

# THE TIMES

## Tangier by Josh Shoemake

Iain Finlayson

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Tangier is the last resort: the city of the dream or nightmare; the casualty ward of desire or despair. Tangier is a layered city, from the maze of the medina to the modernism of the new town to the mystery of the gardens and villas of the mountain. Until 1961, it was an international zone, politically strategic, ruled by the consuls of America and Europeans. It was also 'Interzone', the fevered beat town of William Burroughs, populated (polluted, said Moroccans) in fiction and reality by degenerate exiles, sexual outlaws and economic predators. Then, too, it was the novelistic noir city imagined and set in literary aspic by Paul Bowles. But it was also the ethnic city reported by Mohamed Mrabet, Mohamed Choukri, and Layachi Larbi. Shoemake, who has lived in Morocco since 1996, is a sure-footed guide to the lore and literature of an enigmatic city that has survived its own myth.