

**A CRITICAL MOROCCAN CHRONOLOGY: THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FINE
ARTS IN TETOUAN SINCE 1946**

TINA BAROUTI

Boston University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, 2022

Major Professor: Cynthia Becker, Ph.D., Associate Professor of African Art

ABSTRACT

This dissertation offers the first in-depth, socio-political history of the National Institute of Fine Arts in Tetouan. Organized into four chronological chapters, this study illustrates how generations of artists laid the groundwork for the development of modern and contemporary art in Morocco. My first chapter examines how the pedagogy of the Preparatory School of Fine Arts, founded in 1946 by Spanish painter Mariano Bertuchi Nieto, informed the Pictorial School of Tetouan, articulating myths of Andalusian nationalism, Hispano-Arab culture, and Hispano-Moroccan brotherhood. The role of arts and culture in Spain's imperialist project is a lens for understanding how the colonial encounter and its afterlife affected Moroccan artists of the mid-twentieth century. My second chapter examines the post-independence period, between 1957, when the Preparatory School was re-inaugurated as the National School of Fine Arts by King Mohammed V, and the 1970s. Decades of Spanish colonialism resulted in the region's socio-political, cultural, and economic marginalization and a disregard by scholars for seminal figures such as Ahmed Amrani, Saâd Ben Cheffaj, Meriam Maziane, Mekki Megara, and Mohamed Sarghini. I assert that rather than replicate colonial artistic styles, they were engaged in identity exploration and formal experimentations.

The 1970s and 1980s in Morocco were recognized as the Years of Lead, a period of state-sponsored violence and oppression under King Hassan II, thus, in my third chapter, I delve into

the work of artists responding to these tumultuous decades, such as Aziz Abou Ali, Mohamed Drissi, and Ahmed Amrani. Other artists openly reacted against the school's marginalization and conservative pedagogy via the Spring Exhibitions, a series of five ephemeral outdoor exhibitions in al-Faddān square. Rebranded once more in 1994 as the National Institute of Fine Arts, the school has produced a generation of contemporary artists such as Mohamed Larbi Rahhali, Younès Rahmoun, and Safaa Erruas, who work primarily with Installation art and are socially and politically engaged. To that end, my fourth chapter highlights the decolonial artistic practices and pedagogical shifts introduced by innovators such as Abdelkrim Ouazzani, Mohammed Chabâa, and Faouzi Laatiris, who cultivated a more liberal artistic environment at the school.