Arİf Pasha Mansion from its first construction to the present

Fatma SEDES*
Istanbul Aydin University, Istanbul, Turkey
fatmasedes@aydin.edu.tr
(ORCID: 0000-0002-4064-7381)
* Dr. Ögr. Üyesi, Istanbul Aydın Üniversitesi, fatmasedes@gmail.com

Abstract
Arif Paşa Mansion, whose restoration works have been completed recently, is located in Fatih District of Istanbul (in the old Eminönü). The building, which has been used with different functions since its construction, was first built as a mansion. This building, which was planned to be restored as the "Provincial Youth Assembly and Culture Mansion" by the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, was best known as the old Eminönü Municipality Building. It was built as a "mansion" in the late 19th century and became known as "Arif Pasha Mansion". After a lavish life, it changed hands in 1911 and was used as the "Şehremanet" building (Municipality Building). It became the command (headquarters) of the French occupation forces in 1918 and continued this function until 1923. It functioned as Turkey's first "conservatory" in the 1930s. In the following years, it began to be used as an official institution. II. Mahmud Tomb, Cevri Kalfa Sibyan School, Firuz Ağa Mosque, Kaygusuz Lodge, Şehzade Mosque, Press Museum, Köprülü Library, Mosque, Madrasa and Tomb, Çemberlitaş Square, Atik Ali Paşa Mosque, Koca Sinanpaşa Complex, Çorlulu Ali Paşa Complex, Merzifonlu Kara. This area, which is surrounded by historical buildings and squares such as the Pasha Complex, Gedik Ahmet Pasha Mosque, Bath, Million Stone, 1001 Mast Cistern and Çemberlitaş Bath, has been used as a settlement for ulema and rulers throughout history. This prepared text has been created in order to explain the method followed in the project studies carried out regarding the building, which also served as the ‘’Şehremaneti’’ for a period, and to summarize the process that occurred while presenting architectural solution proposals that would meet today's needs by revealing its relationship with the historical environment.

Keywords
Arif Paşa Mansion, Eminönü Municipality Building (Şehremaneti), Conservatory, Goodwill (Thedosius) Cistern

1. Introduction

As understood from the historical sources obtained, Arif Pasha Mansion was purchased by the Şehremaneti after the proclamation of the Second Constitutional Monarchy and started to be used as the Istanbul Şehremaneti Building as of January 31, 1912, after extensive renovation and some expansion works (Ergin,O.2007)

The building was sold to Şehremaneti in 1911 and opened for use in 1912 after extensive repair and expansion (Koçu 1975). During the survey, restitution and restoration projects carried out in the building, which was also used as the "Eminönü Municipality Building’’ between 1984-2009, it was understood from the observations and material analyzes on the building that it served more than one purpose from the date it was built to the present day and that the building underwent changes for these uses(Figs.1,2)

The building was used as a headquarters by the French occupation forces until October 1, 1923, when Istanbul was occupied by the Allied Powers at the end of the Armistice of Mudros on 30 October 1918 (Aksel, M). The bu-

Figure 1.

Figure 2.

ilding is seen as the Şehremaneti building in the German Blues of 1913-1914. It is understood from the Pervititch map dated 1923 that it was used as a "Hotel Prefecture La Ville" (Sedes, 2008).

Later, it was used as the conservatory building (Dar-ul Elhan) in the late 1920s (Rey, C.R.1949) and served as the Eminönü Municipality Building from 1984 to 2009(Figs.3,4). During this period, the adjacent parcels of the building numbered 1-2-3-4-5 were consolidated and an additional service building was built, and the additional building was demolished in March 2010 due to the damage it caused to the Şerefiye Cistern below it (Sedes, F.2008).

The survey project of the building, drawn in 1990 and approved by the Board decision dated 26.08.1998 and numbered 10178, has been evaluated as a document within the scope of restoration works (Sedes, F.2008). The main differences between them can be listed as follows when the Board-approved the survey studies. While the fire escape was on the back, it was moved to the front. Later, dividing walls were added to the hall where the core in the back section was opened, and new rooms were created on each floor. The wooden doors of the building were replaced with new wooden doors. Since the rooms were used for different purposes, some dividing elements were removed and new elements were added. Changes were also made in the door openings.

When the surveys dated 1990 and 2011 are compared, no major change is observed in the outer contour of the building, but the differences between the two surveys in question and the situation on the Pervititch map are as follows: On the Pervititch map, it is seen that the outbuilding building to the north of the main building has an entrance separate from the main building and independent from the street, and it was expanded and included in the main building in the surveys drawn in 1990 and today. The fire escapes on the east and west facades between the outbuilding and the main building were placed on the rear facade (Sedes, F). The chimney on the west side, where the rear entrance of the building is located on the Pervititch map, was expanded and repositioned. on the map; The formation of the northern façade of the main building, which opens to the outbuilding, is different from today.

The building, whose restitution research was carried out, was built as Arif Paşa Mansion as mentioned before, was sold to Şehremaneti in 1911 and opened for use in 1912 after extensive repair and expansion work. The Şerefiye Cistern, which is partly located on the same parcel as the building, was not damaged in this process. During the survey, restitution and restoration projects carried out in the building, which was also used as the "Eminönü Municipality" building between 1984-2009, it was understood from the observations and material analyzes on the building that it served more than one purpose from the date it was

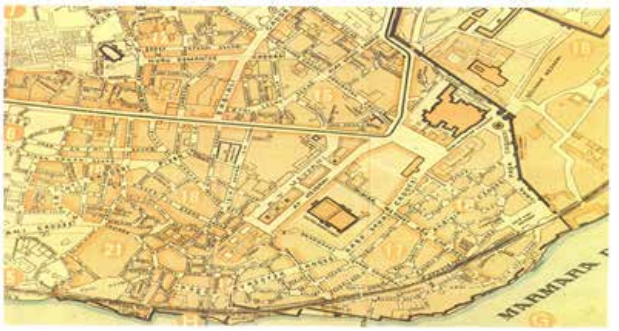

Figure 3.

Figure 4.

built to the present day and that the building underwent changes for these uses.(Figs.5,6).

As a result of the researches, the construction date of Arif Pasha Mansion could not be found despite all studies. As it can be understood from the historical sources obtained, Arif Pasha Mansion, after the proclamation of the Second Constitutional Monarchy, after it was purchased by the Şehremaneti, underwent a comprehensive renovation and after some expansion works, it underwent a comprehensive renovation. It has been used as the Istanbul Şehremaneti building since January 1912. (Source: “Mecelle-iumuri Belediye”, Osman Ergin - “Istanbul Encyclopedia” Volume 2 P:1010-1011)

It is understood from the Pervititch map dated 1923 that it was used as "Hotel Prefecture De La Ville" for a while. Later, it was used as the conservatory building (Dar-ül Elhan) in the late 1920s. (Source: “My CONSERVATORY MEMORY”, from Cemal Reşit Rey- monthly Orchestra magazine dated May 1976).

As it served as the Eminönü Municipality building from 1984 to 2009, the adjacent parcels of the building were consolidated and an additional service building was built. Later it was demolished in front of the press cameras. The sample of the survey project, which was drawn in 1990 and approved with the board decision no: 10178 dated 26.08.1998, belonging to the registered building numbered 6 parcel no. When comparing the survey approved by the board decision dated 14.03.2011 and numbered 4454 by us and the board approved survey showing the state of the building in 1990, the main differences between them can be listed as follows. -Dividing walls were added later to the hall where the core in the back section was opened and new rooms were created on each floor. As the rooms started to be used for different purposes, some dividing elements were removed and new elements were added. Changes were also made in the door openings. The chimney located on the west side of the building, where the rear entrance of the building is located on the Pervititch map, was expanded and its location was changed. On the Pervititch map; The configuration of the northern façade of the main building, which opens to the outbuilding, is different from today. The building contours on the Pervititch map and the building boundaries and dimensions in the board-approved surveys dated 1990 and 2010 were examined comparatively, and the restitution project was created in this direction. In this case, the oldest dated document giving information about the original boundaries of the building is the Pervititch map. Apart from this, the structural data clearly observed on the existing building was also considered as an important data in determining the boundaries of the original mansion structure. In this context, following the traces on the existing building today, it is understood that the mansion was expanded during the period when it was converted into the Şehremaneti building. In the light of the structural data observed during the on-site examinations, it is understood that the section with a long corridor to the south of the main building was added during the said transformation, and another floor was added to the whole of the building, complementing it with an uninterrupted wooden eaves circling all around it. It is seen on the Pervititch map that the annex building

Figure 5. Top.
Figure 6. Bottom.

in the north direction is also separate from the main building. The northern façade of the building was drawn in accordance with the shape and dimensions of the Pervititch map(Fig.5). In the survey dated 1990, the independent bath section, which is adjacent to the northern façade of the main building, was not specified on the Pervititch map, so it was accepted as a period annex and was only expressed as a trace in the restitution project.

In the last examination, it was determined that the thickness of the two rubble stone walls in the basement floor was wider than the 2010 board-approved survey project, and the project was drawn accordingly. These walls are expressed by scanning and in the drawing(Fig.6). In addition, the drawings of the basement floor, which were determined to be different from the approved survey, were revised and submitted to the approval of the board. In line with the accepted new situation, the basement of the building was drawn in accordance with the situation approved in the restitution and restoration projects(Fig.7).

The main entrance door of the building is provided by a wooden door accessed via a five-step marble staircase on Pier Loti Street and opens to the entrance hall. The second entrance is in the opposite direction, on Boyacı Ahmet Street(Fig.8). The iron garden gates, which provide the entrance to the space between the social center and the main building in the north of the main building, and located at the entrance in the back section, have been preserved. The stair cores and wet areas of the building are placed on the deaf north side of the building, which does not have a view. On this front, a fire escape is also proposed due to the ease of access to the garden and evacuation.

There are three-armed staircases and WCs in the north of the halls in the section facing Pier Loti Street(Fig10).

Figure 7. Top.
Figure 8. Bottom.

On the ground floor, under the middle arm of this staircase, there is a wooden door that provides access to the annex building. The staircase leading to the back hall is two-armed and is placed on the northern façade of the building, which has no view. This staircase also leads down to the basement. It is thought that there are units (archive, warehouse, etc.) serving the "Youth Assembly" in the basement. The service elevator added to the building is intended to serve the dining hall and cafeteria sections on the top floor and the service areas on each floor.

The show center is entered through the space between the two buildings. These doors lead to the central staircase hall. On the floors of the building, there is a room facing the front side, a room facing the back courtyard, and a WC located next to the stairs. The rooms are organized as show rooms, workshops and multi-purpose halls (meetings, conferences, seminars). The roof of the building was considered as a hipped roof with the characteristics of the period, and Marseille type tiles were preferred as the roof cover. Water discharge is provided by zinc streams.

The window and door openings on the façades were preserved as in the restitution proposal, and the south façade was drawn in line with the traces obtained from the existing walls. Floor moldings and eaves have been preserved as they were in the existing building. The interior doors of the building were replaced with wooden doors. Floor moldings were added to the show center in the north, taking into account the integrity of the building. Structural system was carried out under the supervision of Prof.Dr. Metin AYDOĞAN (Aydoğan, M.2007) In the building whe-

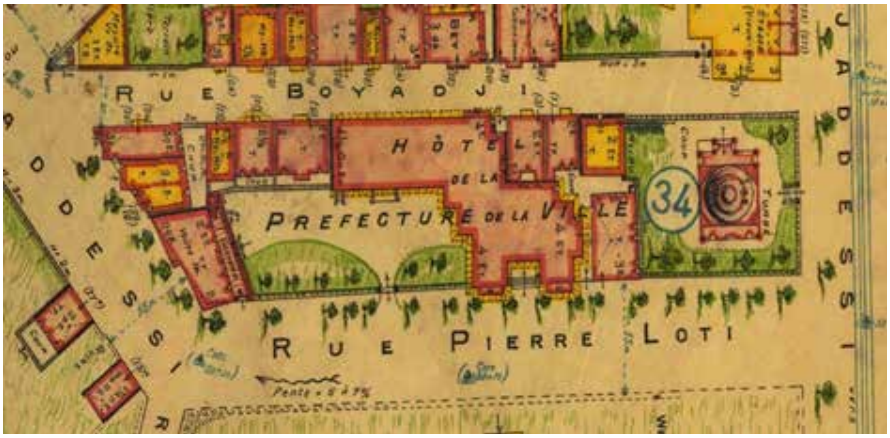

Figure 9. Top.
Figure 10. Bottom.

re the widest gap is 510 cm, 8/22 cross-section wooden beams were chosen as the floor carrier, and the top and bottom of these beams were covered with wood, creating the lightest and safest carrier system possible. For the middle hall, where there is a three-armed staircase, 12/24 cross-section main wooden beams were added on each floor and other beams were placed on these main carriers. The places where the wooden beams pass are marked in the plan drawings.

2. Recomendations for the Conservation of Decoration Elements

If the wooden elements, which were removed from the building and damaged in such a way that they cannot be preserved in situ, by evaluating the results of the wood analysis, do not have characteristics in terms of art history and do not have architectural document value; It is recommended to burn it without waiting after it is removed from the structure. So mushrooms, etc. The spread of diseases based on organism activity to other elements will be prevented. During the application, after the structure is suspended, the damaged parts of the wooden elements that cannot be preserved in place should be cut and removed. After the whole system is sprayed; wooden elements of the same type should be detailed in a size and form compatible with the original and placed in place after being impregnated with the appropriate method.

Impregnation of building elements with vacuum impregnation systems gives more positive results. For structural elements that require on-site spraying, methods such as brushing or spraying may also be preferred, depending on

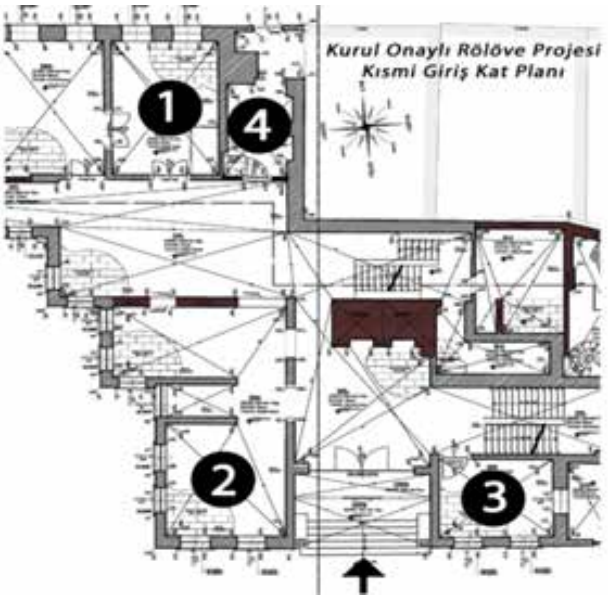

Figure 11.

the application conditions. The wood to be used in the repair; Care should be taken to ensure that it is dried under suitable conditions until the humidity reaches the desired level, that it is impregnated with the appropriate impregnation technique under the supervision of authorized specialists, and that the original wooden element in the direction of the fiber is placed parallel to the fiber direction in partial repairs. Deteriorations were observed in the decorations. The plastered surfaces on which the hand-drawn decoration is applied have undergone physical changes and deformation has occurred in some parts. Acrylic-based paint was made on it in various periods. The paint used on the hand-drawn was also affected by the resulting deterioration and there were some losses. Depending on the preservation of the existing tissue intended for conservation; paint removal should be done, consolidation and cleaning of the contamination on the surface should be carried out. Borders and decorations, the continuation of which can be predicted, should be completed with suitable materials, those that cannot be cleaned and painted should be revived, but should be preserved as they are. The mansion structure also has such a tumultuous past. Conditions of existing hand-drawn decorations;

2.1. Recommendation A:

1. Ceilings with hand-drawn decorations have been eroded due to incorrect and faulty blasting in previous periods.
2. The surface deformations as a result of the wrong scraping work caused the colors and textures of the patterns, and the details in the motifs to be mostly lost. Necessary works to be done in hand-drawn work; very careful paint scraping ought to be done on all surfaces.
3. Making hand-drawn surface cleaning on the surfaces whose scraping has been completed.
4. Taking the existing patterns, correcting, duplicating, transferring the motif to the surface by pinning.
5. Preparation of colors.
6. Clapping.
7. Drawing of flats, drawing of den dans apart from corner and core motifs.
8. Studying corner and core motifs.
9. Making light and shadow details in motifs.
10. Coloring the ground cores.

Wood Conservation Suggestions: If the wooden elements removed from the building and damaged to such an extent that they cannot be preserved in situ by evaluating the results of the wood analysis or do not have characteristics in terms of art history and do not have architectural document value; it is recommended to burn it without waiting after it is removed from the structure. So mushrooms, etc. the spread of diseases based on organism activity to other elements will be prevented (Fig.13). During the application, after the structure is suspended, the damaged parts of the wooden elements that cannot be preserved in place should be cut and removed. After the whole system is sprayed; wooden elements of the same type should be detailed in a size and form compatible with the original and placed in place after being impregnated with the appropriate method. Impregnation of construction elements with vacuum impregnation systems gives more positive results. For construction elements that require on-site spraying, methods such as brushing or spraying may also be preferred, depending on the application conditions. The wood to be used in the repair; Care should be taken to ensure that it is dried in suitable conditions until the humidity reaches

Figure 12. Top.
Figure 13. Bottom.

the desired level, that it is impregnated under the supervision of authorized specialists with the impregnation technique deemed appropriate, and that the original wooden element in the fiber direction is placed parallel to the fiber direction in partial repairs.

Wooden bagdadi top to be made on the ceilings of the building in rooms 1, 2 and 3.

for plaster, the following composition is proposed:

- 2 measures of slaked lime
- 1 measure of 3mm sieve black sand
- 1/5 measure 125µ brick dust (sifted in a fine flour sieve)
- For 20L (1 tin) plaster: 20 gr.

2.2. Recommendation B:
In rooms 1, 2 and 3 (Figure 4.), a regional opening can be left with suitable glass material for the ceilings of the building, thus making the original texture tangible.

Hand-drawn Conservation Suggestions: Deterioration was observed in the hand-drawn decorations on the ceiling and walls. The plastered surfaces on which the hand-drawn decoration is applied have undergone physical changes and deformation has occurred in some parts. Acrylic-based paint was made on it in various periods. The paint used on the hand-drawn work was also affected by the resulting deterioration and some losses were incurred. has been. Depending on the preservation of the existing tissue intended for conservation; Paint removal should be done, consolidation and cleaning of the contamination on

Figure 14.

Figure 15.

Figure 16.

Figure 17.

the surface should be carried out. Borders and decorations,(Fig12), the continuation of which can be predicted, should be completed with suitable materials, those that cannot be cleaned and painted should be revived, but should be preserved as they are.

Room No. 4: After the scraping on the walls and ceiling, the engravings were exposed.

Room No. 3: After the scraping process on the floor, volta floor elements, tie-dye laths and wooden ceiling moldings were exposed Figs.(14,15).

Conclusions

Movable or immovable cultural and architectural heritage plays an important role in instilling awareness of their common past and future as well as historical documents.

Therefore, it is very important to preserve and sustain this heritage. The architectural heritage includes not only the only qualified buildings such as palaces, mansions, pavilions and their surroundings, but also all urban and rural areas with historical and cultural characteristics.

Since movable and immovable works are our common assets, all local governments have a common responsibility to protect them against increasing dangers such as neglect, deliberate demolition, irregular new construction and excessive traffic. The protection of these assets should be considered as the main goal of city and country planning.

Local authorities and authorities that make the most important planning decisions have a separate responsibility for the protection of the architectural heritage. Those in management should help each other by exchanging ideas and information.

Rehabilitation of urban protected areas should be planned and implemented, as far as possible, in a way that does not require a radical change in the social distribution of the residents. Children, young people, middle-aged people, elderly people, in short, all citizens should benefit from the benefits of restoration works carried out by public resources. Necessary legal and administrative measures should be taken in this regard(Figs. 16,17).

Financial assistance to local governments to contribute to the restoration, implementation and maintenance of architecturally or historically significant structures and areas

The architectural legacy will only survive if the public and especially the younger generations know its value. For this reason, education programs at all levels, starting from the primary school age, have to show increased attention to this issue.

International, national and local independent institutions and organizations and NGOs (non-governmental organizations) that will help attract the attention of children, youth and adults should be supported by the local and central government. It is essential to preserve cultural assets and architectural heritage.

Only in this way can it be sustained to enrich the lives of all our citizens, now and in the future.

Our society may face the danger of losing a large part of its traditional building heritage in the near future, unless the new conservation strategy and the community-appropriate conservation policy are implemented.

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Arabic Calligraffiti: A Political Liminal Practice in Street Art's Visual Scene

Hela Zahar
Pôle d'études et de recherche en cultures numériques, Université de l'Ontario français, Toronto, Canada M5E 1Z2
Email: hela.zahar@uontario.ca

Abstract
Arabic calligraffiti, a form of urban art, has spread in both Arab and Western cities, including Montreal, Paris and cities in Tunisia and elsewhere in the Arabic world. Its visibility underlines different tensions and highlights various conflicts and power relations, such as Arab-Western tensions in the visual culture of Western cities, tensions around the religious role of Islamic calligraphy in Arab cities, tensions around urban art in all cities, and tensions around the various digital spaces where these works are disseminated (Zahar, 2018). Arabic calligraffiti has its origins in Islamic calligraphy, modern Arabic calligraphy and the globalized graffiti movement. It is situated at the problematic meeting of the Arab and Western worlds and raises the question of possible interpenetrations and/or tensions (physical and digital) between those two cultural ensembles. Arabic calligraffiti can be considered in many ways as a liminal practice. In this article, we will illustrate the different facets of this liminal practice.

Keywords
Visual scene; Arabic calligraffiti; political liminal practice; urban art; Arab and Western worlds; visibility

1. Introduction

Arabic calligraffiti is present in abandoned warehouses, trendy neighbourhoods, galleries, museums and open-air museums in many cities around the world: in the United States, Canada, Australia, Europe but also the Maghreb, the Middle East and the Arabian Peninsula. Arabic calligraffiti has its origins in Islamic calligraphy, modern Arabic calligraphy and the globalized graffiti movement. It has spread in both Arab and Western cities and is thus situated at the current and problematic meeting of these two worlds. Arabic calligraffiti raises the question of possible interpenetrations of graffiti and Arabic scripts in Arab and Western cities as well as in various locations in the digital space. Its visibility underlines different tensions and highlights various conflicts and power relations: Arab-Western tensions in the visual culture of Western cities, tensions around the religious role of Islamic calligraphy in Arab cities, tensions around street art in all cities, and tensions around the various digital spaces where these works are disseminated. Arabic calligraffiti is in many ways a liminal practice in the global visual scene of street art. In this article, based on a 15-year study of street art's visual scene, we will present Arabic calligraffiti and see how it fits into the political dimension of public visibility. More concretely, we will try to understand what liminal image practices are used by Arabic calligraffiti to become publicly visible and 'to make visual politics'.

2. Origins of Arabic calligraffiti

To understand Arabic calligraffiti, it is necessary to understand its threefold origins: Islamic calligraphy, modern Arabic calligraphy and graffiti. Islamic calligraphy is an essential element of Islamic art (Grabar, 1987). The 'art of the line' (khatt in Arabic) creates a relationship with God and is initially reserved to the scripting of the Quran. It developed strongly from the 8th century and became an important sa-

cred art partly because of the interdiction of representing humans in Islamic art (Beaugé and Clément, 1995). The history of Arabic calligraphy reflects the many innovations and styles that have marked the expansion of Islamic civilization within various cultures (Blair, 2007; George, 2010). Several Arabic calligraphy styles developed over time: the koufi (see Figure 1) and naskhi styles are the two major categories from which more than 20 other Arabic calligraphy styles emerged (Khan, 2006).

Figure 1. Written in Kufic script, the Topkapi manuscript is the oldest near-complete Quran in existence and dates from the 8th century. (Alamy) Source: https://www.arabnews.com/ArabicCalligraphy looked 2022/08/28.

More recently, some Arabic calligraphers have sought to raise in their work the issue of acknowledging the 'Arabness' of Arabic calligraphy traditionally associated with Islamic calligraphy, while trying to evolve it toward the modern Arab calligraphy present in the public space of Arab and Western cities. An interesting characteristic of this new type of calligraphy is that the letters are not always designed to be legible (Marsh, 1996) and depart from the calligraphic tradition based on a reading of the Quran. By questioning this tradition, modern Arab calligraphers are opening new avenues and redefining calligraphy's artistic approach. These innovations were introduced in the 1960s and 1970s through new artistic movements, such as the Hurufiyya (lettrism) and the Saqqakhaneh in Iran, and by artists like Hossein Zenderoudi, Ghana Allani, sculptor Parviz Tanavoli, and Hassan Massoudy (Ali, 1997; Issa, Cestra and Porter, 2016).

Of Iraqi origin, Hassan Massoudy is one of the modern calligraphers who inspired the work of several contemporary Arab calligraffiti artists. Modern Arabic calligraphy, as developed by artists like Massoudy, led to a first rupture with Islamic calligraphy. It moved calligraphy away from simply reproducing the Quran and took it into an aesthetic exploration of the artistic developments in the Western world (see Figure 2). Interested in building a bridge between East and West, this calligrapher borrows citations from various cultures, not just excerpts from the Quran, in a marked departure from Islamic calligraphy.

Islamic calligraphy and modern Arabic calligraphy repre-

Figure 2. Calligraphy by Hassan Massoudy (no date mentioned) Source: https://massoudy.pagesperso-orange.fr/galerie.htm looked 2022/08/28.

sent two important sources of Arabic calligraphy. In addition to these influences is the modern and globalized movement of contemporary graffiti, and here resides—in this new ensemble—the originality of the Arabic calligraffiti remix. Hip-hop culture and graffiti represent the "street art" component of Arabic calligraffiti (see Figure 3). In Arab countries, graffiti first developed by imitating Western styles. A sign of rebellion and liberation from dictatorial powers, it transposed graffiti's spirit and form into the streets of Arab cities (Rabbat, 2012). It would take the advent of Arabic calligraffiti to bring the heritage of calligraphy into the mix of graffiti street art.

Figure 3. Artwork by urban artist Zepha (France, 2011) Source: Urban artist website https://www.abadiafez.com looked 2022/08/28.

In the Western world, Arabic calligraffiti developed from hip-hop culture during the 1990s. Certain artists learned calligraphy from renowned masters while others were self-taught and transmitted their knowledge to other artists. This was the case of urban artist Vincent Abadie Hafez (Zepha), well known in Parisian graffiti artist circles since the '80s, and an artist that has played a key role in the development of Arabic calligraffiti. These early Arabic calligraffiti artists, including Zepha, A1One, Abdellatif Moustad, Marko93 and L'Atlas, certainly produced works of "Arabic calligraffiti" before the emergence of the urban artist eL Seed came onto the scene in 2008, but their creations did not enjoy much visibility and are perhaps identified as a "movement" or style, as was the case after the emergence of the urban artist eL Seed.

eL Seed is clearly the Arabic calligraffiti artist who has made the greatest contribution to the growth of this urban art form in Montreal and then around the world. Born in France, of Tunisian parents, eL Seed lived in Montreal from 2008 to 2011 and then moved to Tunisia, and Paris, to every continent, and then to the countries of the Arabian Peninsula, where he opened a studio in 2015. He has produced works in over 30 cities around the world and enjoys substantial media visibility (see Figure 4).

Any starting date for Arabic calligraffiti is therefore somewhat arbitrary. What is clear is that the leading urban artist of Arabic calligraffiti, eL Seed, moved to Montreal in

Figure 4. Artwork by urban artist eL Seed (Djerba, Tunisia, 2014) Source: Urban artist website http://www.djerba-hood.com/portfolio/el-seed/ looked 2017/12/12.

2008 and produced a series of Arabic calligraffiti works there over a period of three years. This intense production phase and the dominant role this artist played in the subsequent development of Arabic calligraffiti has prompted us to consider 2008 as the starting point of an important phase in this urban art style.

3. Analytical framework

To understand the evolution of Arabic calligraffiti, its liminal practices and the politics of its visibility, we are proposing an analytical framework based on two interrelated concepts: the visibility regime and the visual scene.

3.1. Visibility regimes

The visibility of Arabic calligraffiti in the urban public space reflects the characteristics of the visibility regime under which it is expressed. This concept has been studied by several authors (Jay, 2017; Virilio, 1994; Mirzoeff, 2006; Brighenti, 2007, 2010a, 2010b). For Jay (2017), a visibility regime suggests the idea of a framework or a determination of "visual behaviours," meaning that visual expression results from the power relations between different urban actors. But Jay relativizes the hegemonic flavour ("from above") of the 'regime' concept and stresses that this concept reflects instead a dynamic equilibrium of the visual rules and practices at play in a specific culture. In this sense, 'resistance' to a visibility regime does not involve stepping outside that regime, but rather negotiating and/or gradually transforming the framework offered by the regime through the introduction of new visual practices or modifications of existing practices. Meanwhile, Brighenti (2010a) stresses the structural aspect of visibility regimes, focussing on the 'asymmetries' that define them. In this sense, there is an ongoing negotiation between the structural characteristics of a regime and the practices of the images that constitute it: the emergence of new practices can "create" tension and 'force' the transformation of the visibility regime. Similarly, new practices can emerge following this transformation of the regime.

In the urban space, structural characteristics are reflected in the laws, rules and norms that 'frame' the different visual practices at work. This more formalized framework modulates citizen participation in the city's visual culture, varies according to the different visibility regimes and evolves with the changing visual practices at work. In turn, this citizen participation transforms the visibility regimes. To understand visibility in its political sense, it is necessary to integrate political theory, urban sociology and social movements, among other dimensions. Indeed, beyond its strictly visual dimension, the concept of visibility becomes eminently political: what is visible (or invisible) in the public space influences the citizen and the evolution of society (Brighenti, 2010b; Cook and Whowell, 2011).

Street artists and calligraffiti artists must "negotiate" with visibility regimes even in authorized forms of street art. When eL Seed produced a giant calligraffiti on the mosque of Gabes, in Tunisia, he decided to use a citation from the Quran but, interestingly, this citation was about tolerance and "knowing each other" (see Figure 5). In doing so, this practice can be seen as liminal because it succeeds in inscribing graffiti on the exterior walls of a mosque, a sacred space for Muslims in an Arabic visibility regime.

One year later, the same artist created another calligraffiti on the exterior wall of Tour 13, a soon-to-be demolished building along the Seine in Paris, but this time using a citation from Baudelaire, demonstrating once again a liminal practice (see Figure 6). By using the words of a famous

Figure 5. Artwork by urban artist eL Seed on the Jara Mosque (Gabès, 2012) Source: Urban artist website https://elseed-art.com/projects/ looked 2022/08/30.

Figure 6. The work of urban artist eL Seed on the facade of Tower 13 (Paris, 2013) Quote: « La forme d'une ville change plus vite, hélas, que le cœur d'un mortel » (poet Baudelaire, in Lallier, 2018) Source: Lionel Belluteau's website http://www.unoeilquitraine.fr/?p=2300 looked 2022/08/30.

French poet, the presence of Arabic script was more 'acceptable' in this Western visibility regime.

The same liminal practice was used by Karim Jabbari when he inscribed the words of a Tunisian poet on the walls of a mosque in Montreal in 2017, but this time in a Western visibility regime (see Figure 7).

3.2. Visual scenes

Visual scenes are another theoretical element that help us understand the liminal practices of calligraffiti artists. As it develops, urban art produces visual scenes, a concept derived from work on cultural and musical scenes (Irwin, 1977; Shank, 1994; Straw, 1991; Zahar and Roberge, 2016). These scenes further accentuate the visibility and creative productivity of urban art; they act as integrating elements organized around a visual "thing that matters" (Kozorog and Stanojevic, 2013) and contribute to attracting new actors within the scene: artists, cultural intermediaries, audiences, forming an extended community which, in turn, adds to the cultural overproduction of urban art.

For Zahar and Roberge (2015, 2016), cultural scenes exist in the form of visual scenes: "scenes oriented towards this thing that matters through the production of images in local, trans-local and digital settings" (Zahar and Roberge, 2016, p. 42). If the musical scene is about an important musical 'object', the visual scene is about a visual object. In this sense, visual scenes abound in urban art. For these authors, the participants in a visual scene of urban art form a semi-structured community, what Zahar and Roberge (2015) refer to as an interpretive community. Bengsten (2014) sees in this community characteristics that belong to both the "art worlds" of Becker (1982) as well as the theories of Bourdieu (1986). The relationships that exist in this community are sometimes similar to the social "horizontality" described by Becker, but the observation of practices is also the expression of different powers (see Figure 8).

The other element that seems to be quite fundamental in the concept of visual scene, which was already emerging in the exploration and documentation of urban art, is that of systems of articulation (Straw, 1991, 2004) that link everything in the visual scene. These systems of articulation have been revealed by the ethnographic methods that we used in this study.

A scene can emerge locally and remain local, but it can also translocalize and become digital through new practices. The analysis of practices within the constraining framework of continuity of the scene's focal object makes

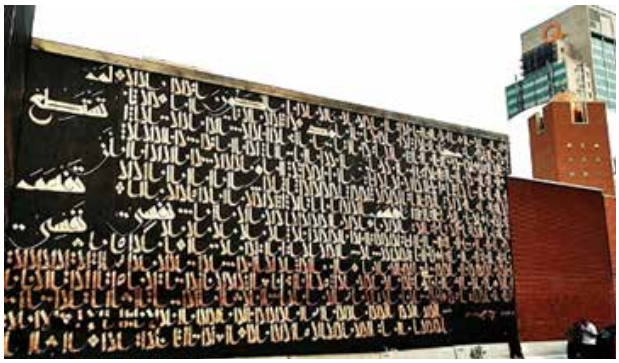

Figure 7. A mural by urban artist Karim Jabbari on the Al-Omah Al-Islamiah Mosque (Montréal, 2017) Quote: "I Would like to understand the universe, but I fail to understand myself" (poet Abou el Kacem Chebbi – Interview with Karim Jabbari, 2017). Source: @ Hela Zahar, 2017.

Figure 8. Local, translocal and virtual scenes Source: @ Hela Zahar 2022.

it possible to delineate and analyze how it functions. Moreover, a chronological approach to the development of the scene makes it possible to understand the succession of these practices, their transformations, the emergence of new practices, and their impact on the productivity of the scene while ensuring that the scene's object remains the common thread and unifier of its 'cohesion' through time. Through its practices, the existence of a cultural scene is in some ways always in equilibrium between the threat of loss of unity (through dilution or transformation of the thing that matters) and the threat of loss of diversity (through homogenization of its practices). As long as the scene is nourished by new cultural productions while maintaining its focal point, it develops, grows and remains effervescent; when it becomes repetitive, it stagnates or gradually perishes. When it changes the "thing that matters," a new scene emerges and starts to develop.

The systems of articulation of a visual scene, like the global street art scene, are a kind of network that must be penetrated and "traveled" by street artists and calligraffiti artists. Our ethnographic study shows how calligraffiti artists penetrate the visual scene of street art from the periphery of abandoned warehouses to the centrality of public walls. Visibility regimes and visual scenes are the two conceptual elements of our theoretical framework that enable us to analyze the development of Arabic calligraffiti. Paired with ethnographic methods, they articulate a view where we can understand how liminal practices of Arabic calligraffiti enable it to increase its visibility in street art's visual scene.

4. Ethnography

To study the visibility of Arabic calligraffiti, a hybrid ethnography was developed concurrently with the establishment of a theoretical framework. The first result of this ethnographic work has been the establishment of a chronology of the development of Arabic calligraffiti over a period of 15 years, from 2008 to 2022.

4.1. The chronology of arabic calligraffiti (2008-2022)

By following the digital traces of Arabic calligraffiti works, a network of actors comprised of artists and intermediaries gradually emerged. With research, a large number of Arabic calligraffiti works have been identified, and analysis of the websites, blogs, Facebook and Instagram pages of artists and intermediaries has made it possible to gather comprehensive information and build a spacio-temporal chronology of Arabic calligraffiti. The chronology revealed the division of this period into five major and successive segments linked to sociocultural tensions (see Figure 9).

Each segment illustrates a major stage in the development of Arabic calligraffiti and is comprised of several events representing the creation of one or more works of Arabic calligraffiti. Montreal is the first segment in the chronology, from 2008 to 2011. It reveals the emergence of Arabic calligraffiti in the graffiti milieu of Quebec's metropolis. The second segment, from 2011 to 2013, illustrates the work of the same artists after going to Tunisia following the Arab Spring revolutions of 2011. The third, Parisian segment, from 2013 to 2015, starts with the Tour 13 event and continues through to summer 2015. It is characterized by the

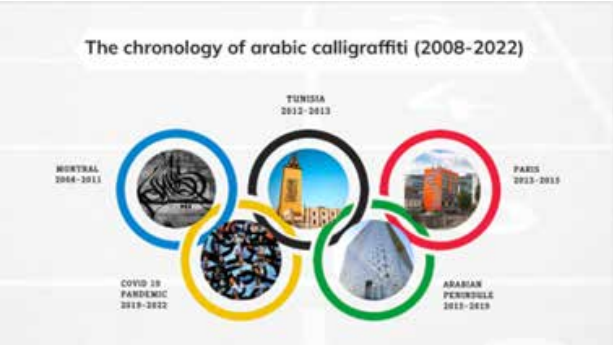

Figure 9. Artwork Chronology of arabic calligraffiti (2008-2022) Source: @ Hela Zahar 2022.

creation of several important Arabic calligraffiti works in the heart of the French capital and a “Parisian” event on the Tunisian island of Djerba. The fourth segment, from 2015 to 2019, illustrates the fragmentation of the phenomena of circulation of Arabic calligraffiti with the exacerbation of Arab-Western tensions. During this segment, Arabic calligraffiti ‘revisits’ Arab and Western cities, returning to Paris, Montreal and cities in Tunisia, but also travels to new places like Egypt, the Arabian Peninsula, the United States and Australia. The last segment, from 2019 to 2022, is characterized by a significant drop in the number of Arabic calligraffiti (and urban art) works in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Establishing this chronology allowed us to identify more than 20 Arabic calligraffiti artists, a diverse audience and several intermediaries (gallerists, columnists, event organizers, photographers, journalists) active in the creation and dissemination of hundreds of works, both in the physical space of cities and in the digital space of the Web (see Figure 10). As we explore below, this network forms systems of articulation within the global visual scene of street art, systems of articulation that connect the different actors and enhance the visibility of Arabic calligraffiti (Zahar, 2018).

This spatio-temporal chronology makes it possible to grasp the extent of the challenges of attaining visibility for these urban artists who decide to incorporate Arabic script into their artistic production. Their works are created in very different locations. In all of these places, they are confronted with the challenge of finding ‘walls’ and must negotiate with authorities, deal with intermediaries with varying degrees of resources, and “adjust themselves” to the surrounding visibility regime. Both the intermediaries and the audience can be surprised by, curious about, sympathetic or outrightly hostile to the creation of their works. Once they are created, the artists must seek to raise their visibility in the digital space. There again, they must deal with creating relevant digital images and seeking visibility with diverse intermediaries and audiences.

What explains the increased visibility of Arabic calligraffiti over the first 15 years of the chronology? As a physical and digital artifact in the public space, Arabic calligraffiti transports visual characteristics that associate it with the Arab world and the Western world and reveals the tensions associated with its ‘Arabness’ in the Western world

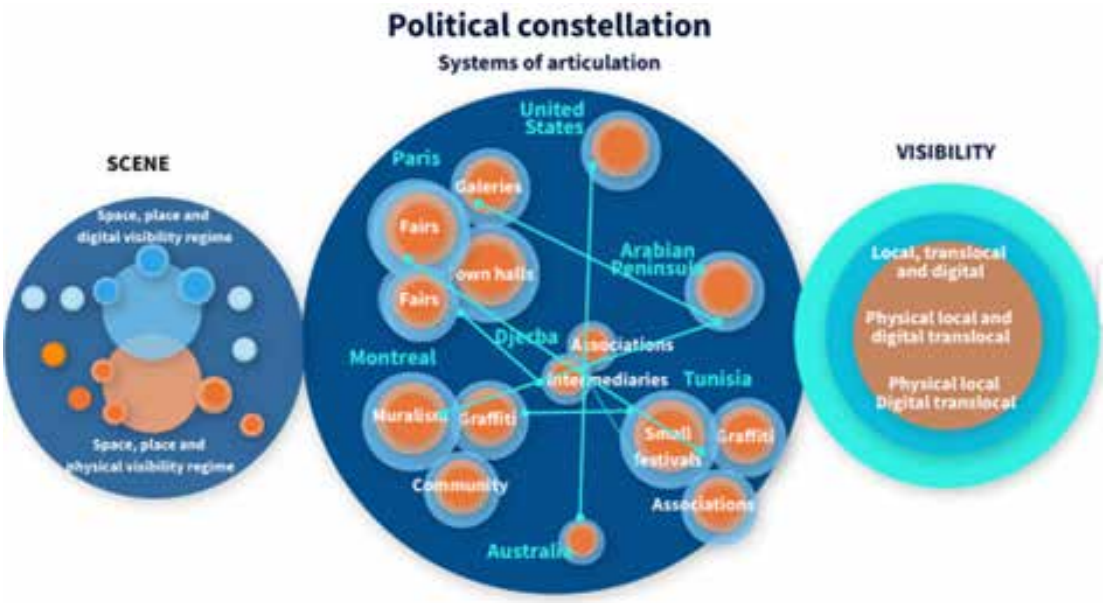

Figure 10. Arabic calligraffiti scene political constellation Source: @ Hela Zahar, 2022.

and its 'Westerness' in the Arab world. Moreover, it is also situated within the tensions between popular, transgressive and participatory urban art, an expression of 'power from below' associated with graffiti, and the authorized practices of an urban art associated with the "power from above" of commercial and governance practices. In the Arab world, it also generates tensions with respect to the presence of art in the public space and reveals the contrasts between tradition and modernity, between traditional Islamic calligraphy and its more contemporary form. The ethnography reveals the winding trajectories and liminal practices used by Arabic calligraffiti artists to penetrate the global visual scene of urban art.

4.2. Hybrid ethnographic methods

While constructing the chronology, the author has been conducting an overt ethnography in the physical and digital fields by presenting herself as a participating and observing university researcher of calligraffiti practices (O'Reilly, 2012). We conducted 105 semi-structured interviews in the three physical terrains of urban artists, intermediaries and the audience. These interviews were conducted based on an interview questionnaire and using O'Reilly's suggested methodology (2012). We interviewed 37 urban artists, 38 intermediaries and 30 members of the audience who were taking photos, on their use of images and their role in the urban art scene. The author took several hundred digital images and video recordings to document the works and visibility spaces of Arabic calligraffiti, at different sites of the physical terrain (Montreal, Paris, Tunis). In taking these photographs, the author interacted with the urban artists, intermediaries and audience by conducting semi-structured interviews. These documents were used to carry out an iconographic analysis (D'Alleva, 2012) of the works and images. This analysis entailed describing the sites where the works are located. The iconographic analysis also addressed the presence of the site in the photographic framing of the works as well as the possible presence of actors in these images (artists, intermediaries and audience).

In the digital field, we traced the images of Arabic calligraffiti on artists' websites as well as Facebook and Instagram accounts. For each Arabic calligraffiti work studied, the artist's website was consulted to determine if the images of this event were posted. Moreover, the entire chronology of the newsfeed on the artist's Facebook page was converted into a PDF document and carefully studied to identify the images related to this work and the posting date. The same method was followed, but this time online, to study the newsfeed on their Instagram page. Each of these images was subjected to an iconographic analysis to determine the framing of the work and whether or not the intermediary, artist or audience were present in the photographic image.

For each digital image studied on social media, several statistics were recorded (number of likes, number of comments, number of shares, framing of the image). In addition, Google reverse image searches made it possible to measure the "digital resonance" of each image by determining the number of websites featuring this image. Lastly, social media analytics tools like Popster and Sociograph

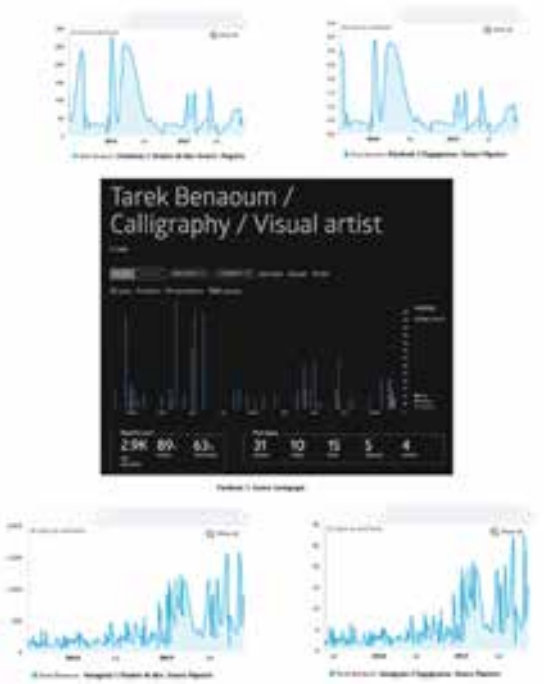

Figure 11. An example of a Pospters and Sociograph graphs for urban artist Tarek Benaoum illustrating the progression of the number of likes for Instagram posts by this artist. Source: @ Hela Zahar, 2017, 2022.

were used to assess the time progression of the number of likes for certain images (see Figure 11).

5. Arabic calligraffiti: a political liminal practice in street art's visual scene

The results of our ethnographic study show a constant progression of Arabic calligraffiti in Western and Arabic cities from 2008 to 2019. But how is this possible if Arabic calligraffiti creates tensions in the visibility regimes where it exists? In some ways, Arabic calligraffiti politically 're-works' the visibility regimes in which it is expressed and prompts their transformation. In turn, the visibility regimes "rework" Arabic calligraffiti, which, in turn, is transformed to adapt to the political 'pressures' of the visibility regimes. Raising the visibility of Arabic calligraffiti is certainly problematic and it has been hypothesized that there has been a modulation in its practices to explain its spatio-temporal extension. It is this modulation in the practices of the Arabic calligraffiti image that makes it a liminal practice in many ways (see Figure 12).

5.1. Liminal practice as ambiguity

With the concept of visual scene as a framework, it becomes possible to describe how a politically charged form of street art can increase its visibility. As the different elements of the ethnographic study illustrate, Arabic calligraffiti exists in an interstitial zone. It does not completely fall within authorized and commercial forms of muralist urban art; it exists on the graffiti margins and subsists in the ambiguous sphere of influence of its thing that matters. Is ambiguity in this sense indissociable from the very concept of visual scene? Is it not in this ambiguity that the sources of its renewal reside? If Arabic calligraffiti existed in the form of an autonomous and "pure" scene, would it not have ceased to exist as a scene? The drifting situation of Arabic calligraffiti, its comings and goings between a disconnected periphery and a market centre, its multiple concentric circles of visibility become apparent in the functioning of these systems of articulation. The chronological development of Arabic calligraffiti illustrates both the creation of tight circles of actors specific to it and integration into more diversified circles that are representative of the various sectors of the visual scene of urban art. When connections are made to these broader networks, they often serve as entry points for the specific actors of Arabic calligraffiti.

Figure 12. Liminal practices of Arabic calligraffiti Source: @ Hela Zahar. 2022.

5.2. Liminal practice between the Western and Arabic visibility regimes

The meeting of all of these actors in the scene, of their powers and visual mediations can be understood using the concept of visibility regime. Whether in the physical space of cities or the digital space, a 'visibility regime' translates the dynamic and changing equilibrium of all of these powers. A visibility regime frames and regulates "from above" the expression of the visible, but also often lends itself 'from below' to more or less marked transformations.

Multiple and different tensions are raised by Arabic calligraffiti based on the specific visibility regimes in which it is framed. In addition to the tension of "spatial justice" (Bengsten and Arvidsson 2014), common to all forms of urban art, there are other tensions more specific to its particular remix. In Western cities, it highlights the presence of Arabness in a public space preoccupied by Arab-Western conflict; in Arab cities, it introduces the presence of the 'Western' modernity of an urban and contemporary calligraphy into public spaces that until very recently were not used to

this sharing of urban visibility. These different contexts of production problematize the visibility of Arabic calligraffiti based on the local political constellation specific to each event. Whether in Arab or Western cities, this sharing of visibility is never exactly translated into equal distribution.

The gradual adoption of these spaces and the struggle for visibility represent the challenge of all urban artists and more particularly Arabic calligraffiti artists, initially confined to the margins of this visual scene and having to navigate a particularly difficult path. Carriers of a tradition that dates back over a thousand years, they seek to remix traditional Arabic calligraphy in new places and with new stylistic expressions. Their art is revealing of diverse tensions in both Arab and Western cities. In Arab cities, they meet the iconoclast resistance of the more conservative factions in these societies; in the Western world, they meet that of certain citizens disturbed by any form of Arabization of the public space. This political issue forces them to modulate their liminal practices of the image based on available places and visibility regimes, and to nimbly use the different systems of articulation of the scene.

5.3. Liminal practice between periphery and centrality

Through modulation if its practices, Arabic calligraffiti travels the urban art scene according to the tensions of this contemporary world. Its visibility emerges from the margins, from these modest local scenes (Montreal, Tunis, Parisian suburbs), then begins to be moderately visible through social media platforms. When its actors circulate between these local scenes, the digital visibility of this circulation helps them access a more translocalized scene. The images in their works spread more and more within growing subscriber networks. Digital intermediaries post their work and physical intermediaries allow them to create works at flagship events like Tour 13 and Djerbahood. This adds to their visibility, which paves the way to new project proposals that they choose based on the triple demands—always potentially paradoxical—of transformative remixes, visibility and profitability. If they acquire a degree of financial autonomy, like eL Seed, this enables them to pursue other more transformational projects, free of merchandising demands. The progressive use of multiple systems of physical and digital articulation of the visual scene of urban art then enables them to go elsewhere and to give a trans-local status to their participation in this scene. Thus, it is the nature of this mise en scene that Arabic calligraffiti exists both on the transformative margins, which generates occasional peaks of visibility associated with spectacular displays, and then integrates, at other moments, into the most institutionalized and commercialized components of authorized urban art.

5.4. Liminal practice between physical and digital space

The visibility spaces that are the cities offer an ensemble of sites and diverse iconospheres. These sites visually present through their architecture and everything that covers their multiple surfaces becomes the concrete and changing expression of social relationships among the individuals who inhabit those spaces. With the development of new digital environments, this sociability is also increasingly practised in a new relational space also constituted of sites ‘loaded’ with meanings. But the terms of digital sociability differ from those established in physical sites; circulating and posting in these digital spaces becomes a more or less explicit encounter between prosumer actors of a “participatory” culture, digital intermediaries with more or less visibility, and the difficult-to-decipher algorithms of a galloping digital capitalism.

5.5. Liminal space between unauthorized and merchandized sites.

From its manifestation in authorized, merchandized, tourist areas to isolated, illegal and participatory graffiti in obscure alleyways, urban art remains a political expression and its presence in its various forms translates the struggle for public visibility and media acknowledgment of the social relationships that each of these forms carries. The political aspect of the liminal practice is translated in terms of spaces, sites and visibility regimes.

In the context of street art, where visibility is often associated with merchandization and institutionalization, the Arabic calligraffiti artist is faced with a triple requirement: to bring the transformative aspect of his or her remixes to the public space (whether Arab or Western), to ensure visibility, and to meet the commercial requirements (human and algorithmic actors) of this visibility.

6. Conclusions

Through the modulation of its practices, Arabic calligraffiti travels the urban art scene according to the tensions of this contemporary world. Its visibility emerges from the margins, from modest local scenes, then begins to be moderately visible thanks to social media platforms. When its actors circulate between these local scenes, the digital visibility of this circulation helps them access a more translocalized scene.

Freewheeling and authorized, Western and Arab, Islamic and modern, Arabic calligraffiti is a political act in that it constructs itself. Its intricate messages convey a concrete, repeated and, undoubtedly, utopic expression of a contemporary cosmopolitanism. Arabic calligraffiti has its ambiguities and its geopolitical contrasts, as if its effervescence depended on it. The few dozen 'Likes' of a southern Tunisian artist are as necessary to him as the virality of Tour 13, Gabès or Perception; the acknowledgements of an obscure Tunisian association nourish him as much as the petrodollars; the open-mindedness and tolerance of an imam reconcile him with his roots.

In this great contemporary remix of cultures, the thing that matters in Arabic calligraffiti is the multiple tensions it generates, the questions it raises and the renewed creation of all the political interstices worked on day after day in the alleyways and hidden recesses of this hybrid, digital and participatory contemporary visual culture.

Conflict of Interests

"The author declares no conflict of interests".

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