

HOTEL EL MORJANE

democraticbook #15
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Text by Maïke Mia Höhne



airport Tunisia



“Because whoever owns a man’s portrait owns the man himself”.

Nouri Bouzid

Hotel el Morjane, Tunisia 2004.

She takes pictures - always.
She doesn't want to own her subjects. She
only wants glances. Glances of the moment.
In Tunisia it is the men who cast their
glances.

For the duration of her trip she stays in
Hotel el Morjane.
It is the oldest Hotel in the place.
A former French Army barracks.
It is situated by the sea. The hotel
contains all of them: manager, chef,
policeman, animation artist... And all
of them give her this open glance, which
amuses and attracts her as they themselves
attract her.

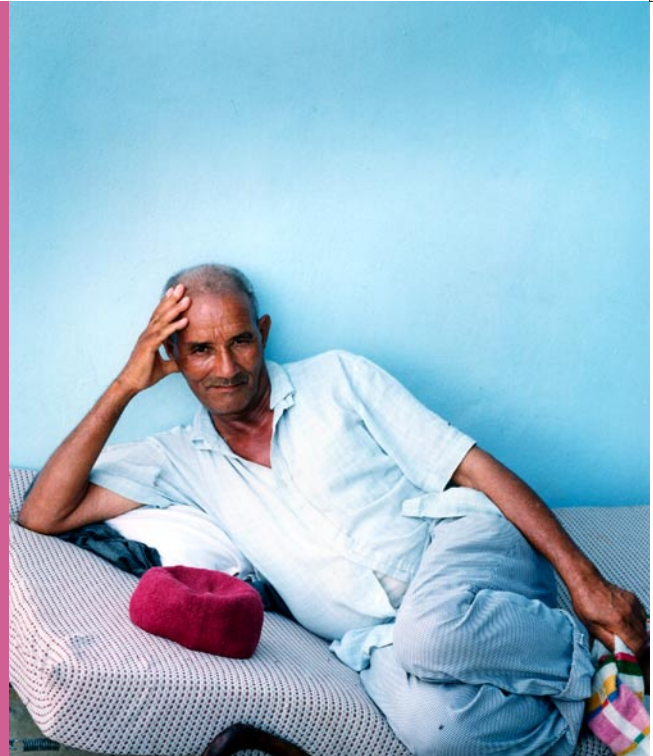


pilot

The forbidden image is the one with the most eroticism. Muslim women emerge from the water, slowly, as if in slow motion. A dress clings to them, in full length and defines who they are.

The picture cannot have them. She is not allowed to capture the glance of the woman emerging out of the sea. The woman is free at that moment. No one is allowed to take the picture. Maybe that is why these women like to go into the water.

Maike Mia Höhne





Giving here is costly: she knows this from observations in the hotel and from the female tourists, who have lost their hearts here. The men here are prostitutes - many of them. That is a fact. This enables them to provide a better life, for themselves and the whole extended family. For a woman: unthinkable, for the man: normal.



Tunesia's men always relate to the one, the Super-father of the land. The Prince, the hero, who has distributed his image into the furthest and remotest corners of the land. A ruler over everyone: a popstar without equal.





beachboy



the little dictator

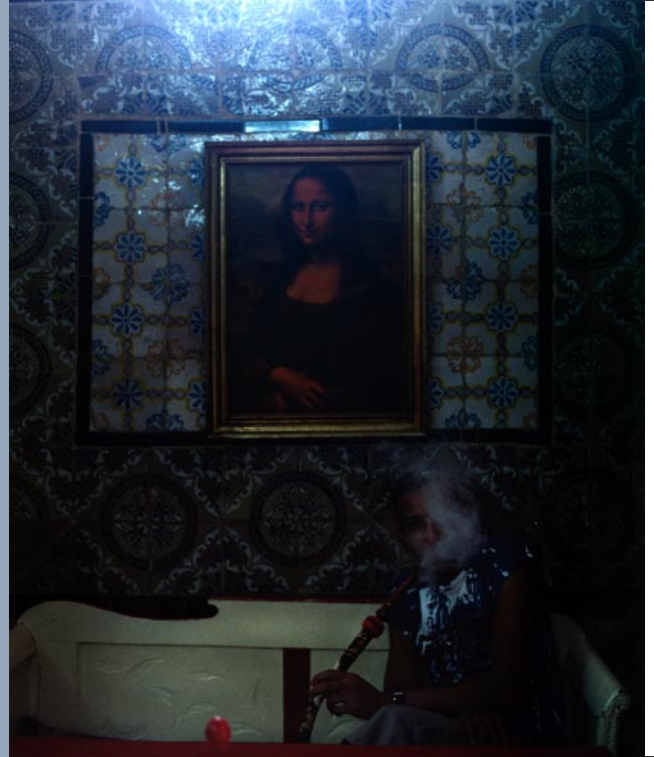


The director





cafe
andalus

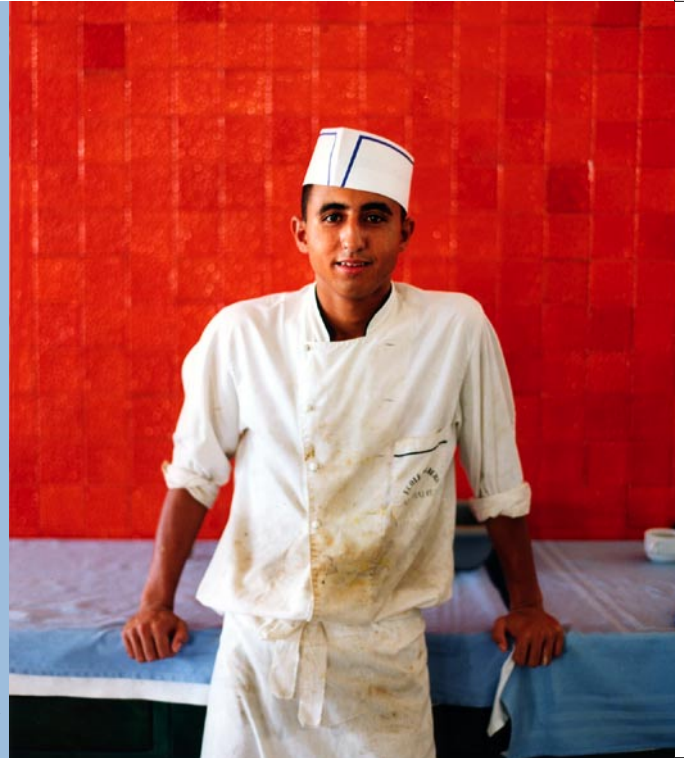






The sovereign belongs to everyone. She belongs to everyone and everyone belongs to her. Thou shalt not create an image of me. Her red curls attract glances. They don't appear to be in any doubt - those who look at her.

the cook



The men who she encounters do not have any doubt in their gaze, no doubt about her role. No qualms about their masculinity - never have. The country's women drop their eyes, as she does, too, when the men lift theirs, whenever she is not looking through her camera. The society seems unaffected and without uncertainty - not in their depiction, nor in their execution. I show myself, therefore I am. Take a picture of me and I give myself to you.

