

SPRING CULTURAL FESTIVAL FOR THE CHILDREN OF TIWADOU

Promoter: *Mohamed Sahnoun Ouhammou*

Type of activity: *education*



The idea of the Cultural Festival was born during a sustainable tourism travel, when a group of Italians shared with Mohamed Sahnoun family the Mutton Feast, last December 31st, 2007. In a letter sent to those travellers, Mohcine Benlemqadem (teacher) and Ahmed Bourar (school director) from Essaadiyine Primary School announced the first cultural festival, with the logo

"TOGETHER TO IMPROVE THE FUTURE FOR OUR CHILDREN"

The main aim of the festival is to make the population feel the need of education for young people. Besides, it represents one of the few opportunities in this valley for a great popular celebration, involving children, adults and the old altogether.

Up to now, the festival, which reached its third edition in 2009, has been financed throughout the project cash of some responsible travels.

Beginning from the seventh edition, scheduled for April 2013, the name will be changed in

Cultural Festival Mohamed Sahnoun of the Young of Tiouadou

to honour who wanted the festival, Mohamed Sahnoun, died on 2012, Novembre 28th.

APRIL 16th-21st, 2007: FIRST EDITION



83 students from the Essaadiyine School (including the Tiwadou and the Temguilcht classes) and 30 girls from the centre Afella-Ighir attended the first edition of the festival. For the final evening party, in the palmerie, various hosts were invited, among which traditional dancers, authorities, musicians and friends from all over Europe.

Program

16th April - Monday

opening ceremony
exhibition of local craft



<i>17th April - Tuesday</i>	sport (athletics): races Tiwadou-Temguilcht
<i>18th April - Wednesday</i>	art (drawing): graphic art competition culture: Tiwadou-Temguilcht cultural competition
<i>19th April - Thursday</i>	environment: cleaning and rubbish collecting in the countryside
<i>20th April - Friday</i>	sport (football): final match Tiwadou-Temguilcht culture: Koran reading competition
<i>21st April - Saturday</i>	closing ceremony prize distribution to both winners and losers folklore and theatre about rural life

Costs

The total cost of the first edition has been 6.250 dirham (around 560 euro), financed by both some YALLAZ responsible travels and other private supporters.

MARCH 18th-24th, 2008: SECOND EDITION



The second edition of the festival was held in March 2008, involving in some of the various activities some students from the Italian Musical School IClassico, with which a **Twinning contract** has been signed. 60 students from the Essaadiyine School (Tiwadou section only), 42 girls from the centre Dar Talibat and 2 students from the school IClassico of Milan attended the second edition of the festival. The day after the Festival closing, there was a great show lasting till night and involving the entire village: gnawa and Berber professional musicians, a theatre performance concerning a traditional marriage by the girls from Dar Talibat, and finally the classic distribution of thanks giving plates.

Program

<i>18th March - Tuesday</i>	opening ceremony local craft exhibition
<i>19th March - Wednesday</i>	sport (athletics): competitions
<i>20th March - Thursday</i>	art (drawing): graphic art competition
<i>21st March - Friday</i>	culture: cultural competition culture: Koran reading competition
<i>22nd March - Saturday</i>	environment: cleaning and rubbish collecting in the countryside sport (athletics): final competitions sport (football): final match with students from both Tiwadou and IClassico
<i>23rd March - Sunday</i>	closing ceremony prize distribution to both winners and losers folklore and theatre performances about rural life
<i>24th March - Monday</i>	Gnawa and Amazigh musical groups performance about a traditional marriage

Costs

The cost of the second edition has been 9.250 dirham (around 825 euro), financed by both some YALLAZ responsible travels and other private supporters.



JUNE 26th-28th, 2009: THIRD EDITION



Another cool edition of the festival, actively involving children and parents from both the village of Tiwadou and Temguilchte. This year the festival was born at the latest and lasted only three days, because it has been held one week after the municipal election which excited the spirits of lots of people. In the matter of fact, all the Moroccan associative activities has been stopped before the election, to avoid any political exploitation of the associations work.

The first day a cloudy and rainy sky helped the young participants to athletic races and football matches. Among girls, Soumia, even taller, as usual left behind her colleagues in the cross-country race. The Temguilchte team won 5 to 2 the football match with Tiwadou, played among rose rocks and palm trees, with lots of children and girls as spectators and fans. Best player Mohamed Zidani.

The second day the competitions of culture, Koran reading and drawing. The yearly rubbish collection in the palmerie, which normally ended with a huge fire (may be not very healthy, but taking a new environmental consciousness, inchallah), hasn't been made: the season is very late, putting children at risk of scorpion and snakes. Anyway the school and the courtyard have been perfectly cleaned. The winner drawing among the students of the 6th year represents a local landscape, with a big eagle in the centre, a sign forbidding fire (written in French!) and with a plastic bottle crossed by a stroke.

After a sunny and desert morning (during which only Mohamed Sahnoun and Zaid went on working around!) the afternoon of the third day was dedicated to the prize-giving ceremony. Really many small children, a chorus of mothers and girls, who sang by invention on various themes, a musical group which made all people dance and sing.

The beautiful song from Koran, by the winners of the competition opened the afternoon. There has been Ahmed, the school director, and Mohcine (as speaker) and all the other teachers Icham, Said and Rashid, from Temguilchte.

The two most innovative performance were a sort of fashion show (boys dressed as women and girls as men) and the speed competition in putting on as many clothes as possible in the shortest time.

Finally, speeches with thanks and goodbye by Ahmed, leaving the place of director to move to Safi, where his family live, and by Mohamed Sahnoun.

Costs

From the first cost analysis, the total for the Festival should amount to 5053 dh, which can be totally covered by some YALLAZ responsible travels, leaving something for next edition or for not-yet-accounted expenses.

MARCH, 29th - APRIL 4th, 2010: FOURTH EDITION





The fourth edition of the Festival took place during a whole week, and the program for the competitions was the same as in the previous editions.

The environmental day (collection of garbage in the *palmerie*) was played by four very aggressive teams; the goal was to collect as many garbage bags as possible and store them in the school courtyard: differently from before, the garbage was not burnt but collected by a lorry sent by the authorities.

A group of Italian people assisted and participated in the fourth edition; during the last day feast, beside theatre, mimic, dance and Berber songs shows performed by both the school pupils and the Souk college kids, the marriage of two young of the village was celebrated.

The true attraction of this edition was the show of Mikele the fire-eater, being Mikele a *YALLAZ* responsible traveller: adults and children really appreciated his show, probably the first time for the valley.

Costs

The total cost of the Festival was 1080 euros, fully financed by some *YALLAZ* responsible travellers.

APRIL 17th - 24th, 2011: FIFTH EDIZION



The fifth edition of the Festival took place in the week of christian Easter, meaning from April 17th to 24th; differently as before, this was not a holiday week for the children so the activities were carried out during the afternoons.

The participants were all the children of the primary school, the nursery, and some kids from the Afella-Ighir college (some of them were involved in the organisation) and from other villages in the region. The last day all inhabitants of Tiwadou participated, and even the Caid appeared. As every year, this was judged "the best edition ever done!"

During the *environmental day* the garbage was collected by four teams who were in charge of differentiate among garbage types: paper, plastic, metal, glass. Hard discussion at the end to decree the winning team!

The cultural competition, based on three-children teams, took place at the school, during the evening: many girls and women of the village participated!

The *kora match* (football) was played, for the first time in the Festival history, by mixed teams girls-boys: apparently the boys did not appreciate this invasion, while the girls definitely did, and after the official match the elder girls invaded the field and played a all-female match, being Awatif, one of the teachers, the boss. The climate was very unfair, with a cold wind; after the sunset it was impossible for the audience to stand looking at the match, so *Abdellah*, the true discovery of this edition, animated some gymn activities who warmed up the people!

Some other protagonists of the week were: *Ahmed*, from Rabat, who played his lute to entertain the children, taught them to play with the calligraphy (and he prepared the required equipment making use of plants found in the palmerie) and helped in the preparation of the Sunday show; *Lia and her mother*, two Swiss women, taught to the children a mountain Swiss dance.



Anyway, the most popular hosts were Mikele the fire-eater and his group: **MIKELE E LE BIMBE!** Up to last minute in doubt whether to perform their show on the school roof or not, due to the strong wind, at the end Mikele, Carlotta, Paola and Giada did it and were welcomed by a public who started enjoying exactly when the lights were switched off.

A news in Sunday show was the **projection of the previous editions photos**, over a screen mounted by Antonino, a **YALLAZ** responsible traveller; the children enjoyed look at themselves in the photos!

Beside the traditional prize-giving ceremony, during the Sunday show some theatre *pieces* about terrorism and about the family life were performed, and also a *piece* in a doctor studio was acted by the elder kids: judging from the public approval, it might have been truly hilarious! And finally girls and boys performed a dance while dressing as the other sex, and even **the teacher Mohcine, who presented the festival**, wore a woman *jellaba*.

Costs

At final balance the fifth edition of the festival costed **830 euros**, collected thanks to some **YALLAZ** responsible travellers.

APRIL 1st - 8th, 2012: SIXTH EDITION



in tamazight "tiwadou welcomes its hosts"

Great news for the sixth edition of the Festival: the organising association was no longer the *Essaadiyine Primary School Pupils' Parents* but the *Tiouadou Village Development Association*. The focus was therefore moved from the school to the village, and the slogan for this edition was: **a party for all the village!**

Besides the competitions already exploited in the previous Festival editions, as the Coran reading, the cultural competition, the athletics (country running), the *kora* matches (both for children and for teenagers), the rubbish collection, the drawing competition, this year a nurse was invited to give a speech about **personal and environmental hygien**, and the workshop was attended by a lot of village people (even women and old men).

The traditional objects expo doubled: in the feminine embroidery workspace dresses and various objects, enriched with Mohamed Farid's paintings and his wife's embroidery pieces, and outside an **food expo** was mounted, showing to the hosts some of the traditional dishes of this region that are about to be forgotten (even because of the complexity of their preparation): the table was open for everybody to taste the dishes, a very tasteful event!

The stage for the final ceremony, on Saturday, was placed outside the school wall, and the nursery class

"Our story starts in any day of some years ago.

In the heart of the Mediterranean a very special harbour exists. Born by chance, this sand drift used to host pirates, religious minorities and any type of bandits.

Inside this caciucco of souls a pirate lives, a captain with a crew but without a ship. He is called **CRAT SAFUT** (three flames in tamazight) for his funny beard and for his power to tame the fire spirit. He is an old demon with a sweet heart, imprisoned in the body of a romi (a Western).

But every year the demon opens up and flies.

And every year in Tiouadou under the shadow of a Amazigh this spirit is free to dance with the fire, in the honour of his Berber friends."

author: Lucio Scardino



was used as a backstage. The ceremony was presented by the three teachers: **Hicham, Mohcine, and Moustapha**, who last arrived at the school (just some weeks) and who is already perfectly integrated and appreciated by students and parents.

As usual the children were prized, but with much more gifts with respect to previous years! And as usual the comics, dances, **theatre** (even with hot subjects as drugs and terrorism), and the immancabile **Mikele the fire-eater**: his show was introduced by the reading of *Lucio tale* (in Italian, but also in French, thanks to *Dorothee*, and in Tamazight thanks to *Mohamed Farid*). The following of the night was then delighted by the **ahwash**, traditional Berber dances and music of this region.

Costs

The balance of the sixths Festival edition was **1270 euros**, collected by the project cash of several **YALLAZ** responsible tours.



APRIL 3rd - 9th, 2013: SEVENTH EDITION

The seventh edition of the Festival was played between March 31st and April 9th, again corresponding to the school holidays start.

Young people and adults from Tiouadou and the neightborough villages faced on 16 different competitions, in the field of culture, of sport (athletics, race, football for children and senior), of drawing, of religion (Koran reading), of leasure (bocce), of cooking (traditional regional recipes implemented by the women).

157 prizes were distributed, as trophies, medals, sport clothes, balls, drawing equipments, books, Koran, Arab and French dictioaries); moreover, some awards were delivered.

During the last day, the students played 15 theatre pieces, but the music background was kept low in sign of respect to Mohamed Sahnoun's widow, still grieving; moreover, games for young people and adults, and the "traditional" show of Mikele the "sputafuoco".





Summing up, the seventh edition of the Festival was participated by between 60 and 120 persons per day, and involved children and young people of Tiouadou and the surrounding villages, girls and women, and the whole Essaaidiyine School.

Costs

The balance of the seventh Festival edition was 870 euros, collected by the project cash of several *YALLAZ* responsible tours and the contribution of Tiouadou Association for the Development.

PROJECT CONCLUSION

The eight Festival edition, scheduled for April 3rd to 12th, was finally cancelled: the project, a very ambitious one, involved students and population of several surrounding villages, but the required coordination for the arrangement was missing and therefore the staff of Essaadiyine School, traditionally the organizing committee, declared this project over.

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