of Morocco and thus to replace the French colonial protectorate by a constitutional monarchy. Therefore, these political parties, *USFP* and *Istiqlal*, were looked upon as powerful national-liberation parties (Moukhlis, 2008: 352). Sadly, the dream and the wish for Moroccans to have a better future started to fade away, so

they stopped to envision better life conditions and dying did not matter for them anymore (Moukhlis, 2008: 352).

Structure of the thesis

To answer the research questions, I will structure my thesis into three main sections. Right after the introduction and the context, Part 1 will be the literature review, where I will discuss academically the studies done in cultural identity, music, class, citizenship, popular culture, engagement, and nostalgia. In Part 2, a reflective section of methodology and methods will be elaborated where this thesis is a qualitative research that uses semi structured interviews. In the analysis section, Part 3, I will develop seven interrelated areas of interests that will help exploring how people in Morocco, who experienced the 70s, engage with the music of Nass el Ghiwan in both the past and the present. Also, I will examine what kind of memories the audience of Nass el Ghiwan remember when listening to this band. Moreover, I will explore how nostalgia is expressed by the interviewed audience and how the sense of collectively is articulated by the audience of this Moroccan band. The thesis will end with a conclusion.

Part 1: Literature Review

Identity, Music, Class

According to Frith (Hall & Gay, 199:110), 'when one is talking about identity, it means talking about an experience or a manner of dealing or living with a specific type of experience'. Indeed, 'the experience of identity describes a social process, a form of interaction, and an aesthetic process'; and according to Stewart Hall (Hall & Gay,1996:109) 'the aesthetic defines the quality of experience but not the quality of an object.; and to experiment, not the world, but ourselves in a diverse way'. However, Frith (Hall &Gay,1996:110) had a different definition of the aesthetic and he states, 'it is the process of deciding, playing and hearing what sounds right; people express themselves, their own sense of rightness and lose themselves, in an act of participation.'

The same idea is also shared by Hall (1996:5) who argued that the word 'identity' is the meeting point between the practises and the discourses. Thereby, 'identification is built on common origins or shared traits with a group of people or a person' (Hall & Gay, 1996:5). He continued by saying that 'identity focuses on a particular kind of experience or specific manner of dealing with a particular experience' (Hall & Gay, 1996:5). According to Hall (Hall & Gay, 1996:5) 'homogeneity and unity are also important part of identity while shared and common pleasure might stand for a collective sense of class'.

Frith demonstrated good music is able to express common experiences and identity. Identity is a process of experiment that can be better understood as music (Hall & Gay, 1996:109). Frith also argued that music, like identity, is a matter of aesthetics and ethics as well as of story and performance (Hall & Gay, 1996:109). It describes 'the mind in the body and the body in the mind' and 'the social in the individual and the individual in the social'. Indeed, music is the key to identity since it gives a strong sense of both the other and the self (Hall & Gay, 1996:109). Frith continued by saying 'music is a metaphor for identity' that has more personal messages (Hall & Gay, 1996:109). Therefore, music is not meant to be a widespread language, but rather to target a more specific audience in which the music makes them experience how the ideal could be. In fact, music production is not meant to express ideas but is a way to live them (Hall & Gay, 1996:109). So, listening and making music can be considered a social movement because music is not inspired from fantasy or derived from dreams but from how the reality is expected (Hall & Gay, 1996:123). Thus, the focus will not be on how a performance or a song reveal or reflect the nation. Instead, how it is constructed,

produced or created as a musical and aesthetic experience that we can understand, taking collective and subjective identity.

Moreover, this thesis will discuss identity from the perspective of the lived experiences of the poor people. I will explore the way this social class identifies itself with Nass el Ghiwan's music in Morocco in the ways in which they reflect on injustice, inequality, poverty and repression. I will also pay attention to what other kinds of identifications they articulate (e.g. regional identity, national Moroccan identity, and collective Maghreb identity). So, this project will look at how people engage with the songs of Nass el Ghiwan and how they experienced this engagement. Additionally, this thesis will study the reasons that made this audience more engaged with Nass el Ghiwan rather than other bands that existed in the 70s. Furthermore, this project will discuss how the poor social class was interacting and experiencing their socio-political situation and the sense of rightness and ethics of Nass el Ghiwan in the 70s. In addition, this research will argue, as mentioned by Frith, that music is matter of story and performance (Hall & Gay, 1996:109). In fact, Nass el Ghiwan was able to combine successfully meaningful lyrics with strong performance when using traditional Moroccan instruments. Nass el Ghiwan managed to produce good music that had the ability to express the common experiences, such as being neglected and repressed, between the members of the band and the poor social class. Lyrics of their songs express the pain of the poor people and make them empowered and to create a connection between them and the audience but not to reach fame in order to serve their own personal interest (Simour,2016:129).

Moreover, the language used by Nass el Ghiwan made the audience identify with their lyrics. Indeed, Nass el Ghiwan had the ability, thorough their lyrics about poverty and social injustice, to create a common identity, origins and traits that have led to creating a sense of unity and homogeneity among their audience (Simour, 2016:120). Therefore, this thesis will approach identity from the angle of sharing common pleasure that would lead to collective sense of class thus having a particular manner of dealing with a specific experience.

This research will develop how the band of Nass el Ghiwan is an excellent example of popular music based on music and identity. In fact, this case is showing that identity is a social and aesthetic process in the way Nass el Ghiwan could create the experience of listening to them as a high-quality experience since people could identify with their lyrics. The audience felt the band was able to put their pain into words and to speak out loud what

they were thinking deep down. Thus, Nass el Ghiwan could create interaction between them and the audience because the band managed to sing about what was right and true to Moroccans during the 1970s. Therefore, while taking into consideration the social and political situation of Morocco, Nass el Ghiwan was considered as a social movement since their music was inspired of the reality and its expectations.

Moreover, the thesis will examine listening and making music of Nass el Ghiwan as social movement since their songs were inspired from the reality and the life of poor people in Morocco that they couldn't protest due to the consequences that can take form of torture, jail or even making disappear forever. Therefore, through the audience perspective and experience with Nass el Ghiwan, this project will challenge Frith points when he wrote that the focus should not be on what a song can reveal or reflect about a nation. In fact, this thesis will put the focus on what the songs of Nass el Ghiwan can reveal and reflect about Morocco in terms of lifestyle, socio- political situation of the country and its people. Nevertheless, I will agree with Frith's point that music is not meant to be a widespread language, but rather to target a more specific audience. Indeed, Nass el Ghiwan will be looked upon as a band that used a specific language meant for targeting an audience that was the repressed and the poor social class who were able to understand the old Moroccan sayings. Nonetheless, I will also give room to see if there are other kinds of overarching, collective identities in addition to the poor social class identity.

Cultural citizenship and popular culture

Cultural citizenship as defined by Stevenson (2003:4) is the ability to take responsibility for the right of people without having a technocratic agenda and media and political interest. Also, it represents how we connect ourselves to the community, which let us define ourselves and others. Cultural citizenship means also to have or develop this feeling of belonging that can take different forms, such as appreciative and critical, or maybe a non-interest form; indeed, 'sharing the same pleasures may refer to sharing a sense of class' (Hermes, 2005:155). This concept is also about the power dynamic. Indeed, Stevenson (2003:4) in cultural citizenship defines power as 'the capacity and ability to question the common code and understanding'. Hermes (2005) believes that the nations are still ruled and controlled by repressive regulations and laws, and if anyone is trying to challenge the system, he or she will be perceived as a potential threat. Indeed, it is considered to be deviant in the act of trying to challenge the community by being (Hermes, 2005).

Nevertheless, freedom in cultural citizenship strongly believes, according to Taylor (2004:22), has to be secured equally to all citizens, and here the word equally can vary in terms of meanings, but it should be in a form of hierarchical rejection. However, political authority was able to establish this system only because it was consented by people. Indeed, the perfect scenario is to build a reciprocal benefit that will be a guide to people who wish to instore stability and peace (Taylor, 2004:71).

This thesis will explore the concept of cultural citizenship in the ways in which the audience reflect on their rights, the poverty they have gone through, whether they articulate criticism of the hierarchy. Also, this project will discuss how this Moroccan band could create a sense of community among the poor social class who defines themselves as the repressed class who is suffering from the injustice and inequality. Moreover, cultural citizenship will be looked as being able to develop the sense of belonging that can take different forms, from being disinterested to appreciate. Indeed, this thesis will tackle how Nass el Ghiwan could create among people an impression of being virtually connected thus having a feeling of being one community that is going through the same struggle in silence. Therefore, I have interviewed people who belong to the poor social class and suffer from injustice.

Besides, the concept of power will be also examined in the way Nass el Ghiwan had the ability and the capacity to challenge the common Moroccan post-colonial understanding and codes that were imposed in the 1970s. So, I will investigate the ways that Nass el Ghiwan deployed in order to break the codes and the common understanding set by the monarchy while keeping in mind that this brave step can have heavy consequences. Therefore, this band had to find a technic that would enable them to not lose their sense of belonging to the poor and repressed social class while being giving the impression of agreeing to the laws set by the monarchy.

Furthermore, this paper will analyse the concept of freedom in cultural citizenship. Through the band of Nass el Ghiwan I explore the ways in which Moroccan reflect on poverty, injustice and on the hierarchical system. Nevertheless, this does not mean that I will be doing a historical research, but rather an audience research by asking the audience about their memories and engagement of nostalgia. I will explore how people in their 50s and 60s reflect about the socio-political situation in the 1970s.

Popular culture can be considered as a way of creating a collective aspect of common sense, awareness, and identity (Hermes, 2005:155). In fact, 'popular texts' give people the

opportunity to connect and develop communities and it does so because 'they are of use to us (Hermes, 2005:155). It also let people reflect on their life by giving them access to compatible stories. However, 'like any work that have no creativity will result in having an empty meaning or significance' (Hermes, 2005:155).

Besides, popular music is perceived as documentation and artistic biography of the interpreter or the 'star'. The 'star phenomenon' is suggesting that celebrities do not operate only politically but also ideologically and this without representing the power (Hermes, 2005: 28). According to Hermes (2005:136), popular music is important for the representation of people and to their reflection. This representation can take a form of oral culture which is considered to be an older from of popular culture that many would associate with illiteracy. According to Hermes (2005:136), 'literacy is not the contrary of orality, both of them imply a storytelling and a narrative which are required for the project'. Besides, 'oral culture, when compared to written culture, has a stronger ability to create sense of belonging and community' (Hermes, 2005:136). Finally, Hermes (2005:56) argues that 'in the organisation of social life, popular culture does not have a material impact, but it can rather positively contribute to citizenship'.

This thesis will be building on the popular culture point by Hermes (2005:136) that consist in the ability of creating a common identity, spreading awareness and connecting communities. Therefore, the focus will be when Nass el Ghiwan was successful of making people feel that 'they are of use to us' by using the oral culture, old Moroccans sayings and metaphors that only poor people can understand and relate to their lyrics (Hermes,2005:136). Also, this thesis will look at how Nass el Ghiwan made the poor Moroccans reflect on the social and political situation of the country in the 1970s. So, a special attention will be paid at when Nass el Ghiwan included the oral culture as an old form of popular culture. However, this thesis will challenge the idea that oral culture is linked to the illiteracy but will agree with the point of Hermes (2005:136) who wrote that 'literacy is not the contrary of orality, both of them imply a storytelling and narrative'. Indeed, this project will question if the success of Nass el Ghiwan was also linked to the usage of oral culture to their songs because people were illiterate or because it was the language that they felt close to it as they used it frequently in their everyday life since the oral culture was very present in Morocco long time ago. Therefore, this project will be building another point that I agree with, mentioned by Hermes (2005:136), who says that 'oral culture, when compared to written culture, has a stronger ability to create sense of belonging and community'. So, I will explore if there is a

possible link between the success of Nass el Ghiwan and their usage of the oral culture inspired from the Moroccan heritage.

Besides, this research will also examine the point brought up by Hermes (2005) when she wrote that like any work that have no creativity will result in having an empty meaning or significance. Therefore, the emphasis will be on when Nass el Ghiwan wrote songs in which they shared in a creative way their common struggles through stories and also through the usage of traditional Moroccan instruments that Moroccans had almost forgot their existence of as they were not often used. In fact, each member of Nass el Ghiwan mastered an instrument that represent different regions of Morocco, which were all included in their songs.

Furthermore, the thesis will explore, after conducting the interviews, the ability of Nass el Ghiwan to create a sense of community between Moroccans and other Maghreb countries such as Algeria; which the government had tensions and issues with and that lead to closed between them (Simour, 2016:22). I will ask my interviewees whether they feel connected to the other Maghreb countries, in terms of similar historical developments and speaking the same language. As a result, this thesis will examine the fact that popular culture goes beyond the nation state, not only Morocco but also people in the Maghreb where they share a common language and colonial history. Thus, this thesis will study the capacity of Nass el Ghiwan to make people of these countries to go beyond political tension and interest and be united through the songs of this band. Moreover, this project will tackle another of Hermes (2005) points which argues that popular culture doesn't have a material impact, but it can rather positively contribute to citizenship. Hence, the emphasis will be on non-monetary contribution of Nass el Ghiwan to the Moroccan scene and industry and their impact on the poor social class who was repressed and suffering in silence.

Besides, this thesis will discuss popular music as documentation and artistic biography since Nass el Ghiwan was writing the lyrics of their songs about the situation of Morocco in the 70s. So, anyone who will listen to their songs nowadays will know the socio-political situation of the poor social class in Morocco after getting its independence in 1956.

Engagement

Within academia, the term engagement has different interpretation which makes it deserving to 'unpack' in order to understand it fully thus appreciate more of the 'complexity' and the 'subtleties' this concept brings in it, like the 'sociocultural' and the economic relations that is

created by both the audience and producer. The strategic decision to mix feelings with money is not an old notion. For instance, popular culture and history of sports show us the old technic of creating a connection between emotions and money (Hill, 2017:6).

According to Jane Roscoe (Hill et al., 2017:4) who is, the CEO and director of the London Film School, said that the engagement is the relationship between the person and the brand and the individuals, a dialogue with participants and audiences who want to connect with the values of a network. Nevertheless, the engagement can take different forms, but mainly the form 'emotional connection'. For instance, SBS, a multilingual and multicultural Australian broadcaster of sport, documentary, news and entertainment… SBS represents multiculturalism broadcaster that is devoted to support beliefs of 'diversity' and 'social inclusion' (Hill et al., 2017:4). People nowadays want a brand to show their personal values because they will be engaged only with content or a brand that will share the same values as theirs. In fact, bands will be relevant if they are able to come up with the common concerns in an emotional way (Hill et al., 2017:4).

Besides, Hill(2007:110) noted that 'all modes of engagement involve some listening, reflecting, witnessing or perceiving', and she continued by pointing out what Taylor (2004:23) has written in his book Modern Social Imaginaries by saying that 'ordinary people would be able to imagine what's happening around them through legends, stories and images but not through theories'. Besides, in her article, Reality TV Engagement: Producer and Audience Relations for Reality Talent Shows, Hill (2017:2-6) referred to the work of John Corner who gave an analytical explanation of engagement and was able to open up this concept so people will be aware that engagement can change in terms of intensity. In fact, Corner explains that this concept can shift in intensity level from 'intermittent and casual 'while 'other time, long lasting to enduring' (Hill,2017:2-6). Corner extended the study of engagement into making it as steps (Hill, 2017:2-6). He indeed argues that the level of intensity of engagement changes and require by the audience a 'cognitive and affective work' (Hill, 2017:2-6). The level of engagement enables detecting the difference between the loyal fans, 'casual viewers', and the 'occasional users' for a product for instance (Hill, 2017:2-6). Corner demonstrates also that the highest level of engagement implies 'affective work and sustained cognitive' that is linked to cultural experience construction, feelings, subjectivity, and anything lived in the instant moment which Kathleen Stewart names it as 'ordinary affects' (Hill,2017:2-6). Therefore, Stewart is asking the researchers to pay more attention to

the effective side of the everyday life in which the intensity and the ordinariness are shared experienced (Hill, 2017:2-6).

On the other hand, cognitive work implies more objective engagement modes (Hill, 2017:6). This engagement mode is related to 'critical appreciation', style, storytelling, knowledge about genre and style (Hill, 2017:2). In her former reality television research, Hill (2017:2) argues that 'critical engagement' may require more, from the audience and the producers, focus on knowledge about genre, questioning how much is ethical, the way the audience is handled and how much the series declare the truth. Nevertheless, the series are not limited to the entertainment job but it also offers live event to their participants and fans that can be considered as unforgettable 'cultural experience' (Hill, 2017:2).

Besides, engagement is beyond 'commercial transaction', it is the commitment of the producers to create 'creative values' in the process of the culture production (Hill, 2017:2). As the years go, the audience engagement turns into 'long-term relationship' with this show (Hill, 2017:2). To have this type engagement means that this show has to be chosen by the 'performers' 'regular audience' 'live crowd' and fans over other shows (Hill,2017:2). It means also to be committed in terms of money and time in order to vote, watch and attend the show; as a result, the audience has to be disengaged with other brands or any other content due to their 'affective' or emotional commitment with this TV- show (Hill,2017:2)

This thesis will explore the engagement that was between Nass el Ghiwan and its audience and the kind of dialogue that was going on between the band and its audience and what kind of values were connecting them. Moreover, I want to examine the form of engagement of the audience of Nass el Ghiwan and its level that can go from 'intermittent and casual to long lasting to enduring' (Hill, 2017:2-6); which its intensity requires from this audience either 'cognitive or affective work' (Hill, 2017:2-6). Therefore, this thesis will study the kind of commitment that the audience had towards Nass el Ghiwan and what made them feel connected.

This research will tackle the affective work that the poor people engaged with Nass el Ghiwan since this band used strong lyrics that provoked their emotions by either using sound effects such as crying or vocal notes that shows the level of pain. Therefore, this dissertation will study the reason of the cognitive engagement of the poor people towards Nass el Ghiwan and the emotions articulated by the audience when listening to this band.

Besides, the different modes of engagement all includes a sort of witnessing, listening, perceiving or reflecting (Hill et al., 2017). Therefore, this research will be building on all the previous engagement actions introduced by Hill (2017:2-6); so, I will explore the audience from the listening perspective mentioned by Hill (2017:2-6). Indeed, the audience will be examined as being engaged in listening to the songs of Nass el Ghiwan through different medium such as the cassettes, radio stations or television. The Moroccans would also be studied as being engaged in perceiving the social injustice that the country installed and the evolution of Nass el Ghiwan and the social changes that they dared to instore and talk about it loudly (Simour, 2016:110). Indeed, poor people could see the evolution and the improvement of the political situation in Morocco when the band started (Simour, 2016:110). For instance, after realising some songs in which they were challenging the monarchy, the poor people might have had the feeling that someone is finally talking about the social issues and because of this, they were also able to talk publicly about the socio and political situation of Morocco without being afraid to go to jail, to be tortured or killed (Simour, 2016:110). So, this thesis will also discuss how this audience could reflect either by themselves or with their family or friends about the social and political situation of Morocco in the 70s and even compare it to the current situation (Simour, 2016:110). Furthermore, as inspired from Hill (2017) work, Nass el Ghiwan will be looked as privileging the legends, stories and images rather than theories.

In this thesis, the audience of Nass el Ghiwan will be studied as being affectively engaged with their songs which implies according to Corner (Hill, 2017:6) an engagement related to emotions, subjectivity, and the construction of the cultural experience. Indeed, in their lyrics, the audience engaged with Nass el Ghiwan emotionally when singing about the pain, for instance, they used words like 'in the name of God, take me away' or 'my heart is in the hands of a blacksmith'. Besides, as recommended by Kathleen Stewart (Hill,2017:6), the thesis will focus on the 'ordinary affects' as according to her it is important for researchers to look at the effective side of the everyday life in which the ordinariness and intensity are commonly experienced. Moreover, the audience will be also studied from cognitive work that implies objective engagement modes. As mentioned by Hill (2017:6) this mode of engagement requires, on the opposite of the affective mode, a 'critical appreciation' and more knowledge. So, the attention will be also paid for the audience who is more knowledgeable about music especially the popular Moroccan music. However, the thesis will only explore the audience part of this type of engagement, since this research is audience based, which

means that the producer's part that Hill wrote about will be explored from the eyes of the audience by asking questions related to significance of their favourite songs what made it unique and different from the other existing bands back at that time. Therefore, the thesis will be focusing on the audience knowledge regarding the Moroccan popular music. Also, the thesis will tackle the opinion of the audience regarding how ethical Nass el Ghiwan is. The purpose is to explore if this band wanted to talk about the issues and the poor social class in Morocco in order to use their notoriety to gain money and power; thus, having a hidden agenda. This can be explained as an establishment of a strategic decision in mixing the emotions and feelings with money as it was done long time ago in the history and popular culture of sports (Hill, 2017:6). Lastly, I will use Corner's (Hill, 2017:6) point to examine the level of engagement of the audience of Nass el Ghiwan that can vary from the occasional to the loyal fans. Corner explains that this concept can shift in intensity level from 'intermittent and casual 'while 'other time, long lasting to enduring' (Hill,2017:2). This levels of engagement would enable me to detecte the difference between the loyal fans, 'casual viewers', and the 'occasional users' for a product for instance (Hill, 2017:6).

Nostalgia

Nostalgia is a Greek word composed of nostos (return) and aglos (pain). Throughout its intellectual history, the word nostalgia had negative connotation, but recent empirical and theoretical work discovered its positive meaning. So, nostalgia provokes a positive emotion and 'psychological comfort' when remembering past events. Ordinary people consider nostalgia as a positive feeling oriented towards the past. For example, someone is thinking about a memory that happened in the past. Usually, these memories are linked to the childhood, friendship or any strong relationship. Additionally, people miss a specific period of time that can make them wish to go back to these days. Therefore, people have mixed feelings from being emotional to happy when thinking about the past (Zhou et al., 2012:678).

Besides, nostalgia is described as a complex feeling that triggers a positive emotion and fight against loneliness and sorrow. According to recent research, music can trigger the feeling of nostalgia depending on the type of relationship between the song and the person (Zhou et al., 2012:679). In fact, the relationship between a person and a song can be articulated into the degree in which the person is used and familiar to the song and what it represents for him or her in terms of memories. Indeed, it is believed that the source of nostalgia is due to the music association formed by people between a specific song and the events that took place in

the past; so, the experience that someone has while listening to music depends on how it makes them feel (Zhou et al., 2012:679). Nevertheless, this doesn't exclude the possibility that music can create feeling of nostalgia when it carries particular characteristics (Zhou et al., 2012:679). Furthermore, the contextual level helps constructing the reason behind one person experiencing different degrees of nostalgia when he or she is listening to different songs (Zhou et al., 2012:679).

In this thesis, nostalgia will be addressed as a feeling triggered when the audience of Nass el Ghiwan listens to them nowadays. This feeling will be explored in its both positive and negative connotation. For example, when this audience listens to the song of Nass el Ghiwan, people either feel happy or sad according to the memories associated with the song. So, this dissertation will explore also the type of memories brought up to the surface when listening to the songs of Nass el Ghiwan. Therefore, for some cases, people might listen to *Siniya*, that literally means a tray that Moroccans use to serve the tea in a tea pot ' barad ' and cups, because it reminds them of their childhood or friendship. For others, people may listen to, for instance, to *Mahmuma* that means pain and sufferance because it reminds them of specific events that happened in the past. Consequently, this project will question how all these memories are linked to identity: what kinds of identities (e.g. cultural, class, national, political) the audience reflect upon when they listen to Nass el Ghiwan? What kinds of memories are narrated by the audiences when they listen to their songs?

Furthermore, the context under which the band, Nass el Ghiwan, started and the socio-political situation of Morocco during the 1970s will also examined as it plays an important role to situate the memory triggered in order to know more about the living conditions, and the circumstances that made the poor people listen to the music of Nass el Ghiwan. In addition, this thesis will examine the reasons that made people to still listen to this Moroccan band nowadays and what made them think and still identify with them. Moreover, nostalgia will be examined as the type of relationship between a person and a song, its characteristics, and its representation.

Part 2: Methodology

This section will address the methods used to collect and analyse the data by using the qualitative approach. Then it will be concluded by a reflection over the methodology approach.

Methodological approach

Seale et al (2004:5) have mentioned that the social researchers should be concentrated on the everyday practise to be able to point out the impact of the 'thoughts, feelings, and identities' that 'brought to bear on our understandings of who and what we are, both in relation to what we apparently are within and to what we believe we share as members of particular situations'. So, it is important to study, in a critical way, the social context that links the audiences since it cannot be 'taken for granted' (Burr, 1995:3).

To reach this, I have to contextualize the research as it is an important process. Flyvbjerg (2001:72) proposes that social sciences can create a 'nuanced view of reality' through case studies, as these can provide 'concrete, context-dependent knowledge'. So, the case study of the audience of Nass el Ghiwan is created in this work. In 1970s, Nass el Ghiwan have talked about politics, social and economic struggles of the poor people that turned to be a reason for its audience to engage with them and be able to talk about their issues highlighted by Nass el Ghiwan (Simour,2016:134).

Since I am the one doing the interpretation in this research, I am aware that my interpretation is socially constructed. Therefore, rather than perceiving this thesis as a means to prove or demonstrate something, I would instead take it as a process of learning. As mentioned by Flyvbjerg (2001:73), Eysenck said:

> *'Sometimes we simply have to keep our eyes open and look carefully at individual cases— not in the hope of proving anything, but rather in the hope of learning something!''*

This thesis research is based on social constructivism that examines 'the aspects that we take for granted' (Burr, 1995:3). Through this thesis, I will discover more about the individuals who were and still are engaging with Nass el Ghiwan. As it has been mentioned previously, this thesis is concerned about the personal experiences, values and opinions. Therefore, qualitative research method is necessary in order to create a strong empirical material and to get rich data from interviewees.

By adopting the qualitative method, this thesis will be based on what Hermes (2012:198) considers to be the purpose of audience studies 'to give voice to groups of audience members.' So, this project is interested in looking at people as individuals who 'constructed their perspective through the meaning of their livings' (Jones, 2004:257). Qualitative research is vital to this thesis because Nass el Ghiwan has for a long time been studied only from the perspective of the experts but never from the perspective of their audience. Therefore, the semi structured interview is a crucial method for collecting data because it allows the interviewees the chance to give detailed opinions about their thoughts and feelings (Hill, 2012:15).

An audience research can be conducted in order to create a link and to explore certain social and cultural individual practises that can be connected with a trend or practises. According to 'pragmatism methodological routines' this can be defined as 'multi-dimensional approach to media audiences' (Hill, 2012:7). 'A pragmatic methodology' gives the ability to conduct different types of qualitative interviews. It includes long or short forms of interviews that can take place either face to face, indoors, outdoors, or at a distance (Hill, 2012:7). For the purpose of this thesis, the semi structured interviews were conducted face to face; however, due to the last minute changes caused by the pandemic Coronavirus/COVID-19, some of the interviews were conducted at a distance via WhatsApp.

Design, piloting, sampling and conducting of the interviews

The selection of the interviewees was based on their social class, age, whether they have experienced the 1970s in Morocco, and if they are an audience of Nass el Ghiwan. Since I belong to a different generation, I have asked my parents to recommend some of their friends with whom I can get in touch with in order to conduct an interview. I have emphasised to my parents that their friends have to belong to a poor social class; which means that the salary is below the median wage in Morocco. Also, I made sure that they were and still listen to Nass el Ghiwan and they have to be at least in their 50s.

So, after the selection process and getting in touch with my interviewees to set a time and date for the interview, I have conducted one pilot interview in the beginning of March in Morocco, Marrakesh. This pilot interview enabled me to put into test the interview guide and check if the questions need to be adjusted or not. Teijlingen & Hundley's (2001:102) testified that the primary role of a pilot interview is to know if the interview guide will fail or not. So, after conducting the pilot interview, I have decided to use the same interview guide and not

change it since it worked well (shown in appendix 2). Even though I had occasionally to redirect the conversation since the interviewee was going off topic sometimes.

As part of the ethics and the integrity of the researcher, I have handed consent forms (shown in the appendix 1), in both English and Arabic, before starting the face to face interviews. However, since some interviews were conducted over the phone, I have sent them the consent form via email; which they have printed, signed and returned to me. I also took my time to explain all their rights; which means keeping their anonymity and having the right to refuse to answer any question that sounds inappropriate for them.

The interview guide was designed to include specific themes and topics rather than a long list of questions, so the interviewee and the interviewer can interact with each other; thus, create flexibility in the interview (Hill, 2012:7). This thesis uses semi-structured interviews, which means that the flow of the questions did not strictly followed the interview guideline. So, the order of the questions depended on the interview's answers. According to Seal (2012:205), semi- structured interviews give an opportunity and more room to the interviewee to answer to the questions in their way; which results in richer data and insights (Edward, 2013:3). During the interview I also got inspired from Seale (2012:218) who advice that both researcher and informants have to be 'undisturbed' and 'relaxed'. Therefore, I have let my interviewees to pick the right time for them to conduct the interview, in which they will be free for one hour so I can get all their attention; in order to not influence negatively the quality of the interview.

According to the method mentioned by Hill (2012:8), I have included the usage of sound in the interview as it can generate rich resources to understand 'emotions, memories and the affect'. In fact, 'sound can be a mnemonic device in an interview ' to collect the emotions and the feelings (Hill, 2012:8). In fact, I made my interviewees listen to one of their favourite songs that they have mentioned and asked them about their feeling and memories and affect that this specific song trigger in them. Indeed, the usage of sound in an interview can be a productive resource for understanding the affect, emotion, and memory of the interviewee. Sound can be a mnemonic device in an interview for recollection of feelings and emotions in a particular drama and viewing experience (Hill, 2012:8).

All the interviewees are born in the 50s or in the 60s who represent by definitions to a poor social class as their occupation and lifestyle worked as an indicator for their social belonging. So, before taking off to Marrakech, I scheduled the interviews via WhatsApp, and the face to

face interviews took place in Marrakesh. It was decided to have these interviews in my parent's place to avoid crowded places such as cafes that could affect the quality of the audio and the focus of the interviewees. Therefore, the empirical material was extracted from two different locations: virtually and physically. Due to time constraint and last minute changes due to the emergence of the Coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic in Morocco, a couple of interviews that were scheduled in advance were cancelled and replaced with a phone call. For the rest of the interviews, they were in my parent's place in Marrakesh and in the famous square known as *Jamaa el Fn*a where people are working in *Halka*, a group of individuals entertaining the visitors by either telling stories or singings old Moroccan and traditional songs. Since this square is a usually crowded, the interviewees were scheduled before the shows starts at 19h. So, the interviews that took place started at 16h in a quite area in *Jamaa el Fna*.

Name of Interviewees	City	Age (years old)	Sex	Occupation	Date of Interview
Chama	Marrakesh	50s	female	Representative of Nass el Ghiwan association	10 March
Rita	Marrakesh	60s	female	Retired technician	10 March
Zineb	Marrakesh	50s	female	Retired hairdresser	10 March
Badr	Marrakesh	60s	Male	Retired assistant	11 March
Walid	Marrakesh	60s	Male	Retired librarian	12 March
Wissal	Marrakesh	60s	female	Housewife	11 March
Amine	Marrakesh	60s	Male	Gnawa master	9March
Ahmed	Marrakesh	50s	Male	singer	9 March
Tilila	Marrakesh	60s	female	Housewife	12 March
Salma	Marrakesh	50s	female	Housewife	7March
Radia	Marrakesh	60s	female	Housewife	7March

Only Moroccans living either in Morocco or abroad will be interviewed since they have to be able to speak the Moroccan dialect, *Darija*, and understand the context under which Nass el Ghiwan started; and most importantly they have to be born in either the 50s or 60s in order have experienced the time when Nass el Ghiwan started and were famous. Also, the reason behind choosing this specific age category is because they will be able to understand the language and the old Moroccan sayings that Nass el Ghiwan used a lot in their songs. In fact, people coming from different generations such as the 80s or 90s won't be able to understand the meaning of these proverbs and what they are standing for and especially they won't be able to create a correlation between the hidden meaning of the proverbs and what the band was trying to express.

Overall, 11 interviews were conducted in which 6 via phone and 5 face-to-face. One of them was a pilot in order to test the questions and how the interviewee might react to them. Also, conducting a pilot interview helped as a practise on the questions that were translated in *Darija* and to check if we need to include more questions or to delete some of them or to change the order of these questions so there could be a smoother interview with rich information.

Analysing data

The analysis was conducted according to the guidance and advice of Bazely (2013:101) 'read, reflect, and connect' that permitted and helped to build 'holistic understanding 'of the people and the topic studied. So, after I collected the data and information from the interviewees in a form of audio recordings, the audio had to be converted into 'write-ups', a transcript (see the appendix 3) (Miles et al., 2014:71). All the interviews were transcribed in my mother tongue, the *Darija;* except one interview that was translated in English (shown in appendix 3). Transcribing the interviews is a crucial step for the analysis part; as it helped me to get a full and a clear picture of what my interviewees have said. The second step after transcribing is coding which is considered as 'resource provider which helps identifying the data sequences that are linked thematically' (Jensen, 2002:246)'. So, after reading the transcribed interviews a couple times, the coding process starts.

Coding process starts in the first cycle and it helps to sum up the 'segment of data.' (Miles et al., 2014:71). Indeed, coding is a 'heuristic method of discovery' and it helps labelling and creating symbolic meaning to the texts. It is also a description 'to the information compiled

during the study' (Miles et al., 2014:71). Often times, codes are linked to data or a 'chunks' that can vary in form and size (Miles et al., 2014:71).

So, the first step was to determine the code by reading carefully and reflecting on the principle meaning of the content which gave me an ability to interpret 'every datum in the corpus' (Miles et al., 2014:73). During the coding process, I did not only stick to one approach, I mixed different approaches together since they can be 'mixed and matched' when needed. Therefore, I have used descriptive, inVivo coding, and 'emotion coding' (Miles et al., 2014:73-75). I also did the sub coding since it helped me to assign a 'second tag' to the primarily code in order to have richer and detailed entry (Miles et al., 2014:80).

In the second step of coding, Second Cycle or Pattern Codes, I have grouped the summaries into categories and themes (shown in appendix 4) (Miles et al., 2014:86).

Patterns coding was helpful because: (Miles et al., 2014:86):

1) It helps to compress an important number of data thus having a smaller number of analytical units

2) It helps to analyse the data while collecting it

3) It helped to elaborate a 'cognitive map' and 'intergraded schema'

4) It helps to come up with common themes and 'directional process.

So, during the coding process, I used both the deductive and inductive coding. I used inductive coding because 'I was open to what the site has to say' (Miles et al., 2014:81). Indeed, all the codes emerged simultaneously from the data of the interviews such as identity (Miles et al., 2014:81).

I also used the deductive coding because I took some categories from the literature review such as the Corner's concept of engagement. Indeed, I developed the coding list before conducting fieldwork (Miles et al., 2014:81). Therefore, I ended up doing abductive coding because I used both inductive and deductive coding.

When finishing the coding process, that can be quite long and complicated since I had to look at the statements of each interview and link them according to their intended meaning and choose a colour, as a part of the patterns coding, that would be meaningful for all the interviews, the following step was categorizing (Miles et al.,2014:81). Categorizing is gathering all the highlighted words, of a common colour, into one topic; then combine these

categories in order to come up with themes that would summarize the main ideas found in the interviews (Miles et al., 2014:81). Indeed, the themes and categories serve to discover 'potential motives' for the interviewees (Brennen, 2013:22).

Reflection on the methods

In this audience based research, I tried to have a balanced gender mix on my interviewees; so, I could get different opinions and perspectives from men and women. I also wanted to interview connoisseurs of popular music in order to get their critical point of view regarding Nass el Ghiwan. Indeed, I was fortunate when I went to *Jamaa el Fna*, the famous square in Marrakesh, to interview people who worked closely with Nass el Ghiwan, and who know a lot of things about Moroccan popular music. In fact, while some of them were singers of popular songs, others were *Gnawa* masters or even an official representative of Nass el Ghiwan association who met several times Nass el Ghiwan in festivals or at their place in Casablanca.

Before starting the interviews, since it was in the Moroccan dialect, I faced some challenges to translate the interview guide that was in English even though I have practised several times before, especially after conducting a pilot interview. However, I have always managed to make my questions clearly and directly to the point to avoid any misunderstanding.

The other challenging point that I have faced was when I was conducting the interviews; especially when I was asking questions about the memories of the interviewees. When I was asking questions related to their emotions and past events, I felt, especially some male interviewees were trying to control their feelings and hide them to not show that they have suffered in the past. I also felt bad when I was interviewing the women who were very emotional when she recalled the memories from the 1970s. Indeed, two interviewees were about to cry when they were remembering the traveling adventures with their sisters or father. Their voices were tight and trembling; they tried to take poses of few seconds to not burst into tears. This situation was unexpected and made me feel bad because I was responsible for making them remember these kind of memories.

Part 3: Qualitative research on Nass el Ghiwan

This section will examine and reflect on the results of the methods and the methodology used for studying the engagement, nostalgia and identity of the interviewees. Therefore, this section will display the findings of the fieldwork that has been done in Marrakesh.

Audience Engagement

1) *Who is the audience, what kind of people are engaging with Nass el Ghiwan?*

Wissal, housewife in her 50s, testified that *'the members of Nass el Ghiwan created a dialogue with its audience when singing about the common issues that poor people were going through.'*

According to Wissal, the audience of Nass el Ghiwan was engaged with the band in a dialogue concerning their common issues. Both Nass el Ghiwan and its audience share the same socio-economic background which means that they both experienced poverty, misery and hardship in life. So, when this social class listens to the songs of Nass el Ghiwan, it gives them the impression that they enter into a dialogue with the band as a way of engaging with the issues they brought up in their songs. Indeed, as mentioned by the CEO and the director of the London Film School, Jane Roscoe, engagement is the relationship and a dialogue between the brand and the individual (Hill et al., 2017:4).

Also, the members of Nass el Ghiwan were coming from a very poor area known for its socio-political and economic issues such as drugs, criminality and diseases. Chama explained that Nass el Ghiwan positively took advantage of these tough circumstances to write songs about it and make the poor social class feel that there is a group of people that know their pain and can understand what they are going through. Therefore, the audience of Nass el Ghiwan created a relationship based on emotions and dialogues expressed by popular language, by using old Moroccan sayings that only the poor social class are able to understand.

> *Nass el Ghiwan wrote their songs in an emotional way which resulted in creating a stronger interaction with the audience. In fact, Nass el Ghiwan used sound effects such as crying and old Moroccan sayings that only the poor people would be able to understand in order to create a connection and show that there is someone or a band knowing what they are going through; as they went through the same social, political*

and economic experience. (Chama, female, 50s, Representative of Nass el Ghiwan association)

The Moroccan band developed an emotional dialogue with their audience that is based on the common sufferance and pain experienced among the poor social class. Indeed, Nass el Ghiwan was able to develop this emotional relation with the lower class because the members of this band also came from a very poor area in Casablanca called *Hay el Mohammadi,* where the living conditions were tough. According to Zineb, the living conditions in this neighbourhood are very hard:

> *The members of Nass El Ghiwan were living in Hay Mohammadi, a very poor area in Casablanca [...] I have been there, you have to check this area, you will see that 15, 16 people living in a small room and addicted to drugs and suffering from diseases. (Zineb, female, 50s. Retired hairdresser)*

As a result, Nass el Ghiwan, as mentioned by Walid, who is a retired librarian in his 60s, was considered as the revelation and a phenomenon that was able to develop a stronger engagement, which took a form of an emotional dialogue with the poor social class; who were waiting many years for someone to shed the light on the socio-political and economic issues that the they were going through in silence.

Besides, as noted by Annette Hill 'all modes of engagement includes perceiving, listening, witnessing, and reflecting' (2007:60). Through the songs of Nass el Ghiwan, the audience of this band was engaged in reflecting, witnessing, and listening. This audience, mainly poor people, was engaged in reflecting on the meaning of the songs and trying to figure out the hidden meanings, the metaphors and the Moroccan proverbs used by this band. In fact, Tilila, who is a housewife in her 60s, was engaged in reflecting as she likes to listen to the songs of Nass el Ghiwan when she is by herself in order to listen carefully and understand the meaning of the lyrics.

> *I prefer listening to the songs of Nass el Ghiwan when I'm alone so I can listen more carefully and try to understand the words and proverbs that I could not understand.(Tilila, female, 60s, housewife)*

So, to be able to understand the cryptic meaning of some of the songs of Nass el Ghiwan, Chama prefers to be by herself so she can focus and reflect on the lyrics by trying to interpret certain words or proverbs that she did not manage to understand at first.

Moreover, the same interviewee was engaged with the songs of Nass el Ghiwan to reflect on their socio-political and economic situation. According to Radia, who is a housewife in her 60s, poor people, including herself, listen to the songs of the Nass el Ghiwan because it makes them think and reflect about their situation.

> *The poor social class was engaged in reflecting on their socio-economic situation in the country [...] when I listen to the songs of Nass el Ghiwan, I feel a lot of things, I feel that I'm in an endless circle and I pray god to take me away from this world. I do not like people anymore, I do not like the civil society. I just pray god to take me away. (Chama, female, 50s, Representative of Nass el Ghiwan association)*

The songs of Nass el Ghiwan make Chama reflect on what's going on around her, about her situation, and how she is feeling. This informant used strong words to express here deep dissatisfaction with her life and the situation of her country; she even wishes to die because she has a feeling of being in a vicious and endless circle going through the same painful experience over and over again.

Moreover, according to Ahmed who testified witnessing the situation of Morocco in the 1970s through the songs of Nass el Ghiwan. Ahmed claimed that Nass el Ghiwan was portraying, in their lyrics, the real events that happened back at that time; which made their audience a sort of a witness to the social, political and economic conditions of the poor social class in Morocco.

> The *songs of Nass el Ghiwan express the reality, what they were singing about are real events and what was going on in our life [...] we were witnessing through the songs of Nass el Ghiwan the living condition of the poor people. (Ahmed, male, 50s, singer of popular music)*

Also, according to Walid, Nass el Ghiwan was able to express what he is feeling and to portray the reality of Morocco.

> *I live with the songs of Nass el Ghiwan [...] the topics of their songs are all real and true because it expressed the Moroccan reality through the imagery portrayed through their lyrics[...] when I listen to them, I can know what's happening and how people might feel [...] also the band was successful in singing exactly what I feel deep down. (Walid, male, 60s, retired librarian)*

When listening to Nass el Ghiwan, 'ordinary people can imagine' what is happing around them through images and stories' (Hill.2017, p60). Indeed, the audience of Nass el Ghiwan engaged in perceiving and imagining, through the lyrics and the story shared by Nass el Ghiwan, the situation of Morocco and the degree of the injustice, pain and misery that poor people were going through in the 1970s. Moreover, Nass el Ghiwan was successful in depicting the feeling of their audience as they were successful in putting words their pain into words.

In addition, as mentioned by Ahmed, Nass el Ghiwan have put a lot of efforts in order to come up with lyrics that will make their audience reflect, witness and perceive.

> *Nass el Ghiwan have put so much effort in writing their lyrics; they do not write words that are meaningless [Singing a song of Nass el Ghiwan] can you notice how wonderful their lyrics are. (Ahmed, male, 50s, singer of popular music).*

Besides, the same level of engagement demonstrated by Ahmed was expressed by Salma who created a name for people who are highly engaged with Nass el Ghiwan as her. In fact, Salma called herself Ghiwani since she categorized herself as highly engaged with the band. Salma testified that the band was visionary because they were able to predict the issues and the struggles that Moroccans will go through these days.

> *I have never disliked anything about Nass el Ghiwan, never. If you do not like Nass el Ghiwan you are not Ghiwani (a name given to someone who is a very engaged fan of Nass el Ghiwan. I' m Ghiwani from the top to the bottom. They were visionary because they were talking about issues that were happening. (Salma, female, 50s, housewife)*

However, Wissal's engagement towards Nass el Ghiwan changed and became more negative but did not lead to disengagement.

> *What I did not like about Nass el Ghiwan is they turned to be drug addicts and they did not improve their music, they stagnated; which was the fall of this band. Thus, the split of the members of Nass el Ghiwan. (Wissal, female, 50s, housewife)*

Moreover, the rich and people in power in Morocco disengaged completely with the songs of Nass el Ghiwan because they were feeling targeted and criticised. Therefore, they did not want to listen to any content form Nass el Ghiwan. In fact, according to Walid who still remember the disengagement of these people.

The leaders and wealthy people did not like the songs of Nass el Ghiwan because they were feeling attacked and criticized; this is why they do not like the members of Nass el Ghiwan and their lyrics. (Walid, male, 60s, retired librarian)

2) Listening as a therapy

Rita expressed, during the interview, her sociocultural engagement with Nass el Ghiwan by sharing what happened to her when she was in the municipality to get some papers signed by the authority. Rita remembered waiting for a long queue but her document was rejected for no reason and she was dismissed from this place. Consequently, Rita felt disrespected and insulted, especially because she could not complain since she knew that nothing would be done about it. Therefore, this situation made her emotionally engaged with two of the famous songs of Nass el Ghiwan because they were putting what she felt into words. Indeed, the engagement of Rita took the form of an 'emotional connection' (Hill et al., 2017). The two songs that made Rita emotionally engaged with are *Mahouma* and *Aaicha Dabana fel Btana* that are about the hardship, negligence and the misery of poor people, as well as the misuse and abusive power of people working in the Moroccan administration.

> *I listen to Mahmouma when I feel Mahmouma (in pain or hurt), I think I will start to complain and cry, you are obliged to listen to them from time to time, it is impossible to forget them. When you go through certain situations, for example, when you go to the municipality and the ones responsible of this place dismiss you for no reason and you are not able to complain because no one will care about you [...] you feel insulted and humiliated even though you are just asking about your rights as a Moroccan citizen and a tax payer. So, when I go through this kind of situation, I think about the song of Aaicha Dabana fel Btana because it talks about what I was going through, it puts an accent to what I am feeling but could not express. (Rita, female, 50s, retired technician)*

For the case of Rita, music evoked thoughts and feelings. Indeed, music can engage different parts of the brain that involves cognition, emotion, motor function and motivation. Indeed, 'musical interventions' are used to accentuate the cognitive, emotion and socialization (Raglio A et al., 2015:70). This can be a reason for Rita to listen to *Mahmouma* and *Aaicha Dabana fel* Btana when she goes through a moment of humiliation because the lyrics of these songs help her accentuate the cognitive, emotion and socialization; so, she can feel her pain from different angles which she only could experience and trigger with the music of Nass el

Ghiwan. As a result, when listening to these songs, Rita would feel better because all her emotions would be accentuated rather than suppressed. Therefore, music for Rita played a therapeutic role that helped her accept here negative feelings that she is going through and to finally overcome it.

What Rita and Meryem were going through was not something new. After the independence of Morocco in 1956, the monarchy had to re-write the constitution three times to be sacred and above any criticism and questioning; to give the right to the monarchy to use different ways of repression for people trying to challenge them (JeuneAfrique.com, no date).

Furthermore, Chama demonstrated in the interview the same type of engagement as Rita especially with the song of *Ghir Khodouni* (take me away). In fact, Chama listened to *Ghir Khodouni* while she was thinking about the situation of the famous square in Marrakesh, *Jamaa el Fna*, in which a lot of poor people were working hard to make this place famous internationally. Chama shared her discontent with the economic situation of these people. She mentioned that these poor people who are either singers or story tellers do not benefit from the success of this square and the only ones taking advantage from it is the municipality and people in power. Therefore, this situation left these people having a miserable life.

> *When I listen to Ghir Khodouni, I say to myself please just take me away, why am I still alive. I beg god to take me away because I do not know where I'm heading to, where I'm going. When I listen to Ghir Khodouni, I start to sing about my problems and what I'm going through from injustice and misery. I'm between the hands of powerful people who have no mercy on me and who do not feel my pain and the misery and poverty that I'm going through. (Chama, female, 50s, Representative of Nass el Ghiwan association)*

Moreover, Amine listened to the songs of Nass el Ghiwan for the same purpose as Chama and Rita.

> *Nass el Ghiwan could express my pain through their lyrics; which helped decrease my feeling of pain [...] I considered the songs of Nass el Ghiwan as a therapy for the people, especially as times got tougher for them. (Amine, 60 years old, Gnawa master)*

So, what Amine was trying to say is that Nass el Ghiwan was playing an important therapeutic role in exteriorizing all the negative emotions and putting words on what people

were going through. Nass el Ghiwan created a feeling for their audience that there is someone out there who could understand their pain; and how tough life can be when you are considered by your government as 'a no one'.

Besides, Badr, who is a male retired assistant in his 60s, testified in the interview that the songs of Nass el Ghiwan gave him energy, motivation and ambition to achieve his goal of finding a job which was not an easy task, and to overcome his negative state of mind. Indeed, music is a therapy that can have the ability to improve the psychological well-being as well as social outcomes such as socialization, mood, and motivation (Raglio A et al., 2015:70).

So, the music of Nass el Ghiwan can have a therapeutic role in relieving the pain of the interviewees because they managed to write lyrics that express and extract the emotions of people. Therefore, a positive emotion can be triggered after listening to their songs.

As a result, the songs of Nass el Ghiwan enabled its audience to get a clear picture of the social, political and economic situation of Morocco in 1970s. Also, the audience of Nass el Ghiwan considered the songs of this band as therapeutic because it helped them to put their sadness into words and to overcome their pain; as Ahmed testified when he listens to the songs of Nass el Ghiwan, he feels relieved. In fact, listening to music is a common practise in 'neurological rehabilitation' because it can reduce the symptoms of depression and (Raglio A et al., 2015:70) make the person feel calmer by slowing the heart rate and breathing and lower your blood pressure, which triggers the muscles to relax (Sleepfoundation.org, 2019).

3) *Cultural engagement*

Besides the emotional engagement, the interviewees were also objectively engaged with Nass el Ghiwan. Hill states that the objective engagement is related to 'critical appreciation' and being knowledgeable about genre, style, and storytelling, and how much of the truth is declared to the audience (2019:130).

Chama have stated in the interview her objective engagement with Nass el Ghiwan by talking about their uniqueness and how challenging it was for the other bands and singers to reach the level of Nass el Ghiwan.

> *it is impossible for any singer or band to reach the level of Nass el Ghiwan either in terms of team spirit, directing, song writing, rhythm (such as Sahraoui, gnawa, they mix music genre), or the tone of their voice especially the Al Arabi Batma, who is the*

song writer and a singer of Nass el Ghiwan.. (Chama, female, 50s, Representative of Nass el Ghiwan association)

Through the testimony of Chama, one can notice her critical appreciation of Nass el Ghiwan and her objective engagement through her eyes of a Moroccan popular music connoisseur. Indeed, in the interview, she mentioned the directing skills of Nass el Ghiwan along with their team spirit and their ability to mix rhythms such as *Sahraoui* and *Gnawa* among other music genres.

Ahmed has also testified during the interview his objective engagement with the music of Nass el Ghiwan by talking about the different instruments used by this band.

Nass el Ghiwan have different rhythms, the rhythm used by Nass el Ghiwan is different than Jil jilala (famous Moroccan band having the same musical style as Nass el Ghiwan in the 1970s). Each band had a different music style [...] Nass el Ghiwan worked with Santir [...] Nass el Ghiwan did not have sophisticated instruments such as drums, they had only traditional instruments made of leather such as Tam Tam . As a result, the rhythm changes. (Ahmed, male, 50s, singer of popular music).

The reason behind this genre diversity can be motivated by the willing to represent all the instruments and music styles existing in different regions in Morocco; especially that the members of Nass el Ghiwan originally came from different cities and regions of Morocco, which was also the case of their neighbours in *Hay Mohammadi*, Casablanca (el Jazeera, 2018). So, in the past when the members of Nass el Ghiwan were children, they used to attend *Hay Mohammadi* every Sunday. The fair used to expose and share the cultural heritage of all the people living in this neighbourhood. For instance, while some would tell stories either fictional or real or what they have experienced in their city of origin. Others would sing *Amazigh* songs (native North African) and wearing traditional clothes and using typical *Amazigh* instruments such as *Taghanimt*, an end-blown reed flute, *Mizwid*, a type of bagpipe, and *Bendir* (Morocco), a snare frame-drum (el Jazeera, 2018).. Therefore, according to Simour (2016:136), Nass el Ghiwan got inspired from a diverse music style and at the same time they paid an homage to these people and to the rich Moroccan culture.

Besides, Nass el Ghiwan was not only limited to entertaining people but rather offering to its audience an exceptional live performance that could, in accordance with Hill, be considered as an a unique 'cultural experience' (2019:130). In fact, Nass el Ghiwan did not just entertain

people to forget about their though times and struggles, but they offered Moroccans an unique experience when they attended their concerts that was described as an unforgettable cultural experience, because they could interact simultaneously with the band and through dancing and singing they could express their pain and sense of inequality. So, through the live performance of Nass el Ghiwan, the members of the band could express their anger shared with all the people attending the concert and at the same time cherish the moment of singing along with their favourite band (Hill, 2019:130). According to Chama, people in the concerts of Nass el Ghiwan were numerous and they were all singing together with the band and expressing by the same occasion the hardship and repression that they were going through; which they could not do before because they were afraid of the consequences such as being jailed, tortured, or killed.

> *When they had concerts, it felt like the national team was playing or Barca against Madrid. The stadium was completely full as people were waiting for the concert of Nass el Ghiwan for a long time. In the stadium, all people were expressing out loud their pain and sufferance that no one could talk about it out loud [...] people were dancing and singing along with Nass el Ghiwan, they knew all the songs of this band by heart. (Chama, female, 50s, Representative of Nass el Ghiwan association)*

Nass el Ghiwan got inspired from oral culture, not to be confused with literacy. In fact, 'oral culture represents an old form of popular culture' (Hermes, 2005:136) and oral culture was popular among Moroccans in the past especially in the poor social class. Therefore, Nass el Ghiwan were using old 'popular language' because it was considered to be clear and easy to understand while singing about the injustice and inequality that the poor social class in Morocco were going through (Hermes, 2005:80). Nass el Ghiwan used this language in a way to create, *Naghma*, a rhythm to the songs to enjoy them more. As mentioned by Tilila in the interview *'Nass el Ghiwan used rhythmic words.' (Tilila, female, 60s, housewife).*

4) Sharing the same values

During the interviews**,** the engagement also took the form of a relationship and a dialogue between Nass el Ghiwan and its audience who was emotionally connected with their values such as staying true to themselves, always representing the people suffering the most, not having any economic interest while talking about the issues of these people, being respectful and not hurting anyone with their lyrics. Indeed, the interviewees wanted to engage with a

band that shows their personal values because the band would be relevant and engaging the audience only if they share compatible values.

One of the values that Nass el Ghiwan was famous for according to the opinion of the interviewee, Walid, is that the Moroccan band was not focused on money making as they were paid low price to perform on stage.

> *Nass el Ghiwan was not speaking 'the language of money', the member of this band were ordinary people coming from a poor neighbourhood. They used to perform on stage for a very cheap price [...] their purpose was not the money but to represent poor people and give these people a voice. (Walid, male, 60s, retired librarian)*

The decision to mix money with emotion is not a new notion. However, according to Walid, the purpose of Nass el Ghiwan was not to earn money. The goal of Nass el Ghiwan was to stand for poor people's rights, express their pain on their behalf, and let their voice be heard.

Nass el Ghiwan made sure that they would always respect and keep their values and not use their fame as 'commercial transaction' with their audience. According to the interviewees, Nass el Ghiwan did not exploit the struggles of the poor people to make monetary profit. Therefore, people respected them and loved the band even more. Nass el Ghiwan was also popular among poor people because they managed to stay humble and close to their audience. In fact, the members of this band decided to not move from their poor neighbourhood so they could stay close to the people (el Jazeera, 2018). Ahmed, who had the chance to meet the band in person and spend some time with them, testified that Nass el Ghiwan did not change their values even after reaching the highest peak of fame.

> *The members of Nass el Ghiwan are very generous, down to earth and act without protocol; they were humble with poor and rich people. (Ahmed, male, 50s, singer of popular music)*

Also, Badr confirms this opinion:

> *I love Nass el Ghiwan because they did not change after being famous. (Badr, male, 60s, retired assistant)*

Besides, even though Nass el Ghiwan was writing songs criticizing the monarchy, or people in power, they have always made sure to not use disrespectful lyrics. As mentioned by Tilila

in the interview, '*Nass el Ghiwan did not harm anyone, they were writing respectful lyrics.'* *(Tilila, female, 60s, housewife)*

Also, Walid shared the same opinion as Tilila but compared the values of Nass el Ghiwan with the values of today's singers to show the contrast.

> *Nass el Ghiwan was using our popular language to talk about our social class issues, but this new generation of singers are interested in looking for ways to make more money. For Nass el Ghiwan, money was not their priority because their goal was to get close to the poor people and the same feeling was shared with their audience. Nowadays, singers release songs for profit purposes without caring about people and their struggles. (Walid, male, 60s, retired librarian)*

Therefore, Walid expressed his engagement with disengaging with the current singers since they do not share the same values. Indeed, Walid developed an emotional and affective engagement with Nass el Ghiwan: and because he feels better when he spends time with someone who shares the same values (Habib, 2019:88).

5) *When do they listen to Nass el Ghiwan?*

After conducting all the interviews, it became obvious how the intensity and the level of engagement differed from one interviewee to another (Hill .2017:60). In fact, the intensity shifted from 'intermittent and casual 'while 'other times, long lasting to enduring'. This type of engagement requires affective work, feeling and subjectivity (Hill .2017:60). So, through the interviewees, it was possible to detect the most loyal and the 'casual viewers' through their everyday habits.

> *I listen to Nass el Ghiwan in the morning […] when I have my breakfast, I put the earphones on, and in the evening and at night […] we performed with Nass el Ghiwan's songs since we had their approval in order to sing the words they used to sing. (Ahmed, male, 50s, singer of popular music)*

So, the engagement of Ahmed can be considered, according to the description given by Hill (2017:2), as one of the highest degrees of engagement. In fact, the engagement of this interviewee can be qualified as a loyal, long lasting and enduring, since Ahmed have been engaging with Nass el Ghiwan for many years, since he was 10 years old until today. Therefore, Ahmed, through his everyday life developed a habit of listening to Nass el Ghiwan daily, three times per day: in the morning, the evening and at nights. The first thing that

Abdallah would do in the morning is to listen to Nass el Ghiwan while having breakfast. In fact, Ahmed developed a ritual to listen to Nass el Ghiwan by putting his earphones on to maximize the experience of listening to the band and grasp more of the lyrics, rhythms, the meaning to the songs, and be isolated from the outside noise. Ahmed continued by saying that after the split of Nass el Ghiwan, Ahmed took over the band's repertoire since he got the authorization from them to perform in *Jamaa el Fna*. Through the words of Ahmed when he was talking about taking over Nass el Ghiwan, it can be noticed that he is taking his job seriously especially after being approved by the band itself. So, for Ahmed, singing the songs of Nass el Ghiwan means keeping the band alive and remembered by people, especially the young generation.

On the other hand, Walid, Chama, Rita, and Radia shared the same opinion about their engagement to Nass el Ghiwan. Thus, manifested a lower level of engagement towards Nass el Ghiwan. However, this does not mean that they are not committed to the band.

> *I still listen to Nass el Ghiwan whenever I think about them [...] it is usually on YouTube at night or when they are aired on the radio before sleeping. (Walid, male, 60s, retired librarian)*

Listening to Nass el Ghiwan at night was not only mentioned by Walid but also by Chama, Rita, and Radia. Indeed, the latter ones testified that they prefer listening to the songs of Nass el Ghiwan at night and by themselves to feel calmer, restful and relieve their stress from a certain situation that they have been through. Indeed, according to Sleepfoundation.org (2019), the role of music is not limited to only enjoy it, but it also has a positive effect on the nervous system. So, people who listen to songs before sleeping enjoy their nights more, comparing to the ones who do not. They wake up less often and have more restful and relaxing nights. Indeed, music has the ability to relax the muscles, the same way as when a person is in a deep sleep.

Memories and nostalgia

1) *Economic situation*

When it comes to nostalgia the majority of the interviewees agreed that life, financially, in 1970s in Morocco was tough. One exception of Chama and Ahmed who remembered Morocco at that time as being nice and cheap. They both agreed that in the 1970s, they used

to have the *Baraka*, blessing; so even though they had little money, they felt it was more than enough to cover their expenses.

> *We could leave with 0.50 cent, it felt like I had 10.000 DH, because we could buy different things, everything we needed. In the 70s we had Baraka. (Ahmed, male, 50s, singer of popular music)*

Chama remembered praying to have the life she used to have.

> Our *life was very nice in the past, everything was cheap. I always pray to have the life we had. Everything was affordable from rent to food. 50dh was enough to have a decent life because we had the Baraka. (Chama, female, 50s, Representative of Nass el Ghiwan association)*

People miss a specific period of time in their lives that can make them wish to go back to those days, nostalgia. The testimony of Ahmed and Chama, who felt more nostalgic about the past comparing to the other interviewee, can be related to their negative mood linked to their actual situation. Indeed, people in a negative state of mind are more nostalgic comparing to the ones who are either in neutral or positive mood condition (Barrett et al., 2010:391). Indeed, Ahmed and Chama had a negative perception of the present since they both believed that there is no *Baraka* anymore and Morocco is getting expensive; which make them wish to go back in time when life was nicer.

On the contrary, the other eight interviewees, all had the same opinion about the toughness of Morocco in 1970s. In fact, these informants testified that the country was hard on the poor people were suffering a lot from injustice and inequality. Moroccans were suffering from issues related to poverty such as the lack of job opportunities, no means to study, to buy books, clothes or food. According to Wissal and Walid:

> *Moroccans did not have a good life [...] they had a tough life in the70s (Wissal, female, 50s, housewife)*

> *Even people who were lucky enough to have a job, they did not get paid enough to support themselves. (Walid, male, 60s, retired librarian)*

As a result, children were obliged to find a job to be able to finance their education.

> *Children had to work during the summer holidays in order to save money for their education of the following year. (Salma, female, 50s, housewife)*

It was also complicated for the interviewee, Badr, to have a loan in order to help his family. According to him, in the 1970s getting a loan required to have a strong network in the bank sector, even to be able to have a very small loan.

> *I remember when I was young and I had a job, I applied for a loan from the bank. However, it was very hard to get as I needed to have a strong network in the bank sector [...] even with all of this I got a modest loan that was around 1500 dh or 2000 dh. (Badr, male, 60s, retired assistant)*

However, according to Tilila life now in Morocco has positively changed and people are living comfortably.

> *Moroccans now live a luxurious life; they have everything they need. (Tilila, female, 60s, housewife)*

Nostalgia usually triggers a positive feeling and create a 'psychological comfort' when people remember an event from the past. 'Ordinary people' (Taylor, 2004:23) reflect on nostalgia as a positive emotion of the past such as when someone is thinking of a memory. Often, these memories are about friendship, childhood or any other type of strong relationship. However, when the eight interviewees remembered their past, they did not remember it in a positive way. When listening to the songs of Nass el Ghiwan especially *Ghir Khodouni,* take me away, or *Mahmouma*, pain, the interviewees remembered the tough life of the poor social class and the kind of hardship they have been through in order to survive and guarantee a proper life for their family. So, when these interviewees reflected on their memories of the 1970s, they did reflect on nostalgia as a negative emotion since their memories did not have a positive connotation for them. Thus, did not trigger a positive feeling.

2) *Political frustration*

Furthermore, all the interviewees considered the 1970s as being politically repressive since Morocco was using repressive rules to keep the control over people and limit their freedom of expression to make the monarchy unquestionable. Hermes (2005) believes that the nations are still ruled and controlled by repressive regulations and laws, and if anyone is trying to challenge the system, he or she will be perceived as a potential threat.

During the interview, Zineb testified that nobody had the right to complain or protest about the injustice and inequality in Morocco since people were scared to get jailed and tortured for years.

> *People were strictly not allowed to talk about politics even if life was very hard on them in so many ways. They had to stay quite otherwise there would have been consequences. (Zineb, female, 50s. Retired hairdresser)*

Moreover, Nass el Ghiwan had also to undergo this political situation back in the 1970s. Badr remembered when Nass el Ghiwan scheduled a live performance either in Morocco or abroad, people started to wonder if the government would allow them to sing or not. According to Badr, Nass el Ghiwan was not prohibited but controlled because of the sensitive topics that they were singing about. In fact, as mentioned by Badr, Nass el Ghiwan were singing about the corrupted politicians and people in power who installed fear among Moroccans and not allowing them to express their anger toward the repressive system. When Badr listens to the songs of Nass el Ghiwan nowadays, he asks himself what Nass el Ghiwan did wrong to be treated as a threat by the government.

> *We were always wondering if the government will let Nass el Ghiwan perform this time or not [...]. We were ruled by a repressive regime that was against freedom of expression and for installing a climate of fear and a power relationship. (Badr, male, 60s, retired assistant)*

After the independence of Morocco, the government had to re-write the constitution three times to guarantee that the monarchy will be untouchable especially after the threatening protest that Moroccans organized and the increasing in popularity of some political parties (JeuneAfrique.com, no date). Nevertheless, these actions were reinforced by making the police and the army intervene aggressively to stop the protest and torture the initiators and the participants of the protest. Indeed, as mentioned by Hermes (2003) the nations are being ruled and controlled by repressive regulations and laws and if anyone is trying to challenge it, this person will be dealt with as a potential threat (2003); which was also the case for Nass el Ghiwan. Nass el Ghiwan was considered as a menace because they were very popular. They were singing about the repression and the struggle of poor people that no one dared to discuss, because people were scared. Therefore, the government had to intervene to keep the control over the content of Nass el Ghiwan. Many times, the members of Nass el Ghiwan were jailed and got their live performance cancelled, as mentioned by Badr. Hence, the point

brought up by Taylor (2004:71) when he was arguing that the establishment of political authority was possible because it was consented by people, is not valid for the case of Morocco in the 1970s especially with Nass el Ghiwan. The Moroccan band had shown and proved many times their disagreement and non-consent with the system as well as the protestors. Nevertheless, it did not stop the establishment of the corrupted and careless political authority.

However, in cultural citizenship it is believed that freedom has to be secured equally to all citizens. The term freedom takes a form, for this case, the ability to criticize the choices and the rules made by the leaders to improve the situation of the most neglected ones and create equal chances and equality for everyone. Thus, the eradication of the hierarchical.

Nevertheless, a positive point was shared by Radia who believed that education was good in the 1970s. According to Radia, who is a housewife in her 60s, education in Morocco in the 1970s offered similar opportunity for poor and rich people. The rich sat next to the poor and studied in the same classroom. Therefore, the education offered to these poor children was a unique chance to improve their situation.

The same opinion was shared by an interviewee who testified that the situation has changed. Now Moroccans have more rights. In fact, Rita believed that the political situation in Morocco has changed toward a positively direction.

> *The situation in Morocco have changed by 80%. We have now in Morocco: children rights, human rights, and women rights […] things are improving. (Rita, female, 50s, retired technician)*

In this case, music triggered the feeling of nostalgia depending on the type of relationship between the song and the person; which can be articulated into the degree in which the person is familiar with the song and what it represents for him or her in terms of memories (Zhou et al., 2012). For the interviewees, some associated the songs of Nass el Ghiwan with the memories of repressions, control, and injustice that was happening in the 1970s in Morocco; while others would associate them with equal chances to all social class and offering good education to the less fortunate; which would enable them to improve their situation.

3) Social life

All the interviewees agreed that the social aspect of Morocco in the past, even with its difficulties, was better than the present. In fact, all the interviewees agreed that in the past

people were closer to each other and they were feeling safer, for themselves and for their children.

> *In the 1970s, Morocco was very safe. I remember that I used to play in the street with my friends, and no one would bother us or threaten our safety [...] I was feeling safe. (Tilila, female, 60s, housewife)*

Moreover, when the informants listened to the songs of Nass el Ghiwan; for example, *Siniya* (that means a tray where Moroccans put Moroccan pastries when receiving guests), it reminded them of the good life. Especially Wissal who felt very nostalgic when she listened to *Siniya*.

> *I feel very nostalgic when I listen to Siniya. This song reminded me of the family gatherings with my cousins when we used to spend the weekend together. We used to have Moroccan tea and Moroccan pastries, which was exactly described by Nass el Ghiwan in Siniya.(Wissal, female, 50s, housewife).*

So, the source of nostalgia can be due to the association of the person to a song related to past events (Zhou et al., 2012). By listening to *Siniya*, triggered in Wissal positive memories and positive feelings such as happiness and the feeling of being loved. Wissal felt loved by her family who surrounded her every weekend as the family gathering was a tradition, a habit that happened every Saturdays and Sundays, as the Moroccan tea and pastries were served for the guests.

Furthermore, all the interviewees articulated nostalgia, for example, when they have testified that Morocco was nicer in the 1970s because people used to be close to each other, and they had mercy in their heart. In fact, according to Tilila who brought up an example of her sister whose husband died and whose neighbours helped her financially. In fact, Tilila gave an example of solidarity for her sister during the most important religious celebration, *Aid al Adha*, when families buy sheep to sacrifice. During this celebration children get very happy and excited and usually share these moments with their friends and especially their neighbours. Therefore, this time of the year was very important in the eyes of the children and neighbours acknowledge that.

> *In the 1970s, people used to be close to each other and neighbours were standing together for each other. I remember when the husband of my sister passed away and left her with four children, but her neighbours in Casablanca were then helping her*

financially. For instance, they bought a sheep for, Aid al Adha. However, the situation has changed a lot today as people are having less empathy toward each other. (Tilila, female, 60s, housewife)

Nostalgia has been labelled as bittersweet, involving a mixture of sadness and wistful joy. Nostalgia contains elements of love, pride, and joy, but it can also contain negative emotions (Barrett et al., 2010:391). Indeed, when Tilila mentioned the death of her brother in law who left her sister with a responsibility of four children, she remembered this tragedy as a sad event but it also showed how she got support from the neighbours. Therefore, this memory made Titili nostalgic and left a bittersweet feeling as the death of her brother in law showed the solidarity of her neighbours.

According to recent research, music can trigger the feeling of nostalgia depending on the type of relationship between the song and the person. In fact, the relationship between a person and a song can be articulated into the degree in which the person is used and familiar to the song and what it represents for him or her in terms of memories. Indeed, it is believed that the source of nostalgia is due to the music association formed by people between a specific song and the events that took place in the past; **so**, the experience that someone has while listening to music depends on how it makes them feel (Zhou et al., 2012).

Identity and sense of collectivity

1) National identity: popular culture

According to Frith, 'when someone is talking about identity, it means talking about an experience or a manner of dealing or living with a specific type of experience' (Hall & Gay, 1996:110). The members of Nass el Ghiwan, before being famous, were close friends and neighbours in *Hay Mohammadi*. They lived the same level of poverty; thus, experienced it the same way as the rest of the poor Moroccans. Nevertheless, the rest of poor people dealt with poverty in silence since they did not have the right to protest in the street or ask the state to give them their rights. People at that time were oppressed, controlled and afraid of the consequences (al Jazeera, 2018). However, Nass el Ghiwan who also experienced poverty but had a different manner of dealing with it decided to write songs about the difficult situation that the poor social class was going through from injustice and inequality.

Nass el Ghiwan have experienced themselves in a different way; 'which means to experiment, not the world, but themselves in a diverse way' (Hall & Gay, 1996:109). Indeed,

Nass el Ghiwan have experienced socio- political and economic situation through their personal experience when they were living in a very poor area in Casablanca; and through the perspective of the poor people when performing live. Therefore, the members of Nass el Ghiwan experienced poverty through their audience perspective, and through the eyes of their audience who shared the same struggles and issues.

Moreover, Hall (Hall & Gay, 1996:109) defines the aesthetic as the quality of the experience rather than the quantity of object. According to the aesthetic definition of Hall, Nass el Ghiwan, aesthetically speaking, offered a unique experience to its listeners on the radio, tv, or live performance. Indeed, Nass el Ghiwan offered a high quality of lyrics to its audience and the rhythms inspired from the Moroccan heritage that poor Moroccans could identify with. Nass el Ghiwan was the first band in Morocco to get inspired from the Moroccan culture and revive all the forgotten aspect of it. Therefore, the band was not objectified because it was not judged based of their physical appearance or the quantity or how developed their instruments were. Nass el Ghiwan was judged on the quality of the experience shared with their audience about the real life; which let to be considered, by the people, as a legend and a social movement.

> *the phenomenon of Nass el Ghiwan got inspired from the reality [...] the real life of the poor people [...] no one dared to talk about these political issues in Morocco except Nass el Ghiwan [...] we consider Nass el Ghiwan as a social movement since it broke all the codes. (Walid, male, 60s, retired librarian).*

However, Frith had a different definition of the aesthetic. He states that aesthetic, 'is the process of deciding, playing and hearing what sounds right; people express themselves, their own sense of rightness and lose themselves, in an act of participation.' (Hall & Gay, 1996:110). The definition of aesthetics according to Frith is more focused on the ethical part; which makes these two definitions complement each other when the audience of Nass el Ghiwan is describing this band. Following the aesthetic definition of Frith, Nass el Ghiwan was singing what was right for them to do back in the 1970s. Therefore, the band decided to represent the poor Moroccans who were suffering from the post-colonial situation and who some lost their family and friends to be independent from the colonial without any recognition from the Moroccan government. Nass el Ghiwan expressed themselves on the behalf of the poor Moroccans to let their voice be heard. The band was able to do so and make these people identify with them, because Nass el Ghiwan went through the same issues.

In the concerts of Nass el Ghiwan, according to the interviewees, it can be noticed that people lose themselves in the act of participating while singing and dancing with the performance of Nass el Ghiwan.

> *I remember in the concerts of Nass el Ghiwan, people were dancing and singing along with Nass el Ghiwan. They were free to sing about their issues (...) they were transported by the music. (Salma, female, 50s, housewife).*

According to Frith (Hall & Gay, 1996:109), 'music is like identity' it is matter of ethics and aesthetics. Nass el Ghiwan have opted for a different aesthetics style than what Moroccans were used to in the 1970s. In fact, according to Ahmed *'aesthetically speaking, Nass el Ghiwan had less sophisticated look [...] they had more a natural look, they had a hippie style [...] they were hippies like us.'* (Ahmed, male, 50s, singer of popular music)

The style of the artists in the Arab world was classical and very conservative. However, Nass el Ghiwan changed the dressing codes imposed by the music industry in the region and opted for a hippie style. The members of Nass el Ghiwan were wearing more colourful and loose clothes with a mid-long curly hair. This style was shocking for some Moroccans, but it created a strong connection with the poor social class as they could identify themselves with their style. Therefore, opting for this style made people especially the lower class to identity with them even more as they felt that this style is close to theirs. Also, by adopting this fashion style, poor people felt that Nass el Ghiwan was accessible and close to them as they had the impression of 'they are of use to us' (Hall & Gay, 1996:49).

Popular culture is a concept that can also be related to identity in general and music identity specifically. Academically, popular music, must be either reflective or representative *(*Taylor, 2004*)*. In fact, music is considered to be 'the key to identity' because it gives a powerful sense of the self and others (Hall & Gay, 1996:109). All the popular songs of Nass el Ghiwan were about reflecting in the misery and injustice that the members of band and the poor Moroccans have been through; and representing the social class that is suffering from these issues. So, Nass el Ghiwan was successful in giving a strong sense of themselves, what they have been through, and the sense of others, poor people, by sharing the same issues that they are suffering from. Therefore, Nass el Ghiwan was sharing, through their songs, their common experiences with the poor Moroccans which made this social class to identify with their songs (Hall & Gay, 1996:109). So, it can be deducted that the concept of identity is

construct based on the common or shared traits and background with one person or more (Hall & Gay, 1996:5).

> *Nass el Ghiwan came from a very poor area were singing about poverty because the social class suffers the most and they have been through the same painful experience'. As a result, Nass el Ghiwan were perceived as 'the symbol of 1970s. (Rita, female, 50s, retired technician)*

Moreover, according to Frith, 'music is a metaphor for identity' that delivers personal messages (Hall & Gay, 1996:109). Through popular music, Nass el Ghiwan, was singing about a specific social class that was suffering the most from the authoritarian regime in 1970s. Nass el Ghiwan was also delivering personal messages to the authorities about the struggle and the sufferance of these poor people. As mentioned by Salma:

> *The band criticized the government, they talked about Hassan II, former king, they talked about the poverty, struggles of poor people, talked about the careless monarchy. (Salma, female, 50s, housewife).*

In fact, popular culture portrays the time of repression, torture and the controlling of people by authoritarian laws and regulations (Hermes. 2005). Therefore, Nass el Ghiwan portrayed and represented the signification of music as a metaphor; because in their songs, they tackled topics and themes regarding the misery and the repression that their authoritarian regime went them through.

> *Anyone could relate to the songs of Nass el Ghiwan because they sung about different topics such as: sufferance, misery, repression [...] anyone can find him/herself in their songs. So, when the band is singing, the poor people have the impression that Nass el Ghiwan is singing about their issues. (Amine, male, 60s, Gnawa master)*

Therefore, popular music can be considered as an 'artistic biography' or 'documentation of the singer (Simour, 2016:7). Popular music of Nass el Ghiwan could serve as a documentation of the oral culture as it has never been written before and it could be lost in the future. Also, it can serve as a way to understand this culture that Moroccans in the 70s and before were using in their daily life. It can also serve as a documentation because it can tell the future generations how the poor social class dealt with the repression, the misery and how the audience of Nass el Ghiwan was able to feel represented though the song of this

Moroccan band; and how the monarchy tried to make itself untouchable and unchallenged. Popular music can be also considered as an artistic biography because it can tell people who are listening to Nass el Ghiwan, how was the life for the members of this unique band.

2) Maghreb's sense of collectivity

The data collected from the interviewees prove the rightness of Frith point. In fact, Frith argued that music is not meant to be a widespread language, but it rather targets a specific audience. Indeed, Nass el Ghiwan used a popular language meant for the poor. The language of Nass el Ghiwan was taken from the generation of their parents who used the old Moroccan sayings, metaphors and personifications to express themselves in their daily life.

Nevertheless, the poor Moroccans were not the only ones identifying with the songs of Nass el Ghiwan. Due to language, culture, socio-political and economic similarity, Algerians identified themselves with the songs of Nass el Ghiwan as well. In fact, according to Badr:

> *Back in 1970s, Algerians used to listen a lot to Nass el Ghiwan [...] when Nass el Ghiwan used to release a song in Morocco, the next day Algerians will be listening to it[...] Algerians could understand our Moroccan dialect, Darija, because it is close to their language; which is not the case for Middle Easterners. (Badr, male, 60s, retired assistant)*

In fact, since Algerians share the same colonial history, as they were colonized by France and faced the same postcolonial challenges such as social inequality and injustice towards the poor social class, they were able to identify with the songs of Nass el Ghiwan. 'Identification is built on common origins or shared traits with a group of people or a person'. Indeed, 'identity focuses on a particular kind of experience or specific manner of dealing with a particular experience.' (Hall & Gay, 1996:5). In fact, as Ahmed have said *'we were living the same situation, Algeria and Morocco, the only difference is we are a monarchy and they are a republic.'* Nass el Ghiwan was so popular and loved by Algerians that whenever they come to Morocco, Marrakesh, they asked people in th*e Halka,* people who sing to entertain people in *Jamaa el Fna,* to sing the songs of Nass el Ghiwan for them.

> *When Algerians came to Marrakesh, they always ask us to sing songs from Nass el Ghiwan [...] Algerians love Nass el Ghiwan. (Ahmed, male, 50s, singer of popular music)*

According to Zineb, who is a female retired hairdresser in her 50s, Algerians used to love Nass el Ghiwan to the extent to spread the rumour that Nass el Ghiwan was an Algerian band not Moroccan.

Even though the conflicts that is still going on between Morocco and Algeria over the Moroccan Sahara, Nass el Ghiwan was able to connect and unify the people of these two countries by their music. In fact, the majority of the interviewees believed that Nass el Ghiwan could fix what politics have ruined. Among these interviewees, Wissal who testified that:

> *The songs of Nass el Ghiwan could express common experiences not only with Moroccans but also with Algerians [...] Nass el Ghiwan was able to calm down the tensions between these two Maghreb countries and to create a sense of collectivity. (Wissal, female, housewife in her 50s)*

Indeed, the tensions were eased when Nass el Ghiwan performed several times in Algeria. Nass el Ghiwan was able to change the perception of Algerians about Moroccans. In fact, the tensions were replaced by unity and 'homogeneity' between these two countries; which are also important part of identity.' (Hall & Gay, 1996:5). Therefore, Algerians started to interreact with Nass el Ghiwan as a Moroccan band which was not the case before.

> *Nass el Ghiwan changed the negative image that Algerians had toward Moroccans [...] after Nass el Ghiwan performed many times in Algeria [...] Algerians started to be less defensive when they talk to a Moroccan [...] Algerians were interacting with Nass el Ghiwan as a Moroccan band. (Rita, female, 50s, retired technician)*

Part 4: Conclusion

This thesis has critically analysed the engagement of the audience with Nass el Ghiwan and then touched upon the important role this band had to make people identify with their music and create a feeling of nostalgia; when the interviewees are listening to their songs nowadays. In this thesis, both identity and nostalgia are connected to engagement of the audience of Nass el Ghiwan who still listen to them because they were the pioneers, the first band to get inspired from the popular culture. In fact, Nass el Ghiwan used an old oral Moroccan culture and local instruments to play their songs. So, the cultural and social context was crucial to understand the listening experience of the audience of Nass el Ghiwan through their affective and cognitive engagement with them. This thesis has also revealed how the engagement of this audience of Nass el Ghiwan made them have a cultural experience and physiological relief; as they could sing and dance along with the band who expressed what they have been thinking deep down but could not talk about, because of the repression and the fear of the consequences.

The interviewees considered Nass el Ghiwan more than a group of people who sang about poverty by using traditional Moroccan instruments; they rather consider them as a social movement that broke all the codes and rules installed by the monarchy to speak on the behalf of an underrepresented social class that was suffering in silence. Nass el Ghiwan turned to be there for their audience, as the most popular Moroccan band which they are still enjoying to listening to and which triggers either positive or negative memories from the past. Therefore, the audience was involved with Nass el Ghiwan into 'serious emotional engagement' (Doona, 2016:181). The Moroccan audience was not the only one engaging with Nass el Ghiwan. The Algerian audience also engaged and identified with the songs of Nass el Ghiwan. Due to cultural and historical similarities with Morocco. So, even though the political tensions that these two countries were facing, Nass el Ghiwan was able to reunite them and create a feeling of brotherhood between the people of these two countries.

1) *How do Moroccans in their 50s and 60s engage with the music of Nass el Ghiwan?*

Moroccans engage with Nass el Ghiwan by including them into their life. However, the level of engagement varied from one interview to another but all the interviewees had as a common point that they all prefer to listen to Nass el Ghiwan by themselves. In fact, some of the interviewees would listen occasionally to Nass el Ghiwan at night when they feel relaxed so they can enjoy more of their music, the lyrics and instruments. Some would listen to the

songs of Nass el Ghiwan everyday while they are having breakfast, lunch and dinner. These interviewees or Ghiwani as they like to call themselves because of their high engagement towards Nass el Ghiwan. While others would listen to Nass el Ghiwan because they went through certain experiences, usually negative, which they could relate to in their songs. So, when they listen to the songs of Nass el Ghiwan, that express their feelings and what they are going through, it makes them feel relieved and understood. To be able to listen to the songs of Nass el Ghiwan nowadays, the interviewees look for them either in the Internet, YouTube, or in their USB key or when they are played on the radio or TV.

Moreover, Moroccans engage with Nass el Ghiwan by choosing to only listen to them and not to the music of nowadays. The interviewees also showed their engagement toward Nass el Ghiwan through their disengagement with the current music in Morocco and in the MENA region in general. In fact, according to the informants, the music of nowadays shows disrespect towards women and have meaningless lyrics. These singers are performing only to make as much money as they can without caring about the people who struggle or are in pain. Nevertheless, this monetary relationship was not the case with Nass el Ghiwan since the ultimate goal of this band was to raise the voice of the poor people and to speak on their behalf without expecting a monetary reward. Therefore, the engagement took also a form of a dialogue between the audience and Nass el Ghiwan. Indeed, this engagement took a form of an emotional connection between the values of Nass el Ghiwan and its audience. The audience of Nass el Ghiwan was emotionally engaged with the band because they did not have an economic interest in singing about the issues of the poor social class and they stayed true to themselves; which means being humble, respectful, and not hurting anyone with their lyrics. Therefore, the audience wanted to engage with a band or singers who shared the same values as theirs; which most of the current singers failed to do, but Nass el Ghiwan succeeded in.

Besides, Nass el Ghiwan was considered by the interviewees as a revelation and a phenomenon because they tackled sensitive topics that no one could do. The interviewees were engaged with Nass el Ghiwan because the primary and ultimate goal of this band was to stand by the side of the poor people and speak on their behalf about their living conditions; as the other band and singers were not able to do since they were scared of the consequences. As a result, the members of Nass el Ghiwan went to jail several times but this did not stop them from writing and singing controversial songs. Therefore, Moroccans engaged even more with this band because they were convinced that Nass el Ghiwan was not singing for money

purposes thus going beyond 'commercial transaction'; which made them love the band, and have this special connection with them. In fact, as mentioned by an interviewee 'Nass el Ghiwan was not focused on money making as they were paid low price to perform on stage'.

Moreover, Nass el Ghiwan had a unique and rich musical style since they have used very old and traditional instruments inspired from different regions of Morocco. Also, Nass el Ghiwan used the popular language that their parents used to use in their everyday life that consisted of old Moroccan sayings and metaphors. Therefore, Nass el Ghiwan came up with a different language than Moroccans were used to in the 1970s. In fact, the singers back at that time used to sing in Classical Arabic and they were singing about heart break and occasionally about their love of their country which could be Egypt, Iraq, and Lebanon... Therefore, Moroccans could not engage with these songs because their topics were not relevant to the poor social class in Morocco; as they considered their tough living conditions more important than a heart break.

Besides, the Moroccans were not the only ones engaged with Nass el Ghiwan but also Algerians. Throughout the history, Morocco and Algeria have faced some political issues regarding the integrity of the Moroccan Sahara. These issues were escalated to the people thus created certain sensitivity, tension and animosity between Moroccans and Algerians. However, the situation has changed when Nass el Ghiwan started to release songs about social, political and economic issues that apparently Algerians were suffering from as well and engaged with. Also, Algerians were able to engage with Nass el Ghiwan due to language and cultural similarities. Indeed, the Moroccan dialect is similar to the dialect of Algerians as well as traditions and cuisine. Nass el Ghiwan have performed many times in Algeria because its people used to love the band a lot. They loved Nass el Ghiwan to the extent of spreading rumours saying this band is Algerian and not Moroccan. Besides, whenever Algerians come to Morocco especially Marrakesh, they always ask the people in the *Halka* to sing songs of Nass el Ghiwan. Therefore, Nass el Ghiwan was able to create a connexion and sense of community between Moroccans and Algerians.

Also, Nass el Ghiwan was not limited to entertain people who listened to them, it was more of an experience, especially during their live performance, as a 'cultural experience'. People could hear and sing along with Nass el Ghiwan and exteriorize what they have been feeling and thinking about the monarchy for so many years.

Moreover, the interviewees were engaged with the band in 'perceiving, listening, witnessing, and reflecting' (Hill, 2007:60). Indeed, the interviewees were engaged in witnessing what was happening to the poor people in Morocco during the 1970s through the lyrics of Nass el Ghiwan. As mentioned by one interviewee 'The *songs of Nass el Ghiwan express the reality because they were singing about real events and what was going on in our lifes*'. So, Moroccans living in Morocco or abroad could know about the social, political and economic situation of the country. Moreover, when the interviewees listen to Nass el Ghiwan, they were able to imagine and perceive through their songs the pain, injustice and misery that the poor social class had to undergo. Indeed, ordinary people have the ability to picture what is going on in their surroundings through stories and images.

The interviewees were also engaged in reflecting on the songs of Nass el Ghiwan. In fact, the interviewees were trying to figure out and analyse the cryptic meanings and messages of the old Moroccan sayings and metaphors used in all the songs of Nass el Ghiwan. For example, one interviewee testified preferring to listen to the songs of Nass el Ghiwan when she is by herself to focus and understand the meaning of the songs that she was not able to understand otherwise.

2) *What do their songs make them remember about the 70s?*

During the interview, I made my informants listen to one of their favourite songs and asked them what kind of memories does this song triggers in them. As a result, all the interviewees remembered events from the past related to the social, economic and political situation of Morocco in the 1970s. The interviewees were also comparing and contrasting their situation and the situation of the country of the past and the present. Therefore, the memories were divided into three categories: economic, social, and political.

The majority of the interviewees remembered the economic situation in the 1970s as being challenging and hard especially for poor people. People were lacking of job opportunities, suffering from the expensive life and not to able to pursue their education. Children had to drop out from school in an early age since they had either to help their parents in farming so they could generate more money in order to be able to survive; or they had to quit school because their schools were too far away from where they live. The children had to walk for long distances to reach their schools which did not, sometimes, offer descent conditions to study in. Nevertheless, for the lucky ones, they were obliged to work during the summer break in order to save some money to buy books and necessary furniture for the following

year. On the contrary, some interviewees remembered this aspect of Morocco differently. In fact, one interviewee shared that during the 1970s the children had the same opportunity as the rich children. The poor children had the ability to be involved in the same program of the same school; by this, the children coming from a poor a family had the chance to improve their situation. Moreover, the interviewees believed that Morocco in the 1970s was cheaper and very nice since they could afford all the necessities such as food and rent with only 50dh (equivalent to 50 SEK). Indeed, they believed they had the *baraka*, which no longer exist nowadays.

Also, the interviewees remembered the repression that the monarchy had implemented after the Morocco gained its independence in 1956. The informants remembered Nass el Ghiwan being controlled and stopped from performing several times. Indeed, each time the band announces a live performance, people started to wonderer if the government will let them sing or not. With time and reflection, some of the interviewees did not understand the motive and the reason that made the government censor Nass el Ghiwan because they were not trying to cause a rebellion, they were only expressing what people felt deep down.

Nass el Ghiwan was remembered by the interviewees as using traditional Moroccan instruments that people started to forget. Nass el Ghiwan used instruments coming from different regions of Morocco which created different and unique rhythms comparing to other bands and singers existing in 1970s. In fact, the other artists were using more modern instruments while Nass el Ghiwan was using less advanced and simpler instruments that were hand made with leather and strings. Furthermore, the interviewees remembered Nass el Ghiwan as the first band to use popular language rather than Classical Arabic. Nass el Ghiwan used the same language that their parents used in their daily life. Indeed, Nass el Ghiwan was using popular language filled with metaphors, old Moroccan sayings and a personification that only the poor people can relate to and understand.

Moreover, when the interviewees listen to Nass el Ghiwan, it reminds them of the family; when Moroccans used to be close to each other and helping each other out. Indeed, the interviewees recalled their time spent with their brothers, sisters, cousins and aunts when they used to visit each other every weekend and either have pastries and Moroccan tea at home or going to a park all together to enjoy the weather the whole day. Also, the interviewees remembered the 1970s as being safe for them as children. The interviewees testified that when they were children and playing in the streets with the neighbours of the same age; they

never had to worry about their safety since they knew they were protected by the adults around them since they considered them as family members.

3) *What kind of identities and sense of collectivity is articulated by the Moroccan audience who listened to Nass el Ghiwan?*

Nass el Ghiwan was able to create a sense of identity among poor Moroccans and Algerians. In fact, Nass el Ghiwan was successful in making the poor Moroccans love them due to their uniqueness and originality. Nass el Ghiwan used different styles and music genre into their songs and they opted for a popular language that Moroccans used to use in their everyday life. In fact, the Moroccan band used oral culture, a language that the poor Moroccans were able to understand. Indeed, in the past Moroccans used to listen to either songs coming from Middle East or Europe, France and Spain. So, the language was different and so was the themes of their songs. Even for the rare times when Moroccan singers released a song, it would be emotional music talking about heart breaks, but not the struggle of the poor social class that suffered the most from the post-colonial time. However, everything changed when Nass el Ghiwan dared to sing about taboo topics such as criticizing the monarchy and people in power. The poor Moroccans felt represented for the first time and that they had someone who cared about their issues, which they were not able to talk about openly since they were scared of the consequences. After Morocco gained its independence in 1956, the monarchy made sure that people will not be able to protest or show their disagreement with the kingdom; which meant no one had the right to talk openly about the tough socio-political and economic situation that they are going through because they were afraid of being jailed or tortured for years. So, Nass el Ghiwan managed to talk about these issues but using a cryptic language to avoid being censored and jailed.

Moreover, the poor people were able to identity with Nass el Ghiwan because of their aesthetic style. The band had opted for a hippie style with colourful and simple clothes with mid long curly that was a little bit shocking for some, but appreciated by the poor social class. This social class was also able to identify with the aesthetic style of Nass el Ghiwan because it had nothing to do with the fancy and expensive clothes that other singers used to wear, which the poor could not afford. In fact, the poor people identified with Nass el Ghiwan because they were also poor like them, as they came from one of the poorest areas in Casablanca and because they were sharing the same struggles.

Nass el Ghiwan didn't only make the poor Moroccans identify with their music but also the Algerians. In fact, due to language proximity and colonial history, Algerians could identify with the kind of issues that Nass el Ghiwan was tackling in their songs. Algerians loved them so much and identified with them so much that they spread the rumour that the band was Algerian and not Moroccan. For so many years, the government of Algeria and Morocco had conflicts about the integrity of the Moroccan Sahara. However, Nass el Ghiwan was successful in unifying these two countries through their songs.

This thesis brought an explicit connection between identity, cultural citizenship, sense of collectivity and engagement in the research of the audience of Nass el Ghiwan. In this thesis, cultural citizenship does not only refer to a nation but it goes beyond national borders. It shows that identity should not only be bound by national borders but that it can go beyond it and show a bigger regional identity. In the case of Nass el Ghiwan, identity went beyond Moroccan borders to reach the Maghreb region. However, it did not reach the Middle East due its language differences, cultural, historical, and political differences.

Nass el Ghiwan managed to engage their audience, the poor social class of Morocco and Algeria, and to leave them comfort even long after they played their last song.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Consent Form

<div align="center">Nass el Ghiwan- Audience Research Lund University</div>

Researcher: Majda Belgazzar

Programme: Master's in media and communications

I am currently conducting a study centred around the audience of *Nass el Ghiwan* as a part of my master's thesis work. This research seeks to explore the thoughts, opinions, and values of individuals in regards to Nass el Ghiwan. Therefore, I would like to interview you as a part of my ongoing research. The data I collect will only be used within the confinement of my final thesis, which I expect to be finished in May 2020.

Your identity shall remain anonymous and I will ensure that this will always be the case. Nowhere in my final report will your real name be stated under any circumstances.

I would like to record the interview and use the dialogue to elaborate my findings. I will only record the interview if you give your written consent. Please feel free to say as much or as little as you want. You can decide not to answer any question, or to stop the interview any time you want.

If you agree to join this study, please sign your name below.

_____   _____

 Full name   Age and Gender

 _____   _____

Occupation   Date

_____   _____

Telephone number (optional)   Email Address

_____

Signature

الباحثة: ماجدة بالكازار

البرنامج: الماجستير في الإعلام والاتصالات

أقوم حاليًا بإجراء دراسة حول جمهور ناس الغيوان كجزء من عمل أطروحة الماجستير. يهدف هذا البحث إلى استكشاف أفكار وآراء وقيم الأفراد فيما يخص ناس الغيوان. لذلك ، أود أن أقوم بمقابلتك كجزء من بحثي المستمر. لن يتم استخدام البيانات التي أقوم بجمعها إلا في حدود رسالتي النهائية ، والتي أتوقع الانتهاء منها في مايو 2020.

ستظل هويتك مجهولة الهوية وسأضمن أن تكون هذه هي الحالة دائمًا. لن يتم ذكر اسمك الحقيقي تحت أي ظرف من الظروف في تقريري النهائي.

أود أن أسجل المقابلة وأستخدم الحوار لتوضيح نتائجي. لن أسجل المقابلة إلا إذا أعطيت موافقتك الكتابية. لا تتردد في قول الكثير أو القليل كما تريد. يمكنك أن تقرر عدم الإجابة على أي سؤال أو إيقاف المقابلة في أي وقت تريده.

إذا وافقت على الانضمام إلى هذه الدراسة ، يرجى توقيع اسمك أدناه

-

_____

لاسم الكامل العمر والجنس

Appendix 2: Interview Guide

1. Which songs do you like the most and why?
2. Do you remember when you first listened to Nass el Ghiwan?
3. Which other bands did you listen to at the same time as the Nass el Ghiwan?
4. How Nass el Ghiwan is different than the other bands or musicians of that time?
5. What makes them unique and different?
6. Why Nass el Ghiwan is important to Moroccans according to you?
7. What were your favourite band in the 70s and why?
8. Do you still listen to them today?
9. When you do listen to the band, what does it make you feel?
10. Does it make you remember the 70s, if yes what does make you remember?
11. Can you talk about the time period in the 70s?
12. Why do you like this band so much?
13. What don't you like about it?
14. When you listen to the band, how do you listen to it, cassettes, CDs…?
15. What are the occasions when you listen to them in the past and today?
16. Do you listen to it alone or with some friends?
17. What are the 3 favourite songs and why do you like them?
18. Let's choose your favourite song and listen to it and tell me how do you feel, why it is important, does it make have some memories, can you explain the lyrics, why do you like?
19. Where do you listen to them, and at what time?
20. Comparing the band with music of today, what do you think about it?
21. What is the popular music of today that can be compared to Nass el Ghiwan?
22. How they are unique?
23. What this band make feel and remember about the 70s?
24. (Show the comments after listening to the song)
25. What do you think about this Maghreb collectively?

Appendix 3: **Sample of Interview**

Q: Which songs do you like the most and why?

A: The songs of Nass el Ghiwan express the reality, what they were singing about are real events and what was going on in our life. *Singing a song of Nass el Ghiwan.* This is what the band was singing, may they rest in peace for the ones who died. The band was composed of *Batma* and *Boujmaa* who was the leader of Nass el Ghiwan.

Q: what are those songs?

Singing another song of Nass el Ghiwan. We belong to this band, may they rest in peace, and we replaced them since we had the approval from them in order to sing the words they used to sing. To be able to sing their songs you have to have their approval before.

Q: Which other bands did you listen to at the same time as the Nass el Ghiwan?

A:Jiljilala, *Nass el Hal*, the band of *Masnawa*, the band of Nass el Ghiwan, *Al Arsad* who were also really good with the rhythm as Nass el Ghiwan but they used to use '*mandoline*' and not Banjo. *Jiljilala* band used also the banjo, *mandoline* and *bandir* and good lyrics.

Q: How Nass el Ghiwan is different than the other bands or musicians of that time?

A: Nass el Ghiwan have different rhythms, and rhythm used by Nass el Ghiwan is different than *Jil jilala*. Each band have different music style; for example, *Masnawa* use *Bozg* that has thinner string and Nass el Ghiwan works with *Santir*. As a result, the rhythm changes.

Q: What makes them unique and different?

A: Nass el Ghiwan is a unique band because they are universal, they are not limited to Morocco only because they wrote lyrics that people can understand. The love of their audience exceeded the borders. The band is singing, *singing Mahmouma song*, and when I listen to it, I think why this world is making us worried; because it will be always like this, always making us feel worried and anxious. So, Nass el Ghiwan put so much effort in writing their lyrics, they don't write words that are meaningless. *Singing the same song*, can you notice how wonderful their lyrics are. The words that Nass el Ghiwan are singing are different from what the *Jil Jilala* or *Arasd* are singing

Q: Why Nass el Ghiwan is important to Moroccans according to you?

A: Moroccans, Algerians, and Tunisian, all of them love Nass el Ghiwan because of their lyrics and their instruments, rhythms and the idea of singing in a group wasn't common. Moreover, aesthetically speaking, Nass el Ghiwan had a natural look, they had a hippie style, and they were hippie.

G: Do you still listen to them today?

A: I'm still singing the songs of Nass el Ghiwan

Q: When you do listen to the band, what does it make you feel?

A: I feel deep inside, I feel that I'm singing songs about something to let people know, either living in Morocco or abroad, who are Nass el Ghiwan.

Q: what they make you think?

Listening to Nass el Ghiwan make me remember the past, when they used to sing their songs. the past was better than today. Now, most of the member of this group died like *Boujmaa* and the person who was singing, *Ahlan ya Nahla*, who is now at home and not doing anything interesting and no one is there to help him. The band gave a lot but didn't receive anything in return.

Q: Does it make you remember the 70s, if yes what does make you remember?

A: When I listen to Nass el Ghiwan, I remember the old days when *Mchaheb*, *Masnawa* and Nass el Ghiwan started. I think also about what's going to the world, and to my parents who died. Their songs are important for me because I grew up with them. I started in this field when I was 10 years old until now in 2020. I had also the chance to meet them in their place and they have also came here.

Q: Can you talk about the time period in the 70s?

A: In the past, we were able to live with 0, 50 cent. Back at that time, we could buy the vegetables, it made me feel like we had 10 000Dh: pay the rent, to eat, and to give some money to your parents. In the past we used to have the *baraka,* the blessing; but now, even if you have 30 000 or 40 000dh, you can spend it in 15 min. There is no *baraka* anymore

Q: Why do you like this band so much and what don't you like about it?

A: I have always liked Nass el Ghiwan, they even came here and sat with us and gave us their approval to sing their songs. I love Nass el Ghiwan, whenever I listen to them, I feel relieved. I like them because they were polite, they were united and never had any conflict. They were also singing about the death of Boujmaa, *singing Ghir Khodouni song*.

Nass el Ghiwan is amazing, may they rest in peace for who died and a longer life for the ones who are still alive. The members of Nass el Ghiwan are very generous, down to earth and act without protocol; they were humble with the poor and the rich people.

Q: When you listen to the band, how do you listen to it, cassettes, CDs…?

A: I listen to the band in my USB carte in which I have all the songs of Nass el Ghiwan and *Mchaheb*, CD and DVD are rare now.

Q: What are the occasions when you listen to them in the past and today?

A: I listen to Nass el Ghiwan when we are working in a wedding in which they use the piano but if I'm there with my brother as guests, we start to sing Nass el Ghiwan and *el Mchaheb*.

I listen to Nass el Ghiwan in the morning, in the evening and at night. I always think about them, they are always in my mind because I love them and my job is Nass el Ghiwan since 1975, before going to the green march, since that time, I loved Nass el Ghiwan.

Q: What are the 3 favourite songs and why do you like them?

A: From the songs of *Nass el Ghiwan*, I like *Siniya*, *Ghir Khodouni*, *Mahmouma*, *Abd Sank Lmaaboud*, *Sahlan wa Sahlan ya Nahla*. I like all their songs.

Nass el Ghiwan is the pioneer, they are the first one to start. After Nass el Ghiwan, lot of bands started.

Q: Let's choose your favourite song and listen to it and tell me how do you feel, why it is important for you?

A: (*singing Ghir Khodouni*) Memories from the past when this place was dusty. I used to go to the theatre I was excited to see Nass el Ghiwan when they were young using nice words and lyrics in their songs. They didn't have sophisticated instruments such as drums, they had only traditional instruments made of leather such as Tam Tam.

Q: how can you explain the lyrics of this song?

A: *singing Ghir Khodouni*, I would interpret the song *Ghir Khodouni* as the wish of a person to die and I feel the pain in my heart that is in the hand of a cruel system. The system didn't protect my rights. It's a world full of sins.

Q: Where do you listen to them, and at what time?

A: I listen to Nass el Ghiwan when I wake up and when I take my breakfast. I put my earphones on and listen to them or to *el Arsad*, a band from Marrakesh.

Q: Comparing the band with music of today, what do you think about it?

A: The lyrics of the music nowadays are about 'we are going out and we are holding hands', but what does it means, what does 'we are going out and holding hands.' What does 'my mom, please my mom'. The singers have to give us meaningful lyrics, lyrics and nice rhythm. The lyrics that people would like to listen it, to think about it, to analyse and to know the meaning behind these lyrics.

Q: who you think listen to Nass el Ghiwan besides Moroccans and why?

A: The Algerians listen to Nass el Ghiwan more than the other countries, and whenever they come to *Jamaa el Fna*, they sit next to us and ask us to sing songs of Nass el Ghiwan.

Q: What do you think about this Maghreb collectively?

A: Nass el Ghiwan performed for 10 years in Algeria. They used to come and go there until Algerians were able to understand what they were singing about. Now Algerians love this band, but Moroccan have stronger feelings because this band write lyrics with strong meaning and they create nice rhythms in their songs. Nass el Ghiwan is a respectful band from *Omar Siyed* to *Batma* and *Boujmaa*.

Appendix 4: **Sample of Coding Process**

Categories	Sub-categories		Quote from the interview
Engagement	**Emotions**	Relieved when listening to NEG	whenever I listen to them(Nass el Ghiwan), I feel relieved
		Love towards Nass EL Ghiwan	I love Nass el Ghiwan
		Like Nass el Ghiwan	I have always liked Nass el Ghiwan
	Evaluation of the band	appreciation of the quality of Nass el Ghiwan work	this band write lyrics with strong meaning and they create nice rhythms in their songs.
		Differences in music style between Nass el Ghiwan and other bands in 70s.	Nass el Ghiwan have different rythms, and rythm used Nass el Ghiwan is different than Jil Jilala. Each band have different music style; for example, Masnawa use Bozg that has thinner strings and Nass el Ghiwan works with Santir. As a result their rythm changes.
		Similarity of NEG and other Moroccan bands in 70s	Jiljilala, Nass el Hal, the band of Masnawa, the band of Nass el Ghiwan, Al Arsad who were also really good with the rhythm as Nass el Ghiwan
		Popularity of Nass el Ghiwan among Algerians	Nass el Ghiwan performed for 10 years in Algeria. They used to come and go there until Algerians were able to understand what they were singing about
		The quality of the Rhythms	' Nass el Ghiwan was also really good with the rhythm'
		The quality of lyrics of Nass el Ghiwan in 70s and the music nowadays	The lyrics of the music nowadays are about 'we are going out and we are holding hands ', but what does it means, what does 'we are going out and holding hands'. What does 'my mom. please my mom'. The singers have to give us meaningful lyrics, lyrics and nice rhythm. The lyrics that people would like to listen it, to think about it, to

			analyse and to know the meaning behind these lyrics. . As we used to do with Nass el Ghiwan
		Values of NEG	The members of Nass el Ghiwan are very generous, down to earth and act without protocol; they were humble with the poor and the rich people.
		traditional Moroccan instruments	They didn't have sophisticated instruments such as drums, they had only traditional instruments made of leather such as Tam Tam.
		Aesthetic look	aesthetically speaking, Nass el Ghiwan had a natural look, they had a hippie style, they were hippie.
	Time and place	time of the day	I listen to Nass el Ghiwan in the morning, in the evening and at night.
		Occasions to listen and sing songs of NEG	I listen to Nass el Ghiwan when we are working in a wedding in[…]but if I'm there with my brother as guests, we start to sing Nass el Ghiwan and el Mchaheb.
		Platform to listen to NEG	I listen to the band in my USB carte in which I have all the songs of Nass el Ghiwan and Mchaheb, CD and DVD are rare now.
	Titles of the songs of Nass el Ghiwan that the interviewee likes to listen	Siniya, Ghir Khodouni, Mahmouma, Abd Sank Lmaaboud, Sahlan wa Sahlan ya Nahla. I like all their songs.	
	Replacing Nass el Ghiwan after their retirement	we replaced them since we had the approval from them in order to sing the words they used to sing.	

Identity		Performance of NEG in the Moroccan scene	Nass el Ghiwan is the pioneer, they are the first one to start.
		Influence of Nass el Ghiwan in the creation of other bands	After Nass el Ghiwan, lot of bands started.
		Other existing Bands in 70s	Jiljilala, Nass el Hal, the band of Masnawa, the band of Nass el Ghiwan, Al Arsad
	Lyrics	Uniqueness of the band	Nass el Ghiwan is a unique band
		Interpreting the songs of NEG	'I would interpret the song Ghir Khodouni as the wish of a person to die and I feel the pain in my heart that is in the hand of a cruel system. The system didn't protect my rights. It's a world full of sins.'
		efforts in writing the lyrics	'Nass el Ghiwan put so much effort in writing their lyrics, they don't write words that are meaningless. *Singing the same song*, can you notice how wonderful their lyrics are'
		Expression of reality	' The songs of Nass el Ghiwan express the reality, what they were singing about are real events and what was going on in our life'
	sense of cconnectivity	Universality of NEG music	Nass el Ghiwan is universal, they are not limited to Morocco only because
		country that enjoyed the songs of Nass el Ghiwan	The Algerians listen to Nass el Ghiwan more than the other countries, and

			whenever they come to Jamaa el Fna, they sit next to us and ask us to sing songs of Nass el Ghiwan.
		reacting sense of community among Maghreb audience	Moroccans, Algerians, and Tunisian, all of them love Nass el Ghiwan because of their lyrics and their instruments, rhythms and the idea of singing of an uncommon group.
		Citizens who felt connected to Nass el Ghiwan	Moroccans, Algerians, and Tunisian, all of them love Nass el Ghiwan because of their lyrics and their instruments, rhythms and the idea
		Sense of belonging to the band	'we belong to this band'
Nostalgia	Memories	Economic situation	In the past, we were able to live with 0,50 cent. Back at that time, we could buy the vegetables, it made me feel like we had 10 000Dh: pay the rent, to eat, and to give some money to your parents. In the past we used to have the baraka, the blessing;
		social situation	When I listen to Nass el Ghiwan, I remember the old days when Mchaheb, Masnawa and Nass el Ghiwan started. I think also about what happened to the world, and to my parents who died.
		Memories of youth	Memories from the past when this place was dusty. I used to go to the theatre I was excited to see Nass el Ghiwan when they were young using nice words and lyrics in their songs.
	Economic situation in the Present		now, even if you have 30 000 or 40 000dh, you can spend it in 15 min. There is no baraka(blessing) anymore