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Adapting Modernity: Designing with Modern Architecture in East Jerusalem, 1948–1967

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This study examines the influence of modernity on residential buildings as a new form of expansion built during the Jordanian Rule (1948–1967) outside the Old City of East Jerusalem. Through investigating a sample of houses, the study shows how building typologies, layouts and architectural characteristics depict and inform reinterpretations and adaptations of modernity. Unlike the modernity that emerged out of the western locus, these buildings do not ignore their vernacular roots but adapt to the Palestinian socio-cultural lifestyle, and at the same time borrow from the aesthetic and ideological characteristics of the modern idiom. Based on architectural documentation and ethnographic research, the analyses show that the peasants (Fallahin) made an important contribution to the adaptive modernity of residential buildings in East Jerusalem. The designs were influenced by some aspects of modernity but were also subject to local and cultural determinants. The study contributes to the literature on 'other modernities' outside the west, and to an architectural history that is informed by people's private and individual experience rather than by those working in the profession. This is considered to be a neglected heritage that this article aims to redress.

Keywords: East Jerusalem—Jordanian Rule—modern architecture—peasants—vernacular architecture

Introduction

An important change in Jerusalem's rural landscape emerged after its division in 1948 during the Jordanian Rule. New neighborhoods with single houses were emerging outside the historic cores of villages surrounding the Old City. Although the local peasants (Fallahin) adopted modern standards, their architecture was inspired by traditional living patterns. Unlike the customary form of expansion in many cities of the Middle East, that followed government-planned mass housing, these houses were self-built according to modern values.

The literature on the architectural modernization in Palestine that followed land reforms (Tanzimat) during the late Ottoman rule and later during the British Mandate is vast. While it represents the dynamic between the adoption of modernity and the vernacular built environment, it is, however, mainly the story of the wealthy local elites in cities who could afford to commission architects. Rarely is the architecture of local rural communities, and its alternative modes of production, thought of as being modern. The architecture of local rural communities is often marginalized, rarely researched within the realm of 'heritage' or mentioned in analytical or historical studies. However, a brief mention by Kroyanker and Gonen relates this 'local' architecture to the 'International Style popular during the Mandate period in Jewish housing in the center of town'.[1] They do not articulate how this modernity was appropriated in East Jerusalem, but rather present it as a second-hand, adopted style, an approach that ignores the dialectic

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relation between this style and the socio-cultural dynamic essential to understanding its characteristics.

This article focuses on the Fallahin reform of rural settings, extending the modernist paradigm in a way that still reflected their traditional lifestyle. Local builders and home-owners modernized their buildings and spaces within their budget. These spaces were based on the *Liwan* plan of the nineteenth-century urban mansions but utilized contemporary technology and construction methods. This study presents a detailed architectural analysis of a number of houses through documentation and ethnographic research. The general characteristics of the buildings, in terms of form, function, structure, materials used and aesthetics, give this architecture its significance in adapting modernity. Also, some design decisions suggest that people were copying styles from one another, reflecting the influence of builders rather than architects.

As such, this article contributes to the literature of modernity as a localized translation in Palestine. Although the built forms, uses and meanings are not like those in Europe, they are still modern, interpreted through the local and changing cultural milieu and studied through the perspective of the people engaged in their production.

Literature Review

Written mainly by western scholars, the history of modern architecture has neglected how regions outside Europe, especially in the Middle East, have adapted and adopted modernity. Considering modernity as a peculiarly western phenomenon, advancing out of developed economies and industries,[2] has prompted a number of contributions to the literature that have linked it to other locations. However, these have emphasized modern architectural experiences as alternatives, with terms like 'alternative modernisms', 'other modernisms', and 'indigenous modernities'. These developed in response to the proposition that clients and architects outside Europe were in fact appropriating modernity to their own purposes and were not 'passive receivers'.[3] Kathleen James-Chakraborty argues that modernism cannot be reduced to a story of 'European émigrés' and that local clients and builders 'who may never have heard of Le Corbusier' were equally important to the spread of modernism in non-western settings, along with architects who received their education abroad.[4] Duanfang Lu emphasizes that locals in developing countries have even created their own imagining of modernity.[5]

Western scholarship has overlooked the socio-political contexts of non-western regions and favoured abstraction and formal interpretation that erases individuality and collective memory.[6] Philip Johnson and Henry Russell Hitchcock's 1932 MOMA exhibition and supporting publication, 'The International Style', emphasized four main principles without much interest in regional and national modernities. These included: 'volume, planes or surfaces as opposed to mass and solidity', 'regularity and flexibility', 'elimination of ornament', and 'perfect use of materials'.[7] These principles were criticized as vague, and not doing justice to the modern movement,[8] as they did not 'reinforce their curatorial argument that modern architecture constituted an international style'.[9] In fact, the style tended to respond to different contexts in terms of culture and climate.[10] One factor for overlooking non-western modernity is the political context, such as countries being under dictatorial regimes, or representing colonial settings.[11] Another reason why western historians have overlooked modernity outside the west is because of a different approach to tectonics. Western modernity was associated with frame

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systems while in places like the Mediterranean, builders continued to use whitewashed masonry and solid walls.

Writings on modern architecture in developing countries developed in parallel with colonial policies.[12] In the mid-1980s the writings of Edward Said and Michael Foucault both addressed the relationship between colonialism and built form.[13] Other works suggest that colonization by European countries of areas with a rich vernacular and traditional architecture was purposely adopted in order to foster modernism, as it was under threat in Europe,[14] thus making colonized areas into a 'laboratory of modernity' to try out new governmental policies, including new architectural forms and planning before they were adopted in Europe.[15] Dominating the colonized landscape was justified by distinguishing the local vernacular as something 'other' to the mainstream modernist vocabulary. This is argued by Edward Said[16] and later by others, including Mark Crinson,[17] where the 'double end' of modernity is its ability to project the image of Empire whilst still showing traces of regional and local peculiarities.

Modern trends in regionalist architecture in the Middle East have also been emphasized in a number of studies as part of a post-colonial nationalist project which includes work by Sibel Bozdoğan,[18] Tom Avermaete[19] and Nezar Alsayyad.[20] They assert that the character and forms of the vernacular built environment justify claims towards there being specific national frameworks. Others suggest that postcolonial scholarship disregards the richness of vernacular history, including migrations from the rural to the urban and changes in land economy and ownership.[21] The post-colonial adoption of modernity was a way to keep up with the world and neighboring countries[22] at the beginning of the twentieth century. In the Middle East, two architectural design approaches appeared: a selective adaptation of historical forms and an experimental design in terms of abstraction which followed the international trend.[23] Combining them resulted in a mixed style that, on the one hand, recapitulated the ideal of nationalism and, on the other, represented a modern International Style that contributed to the claim of universal applicability. In this way modernity succeeded in taking root in different locales using a common language of exposed cubical forms implemented through different building programmes. Also, the role of the architect shifted to provide services to a broader polity instead of working solely with the elite.

Local architects in the Middle East who studied in the west, such as Hasan Fathy in Egypt, Rifat Chadirji in Iraq, and Sedad Eldem in Turkey, had a conflicting 'burden of representation',[24] as they had to reinvent their practice and distance themselves from emerging views of historical legacies. To consolidate a sense of unity, mitigating the climate as a global and trans-historical solution made modern architecture appear as a technical response to environmental nature rather than a displacement of more traditional accommodations.[25] Such architecture was represented in buildings for elite local groups, and in planning governmental sites of national symbolism. The resulting urban forms became customary in expanding cities and were linked with nationalism, class and identity in countries including Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Cyprus, and Kuwait. However, in cities with limited resources, that were already experiencing unplanned informal settlements through rural to urban migration for those seeking work, governments were urged to look for more specific solutions. These were based on self-built housing of proto-vernacular typologies where affordable payments and cheaper land and subsidies were available.[26]

Literature on these lesser-known cases is still lacking within the architectural history in the Middle East. There is a need to document and analyze transnational experiences

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in different areas, using contextual, architectural and ethnographic methodologies. In Palestine, a vast literature exists on how the elite have modernized major cities. Although, in rural areas, modernity was similarly appropriated and its elements embedded, transforming the authenticity of the vernacular built environment forever, it has been scarcely researched. People's private experiences, memories, and stories about how they reconciled traditional life with modernity remain undiscovered, untold and undocumented. This article therefore attempts to fill this gap, using the city of Jerusalem as a case-study.

Research question, objectives and methodology

This study examines the architectural history of modern East Jerusalem during the Jordanian Rule, between 1948 and 1967. This period witnessed important changes as it was a confrontation between two different political periods, the British Mandate and the Israeli occupation. The study examines the modern transformation of rural settings introduced through a model of residential architecture with specific characteristics. It traces the influence of modernity in East Jerusalem and its adaptation to the traditional lifestyle of the Fallahin, based upon the early reforms of a rural landscape that subsequently changed considerably. Such houses cannot be considered to be a pure copy of western modernism but rather a selective adaptation.

This research seeks to address the following questions: what are the dominant models and common architectural characteristics particular to the adoption and adaptation of modernity during Jordanian Rule in the rural settings of East Jerusalem? In particular, how did traditional life in Palestine influence modernized buildings, in terms of appearance, building typology, materials and construction methods employed?

The study documented the buildings and established the typologies in order to understand how this new modernized architecture emerged within the context of East Jerusalem. This included understanding the early engagement of Palestine with modernity through older existing models of architecture. This was done by studying fifty-three houses on the Jerusalem-Ramallah road in Shufat, north of the Old City, as the majority of the houses represented, maintained their authentic architectural style.

The objectives are:

- To shed light on an important but neglected period in Jerusalem.
- To document modern buildings exposed to demolition and haphazard additions.
- To outline building typologies and styles.
- To understand the dynamics between the buildings and the socio-cultural traditional life in relation to the adaptation of modernity.

The methodology is based on collecting empirical and ethnographic data to identify the typologies and characteristics of the houses, all visited between winter 2017 and spring 2019, combined with a literature review on the adoption of modernity in the region. Houses along the Jerusalem-Ramallah road were identified through an aerial map captured in 1967 and through the stone plaques indicating the construction dates on the front façades of the houses. All houses facing the street were visited and their inhabitants interviewed, when researchers were allowed entry. Plans and frontal elevations were drawn, and then transformed into tables, categorized and analyzed using the typological analysis method according to their characteristics, such as the plan configuration, geometry, size, structural systems, location on plot, building materials, services

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and amenities as well as other details. The ethnographic research, through open, semi-structured interviews, provided insights about the life then, which allowed findings in relation to the socio-cultural setting established by the society. Topics included:

- Who was the original owner?
- Do you recall the building of the house? Did an architect design it?
- Who lived in the house? And how were the spaces used?
- Where did you live before and what was your occupation?
- Has the house maintained its original features and arrangement of rooms?
- What were the original materials? What has changed?

As shown in Table 1, today seventy-three buildings exist of which fifty-three (73%) were built between 1948 and 1967 along both sides of the Jerusalem-Ramallah road in the area of Shufat. There were fifty-three residential buildings, nineteen of which were documented in plan and elevation, while twenty-eight were documented in elevation only. The other six were omitted as their original features no longer existed and they had been subject to invasive changes of use.

The study revealed that the houses in Shufat represent an adaptive modernism with local owners hiring a contractor and builders, and working mostly without architects' involvement, thus signifying an important and influential period in the history of Palestine.

Early modernity in Palestine

In Palestine, the initial influences of modernism affected vernacular architecture in cities and villages differently and at different times. The rural houses are typical of a Greater Syria typology,[27] with a single, rectangular, all-purpose room, thick masonry-bearing walls with stone coursing, vaulted roofs (cross, groin or barrel), and small openings for ventilation. Rooms were added, forming a cluster to accommodate the extended family and surrounding a courtyard (Housh) where domestic activities would take place. Houses were raised on a slab (Mastaba) to keep lower areas for livestock, resulting in a variety of forms.[28] Life in villages was communal; occasions were celebrated in the modest square and neighbours helped each other in constructing houses (Al-Ouneh). Houses were laid out in harmony with the local topography, surrounded by agricultural lands; olive groves in central mountain areas and orchards and citrus in coastal areas.[29]

In major cities like Jerusalem, expansion was horizonal, concentrated around major religious sites, again with simple vaulted rooms forming a single family house or an extended family cluster around a courtyard. Life in cities was more introverted due to privacy concerns, with fewer openings towards the narrow streets. Cities were mostly fortified and, until the late Ottoman period, all the necessities of life existed within the walls.

Table 1. Sample of houses

Total number of buildings	Houses allowed entry	Houses did not allow entry	Altered houses	All building types
	Built between 1948–1967			**Built after 1967**
73	53			20
	19	28	6	
	47		Omitted	Omitted

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An early encounter with modernity began when Mohammad Ali Pasha of Egypt occupied Greater Syria, including Palestine, in 1832 with European support conditional upon his allowing equal treatment of non-Muslims. This lasted for nine years until the Ottomans gained control again, and introduced new reforms based on the Tanzimat Charter. Infrastructure such as train lines (Hijaz) was developed, helped by foreign companies and engineers working in parallel with gradual modernization within the empire itself.

The local industries of the Ottoman Empire could not could not compete with the rapidly emerging technologies in the west, and thus depended on western technology, material and building methods, such as prefabrication. Although still adopting some local solutions,[30] Palestine had more access and exposure to the west. Equal rights were granted to non-Muslims, allowing them to own land and to build. This enabled European missionaries to build[31] monumental, island-like structures outside the city walls, in an eclectic style influenced by classical European cultures.[32] Each missionary brought in styles similar to that of their own nation, be they French, British, Italian, Prussian, or Russian. These buildings were used as consulates, hospices, schools and pilgrims' lodging and provided services to the locals, such as education to women, vocational training and training local builders in building skills,[33] which affected the architecture that was to follow. Their buildings entailed importing timber for windows, doors from Europe and Asia, roof tiles from Marseilles, Portland cement from the United Kingdom, and iron of different forms and sizes from Germany and Britain,[34] while limestone was local. For instance, the Protestant Evangelical Christ Church in Jerusalem, believed to be the first large modern building,[35] was constructed by Maltese stonemasons in the 1840s, who are believed to have taught local Arabs, especially from Bethlehem, who in time became skilled themselves.[36]

The affluent, upper-class Arabic families were moving outside the city walls and employing architects, whether locals trained abroad or foreigners, to build spacious, modern urban mansions. They represented progressive urban development, with new aesthetics and living styles, although sometimes inspired by oriental motifs. These mansions mark the modernization of residential architecture, achieved through changing the courtyard configuration into that of a central hall (*Liwan*), gathering the spacious rooms, including kitchens and bathrooms, under one roof. Approached through semi-open porticos, different decorations and details were explored within column capitals, shape of arches and limestone. Coloured Armenian tiles and decorated iron fences and balustrades were used. Generally the style was inspired by European classicism mixed in an eclectic manner.

For its basic plan the *Liwan* configuration seems to have been anchored on three analogous separate traditions: the Syrian '*Iwan*', a large area that serves as a courtyard, similar to the central hall, where both are symmetrical and flanked by rooms;[37] the Turkish '*Konak*' as a free standing mansion within a walled garden; and the Venetian Palladian residences with a massively built ground floor for services and the piano nobile on top. Further influence is suggested by the three-bay house of Greater Syria and Mount Lebanon, the result of an increased need for security, and depending on a hierarchical differentiation of enclosed spaces.[38] The three-bay house was achieved by integrating glazed sheets fitted within wooden frames set in arches in the 1880s, which allowed enclosure. So the *Liwan* became enclosed, with adequate light admitted, and provided protection from weather conditions, in accordance with modern western standards. Access to rooms was through the central hall and alternative side entrances; the rear part was used by women and each room was considered a separate household.[39]

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Local builders are also said to have been influenced by illustrated books in Arabic about central hall building designs that existed in the nineteenth century. This was also promoted in Egypt through the state Polytechnic School that taught architecture through the assimilation of western design methods and contributed to the accommodation of the central hall arrangements in Egyptian domestic architecture.[40] Yet the Palestinian central hall is distinct from others in the region, for its incorporation of the traditional vaulting, although some were covered with inclined roofs and terracotta tiles.[41]

During this time, the *Liwan* configuration gained popularity in urban settings especially in prosperous coastal towns and in villages with Christian majorities, like Ein Kerem, Gifna, and Taybe, as missionary schools and churches were built.[42] In other rural areas and poorer towns, traditional life and vernacular building continued, as the courtyard arrangements allowed gradual financing of future expansions to accommodate the extended family. Also, builders could not afford to construct individual houses on a single plot.

During the British Mandate (1917–1948) a new chapter of architectural influences began. Improved building technologies and construction methods, and the arrival of Jewish and British architects, produced a diversity of styles that also depicted an eclecticism, through combining oriental culture and climate. For the British, the Holy Land was unlike any other colony and therefore new building programmes were necessary.[43] However, the symbolism of colonial architecture exposed a dilemma of style stemming from Britain's use of an interventionist policy expressing dominance and superiority and practising its aim of reforming and modernizing the native society. The dilemma posed was whether buildings should be designed in a modern western manner or in an indigenous style. To adopt a regionalist approach based on localized traditional cultures and systems, concealing the colonial government as 'preservationism', would mean that colonial buildings would be conceived for the benefit of the colonized rather than their rulers.[44] The solution was a 'transcendental strategy' of 'classical modern', which was a mode of modernity that opposed the Arts and Crafts movement used by many British architects but was inspired by the École de Beaux-Arts in Paris. Modern classicism relied on abstraction with fewer classical details, to meet modern problems by 'transcending rather than actually engaging them',[45] thus validating European design for the orient,[46] expressing and even reconciling changes in daily life with an 'idealized abstraction'.[47]

This colonial regionalism developed several typologies of architectural elements, vaguely recognized as Palestinian but it was pure and simple abstraction. Austen Harrison, the chief architect of the Mandatory Public Works Department, designed important buildings such as the commissioner's residence and the Rockefeller Museum. He had an architectural language, compatible with the Beaux-Arts conceptions, which used the local context in terms of materials and climate and an abstracted vernacular that 'transcended specific reference'.[48]

Other Jewish architects, including Eric Mendelsohn, also aimed not for Palestinian culture itself but rather looked at the way their buildings fit into the landscape. However, the British support for making Palestine a homeland for Jews led to the production of other aggressive modern styles. The Zionist adoption of the modernist idiom made Palestine one of the earliest outposts of modernism outside Europe, especially with the use of concrete through the cement factory established in Haifa in 1925, allowing Jewish workers to master working with concrete. Their architecture became more 'international' where the use of modern technologies resulted in an appearance different to the traditional.[49]

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Today, Jerusalem has a diverse cultural heritage, including a layer associated with the modern movement. Some public and residential buildings typical of modernism were built in West Jerusalem, though with limestone façades. In East Jerusalem, the influence of modernism predominantly developed during the Jordanian Rule (1948–1967), and following the migration of people from historic cores, cities and villages, seeking a modern lifestyle and standards.

Palestine during the Jordanian Rule

During the mid-twentieth century, the Middle East witnessed an acceleration of modernity, reflected in social housing that responded to the rise of the working class and inward migration. Architects were commissioned by states to design for this segment of society. Some did not fulfil the aspirations of the poor to build urban-like modernized housing.[50] Public buildings also followed the modern trend with a dominant International Style, especially with the return of many educated architects from Europe, Egypt and Lebanon.[51] This style appeared in states in the Middle East, including Jordan.

The Kingdom of Jordan was recognized as an independent state by the League of Nations in 1921. Palestine's West Bank came under its rule after the war of 1948. While Amman was the capital, East Jerusalem was a spiritual capital, and both witnessed the rise in modern architecture, merged with the local traditional to form a 'domesticated modernity' implemented by local and international architects.[52] This hybrid architecture infiltrated Jerusalem through new forms of residential buildings, and at a faster pace among the Fallahin, and was the product of the work of skilled builders.

The adoption of modernism in Jerusalem was fast as it followed the laws and regulations of Jordan. The fact that the new modern buildings fitted different social groups was consistent with the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights that Jordan signed as a member of the UN in 1955. As such its new modern buildings were symbols of a 'new supranational aesthetics of bureaucratic and technocratic efficiency' that stood in abstracted forms as a symbol of accessibility to all social strata.[53]

Another reason for the fast adoption of modernism in East Jerusalem was that the King lived in modern houses built by affluent architects, both in Jerusalem and in the Amman 'White Palace'. Designed by Sherif Mhanna in 1942, the Amman palace was of pure rectangular and cylindrical geometry built with a reinforced concrete structure clad with limestone.[54]

The house in Jerusalem is located along the Jerusalem-Ramallah road in Beit Hanina. Villagers from Beit Hanina were selling and/or building on some of their agricultural lands intruded upon by the new road. The land was purchased by Abdel-Muti Qutob, an affluent Jerusalemite, who employed the Egyptian architect Sayyed Karim to design the building. Karim created a modern architectural piece like no other in the city, with four floors and a semi-circular driveway, a water fountain at the entrance and a garden. The building has a bold architectural vocabulary of concrete cantilevers, and a mix of stone cladding and red glazed ceramic tiles used to emphasize each projection. In 1960, the King rented the house and used it until the end of the Jordanian Rule in 1967. Thus, the location of the house increased land value and motivated people to build and live closer to the King. The building is still standing today and is known as 'the King's Palace.'

Another regional influence came through architect Sayyed Karim, who was a consultant to the UN as a city planner in 1949, and had put forward many urban plans for

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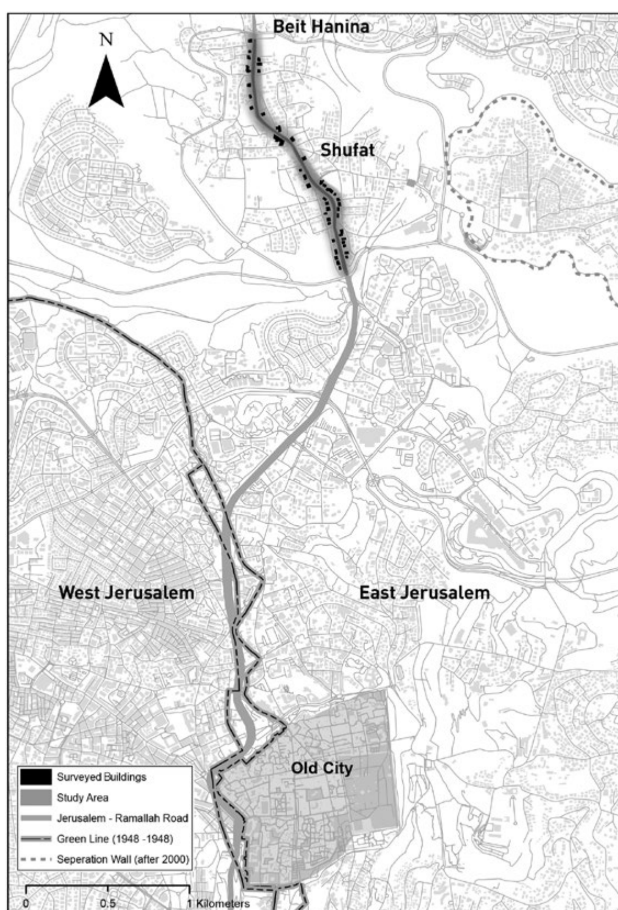
Arab cities, including Baghdad, Damascus, Riyadh, Amman (1954), and even Nablus (1956). Karim, known as the 'flying architect', was also a promoter of the modern movement and a hybrid international style involving local practices.[55] He founded the first Arabic-language design magazine, *Al-Emara*, in 1939, which promoted 'efficient, ornament-free architecture, the use of new construction techniques and building materials, as well as designs that improve quality of life through an emphasis on ventilation, hygiene and natural lighting'.[56] It emphasized the need to develop a unified style based on the analysis of historical materials and building techniques, and campaigned for a localized International Style incorporating concrete and glass. Karim's article in 1941, entitled 'Between the Model Village and Transition Village', focused on village reform, and tackling hygiene problems through resettling the Fallahin in newly built homes and effecting a gradual separation of livestock.[57] These influences on modern architecture affected East Jerusalem during the Jordanian Rule (1948–1967). It was also affected by the diverse socio-economic and cultural dynamics that has been happening in the region.

Shufat

Shufat is within a few minutes' walk of 'the King's Palace', along the same Jerusalem-Ramallah road **[1]**. In September 1952 it had 1,436 inhabitants and by 1967, the number had increased to 3,400.[58] The road from Shufat to the Old City passed through Lifta (Sultani Road), until the new Jerusalem-Ramallah road was constructed during the British Mandate. People recalled their grandparents talking about its construction, referring to it as the 'Amaliah' (an operation), perhaps referring to the Operation Anchor by the British army to gain quick vehicular access. Also, the scale was overwhelming to the people at the time, and because using farmlands meant that the income generated through agriculture would be reduced. They also recall fearing hyena attacks if they live in deserted remote areas. The new road allowed for easier accessibility and encouraged residents to gradually build houses on adjacent plots. After the 1948 war, construction in East Jerusalem increased significantly. Many of the rich families sought proper houses to rent and live in, anticipating a return to their mansions in West Jerusalem, the part under Israeli control.[59] This motivated Shufatis to invest in building new houses for rent, while continuing to live in their older houses or on the ground floor of the new houses. At the time modern architecture was adopted by individuals who could afford to build, many of whom used remittances from other family members working aboard which allowed them to build new houses on land they owned along the road rather than opting for large-scale governmental operations with state subventions.

A few of the respondents mentioned that they lived in the basement of their house and rented upper floors to sustain an income. Most houses maintain their original features, since many of the occupants are 'tenant protected', and changing the original features of the

Fig 1. Location of the houses and Shufat in Jerusalem.



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house could result in eviction; a rule imposed by Israel after 1967, granting tenants protection.[60] During the fieldwork, seven out of nineteen houses visited were tenant-protected, and maintained the original features of the buildings. Today, many of the affluent Jerusalemites, who previously resided elsewhere, occupy these houses, such as the Dajani, Taziz, Khoury and Aweidah families, while others, like the Barakat and Jitan families, bought houses from Shufati families. Many of the houses are occupied also by Shufati families, like Abu Khdair and Jaber.

Little is known about the building permits and the archive of the Amman Trusteeship where building permits were issued. Although captured by the Jerusalem municipality after 1967, the documents cannot be traced. An employee there said that the archive is in Amman/Jordan. Many recalled their parents asking builders to copy the design of a house in the neighborhood, which shows that no architects were employed, although some mentioned names of architects such as Sami Khoury, Mousa Budeiri, Abdulrazaq Odeh, and the surveyor Mousa Ayoub.

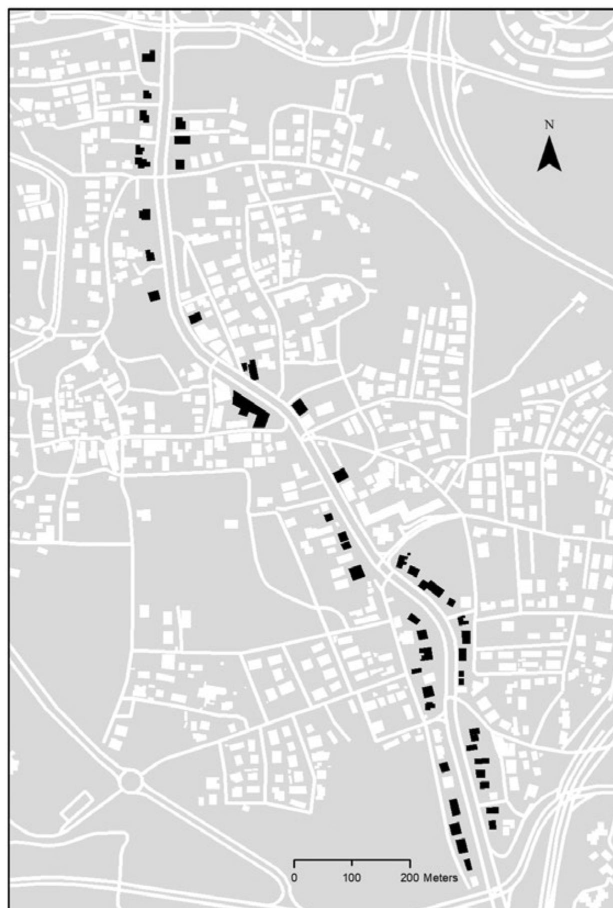

Fig 2. A map indicating the location of the houses in Shufat.

Modern houses in East Jerusalem – sample study

Moving to new areas along the Jerusalem- Ramallah road changed the accustomed living style. Individual houses were centred on spacious private land. Privacy was attained by adhering to setback regulations and by building fences. Houses were aligned with the shape of the plot and its topography. Gardens were planted with citrus, olive and other trees, watered from private wells **[2, 3]**.

All buildings were clad with natural limestone, following the British rule that was still being enforced. Stone was hewn from nearby quarries and cut manually into irregular blocks,[61] unlike in villages where stone was collected from nearby sites. It was cheaper to leave the surfaces rusticated (*Tubzeh*) as refining them in-situ was expensive. In forty-eight out of fifty-three houses, the use of ashlar (refined stone) was limited to the front façade facing the street, to make the house appear more extravagant. Side and rear façades and the first invisible rows of stone courses at the front were rusticated to decrease cost.

According to Table 1, all buildings had flat roofs, with one (36%), two (45%), or three (19%) floors. Basements existed when topography allowed. Some builders added one or two floors after 1967 which were traced through differences in limestone treatment.

The structural system used was reinforced concrete post and beam which was clad externally with limestone. Unlike traditional houses, cantilever slabs and structural elements broke the flat surfaces of the façades, and this can be seen on balconies, window lintels, and sometimes above garden doors. Internally, the skeletal system was exposed through visible down stand beams. Curtain walls allowed for larger openings but these were not used due to privacy restrictions.

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Fig 3. A segment view of the houses in Shufat.

Plan typologies

A similar plan can be seen in most of the houses [4]. The ground floor has two or three entrances. A portico referred to as *Baranda* in Arabic (originally *Veranda* in French) lies at the main entrance. If covered with glass, it is used as a living room functioning as a source of heating in winter if facing south-west. It is surrounded by a low wall and a decorative circular structural column at the corner with a simple capital reminiscent of classical orders, especially the Tuscan [5]. The regular entrance is made of a two-panel metal door, with an embedded opaque window to allow sunlight into the interior.

The other formal entrance, opening on the perpendicular wall of the regular entrance, takes visitors into the formal living room referred to as the *Salon*, without accessing other private spaces. As depicted in thirty-four of the houses, the *Salon,* the most spacious room, usually points towards the front of the house, breaking the linearity of the main façade; often using a semi-circular shape.

The domestic entrance leads into the *Liwan* (a term still used by people today*).* It remains an important feature, resembling the courtyard configuration in the traditional house layout, updated into a covered central hall during the early modernization of the urban mansions in the late nineteenth century and marks an adaptation from traditional to modern living. While the *Liwan* of the urban mansion was spacious, in Shufat, it was less so and acted as a transitional space connecting the surrounding rooms. Having numerous doors prevented it from functioning as a suitable living space. Most *Liwans* visited were relatively dark, due to having only one window opening to the front *Baranda*. A third entrance via the staircase opens into the *Liwan* thus increasing the number of doors. The staircase, at the side of the building, leads to the roof or/and other housing units.

The *Liwan* led to one of the two large bedrooms. Within the sample, fourteen out of the nineteen houses visited had two bedrooms: the main bedroom used by the parents, and the other by the children, boys and girls together. Four had three bedrooms, and

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Fig 4. Examples of plans and front façades.

one had four bedrooms, which allowed the separation of sexes among children. The other bedrooms were reached via a corridor that also led to the kitchen and bathrooms.

The kitchen was the least spacious room because fridges and cooking stoves were not available. It opened onto the garden or sometimes onto a balcony, used to dry food for storage. People would buy their food supplies fresh on daily basis, or preserve it with ice blocks. Cooking took place in traditional stoves referred to as *Wajaa*, comprising a chimney built from cement to funnel out cooking steam and to contain the *Baboor,* (a special gas cylinder lit for cooking).

In contrast with the traditional lifestyle of eating on the ground, and although a dedicated space for a dining room was not considered, a dining table formed the centre of the kitchen. The counter tops were made of stone blocks narrower than the standards of today, and shelves underneath were covered with curtains. The backsplashes were covered with plain ceramic tiles. Specific standardized tiles were used to hold soap tablets, showing meticulous attention to details. All but two of the houses have upgraded their kitchens to meet today's standards.

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Fig 5. Left: Original entrance to Liwan and Salon. Right: A Baranda with a decorated column.

Most houses had two toilets, a squat-type *Arabic toilet*, believed to be more hygienic, with a wash basin outside, and a *Franji* (foreign) bathroom as referred to by the people, with a western-style water closet, wash basin and bath. This signifies another aspect of modern life as *Franji* bathrooms did not exist in traditional houses, and bathing took place in public Hammams. Bathroom ceiling heights were kept lower to utilize the space above for storage, referred to as a *Siddeh* (attic), and reached by a detached ladder. It was used to store olives, olive oil and local white cheese.

Houses had standardized precast terrazzo tiles, containing marble chips and quartz. The mixing of different colours of terrazzo tiles in simple patterns was limited to the *Salon* and *Liwan.* This was in contrast with the earlier usage of locally produced decorative *Sijadeh* tiles (carpet in Arabic). Another means of decoration was to use different colourful synthetic paints on walls.

Building forms and façades

Houses had an internal height exceeding three metres, which allowed for the hot air to ventilate out in summer. They used pure, regular and abstracted modern forms, e.g. rectangular and cylindrical. Among the fifty houses, fifteen had partial cylindrical forms that signified the precision and detailed construction of stone blocks, worked by skilful and experienced Arab workers. Of the fifty-three buildings, twenty-six had a symmetrical configuration with two units on each floor separated by a central entrance and stairway. Many staircase entrances had a semi-circular arch, surrounded with finely and meticulously cut stone with curvilinear details. Stairs were made from carved stone,

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joined together at the edges without using concrete slabs. Balustrades were industrialized, simple and without ornamentation.

Façades were of various colours, sizes, and textures of limestone to emphasize certain volumes and planes, but lacked ornaments. Windows were simple and rectilinear in shape. A few had circular windows above the staircase door. Window lintels were framed with stone courses, somewhat reminiscent of the traditional keystones of arches. Window shutters were made of two panels of wrought iron; and the protection bars had minimalistic ornamentation. Arched windows were rare but occasionally used at main entrances. Windows, as well as all internal doors, were made of wood. Their control mechanism was based on a vertical rod adjusted to open or close. Most house entrances announce their construction date (in Christian and Hijri calendar), as in traditional houses. Texts from the Quran or an image of Khidr (St. George) in Christian houses were also added.

Services and amenities

All houses were connected to water and electricity through central companies in Ramallah and Jerusalem respectively. A sanitary infrastructure was not available, so houses had large ditches in the backyard, acting as septic tanks, where sewage was collected and allowed to decompose. Sanitary and water pipes made of wrought iron were exposed on rear façades, and some still exist today. A berry or eucalyptus tree was planted next to the ditch, as both trees would absorb the sewage and prevent overflow. One owner had to cut the eucalyptus tree because its roots were damaging the building's foundations, and after that the ditch had to be emptied more frequently. Today, all houses are connected to the city's sewage system. Heating in winter was through gasoline-based heaters as central heating was not available, though an original system with panels made of wrought iron was noticed in one house.

Modernity did not only affect buildings but also interiors and furniture, manufactured without ornamentation. People used furniture made specifically for their functions unlike the traditional life. For instance, each family member had a bed instead of mattresses previously piled over each other and used as a sofa during the day. Cupboards were used to store clothes and some of these still exist.

Adaptive modernity in East Jerusalem

The houses studied demonstrate how they have been influenced by modern ideas, but have adapted these in a way that retains the traditional Palestinian lifestyle. People were progressive and accepted emerging trends, yet maintained their traditional background. It is important to note that the houses were studied fifty years after construction, so that people's criticisms are based upon contemporary housing standards. Furthermore, the appreciation of craftsmanship during the Jordanian Rule expressed by the people is based on nostalgia, which might not have been the case at the time. Prefabrication and machine manufactured goods were seen as progressive, forward-looking and were aspired to. However, observed today, the houses still present skilled craftsmanship rather than industrialisation. This is in contrast with modern tectonics, where the use of stucco and white cement plaster has been chosen to emphasize the absence of craftsmanship and render the building industrial.[62] In Palestine, a number of differences appear in the aesthetics of the houses in terms of proportion, regularity and flexibility. Although the houses comply with modernity's general approach to problem-solving, many of the differences are related to the issue of functionality. Since functionality dictates how people shape their living style, the distribution of spaces in the houses

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studied demonstrates how they have adopted modernity in a selective manner, and one that better suits their lifestyle. This is based on three major dependencies: *rational, privacy, and contractor.*

Rational dependent

The Fallahin adopted rational solutions/influences at the time to improve their living standards, but their early association with modernity depended upon a short-term rather than a long-term vision. Some design decisions were based on traditional settings and examples from the urban mansions of the wealthy who had previously adapted modernity in Palestine, especially in relation to plan-layout, aesthetics and functional distribution. However, through finding cheaper ways to do things the Fallahin were able to afford it. For instance, the urban mansions were built with rusticated cut stone on all façades, but the Shufat houses used them on the front façades only. The nineteenth-century urban mansions had spacious *liwan* which served as transitional and living spaces that Shufat houses could not afford. Occupants complain that the *Liwan* is small, and has too many doors. Arranging furniture is therefore difficult.

Most houses had two bedrooms as opposed to the one in traditional houses that contained all activities including sleeping of all family members. Yet the typical location of the two bedrooms is irrationally positioned. The bedrooms are not grouped together; one is connected through a corridor to a kitchen and a second opens directly into the *liwan*.

Moreover, the size and rear position of the kitchen correlates with the traditional setting. Cooking-related activities would traditionally take place outdoors, so the actual space needed for a kitchen could not be estimated. This shows that modern standards were not automatically followed.

Privacy dependent

Privacy was constrained by socio-cultural and religious backgrounds allowing rare interaction between men and women. Although modernism called for open-plan solutions, these houses were more privately oriented. None had an open-plan kitchen as they were considered private spaces. The spacious *Salon,* sometimes semi-circular in plan, was projected from the rest of the building to separate the receiving of visitors from the rest of the activities. It was also the most decorated room, with expensive furniture, isolated and remained locked until the arrival of visitors.

The houses were relatively large (average 140 square meters) per unit. However they only had two bedrooms, allowing privacy between parents and children, but not between sons and daughters. Also, the existence of an *Arabic toilet* adjacent to the *Franji* bathroom meant that people held on to the past while seeking modernization. Today, most of the *Arabic toilets* are obsolete and are used as storage spaces.

Contractor dependent

Many residents indicated that the houses were not designed by an architect but constructed by contractors and builders. Some recalled that their parents asked a contractor to copy previous examples in the vicinity. This could be observed as most houses had similar plans and approaches. The changes noted were due to topography and the shape of the land. Furthermore, building with new technologies was dependent

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Fig 6. A typical Baranda covered with tilted iron frames and glass.

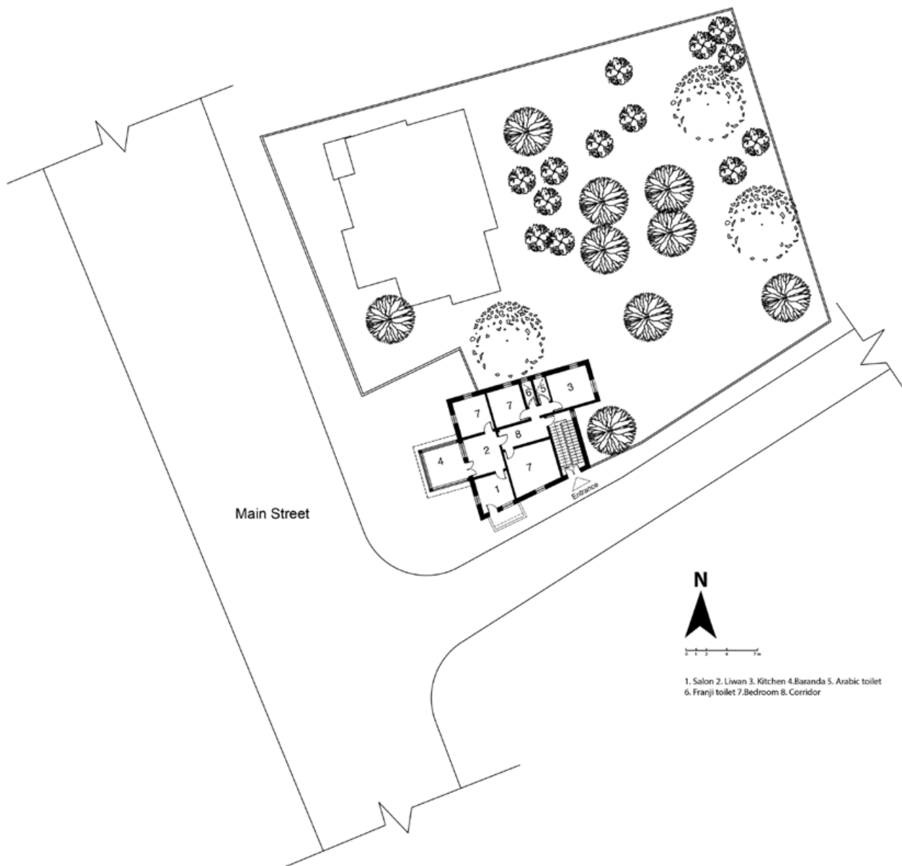

Fig 7. A typical plan with entrance at the rear side.

upon workers' skills and the availability of materials. An example of copying elements without knowing their original purpose is shown in the use of tilted glass frames positioned at an angle as a shading device in balconies facing north and east instead of south west **[6]**. This became a fashionable trend, negating the ideology of providing solutions for the sake of function rather than decoration. Also, the imitation of plan layout regardless of the building's orientation was noted. One of the houses was

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approached from the side as it was located on a junction. The entrance was on the first floor due to topographical issues, creating stores facing the main street. The entrance is at the rear, next to the services into the *Liwan* and then into the balcony. Accordingly, the typical plan remains but with a twisted approach from the most private to the public. The *Salon* still has two doors opening into the balcony and *Liwan* but it cannot be accessed separately by visitors **[7]**.

Conclusion

Modernity under different circumstances could be a *form of creation or destruction*.[63] Under the Jordanian Rule, the rural Fallahin attained the *form of creation* while raising their standards of living by developing modern housing that expressed social cohesion. By renting and sharing modern housing units with affluent urban people, the Fallahin helped to decrease social division, and maintain their traditions rather than being westernized, thus encouraging national discourse.

This was contrary to the previous British rule and the following Israeli period. Modernization under the British produced a new built environment that distinguished between the elites and the Fallahin and created social divisions, thus architecturally expressing fragmentation. Also, during the following Israeli period, modernity was an apparatus of destruction, imprisoning Jerusalemites through enclosures and isolation.

While seeking nationalism in post-colonial periods in the Middle East, governments commissioned architects to develop new large scale building programmes. Architects had the ambition to use modernity while still borrowing from existing traditions. In Jerusalem, a second 'spiritual' capital of Jordan, it could not afford the same projects as in its capital, Amman. This nationalist discourse expressed itself differently in Jerusalem, as a process of reforming social classes, elevating standards, and developing social cohesion. Palestinians therefore had the progressive ability to develop their standards under successive sets of circumstances. While large projects were not attainable, the Fallahin, through individual initiatives, developed their vernacular houses and fulfilled their aspiration of modernity.

The study shows that houses built between 1948 and 1967 in East Jerusalem represent a valuable heritage, which will always be a rich source of inspiration for people in shaping their spaces and lives. Today, preservation efforts focus on historical buildings, especially in the Old City. People and authorities are paying less attention to this later heritage and the mechanisms necessary to preserve it, reflecting a lack of awareness of the importance of this architecture. Giving less attention to modern heritage exposes these houses to the risk of decay and demolition. The houses in Shufat are but a sample of the modern heritage that needs to be explored in Palestine. Preserving this uniqueness and authenticity brings to mind the question of whether the inscribing of the Old City of Jerusalem on the List of World Heritage in Danger could be expanded to include yet another layer of history of the architecture of East Jerusalem.

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