



MAROC

SOU

REVUE CULTURELLE

...ième Biennale des arts plastiques arabes à Bagdad...

DE L'ASSOCIATION MAROCAINE DES PLASTICIENS

combat pour l'existence arabe
ses implications politiques,
elles ne peut pas méconnaître
des plasticiens, d'autant que
science politico-culturelle s'ac-
e jour en jour chez les masses
lisent désormais que l'existen-
maine ne peut se faire que si
nditions et les moyens d'ex-
cette existence sont entiè-

mière biennale arabe ne prenne pas
exemple sur les biennales occidenta-
les qui consistent surtout en un ras-
semblement de professionnels, en
une exposition plate, pareille à n'im-
porte quelle exposition commerciale
où c'est la loi de l'offre et de la de-
mande qui détermine entièrement les
caractéristiques que la production
doit avoir dans l'étape ultérieure. En
tant que témoins de la réalité arabe,

tribuer des prix dans le cadre d'une
biennale qui, à notre sens, doit être
considérée comme la participation
nationale des plasticiens arabes à la
cause arabe commune.

D'une manière générale, les ob-
jectifs de cette manifestation artis-
tique ne se réaliseront pas propor-
tionnellement au nombre des pays



théâtre

Moroccan Trilogy

1950
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2020

MUSEO NACIONAL
CENTRO DE ARTE
REINA SOFIA



GOBIERNO
DE ESPAÑA

MINISTERIO
DE CULTURA
Y DEPORTE

الجمعية الوطنية للمتاحف
FONDATION
NATIONALE DES
MUSEES



Royaume du Maroc

متحف mathaf
المتحف العربي arab museum of
للفن الحديث modern art



متاحف قطر
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مؤسسة قطر
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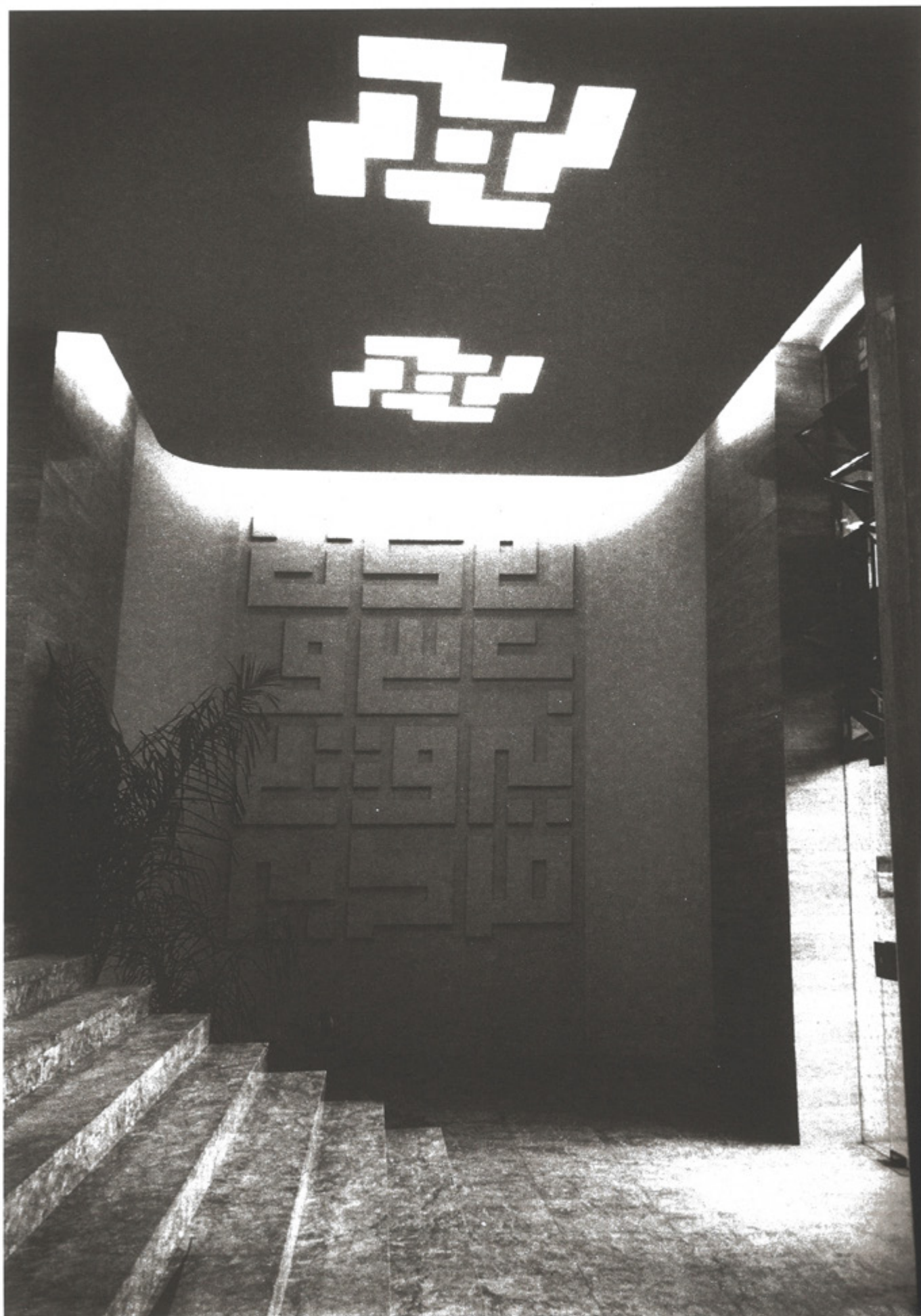
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Morocco's Architecture of Rupture

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Amid rupture and resilience, until the nineteenth century the population of Morocco numbered five million inhabitants, most of them rural and living off agriculture, fishing, cattle raising, and handicrafts. Intellectuals were educated in Fès at Al Qarawiyyin, the oldest continuously operating university in the world, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).¹ Its students have included such prominent figures as the historian Ibn Khaldun, the poet and writer Ibn al-Khatib, the physician-philosopher Averroes, Leo Africanus, and many others. A sense of cultural separation made for a powerful sense of belonging, with marked differences from region to region. To identify the moments of rupture in the world of architecture in Morocco is to distinguish the phases of a history in which the poles of the tradition-modernity duality are intertwined. The builders and their

1. Dating from 859 CE, Al Qarawiyyin was built by Fatema al-Fihri, who personally supervised its construction. She has been described as standing with her boots in the mud, following every detail of the construction process. Was the world's first female architect Arab and Muslim?

work are subject to external influences while preserving endogenous expertise regardless of the local government's policies. The civil population explicitly preserves its traditions in the interiors of bourgeois houses, where the Moroccan living room contrasts the European one; in clothing, where ceremonies are exclusively conducted in *beldi*;² and in cooking, where tagine is standard fare.

The sumptuous spaces of the architecture of the ksars³ and kasbahs⁴ are notable not only for their aesthetics. Their technical achievements are recognized today for their attention to environment, climate, and ventilation. The resulting comfort is also a consequence of the use of local materials such as earth or stone. Fortunately, thanks to the oral accounts of the *maâlems* (master artisans) and the written accounts of the great voyagers, nothing has been forgotten. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the latter carried word of the splendor of Morocco's architecture. Ibn Battuta,⁵ Leo Africanus, Ibn Khaldun, and others never tired of praising the building traditions of even the most remote areas. The vernacular architecture of the medinas was distinguished by sophisticated ornamentation in stucco, tile (*zellij*), carved wood, wrought iron, stained glass, and other materials. But it also stood out by virtue of the arrangement of its volumes, laid out around a center that is bioclimatic and ornamented with fountains and opening onto

2. The term *beldi*, which can refer to anything rural or traditional, here refers to traditional dress such as caftans for weddings and djellabas for funerals. 3. قصر ج قصور (in Moroccan Arabic) Qsar, pl. qṣūr, fortified villages in the pre-Saharan area; fort, castle, sovereign's palace. Alfred-Louis de Premare, *Dictionnaire arabe-français*, vol. 10 (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1988).—Ed. 4. قصبة Qaṣba, pl. Qṣābi, Alcazaba, citadel, fort. Premare, *Dictionnaire arabe-français*.—Ed. 5. A fifteenth-century traveler.—Ed. 6. According to Fouad Serghini, managing director of ADER-Fès, interviewed in *AM Architecture du Maroc*, no. 22 (2005). 7. A population center seventeen kilometers from Marrakech.—Ed. 8. جفّارة Jaffāra, an underground passageway used to drain water collected in water tables and carry it to places needing irrigation. Premare, *Dictionnaire arabe-français*.—Ed. 9. A basin positioned to collect and conserve rainwater; معدة Ma'da ma'āda may be translated as "stomach." 10. أمين amīn, an institution in charge of protecting a corporation or guild.—Ed. 11. More than mere professional organizations, the *amine* were responsible for protecting expertise, transmitting the authorities' injunctions, levying taxes, and recruiting workers for government building projects. Characterized by their location in specialized areas, they combined spiritual, intellectual, and professional values in a spirit of *futuwa* (courtly virtues) most notably expressed in the ritual of initiation or the practice of solidarity. See Mouna Hachem, *Economist*, no. 3396 (November 2, 2010). 12. In 1912, the north (Tétouan) and south were Spanish protectorates, while the rest of the country was a French protectorate. 13. For example, Charles de Foucauld achieved notoriety with the publication of his book *Reconnaissance au Maroc (Explorations in Morocco)* in 1888, earning him a gold medal from the Société de géographie de Paris.

fragrant gardens. Consummate mastery of underground piping was needed to guide the water's circulation. Water used for religious ablutions (which had to reach as far as the mosques) was separated from the water intended for household use, and in Fès blackwater had its own dedicated urban infrastructure.⁶ Sophisticated engineering structures were built to store water in basins around the cities, such as the water towers in Tameslouht.⁷ In the south, underground *ghettaras*⁸ were used to preserve the water table. Inside houses, the precious natural resource was preserved in a *maâda*.⁹

To meet technical and aesthetic challenges, the guild of *maâlems* managed the crafts industry by areas of expertise. Under the leadership of the *amina*,¹⁰ whose members were appointed by co-option, knowledge was transmitted to the apprentices orally in an intensive personal exchange.¹¹ The training was both an initiation, the inculcation of a philosophy, an ethic, and an effort to impart a level of expertise that was difficult to acquire. The organization of the artisans' guilds had a substantial influence on politics. To exhibit the power of the dynasties and tribal chiefs, the great builders summoned a wealth of ingenuity at every stage of the construction process thanks to the talents of artisans who remained anonymous. Among the most remarkable ancient kasbahs is the magnificent Ait Ben Haddou complex, which dates from the seventeenth century and has been listed as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO since 1987. This former trading post on the commercial route linking Sudan to Marrakech by way of the Draa Valley and the Tizi-n'Telouet pass has attracted the greatest film directors. Since David Lean used it in 1962 as a backdrop for *Lawrence of Arabia*, it has served as a location for at least twenty movie and television productions, including *Game of Thrones* in 2013. The seven ksars of Figuig in the east are in every way its equal. This architectural and archaeological treasure is the legacy of a long city-planning and architectural tradition using local materials and techniques that are still in use today. The terraced gardens of the palm grove still use an ancient form of irrigation ideally adapted to the oasis ecosystem.

In the late nineteenth century, French intellectuals anticipated the establishment of the protectorate.¹² They testified to the country's richness and know-how in architecture and artisanship.¹³ Worth highlighting are the works of explorers such as Charles de Foucauld (1888), Albert Laprade in the 1920s with his *Cahiers d'Architecture*, Henri Terrasse in the 1930s, and Orientalist painters such as Jacques Majorelle. From the early twentieth century onward, Morocco was

photographed by Jean-Hippolyte Flandrin. His signature, carefully preserved by the foundation of the Banque Populaire, appears on postcards of the time.

Journalist's reports, films, and travel posters have left indelible traces in the collective imagination. They continue to imbue the country's image with a nostalgic exoticism. Some present-day advertisements even vaunt Morocco as a tourist destination with the same words used a century ago!

The first significant rupture in twentieth-century Moroccan architecture was the abandonment of the traditional guilds. The French protectorate's introduction of a new architectural culture was experienced as an act of violence that established a duality or even a rupture between traditional and modern practices. The fundamentals of the endogenous professional organization were abruptly demoted. Skills and knowledge had been informal, practiced by self-taught expert artisans in a context where reputation and integrity were the only accepted guarantees. The arrival of the colonists imposed a different system, one in which the architect was the *master builder*, a graduate of a school of fine arts. As a result, the traditional approach to producing and organizing space was superseded and redefined as inferior. In the chaos of an identity now held in derision, the abandonment of ancestral craft was justified by the dominant use value, which favored global trends.¹⁴ The development of Morocco was proclaimed with great publicity by its first resident general, Marshal Hubert Lyautey.¹⁵ It thus attracted such prominent figures as the landscape architect Jean-Claude Nicolas Forestier and Henri Prost, winner of the Grand Prix de Rome. The resident general commissioned them to plan the new cities, a task to which they were expected to apply the avant-garde ideas then circulating throughout the world. Essentially from nothing, the medinas, or urban centers, were expected to provide parks, residences, an administrative center, boulevards devoted to businesses, recreational areas, and industrial zones. The plans assigned the functions of each space while leaving the transport network "densifiable" for future extensions. The modern era, after all, would be dependent on infrastructure for automobile and rail travel. Houses would become *machines à habiter*, or "machines for living," built with imported industrial materials according to a standardized model.¹⁶ Undergirded by an extensive regulatory framework, the planning of the new urban centers incorporated vernacular architecture as an ancient legacy to be preserved alongside

a triumphant modernity. Traditional construction by communities and individuals quickly became legally proscribed and went underground. Communal construction carried out by artisans was no longer permitted in urban centers. What remained, however, was *useless* Morocco, which held no interest for the government under the protectorate and which succeeded in upholding ethnic values, a land with regional character, a way of life, and age-old expertise.

In the 1920s and 1930s, widespread fascination with the vernacular gave rise to the neo-Moorish style. However, despite the legal framework that supported the colonial administration, the approach to producing space and spatial structures was mixed and did not completely abandon *practices not in common use*.¹⁷

Some architects during the time of the protectorate were fascinated by and sought to work more closely with local artisans. Auguste Cadet and Edmond Brion drew inspiration from the medinas, having become aware of them thanks to Laprade. Traditional architecture was studied in minute detail at the level of the street and house in order to create the Habous district (1920–1930) and the Mahkama du Pacha (or Pacha's Palace of Justice) in Casablanca. These projects reproduced traditional spatial figures in their external gardens and patio houses. The proposed decorations sublimated the traditional arts by introducing technical additions, material improvements, and know-how inherited from those with expertise in working with masonry, ironwork, marble, and granite.

The interchange between the local artisans and the professionals from Spain, Italy, and France was lively and instantaneous, as well as egalitarian. The neo-Moorish style produced beautiful structures such as the covered passages in Casablanca's art deco districts (Sumica, Glaoui), harmonious blends of art nouveau and art deco motifs with traditional artisanship. The different styles came together to produce a highly original style informed by the

14. "Man dwells when he can orientate himself within and identify himself with an environment, or, in short, when he experiences the environment as meaningful. . . . [T]he task of the architect is to create meaningful places, whereby he helps man to dwell." Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 1979), 5. 15. Lyautey was resident general of the French protectorate in Morocco from 1912 to 1925. 16. Le Corbusier (1887–1965) never ceased to champion the *cellules d'habitation*, or "housing cells," which were meant to be as beautiful as machines and as comfortable and convenient as airplanes or cars. 17. Mohamed Tozy, *50 ans de développement humain et perspectives pour 2025: Dimensions culturelles, artistiques et spirituelles* (n.pub., 2005), http://www.albacharia.ma/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/31441/1216Rapport_Thematique__Dimensions_Culturelles%2C_Artistiques_et_Spirituelles_%282005%29S.pdf?sequence=1.

cosmopolitan expertise of the 1920s. The situation offered professional architects a unique opportunity to innovate. The regulatory constraints permitted a freedom that many architects explicitly came to Morocco to enjoy.

The undisputed jewels of the neo-Moorish style were the administrative buildings and large-scale facilities of the urban centers and imperial cities (Fès, Meknes, Marrakech, and Rabat).

The northern portion of the country was under the influence of the Spanish protectorate, with an architectural style in which the predominant embellishments were "Moorish" (or, to use the Spanish term applied to the region's architecture, *andalusi*). The urban landscape of the city of Tétouan, the capital at the time, allowed the city planner Alfonso de Sierra Ochoa to create social housing by experimenting with flat, hollow block slabs with a reduced surface area. Arranged in a modernized vertical grid, these were a signature element of architect Georges Candilis. Housing projects such as Diour El Makhzen¹⁸ (in the center of Tétouan's medina) and the Moulay Hassan district represent the most remarkable developments of the 1930s.

After the Second World War, reconstruction in Europe went hand in hand with a revolution in industrial materials. The repercussions for Moroccan architecture were far-reaching, involving the introduction of new materials such as metal and concrete. The time had come for a new conception of architecture. The aim now was to build quickly and well, with an emphasis on use and function. In Germany, prior to the war, the architect Mies van der Rohe, who coined the slogan "less is more," had been appointed director of the Bauhaus school in Dessau (1930). In France, Le Corbusier had organized a boat trip between Marseille and Athens for the International Congress of Modern Architecture to formulate the Athens Charter (1933). It would not be long before the new ideas reached Morocco.

THE 1950S: ORNAMENTATION IS A CRIME!

The selection of architect Michel Écochard to head the country's Department of Urban Planning was a clear sign of the desire to break with the past. Those in power were determined to turn Morocco into one of the world's most audacious experimental laboratories, marked by the ideology of the global avant-garde, with factories, modern apartment and office buildings, the country's first skyscrapers, movie theaters, Hollywood villas, cafés, and swimming pools. The modernity galvanizing Europe came to Morocco to practice, where it was pushing at an open door. New and unprecedented forms, as well as extraordinary structures and dimensions, reflected the ambitious commissions of the time.

Écochard tackled the design of social housing with an eight-meter-by-eight-meter grid that responded to the country's urgent need for such housing and was exported as Casablanca's solution to the problem of how to house a city's underprivileged classes.¹⁹ In an effort to eradicate the bidonvilles (a term coined in Casablanca), other programs were developed and published in prestigious European journals as soon as construction on the projects was completed: the Semiramis and Nids d'abeilles housing blocks. Moroccan architecture embraced *modern* thinking so demonstratively that the Casablanca projects drew immediate coverage in the international professional press.

The National Order of Architects was founded in 1955 to organize the profession, monitor its ethics, provide it with a code of professional conduct, and, above all, prevent abuses on the part of a profession in danger of being derailed by ruthless real estate speculation. The end of the protectorate that same year did not halt the momentum of the modernist vision in architecture, however, since the new cultural openness to the world was irrepressible. Five years later, in 1960, an earthquake decimated the city of Agadir. Prince Moulay Hassan commissioned emergency plans, to be overseen by municipal architect Mourad Ben Embarek, from the architects then in vogue. All were followers of Le Corbusier's "Athens Charter," which at that time advocated a tabula rasa approach that freed its exponents from classicism and allowed for radical gestures and the exploration of new materials and new concepts. The new city plans and structures of Agadir reflected the brutalist trend.²⁰ In 1980, Jean-François Zevaco received the Aga Khan Award for his patio villas (1964, Agadir). In them, ornaments and

18. ديور المكنن *Dyūr l-mjzen* (in Moroccan Arabic), literally "Houses of the Estate."—Ed.

19. Within this *trame sanitaire*, or "sanitary framework," each district is home to 9,000 inhabitants, with five neighborhood units of 1,800 residents each. The districts are equipped with local amenities: infirmaries, athletic fields, daycare centers, schools, a theater, markets, and so on. The dwellings themselves are eight square meters in size and capable of accommodating 350 people per hectare. 20. The architects who participated in the reconstruction of Agadir include Mourad Ben Embarek, Patrice de Mazières, Abdeslam Faraoui, and Armand Amzallag; Jean-François Zevaco (post office, fire station, and schools); Elie Azagury (courthouse and mosque); Henri Tastemain and Louis Riou (Building A); Claude Verdugo (the wholesale market); and Henri Prost (the port).

folk traditions were supplanted by raw concrete and clear lines that show the structure, texture, and material. The architects found meaning in this intentional spareness and sparked debate with each new urban experiment, justifying and defending their works in publications, conferences, and books. They were driven by a single catchphrase—"Ornament is a crime!"—and scrupulously applied this modernist doctrine in Agadir.²¹

Agadir and Casablanca are the two most *modern* Moroccan cities. But the shadow side of what was undeniably an economic boom time was the abandonment and sometimes outright repudiation of traditional knowledge.²²

THE 1970S: THE TWOFOLD RESISTANCE TO THE COLONIALIST SPIRIT AND WITHDRAWAL INTO CULTURAL IDENTITY

In the 1970s, a new social order, regulated by an amnesic administration, began to organize city planning and architecture for rural as well as urban communities. State projects ceased to be accompanied by architectural thinking, and local communities showed no interest in it. Prefabricated rural schools proliferated. Administrative centers and infrastructure were built. The construction of social housing was entrusted to industrialists turned real estate developers. Migrant workers were hired to deploy the visible outward signs of prosperity in concrete, corrugated iron, and so on. The earthen architecture glorified in the 1920s was no longer the order of the day.

Growing opposition to modernity, however, fueled a break with the *colonial* past, sometimes leading to the violent construction of a new identity in the European wake.

An opposing faction denounced the sometimes ostentatious deployment of signs of prosperity (e.g., on the facades of bank headquarters), which it regarded as a backward-looking attitude. In this view, the architectural profession was losing its bearings, caught between *elmouâssara* and *elmouassala*,²³ modernity and tradition. A few resisters, supported by students from Europe, defended Arab-Islamic architecture in its purest form, devoid of ornamentation. But internecine quarrels raged among brutalists, modernists, *architectes de l'image*, traditionalists, and civil servants in charge of authorizing the projects. Lacking any real vision, the few professionally trained national architects did not have the time

to respond to the urgent need for mass housing. The public land base had dried up, leaving the field open to speculation and *habitat non réglementaire*, or noncompliant housing, built by the future users themselves. The urban landscape was invaded by a typical "R + 2" plan (a ground floor plus two upper stories), with businesses on the ground floor and no basic infrastructure or local facilities.

As the rural exodus intensified, new shantytowns were created, increasing the density of the medinas, where bourgeois houses were transformed into slums.

At the same time, the large architectural firms were prospering. Jean-François Zevaco, Elie Azagury, Abdeslam Faraoui and Patrice de Mazières, Louis Riou, and Domenico Basciano were rewarded and defended by a powerful professional order. The state entrusted them with large-scale facilities, ministries, stadiums, schools, and movie theaters. The Faraoui/de Mazières firm alone realized more than three hundred high schools, clinics, and hospitals, in addition to the headquarters of the Caisse de dépôt et de gestion (Deposit and Management Fund) in Rabat.

In the spirit of the Bauhaus, de Mazières invited contemporary artists, including Mohamed Chabâa, to contribute works to Rabat-Salé Airport in 1969 and to the building of the Office National de l'Irrigation in 1964, as a way of embracing the "1% artistique," or "one percent for art" program established in France (1951).²⁴ Abderrahman Rahoule's bas relief at the Casablanca postal sorting office was realized in response to a commission from art gallery owner Leila Faraoui in 1979. Other monumental artworks were realized by Farid Belkahia and Mohamed Melehi for the Hotel Les Almoravides in Marrakech, the Hotel Les Roses du Dades in Kalaat M'gouna, and the Hotel Les Gorges du Dades in Boumalne-Dadès.

With Morocco's spatial planning in full decline, the state used the promise of scholarships and contracts to encourage families to send

21. The Viennese architect Adolf Loos published "Ornament und Verbrechen" (Ornament and Crime), based on a 1910 lecture, in book form in 1929. This precursor of the spareness and simplicity required by geometry and structural coherence argues that "form must follow function," with no superfluous ornamentation. 22. These technical and aesthetic skills were fully the equal of those of conquering Europe. In an article published in *Zamane* (January 2019), researcher Mostafa Qadiri calls into question the bridges and aqueducts designed by the Portuguese in the Taza region. He highlights the historical errors revealed in the postcards of the time. 23. *المعاصرة* *Al-mu'âsara*, contemporaneity, modernity; *المواصلة* *Al-muwâṣala*, continuity.—Ed. 24. This scheme requires the sponsors of public buildings to devote 1 percent of their construction costs to commissioning or purchasing a work by a living artist, specially designed for the building in question.

their children to study architecture. Composed of some of the country's first students to graduate from the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, the "Collectif d'architecture" took stock of the crisis in Moroccan architectural thought and threw itself into projects that were faithful to the modern movement and to accepted professional standards. The new wave was represented by Abderrahim Sijelmassi, Bensalem El Harti, Abdelmoumen Benabdeljalil, and Azzedine Lazrak, joined by Aziz Lazrak and Hafid El Awad. They won competitions, including that for the construction of the National School of Architecture in Meknes. The winning project was not realized, however, and classes were started on hubcaps in a shed in Rabat in 1981.

In the northern part of the country, the landscape architect Fernando Muela drew inspiration from the rural vernacular houses of the Jbala²⁵ people in the Tétouan region for the architecture of a Mediterranean resort, and he successfully incorporated white-washed volumes halfway between the vegetal and the mineral into vacation homes in Kabila and Cabo Negro. For Restinga (1980), Elie Azagury drafted orthogonal plans for the apartments and hotel, which described an arc and were supported by pylons. Completely devoid of ornament, the rigor of the grid is visible in Le Petit Mérou in Cabo Negro. Azagury turned to the artist César, known for his "compressions," for the realization of a magnificent fountain sculpture. The region's major projects—including La Corniche in Larache and the offices of the Moroccan port authority (Office d'Exploitation des Ports) at the port of M'diq—were entrusted to Abdeslam Bencrimo, who did not hesitate to embrace the use of steel and glass for the facades.

While the École des Beaux-Arts in Tétouan had been in existence since 1945 and its counterpart in Casablanca had opened its doors in 1957, the École Nationale d'Architecture (National School of Architecture) was not established, under the direction of Hakim Cherkaoui, until 2009.

THE 1980S: THE INSTITUTIONS SET UP THE ARCHITECTS

After the riots in Casablanca (1981), the first school of architecture opened in Rabat under the aegis of the Interior Ministry. It

was followed by the country's first urban planning agency, which formed in Casablanca and recruited some fifteen architects who were graduates of European schools.

The architect Mohamed M'Barki was appointed to lead the Hay Ryad project in the early 1980s. This represented the emergence of operational urban planning, which produced its first coherent urban ensemble on 570 hectares on the outskirts of Rabat. The national architects were invited to realize infrastructure and apartment buildings within the contours of an integrated overall vision. The state was the principal promoter of the large-scale projects. Construction was based on the post-and-beam technique, in which concrete is king.

The use of earthen architecture and local materials sparked experimentation on the part of the state-owned enterprises. The ERAC Tensift, supported by Institut Terre and with French cooperation, financed a pilot project of midrange and luxury social housing. An infatuation with the houses of movie stars would then firmly establish the reliability of earthen architecture, which had previously been regarded as fragile. The beautiful homes of the Marrakech region made an enormous splash in the media, which touted their ecological character and simplicity.

Beginning in 1981, several medinas (Fès, Marrakech, and Essaouira) were classified as World Heritage Sites by UNESCO. They were preserved with the support of Moroccan intellectuals and began to attract foreigners in search of dreams and an "Oriental" change of scenery. The medinas emptied of their inhabitants and turned into holiday resorts for movie stars who enjoyed their "Ryads."²⁶ With this emerged a type of design rooted in arts and crafts, increasingly sought after by designers who exported products "made in Morocco."

Young architects expressed themselves in a minimalist style that responded to the international canons of the modern movement and took a stance against popular traditions. Competition among the young architects promised to be democratic, and national competitions rewarded talented newcomers such as Rachid Andaloussi, Mountassir Abdelwahid, and Taoufik El Oufir.

On the fringes of the city centers, the painter Belkahia invited architect Sijelmassi to build an earthen house in the palm grove of Marrakech. The two friends presented the first sketches at the Centre Pompidou (1981) in a major exhibition organized by Jean

25. جبالَة Ybāla, the western portion of the Arabicized Rif and its population.—Ed. 26. In the Parisian argot, the word means "a house in the medina," while in Arabic it means garden.

Dethier, which then traveled around the world. A few years later, Sijelmassi would build Saad Hassani's house in the medina of Asilah.

1986: THE ROYAL ANGER

In a 1986 speech to the National Order of Architects that has since been commemorated annually on January 14, King Hassan II called for an aesthetic exploration that would allow the Moroccan identity of the country's cities to be recognized at a single glance. This was the death knell for modernity, whose triumph had once seemed to be a foregone conclusion. Local government officials began to apply the royal directive in a highly reductive manner, equating the richness of Moroccan architecture to arches and green tiles. But the effort to renovate the cities could not but take the international advances into account. A form of urban planning that prioritized security could not be avoided if the authorities wished to retain control over urban uprisings. The development of a master plan was entrusted to a French engineering firm, with no Moroccan architects on the team. They looked to the automobile, as the linchpin of all flows and forms of organization, to separate urban functions into zones. Urban regulations became overly strict, and planning decrees began to hinder the cities' development.

As a sign of disapproval, the kingdom's major projects, including prefectures and the Great Mosque of Casablanca, were entrusted to Michel Pinseau and the decorator André Paccard. The architects retreated into their discontent and shunned the National Order of Architects, which had been taken over by a new generation.

The security-oriented period of the 1970s and 1980s showed its determination to break with modernity by destroying iconic spaces for cultural gathering in Casablanca, including the Arènes (Bullfighting Arena), the Cinema Vox movie theater, the Piscine Municipale (Municipal Swimming Pool), and the Théâtre Municipal (Municipal Theater).

2000: RETURN TO THE VERNACULAR AND ORNAMENTATION—RESILIENCE OR RESIGNATION?

The coronation of the young King Mohammed VI inspired the architects' confidence. Three tendencies were clearly visible in the new wave.

The ecological tendency, with a passion for local materials and experience in the field, whose leading figure was Salima Naji.

The 00 generation, which used new software (e.g., building information modeling) and refused to be limited by geography.

The generation of the humanists, which championed urban acupuncture, consultation with residents, and small local projects with a global vision. A professional architecture journal (*AM—Architecture du Maroc*) was started and became an established feature of the media landscape; it has been on the lookout for new developments since 2001.

The return to the vernacular affected more than just architects. The houses in the medinas or the ksars in the countryside were restored as guest houses by enthusiasts who came from all over the world. The projects of architect Elie Mouyal and Denis Coquard's training center for earthen construction attracted attention in the media. Ornamentation was openly embraced in these structures and adapted to the materials and the local context. Alongside the vernacular, a renewed interest in arts and crafts and the building trades supported the Moroccan architectural heritage in all its forms. Spectacular examples of this approach are the railway stations of the ONCF (the national railroad) designed by Youssef Melehi.

An ecological tendency was fostered by the Office Chérifien du Phosphate (the state-owned phosphate company), which has embarked on its third campaign, after Ben Guerir, Mazagan, and Laayoune, to develop ecological cities using the principals developed by LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method), and HQE (Haute Qualité Environnementale). This tendency respects the digital transition of the twenty-first century and practices a clearly ecological architecture attuned to the climate crisis.

Naji, an architect and anthropologist, has become the leading authority on the preservation of the heritage of the High Atlas and Lesser Atlas mountain ranges and the pre-Saharan region. She effusively praises Berber architecture in numerous works that have become touchstones in the field.²⁷

27. "True modernity means accepting one's heritage while adding what's necessary in terms of innovation and comfort, but without effacing the inherited experiences of one's ancestors that one carries with one." Salima Naji, *Architectures du bien commun: Pour une éthique de la préservation* (Geneva: Métis Presses, 2019), 50.

The second tendency fully embraces international canons and the universal progress of architecture, in technical as well as creative terms. Architects seek to associate themselves with winners of the prestigious Pritzker Prize, who are able to land commissions for the country's large-scale projects, including Ricardo Bofill (with Mouyal) for the World Trade Center in Casablanca, Christian de Portzamparc (with Andaloussi) for the Grand Theater of Casablanca, Zaha Hadid (with Omar Alaoui) for the Grand Theater of Rabat, Tom Mayne for the CFC Tower in Casablanca (with Alaoui), and Jean-Paul Viguier (with Omar Kobitté) for the Maroc Telecom Tower. Decisionmakers in Morocco are under the spell of the "Bilbao effect," and Moroccan architects enjoy rubbing shoulders with the top names in the field. Taking advantage of the country's prominence as an export hub for the African continent, they have set up their firms on several continents.

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The third tendency is distinguished by actions in the field that require a humanist commitment and are often supported by international nongovernmental organizations. In Tangier, for example, Hanae Bekkari created a nonprofit association to manage the medina and assisted the Initiative Nationale pour le Développement Humain (National Human Development Initiative) in renovating the Haoumat Chouk district as part of the *Madinati Ajmal*²⁸ program. Myriam Soussan and Laurent Moulin are reinventing the nomadic space by proposing convertible autonomous houses. And Jaafar Sijelmassi is attempting to practice a form of urban acupuncture whose goal is to introduce small-scale local amenities (e.g., athletic and social facilities, green spaces) in neglected urban areas.

The architectural profession has reached its age of maturity (sixty-five), with a second generation of architects ready to receive the baton. They enjoy a favorable context in which digital progress is combined with ecological awareness.

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28. مدينتي أجمل *Madinati 'Ajmal*, literally "my city is the most beautiful."—Ed.