



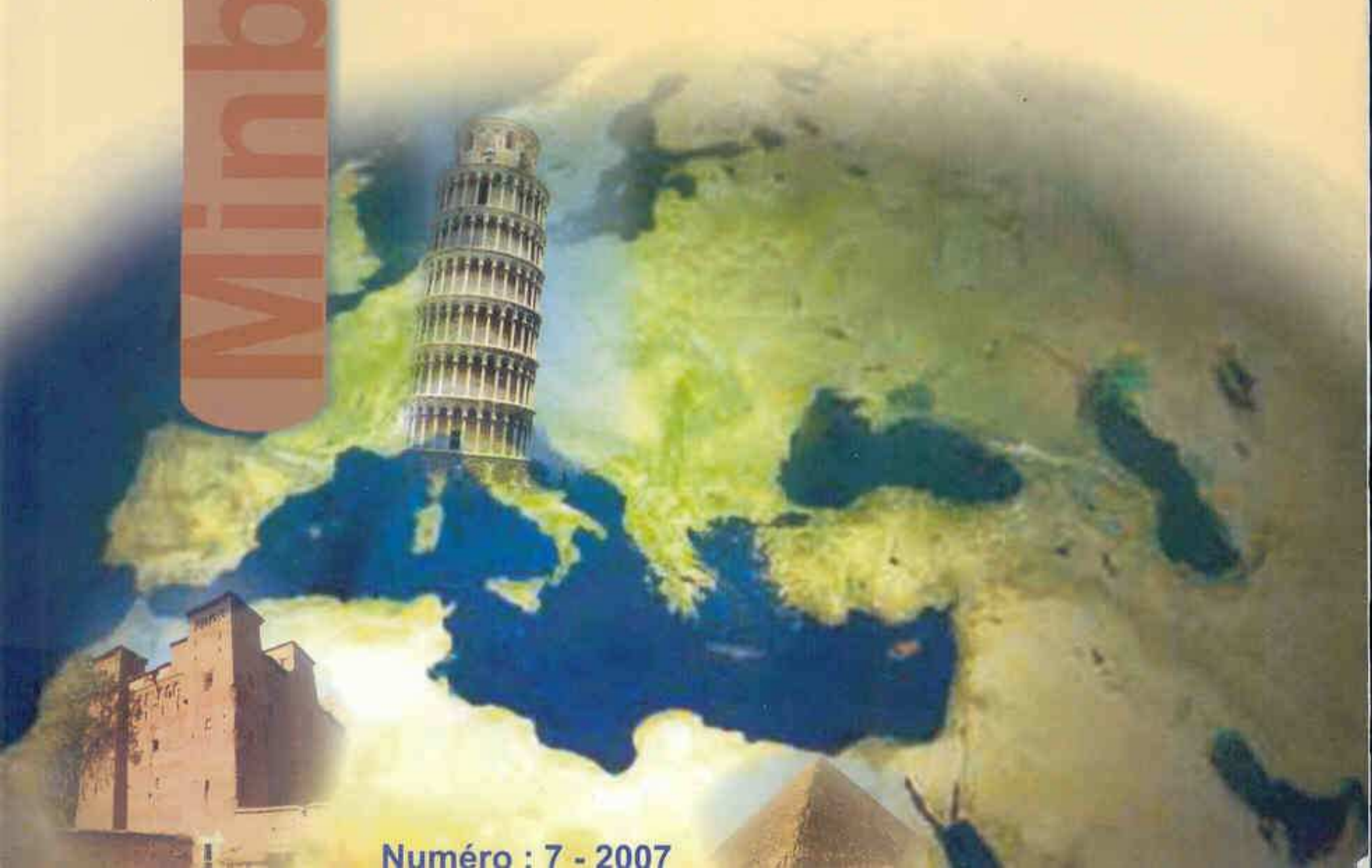
Université Moulay Ismail  
Meknès

# Minbar Al Jamiaa

Proceedings of International Meeting on  
**MEDITERRANEAN ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE**

Actes de la Rencontre Internationale sur le  
**PATRIMOINE ARCHITECTURAL MÉDITERRANÉEN**

(RIPAM'2005)



جامعة مولاي إسماعيل  
مكناس



# منبر الجامعة

أشغال الملتقى الدولي حول  
التراث المعماري المتوسطي

(RIPAM'2005)



Université Moulay Ismail  
Meknès, Maroc

Proceedings of International Meeting of  
**Mediterranean Architectural Heritage**

Actes de la Rencontre Internationale  
**Sur le Patrimoine Architectural Méditerranéen**  
**(RIPAM' 2005)**

Organisée par la Faculté des Sciences de Meknès

26-28 Septembre 2005

Sous la direction

Prs Said KAMEL & Mustapha HADDAD

Numéro 7 - 2007

## Comité Scientifique

**AKERRAZ A.** (INSAP, Rabat, Maroc)

**BADRA L.** (FSM, Meknès, Maroc)

**BENYAICH F.** (EST, Meknès, Maroc)

**BROMBLET Ph.** (CICRP, Marseille, France)

**CORREIRA M.** (DAAESG, V.N. Cerveira, Portugal)

**DELGADO RODRIGUES J.** ( NLCE, Lisbonne, Portugal)

**HADDAD M.** (FSM, Meknès, Maroc)

**KAMEL S.** (FSM, Meknès, Maroc)

**MAKDOUNE M.** (FLSH, Rabat, Maroc)

**SCHVOERER M.** (CRPAA, Bordeaux, France)

**TANOUTI B.** (FSSM, Marrakech, Maroc)

**VALLET J. M.** (CICRP, Marseille, France)

## HOUSES AND CITIES BUILT WITH EARTH: A CONTRIBUTION TO URBAN QUALITY FROM A "CULTURE 2000" PROJECT

MARCO CADINU

University of Cagliari, Sardinia, Italy

**ABSTRACT:** Sixteen institutions of six different countries shall cooperate next year on a cultural project financed by European Community.

Central to the project are architecture, sites and cities built with earth in south Europe and north Africa. This material is part of the cultural heritage of all European countries, and includes hundreds of thousands of dwellings and monuments. The worsening crisis in the craft and technical sectors involved in this kind of building, is leading to an impoverishment in the quality and threatening the very survival of this important cultural heritage.

**KEY WORDS:** medina, earth cities, earth houses, mediterranean cities, city planning

The strategic element of the project is the localisation of the main activities in Marrakech (Morocco), run together with local universities, associations, craftsmen and businesses<sup>9</sup>. The middle age "Medina" (population: 250,000 - UNESCO listed) is built entirely with earth. It is one of the areas on Europe's borders where the oldest and most refined "good traditional building practices" are preserved almost intact. Lessons should be learned from here in order to revitalise work in Europe. At the same time it may be possible to bring to Marrakech advanced and compatible techniques of building organisation and production, and management of historic sites.

Among the countries facing the western Mediterranean sea, Sardinia and Morocco represent very well the values of the traditional practice of earth building of Europe and North Africa. As a matter of fact a high number of historical urban centres were built using these techniques and they shear the way of living and housing traditions that date back to the medieval Mediterranean context.

<sup>9</sup> The project "*HOUSES AND CITIES BUILT WITH EARTH: CONSERVATION, SIGNIFICANCE AND CONTRIBUTION TO URBAN QUALITY*" was written by Architect Maddalena Achenza and Architect Marco Cadinu for the "Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Facoltà di Ingegneria, Dipartimento Dipartimento di Architettura" (Italia), project leader. This CULTURAL COOPERATION PROJECT IN THIRD COUNTRIES, financed by European Commission in the "Culture 2000 Framework Programme" will take place with some co-organizer: 1) Univesitat de Valencia-Estudi General, (España) 2) Escola de Ensino Universitario Gallaecia (Portugal) 3) Associazione Nazionale Città della Terra Cruda (Italia) 4) Provincia di Pescara (Italia) 5) Regione Autonoma della Sardegna, Assessorato all'Urbanistica, Servizio Centri Storici (Italia) 6) ESIEA Ente Scuola Edile di Cagliari (Italia). Some Partners are invited to take part in the project: 1) University of Kassel (Germany) 2) LabHAUT, Ecole Nationale d'Architecture de Rabat (Maroc) 3) University Cadi Ayyad, Marrakech (Maroc) 4) Fondation Moulay Slimane, Oujda (Maroc) 5) Marrakech 3000, Société Immobilière et de Service (Maroc) 6) Craterre-EAG Ecole d'Architecture de Grenoble (France) 7) Soprintendenza Regionale della Sardegna (Italia) 8) Centro Internazionale di Studi per la Storia della Città (Italia) 9) Budapest University of Technology and Economics, Faculty of Civil, Engeneering, Department of Building Construction (Ungary).

The project will take place from november 2004 to july 2005. More informations in our website [www.mediterrae.com](http://www.mediterrae.com), contacts: [mediterrae@unica.it](mailto:mediterrae@unica.it).

Research regarding and recognition of common roots and cultural values among Mediterranean countries can be done through the analysis of traditional living models. Historical urban centres represent a cultural patrimony in which communities identify themselves and on which they invest for turistic and commercial prospects.

The project shall compare different historical European and African heritages and the Analysis of some parts of Marrakech's and Ksour of Figuig's urban systems. It is important (1) to connect the different values of Europe and North Africa in a new and singular experience against the growing demands of rehabilitation of historical cities and traditional architectures; and (2) to create new and active experiences linking new markets with traditional materials and highly-skilled workers in traditional practices.

To those technical factors we must improve the value and the cultural signification of urban sites containing earth buildings, also transmitting to local administrators those methods of evaluation and historical examination that can allow to recognize the value and the real potential of those sites, whose structural origins date back almost to the middle age Mediterranean tradition of ten houndred years ago.

We will try to compare the best methods of treatment of historic public spaces discussing with communities and local administrations about ways of projecting and maintenance. We will discuss about ways of explaining historic towns and their development, before finding rules for the rescuing of non-monumental built heritage and planning actions on public spaces.

The restructuring of the historical centers needs to take into consideration not only the deterioration of the single houses but also the way in which common areas of the city are used according to the existing way of living and the social use of the urban areas.

- Reconstruction of public streets. Main streets, minor steets, and alleys are especailly important because these were the areas in which peopls live and meet. They represent the actual scenery of a city public life and also represent the sites where monuments and historical buildings stand. It is therefore necessary to monitor the quality of intervnetions aimed to modify or reconstruct these areas, with the goal of avoiding the use of industrial materials but rather employing the correct technology to restrore the street pavements and the exisiting houses.
- The historical mapping of the public areas should be strictly followed and it is important to avoid modifications of the alignment of facedes, the opeining of new streets, and the demolition of older buildings. Demolitions of historical urban areas can not to justified by the goal of creating space for "air, sun, and light", all of which refer to nineteen century european concepts that cannot be applied to the traditional forms of the mediterrenian cities.
- Together with the traditional commercial sites (markets, souk), the sistematic reutilization of all "funduk" need to realized according to their original functions. They can become squares within the city or in touristic locations, as well as training schools for artisans or sited of production for traditional products (stone, wood, cermic or textile artifacts). In the funduk there is the possibility of opening centers for commercial and artisan displays aimed toraward other african or euoropean countrins, in line with the medieval tradition of hospitality and international exchange. Indeed, in the past in each city in the african and european medierranean area, the funduk represented a place for welcoming merchants and guests, supported and favored by the city administration. Among the modern functions, the funduk could also become youth hostels, institutions that are especially suitable at representing the spirit of international cutltural exchange.

- Every mediterranean city should have care and create places where mediterranean people can meet and transmit their traditions. Markets and souks, squares but also hammans can be choose for common activities. Also religious places must be protected in every nations. Mosques, synagougues, churches can live together in every mediterranean city and be a landmark and meeting points for peoples and guests from many countries.

Research and experimentation at level of excellence into the application of traditional building methods, and the positive assessment of "living in earth" will contribute to a renewal of the appreciation of European and North African citizens of their historical sites.

The production and establishment on the local market of companies working on sustainable renovation and the simultaneous abandonment of obsolete or pseudo-innovative technologies must be a next goal.

The involvement in the Programme "Culture 2000" of organisations from 6 countries (representing 16 institutions) will add prestige to our earthen cities and will stimulate further initiatives.