

Resistance and stylistic reverence: A typological study of colonial facades in Tlemcen (Algeria)

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Abstract: In Algeria, which was colonised for over a century, the arrival of the French colonisers led to the introduction of new architectural styles imported from Europe. This adoption of an exogenous style in a different cultural context was only made possible by French military domination. Importing and imposing a style was not always easy, as Algerian resistance was as much stylistic and socio-cultural as it was military. To illustrate this point, we have taken the case of the historic city of Tlemcen (North-west Algeria), where the French occupiers met with stylistic resistance complicating the achievement of their colonial project. Our research raises the following question: What forms of stylistic resistance are manifested in colonial architecture in the city of Tlemcen? Our aim is to identify the specific characteristics of colonial architecture in Tlemcen, in order to bring out the signs of stylistic resistance that testify to a desire to maintain a local cultural identity despite the colonial influence. The typological analysis of colonial facades serves as a tool and a means of providing in-depth understanding of architectural facades and typological classification in view of the diversity of styles and ornamentation of colonial facades in Tlemcen. This resistance manifests itself in European revivalism in Tlemcen, which involved an exceptional effort aimed simultaneously at composition and a search for stylistic anchorage and originality. It also manifested itself at the level of the native population, who stepped in to protect their cultural heritage and identity against the colonial authorities. Moreover, a certain form of stylistic reverence can be detected, expressed in avoiding pronounced aesthetic or stylistic expressions, favouring instead a more universal and timeless appearance.

Keywords: colonial styles, colonial facades, Tlemcen city, stylistic resistance, stylistic reverence, typological analysis

INTRODUCTION

An architectural style reflects how a community of architects uses means, forms, and materials (Pradère, 2014), symbolizing ideas and attitudes that refer to the socio-cultural and economic context. It is the particular formal language of an era with its content and appearance. Thus, an architectural style can find its sources in the aesthetic characteristics of a masterpiece of ancient architecture or a school of philosophical thought, a place, or a period of cultural development (Pradère, 2014). Although a style concerns all the details of a building, it manifests itself primarily on the facade, which is 'The locus of architectural composition' (Duplay and Duplay, 1982). The facade provides visual communication between the work of architecture and the public space. It symbolizes not only aesthetic and morphological aspects but also the lifestyle of its owners and the period of its construction (Ngô, 2005). Indeed, the facade boasts its style, tells its story, expresses its owners' culture and status, and can even give clues on the appropriation of space inside the building (Ngô, 2005). These ideas make great sense in Algeria, a country colonized for over a century. The French colonists introduced new types of facades and a new architectural style imported from Europe. The medieval landscape of the old towns became a laboratory for stylistic experimentation (Cochut, 1847), which we now consider rich and varied in forms and ideas. The unfa-

miliar landscape of Tlemcen city results from a cultural confrontation that produced what links the two shores of the Mediterranean, Algeria, and France.

The theoretical adoption of a style and its implication in a different socio-cultural context was more than common, given that the French colonial dominance over the Algerian territory made it entirely possible. However, importing an exogenous style and imposing it was not conspicuous and easy, given that Algerian resistance was as stylistic and socio-cultural as it was military. Looking at all the Algerian cities during the colonial period, we feel a massive difference in what we can call stylistic intensity. In the new towns created by the French colonisers, the stylistic intensity is significant, unlike in the historic towns where the application of the colonial style, similar to that of a French metropolis, remained unfinished for a long time. This factor leads us to believe that, in some cities, the applicability of the colonial style has been called into question. To get to the heart of our problem, we use the case study of the historic city of Tlemcen (north-western Algeria) as an illustration and to discuss the fact that the French occupiers could not do as they desired in the city and that the stylistic resistance made it difficult for them to complete their colonial project. For that purpose, we ask the following question: What forms of stylistic resistance manifest in the colonial building facades in the old city of Tlemcen? We

hypothesise that colonial architecture in Tlemcen displays stylistic elements that diverge from the architecture of a French metropolis, thus showing the existence of forms of stylistic resistance in Tlemcen and affecting the forms of local architectural revivalism. As a result, by examining the specific stylistic characteristics of colonial architecture in Tlemcen, we can identify signs of stylistic resistance that testify to the city preserving a local architectural identity despite the colonial influence.

RESEARCH AIM

The research objective is to identify architectural styles and characteristics of colonial facades in historic towns with the focus on the historic city of Tlemcen, and on stylistic resistance, which is likely to be a particular feature of this town. The adopted method elaborates a typological corpus as a working tool to sort the architectural data of Tlemcen's colonial facades. This corpus will provide theoretical support for further research and interventions in this architectural heritage. The research's results will allow us to gain in-depth knowledge of stylistic production and ensure the documentation and protection of this heritage as part of a sustainable vision of a historic urban area. From this objective, several sub-objectives can be derived:

- Identify and classify different types of colonial facades in the Tlemcen Old City based on architectural styles, historical periods, and design elements.
- Gain insights into the underlying principles and patterns that prevail in the colonial facade design in the city of Tlemcen.
- Contribute to urban planning and development by providing a framework for maintaining architectural unity and continuity within a cityscape.
- Serve as a source of inspiration for contemporary architects and designers by showcasing diverse facade treatments and encouraging innovative reinterpretations of traditional designs.

LITERATURE REVIEW: COLONIAL URBANISM AND ARCHITECTURAL REVIVALISM IN TLEMCCEN

Colonial town planning in Tlemcen

The French occupation of Tlemcen began in 1836, under the command of Marshal Clauzel, but it was not until 31 January 1842 (Lecocq, 1909) that the French finally took possession of the town. In an authoritarian manner, they adapted the pre-existing city - Medina - to their European needs, considering only the principles of defence and military control. This was achieved by transforming the houses and palaces into military establishments, levelling and gravelling the carriageways in 1844, and completing the alignment project in the city in 1845 (Lecocq, 1909), which led to the destruction of many dwellings and important old religious structures such as the Tashfiniya Madrasa and the Quissaria (Kari et al., 2021), as well as the creation of large squares. As a result, the Parisian Haussmannian urban model was adopted in Tlemcen, which was in line with the progressive vision that characterised French interventionism at the time: '...Work did not begin, however, until 1851. This city extension by a new European quarter seemed inevitable' (Kari et al., 2021).

Following the military footsteps, from 1851 onwards, the civil administration, in agreement with the military service, drew up street plans, established army enclosures, and prepared plans for new European districts. The new European model was a

rectilinear urban composition that allowed the city to extend, become denser, accommodate new functions, and have a new urban landscape (Fig. 1). The urban extensions included a church and administrative, judicial, and educational buildings. (Kari et al., 2021). It is essential to know that the urban planning resistance of the indigenous population of the city of Tlemcen to the decisions of the French military engineers was a necessary form of struggle to preserve their cultural identity, heritage, and rights in the face of colonial domination and exploitation. It included resistance to the French authorities' destruction of their historic districts and monuments and the policies of land expropriation and urban development that threatened their livelihoods and traditional way of life.

Colonial architectural revivalism in Tlemcen

Revivalism in architecture is the deliberate recycling of an earlier historical style. The classicism of ancient Greece and Rome, with its rules of proportion and distinctive orders and its general forms, including columns and pediments, was revived first during the Renaissance and then again in the 18th century under the name of 'neoclassicism'. In the nineteenth century, particularly in England, a taste for ornamentation, pointed arches, stained glass, and Gothic art and architecture craftsmanship developed (Choudry, 2022). At the end of the nineteenth century, hybrid buildings inspired by North African Moorish architecture, but also by the architecture of Andalusia, using minarets, domes, flat roofs, poly-lobed or horseshoe arches, stucco decorations forming stalactites, zelliges, etc. appeared, in a whimsical and decontextualized manner (Jelidi, 2010).

The consequences of French colonialism in Tlemcen impacted the architectural styles that developed there. According to primary documentary research, since the beginning of the twentieth century, the French capital, Paris, mainly inspired the architectural styles of the colonial period in Tlemcen. In this respect, the neoclassical style was Algeria's most widely adopted architectural style: "For seventy years, European classicist architecture was the official architecture of the French empire in Algeria, where the policy of the empire outlived the empire" (Soufi, 1988). This style is characterized by its focus on the past and ancient styles, using them in a new way. From 1903 onwards, the details of the classically-influenced architecture were abandoned in favour of a new, locally-inspired stylistic language, present in new buildings ordered by Charles Célestin Jonnart, Governor of Algeria. "Several circulars drafted by Jonnart at the beginning of the century made official the intention manifested by the colonial administration to adopt locally-inspired architecture as the style of the state" (Oulebsir, 2004). As a result, it is known as the Jonnart style, "a style which - according to Jean Jacques Deluz, echoed by Boussad Aiche et al. (2004) - was born of recommendations to architects by Governor Jonnart to give Moorish aesthetics pride of place" (Carabelli, 2006).

At the time, the conservative French population of Algeria attested that the orientalist style, drawing on Arab-Muslim architecture, was systematically breaking with the colonial tradition. From a socio-cultural point of view, adopting a style drawing its origins from Arab-Muslim culture was supposed to appeal to the Algerian population, which had long lived in ignorance and marginalisation, and to rehabilitate the image of France as a respectful state that emphasised local traditions through the use of décor with a strong sense of identity, anchoring it in the culture and the religion of most of the Algerian people. In fact, despite this stylistic dissatisfaction, the first architectural projects gradually emerged in Algeria from 1880 onwards (Godard, 1983). Modern houses embodied the values of Arab-Muslim or Algerian culture. This trend subsequently broadened and was adopted by the State in the construction of administrative and

school buildings. However, since 1930, the modernist project has gradually replaced these styles, emphasising Algeria's Mediterranean character.



Fig. 1. Urban colonial facades of the Tlemcen city renowned for its colorful colonial buildings, with bright hues. (Source: Kari, 2012)

METHODOLOGY

The method adopted in our study is based on typological analysis results concerning colonial facades, which is an interesting approach that will provide in-depth understanding of the objects: *'The type is the set of characters organized into a whole making up an instrument of knowledge by rational abstraction and making it possible to distinguish categories of objects or facts'* (Panerai et al., 1980). Typology is the method of developing types to facilitate classification. According to Carlo Aymonino, typology classifies artistic phenomena (Panerai et al., 1980). Within this framework and given that the history of architecture can be divided into several periods, the type groups together facades that share similar characteristics in terms of their external appearance. The latter can give rise to a classification in stylistic typology.

A typological approach is essential, given the diversity of styles and ornamentation that characterise buildings from the colonial era, which is also reflected in the variety of ways in which their facades are treated in the city of Tlemcen. This methodological tool was chosen in order to bring out the architectural styles of the facades from the colonial period and their architectural interpretation so as to identify any form of stylistic integration or resistance by the community of the historic city of Tlemcen. According to Carlo Aymonino, the typological method *'seeks to classify artistic phenomena to develop a critical analysis process'* (Panerai et al., 1980). The typology of architectural styles, or the study of types, is an instrument that facilitates the result. In addition, to carry out our research, four (4) methodological levels are implemented (Panerai et al., 1980): definition of the corpus, preliminary classification, development of types, and typology.

CASE STUDIES

Our research is based on identifying architectural styles from the colonial period in the historic town of Tlemcen and determining their features through a typological analysis.

Definition of the corpus

The study perimeter includes the intra-muros colonial (Fig. 2) part of the Tlemcen medina, where the French military engineers demolished many of the medina's buildings and rebuilt new structures marked by their new colonial facades. There, the study corpus is juxtaposed with the local medieval urban fabric.



Fig. 2. Map (1/1000^e) of the study area identifying the city of Tlemcen with its notable colonial urban fabric (in grey) to be analyzed. (Source: Authors, 2024)

Preliminary classification

In this phase, we prepared an inventory serving as an information and work tool. The inventory was essentially based on observation of the colonial facades, which is essential to establish a description and determine the criteria and significant properties that contribute to the identification of architectural styles. This preliminary phase is critical to our research, because of the resulting overview of the general situation based on a quick and superficial reading of facades. It took place between March and August 2022. The inventory drawn up during the preliminary fieldwork focused mainly on dwellings. Housing is a crucial urban unit in the Tlemcen old city urban fabric: *'Housing is an essential subject for studying human societies, whatever the cultural area, period, architecture, or group considered'* (Fijalkow; Lévy, 2008). However, majority of the buildings in our study were investment properties. Therefore, the lack of construction dates, the names of the architects, and any archive documents were a real obstacle to our research.

Photographs of the colonial facades facilitated this task, helping us to gain preliminary understanding of the styles and proceed with the in-depth survey of the details of ornamentation without the need to return to the site. The preliminary classification was carried out by forming groups of facades that comprise, for the most part, the same stylistic characteristics, starting with the most prominent cases and excluding facades that can be placed in two categories at once and those that do not appear to fall into any category. Once the preliminary classification was completed, we checked the category groups to see whether there were any potential differences between the architectural and stylistic elements of facades belonging in different categories and between two elements belonging in the same category.

Type development and typology

Once the families of facades were verified, all the architectural elements that make up each category were determined. The common characteristics of the facades' categories were then brought together to define the types. The type is, therefore, an instrument of knowledge: a *'type is an abstract object, constructed by analysis, which brings together the essential properties of a category of actual objects'* (Panerai et al., 1980). It should be noted that there are variations in properties within each facade type. Our research adopted a qualitative approach that identified the architectural styles of the colonial facades of Tlemcen. To implement this approach, a documentary analysis is essential. It involves study of documentary sources related to the fundamental concepts of our research. Therefore, we visited the Tlemcen's city archives. The aim was to read up on the history of the creation of colonial facades in Tlemcen to gather as much historical information as possible.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

Our research revealed the following typologies of the Tlemcen's colonial facades:

- European revivalist typology (A)
- Local revivalist typology (B)
- Modernist typology (C)

European revivalist typology (A)

This typology comprises two subtypes:

1. Sub-typology A1

In this typology, some aspects of the facades were governed by standards, in particular, the height of the facade required by the French authorities in 1959 'town planning regulations' for the town of Tlemcen: the maximum height of buildings could be up to one and a half times the width of the road (an angle of up to 55° above the horizontal plane). However, there were some exceptions: low-rise constructions ranging from R+1 to R+2. In Tlemcen, the facades are characterised by a tripartite composition (Fig. 3), with three distinguishable parts: a base consisting entirely of shops, a shaft of flats, and a crown comprising the cornice and roof. Symmetry is present in the design of the facades (upper levels) of this sub-typology (A1), comprising doors, windows, balconies, and even ornamentation. It gives the facade a specific visual stability and hides anything that might distort the composition. Symmetry is a tool of control. Most of the time, the horizontal bands marking the horizontality of the facades ensure this control, and the simple or fluted pilasters with Doric or Ionic capitals mark the building's verticality and limits (Fig. 4).

The (A1) typology manifests in several forms, the difference between which lies in the balcony typology. We can distinguish:

- Balconet facade type,
- Insulated balcony type,
- Long balcony type,
- Combined balcony type.

Unlike the upper levels, which are symmetrical, the ground floor's commercial facade has no symmetry, as the transformations are stylistic features that remain more or less visible. In most cases, their commercial use resulted in modernised shop-fronts. In this sub-typology, few non-commercial facades have a line of straight quoins. These are mainly the facades of public facilities, which also have ashlar bases. Conversely, the corner chain appears in several facades (Fig. 5).



Fig. 3. Tlemcen's facade tripartite composition, which is a classical architectural concept that divides a building's facade into three distinct horizontal sections. It was used in the Tlemcen colonial facades to create balanced and aesthetically pleasing designs. (Source: Authors, 2024)



Fig. 4. A fluted pilaster with a Doric capital which is a vertical, rectangular element that projects slightly from the wall. The surface of the pilaster is adorned with vertical grooves, known as flutes, which add texture and visual appeal to the colonial facade. (Source: Authors, 2024)



Fig. 5. An example of a corner chain which consists of a series of vertically aligned stones that mimic the appearance of a chain. Corner chains in colonial facades are often used to add visual appeal and emphasize the edges of a building, creating a sense of strength and stability. (Source: Authors, 2024)

The most authentic entrance doors are the wooden ones with transoms (Fig. 6). Authentic neo-classical doors often have a frame decorated at the top with ornaments: clasps, cartouches, mascarons (a woman's head), pendant keys, and sometimes pediments. Ornate consoles or corbels often support balcony platforms (Fig. 7). The moulded cast-iron or wrought-iron railings, a revolutionary technique in the 19th century, enhance the aesthetic appeal of this feature. The French windows are often taller than they are wide, and they all shun arched frames in favour of right angles. As with the entrance doors, the same treatment is used for French windows, limited on sides by mouldings that restrict the effect of the wind. They are decorated with various forms of ornamentation: clasps, a mascarons (head of a woman), pendant key, cartouche, plant (floral) bas-reliefs, and straight pediments (Fig. 8). From then on, the window became a basic unit in a highly repetitive configuration.



Fig.6. Authentic neoclassical doors evoke a sense of grandeur and timelessness, blending the ornate details of Neo-classical design with straightforward elegance. They are often designed with a strong sense of balance and proportion, reflecting the Neo-classical emphasis on symmetry. A) A door with a frame; B) A straight pediment above the door; C) A cartouche above the door; D) A mascarons above the door. (Source: Authors, 2024)



Fig. 7. An example of an ornate console supporting a balcony. The console is richly adorned with intricate carvings and elaborate designs. These may include classical motifs such as acanthus leaves, scrolls, floral patterns, and other ornamental details that add a sense of grandeur and elegance. (Source: Authors, 2024)



Fig. 8. Examples of French windows designed to provide abundant natural light and unobstructed views while adding an elegant and classic look to the space. They are commonly used to connect interior spaces with outdoor areas such as gardens, patios, or balconies. A) A central clasp in the moulded frame of a French window; B) A straight pediment above the French window. (Source: Authors, 2024)

All the buildings are finished with a simple or dentiled cornice (Fig. 9). The roof has two forms: an accessible terrace roof with balusters and an inaccessible roof.

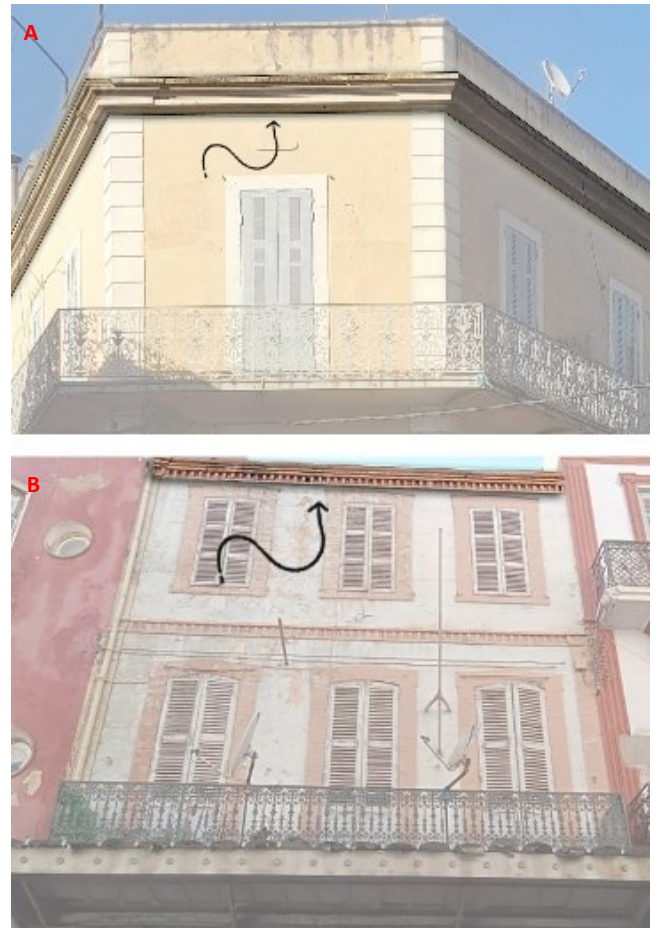


Fig. 9. Examples of a cornice that is a decorative architectural element typically found at the top of a building or structure, where the wall meets the roof. It projects outward from the wall, creating a visually pleasing transition between the wall and the roofline. A) A simple cornice; B) A dentiled cornice. (Source: Authors, 2024)

2. Sub-typology A2

The second sub-typology represents Art Deco, a new architectural language that has spread worldwide. Many of the facades in Tlemcen are based on the city's artistic repertoire. Similarly to sub-typology A1, the facades of this second sub-typology involve mainly housing. The gauges are relatively modest, varying between R+1 and R+3, except for the 'Melis building', which has a gauge of R+5. The ground floor comprises shopfronts transformed by shopkeepers. These buildings have simple and symmetrical compositions based on a central axis, allowing for orderly grouping and balance and using simple forms with straight lines, geometry, rhythm, and repetition. Corner facades are right-angled, rounded or chamfered. Unlike the entrance doors in sub-typology A1, the entrance doors in this sub-typology do not have frames. They are made of wood with transom ironwork details (Fig. 10). The ironwork in sub-typology A2 features stylized geometric floral forms, flower baskets, or geometric shapes.

According to our inventory, we can distinguish two subtypes of A2: subtypes A2a and A2b. This sub-classification is linked to the architectural characteristics of the buildings inventoried and to the time factor. Facades of the A2a sub-typology are ornamented, while those of the A2b sub-typology are sober. In case of subtypes A2a, the facades include classical features and the desire to express this style's beauty through ornamentation. It is assumed that these facades mark the emergence of this style in Tlemcen. However, these facades contain some typical Art Deco ornamentation: pilasters without capitals; friezes with abstract

motifs, flat floral motifs or sometimes geometric bas-reliefs (Fig. 11).



Fig. 10. Sub-type 2 types of doors are characterized by their bold geometric patterns, often found in the panels or glass inserts. The most popular decorative element is often radiating from the central point of the door. (A, B) Wooden doors with geometric iron detailing. (Source: Authors, 2024)



Fig. 11. An example of a frieze with geometric floral motifs in flats. The frieze features a combination of geometric shapes and floral motifs. The geometric patterns may include shapes such as squares, circles, triangles, and other symmetrical forms, often arranged in a repetitive, rhythmic sequence. These geometric elements are intertwined with or serve as a backdrop to stylized floral designs, which may include flowers, leaves, vines, and other botanical elements. (Source: Authors, 2024)

Balconies are essential architectural elements for this style of facade and can be divided into two forms: extending and free-standing. The ends of the balcony railings are often right-angled, rounded, or cut. Unlike the balconies of sub-typology A1, their platforms take several forms: the geometric, floral decor becomes stylized with low reliefs, or sometimes as a dentil (Fig. 12). Similarly, corbels decorated with geometric shapes or flat geometric floral motifs (rare) supported the balcony platforms (Fig. 13). The balustrades are heavily ornamented or made entirely of wrought iron, specifically with Art Deco motifs such

as baskets of flowers or geometric shapes (spirals and semicircles). Balusters are geometric and sometimes have flat rose motifs. Unlike French windows, which sometimes have cut corners that are a feature of the Art Deco style, a bow window is a significant feature of the urban landscape of Tlemcen from that period. This feature, not permitted in France and all its colonies until the 19th century, took hold on the Tlemcen's facades, giving them more depth from 1882 onwards, thanks to a decree allowing it in France and Algeria (Nedjari, 2013). Actually, the bow window was a new form of facade of English origin, enhancing the interior by capturing the sun's rays and allowing a dominant view of the exterior.



Fig. 12. Examples of an A2a typology balcony platform. A) A corbeil balcony; B) A balcony stoup with a dentile. (Source: Authors, 2024)



Fig. 13. Corbels decorated with flat geometric floral motifs. The corbels feature flat, two-dimensional geometric and floral patterns. The geometric elements may include shapes like squares, triangles, diamonds, or other symmetrical forms, while the floral motifs may depict stylized flowers, leaves, and vines. The designs are usually carved in low relief, creating a subtle yet decorative effect. (Source: Authors, 2024)

In sub-typology A2a, all bow windows are rectangular, with rectangular side openings at the top, or they sometimes feature a cut panel. Friezes above the windows embellish the facade with floral and geometric motifs (Fig. 14). They are usually supported by geometric consoles or corbels with either geometric or floral ornamentation. As for the baskets, they follow the rules of the Art Deco style with their geometric shapes. There

are also baskets with dentils or flattened floral and geometric motifs. The bow windows are crowned with geometric or curved pediments (without cornices) decorated with bas-reliefs (Fig. 15). They are also decorated with friezes in geometric or abstract motifs (Fig. 16).



Fig. 14. A2a bow window type. (Source: Authors, 2024)



Fig. 15. Bow windows crowned with curved pediments decorated with bas-reliefs. (Source: Authors, 2024)



Fig. 16. Bow windows crowned with geometric pediments decorated with bas-reliefs. (Source: Authors, 2024)

The facades of sub-typology A2b are simpler than those of A2a. The facades feature 2 types of balcony: insulated and long with cut or rounded corners. All the balconies have iron railings in a geometric pattern or just supporting bars. Their platforms are simple, and the decoration is just a simple step in the platform's limit (Fig. 17). The French windows overlooking the balconies are all high up. In sub-typology A2b, bow windows are often polygonal (Fig. 18), with varying heights and widths separated by columns without capitals. In addition, a porthole window is a new type of window that can be included in this sub-typology. Buildings in sub-typology A2b have tiled roofs or accessible terraces whose railings are generally made of iron with simple geometric motifs or simple support bars. The buildings are crowned with simple cornices, rectangular or angled bands, or roof overhangs.



Fig. 17. Simple stepped decoration within the limits of the platform. (Source: Authors, 2024)



Fig. 18. A2b polygonal bow window type. A polygonal bow window is a type of window that extends outward from the main walls of a building, forming a shape with multiple flat segments, rather than a smooth curve. (Source: Authors, 2024)

Local revivalist typology B

According to architect Marcel Lathuilière (1903-1984), who moved to Algiers in 1928, neo-Moorish architecture 'was conceived based on French plans composed for our needs as Westerners, and the villas or monuments were Moorish only in the decorative elements of the facade' (Lathuilière and Seiller, 1936). Tlemcen is an example of a city that favoured the neo-Moorish style. Buildings constructed in this style further embellish the urban landscape, giving it a variety and authentic richness. This is what we confirmed during our fieldwork; according to the inventory of facades, several Neo-Moorish examples were identified, which are characterised by little ornamentation while displaying, in most cases, perfect symmetry reminiscent of the fabulous Arab-Muslim architecture. They are modest, in keeping with the spirit of Arab-Muslim culture, with an R+1 or R+2 floor plan, even though they often face onto an avenue.

Admittedly, in appearance, this style marks a break from earlier styles. However, in reality, there is still the nostalgia for sub-typology A1; in several inventoried cases, the long balconies are reminiscent of A1 style and extend across the entire first-floor facade, as do the insulated balconies on the second floor (Fig. 19). Even in their treatment, the balcony railings go to the end, like those on neoclassical facades. However, the levels can be marked by a horizontal band or a horizontal line of Muqarnas (Fig. 20). Thus, some of the ornamentation in this style is also

reminiscent of European revivalist styles, especially the use of straight-lined stucco consoles.



Fig. 19. An example of an insulated balcony in typology B. (Source: Authors, 2024)



Fig. 20. A horizontal line of Muqarnas. Muqarnas consists of intricate, repeating geometric shapes that create a three-dimensional, tessellated pattern. When arranged in a horizontal line, these shapes form a continuous band of decorative elements that can vary in depth and complexity. (Source: Authors, 2024)

In this typology (B), architects use French windows as horse-shoe arches embellished with a glass roof decorated with geometric motifs. They are sometimes set in a rectangular stucco frame with geometric decoration resting on two twisted columns with Moorish capitals. Windows are aligned and rhythmic throughout the facade, which confirms the building's Arabic aspect and marks its uniqueness. In type (B), the horseshoe-arched windows resemble Arab-Muslim architecture, particularly that from Andalusia. They are geminated with little ornamentation and have a minimalist Moorish appearance (Fig. 21). The facade ends in either an accessible terrace or a roof. The latter is

made of overhanging tiles resting on wooden consoles reminiscent of the architecture of the Arab-Muslim Medina. Only one door can be considered authentic in all the cases of entrance doors of typology (B) (Fig. 22). It is made of wood carved in a geometric pattern and set in a rectangular frame. Its upper part is like a broken horseshoe arch embellished with glass, decorated with a geometric motif, including a star, and supported on cylindrical marble columns with simple capitals. However, the door is fitted with a modern awning that breaks with its Moorish references.



Fig. 21. Examples of geminated windows in Tlemcen. They are pairs of windows that are closely set together, sharing a central column or a mullion. This design element draws from traditional Moorish architecture, incorporating intricate and ornamental details. (Source: Authors, 2024)



Fig. 22. Typology B authentic door. A prominent feature of typology B doors is the horseshoe or ogee arch, which is often richly ornamented. The arch includes intricate carvings and elaborate patterns. (Source: Authors, 2024)

Modernist typology (C)

In 1930, a turning point marked the history of architecture in Algeria without abandoning the rationality of typology (A) in the century-old buildings and the continuity of adopting the decors of typology (B) in the architecture of the 1930s. This architectural turn to the present produced a new typology (C) that opposed European revivalism (typology B) and put a progressive spin on local revivalism (typology C). It also underlines the interest of the period's architects in this modernity aiming to capture their achievements and display them according to the political will to introduce this modern style (Rezgui, 2022). Technical progress that has promoted the use of new building materials, mainly concrete, steel, and glass, underpins this architectural typology. The style, freed from the constraints of previous styles, was used on several buildings to convey the image of the desired modernity and subsequently became an integral part of the architectural and urban landscape of Tlemcen from the Second World War onwards (Kasmi, 2017).

The results of our inventory show that all the facades in this typology have a rather simplistic, geometric shape. They have clean lines and no decorative elements. They range in height from 1 story (the dominant one) to 3 stories. As with the other types, the shop front completely changed the ground floor. The C typology often blends into the existing urban fabric, respecting the principles of classical urban facade composition while combining resolutely modern architecture. This is demonstrated on the facade by the alignment and repetition of identical windows in horizontal bands. Long windows with a sill topped by an awning are a feature of Tlemcen's C typology. Long balconies are also part of this style. They are solid (masonry) at a height and have a steel handrail (Fig. 23). Similarly, awnings align the French windows of type C, are superimposed (with 3-story buildings), over the entire length and surmounted.



Fig. 23. A long balcony of the C typology. (Source: Authors, 2024)

The C typology is characterized by extreme sobriety, with only aligned square window openings with sills and awnings (Fig. 24). The windows are sometimes bordered by simple, projecting or thinner frames that project more at the top (Fig. 25). In this typology, a concrete cap surrounds the facade (Fig. 26). It is more prominent than the cornices of earlier styles. The terrace often has a masonry balustrade, sometimes with an iron handrail. To gain better understanding of the architectural and decorative characteristics of the different types of colonial facades, we have grouped them together in Tab. 1.



Fig. 24. C typology windows with sills and awnings. (Source: Authors, 2024)




Fig. 25. C typology simple frames. (Source: Authors, 2024)



Fig. 26. An example of the concrete cap surrounding C typology facades. The concrete cap serves both aesthetic and functional purposes. It acts as a protective cover, preventing water from penetrating the top of the facade and causing damage. It also adds a finished, polished look to the building's exterior. (Source: Authors, 2024)

Tab. 1. Facade typologies. (Source: Authors, 2024)

Type	Subtype	Principle of composition	Components	Decoration elements	Examples
A	A1	Tripartite; regular spans, rhythm; horizontality; verticality; straight lines; equilibrium; homogeneity; symmetry of floors.	Wood entrance doors with fanlight; individual balcony; long balcony; high French window; high windows; simple or denticulated cornice; accessible roof terrace; roof.	Corner chain; horizontal bands between floors; balconet; bay frame moulding; ironwork with geometric or vegetal (floral) motifs; simple or fluted pilasters, consoles and corbels ornamented; vegetal (floral) low-reliefs; straight pediments; keystones; mascarons (head of a woman); cartouche.	

A2	A2a	Tripartite; geometry; straight lines; equilibrium; repetition; rhythmicity; floor symmetry.	Entrance doors (right-angled or cut angles); individual balcony; long balcony; high French window (right-angled or cut angles); bow-window; simple or denticulated cornice; accessible roof terrace; roof.	Right-angled, rounded or cut balcony railings; geometric balusters, sometimes with flat rose motifs; floral and stylized geometric ironwork, flower baskets, or simply geometric shapes (spiral, semi-circle, etc.); balcony platform takes many forms: geometrical, floral decoration becoming stylized geometrical with low relief, or sometimes in the form of a denticle; geometrical corbels and consoles with flat geometric or floral ornamentation; pilaster without capital; geometric low reliefs; frieze with abstract motif or flat floral and geometric motifs; geometrical or curved pediments (without cornice) decorated with bas-reliefs.	
A2	A2b	Tripartite; geometry; harmony, straight lines; floor symmetries.	Entrance doors (right-angled or cut angles); insulated balcony with rounded corners; long balcony with cut or rounded corners; high French window; port-hole window; bow-window (polygonal); simple cornice; accessible roof terrace; roof.	Iron railings in a geometric pattern or just support bars; simple geometric ironwork; simple rectangular bands; roof overhangs.	
B		Tripartite; symmetry; alignment; rhythm; repetition; equilibrium; harmony.	Wooden doors carved with geometric motifs; long balconies; individual balconies; elongated French windows; windows with a broken horseshoe arch; gemed windows; accessible roof terrace; roof.	Muqarnas; stucco or wooden consoles; glazing decorated with geometric motifs; rectangular bay frames in stucco and in the form of broken horseshoe arches; simple or twisted columns with Moorish or simple marble capitals; horizontal bands between floors.	
C		Tripartite; alignment; geometric; repetition; sobriety.	Long balconies; long French windows; long windows with supports; square windows; accessible roof terrace.	Balustrade (masonry) with steel handrail; awning; simple protruding frames or sometimes with thinner frames that protrude more at the top.	

DISCUSSION

Stylistic resistance

According to the literature review, in the first instance, French colonizers adopted the European architectural style in the Tlemcen's old city for several reasons, often linked to cultural, political, and functional imperatives. By using a European style, the colonizers sought to mark their domination and cultural superiority over the local population (Oulebsir et al., 2003). Typology A identified in our research served to symbolize

France's presence and authority in old cities like Tlemcen. This typology symbolizes the desire to project an image of modernity and civilization in contrast to what they perceived as the archaism of local structures. European architecture was seen as a means of civilizing and modernizing the old city of Tlemcen. French colonizers introduced decorative facades in the first decade of the 19th century (Soufi, 1988). The colonial buildings introduced into the city's new districts adopted the neo-classical style (Mariolle, Bres, 2005), a style exogenous to the cultural context of the city of Tlemcen. The facades of the colonial buildings were designed based on classical architecture, but the designers needed to conform better to the style. Although the

stylistic production relating to typology A seems modest and repetitive, an abundance of compositional elements in the neo-classical facades can be seen. This town has certain originality; the style is most authentic in the oldest buildings, whose owners did not have the means or did not want to modernize their constructions, preferring to keep the original appearance.

Although an impression of monotony can be perceived due to the use of the same ornamentation on the facades of typology A in Tlemcen, to the point of stylistic banality, we have shown that there was an exceptional effort made aimed at composition and simultaneous search for stylistic anchorage and originality. The composition-aimed effort concerns not only the scale of the facade but the scale of the city. The architects in that period were thinking in terms of the urban landscape, which was characterized by a certain urban and architectural continuity ensured by using the same elements and techniques of facade composition. As for the stylistic anchorage, it is social first, with the metropolis as a source of inspiration. There is originality, because this style was introduced in a particular context, that of an Arab-Muslim city with a significant influence. However, the style crowned the radical transformation of the Arab-Muslim city (urban breakthroughs).

Nevertheless, the adoption of an exogenous architectural style, as (Typology A) in the case of Tlemcen, reflects the complex dynamics of cultural imposition, practical needs, and local responses. In our research, what matters the most is the local response to colonial operations. The typological analysis method identified powerful forms of cultural resistance reflecting the local population's resistance to French colonial rule. French colonizers were forced to respect the history of Tlemcen and yielded to stylistic resistance at the city level. Therefore, the simplicity and absence of ornamentation on the facades are linked not only to the lack of financial resources in the city during the period but also to the resistance of the site. Technical constraints reinforce the resistance in the existing built environment. It should be noted that most facades were built to create clear-cut structures due to the urban breakthroughs made in the city's old fabric to create the city's current boulevards. Because of the dilapidated state of old buildings, facades are limited in height and width.

Stylistic reverence

A particular form of stylistic reverence was identified by the typological analysis. The idea of stylistic reverence in Tlemcen refers to the respect shown to local styles and their intentional preservation despite the pressures of European colonial style adepts (Leconte, 2009). Many of the Tlemcen's historic buildings have been preserved and restored. In appearance, conservation operations show respect for past architectural achievements and their cultural importance but it was an act of submission. During the period of stylistic reverence, architects incorporated traditional elements into their modern designs, such as arches, courtyards, and Islamic decorative motifs (Carabelli, 2006). The production of facades in typology B in Tlemcen has remained modest, although its source is the inescapable example of an Arab-Muslim city. This style was content to reinterpret the elements of local architecture. Geometric decoration, essentially of Moorish influence, adorns the facades of buildings that follow the laws of classical composition and assembly, a hybridization of architectural elements. Here we are not okay with the idea of France as a protector of rights and values (Béguin et al., 1993). This image cannot be correct and has been at odds with the French actions during the colonial period. The duality between proclaimed principles and historical realities underlines the complexity of this image. Typology B shows that the transi-

tion to this style was a result of stylistic resistance as part of the general population's resistance to the French rule.

Stylistic neutrality

This type of architecture in Tlemcen is a mass phenomenon because it rejects decoration in favor of the functionality of the building and is based on rational principles. The third typology represents neutrality, avoiding pronounced aesthetic or stylistic expressions, favoring a more universal and timeless appearance. Several reasons can motivate this approach, including the desire to create buildings that integrate harmoniously into various contexts without visually or culturally dominating their surroundings. Stylistic neutrality minimizes decorative elements or specific cultural references, allowing buildings to remain relevant and adapt to multiple uses over time. It should be noted that despite the inclusion of this typology in the modern reference system, it was still possible to find compositional references to other typologies, particularly typology A, expressing the earlier architectural context.

CONCLUSION

With a heritage inventory, the society has a complete picture of what it possesses and sometimes conserves or enhances, based on discrimination, with no factual basis (Jaunin and Debize, 2018). The typology of architectural styles is an instrument of work whose main aim is to offer more profound understanding by establishing a classification by types of facades that group the same characteristics by underlining the link between them. Typology leads to the recognition of architectural features, the transition from one style to another, and their development over time. Our study shows that the various colonial facades in Tlemcen have been remarkably enriched by architectural styles that developed in the French metropolis. This is, of course, a function of the local context, linked, on the one hand, to the expression of political will and the historical and urban particularities of the city of Tlemcen.

While the exogenous influences are linked to the stylistic trends that were dominant mostly in Paris and that influenced the whole of Algeria in the same way, we note that there are not enough examples of impressive facades in the city of Tlemcen, as is the case of significant Algerian towns (Algiers, Oran, and Annaba). However, the example of Tlemcen remains interesting because it is one of the most historic cities in Algeria and has undoubtedly influenced the typology of French styles on this local scale. Our research has revealed three stylistic typologies that were the most dominant in the facades of French colonial dwellings between 1842 and 1962, including two European and local revivalist typologies and a third modernist typology.

By studying these stylistic typologies, we have identified some fundamental aspects of our problem, and, above all, the existence of a form of stylistic resistance. The stylistic resistance can be defined as the effort of the indigenous population of the city of Tlemcen to protect their urban environment, cultural heritage, and identity against the urbanization policies and development projects imposed by the colonial authorities. The typology of architectural styles has also enabled us to detect a particular form of stylistic reverence. This directly results from stylistic resistance, which forced the colonizers to reconsider their principles and give in to the power of the indigenous population.

Today, in Tlemcen, the significant risk to conserving these colonial architectural treasures is the pastiche of contemporary buildings. However, considering the broad lines that must be respected to build typologies (massing, roofs, and facades), contemporary innovation would bring the colonial landscape to

life. It is necessary not to view cultural heritage as static artefacts but as dynamic, ever-changing entities. By embracing change and transformation, cultural heritage can contribute to human well-being, resilience, and sustainability in the face of contemporary challenges (Holtorf, 2024). In 2011, 50 years after the country's independence, the international event "Tlemcen Capital of Islamic Culture" restored continuity and dialogue with the city's Moorish architectural style, even renewing the Moorish Revival. Today, all new buildings in Tlemcen are inspired by Moorish architecture (Mazouz and Triqui, 2024).

This research does not just document and analyze colonial heritage; it paves the way for practical, political educational and research initiatives that can have a lasting impact on the preservation and enhancement of the Tlemcen's architectural heritage. The practical implications can be elaborated by creating a solid base of theoretical knowledge, allowing other researchers to draw on reliable data and analysis. Furthermore, this research could encourage interdisciplinary approach, combining history, sociology, and architecture for more holistic understanding. The results can help inform the people and influence Tlemcen's city colonial heritage preservation policies by providing convincing arguments and data to policy-makers. The results can guide future interventions aimed at the restoration and preservation of colonial buildings in Tlemcen. The research results highlight the importance and value of colonial architectural heritage in the city of Tlemcen. The research can raise public and local community awareness of the need to conserve and protect the facades. Data can be integrated into educational programs to train the next generation of architects, curators and decision-makers.

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