

## Franco-Maghrebi Rap and Benyoucef's *Le Nom du père*

Keith Moser

*Mississippi State University*

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**Keith Moser,**  
**"Franco-Maghrebi Rap and Benyoucef's *Le Nom du père*"**  
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**Abstract:** In his article "Franco-Maghrebi Rap and Benyoucef's *Le Nom du père*" Keith Moser discusses Messaoud Benyoucef's controversial play *Le Nom du père* and rap as a hybrid art form that has been (re)-appropriated by disenfranchised minorities from all corners of the planet. Exploited and ignored by those at the top of the social ladder, rappers express their anxiety concerning the present situation of inequality in contemporary consumer society. The rending melodies or portraits of human anguish created by rappers give testament to the fact that the interconnected processes of urbanization and globalization have not benefited everyone. In *Le Nom du père*, Benyoucef appears to suggest that the sometimes paradoxical artistic tool of rap could help the stigmatized Harkis to overcome their oppression and to integrate themselves into French and Algerian society.

**Keith MOSER**

### **Franco-Maghrebi Rap and Benyoucef's *Le Nom du père***

Although rap is a recent phenomenon which traces its origins to the South Bronx, it has become emblematic of a global street culture whose aspirations are stifled beneath a glass ceiling of destitution, violence, drugs, unemployment, racism, xenophobia, and exploitative hiring practices (see Halila). Record sales all across the world dismiss the notion that this artistic genre is merely a fleeting trend. As Patricia McBroom notes, "almost 30 years after hip-hop got its start in the black urban scene of the 1970's ... Last year, rap — one of four components of hip-hop culture — became the top-selling music genre in America"

(<<http://berkeley.edu/news/berkeleyan/2000/04/12/hiphop.html>>). Diverse groups of marginalized and disenfranchised peoples have appropriated this musical style to decry the injustice that exists in their respective societies. Elucidating that this hybrid and often subversive artistic form no longer uniquely belongs to the African American community, Eirlys Davies and Abdelâli Bentahila posit that "the second largest consumer of hip hop in the world is now France" ("Code Switching and the Globalisation" 373; see also Davies and Bentahila, "Code Switching as a Poetic Device"; see also Marc Martínez <<http://dx.doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.1804>>). Not only are French youth listening to US-American rappers, but ethnic minority groups elsewhere have ensured that rap inundates mainstream airwaves (see Goudailler 19).

In *Le Nom du père* Messaoud Benyoucef appears to express hope that morally courageous artists will take a stand on this polemical issue that still polarizes both French and Algerian society. Cognizant of the role that hip-hop has assumed in the Franco-Maghrebi community in general for decrying injustice and inequality, it is not by chance that an enigmatic jester raps to open and close the play. Furthermore, additional hip-hop scenes embedded throughout the text clearly underscore that rap has weaved itself into the global cultural fabric of *la culture de la rue*. The rapper provides much needed comic relief given that this play directly confronts the continued struggles of the Harkis, yet Benyoucef's conscious decision to incorporate hip-hop as opposed to other musical styles should not be underestimated. In fact, rap is the resin that binds the disparate scenes of this complex and controversial work together and which creates a cohesive whole.

Although the intentions of Benyoucef seem to be both humanistic and evident, it should be noted that this play became a lightning rod that immediately triggered caustic reactions when it was initially performed in France. Several activist Harki organizations — such as AJIR pour Les Harkis: Association, Justice, Information, Réparation — even filed defamation of character lawsuits against the French government for subsidizing the production of Benyoucef's play. Explaining their moral and legal position in an official statement entitled "Pourquoi les Harkis sont contre 'Le Nom du père'" AJIR asserts that the "play, far from contributing to our understanding of history, provides a truncated and partisan vision taking up the theory of 'treason' again that prevails in Algeria ... The Harkis of Haute-Normandie will oppose the performance of this play by all legal means ... in order to protest against hate and historical manipulation" (Castetz <<http://www.liberation.fr/societe/0101528658-une-piece-de-theatre-ravive-les-blessures-des-harkis>>; unless indicated otherwise, all translations are mine). However, in chapter one of his ethnography *The Harkis: The Wound that Never Heals* Vincent Crapanzano contests the notion that Benyoucef's motivations for writing and performing the play were dubious as AJIR maintains. Reminding the reader that *Le Nom du père* is "the third play in a trilogy dealing with violent contradictions in Algeria's struggle for independence and its aftermath," Crapanzano reaches the conclusion that although "Benyoucef is clearly critical of all the parties involved, he projects enormous sympathy for the individuals entrapped in its history" (19). As Crapanzano affirms, the intentions of Benyoucef is humanist rather than political. Attempting to transcend the "simple binary of good and evil" and the "Manicheistic dichotomy of the 'traitor-hero,'" Benyoucef endeavors to give a voice to all those including the disenfranchised Harkis who continue to suffer from the ramifications of a bitter conflict whose wounds are still visible in both societies (see Sutton; van der Schyff).

The audience must also be careful to not misunderstand the initial "Song" of the "rapper in support (that) rants or sings with a rap rhythm" (Benyoucef 5). Benyoucef does not choose to begin his play with a character who resembles an eccentric buffoon or an absurd caricature difficult to take seriously in an effort to make light of a tragic situation. Rather, Benyoucef is aware that the general public is often more receptive to art that incorporates humor to broach a taboo subject. In the context of rap, *raï*, and contemporary French cinema, Valérie Orlando discusses "humor as the most effective manner through which to reach the hearts of the French" (407). The undeniable popularity of satirical political comedy in the United States, as evidenced by Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert's successful shows on Comedy Central highlights that this phenomenon is universal. Humor can make a bitter pill easier to swallow and it can also encourage individuals to engage in profound introspection without being overtly didactic (see, e.g., McClennen; Waisanen).

As Orlando notes, rap songs are replete with comic relief that serves the function of rendering a serious message more enjoyable for the listener. Perhaps the most striking comical element that is omnipresent in the first rap and throughout the text is irony. Given that slapstick humor permeates the entire play, the rapper's affirmation which concludes the first scene "If we do not have slapstick humor / Know that it is first of all because we love you" is ironic (Benyoucef 6). This comedic form resonates and allows Benyoucef to delve into a divisive issue without alienating his audience. Crapanzano hypothesizes that part of Benyoucef's humor becomes lost in translation and Crapanzano explains, "Haddouche [Mohammed Haddouche is an Harki activist that wrote a letter condemning *Le Nom du père*] fails to see the play's terrible irony, its cynicism, and the occasional relief that comes with humor" (19-20). A plausible answer as to why numerous Harki activists were offended by *Le Nom du père* lies in the fact that the subject matter itself hits too close to home given that it is indicative of their quotidian reality. Although this comedic style can indeed be misinterpreted by sensitive listeners, irony is one of the most common humoristic tools used by contemporary rappers around the globe to transmit their calls for social change.

Franco-Maghrebi and French rappers in general also incorporate *verlan* into their lyrics in part to make their listeners laugh. *verlan* is the French equivalent of the linguistic game played by children and adolescents in the English-speaking world known as "Pig Latin." Similar to "Pig Latin," a *verlanphone* or speaker of *verlan* inverts syllables of words from the French language to create a hermetic type of communication. Although *verlan* was originally nothing more than what linguists term backslang, it should not be automatically dismissed as a meaningless, juvenile form of entertainment. First of all, *verlan* is much more prevalent than "Pig Latin." Moreover, this "secret" language is emblematic of "a language and a culture that belongs to disenfranchised inner cities" (Méla 16). Similar to the aforementioned origins of rap, *verlan* is inseparable from the ugly underbelly of the urban ghettos where its disenfranchised interlocutors reside. Numerous researchers have noted that *verlan* (or *verlen*) as it was originally called has existed for centuries (Antoine 46). However, the usage of *verlan* and other forms of French backslang, such as *largonji*, *loucherbem*, and *javanais* was marginal in mainstream society until marginalized youths from the *banlieues* (re)-appropriated *verlan* to express their mounting frustration and to give a collective voice to all minority groups living in large metropolitan areas (see Bachmann and Basier 173).

*verlan* is an integral part of the *français contemporain des cités* (FCC), but several scholars have also underscored that Franco-Maghrebi youths in particular have adopted this street language as their "second language" (Goudaillier 8; see also Méla 85). Vivienne Méla elucidates that although *verlan* has now become mainstream and is popular with all elements of French society, "By studying *verlan*, we quickly realize that young people of Arabic origin, beurs, are the main users" (74). This social phenomenon explains why *verlan* has borrowed many words from the Arabic language in addition to the fact that French-Arabic code switching is so prevalent in French rap. Moreover, many of these lexical items of Arabic origin are now part of quotidian French vernacular used by young people all across the country (see Gross, McMurray, Swedenburg 24)). Although many language purists and organizations such as the Académie Française resist these linguistic intrusions, popular culture including rap, *raï*, and cinema which is representative of the diverse Franco-Maghrebi population has impacted contemporary French civilization to such an extent that the dictionary *Le Petit Robert* recognizes that terms originating from *verlan* such as *beurs*, *keuf*, *meuf*, and *keum* are "real" French words (see Sloutsky and Black 321).

Given the commercial success of Franco-Maghrebi artists, their so-called "second language" is now spoken all across France even in bourgeois circles. As Méla underscores, "We can also explain the appearance of verlan in all social layers with the ideal of youth that prevails in our society. Speaking verlan is to speak like a young person" (88). For this reason it is not surprising that the first words from the rapper of *Le Nom du père* are "Hello, hello guys, hello girls / tonight you are not going to a party / because tonight we are performing theater for you" (5). Benyoucef clearly targets his message at the young people in the audience for whom *verlan* represents an in-group marker of their social identity. If meaningful progress is going to be made that would allow the Franco-Maghrebi community including the Harkis to have a more stable place in French society, it is the youth which will champion these social changes that could finally close the open wounds to which Crapanzano refers in his study of the Harkis. In other words, Benyoucef's conscious decision to place both rap and *verlan* on center stage in *Le Nom du père* is revealing. Could rap once again assume a similar role for the Harkis as it has for countless other underprivileged groups? Paradoxically, the anonymous rapper, which could easily be dismissed as merely a ludicrous comedian at first glance, is one of the most important characters in the entire play. His music is a subversive social tool designed to foster a dialogue related to a polemical issue that needs to be resolved.

In addition to code switching between formal French and the dialect spoken in many suburbs that blends French, *verlan*, and Arabic, the rapper's declaration "If you are a fan of Alexandrian poetry / This is the style of thieves" (Benyoucef 5). This affirmation allows Benyoucef to both attach himself to and to distance himself from French literary tradition. The word *malandrin* — the word choice *malandrin* is perhaps also emblematic of the literary technique of foreshadowing given that the protagonist S.N.P. will become a skilled assassin for radical Islamic terrorist organizations — appears to reflect a direct homage to François Villon. Noting that *les argots à clef* have existed in France for centuries, Jean-Pierre Goudaillier suggests that "In the 15th century, François Villon composed his famous ballads in the language of crooks, the dialect of la Coquille, a slang of a brotherhood of thieves, that gave up part of their vocabulary as they were being tortured" (6). Although the language of *Le Nom du père* is nowhere near as cryptic as that of Villon's *Ballades en jargon*, given that most youth would understand every single word, it represents a refusal to respect the *règles de bienséance externes*. The usage of *verlan* is now trendy, but it still grates the nerves of many traditionalists (see Sloutsky and Black 308) which would consider this form of backslang too unrefined for the stage.

The aforementioned affirmation by the unnamed rapper is also emblematic of metatheater or a play which reveals its own presence as a work of fiction. This direct admission on the part of the playwright, however, does not undermine the importance of his artificial artistic creation. Instead, the rapper's lyrics are reminiscent of Pablo Picasso's assertion that "Art is a lie that brings us nearer to the truth" (Picasso qtd. in Cook 22). Although all art is a product of human imagination, it often forces people to reflect upon preconceived notions and misguided or simplistic logic. Yet, the rapper's declaration "If you have come here to take the lead / Here, there are no intellectuals that are showing off / If you think that the theater is the center of the world / Or facile psychology / You are going to be disappointed / Because here there is no introspection / It is a question of tormented memories / It is about lives that are agonizing because of history" appears to be both ironic and sincere (Benyoucef 5). Benyoucef wants to make it clear that he is not writing a naïve *roman/pièce à thèse* that reduces the veritable complexity of the Algerian War to a Manichean perspective of absolute good and evil. Conversely, Benyoucef is also cognizant that his play, similar to rap, challenges authority and exposes crimes against humanity. Moreover, Benyoucef is aware of the inherent limitations of art given that he avoids proposing simplistic solutions for complex problems that plague French society. Art can awaken public consciousness and create a space in which a dialogue can transpire, but it is not a social panacea that can instantly resolve divisive conflicts.

Although the next rap scene is of a much shorter duration, the nuances of this passage befuddle the spectator/reader. S.N.P.'s Harki friend Sakhr is the second hip-hop artist introduced by Benyoucef. In addition to its moral ambivalence, Sakhr's song is striking given that it appears to be rather impromptu. According to the didascalia, "He (Sakhr) pulls himself together, acts like a

rapper and sings in SNP's direction" (the character's name is generally written as S.N.P. throughout most of the text) (Benyoucef 20). The spectator is left to ponder why Sakhr would start to rap seemingly out of the blue as opposed to speaking to his companion in a normal fashion. This unanticipated melody does not seem to correspond to theatrical rules governing *la vraisemblance*. However, it should be noted that "battle rapping" which can occur spontaneously on the street is an official genre (see Davies and Bentahila 371). For this reason, one could speculate that Benyoucef is implying that hip-hop already constitutes a vital part of Harki culture even if a specifically Harki rap group has yet to penetrate the mainstream French music scene. Given that many second/third-generation Harkis still live in unforgiving urban slums or *Cités* in Southern France where access to good life seems like a cruel caricature, rap — whether it is played on the radio or performed on the street — offers a cathartic outlet in which disillusioned Harki youths can express their social anguish. The song lyrics "There is more than weed that is being spit [e.g. spitting a rhyme] / in order to not see the abyss" (Benyoucef 20) concretize the desperate plight of the Harkis who still struggle to integrate themselves into French society. Moreover, the word *beu* (*verlan* for *herbe* [weed]) reflects the aforementioned phenomenon of code switching which is indicative of the French dialect spoken by disenfranchised French youths who reside in the violent and impoverished *banlieues*. For many of these excluded adolescents and teenagers, substance abuse is rampant because it provides an ephemeral existential remedy that momentarily allows them to forget dire realities from which there appears to be no escape. Indeed, many second-generation Harkis who grew up in the previously mentioned camps that wreaked of despair and misery use alcohol or drugs to numb their pain. Similar to protagonists from other Harki works such as *Moze* (Rahmani) and *Mon Père, ce harki* (Kerchouche) — it should be noted that Benyoucef is Algerian, but he is not a member of the Harki community: the fact that Benyoucef is an outsider in comparison to Harki authors, such as Fatima Besnaci-Lancou, Zahia Rahmani, and Dalia Kerchouche, is also a plausible explanation as to why his play triggered public outcries and litigation — S.N.P. from *Le Nom du père* has a fractured psyche inseparable from the traumatic experience of living in refugee camps which were inadequate as a form of permanent housing. The myriad of references to mind-altering substances in rap lyrics themselves and throughout the text in *Le Nom du père* mirror the lyrics of countless hip-hop songs which represent many divergent cultures. Without an easy path to integration or even a realistic way to shed the shackles of poverty, it is understandable that many Harkis would drown their sorrows.

However, although the artistic construction of the play highlights that Benyoucef is aware of the counter-hegemonic role of hip-hop and its global significance, he also understands that this subversive tool has often been used by Franco-Maghrebi artists with opposing agendas. Specifically, whereas many Franco-Maghrebi rappers decry Islamic fundamentalism and its repercussions, other hip-hop musicians of North-African descent promote religious radicalism. In the context of Islamic rap in general, Souad Halila notes that "In the face of what is happening in the much hurt and heart-broken Muslim world, many Muslims and sympathizing non-Muslims are genuinely reverting back to the Quran to come to terms with their current powerlessness ... Muslims' equal interest in Islamic Hip Hop and religious Anasheeds may be considered as another therapeutic cure to a deep-seated sense of loss and powerlessness" (41). Similar to substance abuse, rap has become a coping mechanism for underprivileged Muslim youths all around the world who have no voice. Additionally, many Muslim adolescents and teenagers in France have found solace and a type of collective identity by embracing the traditional virtues of the Quran. The contemporary rap lyrics of Franco-Maghrebi artists often reflect this phenomenon: "In the 1990s many Beurs turned to Islam as a means to find acceptance and bridge the gap between themselves and their parents' *foreign* origins" (Orlando 405). Orlando elucidates that "seeking to find out what it means to be Beur, or an Arab, who speaks French but embraces Islam, has proved detrimental to the children of immigrant communities because recourse to Islam is exactly part of the reason racism in France is on the rise" (405) and asserts that not only are many French youths of Arab descent (re)-discovering Islam, but they are also increasingly vulnerable to "fundamentalist coercion" (406). In other words, the destitution and desperation of many Franco-Maghrebi young people have caused them to embrace radical forms of Islam that have exacerbated social tensions and further alienated them from mainstream French society.

The enigmatic ending of Sakhr's song in which Benyoucef professes that "Sharia law is a virtue / and the Koran fucks up everything" (20) is best understood in the above context. From a linguistic standpoint, however, the moral ambivalence of this statement destabilizes the reader/spectator. Is Benyoucef using rap to defend or denounce Islamic fundamentalism in the Harki community? Is Benyoucef validating polarizing, misogynistic Sharia laws that many moderate Muslims consider to be crimes against humanity and an offensive perversion of their faith?

A close reading of the third rap performed by Sakhr eliminates this disquieting ambiguity. Although S.N.P. will in fact be successfully recruited and trained by terrorist cells that promote Jihad ideology, the ironic tone of this passage leaves little doubt concerning the author's true intentions. In this specific rap, Sakhr offers the following advice to the protagonist, "Don't try to understand man you are only a loser ... / The straight path of the savior is Sharia law / Listen well man and don't try to think" (Benyoucef 38). Sakhr's religious counsel in which he urges S.N.P. to stop thinking and to obey fanatical spiritual leaders blindly is ironic. Moreover, Benyoucef's incorporation of words derived from Arabic, such as *cleb* (chien; dog) in the scene appears to be directed at Franco-Maghrebi youths encouraging them to deconstruct radical Islamic ideology. It is not by chance that Benyoucef chooses the dialect of inner-city Franco-Maghrebi adolescents in which to deliver his nuanced message. Further, this linguistic phenomenon epitomizes what Méla describes as the *défrancisation* of both *verlan* and *le français contemporain des cités* (32). The Franco-Maghrebi community, many of which live in the projects, is the major impetus driving linguistic change in urban settings in contemporary French civilization. Thus, the deliberate code switching employed by Benyoucef dismisses extremist viewpoints concerning national identity that cautions citizens to be wary of *métissage*. For linguists who study modern French slang, the influence of Arabic and Berber societies from North African is evident. In an era characterized by globalization, urbanization, and immigration, maintaining the "purity" of a given culture appears to be rather naïve. Since rap itself is indicative of cultural exchange as an eclectic genre with numerous influences, it is a perfect medium in which to promote hybridity. Instead of composing his play in standard French and thus respecting the *règles de bienséance*, Benyoucef places the Franco-Maghrebi *banlieue* dialect on center stage to encourage youth of North-African descent to be proud of the hybrid culture that they have created.

In the next song, performed by the comedian — although Benyoucef does not attribute this rap to the jester in the didascalia, the English word SONG in capital letters which precedes the musical sequence makes it obvious that the rapper is speaking to the public — Benyoucef continues to develop some of the same themes as in the previous refrains. The rapper also reveals that S.N.P. has fallen into the trap of Islamic radicalism and is now a terrorist: "After observing the Shiites / and listening to their calls to fight ... / He finally arrived in Pakistan ... / There he endured a rough training / eating up a ton of preachy propaganda" (Benyoucef 45). In a similar vein, Halila exposes the "holier-than-thou messages" of Islamic rappers that promote religious fanaticism (36). In this passage, Benyoucef appears to use rap itself to denounce this (re)-appropriation of a musical genre by zealots who do not always have pure intentions. The pejorative manner in which Benyoucef describes the ideological indoctrination and military training which S.N.P. receives in Pakistan once again casts little doubt concerning his feelings toward militant fundamentalism. Moreover, it is hardly surprising that the comedian is the spokesperson that communicates this message to the audience given that his humoristic persona softens the tone of the entire play. Although the rapper appears to be much more matter of fact and serious in this song, Benyoucef has already fully developed this character as a personage that provides comic relief.

In addition to summarizing S.N.P.'s tragic life story which culminates with his ill-fated decision to become a terrorist, the opening lines of the SONG concretize the protagonist's problematic search for identity. Reminding the spectator/reader that S.N.P. has many other names, the rapper muses, "Ali alias Alain alias Elias / alias SNP alias Abou-Chafra / With Sakhr and emir Mossaab alas / left on a pilgrimage" (Benyoucef 45). The litany of names might confuse the audience initially, but it highlights the fact that S.N.P. has never been able to create a stable identity in French society. The French government allowed thousands of Harkis to immigrate to France after the failure of Algerian authorities to enforce the provisions of the Evian Accords that protected the Harkis from retribution. However, the remote camps in which this marginalized community was interned did not

offer a viable path to full citizenship. Given the fact that they were intentionally hidden and segregated from the rest of French society for decades, the Harkis were unable to find their place in a country that wanted to sweep this divisive element of its history under the rug. Moreover, many French people were suspicious of this diverse disenfranchised group, most of which spoke a different language and practiced another religion. Although the French government officially abandoned the assimilation model of immigration in 1960, the new paradigm still possesses assimilationist tendencies (see Marranci <[http://www.umbc.edu/MA/index/number5/marranci/marr\\_0.htm](http://www.umbc.edu/MA/index/number5/marranci/marr_0.htm)>). In a social climate that refuses to accept diversity, how can moral and ethnic minorities that differ greatly from mainstream society even create a hybrid identity?

Not only do the Harkis appear to be victims of a rigid immigration paradigm, still lauded by extremist political parties such as the *Front National*, but the continued suffering of this community gives credence to the adage that "history is written by the winners." Although France lost what was to be its last colonial war and thus its politicians had to endure the social repercussions of such an embarrassing defeat, French authorities were still able to control public perception of the Harkis. Given that most first-generation Harkis did not speak French fluently or sometimes at all, they were unable to defend themselves as they were shipped from one secluded camp to another. The situation of the Harkis was far worse in Algeria whose leaders used the *supplétifs* and their families as scapegoats to conceal corruption and dire inequality. Unwanted on both sides of the Mediterranean and considered to be a "problem" in a country in which the possibility of *métissage* or forging a new authentic hybrid identity that incorporates elements of two or more cultures is socially unacceptable, S.N.P. struggles to find any fixed sense of meaning or place. Benyoucef's decision to incorporate rap in his play should also be understood in this context. Hip-hop is a form of art that blends musical genres which represent divergent cultural traditions together in order to create an innovative style that appeals to many layers of society. Thus, rap is a subversive device that undermines homogenization and valorizes the cultural miscegenation that is indicative of the modern world.

Summarizing S.N.P.'s fluid identity, Catherine Brun — in addition to chapter one of Crapanzano's ethnography related to the Harkis, Brun's study appears to be the single text in literary criticism to date that examines Benyoucef's complex work *Le nom du père* — notes that the three initials which designate the tortured protagonist in the play serve to "better mark his paradoxical affiliation with these broken peoples, S.N.P.s were separated by colonial history: uprooted from ancestral naming traditions, cut off from an assimilation in motion" (Benyoucef 36). Brun further elucidates that "A S.N.P. is a 'person with nothing': no name, no father, no culture, no words, barely a man ... because S.N.P. is the son (double) of this invisible father that he rejects with all of his being ... the son categorically rejects all of the names that the 'authorities' can attribute to him" (37). Uprooted from their cultural origins without the possibility of returning to their native land for fear of vengeance, the Harkis suffer from diasporic trauma in a country that demands that they simply be "French." In such an inhospitable atmosphere, successfully integrating oneself into society is a daunting task. Brun also underscores that the "shame of the father" further compounds S.N.P.'s incapacity to define himself according to his own criteria. As evidenced by the works of second-generation Harki writers such as Besnaci-Lancou, the profound stigma concerning the choice of the father to "betray" the principles of the Algerian revolution and to support the French has been passed down to future generations that have never even visited their country of origin. Thus, Crapanzano refers to the tragic saga of the Harkis as "The wound that never heals" (15). This vilification, exile, and historical oversimplification prevent the Harkis from truly identifying with a country (Algeria) that despises and distrusts them. Additionally, many Franco-Algerians, whose parents supported the other side during the Algerian War, still view the Harkis as traitors. Hence, even inside of the Franco-Maghrebi community, a considerable amount of tension separates the Harkis as pariahs who seem to have no place anywhere. As Régis Pierret asserts, "can we talk about an interstitial community, the stigmatism preventing any type of complete identification. Being a Harki is to be neither totally something nor something else, and to always be confronted by one's stigmatism" (99). This pervasive reality explains why S.N.P.'s continued search for identity never seems to bear any fruit.

In conclusion, Benyoucef examines the paradoxes of the literary profession. However, this complex and divisive theatrical work also underscores that art can indeed serve as an invaluable method of decrying injustice and demanding social change. Even if hip-hop is an imperfect tool similar to any other human invention and that can be used for contradictory purposes as evidenced by rap music — that glorifies radical forms of Islam — this unfortunate reality does not mean that this genre should be disregarded. The fact that rap has been (re)-appropriated by musicians from many divergent cultural backgrounds epitomizes the profound trauma which is indicative of the urban malaise experienced by disillusioned youth in ghettos across the planet. Despite what staunch supporters of neoliberal globalization might claim, the streets of the "global village" deconstruct the pervasive notion that everyone has equal access to the "American dream" and that has been exported to nearly all corners of the globe. Benyoucef's *Le Nom du père* makes the spectator/reader ponder whether an US-American musical import could paradoxically be a viable part of the solution for both French society and the modern world.

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Author's profile: Keith Moser teaches French-language literature and culture at Mississippi State University. His interests in research include twentieth- and twenty-first century French/Francophone literature, Harki literature, globalization, representations of ecstasy, semiology/post-semiology, diaspora/(im)migration studies, and French/Francophone media studies. In addition to numerous articles, Moser's book publications include *J.M.G. Le Clézio: A Concerned Citizen of the Global Village* (2012), "*Privileged Moments*" in *the Novels and Short Stories of J.M.G. Le Clézio: His Contemporary Development of a Traditional French Literary Device* (2008), and the collected volume *J.M.G. Le Clézio dans la forêt des paradoxes* (with Bruno Thibault, 2012). E-mail: <[kam131@msstate.edu](mailto:kam131@msstate.edu)>