The vocation of the IISMM (Institut d’Etudes de l’Islam et des Sociétés du Monde Musulman) is to make the contemporary world of Islam known and to stimulate the curiosities of Western intellectuals. Having organized various high-level research programmes, the duration of which ranges from two to four years, La création artistique en pays d’Islam (The contemporary artistic creation in Islamic regions), a programme run by Jocelyne Dakhlia, director of a study at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) in Paris, adheres to this perspective.

Several years ago, the West began to discover Algerian rai music, the films directed by Kiarostami, and the novels authored by Mahfouz. However, other artistic sectors, classical or popular, remain little appreciated. Research in the domains of social science, sociology or the history of art are music and theatre, cinema, architecture, painting, the plastic arts, and dance aim to explore the dynamics at work and to reveal the rapport between modernity and tradition that is inherited or re-appropriated in various Muslim societies. The influence of Islam varies according to national contexts and geographic zones, but also according to the different aesthetic supports. It is through the joint perspective of social sciences, those in charge of institutions, and artists, that questions arise concerning the dynamism of artistic creation, aesthetic and technical modernity, and also the role of the state and private actors (sponsorship, censure) in contemporary artistic creation in Muslim societies. The ‘Artistic Creation in Islamic Regions’ is to present an overview of contemporary artistic creation in Africa, Asia, and the Arab world in its entirety, a borrowed phenomenon and corresponds to the theme, “perspectives. Already, the relations that artistic creation maintains with the West, with tradition, and with Islam presented themselves as determining factors in the different systems of creative production.

The cinema

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