



ON  
THE  
EDGE  
OF THE  
SAHARA

II EDIZIONE

MILANO  
RABAT  
ZAGORA  
M'HAMID EL GHIZLANE

ASSOCIAZIONE  
CULTURALE  
NOSTOI  
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URBAN  
AND ARCHITECTURAL  
DESIGN WORKSHOP

<b>WHERE</b>	Milano, Rabat, Zagora, M'hamid El Ghizlane
<b>WHEN</b>	Dates will be further confirmed according to students' availability. In principle, the workshop could take place in one of the following periods: from 27/05/2026 to 07/06/2026; from 16/07/26 to 26/07/26; from 01/09/26 to 12/09/26.
<b>GOALS</b>	<p>In the 1930s, Henri Terrasse collected sketches, photographs, and texts that described the landscape of the Atlas Mountains and the oases of southern Morocco, highlighting their nature as a physical and cultural boundary. In the 1960s, a group of Dutch architects Kasba 64 retraced Terrasse's footsteps and published, in 1974, <i>Living on the edge of the Sahara</i>, which collects surveys, photographs, and sketches that describe the forms of dwelling and the settlement types of these places "on the edge of the desert".</p> <p>When William Curtis decides, in the 1980s, to retrace the footsteps of his colleagues in the lands of the South, he brings us back similar reflections.</p> <p>The hostile landscape at the edge of the desert, fed by a watercourse system, is the physical background for the settlements and, at the same time, a condition to protect from. From the douar to the medina, passing through the igerm, the agadir, the ksar, the tighremt, and the kasbah, the enclosure is considered as the archetype on which the elements of the settlements are composed. More or less fortified, the settlement types of the Moroccan South are defined by the necessity to protect from the surrounding hostile territory and, at the same time, to maintain a clear separation between the nomad world, represented by the open and unlimited space of the desert, and the sedentary space of human settlement.</p> <p>Historically, Arab and Berber populations have inhabited and defined these places, often meeting and sometimes confronting each other. Today, these places are in a state of advanced decay, or, conversely, they are often the focus of frequently creative restorations intended for touristic purposes. Recent visits to these areas have uncovered a completely altered landscape. Today, other settling models, which prioritize environmental exploitation over a clear exchange relationship, irremediably compromise the fragile relationship between production capability and settling conditions that guided the construction of the landscape until a few decades ago. This phenomenon of indiscriminate transformation is not only continuing, but is also dangerously transforming the valleys of the Moroccan South.</p> <p>The southern regions are home to an incredible heritage made of mud villages (ksour) and rural residences (kasbahs), whose survival is today threatened by modernisation. In a world that turns at high speed, there is no more space for the slowness of rurality that the ancient settlements of the region represent with their masses and walls. Formerly flourishing rural and urban settlements, ksour and kasbahs are today considered as mere artefacts to be exploited only for mass tourism purposes when they are not neglected and left to become masses of rubble in the desertic landscape that characterises these regions.</p> <p>Based on the study of the two historians (Terrasse and Curtis) and the four Dutch architects (Kasba 64), the workshop aims first to investigate the architectural landscape of these places and, secondly, to redesign some portions of it, demonstrating that an alternative to the uncritical transformation of the landscape and its settlements is not only possible but also desirable.</p>
<b>ORGANIZED BY</b>	Associazione Culturale NOSTOI
<b>PARTNERS</b>	Politecnico di Milano   ENA Rabat   Scuola AUIC (POLIMI)



<b>TEACHERS</b>	<p>Prof. Michele Caja (POLIMI)          Prof. Hakim Cherkaoui (ENA)          Prof. Martina Landsberger (POLIMI)          Prof. Angelo Lorenzi (POLIMI)          Arch. PhD Cecilia Fumagalli (NOSTOI)          Riccardo Meneghello          Sara Raffaglio</p>
<b>PARTICIPANTS</b>	The workshop is open to maximum of 25 students enrolled in Architecture Faculties.
<b>LANGUAGE</b>	English, Italian
<b>CFU</b>	The AUC School of Politecnico di Milano assigns to its students 4 c.f.u.
<b>APPLICATION AND ENROLLMENT</b>	<p>Students are invited to submit an application form consisting of a single .pdf document (no more than 20 pages in A4 format and no larger than 5 MB) including the following informations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• one motivational letter (maximum 2000 characters);</li> <li>• one curriculum vitae et studiorum;</li> <li>• one portfolio of works.</li> </ul> <p>The application must be sent to <a href="mailto:infonostoi@gmail.com">infonostoi@gmail.com</a> by March 22, 2026.</p> <p>A commission composed by the workshop organizers will be responsible for selecting the candidates. The results will be emailed out by March 25, 2026.</p> <p>Participation in the workshop will be effective upon payment of the participation fee by April 10, 2026. The following students in the waiting list will be admitted, if payment is not received.</p>
<b>PROGRAM</b>	to be defined
<b>PARTICIPATION FEE</b>	<p>Participation fee is approximately 550€ (the quotation might be subject to small variations - lower or higher - according to the actual number of participants and general expenses).          The fee includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 overnight stays in Morocco;</li> <li>• transfers within Morocco;</li> <li>• final dinner party;</li> <li>• tickets to monuments and museums;</li> <li>• guided tours;</li> <li>• workshop-related documentation.</li> </ul> <p>The fee does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• flights;</li> <li>• meals;</li> <li>• transfers from and to the airports;</li> <li>• transfers and visits during the free time;</li> <li>• anything not included in the list “the fee comprises”.</li> </ul>
<b>CONTACTS</b>	<p>Cecilia Fumagalli - <a href="mailto:infonostoi@gmail.com">infonostoi@gmail.com</a>          Martina Landsberger - <a href="mailto:martina.landsberger@polimi.it">martina.landsberger@polimi.it</a></p>

