

FAÇADISM PUT TO THE TEST OF THE CONSERVATION OF RECENT HERITAGE IN MOROCCO EXAMPLE OF THE CITIES OF RABAT AND CASABLANCA

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ABSTRACT

Façadism, this architectural practice which established itself in Europe during the 1970s and 1980s, entered Morocco in the early 2000s, as a method of retaining historic facades, the exterior walls of old buildings, or as the creation of replicas of these facades with new buildings having a contemporary character to their interiors.

The facade, one of the major components of a building, acts as an interface with the outside world by conveying several types of messages, whether implicit, explicit or symbolic, thus offering a linear continuum of the street. The popular attachment to this urban heritage makes the heritage difficult to demolish and somehow resists this desire to re-exploit its rare land.

The theoretical basis includes an attempt to preserve the historic image by systematically safeguarding the facades of old buildings of heritage value generally located in quality urban spaces. Considered then, as an element of discredit, façadism, is often evoked in an unconsidered way in the current conceptual framework. The advanced objective of this practice is to increase the density of the urban environment while respecting built heritage conservation.

Similarly, it is essential to point out that the use of façadism also results from a compromise of intruding factors in the safeguarding of heritage: real estate speculation, market force, urban densification, legislation, standards and skills of practitioners. It is then considered by some experts as a guarantee of a “facial” safeguard of the urban landscape. It even harms the efforts made over several years to the principle of an innovative and creative architecture which nevertheless generates the irreversible loss, in particular, of historical information.

KEYWORDS: Casablanca, Existing, Facade, Heritage, Morocco, Rabat, Urban Regulations

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