

DRY STONE PUBLIC GRANARIES IN MEGDEZ, A VILLAGE IN THE TASSOAT VALLEY, GRAND ATLAS MOUNTAINS AN ARCHITECTURAL DRY STONE MOUNTAIN HERITAGE IN DECLINE

Mouna Mhammedi, Naima EL Haouzali, Loubna Hrachrass & Ghizlane Dhaidah

Research Scholar, Ecole Nationale d'Architecture (ENA), Rabat, Morocco

ABSTRACT

Located on the Tassaout Valley, one of the highest valleys of the greater Moroccan Atlas, the Megdaz Village offers substantial heritage value; it contains rammed earth houses latched onto the mountains' flanks with a great number of public granaries all arranged in the same place.

Citadels are made from stone and positioned in the middle of the fortified earth-made granaries. Watchtowers are located on the sides of the village where it is more vulnerable; they are 14 m high and are built from perfectly square bases. This architecture proved to be ahead of its time through its exceptional building system: it brings together the dry stone and earth in a very learned process.

These granaries belong to the village's families and create a secured place to store food away from extreme temperatures and humidity; yet not for much longer.

Indeed, as electricity was introduced to the village, combined with the use of new materials (concrete, bricks) instigated a huge shift in the lifestyle of the inhabitants of the Megdaz Village. Furthermore, the constructions used for protection against outsiders started to lose their utility, eventually leading, in some cases, to their extinction.

Our primary objective in this mission is on one hand to increase the awareness of this unique architecture within the large and multifaceted cultural mix within Morocco and, on the other hand, to further understand the building systems and to alert the scientific world of its imminent and certain extinction.

KEYWORDS: *Granaries, Architecture, Dry Stone, Mountain, Heritage*

Article History

Received: 28 Nov 2019 | Revised: 03 Jan 2020 | Accepted: 22 Jan 2020
