

## An Islamicized Mausoleum for Maréchal Hubert Lyautey

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The death of Maréchal Hubert Lyautey on 27 July 1934 came as a great surprise to both the French and Moroccan public.<sup>1</sup> He died in his bed at his family chateau in Thorey a small town in Lorraine. Only two weeks before this date, this former Resident General of the French Protectorate of Morocco had entertained a Moroccan delegation visiting the French metropole. This official group had included Sultan Si Mohammed ben Youssef and his six-year old son Hassan as well as present Resident General Henri Ponsot. Accompanying them were Si Mohamed el Mokri, the Grand Vizir, Si Kaddour ben Ghabrit, the Sultan's Plenipotentiary Minister, and Si Mohamed el Mammeri, his Chief of Protocol. One colonial newspaper carries a photo of the mission, all seemingly healthy, at Lyautey's chateau on 11 July.<sup>2</sup> Sixteen days later, at 3:15 pm, Lyautey succumbed to hepato-nephritis, a failure of the kidneys and the liver.<sup>3</sup>

Lyautey's death –or, more importantly, his burial– merits attention as an event that reveals early fractures in Franco-Moroccan relations. Although Lyautey died in France, the French government would lay him to rest in a mausoleum in Rabat, Morocco on 31 October 1935. During the Third Republic (1870-1940), France's political leaders deliberately manipulated the deaths of icons like Lyautey –popular artists and military officers– to garner support among the masses. Avner Ben-Amos studied this phenomenon, and he notes that “the state funeral is not a simple rite of passage; it belongs, rather, to the category of ceremonies of power that constitute an integral part of any political regime.”<sup>4</sup>

A celebrated colonial officer, Lyautey took it upon himself to identify Morocco as his final resting place and also to design his own mausoleum.

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1. I would like to thank Jonathan Katz, William A. Hoisington, Jr. and William R. Keylor for comments on this draft.

2. Untitled photo, *L'Union Marocaine* (Casablanca), 11 July 1934, 1.

3. Service Historique de la Défense, Vincennes, 9YD453, dossier on Hubert Lyautey, Death Certificate.

4. Avner Ben-Amos, *Funerals, Politics, and Memory in Modern France, 1789-1996* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 3. For a detailed account of Lyautey's funeral as well as the fate of his interred body after independence, see Robert Aldrich, “Marshal Lyautey's Funerals: The Afterlife of a French Colonial Hero and the Death of an Empire,” in Vesna Drapac and André Lambelet, ed.s, *French History and Civilization: Papers from the George Rudé Seminar*, v. 2 (H-France, 2009), 137-52. My article focuses specifically on the placement of the mausoleum and its design, not the funerary ceremony, of which there is still much to be said.

In focusing on the placement of Lyautey's mausoleum and its architectural significance, this article builds upon Ben-Amos's contention that funerary practices provide key insights into political culture, particularly in a colonial relationship. Lyautey decided to commission his mausoleum after his resignation in 1925, and he surely did so recognizing the stunning state affairs that had taken place for other colonial icons, like Amédée Courbet or Joseph Gallieni.<sup>5</sup> Though a devout French Catholic from the contested region of Lorraine, Lyautey eschewed most architectural designs of his own faith, region and nation. Instead, he commissioned a mausoleum in Rabat, Morocco and emphasized in this building features that were emblematic of the burial sites of Islamic holy men of the medieval era (fig. 1).



**Figure 1:** Mausolée du Maréchal Lyautey, FR-MAE, CADN.

This article unpacks the symbolism manifest in the mausoleum's placement and architectural design. "Architecture, like music," as historian Diana Wylie reminds us, "has enormous power to express, and to shape, who people think they are and what they believe in."<sup>6</sup> Accordingly, this mausoleum represented the stone and mortar realization of what anthropologist James C. Scott would term a "public transcript," or "the dramatization of hierarchy and

5. Ben-Amos, "Funerals of Soldiers and Colonizers," in *Funerals, Politics, and Memory*, 204-35.

6. Diana Wylie, "The Importance of Being At-Home: A Defense of Historic Preservation in Algeria," *Change Over Time* 2 (2) (fall 2012): 174.

authority seen more or less from the perspective of ruling elites.”<sup>7</sup> It promoted an idealized vision of an orderly colonialism in which Moroccans acquiesced to their domination by a benevolent foreign power.

Politics, as they say, makes for strange bedfellows, and Moroccans of different political ranks and social statuses opposed this elaborate burial site. The self-aggrandizing Lyautey commissioned his funerary structure in order to perpetuate his own political ideology premised on a thin veneer of association between two nations, but Moroccans—both upstart nationalists and the established elite within the colonial government—expressed displeasure at having in their midst an unwanted reminder of the potential permanence of France’s rule over their North African kingdom. French authorities expressed their intent to construct a brand new monument of immediate historic value, a harbinger of France’s continued relationship with Morocco, but the mausoleum instead advanced the tensions inherent in colonial relations.

### **Building Monuments in Lyautey’s Morocco**

As Resident General, Lyautey had used monuments to promote the “policy of association,” a system of indirect rule. “Association” signified that the French ruled through customary institutions and in partnership with a local elite in order to appear the benevolent protectors of acquiescent natives. In other words, colonial officers in France rejected the assimilationist ideology of their counterparts in Algeria, who ruled directly over the population and without care for local culture or institutions. As noted by the historian Martin Thomas, “the interwar period is generally considered to have marked the ascendancy of associationist pragmatism in imperial administration.”<sup>8</sup> This scholarly proclamation would not have surprised Frenchmen of the interwar era, for the policy of association was lauded by the French elite and *hoi polloi*. Thus, when Lyautey was laid to rest, the editor of the pro-colonial magazine *Le Monde Colonial Illustré* glowingly summarized Lyautey’s policy in the following manner: “For him, colonizing does not only mean conquering territories, it means winning hearts. He only uses force when he cannot do otherwise.”<sup>9</sup>

7. James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 66.

8. Martin Thomas, *The French Empire between the Wars: Imperialism, Politics and Society* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), 6. For an extended study of Lyautey’s policy of association, see also William A. Hoisington, jr., *Lyautey and the French Conquest of Morocco* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1995). See also, Alan Strauss-Strom, *Lyautey in Morocco, 1912-1925* (UK: Endeavor Press, 2016).

9. AN, Papiers Lyautey, 475, AP 237, M.A. Frayssee, “L’heure coloniale à l’école,” *Le monde colonial illustré* 148 (November 1935): 219.

To foster the appearance of Franco-Moroccan cooperation, Lyatuey and his hand chosen cadre of French administrators built myriad monuments that would demonstrate an exaggerated outward respect for local culture as well as for the co-opted Moroccan monarchy and its supporters. The Monument à la Victoire exemplifies how monuments bolstered the policy of association. This monument commemorated the First World War. 34,500 Moroccans had fought alongside French troops. 9,000 Moroccans were killed, and 17,000 others were injured.<sup>10</sup> With the war over, the Association Casablancaise des Veterans immediately sought donations from French citizens and colonized Moroccans in order to construct a statue that would commemorate the efforts of these men. Although privately funded, the Protectorate assume responsibility for the final approval of the Monument à la Victoire's design.<sup>11</sup>

The placement of the monument underscored its importance to Lyautey. Colonization brought Casablanca to life by as Morocco's principal port and financial capital. The statue was to assume a central place in the downtown area facing the new Palais de Justice and the Prefecture. Thus, it became the focal point of a public square still under construction when the first stone for this monument was posed on 11 November 1921, the third celebration of Armistice Day.

Lyautey commissioned the internationally-celebrated artist Paul Landowski to design the monument, and not a local architect. His choice accentuates the importance of this project to Lyautey and other colonial authorities. According to art historian Michèle Lefrançois, Landowski embodies the French government of the time for he "symbolizes both official decisions and the permanence of an ethic for the Third Republic."<sup>12</sup> Given the Third Republic's penchant for his style, Paris alone has thirty statues designed by this artist. His statues evoke the inconsolable grief over the loss of friends and family, for Europeans sought to honor the 10 million soldiers who did not return from the front lines. Landowski ultimately designed twenty monuments commemorating the fallen of World War I, including *Les Fantômes* in northern France (fig. 2).

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10. For Moroccans in the French military, see Moshe Gershovich, *French Military Rule in Morocco: Colonialism and Its Consequences* (New York: Routledge, 1999).

11. Michele Lefrançois, *Paul Landowski: l'œuvre sculpté* (Paris: Creaphis, 2009), 225.

12. Lefrançois, *Paul Landowski*, 7.



**Figure 2:** Paul Landowski, *Les Fantômes*. Photo by Jean-Michel Coffin, <http://encreviolette.unblog.fr/2013/01/04/> (accessed April 11, 2017).

Landowski's design focused on a French and Moroccan soldier greeting each other. This figurative representation embodied one of Lyautey's favorite associational themes, enunciated at the monument's inauguration: "The secret...is the extended hand, and not the condescending hand, but the loyal handshake between man and man."<sup>13</sup> At the monument's inauguration, Lyautey stated that the statue embodied "this friendly and cordial association of two races"<sup>14</sup> (fig. 3).

In fact, the sartorial choices of the sculptor do indeed offer a racialized depiction of the modern French soldier and the medieval Moroccan warrior. The French soldier wears a modern uniform, a historically accurate accounting of World War I dress. The Moroccan soldier, however, was dressed in a cape and turban, as if he stepped from a living history museum focused on some idealized image of the Middle Ages. In fact, Moroccan soldiers had worn the very same uniform as their French counterparts, which should have made the two fighting men indistinguishable from each other. By choosing to represent Moroccans as throwbacks to a bygone era, the sculptor promoted Orientalist notions of colonial Morocco as an anachronism mired in its medieval past.

13. Cited in Zeynep Celik, "Le Corbusier, Orientalism and Colonialism," *Assemblage* 17 (1992): 68.

14. Hubert Lyautey, "Inauguration du Monument à la Victoire," *L'Afrique française* 34, no. 6-7 (June-July 1924): 103.





**Figure 3:** Paul Landowski, *Monument de la Victoire*. © 1935, Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris. Photo by Raymond Isay, From Michèle Lefrançois, *Paul Landowski: l'œuvre sculpté* (Paris: Créaphis Éditions, 2009), 225.

Detached from reality and false in his expression of purported “knowledge,” Landowski’s sculptor is one expression of “Orientalism.” The term “Orientalism” signifies the preconceived notions of European superiority transferred through art and literature, which has, according to Edward Said, who coined this term, never been without the taint of colonialism or its legacy.<sup>15</sup> Artists like Landowski often represent the Arab world as despotic, decadent, backward, violent, sexually deviant, and ahistorical. And so, Orientalism signifies the cultural production of a passive Middle East, and its set of preconceived notions have long buttressed the interventions and colonial agendas of European states. Thus, French colonialism signified not only on military power and economic exploitation but also a massive assertion of cultural dominance.

The statue was placed on a five-foot-tall platform illustrated with four bas-reliefs that represented scenes of life in wartime Morocco: “Trench Warfare” “In Column,” “The Departure” and “Victory and Peace.”<sup>16</sup> Each of them incorporated Orientalist notions of Arabs and their world. A Moroccan

15. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Press, 1979).

16. “Le monument de la victoire,” *France-Maroc* (December 1921).

woman says good-bye to a colonized Moroccan bravely marching to war in “The Departure” (fig. 4).



**Figure 4:** (Paul Landowski, *Monument de la Victoire*. © 1935, Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris. Photo by author.)

It emphasized racial and cultural distinctions between Europeans and Moroccans by swathing the woman in veils and traditional robes and making her a focal point of this carving. Orientalist nostalgia plays out in another panel. In “In Column,” Moroccan soldiers march to war. Although dressed this time in French uniforms, two of the four soldiers wear turbans and a camel accompanies them on their journey (fig. 5).

The inscription to the fallen is in both French and Arabic, thus exemplifying Lyautey’s use of monuments to obscure tensions in Franco-Moroccan relations. The use of the language of the colonized and colonizer is a standard feature on monuments commissioned by Lyautey, who wanted to cultivate a dual audience. Between the raised images of battles, Landowski engraved the names of the fallen in French. And then, the sculptor had captions chiseled in Arabic. (fig. 6) The *shahada*, or profession of faith, dominated the top of monument’s base. Next to a list of the names of the fallen, there was a poignant invocation, in Arabic, that one should “only write on the sand the unimportant matters.” (fig. 7) The Gregorian dates of battles were placed alongside the lunar-based Islamic ones, yet another nod of respect to Islamic traditions.

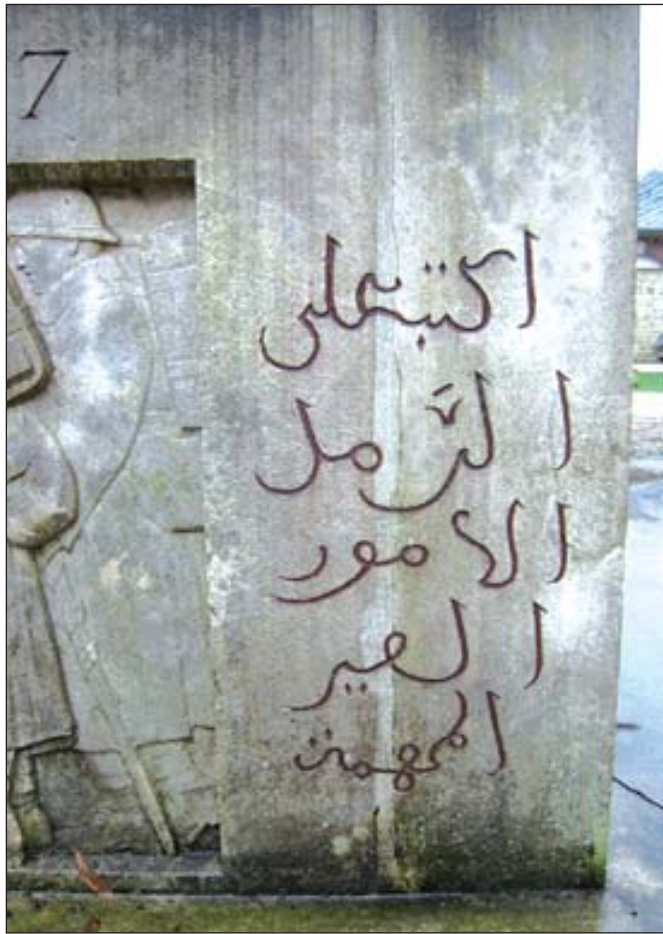


**Figure 5:** Paul Landowski, *Monument de la Victoire*. © 1935, Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris. Photo by author.



**Figure 6:** Paul Landowski, *Monument de la Victoire*. © 1935, Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris. Photo by author.





**Figure 7:** Paul Landowski, *Monument de la Victoire*. © 1935, Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris. Photo by author.

Of course, this is not the sole monument that Lyautey commissioned during his tenure as Resident General, and Moroccan cities were dotted with constructions commemorating the colonial system and the purported alliance between the French and the Alaouite dynasty. For example, La Porte de la Victoire in Rabat, which still greets Moroccan commuters from Souissi to Centre Ville and tourists from the Mohammed V Airport of Casablanca, dates to 1921. This simple dual pylon of stone marks one of the most heavily traversed nodes of Rabat, at the end of what was the newly constructed quarters of the Ville Nouvelle's Avenue de la Victoire (fig. 8, 9 & 10). Taking an active interest in the message conveyed by the new monument, Lyautey wrote the inscription. On one side of the road stands the pylon engraved in Arabic; on the other side of the road, this pylon is engraved in French. It reads:



Figure 8, 9 & 10: La Porte de la Victoire, Rabat, Morocco. Photos by Khalid Ben-Srhir.

Rabat the Victorious, founded by the great Sultan Yacoub el Mansour of the Almohad in the year 593 (1198 Gregorian Calendar). Today reigns the Sultan Moulay Youssef of the Alaouits. May God perpetuate his Empire, 1340 (1921 Gregorian Calendar). Be welcome, O Voyager.<sup>17</sup>

In this way, the Porte de la Victoire in Rabat, like the Monument à la Victoire in Casablanca, literally addressed two discrete audiences, paying homage to an Alaouite monarch and so buttressing, at least in Lyautey's mind, the respect necessary to facilitate associationist policy.

### A Final Resting Place for Lyautey

Ultimately, Lyautey conceptualized his mausoleum as a new monument of historic significance that would promote and perpetuate the policy of association invoked during his tenure as Resident General. Lyautey began to reflect on his posthumous legacy right after his resignation in 1925. He immediately drafted an inscription for his tomb.<sup>18</sup> According to Jules Borély, who had just been appointed Director of Morocco's Department of Historic Monuments, Lyautey wanted the following inscription on his mausoleum: "Here lies Hubert-Gonzalves Lyautey, born and died Christian, who wanted to rest among his Muslim brothers."<sup>19</sup> In this way, the Resident General underscored the association and mutual respect that he had tried cultivated and to forefront during his tenure in Morocco.

The design that Lyautey chose for his mausoleum exhibited an almost obsequious respect for Moroccan building traditions. Although Borély oversaw the preservation of historic monuments in Morocco, he proposed the construction of "a new monument, in the spirit of our time."<sup>20</sup> Lyautey rejected this idea, asserting instead that he desired "just a small, square *marabout*, covered with green tiles, and as simple as possible."<sup>21</sup> In adopting a local building tradition, this colonizing French Catholic intended to send a message to Moroccans of his abiding respect for the religion, the art, and the culture of this North African kingdom.

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17. Léandre Viallat, *Le visage français du Maroc* (Paris: Horizons de France), 39. Rabat la victorieuse, fondée par le grand Sultan Yacoub el Mansour l'Almohade en l'an 593 de l'hégire, année grégorienne 1198. Y règne aujourd'hui le Sultan Moulay Youssef l'Alaouite. Que Dieu perpétue son Empire. 1340-1921. Sois le bienvenu, O Voyageur.

18. Idem., 193.

19. Idem., 196.

20. Idem., 190 and 132.

21. Idem., 134.



Lyautey chose Joseph de la Nézière to design a mausoleum in a Moroccan architectural style.<sup>22</sup> In doing so, he relied on an Orientalist painter to realize his design, an artist whose romanticized paintings rendered colonial North Africa an apolitical fantasy for consumption by European tourists. De la Nézière came to Morocco in 1914 at Lyautey's request and worked for the Department of Antiquities and also the Service of Indigenous Arts. In 1933, he submitted a blueprint of the mausoleum. In a dreamy wash of deep purple with a splash of yellow, he painted a modest building with a sloping green tiled roof. As seen in the illustration, the cross in the doorway is barely perceptible. De la Nézière later asserted that he wanted "the general aspect of a *marabout*, however, a little Franco-Moroccan, that it be neither a true reproduction nor an imitation of an indigenous mausoleum."<sup>23</sup> Pleased, Lyautey boldly signed the sketch with the single word "Approuvé"<sup>24</sup> (fig. 11).

Lyautey and the colonial administration needed to choose a site for this mausoleum, a weighted and highly political task. During his tenure as Resident General, Lyautey had expressed true visions of imperial grandeur, for Jean Gallotti insists that his influential boss wanted to be buried among the Saadien tombs in Marrakech. Gallotti had come to Morocco in 1914 to work as an Inspector of Artistic and Industrial Education in Rabat. Lyautey had promoted him two years later to Inspector of Indigenous Arts, and he worked directly with the Resident General.<sup>25</sup> According to Gallotti, Lyautey wanted to spend his afterlife housed with the remains of the sixteenth-century sultans of the Saadien dynasty. The interior of their imperial necropolis was broken down into separate chambers accented with carved cedar and stucco. Each tomb was capped with a marble cenotaph, and the architectural historian Richard Parker identifies this style as being in that of the Alhambra.<sup>26</sup> Lyautey would take visitors, like French President Millerand, to this site and insist that "I want to be buried there as well." However, his fear of damaging Moroccan sensibilities led Lyautey to change his mind and seek a less controversial site.<sup>27</sup>

22. Madras, Didier. *Dans l'ombre du Maréchal Lyautey, souvenirs (1921-1934)* (Rabat: Éditions Felix Moncho, 1953), 105.

23. AN, Papiers Lyautey, 475, AP 237, Joseph de la Nézière to unidentified correspondent.

24. "La sépulture du Maréchal Lyautey et celle de ses ascendants," *L'Illustration* 22 (December 1934): 569.

25. I would like to thank Patricia Morton of UC-Riverside for sharing information on Jean Gallotti.

26. Richard Parker, *A Practical Guide to Islamic Monuments in Morocco* (Charlottesville, VA: The Baraka Press), 60-61.

27. AN, Papiers, Lyautey, 475, AP 237, Jean Gallotti, "Où le Maréchal voulait-il être enterré?," *Vu* (30 October 1935): 1401.





**Figure 11:** Joseph de la Nézière, from *L'Illustration*, 22 December 1934, 569.

Still, Lyautey wanted to link his mausoleum to a historic site in Morocco, a symbolic means of bringing together the people of France and the people of its colonial territory. Lyautey wrote Borély in 1932 and expressed his desire to be buried at the Chellah in Rabat.<sup>28</sup> The Chellah was a necropolis built by the Merenid dynasty in the fourteenth century within the ruins of a Roman town.<sup>29</sup> Admiring the tranquility of this verdant site, Lyautey had classified it as a monument in 1914.<sup>30</sup> It was located on a hill about a half a mile from the Residence, and visitors entered through an *ourepassé* gate inserted into crenellated walls of *pisé*, or compressed earth. The grounds of this site consisted of approximately 250,000 square feet, and they were surrounded by rolling hills. Lyautey specified to Borély, much to the Director

28. Borély, *Le tombeau*, 127.

29. Parker, *A Practical Guide*, 87-92.

30. "Les monuments classés du Maroc," *France-Maroc* 5 (15 May 1917): 36.

of Historic Monument's relief, for Borély had feared physically disrupting the site and evoking local reactions, that he wanted his mausoleum "Not in the interior of Chellah itself, but on one of the neighboring hills."<sup>31</sup>

The Chellah complex connected Western and North African culture, and this symbolism appealed to Lyautey's associationist beliefs. Deeming French colonial imagery in North Africa that links the colonizer to a Roman past as "Pax Gallica," Patricia M.E. Lorcin suggests that "the concept of a modern Latin Africa as a continuation of Roman Africa promoted the Eurocentric narrative of cultural superiority and fostered the notion of Western primacy when it came to the force of civilization."<sup>32</sup> For Lyautey, the classical ruins of a forum, an arcade and a temple would physically link the mausoleum of the Resident General with the origins of Western civilization. The site also appealed because it contained the remains of a mosque built by the Merinid Sultan Abu Yusuf Yaqub in the thirteenth century. This Sultan and his successors would be buried at the Chellah as well as local holy men for whom were constructed small marabouts, like that Lyautey wanted for himself. In this way, Lyautey could also link his mausoleum to Islamic burial traditions dating to Morocco's medieval past, which he tried very hard to preserve.<sup>33</sup>

At least one Moroccan powerbroker embedded in a colonial system of indirect rule was uncomfortable with Lyautey's decision to locate the mausoleum at the Chellah. Abderrahman Bargach was Rabat's pasha, a position that gave him unquestioned power over Moroccans in the capital city. Lyautey had himself appointed him to this position. However, he claimed "various personal reasons" prevented him from selling the land on which Lyautey wanted to construct his mausoleum, forcing administrators to find other real estate.<sup>34</sup> Some were irate. According to Borély, "You could hear it said: 'See how they (the natives) are' for they insisted that 'that pasha owes everything to the Maréchal'."<sup>35</sup> Bargach's defiance reveals a surprising lack of support for this project by a member of what should have been a complicit elite. "The pasha's attitude," he notes, "led us to believe that the Moroccans did not want Lyautey's tomb, even in the vicinity of the Chellah."<sup>36</sup>

31. Borély, *Le tombeau*, 134.

32. Patricia M.E. Lorcin, "Pax Romana Transposed: Rome as an Exemplar for Western Imperialism," in *The Routledge History of Western Empires*, ed. Robert Aldrich and Kirsten McKenzie (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 416.

33. Stacy E. Holden, "The Legacy of French Colonialism: A Historian's View of Preservation in Morocco's Fez Medina," *APT Bulletin: The Journal of Preservation Technology* (Association for Preservation Technology) 39 (4) (2008): 5-11.

34. CADN, Inv. No. 14, 139bis, Cabinet Civil, Secretary General of Protectorat, 20 March 1934.

35. Borély, *Le tombeau*, 141.

36. Idem., 140-141.

Colonial administrators then considered locating the mausoleum next to the Tour Hassan, which is a medieval minaret dating to the era of the Almohads (1145 to 1248). Construction on this mosque began during the reign of al-Mansour (1184-99), and it would have been the largest in the world if completed. Surrounded by gardens, the minaret towered 148 feet in height. This colossal square minaret of brick and stone towered over the twenty-one columns marking the skeleton of the unbuilt structure, albeit surrounded by overgrown brush. Lyautey had it declared a historic monument on 3 July 1914.<sup>37</sup>

The location seemed ideal. It was located outside the walled quarters of the medina. Given a policy of ethnic segregation in the city, most Moroccans lived in the narrow alleys of the medina. As Lyautey's successor, Ponsot supported the mausoleum's placement at the Tour Hassan.<sup>38</sup> In placing it next to the Tour Hassan, the colonial administration could satisfy Lyautey's desire to be buried at a historic Moroccan site, while also ensure he was nearby by supportive Frenchmen.

De la Nézière came to Morocco in January 1934 in order to appraise this site.<sup>39</sup> He ordered an initial survey of the grounds next to the Tour Hassan as a preliminary to the monument's construction. And so, Borély, much to his chagrin, first learned of the venture when his chauffeur informed him that there were holes dug in the mosque's historic grounds. This unwelcome surprise did not endear the artist to Borély. In a stinging letter of six pages, Borély insisted that the mausoleum would encroach upon the Tour Hassan, which was not aesthetically advisable if one wanted to preserve the sanctity of the historic monument. Borély asserted that Lyautey's modest mausoleum would be outshone and therefore forgotten next to the grandeur of the ancient ruins. Finally, he pointed out that the mausoleum would be in view of the industrial facilities located on the Bouregreg estuary, which would displease Lyautey. Borély insisted that Ponsot resolve the problem, a task that would not ultimately be done until after the Maréchal's death four months later.<sup>40</sup>

The state funeral for Lyautey took place in Nancy, capital of Lorraine on 3 August 1934. Five days later, the conservative newspaper *Le Figaro* made a front-page announcement that "Maréchal Lyautey to be Buried in Morocco."<sup>41</sup> Lyautey's family—his nephew Pierre and his widow—supported this decision,

37. "Les monuments classés du Maroc," *France-Maroc* (15 May 1917): 36.

38. Borély, *Le tombeau*, 143.

39. AN, Papiers Lyautey, 475, AP 237, Joseph de la Nézière to Hubert Lyautey, 12 January 1934.

40. CADN, Inv. No. 14, 139bis, Cabinet Civil, Jules Borély to Secrétaire Général du Protectorat, 2 March 1934.

41. Gaëtan Sanvoisin, "Le maréchal Lyautey sera inhumé au Maroc," *Le Figaro* (8 August 1934): 1.

and the French government in Paris threw its support behind this project, a popular one among French citizens. Pierre Laval, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, sent Ponsot a telegram informing him that President Albert LeBrun approved the transfer of Lyautey's remains to Morocco, and he then made sure that the popular magazine *L'Illustration* published his short letter. Laval also assured Pierre Lyautey of his backing in a private letter.<sup>42</sup>

Ultimately, however, the placement of this mausoleum reveals the rift between Moroccan and French authorities as well as between administrators in Paris and Rabat. As Resident General of Morocco, Ponsot could sense that tensions over this project running high and insisted that the mausoleum must be built on the grounds the Residence. This Residence was a new building designed by Lyautey's hand chosen architects at the end of World War I, and it was located far beyond the medina, the walled Moroccan quarters where Moroccans lived. "Choosing the heart of the administrative city and in French soil could not offend Muslim feelings," he explained to politicians in France, "which had turned hostile at the choice of the historic sites of the Chellah and of the Hassan Tower."<sup>43</sup> Already, opposition among Moroccan actors like Rabat's pasha and his ilk had revealed the pretense sustaining Lyautey's nostalgic and highly romantic vision of colonial relations.

### **Constructing a Colonial Mausoleum**

In Morocco, the government's decision to approve the construction of this mausoleum led influential French citizens to form "The Committee for Moroccan Tribute to Maréchal Lyautey." The President of this committee anticipated an enduring relationship between Morocco and France, one premised on a colonial system of governance. He insisted that "Marshal Lyautey's tomb is no ordinary construction. It will be a historic monument of a very high political character."<sup>44</sup>

The Protectorate hired architect René Canu to implement de la Nézière's blueprint. Having worked on many new buildings in Moroccan cities, Canu was an ideal choice to oversee the mausoleum's construction. He was a promoter of what one architectural historian deems "Arabesque."<sup>45</sup> This term indicates a style of colonial architecture cultivated by Lyautey. He required that French architects incorporate local design motifs in government buildings to demonstrate a respect by the French for Moroccan traditions and so legitimize

42. CADN, Inv. No. 14, 139bis, Cabinet Civil, Pierre Laval to Pierre Lyautey, 30 November 1934.

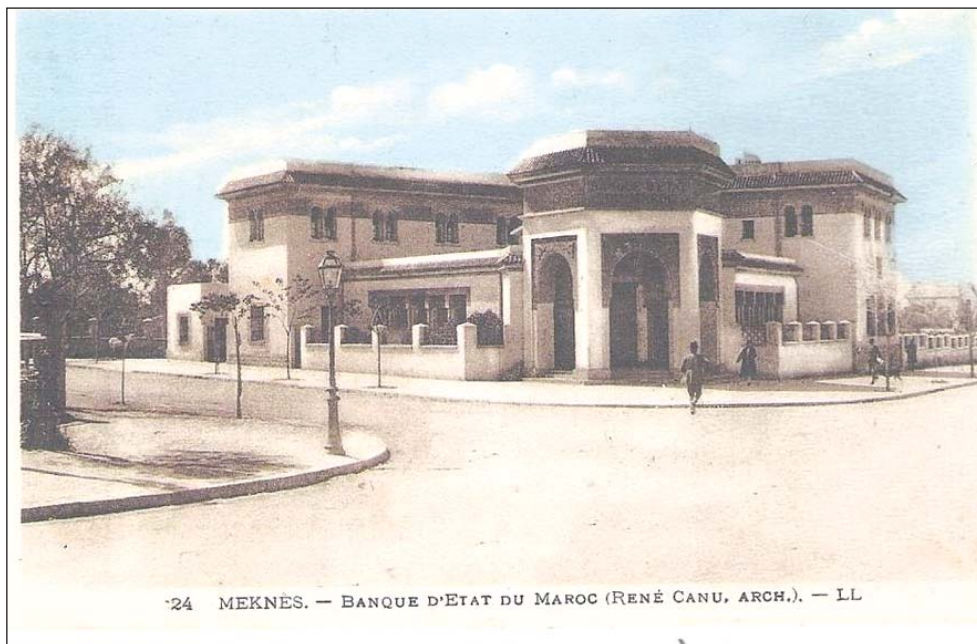
43. CADN, Inv. No. 14, 139bis, Cabinet Civil, Télégramme au Départ, Ponsot to Diplomatie Paris, 18 November 1934.

44. CADN, Inv. No. 14, Cabinet Civil, 139bis, *La Vigie*.

45. François Béguin, *Arabesque: Décor Architectural et Tracé Urbain en Afrique du Nord, 1830-1950* (Paris: Dunod, 1983).



colonial rule. Thus, public buildings in colonial Morocco tended to have a plain white washed exterior, in accordance with regional preferences, but they also had incorporated into their design such details as interlaced wooden screens or *oultrepassé* arches. According to François Béguin, the implementation of such building codes minimized the appearance of ethnic segregation between the Moroccan and French neighborhoods. He writes that this style acted as “an artifice intended to prevent the image entering and settling in the mind of two absolutely incongruous towns.”<sup>46</sup> In working for the Protectorate, Canu for example, had designed the *Banque d’Etat* in Meknes and Fez in the style of Arabisance, for it joined arches and whitewashed exteriors with European design elements (fig. 12).



**Figure 12:** René Canu, *Banque d’Etat* in Meknes, Morocco.

Postcard by Léon et Levy/Roger-Viollet.

The committee of French patriots overseeing Canu’s work ensured that he adhered to the original design.<sup>47</sup> In the tradition of “*Arabisance*,” one member noted that care had been taken so that the mausoleum “does not represent a monument with marble walls or with colored stone. As the traditions and Moroccan style indicate, it would be preferable to have white masonry walls under a green-tiled roof.”<sup>48</sup> As would seem dictated by the logic

46. François Béguin, “Observations on French Colonial Architecture in North Africa between 1900 and 1950,” *Lotus International* 26 (1980): 43.

47. CADN, Inv. No. 14, 139bis, Cabinet Civil, “La construction du tombeau du maréchal est confiée à la Chambre Syndicale des Entrepreneurs du Maroc,” nd.

48. CADN, Inv. No. 14, 139bis, Cabinet Civil, Leroy to Pierre Lyautey, 4 March 1935.

of Arabisation, Lyautey's widow and nephew opposed the use of any modern building materials, like reinforced concrete.<sup>49</sup>

The mausoleum's elaborate inscription deliberately promoted a policy of association that purportedly set the French administrators and citizens on an equal footing with colonized Moroccans. Set within an arch, an engraving in French and Arabic read:

Here lies  
 Louis Hubert Gonzalve Lyautey  
 First Resident-General in Morocco (1912-1925)  
 Deceased in the Catholic religion  
 Having, in full faith,  
 Received the last sacraments.  
 Profoundly respectful of ancestral traditions  
 And of the Muslim religion,  
 Kept and practiced by the residents of the Maghreb,  
 Among whom he wished to rest  
 In this land which he so loved.  
 May God keep his soul in eternal peace<sup>50</sup>

Though dictated by Lyautey, the French government etched it onto the mausoleum, thus actively continuing the former Resident General's policy of using colonial monuments to promote Franco-Moroccan relations.<sup>51</sup> De la Nézière deliberately decided to interweave the Arabic translation with the French inscription. The script of each language, one written left to right and the other right to left, overlapped and intertwined. The artist insisted that "There you can see a profound message about the support brought to Morocco from France."<sup>52</sup> In writing to Pierre Lyautey, he stated that "In my opinion, this layout, presented with separated panels, would better carry the idea of close collaboration between France and Morocco"<sup>53</sup> (fig. 13).

49. CADN, Inv. No. 14, 139 bis, Cabinet Civil, Pierre Lyautey to Leroy, 10 March 1935.

50. AN, Papiers Lyautey, 475, AP 237, "Les Cendres de notre Maréchal reposent en Terre musulmane," 1 November 1935.

51. Didier, *Dans l'ombre du Maréchal Lyautey*, 105.

52. AN, Papiers Lyautey, 475, AP 237, "Un simple marabout mais sur la porte une grande croix."

53. AN, Papiers Lyautey, 475, AP 237, Joseph de la Nézière to Pierre Lyautey, 31 July 1935.



**Figure 13:** Inscriptions on Lyautey's Final Resting Place, Mausolée du Maréchal Lyautey, FR-MAE CADN.

Canu paid careful attention to the details in the interior of the mausoleum, even though Lyautey had left no directions for its design.<sup>54</sup> Four steps led to the entry of the mausoleum, which had an imposing wrought iron door.<sup>55</sup> Stepping inside, there were sixteen marble columns that created a circular corridor. The columns joined the ceiling in ribbed arches (ogives) so as to support a domed ceiling marked by a translucent cut out of a Moroccan star, which let some natural light filter into the room. The only decoration on each of the four walls was a cross representing Lyautey's beloved Lorraine, and these were linked to the five-pointed star that represented the Alaouite dynasty. Facing the entryway, the visitor to the mausoleum saw an epitaph in French and Arab and below it the names of organizations that had been close to Lyautey's heart, like the Boy Scouts and the city of Nancy in Lorraine. The casket itself was placed in the center of the mausoleum next to a massive cross of marble that marked Lyautey's identity as a devout Catholic.<sup>56</sup> The walls were of limestone tile that generated a yellow tint.<sup>57</sup> Such attention to the mausoleum's interior was important since this was to be the setting for future visits by foreign and domestic dignitaries as well as an annual commemoration of Lyautey's death and so of France's colonial project.

In adopting a Moroccan architectural form for a mausoleum placed in the capital of this North African Protectorate, there is no doubt that Lyautey intended to manipulate the physical context of a colonized city in order to foster an image of a gentle colonialism masking the disruptive foreign interventions that was transforming Morocco. A colonial newspaper reported that "his wish was to lay at rest in Moroccan soil in order to be a living link between the natives and continental France."<sup>58</sup> The writer Jean Tharaud, author of a popular book on this North African kingdom, had traveled to Morocco as a guest of Lyautey in 1917. Upon Lyautey's death, Tharaud, insisted that Lyautey "wanted to create another bond between France and Morocco. He believes that the greatest sign of friendship he could give to Moroccans would be to entrust them with watching over his tomb."<sup>59</sup> Borély, too, after working with Lyautey, agreed that the former Resident General wanted more than a quiet resting place for himself and his wife. He remembered that "Lyautey was a man of action; what mattered most to him with his *marabout* was his

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54. CADN, Inv. No. 14, 139bis, Cabinet Civil, "La construction du tombeau du maréchal est confiée à la Chambre Syndicale des Entrepreneurs du Maroc," nd.

55. CADN, Inv. No. 14, 139bis, Cabinet Civil, Guillemet to Canu, nd.

56. AN, Papiers Lyautey, 475, AP 237, "Les ultimes cérémonies à Rabat," *Echo du Maroc*, 31 October 1935.

57. Borély, *Le tombeau*, 161.

58. AN, Papiers Lyautey, 475, AP 237, *Echo du Maroc*, 28 October 1935.

59. AN, Papiers Lyautey, 475, AP 237, Jean Tharaud, "La dépouille de Lyautey quittera Nancy demain pour être inhumée au Maroc."



presence, the influence that his memory could have on the continuation of his work.”<sup>60</sup>

As the nephew of the former Resident General, Pierre Lyautey was in a prime position to understand the intentions of his deceased uncle, and he asserted that this endeavor was an extension of his colonial policy. He remembered that the Resident General “considered his burial in Morocco as an act of faith in the Protectorate, as an act of love towards Morocco, as an act of trust towards Moroccans. The idea of associating with natives was his inspiring “credo” for thirty-five years”<sup>61</sup> Lyautey’s nephew insisted that his uncle intended to “serve beyond death” and “work –this was his expression– on the social politics of unity by the presence of his remains on the shores of the Atlantic”<sup>62</sup> For Lyautey, the mausoleum would mark the enduring strength of the colonial enterprise.

### Nationalist Responses to the Mausoleum

When Lyautey died, a group of young men had already begun to form a small but important association, and they would strongly resist the construction of Lyautey’s mausoleum in Morocco. This nationalist movement began in the early-1930s, with the politicization of the sons of the political and mercantile elite who exercised influence in Morocco through the policy of association. From the start, these nationalists sought to engage the masses and so “often took advantage of local incidents.”<sup>63</sup> Nationalists identified the construction of Lyautey’s mausoleum as an issue with the potential to increase their sway among the *hoi polloi* and also decrease the influence of the French.

The nationalist Mohamed Hassan al-Ouazzani vehemently opposed the mausoleum. Born in Fez in 1910, al-Ouazzani was the son of a large landowner. As such, he had benefited from the system of education put in place by the French. He received his high school degree at the College Musulman, which the French established to train future leaders who would perpetuate the policy of association. After graduating, he attended the prestigious l’Institut de Sciences Politiques in Paris. To circulate his radical nationalist message, al-Ouazzani founded in 1933 what is generally considered the first nationalist newspaper, *L’Action du Peuple*. According to Mohamed Tozy, “the work of Mohamed Hassan Ouazzani aimed to reform Moroccan society, which should

60. Borély, *Le tombeau*, 163.

61. AN, Papiers Lyautey, 475, AP 237, “M. Pierre Lyautey nous ditce que doit être cette manifestation,” 18 September 1935.

62. Pierre Lyautey, “La sépulture du Maréchal Lyautey: Une mise au point de M. Pierre Lyautey,” *Le Figaro* 8 August 1934: 1.

63. Daniel Zisenwine, *The Emergence of Nationalist Politics in Morocco: The Rise of the Independence Party and the Struggle against Colonialism after World War II* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 16.

modernize without denying itself, in other words, without renouncing its Arabic-Islamic tradition.”<sup>64</sup>

Forty years after the mausoleum’s construction, Ouazzani still remembered it with distaste. In his memoirs, he recounts nationalist ire over the mausoleum, noting Lyautey:

felt that he was “le patron du Maroc” to the point that he ensured, during his last days in Morocco, to set up for himself a tomb on a hill facing the Résidence Générale in Rabat... which was built in the style of the tombs built for the holy and righteous Muslim men in Morocco. And this tomb would be crowned with a green brick dome. Through this act, Lyautey violated the sanctity of Moroccan heritage and upset the very policy of respect and care for these Moroccan traditions that he had called for during his tenure as Resident General of Morocco.<sup>65</sup>

Al-Ouzzani’s memoir evokes the religious aspects of the nationalist movement in expressing concern for the architectural style of the mausoleum. It also forefronts issues of sovereignty. Thus, this nationalist believed that the mausoleum did not promote Franco-Moroccan cooperation, instead it co-opted Moroccan building traditions for the more nefarious purpose of overwhelming and overcoming Moroccan autonomy.

Abu Bakr al-Qadiri also invokes a nationalist distaste for a mausoleum that co-opted Morocco’s building traditions. Born in Salé in 1914, al-Qadiri was also a founding member of the nationalist movement. Like many of his nationalist counterparts, he insisted that a purification of Islam was the only means for the country to modernize. By 1933, he had formed an Arabic language school designed to spread these Salafiyya ideas. In this vein, al-Qadiri resisted the mausoleum for political and religious reasons. He insisted that the transfer of Lyautey’s remains to the mausoleum acted as a “symbol of a passed time,” one alluding to a distasteful “occupation.” Indeed, he deemed the mausoleum a “symbol of this conquest.” “The government,” he stated, referring to the mausoleum, “should be well aware that this act of transporting the Maréchal’s remains will create discomfort around the Islamic world since this act disrespects the feelings of Muslims.”<sup>66</sup>

64. Mohamed Tozy, “Mohamed Hassan Ouazzani: liberté individuelle et pouvoir politique,” in *Penseurs maghrébins contemporains* (Casablanca: Éditions Eddif, 1993), 228.

65. Ouazzani, Mohamed Hassan. *Mudhakkirat haya wa-jihad: al-tarikh al-siyasi l-il-harakah al-wataniyya al-tarikhiyya al-maghribiyya* IV (Rabat: n.p., 1982), 198-99.

66. Abu Bakr al-Qadiri, *Mudhakkirati fi-l-harakati al-wataniyya al-maghribiyya, min 1930 ilā 1940* (Casablanca: Matba al-Najah al-Jadida, 1993), 338-39.

Officials of the French Protectorate recognized the divisive and problematic nature of the mausoleum, but those in Paris still insisted on building it. According to Borély, the Resident General knew “Moroccans do not want the Maréchal’s tomb in Morocco!”<sup>67</sup> Indeed, Ponsot believed that Moroccan nationalists would spread word that the presence of Lyautey’s remains in the mausoleum signified the French annexation of Morocco.<sup>68</sup>

As the mausoleum neared completion, colonial police anxiously kept an eye on the nationalists. They surveyed, for example, the movements of Omar ben Abdeljelil al-Fassi. This nationalist was collecting signatures on a petition protesting the mausoleum’s presence on Moroccan soil. The petition was circulated in Port Lyautey, Salé, Rabat, Casablanca and Fez. The widespread distribution of the petition suggests that the nationalist movement may well have been more popular at this time than scholars have heretofore credited it. The nationalists had also tried to prevent the mausoleum’s construction in Rabat through a letter-writing campaign to the French government.<sup>69</sup>

Throughout the fourteen-month period in which the mausoleum was constructed, French administrators kept a sharp eye on Moroccan responses to it. The Direction des Affaires Indigènes published a “Note concerning the burial of Maréchal Lyautey’s remains in Morocco and the possible repercussions on indigenous views” on 4 September 1935. In it, French officers suggest that the Sultan and his Grand Vizir would prefer that Lyautey be buried in his native Lorraine, rather than in Morocco. “They believed” the report stated, “that transferring the ashes to Morocco will only result in an anti-French action campaign, led by nationalist elements, and that a new era of difficulties would arise as a result.” The author reported too that notables from both Fez and Rabat refused to even discuss the topic of the mausoleum being constructed for Lyautey with French administrators. In this way, they extrapolated, “they are not in favor of it.”<sup>70</sup> By August 1935, colonial administrators felt compelled to inform Pierre Lyautey that there would be extra security at the funeral, a necessity “whether we want to avoid in October all the more or less tendentious demonstrations already announced by certain Moroccan groups, or whether, on the contrary, we want the ceremony to become a triumph worthy of the Maréchal’s glory.”<sup>71</sup>

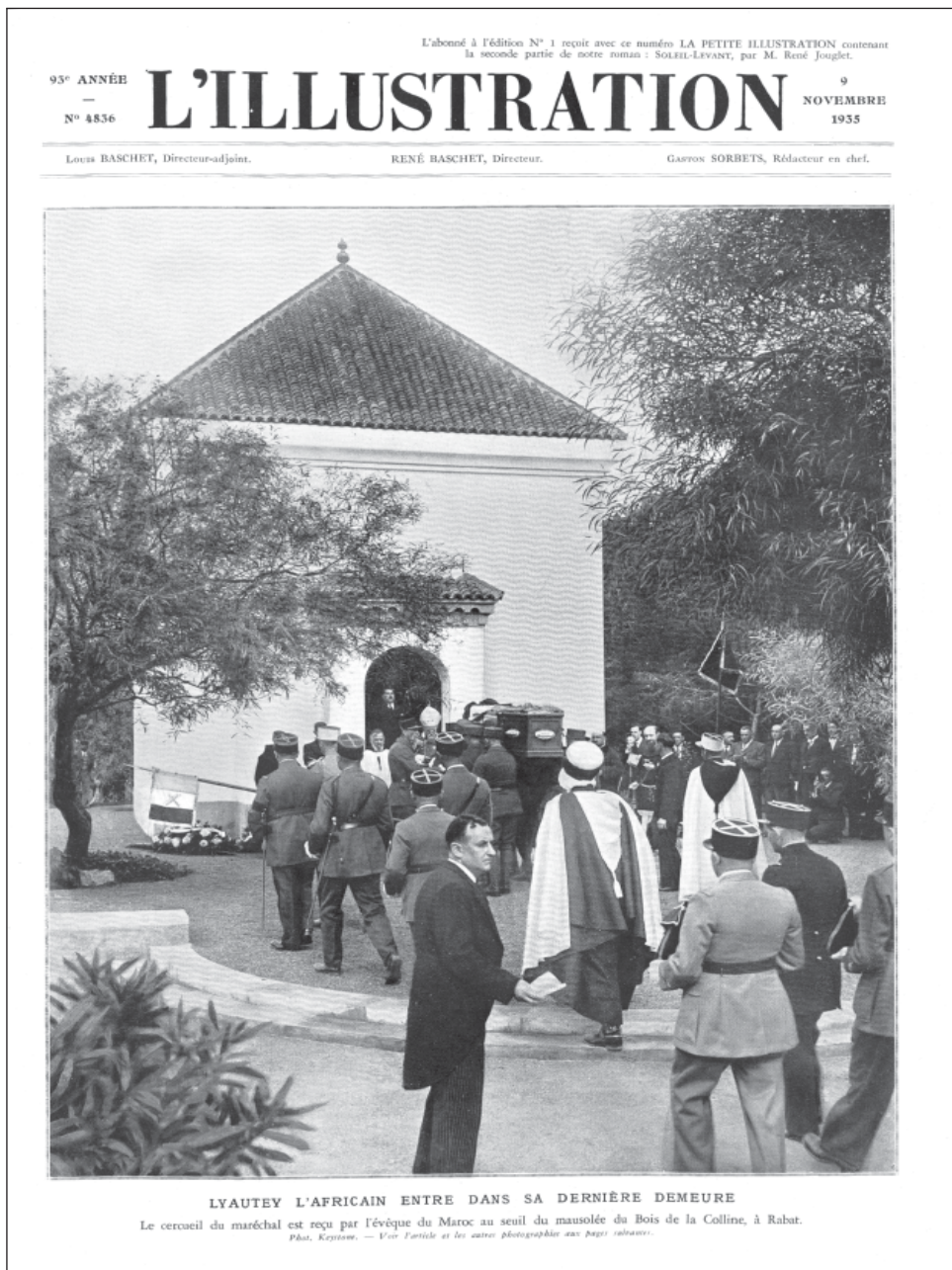
67. Borély, *Le tombeau*, 151.

68. Idem., 158 and 183.

69. *Situation politique et économique du 1 au 31 Octobre 1935* (Rabat: Protectorate of Morocco, 1935), 1.

70. I would like to thank William A. Hoisington, Jr. for sharing his notes with me: BGA, Dossier Maréchal Lyautey, Direction des Affaires Indigènes, 4 September 1934.

71. AN, Papiers Lyautey, 475, AP 237, unreadable name, Le Maroc: Politique, Economique, Financier to Pierre Lyautey, 5 August 1935.



**Figure 14:** “Lyautey l’africain entre dans sa dernière demeure”. From *L’Illustration*, November 9, 1935.

Ultimately, the French heaved a sigh of relief on the day of the funeral ceremony, for nationalist protests over the mausoleum did not result in wide scale riots. Instead, nationalists sent out politely worded telegrams of protest to the French government, the Resident General and the Sultan. They also convinced many Moroccans to close their business for the day as a sign of



displeasure.<sup>72</sup> During the funeral service, they managed to pass out nationalist literature. But in all, French administrators noted the funeral service ultimately took place “without provoking the least incident in the Moroccan scene.”<sup>73</sup>

It seems nationalist efforts influenced the actions of the Sultan, who refused to comply fully with French plans for the commemoration of Lyautey's death. The Sultan did indeed attend the ceremony for Lyautey at Bab al Rouah in the downtown area of Rabat. But he refused to accompany visit the mausoleum on the grounds of the Residence, and this despite the efforts of French administrators to convince him otherwise. “He had been very reticent during the funeral to go there,” one official later remembered, continuing “and, in any case, he never came to the Mausoleum, even on the day of the funeral.”<sup>74</sup> The refusal of the Sultan and Rabat's pasha to tow a clear colonial line suggests a new partnership between nationalists and Moroccans powerbrokers against French officers.

### Conclusion

Twenty-two years later, the Sultan and these nationalists managed to negotiate Moroccan independence, and Lyautey's mausoleum would become an obsolete and somewhat awkward remnant of the colonial era. In 1961, France, under the aegis of General Charles de Gaulle and the Fifth Republic, solemnly repatriated the remains of Lyautey. He now lies at the L'Hotel des Invalides. Since the former French Residence became the Moroccan Ministry of the Interior, the mausoleum –or what might remain of it– can be viewed neither by the Moroccan public nor architectural scholars like myself.

This mausoleum, however, must not be forgotten, for it represents a significant chapter in Moroccan history and Franco-Moroccan engagement. Though intended to strengthen colonial relations, the mausoleum's construction actually fractured them, revealing what anthropologist James C. Scott terms a “hidden transcript” of resistance. A Catholic mausoleum built an Islamic style as a means of honoring the soldier responsible for taking away the independence of this North African kingdom was not welcome, even by those Moroccans who had benefitted from the establishment of this political system. The self-aggrandizing Lyautey commissioned his funerary structure in order to perpetuate his colonial policy of association, one that provided some power to urban notables, however, Moroccans –whether young upstart

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72. I would like to thank William A. Hoisington, Jr. for sharing his notes with me: BGA, Dossier Maréchal Lyautey, Direction des Affaires Indigènes, “Note au sujet de la translation des cendres du Maréchal Lyautey,” 17 September 1935.

73. I would like to thank William A. Hoisington, Jr. for sharing his notes with me: BGA, Dossier Maréchal Lyautey, Direction des Affaires Indigènes, Bulletin de renseignements, 5 November 1935.

74. CADN, Inv. No. 14, 139bis, Cabinet Civil, 8 July 1936.

nationalists or the established elite within the Protectorate's government—joined forces and expressed displeasure at having in their midst a permanent reminder of France's rule over their North African kingdom.

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### ملخص: ضريح إسلامي للمارشال هوبير ليوطي

توفي المارشال هوبير ليوطي في فرنسا، غير أن الحكومة الفرنسية وضعت جثمانه في ضريح "إسلامي" في الرباط عاصمة المغرب. وكان ليوطي أول مقيم عام في عهد الحماية الفرنسية بالمغرب (1912-25)، وشديد الإخلاص لديانته الكاثوليكية. وقد دفن هذا البطل الاستعماري في ضريح صممه الفرنسيون على نحو مماثل لأضرحة الأولياء المنبثة في المغرب منذ العصور الوسطى. ويروي هذا المقال الحثيات والسياقات المثيرة لهذا المقام الجنائزي المشحون سياسياً وفقهياً. وبذلك، فإنه يكشف عن بعض معالم التوترات المبكرة بين الفرنسيين والمخزن وكذلك أعضاء الحركة الوطنية الصاعدة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: مستعمرة المغرب، الآثار، هوبير ليوطي، الهندسة المعمارية.

### Résumé: Un mausolée islamisé pour Maréchal Hubert Lyautey

Le maréchal Hubert Lyautey est mort à Thorey, en France, mais le gouvernement français l'a laissé se reposer dans un mausolée "islamisé" à Rabat, au Maroc. Catholique très dévoué, Lyautey avait été le premier résident général du protectorat du Maroc (1912-25). Ce héros colonial a été enterré dans un mausolée conçu par les Français comme un simulacre d'un tombeau pour un marabout, un saint sacré musulman médiéval. Cet article raconte la myriade de réponses à cette structure funéraire idiosyncratique et politiquement chargée. Ce faisant, il révèle les premières tensions entre les Français et les makhzen ainsi que les membres du mouvement nationaliste naissant.

**Mots clés:** Maroc colonial, monuments, Hubert Lyautey, architecture.

### Abstract: An Islamicized Mausoleum for Maréchal Hubert Lyautey

Maréchal Hubert Lyautey died in Thorey, France, but the French government laid him to rest in an "Islamicized" mausoleum in Rabat, Morocco. A devout Catholic, Lyautey had been the first Resident General of the Protectorate of Morocco (1912-1925). This colonial hero was buried in a mausoleum designed by the French as a simulacrum of a tomb for a marabout, a medieval Muslim holy man. This article narrates the myriad responses to this idiosyncratic and politically charged funerary structure. In doing so, it reveals early tensions between the French and the makhzan as well as members of the nascent nationalist movement.

**Keywords:** colonial Morocco, monuments, Hubert Lyautey, architecture.

### Resumen: Mausoleo islámico para el Maréchal Hubert Lyautey

El mariscal Hubert Lyautey murió en Thorey, Francia, pero el gobierno francés lo dejó en un mausoleo "islamizado" en Rabat, Marruecos. Un devoto católico, Lyautey había sido el primer Residente General del Protectorado de Marruecos (1912-1925). Este héroe colonial fue enterrado en un mausoleo diseñado por los franceses como un simulacro de una tumba para un marabout, un santo musulmán medieval. Este artículo narra las miríadas de respuestas a esta estructura funeraria idiosincrática y políticamente cargada. Al hacerlo, revela tensiones tempranas entre los franceses y los makhzan, así como miembros del naciente movimiento nacionalista.

**Palabras claves:** monumentos, colonial, marruecos, Hubert Lyautey, arquitectura.