

Discussion Points for Ali Zaoua

The actors in the movie were actual street urchins who lived on the street. At the end of filming, all but a couple of the children returned to life on the street, despite offers of assistance. What are the advantages and disadvantages of working with this type of cast? Can you spot the professional actor among the children (it was the older one, Dib).

What is Ayouch saying about life on the streets?

The film has been described as magical realism. How would you describe its magical realism? What other similar films does *Ali Zaoua* evoke?

How does the stark reality of the children's lives interweave with their rich fantasy life? The contrast between real life and fantasy life? What is Ayouch's point in doing this?

The director, Nabil Ayouch, also creates a strong differentiation between land and sea. How is this manifested?

The three friends, Kwita, Omar, and Boubker, seem to have three distinct personalities which at times compliment each other and at times are at odds with each other. What do you think are the differences and similarities between these three characters? Are they symbols for anything more grand, something more fantastical? For example, Boubker is found reading a prayer book, Omar reaches out to Ali's mother, and Kwita is determined to fulfill Ali's wishes.

What is meant by the subtitle of "Prince of the Streets" in describing Ali Zaoua? What motivates the children in their determination to bury Ali Zaoua.

Do you sense any documentary techniques in the film? If so, how?

How are adults in the film portrayed? What is their relevance?

Throughout the film there is a beautiful overhead tracking shot of the city which is repeated several times. The shot is particularly striking for its complex composition, a strip of dense, industrialized urban land contrasted on both sides with the vast blue sea. What is the significance of this oft-repeated shot? How does it resolve itself in the end?

Some subscribers compare *Ali Zaoua* to a Moroccan *Lost Boys*. What other films does it remind you of?