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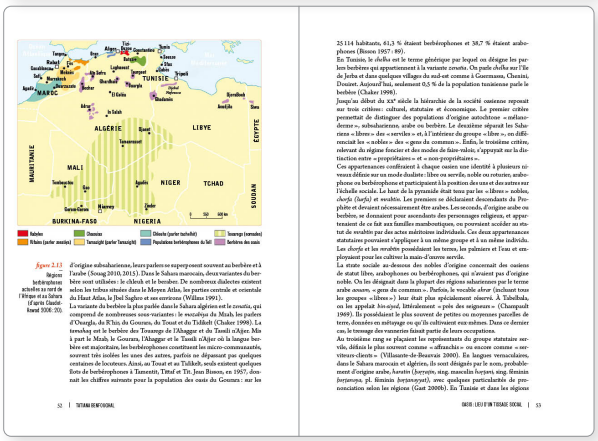

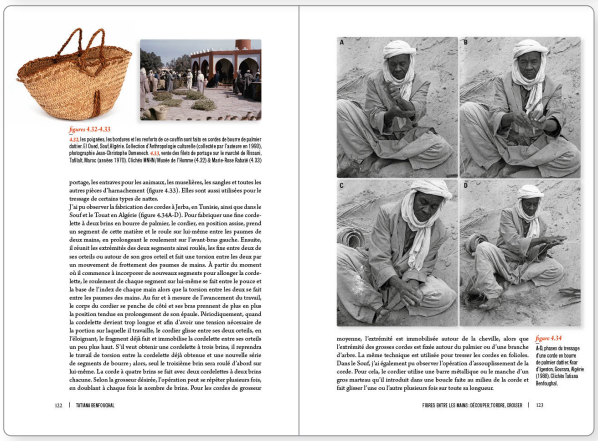

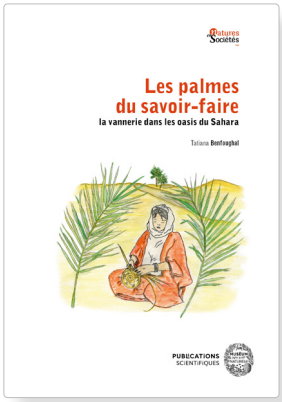

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Les palmes du savoir-faire

la vannerie dans les oasis du Sahara

Tatiana **Benfoughal**

THE BOOK

This work is the result of a research led by Tatiana **Benfoughal** in the Saharan oases of the three Maghreb countries: Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. in order to investigate basketry craft and all its connections to environment and society, the author takes on three different directions of approach. Based on the use of fibers extracted from the palm-tree, basket-making is first considered at first as an element of the oasitic agrosystem, assimilated into a more global Saharan system characterized by two complementary ways of life, nomadic and sedentary. Then, in an exploration of the objects of basketr making, on par with the most, painstaking museography Tatiana Benfoughal analyses weaving techniques, the knowledge and know-how that are linked to them, as well as the ways weavers, men and women, value what is "beautiful" and what is "modern". in the same section, the description of the different uses of basketworks invites the reader into daily and festive life of the oases inhabitants. Finally, in the third approach, the author proposes an analysis of the status of men and women basket weavers within the oases society, of their working conditions and the means of marketing their production. The author seeks in particular to grasp basket weaving as part of two closely connected contemporary situations: on one hand the partial perpetuation of a former way of life and practice and, on the other, the deep restructuring of economic and sociocutural life in the Sahara.

THE AUTHOR

Tatiana **Benfoughal** is the holder of a PhD in ethnology obtained at EHESS, Paris (1986). Her researche explores material culture and crafts in the Maghreb and Sahara and of European countries. At present she is honorary research associate at the National Natural History Museum (UMR 208 Paloc – local heritage, environment and globalization). Tatiana Benfoughal has been a research associate at the Russian Museum of Ethnography in Saint-Petersbourg (1971-1975) then chief curator at the Museum of Ethnography and Prehistory in Algiers, known as Bardo Museum (1975-1993). in France, from 1993 to 1997, she has been invited as a visiting lecturer at Aix-en-Provence University and as a teacher at the École du Louvre, then, from 1997 to 2016, she held a position of project engineer at the Musée de l'Homme/MNHN, where, from 2008, she has been in charge of cultural anthropology collections.

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