

ARCHITEXT IV

School of Architecture

CREDITS

Editors

Itzik Elhadif

Dr. Edna Langenthal

Board of Editors

Prof. David Leatherbarrow

Prof. Marcel Mendelson

Prof. Beni Reuven Levy

Dr. Ruth Dorot

Dr. Edna Langenthal

Dr. Hernan Casakin

Itzik Elhadif

Copyediting

Meira Hass (Hebrew)

Michaela Ziv (English)

Hanna Simansky (English)

Graphic Design | Keren & Golan Studio

Print | Elinir

Cover Illustration | Anat Eisen

School of Architecture

Ariel University

POB: 3 Ariel

Israel 40700

03-9066242

2014 © All Right Reserved

CONTENTS

FOREWORD / 4

THE HOME

ITZIK ELHADIF

DR.EDNA LANGENTHAL

RETURN TO THE HOUSE OF SARABHAI / 8

PROF. GILEAD DUVSHAN

BLACK HUT—ON THE REDUCTION OF HOMEIN / 18

THE DIGITAL AGE

ELIYAHU KELLER

THE HOME – THE PERCEPTION OF SPACE, TIME / 36

AND IMAGE IN THE MEDIUM OF CINEMA

HADAS SOPHER

HOME IN ‘WADI RUSHMIA’: / 48

SPEAKING, PLANTING, BUILDING

LIAT SAVIN BEN SHOSHAN

THE YEARNING FOR HOME – THE LAND / 70

OF ISRAEL LANDSCAPES IN PAINTING

DR. MICHAL MOSHE

ON THE THRESHOLD OF THE HOME – / 88

ACCORDING TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF

EMMANUEL LEVINAS

DR.EDNA LANGENTHAL

WITH YOUR BACK TO THE SEA / 102

RATIONALE

PROF. BENI REUVEN LEVY

200 MM - KIRYAT GAT 2013 / 106

YECHI AMSILI

"DIALOGUE ON THE JORDAN" - A HOUSE / 110

FOR CULTURAL DISCOURSE

HADAR OSDON

ASYLUM SEEKERS / BORDER DISRUPTION / 114

Yael Brauner

“In the history of the human spirit, I distinguish between epochs of habitation and epochs of homelessness. In the former, man lives in the world as in a house, as in a home. In the latter, man lives in the world as in an open field and at times does not even have four pegs with which to set up a tent.”

Martin Buber

The concept of “home” is a far-reaching metaphor, yet it does not entirely reflect the phenomenon. Like most penetrating universal models, it is a tangible notion for which we hold respect, as well as a universal concept. Perhaps this concurrence is due to the idea of the “home” as the center of existence. The concept of home may conjure thoughts about the most fundamental aspect in the life of man – the overall condition of his existence. If so, the home may also be viewed as an image of a person and an image of the world. It would seem that an examination of the nature of the phenomenon of “man’s existence in the world” may be understood by reflecting on the concept of the home. The question of the concept of the home is an attempt at understanding of our existence as beings involved in the world.

References to the concept of the home are not trivial. In our culture, references to the subject of the home are abundant in poetry and art. It is often considered self-evident. In this issue, we wish to go back and explore the home, with an emphasis on observing the architectural object.

Being home or not being home, at a certain location or within a contained space – appears to be a kind of general phenomenon of time and space in human existence. The home would appear to be not merely the description of a possible location in space (inside a building) and time (feeling), but also a sign or symbol of congruence between concrete existence and abstract human existence. The universal and particular aspects of the idea of the home appear to support our concept of habitation space and the house itself as a phenomenon of our existence in the world and of our existence as beings who are involved and have opinions about the world.

The fourth issue of “Architext” is dedicated to this subject and deals with various aspects of the concept of the home in culture, art and society, as well as the nature of the relationship between mankind and the concepts of “house” and “home”.

As a test case, Gilead Duvshani chose the Sarabhai house in Chandigarh, India. The greatness of its designer, Le Corbusier, lies in his ability to integrate a universal rational concept with the excitement for the local authenticity. Le Corbusier manages to refine this blend to create a geometric, modernistic structure characterized by proper scaling and assimilation in nature.

Eliyahu Keller describes in detail the engineered dwelling space, in which the small, replicated person is incarcerated in a virtual technological enclosure, a product of the informational superhighway being broadcast to him in an infinite series of “real life” images upon screen walls. Keller offers us a way out of this black-box prison in the form of a new architecture that combines accessibility to physical reality with intelligent use of the contemporary virtual cyber world.

Two articles deal with the view of the concept of cinematic-virtual media home space, which actually enables us to choose and display elements of space and time with different and separate meanings, as chosen by the director, whether he is directing fiction or a documentary work.

Liat Sabin examines Amos Gitai’s film, “Wadi” (1981-1991), which is part of a documentary trilogy bearing the same name, describing the residents of Wadi Rushmia in Haifa. The Jewish and Arab residents of this neighborhood are poor refugees without the means to purchase land and houses. Sabin views the status of these refugees as political, perpetuated by the authorities, and calls for an architectural-planning dialog which will take all the residents and the natural data of the area into account.

Hadas Soffer’s article looks at the home as a unit of the perception of time and space as depicted in the movie, “Goodbye Lenin!” (Wolfgang Becker and Bernd Lichtenberg, 2003). Soffer proposes the question of whether the simulacra space components are the result of man-made design or the inevitable result of the culture of consumerism, separation and mass distribution. Do we have the ability to control the results of this historic and social trend?

Michal Moshe traces the “feeling of home” and the Israeli landscape as depicted in Israeli

art throughout the years. In her article, she exposes the inner struggle of Israeli culture between integrating into the Israeli landscape and looking outward, between longing for local origins, or those that are conceived to be, and the aspiration to be part of the nations of the world.

Finally, Edna Langenthal discusses the concept of the home as described in the writings of the French philosopher, Emmanuel Levinas. Langenthal proposes looking at the concept of the home as the ethical basis for the existence of man in the world, offering examples of how doors and windows, as architectural elements, frame and define the habitat and create a separation between the “I” and the “other”, while simultaneously enabling an encounter between them.

As in previous issues, we present a selection of three final projects from the Ariel University School of Architecture. As Prof. Beni R. Levy notes in the rationale of the Final Projects Studio, this year each student was given the opportunity to decide on the subject of his/her research, within the collective framework of focused observation of physical and cultural spaces of the region in which we live, while responding to the topic, “With the Back to the Sea”.

Yehi Amseli examines how climatic, geographic, human and cultural spaces are unified in architecture and urban planning and design, focusing on Kiryat Gat, which is located in an area with a distinct climatic phenomenon, receiving 200 mm. of precipitation.


The other two final projects presented in this issue deal with the concept of “borders” from different points of view. Hadar Osdon examines the understanding of the Jordan River border as a changing intermediate space that opens an opportunity for further dialog between the two sides of the border between Jordan and Israel. Yael Brauner Rosenthal focuses on the encounter between Israel, Egypt and Gaza, and examines how the no man’s land of refugees and refuge seekers can turn into a defined “place” and become identified as “home”.

Pleasant reading!

Editors:

Itzik Elhadif

Dr. Edna Langenthal



RETURN TO THE HOUSE OF SARABHAI

PROF. GILEAD DUVSHANI

H.I.T ISRAEL

One of the key and perhaps even most important challenges that architecture needs to deal with today and in the near future, is that of urbanization. This is the beginning of an era in which most of the world's population will live in cities.

Already today cities are huge metropolises, with abundant spaces, characterized by tremendous potential for growth as well as multi-tiered problems.

"Two hundred and forty-three million Americans are crowded together in the country's urban three percent. Thirty-six million people live in Tokyo and its surroundings, in the most productive metropolitan area in the world. Twelve million people live in the center of Mumbai, and Shanghai is almost as large".¹

How can existing cities be improved? How can new cities be built in order to provide housing for the millions who are homeless?

Chandigarh (the capital city of the two northern Indian provinces of Haryana and Punjab) and the Sarabhai House are test cases for urban planning and modern architecture, as expressed in the Third World. Le Corbusier created them in the heroic years of the international style, as a western product that was transplanted to the Indian subcontinent: a kind of colonialism of the local built-upspace through concepts imported from abroad. The harmony and dissonance between them teach us of the options available to us today, when we try to judge that period through its architecture.

I needed to return to India, to Chandigarh and Ahmedabad, in order to clarify for myself whether Chandigarh is a success story or a failure of modern urbanism; and how Le Corbusier's buildings have withstood the test of time. The last time I had visited Chandigarh was about 30 years ago, when I was still a student. I remember wide roads with multiple

1. Arendt, Hannah. **The Origins of Totalitarianism**, San Diego New York London 1971 [1958], Chapter Five: The Decline of the Nation State and the End of the Rights of Man, pp. 147-167.

lanes that remained empty. Here and there one saw a lone rickshaw driver pedaling along in the scorching heat of the Punjab plains.

In those days it was fashionable to criticize Le Corbusier and modern urbanism. The alleyways of the traditional city sparked romance and yearning, given the standard housing projects which flourished in all the suburbs of western cities. Today I know that the criticism was premature, since the city of Miletus by Hippodamus had already introduced a rational Cartesian geometric system in the fifth century B.C.E. But there, public buildings were anchored in the life and texture of the city, and there was a logical connection between the scale of the individual and that of the built panorama - between the residents and the government buildings, the Temple, the Palace and the market. In modern cities there is a separation between residents and government, between humanity and bureaucracy.

In the old cities the buildings were laid out in accordance with how people and donkeys walked, while in the modern cities, the needs of the car have been considered. For this reason they can extend over large areas, especially vis-à-vis the distribution of functional elements in different areas.

I find that even today, the capital city of Chandigarh is still disconnected from the experience of the urban fabric. It observes from a distance the constantly changing, vibrant city that its citizens are very proud of.

According to the lesson we learned from Greek-Roman urbanism, it appears that the orthogonal system is the most convenient and fastest way to "package" land for a new settlement, especially in the reality of the modern age - and even more so in today's world - when the main problem of contemporary urbanism is how to accommodate millions of homeless people in an acceptable manner over the long term. This issue, combined with the desire to create a comfortable lifestyle, resulted in improved residential conditions, including ventilation and sunlight, maintaining a close connection with nature, and also taking into account the characteristics of the car and its requirements - all of these have led to the division of urban space into different functional areas. Hence, modern city living and the residential blocks that constitute it, are designed to maintain a distance between the buildings. In Be'erSheva, for example, arid desert areas have remained between the buildings, separating the elements of construction. Here in Chandigarh, vegetation fills the entire space, virtually hiding the buildings, emphasizing the connection to nature and creating continuity between all the components of construction. This is an immanent feature of the location which the city of Chandigarh is able to reinforce.

Another phenomenon is the major change that the residential blocks have undergone. Today they lack the order and discipline according to which they were originally planned, thanks to the personal creativity of the tenants, which erupts across the modernist geometrical layer,



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

creating a wealth of textures and shapes, colors and textures, as broad as the imagination and encompassing local tradition, and as an authentic personal expression of each resident and family. Thus, in the process of generating and abolishing order, local architecture is created, combining a sense of freedom within the orderly geometric global framework. The rational together with the emotional, the permanent with the temporary (Figs 6-1).

Traveling along the roads in India reveals the dichotomy between the influences of the West and the essence of the Orient. The need for an organized network of roads for motorized vehicles moving at the speed of the industrial era collides with the deeper significance of the right to personal expression for each of the millions of individuals, human beings and animals.

The route from Shimla (the provincial capital of Himachal Pradesh in northern India) spirals endlessly in dozens of loops down the slopes of the Himalayas. The narrow road is squeezed between cliffs, and presses against the expanse of the space-time continuum until one feels that the road will never reach its end. Also because of this, and because of our driver's (Navran) style of driving - which was reminiscent of a random dance between cars and twisting roads along the steep slopes - the sudden exit to the flatlands is liberating, bringing with it a sense of relief and relaxation.

At the entrance to the city we cross a bridge and immediately find ourselves amongst the flow of masses of humans and vehicles. The empty roads of yesteryear are now full of life, bustling and congested: colorful buses crammed to capacity with people hanging onto the doors, sitting on the roof and enjoying the breeze. Between the cars there are carts loaded with hay, rickshaws, cows, dozens of bicycles and scooters carrying entire families: the father is driving, holding onto a child perched between his legs, behind him sits another child clinging to his back and behind the child - the mother, wearing a colorful sari that flutters around her. She sits side-saddle, with a baby in her arms.

All of this mixed crowd, flowing along swiftly with out any apparent order or discipline, horns blaring, not out of any sense of anger or impatience, but rather as part of a daily, habitual and even cheerful celebration. The honking of horns creates a separate rhythm, which adds to that of the movement of pedestrians and vehicles, interwoven with energies flowing out of the tumult. The entire area shakes and vibrates with pulses that match the monotonous head movement of our driver Navran, swaying to the right and the left, maneuvering the old Ambassador car easily and quickly into the courtyard of Sarabhai House.

The searing heat wraps itself around you. This heat has the specific gravity of a solid material, weighing down on your head and your body, burning you all over. Walking barefoot on the cobblestones is an impossible task. Space stands still. Just as in the art of cinematography, you can shoot an object from one perspective and over time, and show the film in such a way that the reality, which takes place over several hours or days, occurs before our eyes



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6

Figures 1-6: Residential buildings, Chandigarh

for a few minutes or seconds; thus, like a furnace, compressing the heat of thoughts into one point in time, and focusing them in search of bodily relief in a shaded place, in order to preserve the ability to function, and a certain degree of clarity.

As with the city, so it is with the house that we have come to see, the Sarabhai House, immersed in evergreen nature, intense and exotic, rich with hues and sub-hues of green, orange and gold. Plenty of trees and large areas of verdant flora fill every corner. The composition of this green landscape is complemented with ferns and shrubs, breaking out into all directions and covering it all, whether natural or built. Fragrances and sounds of the tropical forest waft into the air, washed by the last rainfall and dripping with dew-drops (Fig. 7).

The house was designed by Le Corbusier in the early 1950s, soon after India gained independence from Britain, after its many long years of government. The modernist and rational house is set out as a logical and orderly structure. Its design took into consideration the local climate in order to allow the most possible sunlight and air to enter from the outside. The parallel walls are built in the direction of the air flow, and create protection and shading. The spaces between the walls open from every side towards the green expanse, while the openings form a kind of picture frame from which the local landscape is reflected. The walls project beyond the line of the windows of the building shell, and look like tree trunks, another kind of continuity of nature.

The precise geometry, order and discipline of the walls are in contrast with the untamed nature, bold and brazen, which has always prevailed here, and is now only framed by the building. Here the determinism, the tidiness and the organization of Europe are expressed, versus the infinite repetition of the Indian nature.

Indian tradition is also evident in the geometric order, in the forms of modular mandalas, the architecture of temples, or in the built-up fabric of the city of Jaipur, for example. However here, at Sarabhai House, all of the geometric order crumbles into the green jungle and the scorching heat. The composition of parallel walls disintegrates when it comes into contact with nature, and invites the energies flowing from the outside into the interior spaces; and these, in turn, continue to flow in the corridors between the entrance and the living space, to the work area and the servants' quarters. Local stone flooring from Madras, from which the reddish brick walls grow upwards; exposed concrete beams with moderate vaults ("Catalan") vaults from clay bricks, these create the perfection that radiates simplicity, humility and the human scale (Fig. 8).

Nature breaks through from all sides, invading, crossing the space and laying claim to the first right in this place. The architectural journey in the logical structures becomes a free journey, following the line of the land, as part of the surroundings, passing from the outside in and from the inside out, and then onwards and upwards, to roofs covered with thick grass



Figure 7:
Sarabhai House, from the outside



Figure 8:
Sarabhai House, interior

and row upon row of shrubs that grow directly from the roof, and dozens of plants scattered everywhere. The roof has become another plot of land continuing all around, and the green embraces everything, passing over the house and inside it. An irrigation canal made from rough concrete passes over the roof, collecting the monsoon rainwater, descending like a gutter, resembling a water slide, straight from the roof to a pool of water shaped like a painter's palette, refreshing and blowing life into the green and built-up landscape (Fig. 9). Inside, the furniture is heavy, and it sinks with fatigue. I presume that it was placed like that, where it has remained ever since the house was built, without anything being moved or changed. Rickety armchairs and sofas, simple wooden beds like those often seen at the sides of the roads in India. They are also to be found here, in the wealthy home. Everything smells old, used, human.

After the visit to Sarabhai House we have arrived at Navran's modest apartment, and we are seated around a low table to taste the finest delicacies of local Indian cuisine. Navran is sitting at the head of the table, on a box covered with an embroidered carpet, decorated with stories of mythology and gods. The children are quiet in the other room, the wife is bustling between the kitchen and the table.

We've come a long way together, Navran and I, in recent days and now he says: "Now I can trust you, show you my secret treasure". From the bottom of the box on which he sits, he takes an old tin box, like those candy boxes grandmother used to keep on the top shelf of the kitchen, out of the reach of the grandchildren.

The contents of the box is spilling onto the table, revealing a collection of used items, key



Figure 9:
Sarabhai House, general

chains, old coins, a whistle, idols of gods, badges of merit - probably from the army, different colored pins, a treasure of gadgets; an inventory of fantastic hidden narratives which this large man with the countenance of a primordial chieftain had collected over the years. In this box was the accumulation of an entire world, the inner world of a child, rich in legends and images, yet existing simultaneously, side-by-side, with the gravity, responsibility and discipline of a man and a father, who is mindful of his family's tradition. This contradiction, between the supreme and the simple, between order and discipline versus fairy tales and images, expresses India to a great degree. This is what Le Corbusier did so well to India. This is, perhaps, the essence of the difference between India and the Western world.

Ezriel Carlebach puts it wonderfully in his book "INDIA, Journal of a Visit":

"Things have not changed with the modern separation between state and religion. Since even this struggle does not come except to match the country with the new faith, the faith of modernism. And even a place where all of the priests have been deposed, they were not eliminated except by the priests of the new faith, who sought to hold onto it by usurping the government. Every upheaval –the priest and king frequently become chaotic. Every dictator is partially a Pope, and every Pope is partially a dictator. All of the rulers serve an ideal, and therefore the nations must serve them both.

"Apart from one single exception - India. She herself does not understand what is obvious to the rest of the world. That it is possible to control the souls of the people".²

Therefore, hand-in-hand with the modernist schemes, there is room for personal expression in India; there is a space which is alive and which respects the legends and the stories of the spiritual world and which is not controlled by 'technocracy', the Golden Calf of modern times.

Le Corbusier's perception is recognizable in the buildings he designed:

The National Assembly building in Chandigarh (fig. 10), where the plenary auditorium is surrounded with spaces housing columns and ramps; it is a home for the sages in the thick of the forest, the habitat of Buddha, with celestial light spilling all around between the treetops.

The Supreme Court building (fig 11), where the giant concrete 'sunshade' on the roof protects the courtrooms, in the same way that roof of the Diwan-i-Am – the Hall of Audience (fig. 12) functioned; it was here that the Mughal Emperor sat, listening to the complaints of his citizens and judging the people, while the Ruler was protected by a roof that floats



Figure 10:
National Assembly Building,
interior, Chandigarh



Figure 11:
The Supreme Court House, Chandigarh



Figure 12:
Diwan-i-Am, the Red Fort, Delhi

2. Ezriel Carlebach, "INDIA, Journal of a Visit", Maariv Press, 1986, p. 211

overhead on columns, leaving the front of the building open for ventilation, under the formidable blazing sun.

The Mill Owner's Association building creates a link between the city and the river. There is no better way to explain the concepts - architectural medium, architectural journey, architectural transparency as Colin Rowe had intended - than this magical architectural journey from construction into nature, starting at the mill owner's house.

All these buildings have parallel and multi-tier narratives. The hard-to-explain and somewhat Western seriousness of the government, with the hidden inner world of the subcontinent; with the legends that they know how to recount, with provision for personal expression; this is architecture which knows how to formulate a story; this is architecture at its best, the creation of synthesis, of a new statement to the world, with continuity and connection to the past, to the narrativeness and the internalism of place.

The return to Sarabhai sheds new light on the work of Le Corbusier, the multi-diversity and multi-layers of such meaningful work. I recognize his ability to weave together the effects and the designs, the past and the present, into a narrative statement, with people always at the center. The aspiration is to create locations and opportunities for society to prosper and develop, using material to create Utopia.

Another lesson - in addition to that of the underlying narrative inherent in Le Corbusier's buildings - is the urban lesson of Chandigarh: you can plan a new city, with basic orderly arrays of prototypic geometric networks of residential structures similar to that in Chandigarh, but focus must be placed primarily on the functions within the space, and integrating the textures of residential buildings with those of public buildings. Open public spaces should be characterized through a hierarchical diversity, from the more public through to the private. In Chandigarh, the central square is much larger than necessary, however, there is no hierarchy of public space.

Chandigarh has wonderful buildings, although the urban fabric is still lacking; but the pace of change, the growth of the population, and the unique character of India will eventually create a coherent "unity".

Sarabhai House can serve as a test case for synthesis between the East and the West, between the rational modernist concept and reference to the essence of location; it signifies Le Corbusier's ability to create a place which is modernism and humanity at its best.

The West, which advances with the development of science and industry, also imposes architectural perceptions with the colonialism. The system of Chandigarh, like that of Sarabhai House, presents a rational geometric approach to the order of the built environment; in both places, local culture and nature combined with the imported systems

produce a joint creation. Indeed, Sarabhai House is a private home, with very few problems compared with those of the provincial capital city of Chandigarh; however, it may be precisely because of this that it is much more impressive when compared with the multiple problems of Chandigarh which are yet to be resolved, originating in the perceptions of Western design of the international style.

Breaking down functional components and isolating them in the space, and especially the lack of hierarchy between outdoor spaces designated for pedestrians, the roads and the squares, still breaking apart the urban space of the city, unlike the traditional Indian city, which is a fabric of streets and pedestrian plazas on a human scale.



BLACK HUT—ON THE REDUCTION OF HOME IN THE DIGITAL AGE

ELIYAHU KELLER

MASTER OF DESIGN STUDIES

HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF DESIGN

Instantaneous Architecture

“Confronted with massive technological change, a common temptation is to focus on the present only, as if what is happening was without roots in the past.”¹

With these words French Architect and Theorist Antoine Picon begins his recently published book, "Digital Culture in Architecture". This quote, though seemingly straight forward, opens a window into Picon's wide-ranging teachings. In the book Picon reviews the sources of digital culture and the influence of this culture on contemporary architecture. The above-quoted sentence encompasses not only Picon's basic assumption, but also an accurate description of one of the characteristics of contemporary culture, which is affected so greatly by the many possibilities the digital world offers. The temptation, Picon notes, to focus on the here and now, the instant and the visible, is one of the prominent characteristics of our modern-day culture. This temptation and the reaction to it, are also expressed in architecture; in understanding primordial and ancient concepts; and in its response to all kinds of cultural trends and technological developments.

Instant culture, represented by the new sources of information we are exposed to (Google, Wikipedia), by the non-committal relationships that we create with the tools at our disposal (Facebook, Twitter, Google+) and by the double and imaginary life we conduct in front of computer screens (Second Life, World of Warcraft), is expressed also in the architecture that this period and its representatives produce. One of the immediate influences of culture is the flattening of primordial concepts, and their visual and two-dimensional graphic

1. Picon, Antoine. **Digital Culture in Architecture**. Basel, Birkhauser, 2010.

2. "The electronic paradigm directs a powerful challenge to architecture because it defines reality in terms of media and simulation; it values appearance over existence; what can be seen over what is. Not the seen as we formerly knew it, but rather a seeing that can no longer interpret. Media introduce fundamental ambiguities into how and what we see". **Eisenman, Peter, Visions Unfolding – Architecture in the Age of Electronic Media**, Domus, 1992.

representation. This flattening is especially evident in the architecture of the mid-20th century onwards. In the words of American Architect Peter Eisenman (1932- present) who, over two decades ago claimed that we live in a world where what is considered is that which appears, and not what really exists². It would therefore be proper to study this phenomenon in-depth and from the broad historical outlook offered by Picon, to explore one of the ancient concepts of human and architectural culture, the concept and the perception of “home”. From an examination of this primordial concept, we can pinpoint the inevitable change in perception, and draw a broad conclusion about the conceptual changes that architecture has experienced in the present era.

However - and contrary to the teachings of Picon -we will commence by describing the contemporary rather than the historical living space, and this so that we may first look at the point where we are now or, how should we say it? - the horizon which we are facing. Before us a sharply critical description of living space, as presented in another visual, common and relevant discipline which also illustrates, with its power and its prevalence, the spatial and perceptual transformation of the concept “home” as an existential phenomenon in the current era – the television. The second chapter of British drama series “Black Mirror”, “Fifteen Million Merits”, opens with a troubling and foreboding description of a person in an unknown future. Bing, the hero of the episode, whose name deliberately resonates in our minds like the ringtone of a text message alert, wakes up in his tiny room, surrounded by four screens that serve as walls. The screens project an almost childlike description of rural scenery; a hut and a rooster crowing, which plays the role of an alarm clock. Bing's life is monotonous, to say the least. It consists of several repetitive every day activities: waking up at a particular time, walking into one of the rooms in the huge complex where he lives, that we learn about later in the episode, and riding on an exercise bike while watching TV for most of the day. Bing's long ride on the bicycle serves two purposes: the first, which is the social objective, is to create energy for the world, since - due to the lack of resources -the task has fallen to most human beings to produce energy for their continued existence. The second, however, is a personal objective. Accumulating energy gives Bing points or ‘merits’, which he can use to buy food and hygiene products, as well as the possibility of participating in a talent competition. This competition can afford him the right to star in a TV program that will be projected on that same screen in front of him, and in front of his friends, for all the many hours when they are cycling. We will not linger on a description of the whole episode because that is not the purpose. Nonetheless, it is worthwhile dwelling on the description of Bing's living space, and the description of the objective before him, since these openly and decisively criticize the impact of the digital age on personal and private space.



Figure 1:
“Black Mirror” – second episode

Bing wakes up in a room that can be described simply as “one square meter”. There is no other object in the room except for his bed, a hidden locker which contains his toothbrush, and the four screens that surround it. These screens actually serve as the only means of entertainment in the space that he lives in, and through them he establishes a unique connection with the outside world, if you can call it that. He watches different programs that are projected onto the walls in his room, and plays computer games with virtual tools that mimic the movements of his body. Human interaction does not exist within the walls of his room, although there is a bike in the room, but even there, most of it is done in front of the screen. Dialogue is not a common form of communication in the world he lives in, and is used by him and his friends in the cycleroom only out of necessity, or out of the desire to harm the other figures residing in the same world. Figures that represent the non-productive individuals; that is, those who did not merit riding on a bike to benefit mankind by creating energy, and they, in fact, concern themselves only with the maintenance and cleaning of the huge complex.

In the mixture of seemingly infinite, but in actuality, limited options which Bing sees before his eyes on the television screen, one stands out in particular, and is one in which he creates for himself a kind of digital animation character, which is supposed to represent him in the virtual space that appears on the screen. This character, like the other representations that appear on the various screens, whether in his room or in the TV room in which he rides, does not pretend to look real. The same goes for the landscape on the screens when he wakes up, and also the image of the rooster, which looks as if it was pulled out of a children's book

or one of Disney's latest computer-animated films. Furthermore, both real characters and narratives that appear in programs that he watches are ridiculously exaggerated. Starting with pornographic programs, through exaggerated reality in the style of 'American Idol' and vulgar 'skits'. All of these create for Bing the only contact with the outside world, an unrealistic world, extroverted and excessive, and it is uncertain where this is, since Bing and his colleagues do not leave the complex where they spend their days. That is to say, essentially Bing has only one purpose: to change from a real person who lives in the complex, as alienated as he might be, into a figure on the screen, whose life is not just an example and a model, ostensibly, for the other riders, but most likely, in his mind's eye, infinitely more complex and happy than the monotonous life he leads. The virtual figure that he creates for himself on screen is just one phase in the process of becoming an absolute representation in a deviated and extroverted life screened on television, in front of those who were previously his cycling colleagues. All of his desires, all of his efforts are directed wholeheartedly towards this goal; for the sake of leaving the interior space, the functionality, where he lives, in favor of an apparently outdoor space which the screen is displaying to him, ostensibly free –this appears to arouse his inspiration.

If so, what can be learned from the horrific and terrifying description of the futuristic life that supposedly awaits us? Is the description presented to us utopian or dystopian? It seems that the answer is clear and the intention is even more obvious, but how distant is this description of the productive mega-structure imprisoned within itself and facing only inwards, from those huge and repetitive office towers appearing before our eyes in available space? And how are these towers essentially different from the residential utopian vision of the Swiss architect Le Corbusier (Le Corbusier, 1887-1965), as presented in the work "La Ville Radieuse" which he designed and planned almost a century ago? Is there a fundamental difference today between the repetitive office spaces and the replicated apartments that we live in, in a world where even the boundaries between the time we spend at work and our leisure life are also blurred? How are the spaces where we spend our time different from that Corbusian field of autistic and identical towers, surrounded by an un-afflicted utopian outdoors, which has a negligible impact on the lives of the residents, who inhabit the living tree-trunks scattered across and along the Cartesian grid? An outdoors which, equally, might exist outside the residence of our hero, as described above.

Such descriptions, as presented in "Black Mirror" are not new. Polish writer Stanislaw Lem (1921-2006) more than half a century ago, described in his book "The Futurological



Figure 2:
La Ville Radieuse, Corbusier, 1924

Congress", a similarly extreme essentially virtual, utopian reality. The "Matrix" series of films became even more extreme than these descriptions and, in fact, presented a situation where humanity is in a kind of digital coma, which serves as a basis for the existence of a shared virtual consciousness within a software system. However, something in the description presented in "Black Mirror" is more disturbing and stimulating still. In contrast with the description in the "Matrix" films which people imagine to be the perfect world, and live their lives, ostensibly as we live ours, in a virtual environment – the descriptions in the series do not purport to be true. On the contrary, the descriptions are vulgar, ridiculous and excessive. So excessive that the figures become used to them. If we stop for a moment and wonder about the nature of our own lives, have we not become used to disturbing and extreme scenes? Are we not indifferent to displays of abuse and torture, disaster or catastrophe appearing before our eyes on TV screens, on our cellular phones or on the computer? Have we not become consumers of perverted and extreme information? What can be learned from this about the role of architecture, and the changes it must cope with in the midst of the digital age? Firstly, we must profoundly comprehend the conceptual and existential changes brought about by the Internet revolution, the digital media and the screens. We must digress beyond the immediacy that characterizes our era,

and try to understand the real phenomenon concealed behind the black screen and the way it has put down roots in our lives. At this point we must make an initial conceptual distinction between the appearance of the screen in our lives and the phenomenon, which exists today by means of the screen, and is expressed by the flattening of reality, the disappearance of the need for human intervention and the elimination of the hierarchy of values and traditions. In other words, in contrast with the physical appearance of television screens in our homes, which occurred for the first time in the late 1940s, after World War II, the phenomenon of the screen reflects a much more complex situation. The physical screen, which started its life in the living room and then progressed to the other rooms in the house, has brought about a certain change in human behavior within the physical space of the house, and the gathering within this space - but it is not the direct cause of the flattening trends and the instantaneousness which Picon speaks of. The phenomenon evolving before our eyes depends, however, on electronic devices of one kind or another: TV, computer screen or smartphone; but its true meaning is reflected in the content that these devices transmit, in the options that this content creates and in the social interactions that the devices enable. Development of the screens and the digital media and, moreover, the unlimited options that this media allows, create and perpetuate the superficial existence that Eisenman described in regard to electronic communication³. In fact, using the phone or computer screen embodies an extreme phenomenon, which gradually eliminates the space. The screen produces the illusion of depth, when it presents before us endless virtual expanses of time, information and space. However, due to the fact that these spaces are not spaces at all, but their superficial representations, the physical space behind these screens is actually vanishing. Not surprising, then, the fact that we describe how we use the screens and the 'spaces' inside them, as "surfing", "searching" and "finding", clearly, physically, metaphorically⁴. The reality, however, is entirely different. The screen produces relationships of single values, or perhaps even devoid of values, in which human intervention and human interpretation are not directly required. Moreover, as the reason for this phenomenon, and as a consequence thereof, the physical location of the subject in front of the screen becomes meaningless.

3. In his article Eisenman describes the problematics in the phenomenon of the fax and electronic reproduction, saying: "With the fax the subject is no longer called to interpret, since reproduction is done without control or direction whatsoever. The fax also challenges the concept of originality. Whereas during photography the original copy maintains its unique dignity and value, during transmission the original maintains its form, although not its unique value, because it is not actually transmitted". *ibid*

4. Kimchi, *Eran The Internet / What is New in Novelty*, Resling, 2012

It seems that the description presented to us in the TV series "Black Mirror" is Utopia come true, and its realization revealed its imminent destruction. According to the narrative above, the culture of productivity, so highly revered at the end of the industrial revolution, changed its form in the second industrial revolution and is becoming a prison. Domestic utopian⁵ space collapsed in on itself, with the ratio always being inwards, without an exterior. Has that not turned the home and the living space into an antithesis of existence? Is the home today still the primordial place from which a person formulates his attitude towards the world, and through it receives the world's attitude towards him? Moreover, does this phenomenon of a domestic space that collapsed inwards not directly reflect the virtual internal spaces that radiate from the spaceless and reduced screens, as chosen by Anthony Vidler (1941- present) who defines them, saying:

"Between contemporary virtual space and modernist space there lies a confusion, created by the auto-generative nature of the computer program, and its real blindness to the viewer's presence. In this sense, the screen is not a picture, and certainly not a surrogate window, but rather an ambiguous and unfixed location for a subject"⁶.

The inability to be located drags one almost directly to the inability to create an association or an intervention at any level in reality, which is itself not limited to physical means, and presents situations that are entirely lacking in depth. This reality, as we shall see later on, is one of the decisive problems architecture must deal with in our time, as it completely undermines the concept of the home, which basically is a state of being located, creating a relationship with others, and human intervention.

Intricate network / simple space

French philosopher Paul Virilio (1931-present) has, for more than half a century, been referring in his writings to the immediate and perceptual effects of technological progress on architecture and its perception. The historical approach about which Picon writes today appears in Virilio's writings, both the early and the late. His writing expresses

5. The term "utopia" was coined by the English philosopher Sir Thomas More, in his book dated 1516 of the same name. The term came to describe a society or a group with ideal and perfect values. In this context, the utopian domestic space - created by Le Corbusier in "The Radiant City" - is a projection of the society for which the house was designed, as part of Le Corbusier's modernist vision - a productive, industrial and utilitarian society that highly prizes the values of mechanization and efficiency.

6. Vidler, Anthony, *Warped Space – Art, Architecture and Anxiety in Modern Culture*, MIT Press, 2001.

autobiographical and personal observation on the one hand (Virilio was raised in a French town that was heavily bombed by the German army during World War II), and the historiosophic⁷ perception on the other. In one of his most famous works, 'The Critical Space', Virilio specifies concepts, environments and seemingly primeval spaces, and demonstrates how the technological changes express themselves in the change in the perception of these concepts and spaces. His descriptions focus on spaces such as airports, streets and cities, but in our context it is proper to focus on the perception of the home and the dwelling space. Here, too, it is necessary to differentiate between the familiar physical terminology, and the phenomenon behind it. Due to the limitations of the Hebrew language, the word 'bayit' has several meanings, and the reader needs to deal with the confusion of terms. Therefore, we shall separate between the physical condition of the 'house' and the conceptual phenomenon behind the physical phenomenon, which is 'home'. Regarding the physical house there is need to be too long-winded, but on 'home' (domesticity) and the change in the perception of this phenomenon it is worthwhile expanding; because, with the advent of screen and digital media in our lives, it seems that the physical term 'house' has hardly changed: however, our understanding and our perception of domesticity has changed significantly. Virilio's words in this context illustrate how the frequent use of the shiny screen leads to the flattening, disappearance and transparency of physical space, which is perceived by us, in general, and of the space of the home in particular: "If space is what prevents everyone from being in one place, then the brief seclusion leads everything, absolutely everything, to that same place, to that same place that has no place".⁸

This isolation opposite the screen reduces the space drastically by concealing distances, erasing borders and eliminating any form of existence of the other, or of external reality. The external itself folds inwards and becomes the sequence of events that appear in time, depending on the speed at which we choose to pass them, or should we say, depending on the internet bandwidth which we paid for. Reducing the grandiose space which Virilio speaks of, as a universal phenomenon, also appears in the private and not necessarily in the public spaces, which apparently proceed at tremendous speed.

"The instantaneousness of existence leads to a utopia of the single interface. After the distances of space and time, the distance of speed annihilates the concept of physical dimension. The speed, in one instance, becomes renewed to primordial size, beyond any degree of time or place. This wasteland is similar in practice to the momentary inertia of the surroundings. The old fashioned urban blocs disappearing in a huge acceleration of the media in order to give birth to a new kind of centrality: the centralization of a habitat

without a home, in which the limits of ownership, the definitions, and the boundaries no longer derive from the constant physical barrier".⁹

With these words Virilio actually connects the instantaneousness that Picon speaks of with disappearance, or perhaps the clear perceptual change of the concept of the home, which, in his opinion, is connected with concepts such as ownership, borders and relationship. Virilio goes on to describe how contemporary technological culture is dependent on speed and, as such, is in fact a time-dependent culture. Architecture, in comparison, despite the theoretical occupation in the dimension of time, and the practical and inevitable conflict with the pragmatic appearance of this concept, is a discipline that belongs to the world which, according to Virilio's concept, is disappearing. A world in which physical size and the concept of space are the main determinants. Architecture, in a world dominated by the dimension of time and speed, is, therefore, quickly becoming irrelevant: "Is urban architecture going to become outdated technology, as happened with the spread of agriculture?"¹⁰

In one of his latest works, Virilio expands his thoughts on this subject. Now, not only time and speed dictate and reduce the perception of space, but the information itself, which - with the help of computer and phone screens - appears everywhere and creates for us life under a regime of fear:

"We live under the administration of fear: fear has become our environment, our daily landscape. There were times when wars, famines and plagues were local and limited to a specific time frame. Today, it is the world itself which is limited, saturated and distorted; the world itself which holds us, and shackles us with a sense of claustrophobic anxiety. Crises in the capital market, random terrorist attacks, lightning epidemics, professional suicides... fear has become the world in which we live".¹¹

7. Historiosophy, unlike history, does not intend to provide as accurate a description as possible of historical processes, but rather deals with the understanding and critical observation of these processes as part of a broad scope of events with overall significance..

8. Paul Virilio, **The Critical Space**, Resling 2006.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

11. Virilio, Paul, **The Administration of Fear**, MIT Press, 2012.



Figure 3:
The Attack on September 11, 2001

Fear has become the environment, claims Virilio. The borders were breached, distances were erased and now the whole world is reduced to the screen, which presents us with those natural disasters, pandemics, economic crises and wars. We experience a huge number of incomprehensible, global and fateful events, but they are all condensed to a caption and an image on a computer screen. This opinion of Virilio's is not new for anyone who is familiar with his writings. For half a century, Virilio has been writing about the devastating effects of technological developments on human spatial perception. Starting with the strategic bombing he experienced as a child during World War II, which made the environment dynamic and frenetic, according to him, ending with electronic scanning in airport which, in his opinion, has forever and completely altered the experience of entering a city. Virilio presents us with a disturbing picture of life in a world of technological determinism and again discusses the concept of speed. Speed, in his opinion, has increased drastically in today's world, and alters both the spatial and the urban experience.

Nonetheless it is important to note that Virilio's concept, despite its relevance to our own time, is the self-evident continuation of former intellectual thoughts which first appeared as a reaction to the Industrial Revolution, and led during the early 20th century to an architectural and cultural concept expressed in the design and construction of the pseudo- and the super-urban spaces in which we now live. Dutch historian Johan Huizinga, in his 1926 book, "Life and Thought in America"¹², describes his impressions from an extended visit to the United States during that period. From these impressions he argues emphatically

that "the big city is no longer a place to live. It has become a mechanism, a transport machine. It has made everything mobile", whereas Le Corbusier, one of the leaders of this perception, summarizes it with his famous saying, "The house is a machine for living in".¹³ The Industrial Revolution brought with it the message of the machine and the values of industrialization, efficiency and standardization; thus, a hundred years after its inception, the revolution served as a tool in the hands of modernist architecture, which upheld these values and applied them to urban living spaces, both public and private, all over the Western world, and its affiliates around the world, until now.

Today, after a century of modernism, post-modernism, de-constructivism, new-urbanism and various other architectural theories, it appears that Le Corbusier's rational, mechanical, analytical and universal perception still prevails. When we design and create residential buildings, we still consider quantitative values such as use, cost and efficiency, and not primal or fundamental values, such as experience. It seems that the utopian vision of Le Corbusier found its realization in Western cities during the late 20th and early 21st centuries, and utopia as it is defined are visions that are not supposed to materialize...

For a moment we will return to Virilio and Huizinga. If the city Huizinga was talking about becomes a "mechanism" and "mobile" then the city, or should we call it the 'urban space' of today, becomes computerized and so fast that it is almost transparent. Environment, therefore, is changing. However, it seems that residential spaces, which already changed a century ago, are stuck in a kind of modernist fixation, sometimes enveloped more or less attractively. How, then, can it be proven that the home has not changed? Or rather, the concept of the "home" and its existence, according to our perception, are not changing?

In practice, the screens that feed us the current information - or impose fear on us according to Virilio - are everywhere. They are not limited to our workplaces or shopping centers. Apart from the number of computers that are increasing constantly in every home, each of us carries in his pocket a mobile screen, a smart phone, ensuring that we are always connected, always aware and, according to Virilio's perception, always apprehensive. Beyond the fact that spatial consciousness is reduced to a screen, and that our relationship with what is outside of us is distorted and minimized into a text message, the homespace, which was always a protected and harmonious space to which a person returns, is becoming one more in a succession of useful spaces, the aim and purpose of which is to constantly feed us with information. The house, in this context, is not fundamentally different from the office, the mall or the street, because, in fact, from an extreme viewpoint, all of these have

12. Huizinga, Johan, **Life and Thought in America**, Resling, 2005, Translation: Carla Epstein

13. Le Corbusier, **Toward a New Architecture**, Babel, 2007, translation: Ido Bassok

become insignificant. If so, our perception of the primordial domestic space is changing in an unprecedented manner, but the physical space itself is not reacting.

According to French philosopher Jean Paul Sartre, (1905 – 1980), our view is, essentially, the presence of another and, as a result of that, of our personal presence¹⁴, currently directed toward the screen and toward the representation of the world that is projected upon it; and in that same black space, which seemingly creates infinite possibilities of countless connections with other entities around the globe, we are reflected, and thus recognition of the other and the surroundings are eliminated. All around us, however, the world continues to move and change without our being aware of it: once an avenue, the second time an office floor, the third time a bedroom.

The magic of the screen can be attributed, of course, to the wonders of technology and the magical possibilities it gives rise to, but this would diminish the importance of the cultural and historical processes that led to this situation. The reduction of the home and the dwelling space began, in fact, long before the appearance of the screen in every home, but it appears, nowadays, to have reached an apex. The process which supposedly began with Le Corbusier, originated during prior historical processes. Picon, who felt the need to embrace and understand the transformations of the present by means of historiographical observation, argues in his book that the digital revolution and its impact on architecture originate from the second industrial revolution, or the "information revolution" as he calls it, which has created, as a consequence of technological and social processes, the knowledge society - a society that consumes, organizes and unifies knowledge and information, ostensibly for cultural reasons. Other concepts indicate that actually this process started during the scientific revolution of the 16th and 17th centuries, claiming that the seed has been sown that became the sciences, the arts, including architecture into disciplines that deal with the quantitative and the measurable, not the substance, the divine and the abstract. The understanding of these processes is vitally important, but for the purpose of this discussion we shall not delve too much into the historical nuances. However, it should be noted that the degradation of space, or the gradual reduction in our perception and our understanding of space is a historical process, that has been growing gradually over a period of at least four hundred years.

14. Jean Paul Sartre, "The Look", Resling 2007, Translation: Avner Lahav

15. Factory Fifteen (Factoryfifteen.com): a British animation and film studio, that includes architects, engineers, filmmakers, photographers and animators. Besides engaging in architectural imaging, members of the studio produce conceptual architectural images and videos, both utopian and non-utopian, that illustrate the effects of modernization on space. In this respect it is worth noting the following projects: Megalomania, The Golden Age, and Royal Reformation.

Reduction in the situation of the home is expressed, inter alia, in its planning and in the architectural expressions that gained acclaim over the years. Starting from the social conditions that find expression in the "Ville Radieuse" and Le Corbusier's "Domino house", through the 'glass houses' of American Architect Philip Johnson, 1906-2005, who tries desperately to make the house utopian and non-material in its design, in the environmental situation in which it stands, through examples such as the Mobius House of the Dutch UN Studio, which attempts, by means of the verbal and graphical interpretation of a mathematical term, to produce a seemingly individual geometric condition of fluid surroundings. What can be said, then, about the situation presented to us in "Black Mirror", or in the examples of "theoretical" and other non-realisms, such as those of the Factory Fifteen simulations studio?¹⁵ How far removed is this seemingly extreme situation from the future that awaits us, a future in which the domestic space is reduced not only physically but cognitively, into an image on a screen, through which all of our connections with the external and the internal world are made? Moreover, how far is this from the reality in which we live today? Is Vidler's statement regarding our inability to locate ourselves vis-à-vis the screen less relevant and less meaningful today than it was a decade ago, when it was said? How, then, can we rethink the concept of the "home" in reality in which the very act of being located is itself in doubt? How can a person determine his place in the world, in which his home from primeval times, and even the concept of the "location" itself becomes fluid, unstable and irrelevant?



Figure 4:
Mobius House, UNStudio, Netherlands, 1998

Smart Home

The problematic state in which contemporary architecture finds itself requires innovative and radical thinking. Indeed, in the past there have been attempts to deal with the concept of “home” in shapes which today may seem to us almost childish. The attempt by American Architect Peter Eisenman in his famous House VI, where there is a reverse staircase standing in the middle of the dining table, is a graphic attempt, indeed, but is significant in the architectural historiography of the late 20th century, to create a kind of disharmonious situation in a living environment. This thought is not so trivial, and it is filled with vital comprehension of the cultural condition that encompasses us in this era. Understanding that the state of the house we are discussing has changed and we, as architects and cultured individuals must re-establish this situation and turn it into a challenging and awakening situation, which rouses us from the digital slumber into which we have been drawn. The primordial perception of the concept of home must change, in view of the elimination of personal and physical boundaries. In a world where, actually, the concept of privacy no longer exists (it is easy to see, from the lack of cultural relevance of concepts such as censorship in the era of social networking), the home must fulfill a series of values and situations that are different and challenging. Today, our private lives, or rather the life that we choose to present, is exposed to anyone on social networking sites. However, this choice also soon becomes an illusion, and the pattern of exposure of our leisure culture becomes almost obsessive, and contains our private lives within it: the process of bringing up our children, what we eat for dinner and, of course, the state of our inter-personal relationships. Is the time far off when we’ll also be bringing our Facebook page into our bedroom? Have we not done that already?

Contrary to Virilio’s somewhat apocalyptic observation, Picon examines the digital upheaval with a critical, yet fundamentally positive and adoptive approach. He does not claim that the physical space is disappearing from our lives and that it is in danger of extinction. In fact, he even makes a point of stating that this is not the case. However, Picon wishes to deal with the cultural changes, which the revolution and the digital culture have brought us, and to discover the role of architecture in this new kind of cultural situation.

Reducing the space until it disappears, the apparently eternal need for public spaces and the re-definition of social relationships as being independent of physical interaction—all these and more are used by Picon as starting points for dealing with innovative and practical ideas in today’s architecture. In his book, Picon quotes Japanese Architect Toyo Ito, on the modern need for two bodies - the physical body, which is linked to the world through a system of circulating fluids; and the virtual body, linked to the world through a system

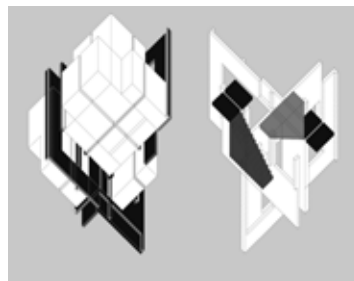


Figure 5:
House VI, Peter Eisenman, Connecticut, 1975

which circulates electrons. According to Picon, this reality, which Ito identifies, is one of the main challenges that architecture must deal with today:

*“This kind of experience is apparently typical of a state of transition towards augmented reality. Individuals, connected digitally to each other, changing, just as the feelings and their perceptions change. Because it appears that holding onto two bodies is a difficult task in the long run, the question that arises is how to reunite, to synthesize the various feelings and perceptions anchored in our enhanced lives. One of the missions of architecture can connect a new synthesis for this purpose”.*¹⁶

If so, how should a house function in this situation? Picon shows us a new cultural, technological and spatial situation, in which the ancient role of the home - to serve as a habitat for its owner, and a place to create a relationship to the world around him - has undergone a metamorphosis. Home has taken upon itself another role - used to create a relationship between man and his other inner self, which he created on a computer screen. The physical body and the digital entity are separate.

Disappearance or Reappearance

It seems that in our time, the barriers between interior and exterior are slowly disappearing, or perhaps they disappeared long ago. Now our inner lives dictate the external surroundings and vice versa. As Virilio maintains, information itself, and the fear that is concealed within that information, has become the environment in which we live. How, then, can our home fulfill its function and protect us from this external and internal world? Moreover, how can the home function as a dwelling-place, in a world where science and progress are taking the place of the deity and the temple and provide the illusion of eternal life in the figure of a virtual being, liberated from the shackles of the physical body? Should one preserve the conception of a kind of harmonious paradigm, according to which the individual returns to his home after a long day’s work, puts his feet up on the couch and sighs? Or should the home take on a new, material and challenging form, revealing to the individual the wonders of the physical world, and serving as a corridor between conscious states, between the virtual and the physical, between what is domestic and what is not, between the inner and the outer? We need to redefine these concepts. The perception of home as a mediator between the private and internal world, and the external and the public world, has become distorted, and there is another unknown entity entering into this complicated equation. That internal anomaly expressed in another entity, an intangible body, which Picon and

16. Picon, Antoine. **Digital Culture in Architecture**. Basel, Birkhauser, 2010

Toyo Itoboth describe, and which we carry with us everywhere on the screens that are in our pockets. In fact, we need to redefine the discipline we are dealing with, since the primordial matter on which it is founded is uncertain these days, and in the words of philosopher Karsten Harries (1937– present) ‘there is nothing less than our humanity at stake.’¹⁷



Figure 6:
Factory 15, The Golden Age, Somewhere

We must produce a new series of architectural tools, primeval and creative, to deal with a gigantic world of unlimited and uncontrollable information. These tools cannot ignore this new cultural and social phenomenon, just as we cannot continue to produce obsolete architecture. These must be tools that challenge the physical dimension, and reveal it to us in the original form, on the one hand and, on the other, adopt the virtual dimension, and create a new relationship between man and man, and between man, himself, and his world. It must be a challenging and multifaceted architecture which reflects and embraces the complexity of modern life, and which is capable of sustaining even more complex relationships. Physical architecture, open-ended and with a border, that transcends and challenges the infinite spaces the screen offers us, thereby making our tangible lives richer and more complex. We must do so quickly, since the acceleration of daily information does not stop at the concrete walls or double-glazed windows of our houses. In effect, it permeates through them as if they did not exist, and someday we are likely to find ourselves in the

17. Harries, Karsten, *The Need for Architecture, Environmental and Architectural Phenomenology*, vol. 20, issue 3, 2008, American Institute of Architects.

same house we have resided in for decades, in a situation identical to that which we found ourselves in only a moment ago, at the office, at the bus station, in the convenience store or during a conversation, staring silently into another world, sparkling and mesmerizing, trapped within the screen, and around us the home remains in slumber. And within that same house, that same physical “prison”, without the domesticity, which has disappeared behind the screen that ostensibly liberates, glittering with the shiny, electronic splendor of a false black hut, and nothing more.

Bibliography:

- Eisenman, Peter. *Vision Unfolding – Architecture in the Age of Electronic Media*. Domus, 1992.
- Harries, Karsten. *The Need for Architecture*. *Environmental and Architectural Phenomenology*, vol. 20, issue 3, American Institute of Architects, 2008.
- Picon, Antoine. *Digital Culture in Architecture*. Basel, Birkhauser, 2010.
- Vidler, Anthony. *Warped Space – Art, Architecture and Anxiety in Modern Culture*. Cambridge, MIT Press, 2001.
- Virilio, Paul. *The Administration of Fear*. Cambridge, MIT Press, 2010.
- Huizinga, Johan, *Life and Thought in America*, Resling, 2005
- Virilio, Paul. *The Critical Space*. Tel Aviv, Resling, 2006.
- Le Corbusier. *Towards a New Architecture*. Tel Aviv, Babel, 2007.
- Jean Paul Sartre, ‘The Look’, Resling 2007
- Kimchi, Eran *The Internet / What is New Novelty*, Resling, 2012



THE HOME – THE PERCEPTION OF SPACE, TIME AND IMAGE IN THE MEDIUM OF CINEMA¹

HADAS SOPHER


ARIEL UNIVERSITY

The medium of cinema allows us to examine issues of space and reality using tools that are outside reality, tools that provide an illusion. This is a kind of duplicity: the cinema enables us to examine the issues themselves, as subjects for discussion, and also the message that is conveyed to us viewers; as well as how it is transmitted – all of which by the specific means that have been carefully chosen by the creators.

This article examines the home as the base unit for the perception of space and time in the simulated cinematic spectrum reflected in the film 'Goodbye Lenin' (W. Becker, B. Lichtenberg, 2003).

The plot develops against the back drop of the historic unification of East and West Germany, from the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, through to the reunification day in October 1990. This was the period of the dissolution of eastern German Socialism leading to its collapse in the face of Capitalism coming from the West. The central event motivating the plot is the collapse of the family's mother, who falls into a coma later awakening to an entirely different political, cultural and social reality. Her weakened state of health leads her son Alex, the protagonist, to conceal from her any detail that might agitate her and cause her illness to recur. To this end, Alex creates an alternative reality in the family home, where he "resurrects" the various elements of the former Eastern German life. His sister, his girlfriend and other minor characters cooperate with him in this. The interior of the family home, a typical 79m² East German apartment, dominates the plot for the most part. The mother of the family uses only one room which was prepared for her, and which translates into being the imaginary essence of an East Germany that has disappeared. As the plot unfolds, the protagonist undergoes a change: detached from the historical narrative, he starts to create a Utopia, and begins to construct Socialism as he would like it to be.

The film encourages discussion on the existence of reality versus the existence of an image of reality, through the use of the home space and the home itself, as a concept defined by objects and actions. How is simulated architectural space created, and what are the conditions for its creation? On what variables does it depend, and which ones



1. This article is written following a Seminar paper written under the supervision of B. Blich, Architecture and Town Planning, Technion, 2011.

are "destroyed" in its creation? Is the home a collection of its belongings? How does the experience of home living break down and rebuild itself in the cinematic media?

Model of capitalist dissolution

Post-modern culture brought with it diversity – the assortment of styles and details; in contrast, Capitalism brought with it dissolution and fragmentation (Jameson, 2002). Social life itself has separated into infinite codes and disciplines that can be mixed freely, with no need for justification. "I don't need a reason to design as I design," said Frank Gehry about his design for the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao (Gehry, 2000). This freedom leads to the collapse of the paradigm and is the most fertile ground for creating without conscience, the only discipline of which is the idea itself. Jameson claimed that the dissolution of human actions occurs under the auspices of Capitalism, which leads to their reconstruction in accordance with models of efficiency and necessity (Jameson, 1979), and the abandonment of the norms and the collective project for the heterogeneous discursive field (Jameson, 2002). The creators of culture had no other place to turn to except to the past.

Here modern architecture, which had rejected the past, tries to structure it nostalgically (Hutcheon, 1998). Nostalgia, like irony, became primary elements in contemporary culture (Rist, 1989, in Hutcheon, 1998). Nostalgia populates the desire to restore the past, but the ability to do so exists only from the aesthetic aspect. The enchantment with the vanished past and the addiction to image led to the attempt to appropriate the past to the present, and to skip over the real obstacle of endless transformation of the present. Jameson talks about the technique of "enlisting" or "appropriating" elements of cinematic media, leading to an attack on the present, as well as the recent past. A gap is created between real history and the artistic language of nostalgia. This contradiction, according to Jameson, leads to a new inventiveness regarding form (Jameson, 2002). In fact, we cannot escape the present, and the features of capitalism in which we find ourselves immersed. The past has been conquered and dissolved by the present regime, a cultural and social regime the means of which are images, fashions and multiple possibilities. History is thus erased by the myriad of images and displays. In the film, the image of the form is expressed in a phenomenon called "Ostalgia" – a nostalgic feeling of deprivation and yearning for the characteristics of the Socialist regime in East Germany, which disappeared with the process of Westernization. Ostalgia yielded the reuse of East-German characteristics, emphasizing all that was positive about the regime.

In Figure 1 we can see that the past and the present (Spaces 1 and 2) are located in independent areas of consciousness. Space 2 (the capitalist present) splits into other spaces indicating the

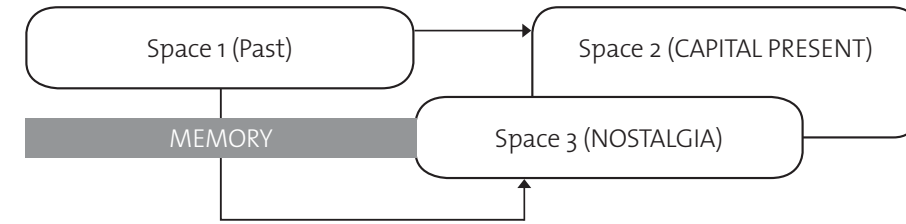


Figure 1:
Nostalgic space - Situation A

multiplicity of contemporary options - such as Space 3, the 'nostalgic space'. Space 2, and within it also Space 3, draws inspiration from Space 1, but is detached from it, and all it can get from it is controlled by memory. It should be noted that the current memory space is not independent, since it is also produced with the support of the present, Space 2.

Skipping from the place to the simulacra

The diagram in Figure 1 illustrates the development of mechanisms of representation and image. Baudrillard argues that reality is a desert that lacks purpose and need, and that real consumption is that of image, or of the mechanism of representation, composed of several units: model, memory and matrix. The development of these representation mechanisms ranges from the reflection of reality, by creating a mask of it, through to its disappearance altogether in favor of a pure simulacrum (Baudrillard, 1983). In effect, the nostalgic space in Figure 1 is built according to mechanism, and it can never again become the object yearned for. Based on this terminology, we can examine the use that the protagonist makes of the home in the film, as a concept and as place, to create an image, and phases that the image undergoes: from the beginning until it becomes a product in itself, independent of the dimension of any given memory.

This logic is also to be found in the writings of Zeli Gurevitch, for example, in his book 'On Israeli and Jewish Place' (Gurevich, 2007). Gurevich makes the claim for the establishment of a "place", prior to it becoming something physical, as a myth and an idea that creates identity. This means that the concrete object is not the only thing responsible for the formation of identity. A place is created by skipping back and forth between reality and the idea. The creation of this logic is assigned by Gurevich exclusively to Israeli anthropology, but it would be interesting to test it in the family home, through the prism of 'Ostalgia', which offers a model that skips between the reality and the image.

The human need for a dimension of collective memory is fertile ground for the preservation of historical buildings and sites. The guidelines for preservation are based on a range:

starting from preservation of the entire structure in detail, through to the preservation of the historic image and the collective memory. That way the façade of a historic building can be preserved as a thin shell while behind and adjacent to it, a new building is built to meet present-day requirements. Anyone on the street where the building stands will not be aware of the essential change that has taken place behind the "shell".

Heritage itself is consumed and discarded through choice and, therefore, will be created in accordance with the needs of the society that consumes it (Liu, 2007). As early as 1948, George Orwell, in his book '1984', spoke of rewriting history. The Soviet communist regime erased and rewrote portions of history according to their needs, by means of both printed and broadcast media. But that is not the exclusive privilege of totalitarian regimes. In fact, Capitalism, with its capitalist individual, makes similar use of these tools, even if the circumstances are different. Architect Rem Koolhaas (CronoCaos, R. Koolhaas, Venice Biennale 2010) argued that preservation is now leading architectural design, and it is highly intertwined with the tourism and real estate industries, to the extent that interest in a particular building in accordance with these criteria leads to the worsening of one or neglect of the other. For example, says Koolhaas, a structure designed according to the utopian ideals - which are now out of the current architectural discussion - are often neglected to the point of destruction. Preservation, therefore, has also become a capitalist commodity, and it is no longer the past that stands behind it, but the present. The entire city becomes an urban market of consumption.

For the purpose of illustration, the nostalgic space shown in Figure 1 can be seen as an item and an example of the formation of Baudrillard's simulacrum in the capitalist space. In Figure 2 one sees that the past (Space 1) is completely detached from Space 2, and it is operated by a set of criteria produced within Space 2 itself. Memory is part of this system of criteria. These form Space 3, the nostalgic space, by projection. That is, the past is not a "thing", but rather the pure image. Nostalgia is, of course, one of many examples of simulacrum space.

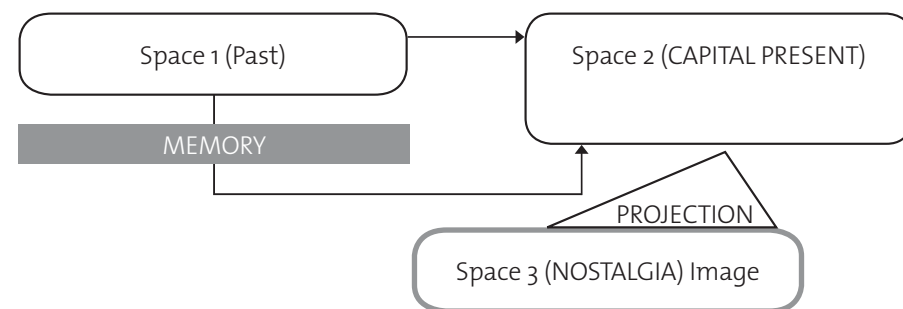


Figure 2:
Nostalgic space – Situation B

By means of these concepts an attempt will be made to map and analyze the architectural organs used in the family home in the movie to define nostalgic space.

From the very beginning of the film the viewer watches the Capitalist disintegration into the many different fragments Jameson mentions (Jameson, 2002). The first part of this disintegration lies in the separation between memory and reality. The first scene is a flashback to Alex's memory from the year 1978, a pastoral scene at the family's vacation home. To the relaxing sound of a melody being played on the piano, Alex and his sister play in the garden of their summer home - an outdoor space with a grass lawn, a hammock and the two children. The father does not appear, but Alex turns to him and asks for his help. In this way we understand that the father is there and one gets a sense of family. This scene represents the dimension of the protagonist's memory. The viewer is somewhere between the child's memories and the authentic picture that represents the history, with relevant details omitted – whether the intention is to recreate the natural blurring of human memory, or an attempt to erase history. The nostalgic dimension should also be mentioned, as it creates a pleasant image of space for the viewer. This part of the film employed the "home movies" method: filming with old equipment, which is reflected in the technique of the shaky camera, using photographic quality of a time long passed. In addition, a faded yellowish tinge was added to the film as well as a fast pace of filming and fragmenting of the frame around the images of the children and their surroundings. These elements create for the viewer a gap in the perception of past time, referring to an event located in the space of memory.

The continuation of the first scene in the family home is done with normal speed photography. We are still inside the protagonist's memory. There is still a yellowish tinge to the colors and stark contrast between light and shadow. Childhood memory is dim and fragmented, as is the family home, moving from the area of the kitchen, near the well-lit window, and the gloomy living room lit by the television screen. In the first dissolution that separates between memory and reality, movement is generated for the viewer between architectural space, the space of the home and the television. The medium of television is an element used in the film for the representation and perception of time, and expresses the historical development (as well as its erasure and rewriting), as necessary. The symbolization created here by the television for the purpose of creating memory, allows the memory to move between past and present, just as we might change a TV channel.

Ostalga is the driver that separates memory from reality. We shall examine it through the scene in which Alex and his girlfriend are searching through abandoned houses in the city



Figure 3:
The use of Ostalgic space, source:
Goodbye Lenin, 2003

for East German commodities whose manufacture has been discontinued (Figure 3). In this scene, the past is illustrated by the space of the abandoned home, and objects found there. Alex and his girlfriend represent the present, compared with what shall no longer exist. Here, too, what is old has the faded yellow tinge. The mirror is covered with a layer of dust. The wallpaper and the bedcovers are just like those in the mother's 'reconstructed' room, in an outdated shade of yellowish-brown. The camera lingers on many "homey" items, in order to stir the memory and produce the nostalgic space (Ostalgic, in this case) as an active space. Here there is a move which starts as they enter the house and continues as they walk around it, discovering the components of memory. Afterwards, the Ostalgia reaches its climax in the bedroom. It is possible to see that the abandoned home space has been appropriated to create a nostalgic space, which is perceived as a living and active space. The initial separation between memory and reality is, consequently, the first act of the decomposition process.

Second dissolution: between two political spaces

The plot takes place in an intermediate dimension – between memory and reality. It is an in-between area of two political periods. The beginning of the film - after leaving the memory in 1978 - takes place ten years later, when the DDR regime has collapsed in favor of West-German capitalism. From this moment onwards, what is broadcast on the television in the film is like an authentic broadcast; the pace of the photography in the film increases, and the film breaks down into details and items, the purpose of which is to express the political space that they are associated with. The images and information they provide change more rapidly. The viewer is left to gather them into a complete picture. We thus obtain an infinitely split space - one moment we are watching the 'Wall' falling; another moment, a new fast food branch that is opening; and the third moment we're once again watching the changing family home. The television broadcast, the place of work or the street are "objects" that are associated with the domestic space of a routine life. In fact, it is possible to ask the question: are the boundaries of the house defined by the physical wall and door; or by the urban shell it is situated in; or by the a-physical shell of the surface and screen?

Table 1:
Elements and spaces that express the desired political dimension

	Space 1: East-German Socialism	Mediation, transmission	Space 2: Western Capitalism	Neutral
Space	The space of abandoned houses Living room Nature, sky The mother's room The summer house City monuments	Street Flea Market Apartment corridor	Work space Shower Kitchen Monuments	The mother's room in the hospital The doctor's room
Props	Wallpaper Jars Clothing Uniform Typewriter Old furniture Red paint Flags Photographs of people	Television Doors Window	Clothing Uniform Advertisements Red paint Red helmet Flags Satellite dishes	Medical equipment (feeding tube) Flowers Clock Hospital corridor

Western capitalism penetrates directly into the depths of socialist culture, quickly and efficiently dismantles it and divides it up. Compared with this fast pace, Alex tries to reclaim for his mother the earlier world she is familiar with. On the screen we observe the losing battle that Alex fights to maintain this reconstruction by collecting items and details from the crumbling East. The family home, which is again westernizing, contains within it a socialist space. It is a space within a space, each with its own representation.

In Table 1 we see the elements and spaces used to express the desired political arena. The domestic space, both the internal one and the broader "city home", serve as convenient ground to illustrate the period. The urban monuments (such as the statue of Lenin which, at

the beginning of the film, appears whole; and later broken and floating in the air, helpless) serve the same purpose. In contrast, the street space, public places like the city square or the flea market, function as expressions of the space in the midst of the transition between the two periods, that is - the in-between space.

Perhaps the size of the street space or of the city complex, and their ability to accommodate many items –facilitate their function as “transitional space”. In terms of props, a small item such as a television is enough to convey the message. The screen can incorporate and broadcast this variety of objects. Here there is a parallel between the two, and an appropriation is made of the large space and the small element in the role of the “periodic corridor”. However, the television element sends a one-dimensional message, while the urban space can accommodate two spaces simultaneously: advertisements - symbolic of the capitalist West - are seen through the window, penetrating the area identified with the East-German space.

It also should be mentioned that Space 1 is an area consisting of both the signs expressing the political period, and the simulacrum itself, which is a nostalgic space. All of the architectural elements and spaces are appropriated into this space in order to serve the image and, therefore, the relationship between them and the historical period is a relationship of projection only (Figure 2).

Third Dissolution: Utopia

In the third and final stage of dissolving the chain of markers we find the final separation from both history and reality, and the creation of a new utopic space.

Looking at the sky Alex understands that he is capable of independently and freely shaping reality. At this stage, Alex disconnects from the shackles of the past and the present; the new space he is creating for his mother consists of space and elements which he connects however he wishes. Reality is thus a player in this chosen media. The realistic background, the space and its components, the time and text are all equal players in the program screened for the mother as she lies in her room. The new reality is an image projected onto the physical walls. It is an Ostalgie space, in which the protagonist expresses a longing for something that never existed. If, at the beginning of the film, the viewer gets to witness the dissolution and separation of the elements and the space in a relatively “objective” dimension (we must remember that the message is conveyed to us through the cinematic dimension), in the Ostalgie space, the home was constructed with meticulous care to filter out any element that could disturb the existence of Utopia. The western urban shell, which includes buildings covered with billboards of Coca-Cola, is appropriated to the imaginary plot integrating “authentic” photographs of space in an industrial factory. The window in the room is no longer a threat to the discovery of the truth, since it and whatever is

viewed through it have also been drawn into the plot. Thus, the new reality is sewn from patches which are devoid of context. The new architectural space is meaningless. The only significance is the image that it produces. This can be seen from the pictures in Figure 4: the scene taken by Alex, in which his friend appears as a news announcer, the wall partially painted with just the minimum amount required for framing the Utopia which is reflected completely through the television set.

Yearning for a well-staged past

This article examines the architectural elements used in a cinematic medium to create a simulacrum, through the house and its image. Since the cinematic medium is an imaginary space and is itself staged, obviously all the elements appearing in it - whether spaces or items - will be carefully selected, while others will be left in the darkness outside the space which is filmed and projected to the viewer. Ignoring that aspect, the article has attempted to differentiate between realistic space and the space of the image, and the circumstances required for the formation of the latter from within the space of the former.

Considerable weight is given to the influence of Capitalism on the process. The underlying argument is that Capitalism is the engine which generates all the spatial fragmentation and the formation of areas of image and projection. Apparently, without the existence of a post-modern culture which splits freely into countless codes, it would not have been possible. But longing for the existence of an idea and structuring it into an apparent reality existed even prior to the post-modern era. This can be seen in the yearning of the Jewish people in exile for a Jewish state, and its dream about the “Land”, as a concept which has almost physical content, yet nonetheless lacks reality, and is attributed to the dream and the aspiration (Gurevitch, 2007). From a discussion of the term “architectural simulacrum space” and its physical expression, in a picture, for example, the term “the minimum criteria” came into being: to create a simulacrum, not all the elements that exist in reality are necessary, but the most useful of them. “Less is more” said Mies van der Rohe, using a minimum number of walls and objects, to design the Barcelona Pavilion as the modern royal home in 1929 (International Exposition in Barcelona, Spain, Mies van der Rohe, 1929). Heidegger held that a chair has an essence, that an individual is an entity of possibility and that Capitalism and Globalism are what will prevent the individual from being capable of shaping history (Heidegger, 1927). What are the components of the simulacrum space? Are they the fruit of man’s design or an inevitable product of culture of consumption, the culture of fragmentation and distribution to the masses? Can we set the rules or the techniques to design this space? Or, as in the film, was Utopia snatched from Alex’s hands so that, without our control, the image of the space would merge with the reality, and we will no longer know who is who.



Figure 4:
Utopia (Ostalgie space), source:
Goodbye Lenin, 2003

Bibliography

Baudrillard, J (1983) *Simulations, The precession of simulacra.*

Baudrillard, J. (1983) *Simulations, The implosion of the meaning in the media.*

Marx, K. (1998) *The poverty of philosophy, for the Internet by David J. Romagnolo.*

Jameson, F (1979) *Reification and utopia in mass culture, social text no.1, pp.130-148.*

Hutcheon, L. (1998) *Irony, Nostalgia, and the Postmodern, University of Toronto, HTML editor
Marc Plamondon.*

Gurevitch, Z. (2007) *On Israeli and Jewish Place, Am-Oved Publishers Ltd. Israel*

Orwell, G. (1949) *1984, Secker and Warburg, London.*

Heidegger, M. (1927) *Being and Time.*

Liu, W (2007) *Everyday life morphology and urban conservation*

Hausmann, L. "What is all the Ostalgia about" <http://www.haaretz.co.il/misc/1.915005>

http://www.fahrenheitmagazine.com/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=1705:cronocaos-por-rem-koolhaas&lang=en&img=0#mainCheatImage

<http://www.thelmagazine.com/newyork/is-conservation-killing-contemporary-architecture/Content?oid=2086031>



HOME IN 'WADI RUSHMIA': SPEAKING, PLANTING, BUILDING

LIAT SAVIN BEN SHOSHAN

BEZALEL ACADEMY OF ART AND DESIGN

This article will discuss the concept of domesticity, an issue which has become a dominant paradigm in architectural theory and political theories. Discussion of this concept will be developed by contemplation of Amos Gitai's film 'Wadi' (1991-1981), which is part of a documentary trilogy portraying the story of a group of people living in Wadi Rushmia in Haifa, over a period of two decades.

We usually identify the perception of the "house", and the search for a home, with the desire to simply return to the local roots of the "place". As such, the "house" is trapped within the practices of cultural and political control in conservative ideologies of unchanging significance, which stabilize the formation of identity and suppressing differences.

The article traces the domestic foundation of those who are, by definition, placeless - the refugees. The discussion of Gitai's film is linked to Hannah Arendt's description of the birth of the refugee problem¹. According to Arendt, the refugee problem arose when the European nation states were established between the two World Wars. Once certain ethnic groups were defined as having a national home and won civil rights within the nation state, members of other ethnic groups were excluded from civil rights and became refugees without a national home, and sometimes even became homeless in the basic physical sense.

Gitai's film 'Wadi' describes a place - Wadi Rushmia in Haifa, where a group of people without means, and without ownership of land or a house, were assembled; all of them were refugees - Jews and Arabs. These people thus became non-partners in public and political life, and lacking of a "Space of Appearance". Space of Appearance is Arendt's concept of the political space in her book 'The Human Condition' (1998). The notion of the political is a "Space of Appearance" in which human beings appear to each other, in words and deeds, which are not intended for a purpose or for the creation of physical objects, and thus they build their common world together². The Space of Appearance is created, according to Arendt, in-between human beings, through their words and deeds. It is an intangible

1. Arendt, Hannah, **The Origins of Totalitarianism**, San Diego New York London 1971 [1958], Chapter Five: The Decline of the Nation State and the End of the Rights of Man, pp. 147-167.

reality which Arendt calls the "web" of human relationships. Action and speech discloses the agent, the 'who' behind it. Only the actors and speakers who re-enact the story's plot can convey the full meaning, not so much of the story itself, but of the "heroes" who reveal themselves in it³. In the article, being a refugee, or "refugeeism" as it appears in the film, is examined as a sort of political action in which the figures reveal themselves through action and speech, and re-enact their stories. "Refugeeism", being a mode of movement between spaces, is examined as a means of action as well as expression, similar to what Deleuze and Guattari call "minor literature"⁴. They note that a minor literature does not come from a minor language; it is rather that which a minority constructs within a minor language. [...] The three characteristics of minor literature are the deterritorialization of language, the connection of the individual to political immediacy, and the collective assemblage of enunciation⁵. Deleuze and Guattari relate to minor literatures as a way in which immigrant communities create escape routes and expression with in language. Similarly, being a refugee will be described in this article as a mode that leads to creative forms of action, both in language and speech, as well as in the structuring of a domestic space. "Refugeeism" expresses the cultural - political conditions of our time in general, and in the State of Israel in particular. Built by and for refugees, its establishment also created other refugees. In the conclusion of the article it will be argued that architecture should also look for a more flexible theoretical model of domesticity, appropriate to the complexity of current political existences, reflecting situations of refugeeism - and perhaps learning from them.

Wadi Rushmia

Wadi Rushmia on the Carmel is a deep river gully beginning with a steep incline on the eastern slopes of Mount Carmel and flowing down to the sea. Despite being open landscape in the heart of the city, the valley is not used as a place for excursions. Access

2. i.e. how Arendt describes political life and political space. Political space is, according to Arendt, a 'space of appearance', created by words and deeds, which are not intended for a product or a purpose known in advance, and are made in the public sphere, between a wide variety of human beings. Arendt distinguishes between political action and other types of human activity, such as work and labor. From: Hannah Arendt, **The Human Condition**, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1998.

3. Arendt, 1998, pp. 183-184, 186.

4. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, What is Minor Literature?, **Kafka - Toward a Minor Literature**, translated by Dana Polan, Theory and History of Literature volume 30, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986, pp. 16-27.

5. Ibid, p. 16, 18.



Figure 1:
Wadi Rushmia, a view to the Haifa port, 2008.



Figure 2:
Wadi Rushmia, a view to the valley's estuary, 2008.



Figure 3:
Wadi Rushmia, a view to the West, with Hadar Hakarmel on the right, 2008.

Figures 1-3
Photographed by Liat Savin Ben Shoshan

to it is difficult, and it is physically disconnected from the surrounding urban continuum. Despite its central location and unique visual presence in the urban space, the valley does not fit into the sequence of movement and urban activities (Figures 1-3). It appears that, in regard to this continuity, Wadi Rushmia became an inner and hidden space, a place "devoid of surface". However, the detachment of Wadi Rushmia is not just physical. According to Hannah Arendt's perception, it could be said that the valley was absent from the urban space as a Space of Appearance, consisting of a web of relationships and enacted stories. At the beginning of the 20th century a residential neighborhood began to develop in Wadi Rushmia, an area that was then on the periphery of the Old City of Haifa, which today is the hub of the modern city. The nucleus of the neighborhood was established by workers who migrated to the city from other towns and villages around it, to work in building the Hejaz railway (1904 -1908) and the port of Haifa (1909), under the directives of the Ottoman Empire. Due to the housing shortage in the old city of Haifa they established a neighborhood of tents and shacks in the valley⁶. Residential areas in the valley continued to grow when many additional workers migrated to the city during the British Mandate, beginning with the expansion of the port works in 1929 and construction of the bridge over the valley (Figure 4)⁷. In the 1940s there was already a permanent population of 3000 people living in the valley⁸. At the same time, Jewish Haifa had also increased and the Jewish neighborhoods in Haifa began to be built, including Hadar HaCarmel and Neve Sha'anani, on the slopes of the Carmel near to the valley. These two neighborhoods were designed as Garden neighborhoods in the 1920s by Richard Kaufman. In the planning of NeveSha'anani, emphasis was placed on the physical and conceptual continuity between the Haifa valleys and the building through visual lines, and public open spaces that open onto the valley landscapes, and the marking of paths that descend to the valley and the gardens facing it⁹ (Figure 5) The

6. Goren, T., **The Fall of Arab Haifa in 1948**, The intensity of the Struggle and the Dimensions of Collapse – Kiryat Sde Boker, The Ben-Gurion Research Institute for the Study of Israel and Zionism, , 2006 [Heb] 5766 - 2006.

7. See Yifat Weiss, **WadiSalib, A Confiscated Memory**, Van Leer Institute, Hakibbutz Hameuhad Press, 2007. Industrialization of Haifa during the British Mandate, and the implications for the Arab population in the city, see: Seikaly, M., **Haifa: Transformation of an Arab Society, 1918-1939**, London, IB Tauris, 2002.

8. Goren, ibid.

9. See Gilbert Herbert & Silvina Sosnowsky **Bauhaus on the Carmel, the arrival of modern architecture to Hadar HaCarmel, Haifa**, Technion, Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning, Architecture Documentation Unit, 1985.



Figure 4:
The Bridge over Wadi Rushmia (built 1927), 1930.

Unknown photographer,
source: Wikipedia

neighborhoods built near the valley since the 1970s overlook it as a distant landscape¹⁰. In the 1948 battles, the Arab fighting organizations were centered in the Arab neighborhood of Halisa and the adjacent Wadi Rushmia. Consequently, since their population was for the most part Muslim, these neighborhoods become a major target for Haganah and Irgun fighters in Haifa. These neighborhoods were the first to empty of their occupants during the war. After the war, families of immigrants from Bulgaria occupied the empty houses. Other Jewish immigrants, among them Holocaust survivors, came to live in the houses in the valley. Arabs returned to the neighborhood; a small number of them still held ownership of their homes, while others returned to the neighborhood even though they no longer had legal ownership. These residents were internally displaced refugees, a particular type of refugee created with the establishment of the State of Israel – the 'present absentees'. Israeli law defined 'present absentees' as the Palestinians who fled or were driven out of their homes by the Jewish (and subsequently Israeli) forces prior to the foundation of the State of Israel, or by institutions under the authority of the State of Israel following its establishment, and who remained within the borders of the State of Israel in the period between November 1947 and July 1949, but also continuing into the present.¹¹ Thus, between the early 1950s and 1972, a mixed ethnic fabric of refugees and immigrants developed in Wadi Rushmia, numbering about 3,000 people. At the start of the 1970s the area was declared to be an "evacuation zone" and in 1972, when the municipality announced the construction of a bridge to Hadar, it vacated most of the inhabitants and destroyed most of the houses in the neighborhood. Since then, the municipality of Haifa has progressively continued to destroy the houses in the valley, in an effort to evacuate the remaining inhabitants. In 2008 the last of the residents were evacuated - an elderly couple, members of an Arab refugee family who agreed to leave the valley after almost sixty years of living there, in return for compensation from the municipal company 'YeffeNof', who received the commission for the development of the valley (Figures 6-8) These last residents, who were photographed by an Haaretz photographer in the process of their evacuation, are Yusuf Hassan and his wife, who

10. Kolodney, Z., The urban significance of valleys in the city of Haifa, Studies in Managing Natural Resources and the Environment 2 (2002), pp. 141-140.

11. BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugees' Rights distinguishes between two groups of internally displaced persons: those who were displaced in 1948, and those who were displaced after 1948. The first group – the 1948 internally displaced Palestinians – who constitute the majority of displaced persons that remained inside Israel, consists of those Palestinians who were expelled from their homes during the 1948 Nakba under Israeli law; they are classified as "present absentees." See: Internally displaced Palestinians, international protection and durable solutions, **BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugees' Rights**, Bethlehem, 2003

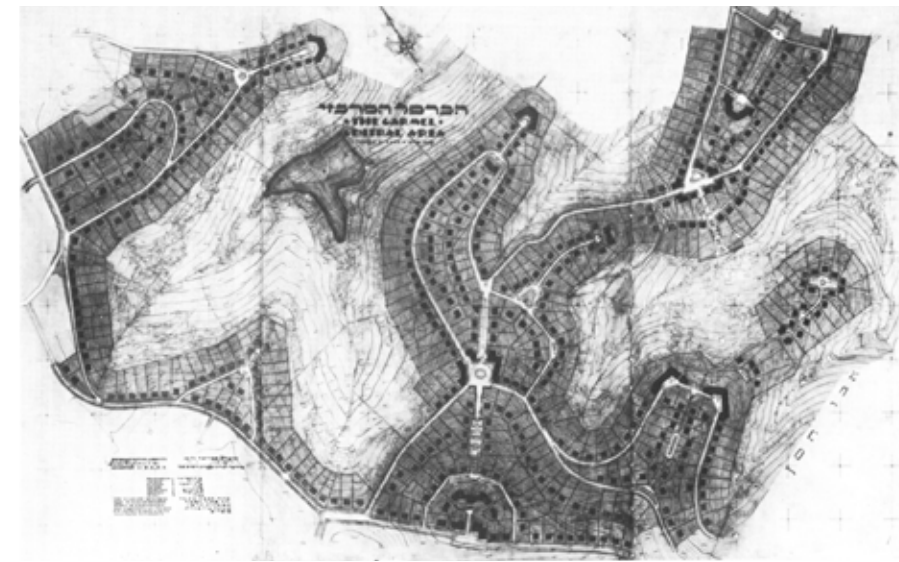


Figure 5: Richard Kaufman, Plan of neighborhoods in the Central Karmel (Wadi Rushmia on the right), 1923. source: Kaufman Archive in the Zionist Archive, file no. A175/198



Figure 6: Doron Solomon, "Residents of a shack received 330 thousand shekels for its Destruction" Haifa News, May 12th, 2008



Figure 7: Ha'aretz, May 2008, Photographer: unknown



Figure 8: Ha'aretz, May 2008, Photographer: unknown

appear in all three parts of Gitai's trilogy 'Wadi', 'Wadi 1981-1991' and 'Wadi Grand Canyon'.

Over the years the valley has become an isthmus connecting / separating the different neighborhoods, whereas the valley itself gradually emptied of its residents. In 1999, the huge "Grand Canyon" shopping mall was opened in the valley - the largest in Israel at that time. The mall serves the surrounding neighborhoods, which were planned in the 1980s and 1990s without any relation to the valley, as self-contained 'bedroom suburbs'. For these neighborhoods it is both a consumer site and a public space. The mall, with its large billboards and the road system that surrounds it, was positioned like a fortress inside the valley. It turns its back on the valley - a blank wall 30 meters high (Figure 9), and the city is disconnected from access to it. The relationship between the local mall and the valley is mainly reflected in the name, the 'Grand Canyon'. In a sense of unconscious irony, the basement of the mall - which was designated for extreme sports - was designed as an indoor landscape of an artificial nature, supposedly inspired by the Wadi. Statutorily the area is defined as 'open space', but the entrepreneurs and planners of the mall took advantage of the British master plan for the city of Haifa, dating back to 1934 (which still determines the statutory status of the open spaces in the city), which permits the construction of buildings for "recreation and leisure" within areas defined as open space¹². In 2003, a landscape plan for the valley (known as Nahal Giborim), was submitted, proposing the reclamation of the valley and the planning of a scenic route through it which would integrate it into the urban landscape (Figure 10)¹³.

However, other decisions were made and in 2007, work began on the digging of the Carmel Tunnels, a system of toll roads in two double tunnels underneath the ridge of Mount Carmel in Haifa (Figure 11). In 2010 the central starting point of the Carmel Tunnels opened in Wadi Rushmia - a road system connecting the neighborhoods of the Carmel with the Bay Area and the Carmel Beach. In the valley itself a road was paved for trucks to remove dirt from the excavations. In exchange, the operating company of the Tunnels undertook to set up a vast public park in the valley - a commitment which has not yet been fulfilled, and there is considerable doubt whether it ever will be.

The landscape continuity of Wadi Rushmia and its location in the heart of the city, allow it to be viewed as an architectural cross-section through which the development of the

12. According to Saul, Y., [Hebrew], Mall in the canyon: building the Grand Canyon in Wadi Rushmia in Haifa, *Studies in Managing Natural Resources and the Environment 2* (2002), pp. 136-123.

13. The design was made by Moria-Sekely Landscape Architecture Office, and was commissioned by the department for long term planning in the Haifa municipality headed by architect Ziva Kolodney. Interview with architect Ziva Kolodney, Haifa Municipality, May 2007.



Figure 9:
'Grand Canyon' shopping mall, Haifa, 2009. Photographed by: Liat Savin Ben Shoshan

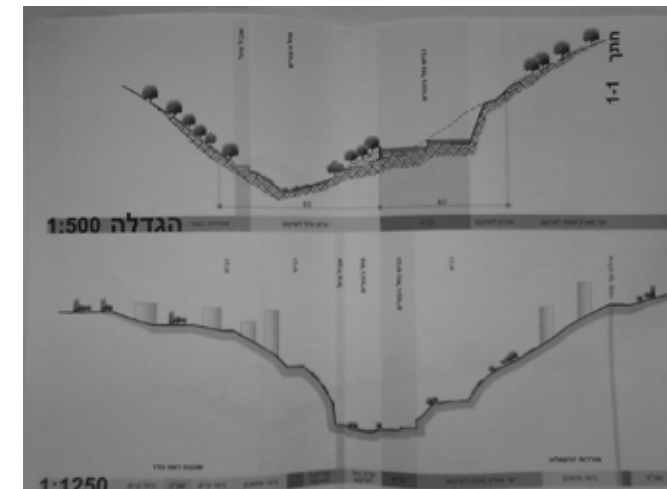


Figure 10:
A proposed plan for the Reclamation of Nahal Giborim, Moriah-Sekely Architects, September 2003. Source: the department for long term planning, Haifa municipality. Photograph: Liat Savin Ben Shoshan, courtesy of Dr. architect Ziva Kolodney.



Figure 11:
Advertisement: Hakarmel Tunnels company

neighborhoods in Haifa over the past century can be seen. From this cross-section one can examine the valley as landscape which reflects Haifa's history, outlined by the contiguous construction of the residential neighborhoods.

The residential neighborhood in the valley started as a workers' neighborhood of shacks and tents at the beginning of the 20th century, and in the subsequent decades the shacks were replaced by stone houses built in the local tradition. Since the destruction of most of these houses and the evacuation in the 1970s, only a small number of inhabited buildings survived in the valley, and of those, only a numbered few remained with their former owners¹⁴. Over the years, newcomers built their homes utilizing a collection of artifacts and any kind of waste materials they could find: tin, pieces of cardboard, wooden planks, iron sheets, plastic sheets, fabrics. Fruit trees were planted beside the houses, ornamental gardens and fruit gardens. These people make up the characters in the documentary trilogy Wadi ('Wadi 1981', 'Wadi 1981-1991', and 'Wadi Grand Canyon' 2001)¹⁵. The films follow life in the valley and the living conditions which necessitate daily work in order to maintain them: roof repair, strengthening a wall that the wind blew over, repairing a leak through which the rain comes in, feeding and caring for pets, nurturing the vegetation: watering, hoeing, pruning, planting. These tasks take up most of the day, because they are so demanding due to the complex living conditions. They do not meet the standards of external efficiency, but are for the daily existence of the valley inhabitants only. In the times in between work, and sometimes during work, the residents of the valley sit together, playing, singing, smoking, talking. The film follows several characters who reside in the valley: "Arabs of '48"¹⁶, Holocaust survivors and Jewish immigrants from various European countries, as well as new immigrants¹⁷. Most of them declare that they do not want to leave the place, but when they do eventually leave, it is obvious that this is not so that they will return, not even for a visit. Yusuf, one of the oldest residents of the valley and the last to be evacuated from there, says that those who left claim that they cannot return, or that they are "afraid" to return. It appears that after someone leaves, the valley ceases to be an actual physical place for them, and what remains is an imagined, almost dreamlike space.¹⁸

The Wadi – an enclave of "naturalness" in the heart of the city – encompasses the fact that it is the remains of earlier nature, where the physical space contains traces of the mountain's erosion. Within this 'internal' time-space, there is an encounter between the settling of the Wadi residents in a space that is in the process of vanishing and the time of their presence there, which is drawing to an end.

Wadi, 1981, 1981-1991, 2001 / Amos Gitai

The film 'Wadi' shifts between cinematographic long takes of various figures, and long takes of the space itself – static, and in motion (Figures 12-14). In the cinematography of the

first type, the figures appear in ongoing monologues - the different voices and languages of the Wadi's residents. The speakers are filmed without subtitles containing identifying information, and whatever the observer knows about them derives from what they say about themselves, and sometimes about each other (Figures 15-19). The 'traveling shots' repetitively used by Gitai as an expressive means, are continuously moving views in which the camera – which is located at the edge of the valley – stops its journey and turns slowly downward and inward, to the space which gapes open between the two sides, inside the old quarry; a huge inner space buried inside the area of the City. A political-social expanse takes place inside the space, in which the daily life of those who withdrew from the City is conducted, with its economic national and social conditions.

The stories, myths and legends they tell themselves, each other and the film camera turn the 'Wadi' into a space which is an 'internal' recipient, a space which makes it possible to express what has been denied in the external urban space. One may wonder whether we may, in the general sense, relate to any physical space as an 'internal' versus a 'general' space; is there a "general space" and can we assume the existence of such a distinction at all? Is the physical division between "down" and "up", between the 'Wadi' and 'City' not already misleading, a too simple spatial diagram of a more complex situation, in which virtually every space already contains the other space, and the recipients, therefore, in

14. Conversation with local residents (August 2009) revealed that on the eastern side of the valley there remains at least one house to which the inhabitants claim they hold legal property rights from before 1948,

15. For a comprehensive reference of the works of Gitai, his cinematic work methods, his intellectual background as an architect, and his engagement in space, history and politics in Israel, see: Irma Klein, **Amos Gitai: Cinema, politics, aesthetics**, Hakibbutz Hameuhad Press, Tel Aviv, 2003.

16. The Arab name given to internally displaced persons, as mentioned earlier, the ones legally defined as "present-absent", who were not present in Israel during the war in 1948, and returned thereafter, but their property was transferred to ownership of the State, and called "abandoned property". The loss of these internal refugees is totally deprived of the possibility of expression under the political conditions of the Israeli nation-state, where, over the years of its existence, any attempt to express themselves and present injustices were met with absolute and continuous negation by the various systems and instances.

17. In 1981, with the start of the film, referring to Jews from Hungary and Romania, refugees from the Holocaust; in the later episodes, in 1991 and 2001, immigrants from Russia and Ethiopia also appear.

18. To be expanded on later, in connection with the terms "irreversibility" and the "power to forgive", in Arendt, 2013, pp. 271-278.

each of them, are not designated as recipients known in advance, but they are already "full of holes"?¹⁹

However, it appears that what we see in the film are remnants; documentation of an action which already contains its own end; continual disintegration without external time - disappearance. The film documents the path of this disappearance - a dual process: the more the occupants of the valley are given a voice in this film, the more the impossibility of their existence, their presence and speech in the public-political sphere in general, become apparent²⁰. The film gives them existence and expression, and chronicles the settlement and the creation of their own home, in that place. But at the same time, in reality, the place and the people residing there are slowly being pushed out of the "general" space, the legal space and the space of expression, and lose access to it. The creation of a home in that place is an intermediate step, a pause, a minimal action of survival.

The Wadi as a "Space of Appearance"

In her analysis of public and political forms of existence Hannah Arendt proposes three concepts: Space of Appearance, Action, and the concept of the beginning and birth (Nativity). For the purpose of this analysis I will present them in three categories: the political action, the space in which it is realized, and the concept of time that characterizes it. The three concepts share reciprocity, each outlining, characterizing and conditioning the existence of the other. The action, one of the dimensions of the space of human endeavor, is distinct from both of the other dimensions: Labor-work for the purposes of biological existence, and Work-Creation, directed at a tangible product in the world. Action is a deed or a spoken word intended neither for existence or nor for a product. Unpredictable in essence, it takes place in a public space containing variety and multiplicity, and is sustained by the relationship between them. The public-political Space of Appearance is not a given reality. It returns and emerges from within the political action, which is never the act of an individual, but of many working jointly:

"Action and speech go on between men, as they are directed toward them [...] the realm of human affairs, strictly speaking, consists of the web of human relationships which exists wherever men live together. The disclosure of the 'who' through speech, and the setting of a new beginning through action, always fall into an already existing web[...] Together, they start a new process which eventually emerges as the unique life story of the newcomer, affecting uniquely the life stories of all those with whom he comes into contact²¹."

Seemingly, there is a fundamental difficulty in arguing that a Space of Appearance comes into being through the acts and stories of the residents of Wadi Rushmia. The characters in 'Wadi' are living in the valley in temporary shacks or abandoned houses, partially destroyed, exposed to the exterior. In fact, the existence and preservation of private space

is the main concern of the inhabitants of the valley. They are preoccupied with surviving, and are not "available" for public or political activity. The clear separation between the private and the public is replaced by different levels of exposure to the climate and remoteness from the city itself. However, through filming the remnants of the residential neighborhood in the valley, a space of appearance comes into being, through the actions and stories of those who live in the valley, as they appear on the screen as the agents in their self-constructed world.

For the purpose of this analysis I will focus on two characters who appear repeatedly throughout the years the trilogy was filmed. One is Yusuf Hassan, an Arab from Haifa, whose family lost its property in 1948 and became scattered. In the early 1950s, Yusuf came to the Wadi, and set up a cabin to house his wife and himself, where they raised their family. Another character that Gitai follows is Miriam, a Jewish woman from Hungary who immigrated to Israel in 1948. It isn't mentioned in the film when she arrived in the valley. In 1981, Miriam lived in a house with her husband, an Arab fisherman named Iskandar. By means of a discussion about Miriam's mode of expression in the film I will examine refugeeism as a form of action, a form of expression and a way of becoming settled and creating a home.

19. I consider it proper to refer in this context to the space proposed by Jacques Derrida using the concept of 'crypt'. During a discussion of the basic concepts of psychoanalysis, which emerge from the writings of psychoanalysts Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok, Derrida undermines the existence and the "loss" of the repressed event for the consciousness. The repressed event is not coded in the "underground" topography of the subconscious - but active in the mental topography of the subject, from "space" that Derrida describes as "topography without geography": the surface containing "encrypted" places, but denied the defined delimitation of interior and exterior, up and down, surface and depth. For further study, see: Derrida, Jacques, "Fors: the English words of Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok," in *The Wolf Man's Magic Word: a Cryptonym*, Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok, forward by Jacques Derrida, translated by Nicholas Rand, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1986.

20. An act, to some extent also the film (the document) itself is designed to be unknown and to disappear, because of the stubborn refusal of many moviegoers in Israel to see Gitai's films, amongst other things because of preclusive positions, which perceive his cinema as exceeding the legitimate criticism of the nation-state. In particular, referring to the early documentary work which explicitly dealt with the problem of refugees and displaced Palestinians inside the borders of the State of Israel, starting from "House" (1980), which was censored by the Broadcasting Authority, through the Wadi' trilogy, (1981 - 2001), 'Field Journal' describing the Israeli military presence in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Lebanon (1982) and many others.

21. Arendt, 1998, pp. 182-184.

Yusuf and Miriam

Miriam and Yusuf reappear throughout the trilogy as monumental figures, and as such emerge as agents of action in the film. They appear as monumental through the particular modes of their speech and action. Yusuf and Miriam have a verbal and physical manner of expression – they both speak broken Hebrew, the language of immigrants-refugees, which has a poetic dimension and expressive power; language that interprets life while describing it. Both of them appear while working on the establishment and preservation of their domestic space.

At the beginning of the trilogy, in 1981, Yusuf had already been living in the valley with his wife for 28 years. Still, their settlement appears to be minimal and survivalist - they live in a group of temporary huts, the poorest and most dilapidated of all the dwellings in the film. These huts are made of construction rubble, gathered from a variety of building sites in the city, and they are connected neither to water nor to electricity. Yusuf spends most of the time trying to keep the house from falling apart. However, when he speaks Yusuf becomes a narrator. He tells of his experiences and describes the loss of property and the dispersal of the family, which resulted in him coming to the valley at the start of the 1950s. He and his wife live in the Wadi with their sons, daughters and grandchildren. His dwelling, which is open to the winds from the valley, is also open to guests of all kinds, including neighbors, relatives and strangers.

Miriam is a Jewish immigrant from Hungary, who in the first part of the trilogy lives in a house in the Wadi with an Arab fisherman named Iskandar. Miriam conducts long monologues in front of the camera. She describes her life and analyzes it, idiosyncratically combining linguistic errors with "high" poetic language; language which obviously was not learned only from speaking. She describes her relationship with Iskandar as a bond of "love", which she interprets as one of the 'natural forces' that empowers a world full of humans, animals and plants, a force which led to the circumstances of her life. Most of her time in 'Wadi' Miriam is occupied with cultivating and taking care of her plants that surround the house she lives in with Iskandar (Figures 20-22). In the second part of the trilogy, after years of living together in the Wadi, the pressure from Iskandar's family and friends increases for him to "get rid of" Miriam. Iskandar does not divorce her, but changes his behavior towards her and becomes violent in a manner which compels her to leave. Miriam once again becomes a refugee, this time driven away from her home in the valley. She must escape, leave. A short time after Miriam leaves the valley and moves to another place, Iskandar is killed in a car accident. In the following monologues she will continue to talk about her life with Iskandar in the past, about her life in the present, about his death, in the same type of active speaking, observing and interpreting. At the same time, Miriam continues to care for plants near to the houses she lives in. Talking about her own life and caring for

the plants appears in one entire sequence in the film, as a heterogeneous form of activity, which at the same time attests to conditions of the immanent situation of migration and refugeeism. Miriam talks about the love she and Iskandar shared, which takes place against the background of the national-ethnic conflict, and for which she had to pay with condemnation and social ostracism.

Miriam's voice

... There was nothing there. There was just rocks and dirt, and sticky things. And I began to collect the stones and placed them into rows and I put earth in between the stones, and then I planted trees in them, so that it would be green and nice and cool and lovely... lovers, loving in the way that we had outside of Israel, we were in verdant foliage, not in yellow. I wanted people to see something that they did not have, and they would like us..²².

Miriam describes her love as a living force, stronger than human beings, which it motivates and which it controls. Ostensibly, this is her way of explaining the fact that an Arab man and a Jewish woman were living together, as an unavoidable fact of life, and not by choice. Love has chosen them, and drives them, and it was not they who had chosen it. Love is only one of the forces, she says, affecting humans, being waged among the various systems of those who control and those who are controlled, the activators and the activated. When asked which party she identifies herself with, she refuses to answer, arguing that it is the role of others to determine where a person is placed. The appearance of Miriam in the trilogy leaves no doubt that she cannot be identified with any of the sides. Miriam lives in the valley in severe violation of social taboo, and lives in a house that had been condemned and was later demolished; but her performance in the film makes it clear that the shape of her life is not the result of free choice, nor is it only the result of circumstances stronger than her, it is a combination of both which shaped her life story. What is evident in the film is her actions and her speech, as an interpretive and active dimension.

Miriam implements her settlement in the valley by planting and nurturing green and fertile spaces around her residence. Planting, as a repetitive action, appears here as an expression of almost uncontrollable forces, obsessive and animalistic, directed strongly towards creating a sustainable habitat. Her love and her activities to settle are mixed in the film through the cinematography and the voice of the speaker, and emerge as powerful and moving forces, words and deeds, actions and ideas all together. Even later in the trilogy, after her love life has "failed", once Iskandar's family pressures him to choose between them and her, because she is Jewish, after their life together has run aground and Miriam leaves Iskandar and moves, alone, to a housing project outside the valley, she continues to act

22. From 'Wadi 1981-1991'

the same way in the physical spaces in which she lives. Every year, and next to every house where she lives, in the valley and in her small apartment, Miriam keeps planting a flower, a vegetable garden, and a fruit orchard and by doing that, she says, she labors against the destruction, decomposition, and decay of the ground (she claims that "the earth that is not cared for becomes dirty and even smelly"). These deeds of Miriam are modes of political action as defined by Arendt, as they take part in preserving and protecting the continuity of existence; planting and tending the area around the home, in contrast with the destruction and erosion of the place. While living in the valley they defended its existence, and thus inhibited its destruction. It is also a new mode of building a home which is horizontal, "low", near to the ground, and temporary. Miriam's sequences of immanent daily action speech manage to create a path of escape within the language, a minor literature. Miriam's monologues are revealed as the power of continual, persistent, driven and flowing speech with the help of many forces - operating in parallel and during all of the periods shown in the film. Miriam is driven almost physically by the forces that I shall refer to here as "the power of love"²³. Miriam's "powers of love" are a transitioning between "animal state " and "human state", an analysis drawn from Deleuze and Guattari's reading of minor literatures. In Miriam's words, history and nature are referred to as currents flowing together, running and setting the subject in motion, as if it were sweeping it back and forth, without the possibility of action, like "a beast that passes, and fends for itself, seeking out a path"²⁴. Miriam came to Israel in 1948²⁵, "the year the State was established"; she arrived, so she says,

23. Hannah Arendt sees love as one of the rarest phenomena: "Love [...] indeed possesses an unequalled power of self-revelation and an unequalled clarity of vision for the disclosure of the who, precisely because it is unconcerned to the point of total unworldliness with what the loved person may be, with his qualities and shortcomings no less than with his achievements, failings, and transgressions. Love, by reason of its passion, destroys the in-between which relates us to and separates us from others". Love does not only destroy the content, the connection of human beings, but rather, because" love is by its very nature unworldly, and it is for this reason rather than its rarity that it is not just apolitical but anti-political - perhaps the strongest of all the anti-political human forces" (Arendt, 1998, p 242). Compared with the way in which Arendt sees love, as an anti-political force, I am referring here to "Love", not only as the relationship between people (although even as such), and not just as destroying or building the content between them, but as the motivation towards action, including political and non-political actions. It is actually the passion which Arendt perceives to be what destroys the connection and the separation between us and others, described here as the force that creates strong relationships between us and others. (1986).

24. Wadi 1981-1991

25. Hence, Miriam came to Israel from Hungary after the War, i.e., she survived the Holocaust in Hungary: but the film does not deal with that, and there is no information about her life during the war.

"For the heart. Because I did not want them to harm my husband there... so I said come, let's go to Israel, where you can be a human being"²⁶. Leaving Hungary was "for the heart", and with the aim of being "human"; nevertheless, from what she says it seems that she went through transitions and sharp fluctuations in her life, which she perceives as having been driven from the outside, as if from instinct, like an animal. Miriam's paradigmatic historical awareness, mentioned earlier, formed from the status of the refugee's situation, is expressed here in action and in speech, as a continual movement, animalistic, without leaving a trace on the space that housed it for a while, without belonging to human society, but while striving to "be a human being". Through her connection with Iskandar, Miriam "crossed the lines" of her new nation state, which "made her into a human being" by virtue of her racial-national belonging. Love is referred to in her monologues as the "force of nature", the operator on the subject of real physical effort, almost regardless of its desire: "they are already connected, they are really connected, they cannot separate, they have no strength"²⁷.

But Miriam is not only a pawn being played by these "external" forces. The many forces of love, those who trigger it, are also triggered in turn, in the space, through planting. She plants and takes care of the earth, burying in it the beginnings of her growth, driving forces, conflicting with the currents that move her as the passive object. The animal movement, that is even manifested in her walk – walking quickly, slightly bent, her head bowed to the ground²⁸ - mixed with an activity of "scientific" observation, and systematic acts of planting and nurturing plants. The same "scientific" observation is turned on her own life, as an array of developments and metamorphoses, which includes political, historical and social figures.

Promise and forgiveness

The non-human... always moving in life, not stopping, not standing. Wherever he reaches, he continues walking onwards. That is how we came here. That's the way it turned out, that's the way life is. On the road of life there are many paths, we try all sorts of paths; does every individual always take the main road? No, that's boring. Pathways are attractive, one wants to know what is at the end of the path, so we try it. One doesn't think, one walks. A

26. Wadi 1981-1991

27. Ibid.

28. In an interview from 1991, Yusuf recounts that one night he returned from his job as a night watchman, and saw Miriam walking in the forest, among the trees, her hair loose. When he asked her what she was doing, she said she was looking for her dogs.

person never knows what tomorrow will bring. Life is... every day brings its own gift, of that particular day, for that particular person. We were simply born, and so we go through life. Just as an animal passes, and gets by, and seeks a path for himself, that's the way a person just goes through life, between the obstacles. The obstacles permit him...²⁹

Arendt claims that "The possible redemption from the predicament of irreversibility – of being unable to do what one has done though one did not, and could not, have known what he was doing – is the faculty of forgiving. The remedy for unpredictability, for the chaotic uncertainty of the future, is contained in the faculty to make and keep promises. The two faculties belong together in so far as one of them, forgiving, serves to undo the deeds of the past [...] and the other binding itself through promises, serves to set up in the ocean of uncertainty, which the future is by definition, islands of security without which not even continuity, let alone durability of any kind, would be possible in the relationships between men."³⁰

It is my understanding that the power of love that drives Miriam, and which she in turn drives, are the kind of promise to which Arendt refers, a promise physically buried in the ground. The planting, burying the seedling in the soil while relying on the fertility, an action without a known end, performed by Miriam in places that are not "designed for this", neither by virtue of the design or the distribution of regulated land. Miriam plants in the valley, in fallow areas, in the neglected side yard of the public housing project apartment where she lived in 2001. She plants, even though the place where she lives never "belongs" to her legally, or even by virtue of living in the place for many years, or even by relying on expecting to live in the place for the long-term. She plants in order to get the fruit, to eat it (sabras, for example) "... because they are expensive, one costs five shekels"; in order "that it will be green and nice and cool and lovely"³¹.

When Miriam forgives Iskandar, because "the ground has already covered everything... because he is already dead, buried in the ground"³², and therefore whatever took place between them is already over and done with - the ground is what gives birth to everything, and covers everything; the source of the promise and, therefore, also the source of forgiveness. This is the ground in the most tangible sense, grains of sand and lumps of earth, which you can smell and touch with your hands; land which cannot be turned into a traded product or abstract value, because the conditions of its existence are temporary, immanent, non-possessive, impossible to put a seal on it; conditions that are not fatal by virtue of being repetitive, but by clinging and connecting with nature's life cycle.

Wadi: a space of promise

Visiting the Wadi in 2001 the neighbors, Miriam and Yusuf, meet. Miriam comes back to visit years after she left the valley and Iskandar, and meets Yusuf and his extended family. Miriam

has aged a lot, and Yusuf is still living in the Wadi, but the living space he and his family have is smaller since the valley became part of the construction site of the mall. Miriam suggests that Yusuf work as a guard on the construction site in the valley. He refuses. This proposal hints at his symbolic role in the series. Contrary to Miriam, who leaves the valley and just comes back to visit, and contrary to the other characters who make a one-time appearance only, Yusuf is "guarding the valley" (Fig. 5). It appears that his presence in the valley is as old as the Wadi itself, and with his departure, even the existence of the valley in its current form will come to an end. Miriam and Yusuf stand next to each other, their old age increasing the sense of time passing, and the overpowering changing of the place. Indeed, Yusuf and his family – who had settled in the Wadi 55 years earlier - were forced to leave the valley in 2008. Former neighbors, Miriam and Yusuf, were forced, each one in turn, to leave the valley because of circumstances more powerful than them, and when they left it ceased to be a place of habitation for them (Figs. 6 – 8).

Arendt argues that between the three dimensions of human action, political action is best related to natality: "the new beginning inherent in birth can be felt in the world because the newborn is endowed with the ability to start something anew – in other words, to act. In this meaning of initiative, the foundation of action and hence of natality is inherent in all human activities³³. "Birth does not start from nothing. Man is born into a world that exists, that was there before him. Even the physical birth is a start: humans who are born are the beginning in the existent world, which allows for man's continual renewal³⁴. Thus, birth is based on a contrast: alongside being a mode of exposure, revelation, initiative and expression, it requires an element of protection and preservation. In birth there is excitement from the potency of the production, which repeats itself and constantly changes what is new: the birth of new humans, new words, new deeds, new buildings and landscapes and, next to these, a warning against their destructive power, and their potential to take the place of what was there, to delete it, and forget it ever existed. On the one hand, what is concealed in the private space of childhood is a prerequisite for the future emergence of a new beginning in the world; on the other hand, the protection of the

29. Wadi 1981-1991

30. Arendt, 1998, p 237.

31. First citation from Wadi 1991, second citation from Wadi Grand Canyon 2001

32. Wadi 1981-1991

33. Wadi Grand Canyon (2001)

34. Arendt 1998, 237

existing world, the ancient, what was there before it was born, allows for political action to be realized in the Space of Appearance of the relationship and the manifestation of prior and current human stories.

The very act of documentation allows the Wadi to be born again and again. Its cinematic presence enables new beginnings. Through cinematic time and space the Wadi becomes a unique Space of Appearance, consisting of cinematic representation of the physical space, of the sound and of human action. This is Space of Appearance that produces its own conditions of attention. So that the cinematic Space of Appearance will eventually shape and change the physical space, to create a sequence, an evolution and formulation of multi-dimensional discourse and practice of architecture. The new beginnings of such a discourse, which have always existed at the sides, have begun to grow and expand. In recent years, theoretical, historical and critical research and writing, to which this article belongs, create a discourse which attempts to reveal some of the latent dynamics of architectural and urban planning, question their function among these powers, and suggest it as an action and speech which go between human beings rather than 'over their heads', aspiring to serve citizens in the larger sense of the word, including 'legal' residents, refugees, minorities.

One can hope that, as part of the development of this discourse, the conditions of attention, the respondents and those created by Wadi Rushmia will also find their place. These terms of attention will mark Wadi Rushmia, as it existed in the past in a period that was outlined in time, as a place, one of many which those engaged in urban planning must learn how to protect, and educate them to embrace it, to enable the realization of sustainable urban space, as a space of Jewish-Arab coexistence. Conditions of listening to the voices of those who live in the Wadi, as created in the film, will lead to an architectural discourse and planning based on different thought in relation to natural disappearing spaces like Wadi Rushmia: environmental, social, and civil thought; thought based on the establishment of a shared world; in which architecture is a part of a political and civil act, a deed of civic participation and the preservation and creation of local heritage, rather than a product of national, ethnic or economic powers. Spaces such as Wadi Rushmia, on agricultural terraces that existed for hundreds of years, will no longer be considered as areas which can be changed in favor of controversial development. They will be defined as the spatial legacy of nature and of human society, which should be preserved for future generations, and for the continued civilian existence of human beings in this country.



Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 14



Figure 15



Figure 16



Figure 17



Figure 18



Figure 19

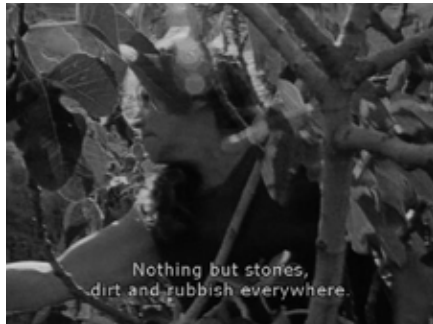


Figure 20



Figure 21



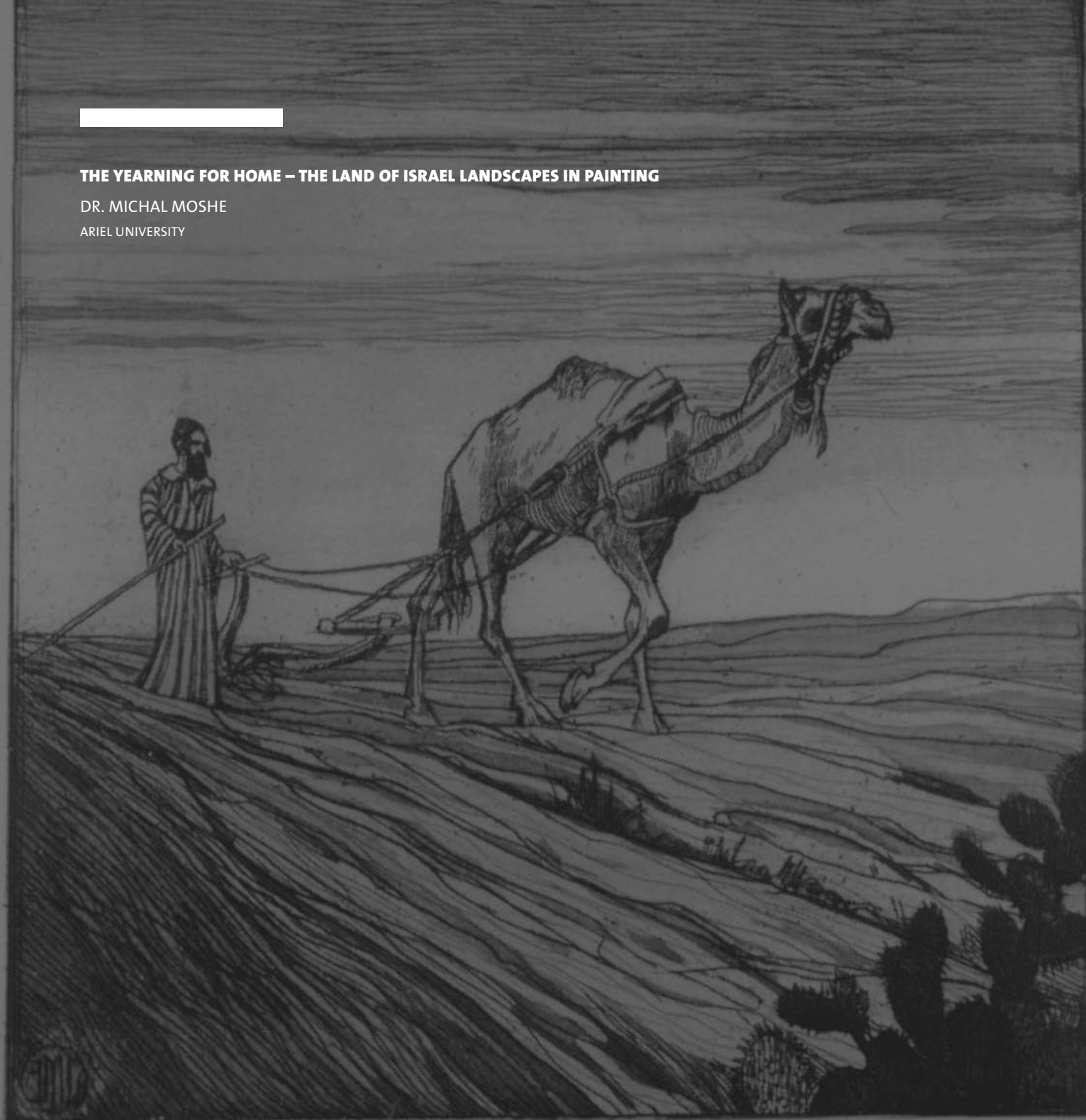
Figure 22

Figure 12-22:
Amos Gitai, Wadi 1981-1991

THE YEARNING FOR HOME – THE LAND OF ISRAEL LANDSCAPES IN PAINTING

DR. MICHAL MOSHE

ARIEL UNIVERSITY



The meaning of 'home' as referred to on these pages is not one built of walls; its floor is the earth and the sky – its ceiling. The home described here is the landscape of the country: the earth, nature, flora, here and there a stone wall, an orchard, a small building, sand dunes, the sea. The country's landscape is documented in Israeli paintings as part of the perception of the return "home" to the homeland: back to the location of the physical, geographical and historical past; back to the place that was the home of a nation, and is once again becoming its home².

The study of Israeli art is rich and fundamentally chronological, because of the discipline of its teaching – the History of Art: Research describes painting as a chronology; it starts with the earliest Israeli painters at the beginning of the 20th century, and follows the process of its development³. Many studies are devoted to artists and review their work

1. A review, bearing a name in that spirit, is the book by Shlomo Sheba, **Painting a home as a homeland, the story of the first generation of artists**, Tel Aviv, Ministry of Defense, 1992. An overview describing the artists and their principal works.

2. On moving forward into the country while, at the same time going back, see the article by Ariel Hirschfeld, "Forward – on the perception of the Orient in Israeli culture" in the exhibition catalog 'Forward – the Orient in Israeli Art', Israel Museum, Jerusalem, 1998, p. 11 (hereinafter: Zalmona, Forward). He delves into the meaning of the word 'forward', which has three meanings: 'kedem' – in the meaning of East; 'kadem' – in the meaning of progressed, in other words, moved forward; and 'kedem' – specifying ancient times. 'Kadima' (Forward) is the name of an exhibition held at the Israel Museum in 1998, curator Yigal Zalmona, presenting the perception of the Orient in Israeli art and its vicissitudes.

3. Basic book for learning about the development of art in Israel, see: Dorit Levita, Gideon Ofrat, **The Story of Israeli Art**, Benjamin Tammuz (ed.), Tel Aviv, Masada, (hereinafter: Israeli Art) 1980, whose research approach is evident in the subtitle of the book: "From the days of Bezalel in 1906 to the present time". Also, the book is arranged so that each chapter is devoted to one decade, and chapters present the decades one after another. This approach is also used in the exhibition catalog curated by Yigal Zalmona: **100 Years of Israeli Art**, exhibition catalog, Jerusalem, Israel Museum, 2010 (Zalmona, 100 Years of Art); See also: Mordechai Omer, **90 Years of Israeli Art**, Tel Aviv, Tel Aviv Museum of Art, 1998.

and the influencing sources that shaped their perception and their works⁴. Some of the works examine the ideology that shaped Israeli art, such as social realism in the 1950s and political art in the 1990s⁵.

This study seeks to expose the sense of the 'home' embodied in the scenery of the Land of Israel, as described in Israeli painting, taken from the world view that produced it⁶, and as part of the formation of the concept of 'place' in Israeli culture: What do the painters describe as being the "Landscape of Israel"? and what was the "landscape" that the painters in the Land of Israel painted at the beginning of the century, and described as "home"?

The landscape

What is landscape? What components of the picture viewed in the eye of the beholder are referred to as "landscape"? "Landscape" is a complex concept and is difficult to define; its use ranges from the physical aspect of the "earth" through to the abstract significance of "space".

An etymological study of the word in various languages presents several meanings for the word "landscape": in English it refers to the appearance of an area of land as a backdrop,

4. Books, articles and many catalogs of exhibitions have been dedicated to the artist. See for example: about Abel Pann in the Yigal Zalmona exhibition catalog, Abel Pann: **Bible illustrations and more**, Jerusalem, Israel Museum, 2006; Batsheva Goldman Ida, **Ze'ev Raban: A Hebrew Symbolist**, Jerusalem, 2008; Ziva Amishai-Meisels, **Naftali Bezem**, Tel Aviv, 1986; Amitai Mendelsohn, **Landscape of Longing: Avraham Ofek's Early and Late Works**, exhibition catalog, Jerusalem, Israel Museum, 2007.

5. See the article by Gila Ballas: "Social Realism in the test of time", in: **Social Realism in the 1950s, political art in the 1990s**, exhibition catalog, Haifa, the New Haifa Museum, Spring 1998, pp. 15-32, about Israeli urban art in the 1950s depicting social problems of poverty, deprivation and social justice and, in the same catalog, see the article by Ilana Tenenbaum: "Eleven Notes on Political Art in the 1990s" pp. 35-40. See also Galia Bar Or, "Hebrew work" in: Hebrew Work - Israeli art from the 1920s to the 1990s, Tel Aviv, Ein Harod Museum of Art, 1998, pp. 56-59.

6. Although the prevailing research approach is chronological, it is clear that the division into periods is schematic, intended for didactic purposes, because, in effect, the beginnings of the system appear prior to the specific years attributed to it so that, for example, expressionist landscape painters begin to appear in the mid-1920s, when the trend in Israel was prevalently modern; while Ze'ev Raban continues to paint semi-Persian miniatures for the Song of Songs.

7. 'Scanae', background for shows, decor. In Greek theater the skene was placed behind the orchestra, in the center. This is a two-storey structure, with three openings used for the entrance and exit of the actors. Inside the structure were the actors' dressing rooms and its façade served as a backdrop to the stage.

as background⁷, as a view of nature that is spread out for the observer from a place that is high or distant⁸; sometimes it refers to a whole rural or "non-urban" region as a landscape. In Europe, the language differentiates between woodland area and rural space, spread between agricultural fields (campagne in French).

The study of landscape is divided between the deterministic approach, which considers landscape to be a crucial factor that designs processes and phenomena, and being a background for the occurrence of events. The researchers are divided between those who attribute to landscape the essence of being nature alone, and those who attribute to it human elements intertwined with the natural. The latter distinguish between 'nature' as landscape and landscape as scenery linking nature to human activity within it⁹. Wild nature becomes "landscape" according to this perception, when human civilization turns it into its home¹⁰. Thus, landscape embodies signs attesting to the cultural perceptions of the people who lived there and turned it into landscape; it is these signs of culture in the Israeli landscape that we shall attempt to reveal in this article.

Landscape Painting

Ostensibly, landscape painting is an objective document describing the reality of the existing landscape with a stroke of the brush, ink or pencil. Ostensibly only, because the selection of subject matter and the mode of expression are a manifestation of the often conflicting emotional history of the painter. The painted landscape thus reflects both the appearance of the existing landscape and how it is perceived by the painter. The painting of the landscape, beyond its artistic analysis, becomes an instrument of research which contains evidence of the observer's point of view¹¹ as well as his worldview. In this context, through the paintings of the Israeli landscape, we can read in this article the manner in which an area of land is perceived – as the homeland—as home.

The time frame of the article will focus on works created in Israel since the beginning of the 20th century, through the 1920s and 1930s, almost up to the founding of the State. Works that illustrate the tension between the landscape itself and the interpretation given to it by the observer; tension that moves the perception of 'home' from the historical

8. Avraham Even-Shoshan, **The New Dictionary** (four volumes), Jerusalem, Kiryat Sefer, 1986, p. 838.

9. Darby, H. C., **Man's Role in Changing the Face of the Earth**, Chicago, 1956, pp. 183-216.

10. Tuan, Y. F., "Rootedness versus Sense of Place" in: **Landscape 24**, 1980, pp. 3-8.

11. For interpretations of landscape from various points of view, the origin of which are in various worldviews, see: Meining, D. W., "The Beholding Eye" In: **The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes**, Oxford. University Press, Oxford, 1979, pp. 33-48.

homeland to the natural place, from memory to reality. The choice of this period is not accidental: the Zionist movement had been operating pragmatically for about 20 years; the first wave of immigrants (first 'aliyah') had built the settlements and the villages; the cities and Tel Aviv¹² in particular. The prevailing mood in Israel was the spirit of renewal; of returning to the home from which we had been exiled by force, to the Bible and to its landscapes. This enthusiasm meets the political reality that Israel faces: the Ottoman rule and, after that, the British Mandate, and the Arab inhabitants of the land. Landscapes of Israel, with all its historical and conceptual baggage, on the one hand, and the concrete, the settled, the constructed, on the other, are spread out before the artists, and they would often describe it.

The study will review paintings by Israeli artists who lived here in Israel. Unlike European painters who painted the landscapes of Israel as visitors, they saw themselves as new or veteran inhabitants of the land. Their landscape paintings bear the longing and yearning for the scenery of the patriarchs, the passion for the original landscape and the dream of the wide world outside of the land of Israel¹³. This is the landscape, in relation to which lies the nucleus of a profound conflict accompanying the Israeli culture even prior to the establishment of the State –between the attraction to the past, and the pull to the east; between the desire to integrate into global trends and striking roots in the land. All of these will once again raise the question that still remains unanswered: How do we perceive the "place" to be 'home'?

Landscape painting in Israel

The Land of Israel and its landscapes have been described by many travelers and pilgrims¹⁴. It was part of the magical Orient that attracted the West in the late 18th century, and

12. If we refer to the first settlements, and the date of their establishment as being the starting point of organized existence, in 1882; and the kibbutzim of the second aliyah, which were established at the beginning of the century, unlike the "old settlement", which had existed for generations and the landscape of which had been perceived as the traditional landscape.

13. The landscape paintings I selected are works entitled "Landscape" or some combination with it: "Landscape around Jaffa" or "Surroundings of Tel Aviv" for example. I wanted to test the concept of paintings whose subject is landscape, rather than landscape as the background for another story. This was not always possible, since, at the beginning of the century there was almost no landscape itself in the paintings. In these cases, I have chosen to discuss paintings in which landscape was an important and central element.

14. Yehoshua Ben-Arieh, "The perceptions and images of the Land of Israel and Jerusalem in the literature of Western travelers in the 19th century", in: **Exchanges in the new Jewish history** (Ettinger Book), Jerusalem, Shazar Center 5748 (1988), pp. 89-114.

with greater intensity during the 19th century; it was part of the exotic Orient: a cradle of imagination, freedom and emotion¹⁵. At the same time, Israel was also a sacred place - a land where the events of the Old and the New Testaments had taken place; a land in which having contact with it and residing in it fills you with a sense of sanctity, which remains wherever the "holy figures" from the past had walked¹⁶.

European painters painted landscapes of Israel and its inhabitants as if they were illustrations for Bible stories. The local artists painted present-day life in the landscape, or what appeared to be such: the 20th century opens with the artists from 'Bezalel', the flag bearers of original-renewed Jewish art in the land of our Fathers¹⁷. Creations and crafts abounding with Jewish symbols, such as the Star of David, the Menorah, palm fronds, mixed with influences from the East: Persia, Turkey, Yemen, Syria. Some of the Bezalel artists who came from Europe brought with them the stylistic influences they had acquired there: the meandering line of the art-nouveau; the blurs of color and ambiguity of mystical-symbolic,romantic-legendary.

First Look: Image of the Landscape of Home

Between 1920 and 1931, Ze'evRaban painted ten pictures of Israeli landscapes¹⁸. The 'Jerusalem'

15. The discovery of the East by the West occurred politically and intellectually at the same time: Napoleon's invasion of the Middle East was one of the important factors, together with the wars in region the mid-19th century (Turkey-Russia, Greece, Sudan, Cyprus); the translation of 'Arabian Nights' gave the West access to the Eastern culture's plentiful imagery, described to Westerners the oriental lifestyle, its colorful people and its unique places, and filled their imagination with the "East": wonderful palaces, flying horses, magic carpets and magical bottles. 'Orientalism' is a term meaning the perception of the East by the West, as having natural characteristics with threatening violence and everyday folkloristic life, and its people as noble savages. See the review of the "oriental" design by the West in Edward Said's, **Orientalism**, Tel Aviv, Am Oved, 2000.

16. For the emphasis on landscapes painted by Israeli painters, as opposed to landscapes painted by pilgrims and travelers, see: Yehoshua Ben-Arieh, **The painters and paintings of the Land of Israel in the nineteenth century**, Jerusalem, Yavetz, Hemed, 1992, in which one recognizes the perception of a foreigner observing the landscape and its inhabitants, as a visiting tourist, without the conceptual and social burden that accompanies the local Israelis.

17. Background on art during the period of the first decade of the 20th century appears in Tammuz, Levita, Ofrat, *The Story of Israeli Art* (see footnote 3 above), pp. 32-13, and describes the "Bezalel" concept – the Utopia of Israeli art at its outset.

18. From: Palestine, 10 Pictures by Ze'evRaban, Bney Bezalel Pub. Jerusalem, 1931. Ze'ev Raban painted ten landscape pictures of cities in Israel, all of them in this format, including Jaffa, Tiberias, Hebron and Haifa (below) and famous tourist sites such as the Tower of David, Rachel's Tomb and the Wailing Wall.

landscape is seen as if painted through a window; the lintel is decorated with leaping hinds, and there are plants with twisted branches bearing pomegranate-like fruit. The two pillar heads supporting the lintel, are plaited like two plants or two figures embracing. At the base of the pillars are two lions, the symbol of Jerusalem, and the base of the picture is decorated like the upper lintel, bearing the inscription taken from a verse from Psalms: " Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee". Jerusalem is painted inside the frame, a supposedly realistic picture of the city from west to east, but careful observation reveals that it is a simulation of an oriental city: domes, arches, cylindrical clay railings of roof balconies and cypress trees scattered in the background. A large building that could be identified as the Hurva Synagogue in the Jewish Quarter, and the minaret next to it; the Dome of the Rock in the background, and the Mount of Olives on the horizon. The sizes of the buildings and the topography of the landscape are not accurate. By using Raban's tools of expression – art-nouveau and symbolism – a distant, dreamy look is emphasized: the city seen through the window is distant, unattainable. This is an image that symbolizes the landscape, and not the landscape as actually seen by the painter.

With Raban's tools of expression of art-nouveau and symbolism, the distant, dreamy look is emphasized²⁰.

The urban landscape of Haifa repeats this image: this landscape is also painted as if looking through a window. The mountain, the bay and the horizon constitute a frame for an ancient oriental city on the sea coast, with domed houses and tall palm trees to highlight its character. The depiction of the landscape from above, a distant view, defines the point of observation as controlling the area. The city is empty, like in a postcard. The figures in the foreground are seated on Mount Carmel, overlooking the landscape, dressed as Arabs, and they call out to winged angels - beings that originate in the European-Christian world of artistic figures.

Cityscapes of other towns in Israel, such as Tiberias and Safed, are all described from the same angle: The city always sits at a distance the natural landscape is a kind of changing backdrop; palm trees and domed roofs as an image of an oriental city. An oriental image,



Figure 1:
Ze'ev Raban, Jerusalem, 23.5*14 cm¹⁹



Figure 2:
Ze'ev Raban, Haifa, 1920-31, 23.5*14²¹

19. From: <http://www1.amalnet.k12.il/sites/Mifgashim/Pages/RabanZeev.aspx>

20. Unlike European symbolism, which is rich with symbols of Satan, sin and hell. For details, see Batsheva Goldman Ida, **Ze'ev Raban: Hebrew Symbolist**, Tel Aviv Museum, Yad Yitzchak Ben Zvi, Jerusalem, October 2001.

21. Illustration from: <http://www.kedem-auctions.com/auction-items>.

since the stone domes popular in the construction on the mountain were flat domes crossed with arches, and flat branched ceilings of buildings made with mud and clay²². The characters are related to the Biblical stories that took place on the site; dressed in what is identified with the figure of the "ancient Hebrew": the image of the "Hebrew" man combining the natural, confident body movements, with the "translation" of the biblical 'coat of many colors' that characterizes the inhabitants of the region – the Arabs and the Bedouin. The depiction of the landscape is an attempt to preserve the Biblical memory of the place rather than to provide a realistic description of the site itself. The landscape in the painting is returning to the lost home, as in the Zionist vision: as an idyll; clean and pure Utopia, the opposite of the darkness of the Diaspora.

The return to the landscape of the past is also a return to the source of power and vitality; open views of the country, the rocky areas, the desert – these are a cure for the ills of exile. These are biblical landscapes which constitute a place of physical and ethical regeneration; they give the sense of home, as opposed to the foreignness of the Jew in the Diaspora.

The Biblical landscape as a source of strength is the background to Lilien's Jewish plowman (1907). Lilien depicts an open field with furrows, and a sky also heavily lined, a thorny 'sabra' plant in the right hand corner of the painting. In the center there is a camel walking, portrayed from a low angle, and therefore appearing oversized in relation to its real size within the landscape²³. The camel takes up the center of the painting; it is harnessed to a plow held by a Jewish farmer wearing a striped robe. The pristine, open landscape, is being plowed by the strength of the camel, while the Jewish farmer is holding the plow. He is the image of the new Jew, the continuation of the mythological fathers of the country.

Bezalel artists continued painting with this perception even when, in the 1920s, an influx of young artists who rebelled against the school of "Utopian-Oriental-Jewishness" appeared on the scene of local landscape artists, and painted the 'return to the homeland' against the Biblical -oriental landscape – which they appeared to see.

Second Look: the landscape of the home of the locals

'Sabbath Eve in Jerusalem' illustrates the change in the perception of the place: the domed

22. See Yizhar Hirschfeld, The Rural Dwelling House in the Hebrew Hills and Building Tradition in Palestine" in *Cathedra* 24 (Tammuz, 5742), pp.

23. See Gideon Ofrat, "An observation about Lilien's sun "in, archive texts, <http://gideonofrat.wordpress.com/2011/01/05>

24. Illustration from: <http://wizolibrary.wizocollege.co.il>



Figure 3:
Ephraim Moshe Lilien, A Jewish Plowman 1907, 36*51 cm, The Israel Museum, Jerusalem²⁴

houses with the arches, the dark cypress trees, the gray road and sky are the new vision of the ancient "Erev Shabbat" (Shabbat eve).

In this context, the landscape of Israel becomes not Biblical but contemporary, the home in which present-day life is taking place. The paintings often depict the landscapes of the country, with the emphasis on descriptions of landscape as the topic of the creation rather than a backdrop for another topic. However, even the depiction of this view is not devoid of imagery: a very early work, dating from 1922, is that of Reuven, depicting the sandy landscape on which the first Hebrew city, Tel Aviv, is being built. Unlike Lilien's heroism and Rabban's art-nouveau sweetness, the small houses of Tel Aviv with the red roofs stand scattered about on the sand, without any order, without any roots; the azure sea in the background, and three little boats bobbing about like in a child's drawing –innocent in shape, composition, in the perception of depth (perspective) and color.

The house that Rubin depicts is the new Tel Aviv, and not history-laden Jerusalem with its many complexities, religions and people. Reuben wrote in 1924: "I have forgotten Romania; New York was very far away. In the Land of Israel, the sun shone, there was a sea, there were pioneers with tanned bodies, bronzed faces and open shirts; girls, Yemenites and children with huge eyes..."²⁷ Observing the people of the land and the emphasis given to them as the "protagonists" of the paintings in the 1920s are, in effect, the components of the new perspective to the "home". No longer a look aspiring towards the landscape of the ancient home, towards the place where the utopian-archetypal-Biblical Jewish characters who have returned to their Jewish land are living; but looking at the landscape as the home of the indigenous population, the natives, and turning the Arab, the well-rooted compatriot, into an object of admiration and a role model.²⁸

In the "Forward" catalog, the 1920s are presented as expressing the connection to the East: the Arab as an Arab and not as a reflection of the Biblical hero, perceived as a model of belonging, as the natural existential connection with the country. Zalmona writes: "The Arab is the instinctiveness, the physical strength, the opposite of the stereotype of the



Figure 4:
Shmuel Levi-Opal, Erev Shabbat in Jerusalem, watercolor on paper²⁵



Figure 5:
Reuven Rubin, Houses in Tel Aviv, 1923, oil on canvas, 75*55 cm, Abramov collection, Jerusalem²⁶

wretched and miserable Jew. While the Diaspora Jew was passive, physically weak, spiritual, did not engage in physical work, and was a rootless wanderer, so will the new Jew be aggressive, physical, active, independent, rooted, material, living a natural life in harmony with his surroundings²⁹".

The local scenery is the new home: the Arab inhabitants of the country and the rural landscape provided the local answer to turning one's back on the Diaspora. The change in ideological perception and the objective of returning to the land was also reflected in the transfer of the center of art from Jerusalem and from the historical Tower of David, the location of exhibitions, to a tent on the beach in Tel Aviv³⁰. The artists who left Jerusalem as the center of their creative environment and moved their homes to Tel Aviv, such as Reuven, Paldi, Gutman, Tager, Shemi and others, painted the exotic, the indigenous, the country's natural landscape and moved from the Jewish (= Jerusalem) to the Israeli (= Tel Aviv). The scenery of the Land of Israel is no longer the exotic picturesque surroundings of Bezalel, but scenery that is native, rustic and natural.

The style of painting of these works was sometimes called the "Land of Israel school" of painting, because it was created in Israel by painters who rebelled against the concept of the 'Bezalel' artists, which they felt to be anachronistic. After a period of studying and working in Europe, artists who lived and worked in Israel created a style that was an expression of the modern trends appearing in Europe, combined with content and subjects that they encountered in Israel³¹. Looking back, it will be understood that this trend did not create new local art - which had been the impression - but rather a Western style that was translated into local landscapes, and the figures that characterized them; the primitive trend of European painting had expressed full Arab figures, which replaced Gauguin's brown women from the Polynesian islands, and "The Young Ladies of Avignon" by Picasso; whereas the local countryside was a worthy substitute for the exotic landscapes of European painting³². In other words, despite the fact that it seemed that the admiration for what was

25. Illustration from: <http://cafe.themarker.com/post/2542099>

26. Painting from: <http://cafe.themarker.com/post/2803813>

27. Reuven Rubin, **Reuven, an autobiography and a selection of pictures**, Tel Aviv, 1984, p. 145.

28. General background on the art of the period, Levita, Ofrat, **The Story of Israeli Art** (see footnote 3 above), Chapter Two, pp. 33-51, and also Yigal Zalmona, "The Orient in Israeli Art of the 1920s", in: Mark Schoeps (ed.), **Israeli Art in the 1920s**, Tel Aviv Museum, Tel Aviv, 1982.

29. Yigal Zalmona, *100 Years of Art* (see footnote 3 above), p. 57, quoting there the words of Nachum Gutman: "...I loved the Arab humor, the descriptiveness, the lack of misery, those are things I have not seen in the character of the Jews who came from small towns..."

30. The important exhibitions of Israeli art were held in the Tower of David between 1921 and 1932, see: Yigal Zalmona, **Days of the Tower of David: the first cultural war in Israeli Art**, Tower of David Museum, Jerusalem, 5752-1991.

31. See Gideon Ofrat, on the influences of European artists such as Henri Rousseau, Paul Cézanne, Marc Chagall and others upon Israeli artists, in: <http://gideonofrat.wordpress.com/2010/12/15>.

32. On the analogy between the 'Siesta' by Gutman in 1926 and Picasso's "Sleeping Peasants" of 1919, in Yigal Zalmona, *100 Years of Israeli Art* (see footnote 3 above), pp. 72-73.

"local" indicated a sign of involvement in the country, the landscape painting, nonetheless, still expressed the foreignness that the enchanted Europeans felt for the landscape which was indigenous, different and exotic; it was unfamiliar, they were outsiders and were not part of it.

An unmistakable representative of the style is Nahum Gutman, whose landscape paintings reflect the attraction to the local rural landscape, and the figures in his paintings express the vitality and intensity of the peasants; small domed houses, small doorways, some of them arched, a minaret, a bell tower on the hill, a roadway, a wall along which a white-robed figure is walking, the tall palm trees "slicing the sky", the thick vegetation surrounding the buildings and the mystery - all of these will become the elements of the new home.

The Kinneret landscape of 1928 describes a moment of dreamy peace; the Sea of Galilee lies quietly between the mountains, and we peek at it through a gully that opens up before our eyes. On the slopes lies a small town surrounded by trees. Small square houses with flat roofs. They are built of basalt rocks, sealed with white mortar. Paths wind their way between the houses. Arab figures stand in the doorways of the houses, and a donkey is slowly making its way up the path. The home of the new generation is described in Gutman's landscape painting: a culture of leisure and tranquility, a slow pace, natural, rural and not urban. The village as a symbol of what is local; human existence, deep-rooted, connected to nature and the landscape. This landscape is the new home of the people of Israel—the placid, rural oriental landscape.

Third Look: The home as an agricultural landscape

Alongside the depictions of the local landscape arises a new image of the landscape as the home of the Zionist vision: the local landscape is agricultural, expressing the ethos of Jewish labor—the barren earth of Israel can be conquered by the strength of Hebrew work. Israel Paldi's painting 'Landscape', 1928, shows the mountainous landscape with strong, almost expressive brush strokes: plowed fields on the hills, an almond orchard blossoming white. The landscape that the new Zionist settlement is creating is revealed to us: a horse-drawn cart at the front of the painting, rows of cypress trees demarcating agricultural plots; on the horizon, against the blue sky, white clouds are the crown of the agricultural landscape. The colors of the landscape are hot, the plowed earth is dark brown; the dark green scale of the trees conveys a strong sense of renewal. The only human figure in the landscape is the wagon driver, sitting high on a pile of hay, dressed in work clothes, with out any trace of the appearance of the mythical forefathers of the nation or the local Arabs.



Figure 6:
Nahum Gutman, Tiberias landscape,
oil on canvas, 1928, 58.5*78.5, The Israel
Museum³³

The 'landscape' by Arie Lubin of that same year, also portrays an agricultural panorama of the gentle hills and represents the home that is slowly crystallizing in the Israeli consciousness, as well as the image of the Israeli: groups of trees in the background define the houses in the agricultural settlement, peeking out at the top of the picture. Despite the relatively small area, they are prominent in white against a background of dark brown-green, the hot balance of the landscape. The foreground of the picture shows light-colored sands on which wild trees grow, and the distant landscape beyond the village is also mountainous and exposed, almost barren. Within this primordial framework is the agricultural landscape, as an ideal vision of conquering the wilderness, labor and fulfillment.

Lubin's landscape painting depicts the formation of contradictory forces in relation to place, and opposite directions of attraction in the perception of the home: the home, as returning to the ancient homeland, as the landscape of the natives or as the realization of settlement. These opposing directions became clear political ideologies, and these were their nuclei, which gradually strengthened as the decades and the events passed. None of them became acquainted with the new landscape, understanding its depth and making it "home".

Fifth Look: The home in the universal landscape

The local landscape, with its local population of the strong Arab men, the round curvaceous Arab women, the small villages surrounded by orchards on the hilltops, on the one hand—and, on the other, the new agricultural countryside filled landscape paintings for nearly a decade. The Israeli home had two faces: the local-oriental and the local-western; the former included an Arab home, the latter a western home; in the former were primordial landscapes, in the latter were the modern.

A greeting card from 1932 depicts the landscape: in the background the landscapes of Genesis, mountains, local construction, palm trees; and, at the front, the Jewish worker, standing erect and virile, plowing the land and redeeming the soil.

This dichotomy gradually fades. In the 1930s, the sunny Israeli landscape darkens and the brush strokes become strong, expressive. No more child-like innocence of Ruben's Tel Aviv, no Arab villages nor the agricultural landscapes of Paldi or Lubin. An upheaval was taking place in Israeli painting, in its content and in how it was expressed; this occurred very gradually



Figure 7:
Israel Paldi, landscape, oil on canvas, 1928
72.5*62.5 cm, The Israel Museum³⁴



Figure 8:
Arie Lubin, Landscape, 1928



Figure 9:
Greeting card, 1932, black and white,
480*313 mm³⁵

33. Painting from: <http://www.yynet.co.il/yaan/0,7340,L-10493-MTA0>

34. Paldi's paintings in: http://he.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D7%99%D7%A9%D7%A8%D7%90%D7%9C_%D7%A4%D7%9C%D7%93%D7%99.

35. From: www.tapuz.co.il

towards the end of the 1920s, and became the common style of painting during the 1930s. The change is clear, but the reasons for the change are divided: Zalmona indicates the Arab riots against the Jews in 1929 as the turning point in the perception of the local Arab; he is no longer portrayed as the "local protagonist" but as a murderer³⁶. Zalmona describes the ideological fragmentation that dictates the desire of the Jewish community to disassociate itself from the Arab community: the Jews perceived themselves as western, modern, and not identified with the rural and traditional Arabs who, only a few years earlier, had been perceived as 'salt of the earth'. This trend become stronger, according to Zalmona, in the 1930s, especially in the years 1936-1939, with the growing animosity and hostility during the Great Arab Revolt, with the waves of killings (the events of 5696 - 5699) and with the 'tower and stockade' form of settlement.

Levita attributes this change in the subject of paintings and modes of expression to the artistic events in Israel: Yitzhak Frenkel's studio in Tel Aviv operated from the mid-1920s. His students were young pioneers who, during the day, worked constructing roads, building and working at pioneering the land; and who, in the evenings, painted in the studio. Frankel brought the spirit of French art to Tel Aviv: Impressionist painting, post-impressionist and expressionist trends.

The pioneers, fulfilling the Zionist ideal in their work, did not need to paint it. Their paintings lacked oriental romance or pioneering. The painting itself was the study subject, and not the expression of a story³⁷. In the 1930s there was a dramatic development in Israeli art, and Israeli eyes looked towards France: works barely describe the orient, its landscapes and its people. Artists chose to paint landscapes in the early morning or evening, so as not to struggle with the bright and intense Mediterranean light; thus Israeli landscape painting started to imitate European landscape paintings, with its dim and dark shades, as an antithesis to the local aspect.

36. Yigal Zalmona relates to this in the chapter "the Orient in Israeli Art of the 1920s," in the exhibition catalog "Israeli Art of the 1920s" (see footnote 29 above). This theme repeats itself extensively in his article in the exhibition catalog "Forward – the Orient in Israeli Art". There he describes a greeting card for Rosh Hashana of 1930, and offers commentary on it according to which, the Arab village is identified with the past, with suffering, with sadness - the curse. In contrast, the new built settlement and its main symbols - a water tower and plowed fields - are a sign of blessing. The local and deep-rooted idealization of rootedness was severed with the riots and killing in the 1930s. The card and its interpretation can be seen in: Yigal Zalmona, *Forward* (see footnote 2 above), p. 64.

37. Levita, Ofra, *The Story of Israeli Art* (see footnote 3 above), pp. 54-58.

38. The painting from: http://www.montefiore.co.il/products.php?search_artist



Figure 10:
Issai Kulvianski, Tel Aviv Beach, oil on canvas, 57*76 cm³⁸

How European could a Tel Aviv beach appear? The shades of the sand, the water and the pale sky are not local; the cool tones and the starved figures exemplify a look to the west; the landscape does not belong here, to this place; the home is now overseas.

The influence of French painting started by Frenkel intensified with the rush of young artists to Paris. These trips introduced the artists to French painting, especially with the Jewish école de Paris.³⁹ Israeli artists gave up the modernist approach with the Oriental tendency, which had characterized their previous works, and turned towards a Mediterranean⁴⁰ approach.

What is more French than the tall trees on the boulevard providing shade, benches arranged along it and men in suits and women wearing bonnets sitting on them? Joseph Kossonogi's Rothschild Boulevard is but "by chance" in Tel Aviv, and Issai Kulvianski's man selling oranges is painted against a dark background, shaded and overcast. The landscape paintings of the 1930s have become darker, the dark green hues and soft browns are primary. Pictures of the village, in which previously one had seen domed roofs, donkeys and Arabs, have become pictures of boulevards and pathways, overshadowed by heavy trees.

The objection to the landscape paintings of the previous generation had brought a reversal: from the bright landscape to the grayish one, from Israeli landscapes to scenes of gardens and blooming avenues. Were the journeys to Paris the result of the hostilities and the struggle against the Arabs, which pushed for the renewal of the connection with the Western world in contrast to trends of integration with the East? Or was this the continuation of the French spirit that Frankel had brought? Or just a fashion? Perhaps it was a combination of all of the above. In any case, Israeli landscape paintings began to resemble French painting more and more, until Moshe Castel wrote in 1940: "Are we to see nature through Parisian glasses?" And Shemi wrote about the painter's detachment from the reality and the nature in which he lives⁴².

39. The Jewish école de Paris-composed of artists from Eastern Europe such as Marc Chagall, Chaim Soutine, Pinchas Kerman, Michel Kikoïne, and exiles from other parts of Europe, for example Modigliani from Italy -was an influential artistic stream between the Wars. It disappeared during World War II.

40. It was not just a concession in principle and change in artistic direction. Denial of what had been done so far had been so dramatic that Paldi, for example, when he returned to Israel, left his old paintings at the hotel where he had been staying in Paris – in other words, he literally discarded them.

41. The two paintings from the collection of Israeli art at the WIZO college, from: <http://wizolibrary.wizocollege.co.il/netpub/server.np?original=2227&site=EffervescenceISR&catalog=catalog>

42. Levita, Ofra, *The Story of Israeli Art* (see footnote 3 above), p. 72



Figure 11:
Issai Kulvianski, selling oranges, oil on canvas, 713*1054, 1939⁴¹

Final look: The home in the Israeli landscape

At a time when artists from Tel Aviv streamed - physically and spiritually - to France and painted the Israeli landscape as if it were French, local landscape painting developed in Jerusalem. In effect, artists who had immigrated to Israel from Germany only recently settled in Jerusalem, and looked at the landscape as it is. The rise of the Nazis to power in Germany brought German artists and intellectuals to Israel, and "Bezalel", which had been closed (its management being located in Germany), opened and became a center for the absorption of immigrants. Jerusalem and the new "Bezalel" became the center for the German 'school', the opposite of the French school that had spread in Tel Aviv, and amongst its artists were: Sternheim, Bloom, Leopold Krakauer, Anna Ticho, Greta Krakauer-Wolf and others⁴³.

Yigal Zalmona defines the drawings of the artists of the German school as being "laden with oriental values, sunburned and lifeless"⁴⁵. This article seeks to show that, after reviewing the painting so far, these drawings demonstrate for the first time the new familiarity with the landscape of home. 'The Jerusalem Hills' is the study sketch showing the landscape and the details of its structure: the topography, the slopes, how they slant down towards the wadi; the exact place where the vegetation is concentrated, the fold in the ground from which the cypress trees rise and grow; the route by which the water flows down the slope and along which grasses grow. This is the first time in the paintings of the landscapes of Israel where a trend is developing that investigates the scenic reality and the details of its components, and not dressing the painting in imagery or preconceptions.

The trend of investigating the landscape emerges from the records of the ruins, rocks and the landscapes of Anna Ticho: a meticulous, detailed and accurate recording of what our eyes see, a landscape in amazingly accurate detail and laden with atmosphere. How different from the 'Judean landscape' seen from beyond the pine tree in Raban's 'Jerusalem', or Paldi's 'Abu Ghosh'; compared with the image and the romance, Anna Ticho describes the landscape as existential; in ink and chalk, almost every pine needle is described, all of the weeds and thorns are described with the atmosphere of the landscape, the heat and dryness.

'Rocks near Motza' by Anna Ticho: drawings with an expressive hand but without the distortion of the German Expressionists, without the gray color of the French Expressionists. These represent, in Zalmona's opinion, "time, which even kills the stone... drawings depicting



Figure 12:
Krakauer, Jerusalem hills, charcoal on paper, 48*63 cm⁴⁴

43. Avraham Ehrlich, **Leopold Krakauer**, Tel Aviv, United Kibbutz Movement 1987.

44. Drawing from: <http://www.mutualart.com/Artwork/The-Mountains-of-Jerusalem/BC1D4CB8D9B3569F>

45. Zalmona forward (see footnote 2 above), p 65.

the age of civilization, its ruins, the emptiness of life and humanity... an old and abandoned world, a world of ghosts controlled by the death"⁴⁶. This article seeks to observe through an inverted perspective: against the background of studying the sense of 'the home' that the Israeli landscape paintings radiate, we can say that the landscape painting reached this stage, after going through stages that had included images, changes and transformations / revolutions; to the maturity of observing the landscape with open eyes, unclouded by the dream of our forefathers, not yearning for the Arab roots and not for the essence of French boulevards. Observation which opens the possibility of studying, of investigating the landscape, of understanding the smallest details of its components and, for the first time, allowing a sense of belonging to the home. This is the beginning of acclimatizing and building a local culture - real and deep-rooted.

View from a distance

Landscape paintings have become research tools, through which I have tried to comprehend the perception of the 'home' in the land of Israel. Beyond the discussion of landscape paintings, in forms of expression, in the rainbow of colors, in the manner of brush strokes and color types, the internal struggle that Israeli culture is caught up in was revealed: and painting is one of the manifestations, from time immemorial. The struggle between integrating into the landscape of Israel, and turning towards the West. This review also displayed the deceptive faces of the conflicting forces that are partners in this struggle.

The beginning of the Israeli landscape painting in the perception of landscape as a backdrop for historical events in Jewish myths. The landscape is not perceived as existing, but as fulfilling an image and an idea, a kind of veiled observation of biblical landscape in which historical stories of the nation returning to its Homeland took place. This trend is fading with the rise of painters who are relocating the center of their artistic lives to Tel Aviv, the new city, and their fascination with what they perceive to be the local landscape, the desire to connect with the "oriental charm", through which they seek to strike roots in the new-old homeland. This trend is sobering with the increase of a stream of artists who position the color, the shapes and the composition of the painting as the subject of their work. Combined with the threatening political reality, the painters are turning towards the greater world. The landscape is no longer the landscape of the land of Israel, it is an alien landscape, cold and gray, a kind of refuge. At the same time a new trend is developing, of looking at the landscape as the landscape of the land, and studying it as it is, studying it slowly, carefully,

46. Ibid.

47. Drawing from: <http://www.tbh.co.il/art/bagrot/pages/61.htm>



Figure 13:
Anna Ticho, Rocks near Motza, drawing, Israel Museum⁴⁷

patiently, meticulously, full of emotion and atmosphere.

As a result of these conflicting forces, in the years that followed the trend of the French expressionist paintings spread, and this became dominant in all the exhibitions: "How long we will be influenced by paintings that are foreign to us and to our reality?" asked Moshe Castel in 1940 –the "home" had become part of Western culture.

The answer to this question comes not in the form of continuing the investigation and study of the landscape, but rather by segmenting it into two streams that characterize the next decade: the mystification in works by Ardon, on the one hand, and the "Canaanites" - the search for roots of Canaanite-Hebrew rather than Jewish - on the other. In addition to all of these, the trend for abstract painting continued to develop, and this stands at the brink of its maturity as a dominant stream during the decade that followed, with the 'New Horizons' in landscape painting too⁴⁸.

In the internal struggle over the image of the home, the universal trend of connecting with the western moods was victorious. The present study highlights the route that was forgotten along the way, through a scholarly study made for the purpose of connecting with the local landscape and transforming it into 'home'.

48. Abstract painting was removed from the discussion due to lack of space. Its outstanding representative, Joseph Zaritsky, already in the 1920s started to describe the landscape by means of abstract painting but, essentially, the abstract relates to the painter and to his feelings, and does not relate to reality as such. See Levita, Ofra, **The Story of Israeli Art**, the chapter on the 'Canaanites' and the 'New Horizons' group, and also: Mordechai Omer, **New Horizons**, Tel Aviv, Tel Aviv Museum of Art, 1996.



ON THE THRESHOLD OF THE HOME – ACCORDING TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF EMMANUEL LEVINAS

DR. EDNA LANGENTHAL

ARIEL UNIVERSITY

We architects are trusted with the task of building homes. Indeed, when one thinks about architecture, the construction of well-functioning homes that have an aesthetic dimension naturally comes to mind. However, does the architect build homes in the profound sense of the word? Perhaps a home is not an architectonic object, but a psychological or sociological one? Perhaps the home that the architect creates is just a container, a shelter that protects its inhabitants?

In this article I turn to the philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas and particularly to his thoughts about the notion of the home. Levinas is known for the ethical turn his thought takes and, as we shall see, his understanding of the home is fundamentally ethical because he links the home to the relationship one has with others.

In the chapter about dwelling in *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas argues that the home does not merely function as a shelter from the elements or a safeguard against enemies. Hence, he rejects the common functionalist approach represented, for instance, in the work of the historian of architecture Banister Fletcher. The latter opens his book *A History of Architecture* with the claim that: "Architecture... must have had a simple origin in the primitive effort of mankind to provide protection against inclement weather, wild beasts and human enemies."¹

While Levinas maintains that houses originated with the functional goal of providing shelter and protection, he argues that they nonetheless have a special role in human life, beyond the functional. A home, or as Levinas calls it a dwelling, is the condition for human life; its origin or arche. Hence, the home's primary role is existential and not functional.

This article consists of three parts. In the first, I introduce two traditional paradigms for thinking about the notion of the home. These paradigms build on an understanding of the home as a semi-natural entity, one that links humans to the natural world. The discussion of the two paradigms serves as an introduction to the second part, where, using Levinas' philosophy, I present an alternative to this approach. I argue that the notion of the home undergoes a change: it is no longer a bridge between humans and the world, but a space

1. B. Fletcher, *A History of Architecture*, D. Cruickshank (ed.), Oxford: Oxford Architectural Press, 1996, p.1

that structures human ambivalence. On the one hand, the home separates humans from the anonymity of the natural world; on the other, it makes entry and exit possible and allows one to welcome others. In the third and last part of the paper, I develop the implications of this line of thinking for the field of architecture. Levinas himself did not make explicit connections between philosophy and architecture. Yet, I argue that there is a concrete and natural connection between the two because the home as an architectural object lays the ethical foundations for our existence. I demonstrate this point by examining two architectural elements crucial for home: the door and the window.

Part I

Traditionally, homes are considered semi-natural entities which bridge the human and non-human world. Unlike other artifacts and technological inventions that subordinate nature to culture or allow humans to abandon their natural state, homes are seen as artificial entities, but not anti-natural ones. The home connects humans to the world spatially and also serves as a link between human and divine creation. There are two main paradigms for thinking of the home as a semi-natural, semi-artificial thing: the place paradigm and the lost home paradigm.²

The place paradigm makes use of two kinds of abodes (Figure 1). The natural abode of rustic living, where humans are “at home” and the urban home. This paradigm, where the home is equivalent to one’s roots, expresses a desire for a harmonious agreement between humans and nature, made manifest by communal living.

The work of Ferdinand Tonnies (1855-1936) offers an example of this paradigm. Tonnies contrasts social and communal life,³ claiming that a community is marked by living, organic human relationships, while society is characterized solely by imaginary or mechanical relationships.⁴ Homes are the most important element in communal relations; they are “the body of the *Gemeinschaft* itself.”⁵ This is because the home establishes boundaries and allows for a sense of belonging, thus enabling relations between neighbors. Tonnies explicitly distinguishes between rustic homes, human natural habitat, and urban homes, where one finds society rather than genuine community. Unlike villagers, city dwellers happen to chance upon their home or artificially choose it.⁶ City dwellers are alien to their

2. For instance: Vitruvius, **The Ten Books on Architecture**, M. H. Morgan (trans.), New York: Dover Publications, 1960; A. Vidler, **The Writing of the Walls**, London: Butterworth Architecture, 1987, 17-21.

3. F. Tonnies, **Community and Society**, C. P. Coomis (trans.), New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1957.

4. *Ibid.*, 33.

5. *Ibid.*, 108.



Figure 1:
Top: Urban scenery, Bottom: country-side

surroundings. Urban living is characteristic of materialistic societies, wherein laborers are exploited and commerce reigns. Rustic living, on the other hand, allows humans to share their belongings and enjoy the fruit of their labor communally.⁷ For Tonnies, the home literally belongs to the farmer who works the land. The home ties humans to the land and to their place, putting an end to nomadic life. Under this view, the natural home is directly connected to its place, that is, to the ground on which it stands and to the ideal, communal group of which it is part.

Unlike the place paradigm, the lost home paradigm (Figure 2) points to the fact that there is no harmony between humans, nature and the world. Such harmony is a thing of the past, forever lost. This view gives rise to the feeling of nostalgia found in numerous stories about the origin of the first home.⁸ An example of this approach is found in Marc-Antoine Laugier's (1713-1769) *An Essay on Architecture*.⁹ Laugier describes a myth of the human primitive state, where humans were first guided solely by instincts. The first man rests on a river bank and feels content. Once the sun becomes too strong, he rushes to find shelter in the nearby woods, where he is again satisfied. Then comes the rain and man must seek shelter in a cave. Since the cave turns out to be too dark and damp, he decides to build a home. For this purpose, he chooses four logs, which he sets as pillars on top of which he places a roof. Later, to control the temperature, he adds walls to the construction.¹⁰ What is most striking in Laugier's story is the natural impulse that guides man to use nature to ameliorate his condition. The home is a direct continuation of the cave and the woods; it is on the same spectrum as other natural objects.¹¹

Despite the difference between these two paradigms, both point to the home as a symbol for human orientation and placement in the world. Furthermore, both distinguish between having a home in the world (which they equate with existing harmoniously with nature) and being homeless (being separate from nature).¹² One could also add the postmodern view as an alternative to the nostalgic view. According to the former, humans were never at home in the world, but rather always alienated from it. This view does not provide a genuine alternative, since it simply holds that humans were always homeless.

Part II

Two aspects of Levinas' thought allow me to discuss the change that the notion of the home undergoes in his corpus: first, the relationship between the notions of place, rootedness and harmony, and second, the relationship between home and the other. I will show that Levinas separates the home from the conceptual cluster of place, rootedness and harmony, and will examine the ways in which Levinas builds the home as a condition for interiority, on the one hand, and openness toward alterity, on the other.

Three aspects of Levinas' thought enable the change that the notion of the home undergoes.

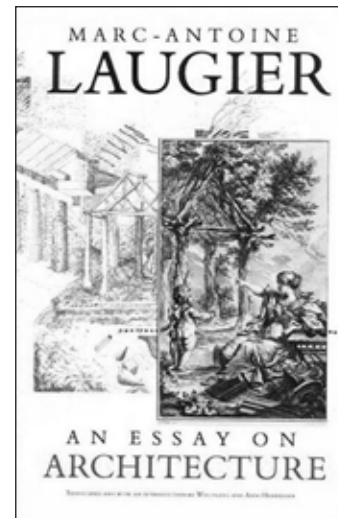


Figure 2:
The cover of Laugier book

The Anonymity of Nature. The Element: nature, or as Levinas calls it, the element, is anonymous. The element is the hylic medium from which things emerge and to which they return. It is a mutual fund that does not belong to any particular person and which is in principle unalienable, for example water, earth, light, and even the city. We have sensuous contact with the element, which envelops us. Levinas likens contact with the element to immersion in liquid, an experience that involves certain sensations which we are, however, unable to attribute to any particular cause. The element lacks an outline or any other quality that would allow one to grasp it, because one cannot distance oneself from the element and in order to grasp anything distance is necessary. The act of building allows one to overcome the absolute proximity to the element. The home is a semi-internal space that surrounds the subject and separates it from the element. The world lacks objective reality prior to the building of the home. The home dissolves the element, making possible the relationship between humans and the world.

Levinas says that the home creates intimacy against the anonymity of the element. By understanding nature as anonymous, Levinas separates himself from thinkers who envision the home as a bridge to nature or an expression of the original human state. If nature is anonymous, as Levinas claims, then the intimacy of the home is its opposite.

The Formation of the Subject. Enjoyment: According to Levinas, the subject is first and foremost a body and as such it has direct contact with the world. Subjects become who they are through enjoyment. The notion of enjoyment expresses the primary relation that

6. Ibid., 227.

7. Ibid., 43. As we shall see, for Levinas the home is always chosen and there is no natural dwelling with which it is contrasted.

8. J. Rykwert, *On Adam's House in Paradise*, MIT Press, 1989.

9. M. A. Laugier, *An Essay on Architecture*, W. Herrmann and A. Herrman (trans.), Los Angeles: Hennessey and Ingalls, 1977.

10. Ibid. 11-12

11. Other examples of this paradigm are Vitruvius (first century BC) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778).

12. The anthropological meaning of homelessness becomes clear in Martin Buber's work, which distinguishes periods of dwelling from periods of homelessness. M. Buber, *The knowledge of man: Selected essays*, Maurice Friedman and Ronald Gregor Smith (trans.), New York: Harper & Row, 1965. Buber argues that one's home is the world; when one cannot make the world one's home, then homelessness is one's share. Levinas contends this point when he argues that it is precisely the home that separates humans from the world.

humans have toward their existence and discloses the fact that human lives are valuable. Levinas describes inwardness as a dimension of a living subjectivity that is intimately linked to an outside that nourishes it.¹³ Nourishment is the concrete foundation to which life is already bound; Levinas calls it “objects of enjoyment.” This does not mean hedonistic pleasure, but rather the fundamental structure of life. Sorrow and pain sustain us as well; they too nourish us and fill up our lives with value.

The Relationship between Subjects and Nourishment; Caring about Tomorrow:

The external things that nourish us become the basic components of our lives and identities; they shape us as independent entities. However, their presence is constrained by constant insecurities. At the heart of the enjoying self stands an unquiet self. The self worries about tomorrow and this worry weakens one’s sense of security. We constantly worry that we will cease enjoying. Hence, humans position themselves in the world in an anxious, troubled and restless manner, constantly on guard, facing an unknown future.

The act of building a home allows one to hold on to one’s nourishment. The home prevents disquietude and anxiety from causing the self to collapse back into the element. Hence, the home’s primary role is not to provide shelter from harsh weather, but to break the element by creating a utopia.

Utopia here does not have an ideal sense. Utopia is a non-topos: a non-place at the heart of place. It is the separation of the self from the world. This separation is formed through the subject’s enjoyment, by the fact that the subject is independent and sentient. According to Levinas, one does not approach the world directly from the world, but from a place outside the world, from the utopia of the home.¹⁴ The utopia is created when the inwardness of the subject, the mental space, is projected outward, so to speak. Levinas is not an idealist who thinks being at home is simply a metaphor for the psyche. The home is a spatial entity; it is the concrete expression of human inwardness. The material home is therefore a portico to human inwardness, a gateway to subjectivity.

In addition to separating humans from the element or from nature, the home also allows for representation, ownership and even ethics. This is due to the fact that the home creates distance, which is fundamental for all three. Since the element is inseparable from humans, only building a home can create distance between them. Levinas resists the idea that the

13. Nourishment is a metaphor; we are nourished by more than just foodstuff.

14. **Totality and Infinity**, 157.

15. On the home as a link between human and the world see: D. A. Kelly, “Home as a Philosophical Problem,” **The Modern Schoolman** 52, 1975, 151-168.

home mediates humans and the world or that the home exists on a continuum between them. For him, the home separates and distances humans and the world.¹⁵

As independent, psychic creatures, humans develop relationships with their environment, relationships marked by ownership, labor and representation. One cannot distance oneself from one’s body as one does from the home; hence, one does not relate to one’s body in terms of ownership and labor. The body consumes whatever comes its way; it digests the element completely. The space of the home, on the other hand, allows one to leave things suspended: the home takes things in but does not absorb them. Ownership, for example, means taking objects out of their original context and enriching them with new meaning. The home also makes labor possible. For instance, when one cultivates the lands or travels by sea, these spaces become part of one’s domiciles and constitute one’s being in the world. Representation also becomes possible because of the home. By representing, one can think of things as objects. The ability to think about objects and to discern them from each other requires the ability to draw boundaries, to define and set limits. This act of separation is possible only through dwelling, through the opposition between exteriority and interiority. Thus, the home conditions thinking. The domestic sphere allows one to think of absent things, making them present by bringing them home.

For Levinas, humans do not enter the world as complete entities. The constitution of subjectivity and the foundation of human independence require constant efforts, never becoming complete. The subject’s identity and independence are created through dwelling in one’s home, in the world. Humans approach the world from the interiority of the home, to which they can retire at any given time. For this reason, humans are never homeless. Levinas claims that even those who feel alienated from the world eventually feel at home in it. Travel and rootlessness do not make humans homeless, but rather dispose them to seek a home.

The Feminine

The home can seem to be an element that contains the subject, separating it from the world. However, the movement into the home does not signify parting from the world, but suspending the world in a way that allows one to return to it. The movement inward, into the home is egoistic in nature. According to Levinas, this movement makes hospitality, being receptive to an outside world, possible. He calls this the feminine movement. When retreating from the outside and entering into the home, we assume that the home is a welcoming place into which we can recede. Entering into the home, one experiences its intimacy. The home offers a space where worries subside, it has a tender touch. This tenderness allows the subject to constitute herself softly and intimately. The intimacy of dwelling does not merely belong to the closed circuit of selfhood; one is not merely

intimate with one's self. The intimacy of the home is a testimony to the intimacy one has with others, with the feminine element.¹⁶ The domestic element that characterizes subjectivity is linked to prior human presence. Even if there is no actual woman in the home, the distance that the home creates is not empty and cold, but rather marked by the presence of feminine warmth. The source of this warmth is the encounter with feminine otherness, which provides the home with its familiarity and intimacy. The loving, feminine other one encounters is familiar. The feminine is not the absolute other. The experience of the feminine predates and serves as a condition for the revelation of absolute otherness.

The Revelation of the Other's Face

In Levinas, the subject confronts the Other. The encounter with the Other creates distance between the self and objects; those objects that became one's own because of the home. In order to retreat from one's involvement with things, one needs not only to refrain from enjoying material objects, but also give them up as possessions. One needs to learn to give up one's belongings. This requires an encounter with otherness, with a transcendent and absolute Other. The other challenges claims of ownership and loosens the subject's hold on material goods and possessions, by putting forth the imperative "thou shalt not kill". The face of the other commands that I care for her, warns me not to harm her – she not only prohibits murder, but also greed and refusal to share my goods with her.

Unlike worldly objects, which are in principle always within our reach, the face of the other has a hidden dimension that forever escapes us, says Levinas. The only way to come in contact with this dimension is by developing an ethical relation to the other. Humans always understand their place in the world vis-à-vis their relation to others. Hence, according to Levinas, it is not the land or walls that make a home, but the fact that it has doors and windows, through which guests may enter.

Facade, Window and Door

Levinas criticizes the tendency to treat the human face as a building's façade. For him, the façade is merely an external appearance that conceals hidden interiority. I am standing in a piazza facing the façade of a broad, short building. There are many windows and doors to this façade, and yet it is blind. Who does it address? Whose gaze does it capture?

"Façade" is an architectonic term; the front part of a building. A building's façade, which is midway between the outside and the inside can be interpreted in numerous ways. If the façade is seen as the inside of the building, for instance, then it expresses the building's inner contents; contents that it at the same time conceals. For Levinas, this metaphor signifies that the façade is a "flat" screen onto which the building's interiority is projected. Thinking of the façade as a flat screen implies that it is conceived as a frame that represents

the interior of the building, an interior designed to meet certain needs. An office building, for example, has a façade that expresses its interiority; expresses the fact that it is a place of work. The façade of a residential building, on the other hand, should capture or represent the unique activities of the domestic space. The person who uses the façade has a uniform and unchanging relation to it, one planned in advance. However, this is not the only way to "read" façades. A façade can also be interpreted as a space that preserves the tension between the inward movement of entering into the home and receptivity to the external implicated in welcoming the other.

The architectonic object is not a static entity; movement is integral to the way we perceive it. Hence the façade, in the context of the building, should not be understood as a static screen. Façades have openings, which allow for entry and exit – through the door – and opening and closing – through the window. Levinas describes the home as a fundamental existential condition, which preserves the movement inward and outward simultaneously. This movement is "at the same time open and closed."¹⁷ It allows the self to separate from the world and gather itself while also enabling the self to maintain a transcendent relationship with otherness, through hospitality.

Doors and windows are common architectural elements, ones which we often encounter in daily life. These architectonic thresholds frame our lives. We enter and exit buildings through doors; feel secure at home because of our ability to close the door to the outside world; we maintain a relationship with the outside through the window, which we can open and close allowing air, light, and sounds to enter the home. We move in and out of homes through windows and doors. In fact, the "inward/outward" movement is made possible only through these openings. Doors and windows define the inside and outside of our existential space. They separate us from the outside and connect us to it. Without doors or windows, the home does not exist. The door opens a limit; it marks a dwelling. With its erection a concrete space came into being and was separated from the rest of the world. Yet, closed doors disclose the fact that they can, in principle, be opened. The door always opens to an outside. Hence, the door is ambiguous: it defines the inside and separates it from an outside, distinguishing the private and the public sphere; and yet, it also allows movement from the enclosed interior to the outside world. Thus, the door is without a doubt more than a limit between the inner space and the outside world.

Let us consider the façade's window. Like the door, the window both defines an inside and

16. Ibid. 155.

17. **Totality and Infinity**, 148.

opens to an outside. Like doors, windows are openings in walls. However, the two differ significantly, inasmuch as the body carries out the inside/outside movement through the door, while the eyes allow us to look outside through the window. A window can be open or shut. When shut, we are inside, looking outside through the window's frame. The window then seems to be a frame that defines how the outside appears. This explains why we often reduce the singularity of the other to a set of properties that appear through a certain frame.¹⁸ While the act of opening a window changes something in the building – the basic dichotomy between inside and outside is traversed, with the outside entering inside – the change is significant mostly for those who are inside, in the home (Figure 3).

It seems, then, that as soon as one enters the home, one's connection to the outside world is established mainly by gazing through the window. In fact, one can also shut all windows and curtains and withdraw into the interior space, which is now completely uninterrupted by the outside. The ability to withdraw into the home means that one is able to separate oneself from the element, from the anonymity of natural existence. But this withdrawal can be interrupted by the entryway, by the meaning that the door carries.

The door is first and foremost characterized as a threshold. By constituting a threshold, the door erects a place that one can close off and into which one can withdraw. At the same time, the door points to a fundamental crack in this closed space. Whoever is outside knocks on my door. In Levinas' words: "This presence consists in coming toward us, in making an entry. This can be put in this way: the phenomenon of the Other's (Autrui) aspiration is also a face - or ... the epiphany of a face is a visitation."¹⁹

The other becomes present as it comes toward us, as it enters. The face is present as a movement that comes from elsewhere and approaches us. The epiphany of the face is a visit. When thinking of the visit, we tend to imagine someone knocking on the door, appearing on the threshold. This threshold makes a difference; it is a space that disrupts all continuity; a transitional place. The simultaneous movement of withdrawing inside and welcoming the other appears at the threshold.

An architecture that is based on this conception of otherness needs to reconcile the tension between one's rights and the rights of the other. This architectonic culture ought to consistently conceptualize dwelling spaces where the tensions and oppositions



Figure 3:
Looking out from the window

between outer and inner, public and private, the open and the closed express and manifest themselves together.

I would like to end this discussion with a short analysis of an episode that appears in the Talmud. This story will allow us to articulate the Levinasian insights into the nature of the threshold and his understanding of the relationship between the home and responsibility toward the other.

The Talmudic Tractate Baba Batra elaborates on the discussion in the Mishnah of the status of those who live outside in the yard. The Talmud examines the "He may be compelled to the building of a porter's lodge and a door for the courtyard..."²⁰ The Gemara examines the question of the necessity of building a gatehouse.

To answer this question, the Gemara tells a story of a Chasid who used to converse with Elijah. Once this Chasid built a gatehouse, Elijah stopped appearing to him. Why, the Gemara asks, has this happened? Before answering this question, we need to explain what a gatehouse is, exactly (Figure 4). It is a small structure that stands at the entrance to the yard to prevent strangers from entering into the home. A gatehouse is a threshold or an entryway to the house.

First, it seems odd to demand making an opening. Can we even conceive of a home that



Figure 4:
Threshold

18. Levinas examines the image of the window, perspective and conceptions of visual representation in Renaissance painting and their relation to philosophy and the problem of sight in **Totality and Infinity**, 67-69.

19. **Meaning and Sense**, 69 (original emphasis).

20. "Tractate Baba Batra," Babylonian Talmud, 1:5 Soncino Press translation

does not have an opening? Yet, the discussion seems to focus on the relationship between the inside and the outside and the measure between the two. It seems to indicate that the absence of Elijah (who represents the divine) is directly related to the way in which the word “measure” is understood. According to Levinas, a measure is always related to a relationship to an other. The measure is the way in which one relates to others and itself is measured through grace.²¹

Hence, the answer to Elijah’s absence lies in the erection of the gatehouse that prevents the poor from entering the house. The poor man stands at the entrance of the gatehouse and the depth and structure of this house block his plea, preventing it from echoing in the house. The Gemara sees hospitality and welcoming the other as cornerstones for any home. Elijah stopped visiting the Chasid because the latter does not let others into his home. Elijah refuses to enter a space from which the poor, the widows and the travelers are excluded.

We see that doors are measured by their ability to let others into the home, by being the threshold that allows one to welcome the other. According to Levinas, a home where the voice of the other does not reverberate is not truly a home.

Structures that are understood as well defined and impenetrable exclude all interpretation and do not leave space for otherness. The only human presence in such structures is that of the homeowner. Since such objects are designed from a one-dimensional perspective, that of the owner, they do not take genuine otherness into account. The other remains external to such objects, passively gazing at them from the outside. Architectonic objects, which by nature invite human activity and call for responsibility toward the other, betray their own nature under such conditions. Since otherness is external to them, these architectonic objects cannot become genuine spaces.

Nowadays, few architects believe that architecture has any other function than providing shelter. In a world driven by technology and aspiring toward maximum efficiency, one tends to think of humans as matter needing organization, hence approached through calculations and computations. However, this approach obscures the many possibilities human life holds and makes such life homogeneous and uniform. We ought to remember, therefore, that the role of the architect should not be reduced to the efficient design of commodities or to the opening of poetic or aesthetic dimensions in human life. Genuine

21. In the Days of Awe the prayer that God taught Moses in the cave in Chorev is repeated: “Thou taughtest us Thy attributes Thirteen to say. Remember then Thy covenant With us unto this day.” (High Holiday Prayer Book, compiled and arranged by Rabbi Morris Silverman - in poem form) The center of forgiveness is the thirteen attributes of God’s mercy, with which God tries to teach Israel the virtues they need to acquire. These virtues will enable the people of Israel to resemble God, by making mercy their measure.

architectural theory and practice ought to provide interpretations for human dwelling. Hence, it is responsible for creating places that allow for and reflect the ethical relationship between the self and the other. Such architecture cannot exist without the Levinasian understanding that the place and the home are inherently linked to the other.



WITH YOUR BACK TO THE SEA
RATIONALE

PROF. BENI REUVEN LEVY
HEAD OF THE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE
ARIEL UNIVERSITY

'If you will it, it is no dream; and if you do not will it, a dream it is and a dream it will remain'

Theodor Herzl

The final project at the University of Ariel School of Architecture is a key step in the overall sequence of the student's studies; an important chapter in the student's academic and professional training; and a complementary stage to the studio studies. As such, the project also serves as a "calling card" for the graduate's future as an Architect.

However, the project is part of an infinite and open-ended journey of the creator in the fields of Architecture and Urbanism; a journey of constant discovery, the underlying principle of which is contemplation, creation and implementation in the architectural language of concepts and places that are worthy for society in general, and the Israeli environment in particular.

There is no fixed or predetermined formula for a final project, but it must have basic qualities in order to be worthy of its position: it must raise a question and/or a matter of principle; express an ideological opinion; constitute a field for personal experiment; be critical, be relevant, innovate, have a dimension of inspiration, committed to environmental sustainability on the one hand, and create a place of tangible human experience on the other. The project needs to demonstrate professionalism in articulating the ethical and architectural position. This will be done through personal expression - deriving from integrating the student's unique language as part of his experience at the school - and from his own experience in general. It is essential to combine the curriculum taught in the studio, as well as profound auto-didacticism.

Beyond the academic and professional content with which the studio provides its students, its main role is to be a source of inspiration for discussion and clarification of subjects. It must allow architectural creation through openness and by encouraging initiatives for thought, creativity and individual concepts within the framework of the basic values taught at the School of Architecture in Ariel: personal and professional ethics, an ecological approach to the natural and the built environment, broad-minded professionalism, social solidarity and striving towards aesthetics that are beautiful both internally and externally.

In accordance with this approach, it was decided in the 2013 - 2014 academic year to allow each student to independently determine the starting point of his/her personal project by means of the opening exercise: "I, We, They - Here and Around". Later on, as part of the requirements for focused reflection of the physical and cultural space in which we live, the students were asked to react, from a conceptual and a design viewpoint, to the premise "With Your Back to the Sea". The students were asked to approach this over the short term and the long term; from the Mediterranean coastline eastwards, while voicing architectural thinking and personal interpretation stemming from this observation.

The studio work has produced a variety of projects throughout the country; projects that have re-examined places in our surroundings and outlined a vision for their future. The students' visions and their planning proposals serve as a platform for consideration and discussion and to influence the content, quality and significance of life in Israel.

Studio Instructors :

Professor Architect Beni Reuven Levy, Professor Architect Saadia Mandel, Architect Itzik El hadif, Architect Dana Oberson, Architect Udi Mendelson.

200 MM - KIRYAT GAT 2013

YECHI AMSILI

The 200 mm 'rain line' is a geographical-climatic line which stretches across the State of Israel and symbolizes the separation between two types of climatic-cultural landscape: the **Negev** - which is identified with arid desert landscape, spreading from the 200 mm line southwards, and which heralds a unique region in the versatile landscape of the State of Israel; and the **coastal plain** - gradually spreading north towards the mountainous Israeli countryside, and identified with a green and fertile land.

The appearance of the 200 mm line is primarily identified as a clear climatic phenomenon but, in fact, it marks an evident dichotomy in the cultural landscape of the State of Israel: the town of Kiryat Gat, planned right on the 200-mm line, was established as an outcome of an unmistakable agricultural vision, and made possible by the gradual range between two different agricultural languages: that of **"non-irrigated"** agriculture, associated with the landscape of the Negev and the desert; as opposed to that of **"artificially irrigated"** agriculture, associated with the coastal plain and the mountains (Figure 1).

My project deals with the question: How does climatic and geographical space define urban planning and make it unique?

The underlying inspiration for the project lies in my childhood memory of the Kiryat Gat landscape: as a boy wandering along random pathways created during the early days of this town, set in the midst of farmland; goat paths branching out between the neighborhood and the wadi, crossing roadways towards the rocky hills and defining

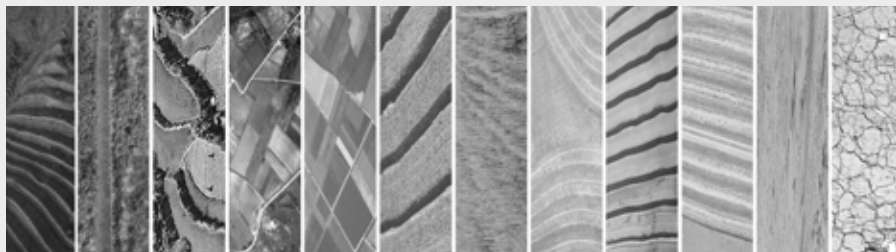


Figure 1:
Change in the landscape at the 200 mm rain line

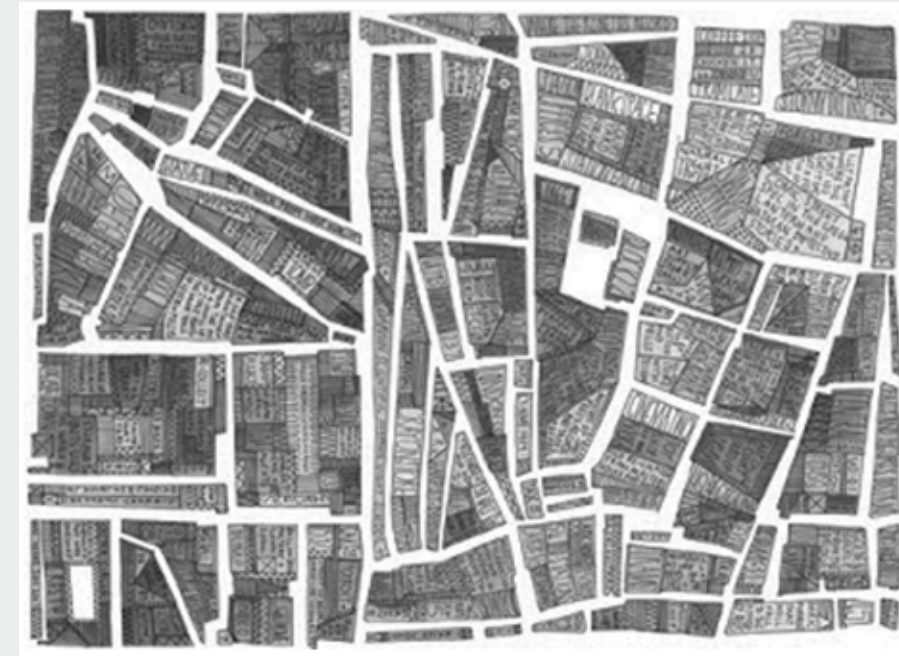


Figure 2:
Roaming urban landscape

anonymous places set into the core of the developing city in the heart of the Lachish region. All of these routes led to the focal point of what was happening in Kiryat Gat in those days - the **town market**. The existence of a vibrant and bustling town market as the center of cultural and social life in Kiryat Gat proved, in point of fact, the importance of the relationship between physical space, the built landscape, and urban planning.

The uniqueness of the town market in Kiryat Gat was the local produce of the Lachish region settlements, traded without any middle-men, and the direct connection between people from different communities and a diversity of cultures that were grouped together (Figure 2).

The inability to cope with the rapidly developing urbanity of Kiryat Gat resulted in a symptom that is common amongst weak development towns - the disintegration and weakening of the urban center of the town, and its growth in peripheral and distant rings. The fascinating meandering routes remained orphans of the curious, since the city had lost its distinctive identity as a city rooted in the midst of an agricultural area.

Recalling my early memory of wandering along those routes, and the experiences of the town market which disappeared as if it had never existed, in the first stage of the transformation I locate and define the transition from the coastal plains landscape to that

of the arid Negev. While the 200mm line dissects the town's center it from west to east, the city is divided, according to my perception, into two main areas that are defined by the morphological language relating to the agricultural landscape:

The northern city - with its morphological characteristics of artificially irrigated agriculture, originally based on the movement of water for irrigation from the upper agricultural portion to the lower portion, through irrigation canals and terraces.

The southern city - with its characteristics of non-irrigated agriculture based largely on rainfall, without the intervention of intentional irrigation. The farmers worked their land in the form of linear strips, which expanded the contact surface of the earth with the rain water (Figure 3).

In the second stage I locate the original roaming paths in the specified operating space, which connected the northern and the southern parts of the town, understanding that these pathways play a decisive part in shaping the identity of the town's renewal (Figure 4).

The rural vision which, in former times, was the basis for the town's planning, now appears in the enveloping architectural interpretation, designing the its landscape with the inspiration of the original panoramainto which Kiryat Gat was planted. The architectural

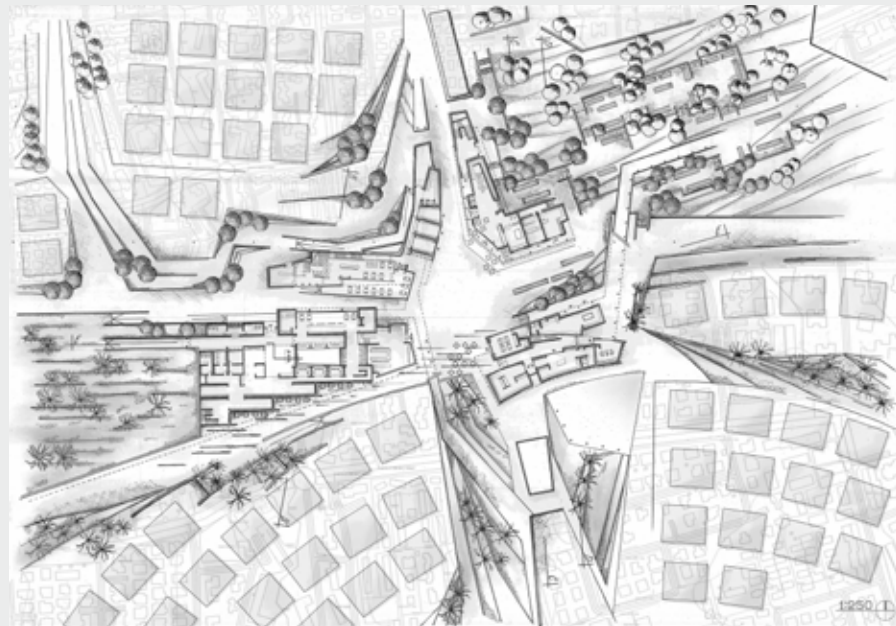


Figure 4:
200 mm - town square and market plan



Figure 3:
Locating the leeway and diagnosing
agricultural and urban morphology

design and urban construction follow the identified morphology, and produce the alternative square in which the new town market is situated.

Just as the agricultural methods manipulate the water and gradually network it towardsthe different plots of land so too, do the roaming paths gradually gather at the new town square, exposing it through indirect views. Reaching the square creates a dramatic experience, as it perpetuates the gap between the edge of the non-irrigated language into the artificially irrigated language and drains all of the paths together into the town market - which is as lively and bustling as it was in the past. The essence of the town market once again becomes a place that creates the launching points for a city that is crying out - both for human encounters and for spatial ones (Figures 5-8).

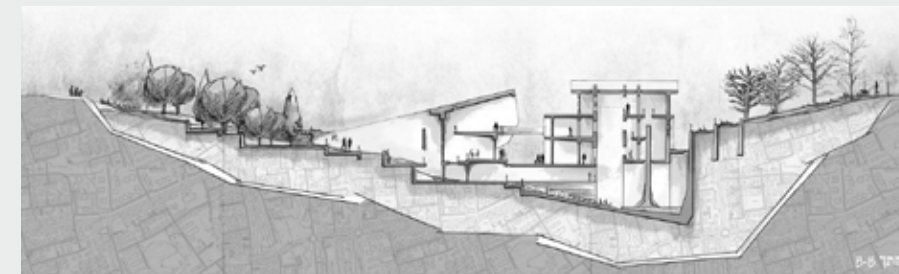


Figure 5:
The road to the market - linear language alongside the language of terraces, section



Figure 6:
The decomposition of the market into the square, section



Figure 7:
The route to the market, view



Figure 8:
The route to the market, view

"DIALOGUE ON THE JORDAN" - A HOUSE FOR CULTURAL DISCOURSE

HADAR OSDON

"It is common to see the border as a marking of territory. As such, it constitutes a fixed cartographic marker, a line designated to delimit the defined national identity. This line is not stable, and is subject to negotiation following wars and the territorial treaties signed at their conclusion. The fluidity of a border marking suggests its potential as people's habitat. Modernist political discourse has sought to neutralize the human spirit of the border and thus presented it as a 'non-space' - a line drawn on a map, a geographical indicator. However, we can also consider the border to be a newly discovered space, a kind of 'unknown land'. The character of such new spaces relies on them being ambiguous and, consequently, also non-hegemonic. These are the kinds of spaces that Michel Foucault, in his article 'Of Other Spaces', called 'heterotopic' - a sort of antithesis to the modernist utopian space.

A border should be perceived as a heterotopic space, a space that suggests a different essence to anyone seeking to give it meaning. This space is repeatedly appropriated by different and contradictory forces, sometimes political and sometimes gender-oriented. However, any assignment of meaning to a border bears the potential for subversion since, for policy makers, the border was and remains a fixed mark, a dividing line than cannot be crossed".
(Border, Yael Munk)

My project discusses the issue of the border, and seeks to perceive it as an in-between space that creates an opportunity for spatial dialogue. The Jordan River was the first gateway into the Land of Israel for the people of Israel: "And the people came up out of Jordan on the tenth of the first month, and encamped in Gilgal, on the east border of Jericho" (Joshua 4:19). Once the Jordan had been crossed, this gateway into the Land of Israel became a national boundary but, at the same time, from a broader perspective it serves as an international "pillar", as part of the Great Syrian-African Rift. The peace treaty between Israel and Jordan applies the principle currently accepted in most international agreements regarding river boundaries: "Natural changes alter the border, and it is delineated along the new course". The territorial boundary between the two countries follows the flow of the Jordan River, so that any change in the flow alters the border. The opinion of the Sages is cited in the



Figure 1:
General view of the building

Jerusalem Talmud: "Jordan, which took from it and gave to it, whatever it took it took, and whatever it gave it gave" (Challah, 4:8). In other words, if the Jordan changed its course and widened the borders of the Land of Israel, and narrowed them from the other side, or vice versa - whatever it took it took, and whatever it gave it gave; the border of the Land of Israel is always the Jordan River, and it changes with the changing course of the river.

The project aspires to dispute what is said above about the physical space: changes in the river define a dynamic space that is not permanently owned - a space in limbo between the two countries. The water moves between exposure and coverage, while maintaining a relationship of give and take, the way the earth itself hosts human beings and exposes them to a renewed encounter with the water. The detachment from the ownership of the land, the light and the water, enables us to expand the limitations of the personal, individual, introspective view. These layers enable us to conduct a dialogue, and collaboratively examine the theory and practice of the artistic-social endeavor.

The Jordan River moves along a winding channel. I imagine the river bends as a kind of "folding over". The intermediate spaces where bends are created allow for the north-south and east-west ratios over which there is no absolute ownership - dynamic, three-dimensional "strips" of land. The three-dimensionality of the border is first expressed as a view between the two banks, a tangential pathway between the banks themselves, resulting in a state of total three-dimensionality blurring the border.

As a case study to examine the concept of "border", I chose to focus on a point along the Jordan River, east of the Bet-ha'Arava junction, where the Abdullah Bridge used to be. Built to connect Amman to Jerusalem, the bridge was bombed during the Six Day War and has since stood there in ruins. It lies above one of these "bends" of the Jordan. I chose to intensify the decomposition by redirecting the route leading to the bridge towards the bend, thereby

creating an intermediate three-dimensional space for the border itself, in limbo between the two countries.

The project consists of two branches that create a single shared space, a kind of whirlpool around the inner open space that is covered and uncovered depending on the state of the water, its flow and its height. The area of the shared dialogue is "washed away", allowing for a new discussion every day. During the planning and placement of the building I was guided by the direction of the Jordan's flow - where it comes from and where it goes. The starting point was the flow source in the north, from where the Jordan descends to the project, and continues southwards, blurring and delaying the flow through the inner space of the project. The upper arm comes out of Jordan, and depositing whoever walks there into the central space, where the library that escorts this descent is alternately open and closed and contains different types of spaces for studying and meeting. From the Israeli side another branch moves up, allowing room for discussion and deepening discourse. On the upper, level these two branches intertwine to become one. The concourse is surrounded on one side by short-stay guest rooms for contemplation or for personal, private creativity - to the ever-present accompaniment of the water. On the other side, the space allows for social gatherings and leisure activities. **The project aspires to chart a path for the individual to observe and be observed, suspended and standing, guest and host.**

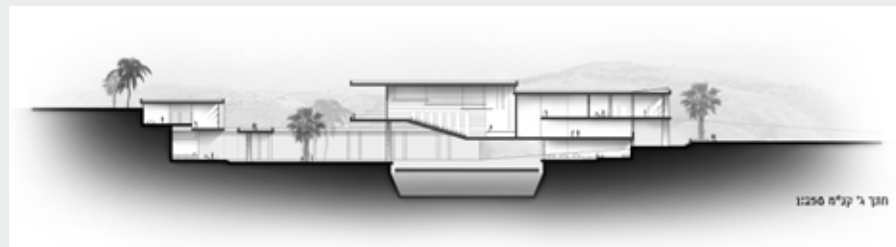


Figure 2:
Section C

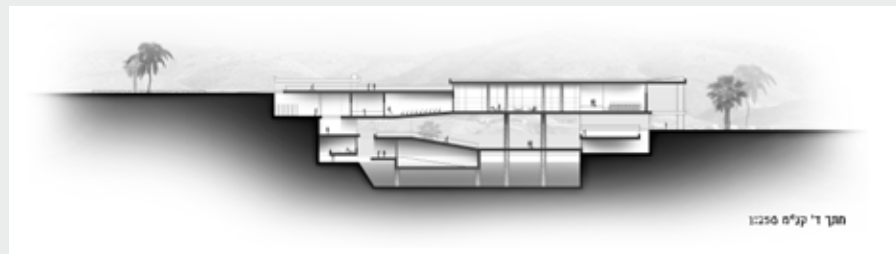


Figure 3:
Section D



Figure 4:
General view of the building

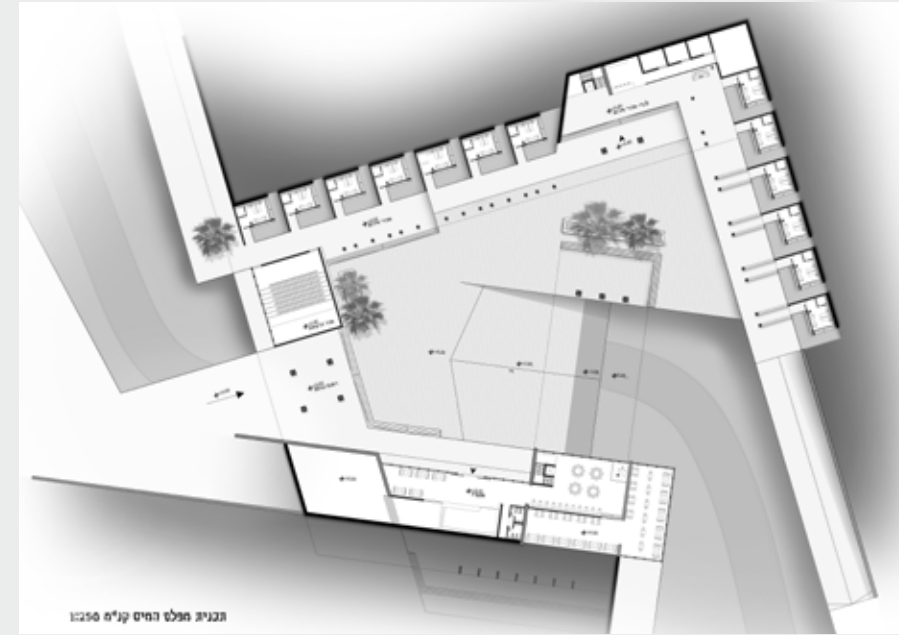


Figure 5:
Water level plan



Figure 6:
Upper level plan

ASYLUM SEEKERS / BORDER DISRUPTION

Yael Brauner

"But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God."
(Leviticus 19:34)

The project deals with refugees, asylum seekers who crossed the Sinai Desert, did not make it into Israel and were caught in the strip of land between the border fences; they unwillingly found themselves in the no-man's land between Israel, Egypt and Gaza.

My project seeks to examine the statement from Leviticus 19: what is the place of the foreigner in our world and how the state of the border might enable a space for refugees, for the "other".

During the project I researched the concept of temporariness and the significance of expanding the border from a linear entity to a spatial one. Perhaps this space, when a group of people spends time there, might change its definition from 'no man's land' to a place with a definition and an identity.

According to the overall concept of the project, the country's borders are defined as ex-territory in which it is possible to create space as a third entity. A place in the anthropological rather than the geographical sense; it is not just a point on a map or in the country, it is rather the sense of someone who is there.

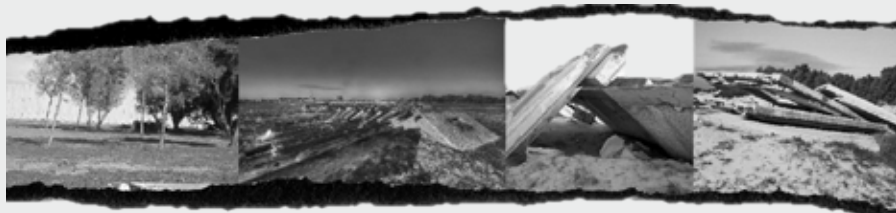


Figure 1:
Yamit settlement dismantled walls

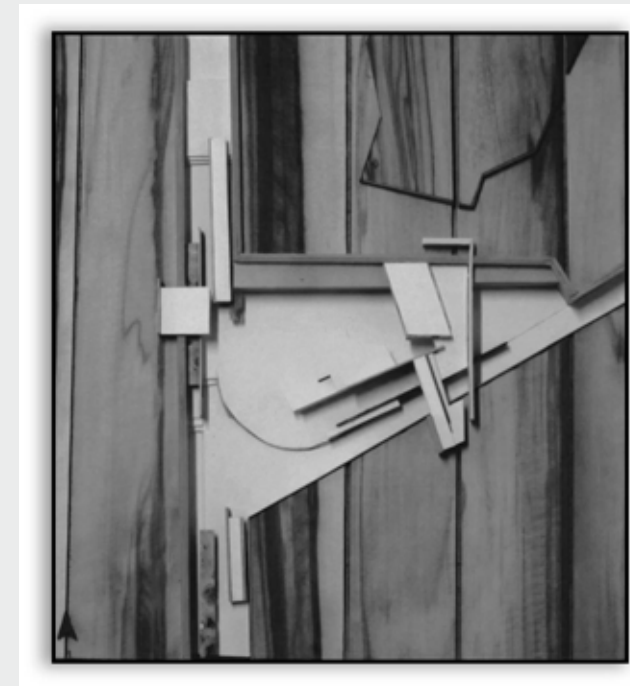


Figure 2:
Model

I focused on the Israeli-Egyptian border, which is 236 km long, and on the Kerem Shalom crossing at the southern end of the Gaza Strip, 3.6 km from the Rafiah Crossing near the Israeli-Palestinian-Egyptian border. Today, Kerem Shalom is the only crossing through which goods move in and out between Israel and the Gaza Strip. This meeting of borders creates a kind of triangle that does not belong to anyone.

Adjacent to the crossing there is a place called the "wall cemetery". It contains life stories from the evacuation of Yamit in the Sinai, written on the walls of the homes that were dismantled during the evacuation and were left as a reminder of the temporariness on our land. What I wanted was to take the reminder of our temporariness as a nation from the walls of Yamit, and use it as a place for refugees, an asylum for those who seek it. Hence I went out to this triangle of borders.

The design approach was to provide a different interpretation and reference to each wall around the ex-territory. The aim was to shift the refugee from being a singular "I", to being a society "we"; to create a sense of identity.

I tried to generate the process of change by using two different structural languages: one dynamic, the free movement of the walls, leading and guiding the refugee, as a reminder



Figure 3:
House of worship

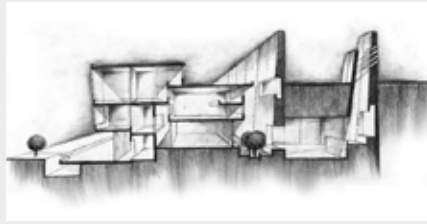


Figure 4:
Section house of worship

of the walls of Yamit. The other – remaining in place, fortifying it by creating living quarters within the border, the "separation fence" in the sense of "a man's home is his castle".

I believe that an identity can be created in three ways: first, by an encounter with the other: on the Gaza border, an attempt at an encounter between a Gazan refugee camp and the asylum seekers is created through a window, just like in the story of Noah's Ark,

"A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it." (Genesis 6:16). Both parties are enclosed and the window is the hope for change, for a better future. The principle behind the planning was to create a sacred place with no defined faith identity, only using light.

Second, through an encounter with what is similar and familiar to us, with home: the concept of home encompasses familiar surroundings, a sense of belonging and of security; personal safety from interaction with others, existential safety – in social order and our place in society. These are all feelings that are destabilized among asylum seekers. The thought was that the basic housing unit should cater to a person's need for privacy.

Third, through an encounter with the land, as expressed by planning internal yards and introducing undefined nature into the living space, to the people and to the limited human scale.



Figure 5:
General plan

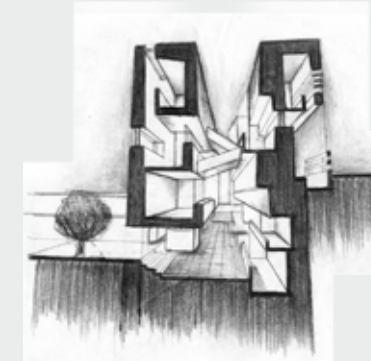


Figure 6:
Section of residential building

Thus, part of the planning intentionally leaves an untreated area of no man's land in the center, to allow nature to remind us that the land does not belong to us, but gives us a temporary space within it. In the words of Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz: "A nation that resides on its land for a certain time, not only feels connection to and ownership of it, but also feels secure that things will continue as they are, forever... In contrast, those who live in tents in the desert know that they are there only for now... their ability to cause any disruption is actually based on the existence of doubt, of a certain degree of concern that the existing state is not necessarily everlasting."

While working on the project I came to understand that we don't need to create a place for refugees to settle in permanently, but to allow them a place in which they can create an identity for themselves as well as the tools with which to return from whence they came.

This led me to believe that the planning should give a sense of stability, while at the same time arousing a sense of temporariness.