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Architecture on the Ground: Design and Contestation in West Bank Settlements, 1967 to the Present

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Architecture on the Ground: Design and Contestation in West Bank Settlements, 1967 to the Present

By

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Abstract

Architecture on the Ground: Design and Contestation in West Bank Settlements, 1967 to the Present

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This dissertation is an architectural history of West Bank settlements. Since 1967, when it captured the West Bank from Jordan in the Six-Day War, Israel has overseen the construction of hundreds of settlements. Though they began as an esoteric project, mainly associated with a small group of messianic Israelis, today, settlements house more than 430,000 Jewish Israelis. Built outside the recognized borders of Israel and against the opposition of the native Palestinian population, settlements have become one of the most contested housing projects in Israel and the world.

Scholars of the built environment have often theorized West Bank settlements as a paradigmatic case of the militarization of architecture. Analyzing aerial views and statements made by individual politicians, they have argued that settlements function as war machinery. That argument is coupled by an assumption that settlements are of uniform design. As a result, existing scholarship has overlooked the fact that a heterogeneous landscape of settlement types and housing models—ranging from trailer homes and kibbutz houses, to suburban tract homes and multistoried apartment buildings—has come to form the settler movement over the last five decades. This heterogeneity defies easy categorizations and demands reconsideration of the political uses of architecture in the region.

Architecture on the Ground studies the intricate design debates that accompanied the construction of settlements. It shifts the focus away from high-profile individuals to explore how architects, amateur archeologists, real estate developers, and disparate groups of settlers, ranging from religious Zionists to bohemian artists and ultra-Orthodox wives, played a pivotal role in the design and construction of settlements. It identifies five successive settlement patterns that have emerged over the fifty years Israel has occupied the West Bank. Each pattern emerged in response to different political moments, and is defined by characteristic building technologies, architectural forms, and practices of governance. In tracing the evolution of these five patterns, the dissertation seeks to model a new understanding of the relationship between architecture and politics—one founded on numerous contingencies and contradictions.

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Introduction

In the winter of 1988, the architects Aaron Weingrod and Judith Green found themselves faced with a problem. Born in the United States, they had immigrated in the 1970s to Israel, where they worked at the office of landscape architect and Harvard graduate Shlomo Aronson in Jerusalem. The office had recently taken a design commission in Ma'ale Adumim, one of the largest settlements in the West Bank, a large territory to the east of Jerusalem that Israel had conquered from Jordan twenty years earlier. Weingrod and Green felt uncomfortable working on the project. They associated themselves with the Left and opposed Israel's presence in the occupied territories. When they expressed their concerns to Aronson, he was sympathetic, but didn't think the office should give up the lucrative design commission. Out of respect for Weingrod and Green, however, he decided that anyone feeling uncomfortable with the project could choose not to work on it, without risking their tenure at the office.

Weingrod and Green were not entirely satisfied. It was clear to them that they were not the only architects faced with such a problem. Across the country, there were many architects who opposed the occupation, but few had openly refused to work in settlements. Weingrod and Green contacted their friend Karen Weiner, a graduate of the Architectural Association and a professor at Bezalel Academy. Together, they agreed that something must be done. They decided to draft a petition, calling on design professionals to decline building commissions in the West Bank and boycott construction in the occupied territories.

Drafting the petition was not as simple as the three architects may have wished. They quickly realized that they would have to exclude East Jerusalem. Israel conquered the eastern half of the city together with the West Bank in the Six-Day War from 1967. But unlike the remaining parts of the West Bank, East Jerusalem was fully annexed to Israel, and in the years since had experienced an unprecedented construction boom, providing much-needed work opportunities for local architects. Weingrod, Green, and Weiner knew that few architects would sign a petition prohibiting them from working in East Jerusalem.

After they agreed on the final version, Weingrod, Green and Weiner circulated the following petition among their peers:

> Building reflects cultural and social aspirations. The designer and implementer in delineating modes of life, often entire populations, must be aware of this fact and assume personal responsibility for the consequences of his work. The settling of the occupied territories, excluding East Jerusalem, which constitutes an exceptional case, is a clear manifestation of the occupation and its institutionalization. Hence the builder in the occupied territories: town planner, engineer, designer, architect and builder complies with this objective. This is the hour to take a personal stand. Boycott building in the occupied territories.[1]

Within just a few weeks, Weingrod, Green and Weiner had collected 103 signatures. Among the signees were David Resnik, then the head of the Israeli Association of

[1] "Metahnenim Neged Bniya Bashtahim," May 1988, Karen Weiner's private collection. The petition also referred to Gaza Strip from which Israel withdrew in 2005.

Architects, as well as luminaries such as Ron Arad and Eldar Sharon. Very few architects refused to sign the petition, and those who did refused because they saw the act as pointless. Leading architect Dan Eitan insisted that he doesn't believe in petitions. "Petitions don't do anything," he told Weiner. Hillel Shocken also declined, saying that whoever pays taxes, taxes that support the Israeli government, is not in a position to sign such a petition. But these oppositional voices were marginal. As Weiner later recalled, in all, only five or six architects refused to sign the petition.[2]

On August 12, 1988, the petition appeared in local newspapers.[3] According to Weiner, the first few days following the publication were euphoric. The three got many phone calls from friends, congratulating them and expressing their support. A reporter for the local newspaper Kol Ha'ir even wrote a short piece, discussing the petition's popularity among architects who often worked for the state.[4]

But the petition didn't do much. Over the next thirty years, Israel oversaw the construction of hundreds of thousands of homes in more than 130 settlements and ninety unauthorized outposts.[5] Today, some 400,000 Jewish Israelis reside in settlements, constituting 12% of the total population of the West Bank.[6] All of them reside outside the internationally-recognized borders of Israel.

When I met Weiner in 2017, she agreed that the petition had failed to arrest the construction of settlements. The mechanisms of the Israeli occupation are just too strong, she lamented. "It wouldn't matter if I refuse to plan a villa or an individual building (in the West Bank)." Nevertheless, she reassured me, the petition was not a complete waste of time. It did two important things. First, it communicated a clear message of opposition to Israeli settlers. "I wanted the settlers to know that I would never plan a house for them," Weiner told me. "They are *muktzeh* [outcasts in Jewish law]…We [architects] and you [settlers], we are not the same thing." Second, the petition created an unprecedented dialogue with the state. Suddenly, architects took a stand against their government. Until that time, such an act of dissent was rare in Israel or anywhere else. "It was basically a revision of the profession," Weiner concluded. "It said that architecture is not just a service industry. We are not just providing a service. It gave a status to the profession that is usually not given to it." The petition, then, articulated a new relationship between the profession of architecture and their fellow citizens on the one hand, and the state on the other.

Weiner's comments, expressing her feelings of loss and triumph, resonate with problems I have been exploring since 2013, when I first visited the West Bank. Unwittingly, she articulated the two main questions this dissertation explores: First, how have architects interacted with settlers and state officials over the course of five decades of Israeli occupation? And second, what is the role of architecture and urban design,

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[2] Karen Weiner, interview with the author, August 3, 2017.
[3] See, for example, "Neged Bniya Bashtahim," *Kol Ha'ir*, August 12, 1988, 59.
[4] Shahar Ilan, "Adrihalim Neged Bniya Bashtahim," *Kol Ha'ir*, July 29, 1988, 1.
[5] According to Peace Now there are 132 settlements in the West Bank. The exact number of unauthorized outposts is contested. According to Peace Now's data, there are 97 unauthorized outposts. According to Talya Sasson there are 105. According to Erez Tzfadia there are 132 outposts, while according to the Ministry of Security there are only 88. See "Population," Settlements Watch (Peace Now, 2016), http://peacenow.org.il/en/settlements-watch/settlements-data/population; Talia Sasson, *'Al Pi Tehom: Ha-Im Nitsaḥon Ha-Hitnaḥaluyot Hu Sofah Shel Ha-Demoḳraṭyah Ha-Yiśre'elit? = On the Brink of the Abyss: Is the Triumph of the Settlements the End of Israeli Democracy?* (Yerushalayim: Keter, 2015), 20; Erez Tzfadia, "Informality as Control: The Legal Geography of Colonization of the West Bank," in *Cities to Be Tamed?: Spatial Investigations across the Urban South*, ed. Francesco Chiodelli, Beatrice De Carli, and Maddalena Falletti (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), 200; "Maahazim - Ktzat Seder Babalagan" (Peace Now, June 18, 2010), http://peacenow.org.il/outposts.
[6] See "Population."

whether "from above" or "below," in the Israeli settlement project? That is, to what degree is the built environment—its design and use—an active agent in the Israeli occupation?

To answer these questions, this study explores five decades of settlement construction and design, from 1967 to the present. It traces a history of the heated negotiations that took place between three main actors: architects, state officials, and different settler groups. It also records the involvement of other actors, such as real estate developers, archeologists and international agencies, who have occasionally intervened in the design of settlements. It traces five different settlement types the interactions between these actors have produced. Each type is defined by characteristic building technologies, architectural forms and practices of governance. In chronicling the evolution of these five patterns, this dissertation also asks how does the built environment form subjectivities and act as a stage for national self-fashioning.

Architectural Histories of West Bank Settlements

Despite the fact that West Bank settlements have arguably drawn more controversy than any other housing projects in recent history, there are few academic accounts that address the issue. For many years, scholars ignored the settlement project.[7] Only in the late 1980s, after the outbreak of a Palestinian uprising against the Israeli occupation, did scholars begin to investigate settlements.[8] The first studies of settlements were written by political scientists and sociologists, and they focused almost exclusively on the theological underpinnings of the religious settlers group of *Gush Emunim* [Bloc of the Faithful].[9] They often depicted settlers as radical and dangerous, constituting a break with both Judaism and Zionism.[10] Over time, other historical studies emerged and moved beyond the focus on *Gush Emunim* to analyze the alliances between religious settlers and secular state officials. Notable among these studies are Idith Zartal and Akiva Eldar's *Lords of the Land* and Gershom Gorenberg's *Accidental Empire.*[11] However, these

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[7] A number of scholarly accounts form an exception to this rule. Among these are David Newman and Dan Rabinowitz studies on settlements and settlers culture. In addition, Ehud Sprinzak's article "the iceberg model of political extremism" and his work on illegality in Israeli polity have made significant contribution to the understanding of settlers culture. See David Newman, "The Role of Gush Emunim and the Yishuv Kehillati in the West Bank 1974 - 1980" (Durham University, 1981), http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/9372/; David Newman, *The Impact of Gush Emunim: Politics and Settlement in the West Bank* (London: Croom Helm, 1985); Dan Rabinowitz, *Mi Leadunai Elaii: Gush Emunim* (Tel Aviv: Hotsa'at Hakibutz Hameuhad, 1982); Ehud Sprinzak, *Ish Ha-Yashar Be-'enay : I-Legalizm Ba-Ḥevrah Ha-Yiśre'elit* (Tel Aviv: Sifriyat po'alim, 1986); Ehud Sprinzak, "The Iceberg Model of Political Extremism," in *The Impact of Gush Emunim: Politics and Settlement in the West Bank*, ed. David Newman (London: Croom Helm, 1985).

[8] Scholars' interest in settlements stemmed from a number of reasons that began to surface in the 1980s. The anthropologists Joyce Dalsheim and Assaf Harel have argued that it is reasonable to assume that the first intifada was perhaps the most important one. See Joyce Dalsheim and Assaf Harel, "Representing Settlers," *Review of Middle East Studies* 43, no. 2 (Winter 2009): 221.

[9] For examples, see David Newman, *The Impact of Gush Emunim: Politics and Settlement in the West Bank* (London: Croom Helm, 1985); Ian Lustick, *For the Land and the Lord: Jewish Fundamentalism in Israel* (New York, N.Y: Council on Foreign Relations, 1988); Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism: The Bloc of the Faithful in Israel," in *Fundamentalisms Observed*, ed. R. Scott Appleby and E. Martin Marty (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 265–344; Ehud Sprinzak, "The Politics, Insstitutions, and Culture of Gush Emunim," in *Jewish Fundamentalism in Comparative Perspective: Religion, Ideology, and the Crisis of Modernity*, ed. Laurence J. Silberstein, New Perspectives on Jewish Studies (New York: New York University Press, 1993); Martin E. Marty et al., eds., "The Enclave Culture," in *Fundamentalisms Comprehended*, The Fundamentalism Project, v. 5 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 11–68. These early accounts have inspired a number of more recent texts. See, for example, Michael Feige, *Settling in the Hearts: Jewish Fundamentalism in the Occupied Territories*, Raphael Patai Series in Jewish Folklore and Anthropology (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2009).

[10] For a critical review of literature on settlements, discussing the first wave of scholarship's focus on *Gush Emunim* and its inadequacy to account to diverse groups of settlers, see Joyce Dalsheim and Assaf Harel, "Representing Settlers," *Review of Middle East Studies* 43, no. 2 (Winter 2009): 219–38.

[11] Idith Zertal and Akiva Eldar, *Lords of the Land: The War over Israel's Settlements in the Occupied Territories: 1967-2007* (New York: Nation Books, 2007); Gershom Gorenberg, *The Accidental Empire: Israel and the Birth of Settlements, 1967-1977*, 1st ed (New York: Times Books, 2006).

accounts have focused almost exclusively on the strategic and ideological forces behind the settlement project, ignoring questions of everyday life, cultural production, and—of particular interest to me—architecture and urban design.[12]

On the rare occasion when scholars have addressed the urban form of West Bank settlements, they did so only to dismiss the design of settlements as a crude and unsightly manifestation of state power. For example, the geographer Elisha Efrat, has pointed to the multiplicity of settlement models, but reduces this multiplicity to "an unplanned mixture of replicas deprived of method or overall conception." This lack of originality, Efrat adds, reminds us that any experimentation with urban form in the occupied territories serves "one and only purpose—grabbing lands and keeping them at all cost."[13]

The political geographer David Newman has offered a more nuanced account, showing how leaders of the settler movement established settlements near large metropolitan centers in order to take advantage of a trend towards suburbanization that emerged in Israel during 1970s and 80s. In so doing, they encouraged many Israelis who sought a suburban lifestyle to move to the West Bank. Newman has termed this strategy as "suburban colonization."[14] Newman's account is important for understanding the geographic distribution of settlements and the internal dynamics of *Gush Emunim* leaders. Nevertheless, Newman, who is not an architectural historian, left the question of architecture and urban design unaddressed.

It is not accident that throughout this time, architectural historians themselves remained silent.[15] As Alona Nitzan-Shiftan has argued, historiographies of Israeli architecture have often focused on modernism, celebrating it as a national tradition.[16] Modernism, in these accounts, has been associated with honesty and progress. It was also

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[12] For a critical discussion of these accounts, see Marco Allegra, Ariel Handel, and Erez Maggor, "Introduction: The Politics of Everyday Life in the West Bank Settlements," in *Normalizing Occupation: The Politics of Everyday Life in the West Bank Settlements*, ed. Ariel Handel, Marco Allegra, and Erez Maggor (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017), 6.

[13] Elisha Efrat, *Ge'ografyah Shel Kibush*, Temunat Matsav (Yerushalayim: Karmel, 2002), 32. In a relatively similar manner, Edward Said has argued that settlements "were intended visibly to illustrate Israeli power, additions to the gentle landscape that signified aggression, not accommodation and acculturation." See Edward W. Said, "Invention, Memory, and Place," *Critical Inquiry* 26, no. 2 (Winter 2000): 175–92.

[14] David Newman, "Settlements as Suburbanization: The Banality of Colonization," in *Normalizing Occupation: The Politics of Everyday Life in the West Bank Settlements*, ed. Ariel Handel, Marco Allegra, and Erez Maggor (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017); David Newman, "Colonization as Suburbanization: The Politics of the Land Market at the Frontier," in *City of Collision: Jerusalem and the Principles of Conflict Urbanism*, ed. Philipp Misselwitz and Tim Rieniets (Basel ; Boston: Birkhäuser, 2006). On the collaboration between settler leaders and official planning institutes, see David Newman, "Gush Emunim between Fundamentalism and Pragmatism," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 39 (Spring 1986): 33–43. Newman has also discussed the ways by which Community Settlement model forms a break from earlier agricultural settlements associated with Labor Zionism. See David Newman, "Spatial Structure and Ideological Change in the West Bank," in *The Impact of Gush Emunim: Politics and Settlement in the West Bank*, ed. David Newman (London: Croom Helm, 1985), 172–82; Newman, "The Role of Gush Emunim and the Yishuv Kehillati in the West Bank 1974 - 1980."

[15] As I discuss below, scholars have carefully studied East Jerusalem that Israel annexed almost immediately after the Six-Day War.

[16] For a critical analysis of historiographies of Israeli architecture, see Alona Nitzan-Shiftan, "Israelizing Jerusalem: The Encounter Between Architectural and National Ideologies 1967-1977" (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2002), 36–44.
For examples of architectural histories that have celebrated modernism in Israel, see Nitsḥak Ḳelṭer, Yitsḥaḳ Ḳelṭer, and G'urg' Fasi, *Batim Min Ha-Ḥol: Adrikhalut Ha-Signon Ha-Benle'umi Be-Tel-Aviv, 1931-1948* (Tel-Aviv: Ḳeren Yehoshu'a Rabinovits le-omanuyot Tel-Aviv : Ḳeren Tel-Aviv le-fituaḥ : Miśrad ha-biṭaḥon, 1994); Michael Levin, *White City: International Style Architecture in Israel, a Portrait of an Era* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv Museum, 1984); Avia Hashimshoni, "Architecture," in *Omanut Yiśra'el*, ed. Benjamin Tammuz (Tel Aviv: Masadah, 1963), 199–229.

There are a number of important exceptions to this rule. Among these are Fatina Abreek-Zubeidat's MA thesis on the Palestinian refugee camp of Dheisheh, and her current dissertation project on the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip. Both have been carried out at the Technion. Equally powerful is Sharon Rotbard's study of Tel Aviv and Jaffa. Astutely, Rotbard has shown how architectural historiographies have celebrated modernism on the expense of Palestinian Jaffa. See Fatina Abreek-Zubiedat, "The Architecture of the Palestinian 'Refugee Camps' in the West Bank, Dheisheh Refugee Camp as a Case Study 1948-1967" (Technion - Israel Institute of Technology, 2010); Sharon Roṭbard, *White City, Black City: Architecture and War in Tel Aviv and Jaffa* (Cambridge, MA: Mit Press, 2015).

linked to labor Zionism and nation-building. The origins of this tradition are often traced to the 1930s.[17]

The Six-Day War, however, is seen as marking the end of this heroic period, and the beginning of a "decline" with the rise of symbolism and eclecticism in architecture.[18] The architectural historian Zvi Efrat, for example, has argued that in the aftermath of the Six-Day War, "the ethics and aesthetics of the first Israeli era were suddenly transformed into anachronism."[19] Most settlements do not adhere to modernism. They favor "anachronism." For this reason, it is not surprising that architectural historians have turned a blind eye to West Bank settlements. In addition, the fact that most leading Israeli architects didn't take building commissions in the West Bank further discouraged the study of settlements.[20]

In fact, the architecture of settlements was actively excluded from architectural scholarship. For example, in his comprehensive study of Avraham Yaski's work, Sharon Rotbard has consciously ignored Yaski's large-scale building projects in the West Bank.[21] Rotbard explained to me that he did so out of respect to Yaski, who was his former employer and friend. He didn't want to have Yaski's name associated with the settlement project in the pages of history.[22] In a similar manner, when a Haaertz reader asked architectural critic Esther Zandberg to comment on the architecture of settlements, Zandberg explained she prefers not discussing settlements because of her opposition to the Israeli presence in the occupied territories.[23] The editors Tula Amir and Shelly Cohen also chose to limit the scope of their volume, *Living Forms: Architecture and Society in Israel*, to the internationally recognized borders of Israel.[24]

In recent years, several architectural historians have made brief references to settlements, but their treatment is biased or fragmentary. In her comprehensive study of the Jewish colonization of Palestine Yael Allweil has allocated only three and a half (out of 263) pages to West Bank settlements.[25] Her investigation focuses on the most radical settlement attempts in the mid-1970s, which account for only a small minority of settlers. In a similar fashion, Hadas Shadar makes only brief reference to settlements in her comprehensive analysis of six decades of architectural production at the Ministry of Housing.[26] As Zandberg, the Haaretz critic, has noted in a review of the book, Shadar's

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[17] Alona Nitzan-Shiftan, "Israelizing Jerusalem: The Encounter Between Architectural and National Ideologies 1967-1977" (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2002), 36–44.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Zvi Efrat, *Ha-Proyeḳṭ Ha-Yiśre'eli: Beniyah Ṿe-Adrikhalut, 1948-1973*, Ḳaṭ. (Muze'on Tel Aviv Le-Omanut), 04/18 (Tel Aviv: Muze'on Tel Aviv le-omanut, 2004), 935–36.

[20] As I discussed above, a large number of leading architects had taken part in the construction boom in East Jerusalem in the decade that followed the Six-Day War. Since, unlike the remaining parts of the West Bank, East Jerusalem was annexed to Israel, it enjoyed a different legal status and an overall acceptance in Israeli society.

[21] Sharon Rotbard, *Avraham Yaṣḳi : adrikhalut ḳonḳreṭit* (Tel Aviv: Babel, 2007).

[22] Sharon Rotbard, conversation with the author, May 4, 2016.

[23] Ester Zandberg, "Ester Zandberg: Kikar Lelo Tzel - Hitalelut (Q&A with Ester Zandberg)," *Haaretz*, August 12, 2013, https://www.haaretz.co.il/1.2092800.

[24] See Shelly Cohen and Ṭulah 'Amir, eds., *Tsurot Megurim: Adrikhalut Ṿe-Ḥevrah Be-Yiśra'el* (Tel Aviv: Ḥargol : 'Am 'oved, 2007).

[25] Allweil's account is also historically inaccurate. For example, she argues that since 2005 "the settler milieu of some 300,000 citizens living outside state borders has become aggressive in initiating new settlements and strongholds in the West Bank." As I discuss in chapters 4 and 5 and elsewhere, the vast majority of settlement construction in the last two decades has taken place in existing settlements rather than new ones. Moreover, as this dissertation illustrates, there is no such thing as a "settler milieu." Yael Allweil, *Homeland: Zionism as Housing Regime, 1860-2011*, Planning, History and Environment Series (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon ; New York, NY: Routledge, 2017), 251; Noam Shoked, review of *Homeland: Zionism as a Housing Regime, 1860-2011*, by Yael Allweil, *Buildings and Landscapes* 25, no. 1 (Spring 2018): 100–102.

[26] See Hadas Shadar, *Avne Ha-Binyan Shel Ha-Shikun Ha-Tsiburi : Shishah 'aśorim Shel Beniyah 'ironit Be-Yozmah Tsiburit Be-Yiśra'el* (Tel Aviv: Miśrad ha-binui ṿeha-shikin, 2014), 142, 160–62.

decision to limit her discussion of settlements is troubling given the Ministry's pivotal role in the settlement project.[27] A slightly more detailed account can be found in a dissertation by Dikla Yizhar. In her study of decentralization processes and the emergence of new housing models in the 1960s and 70s, Yizhar discusses *Gush Emunim* and the birth of the Community Settlement, pointing at the interrelations between the colonization of the West Bank and neo-liberalism. As before, however, Yizhar's description is limited in length and scope, focusing exclusively on one settlement model.[28]

Interestingly, although architectural historians have given West Bank settlements short shrift, they have carefully scrutinized the architecture of post-1967 East Jerusalem.[29] Alona Nitzan-Shiftan's groundbreaking work on the construction boom that changed the face of Jerusalem in the decade that followed the Six-Day War is the most notable account on the matter.[30] Nitzan-Shiftan has compellingly shown how the architects who oversaw the massive construction projects in East Jerusalem were inspired by postwar critiques of modernism, and replaced the "developmental modernism" of an earlier generation, born in Europe, with something they associated with "an architecture of the place."[31] This dissertation is indebted to Nitzan-Shiftan's work, especially to her discussion of the Ministry of Housing, and the architectural culture out of which some of the protagonists I discuss had emerged.

Studies of everyday spaces in the Jewish neighborhoods of East Jerusalem have been equally illuminating. In a study of the neighborhood of Gilo, Rachel Kallus has documented the intervention of government and military officials in the neighborhood's design and use in moments of political upheaval. These officials, Kallus argues, supervised the fortification of Gilo—shielding windows against Palestinian snipers, and erecting walls that limited the mobility of Palestinians—in ways that force us to question the presumably civilian nature of everyday life in East Jerusalem.[32] Equally potent is Wendy Pullan and Haim Yacobi's study of the limited interactions between Jewish Israelis and Palestinians in the French Hill neighborhood in East Jerusalem.[33] These two accounts shed light on the imbrication of the politics of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in everyday life in Jerusalem. Nevertheless, their insights cannot be easily applied to

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[27] Ester Zandberg, "Hashikun Hatziburi Beisrael: Hara Bemifalim, Vegam Hamefoar Shebahem," *Haaretz*, March 26, 2014, https://www.haaretz.co.il/gallery/architecture/environment/.premium-1.2280242.

[28] Dikla Yizhar, "Bne Beitha: Kriaa Socio-Tarbutit Shel Hamishtamesh Hapail" (Technion - Israel Institute of Technology, 2016), 106–14, 116–21.

[29] According to the UN and international accords, Jewish neighborhoods in East Jerusalem are also illegal settlements. Like those West Bank settlements I discuss in this dissertation, they were built on lands that Israel conquered in the Six-Day War. It is not in my interest to erase this fact. Nevertheless, according to Israeli law the Jewish neighborhoods of East Jerusalem are not settlements. Israel annexed East Jerusalem almost immediately after the war, subjecting it to a different set of juridical apparatuses and building codes. As a result, they are not seen as settlements in Israel. Not by the general public, nor by Israeli architects.

[30] Nitzan-Shiftan, "Israelizing Jerusalem: The Encounter Between Architectural and National Ideologies 1967-1977"; Alona Nitzan-Shiftan, "Seizing Locality in Jerusalem," in *The End of Tradition*, ed. Nezar AlSayyad (Routledge, 2004), 231–55; Alona Nitzan-Shiftan, "Frontier Jerusalem: The Holy Land as a Testing Ground for Urban Design," *The Journal of Architecture* 16, no. 6 (2011): 915–40; Alona Nitzan-Shiftan, *Seizing Jerusalem: The Architectures of Unilateral Unification* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017). For other works on the architecture of post-1967 Jerusalem, see Shira Wilkof and Alona Nitzan-Shiftan, "'An Historical Opportunity': Landscape, Statism and Competition in the Creation and Planning of the Walls of Jerusalem National Park, 1967," *Cathedra* 163 (May 2017): 163–90; Kobi Cohen-Hattab, "Designing Holiness: Architectural Plans for the Design of the Western Wall Plaza After the Six-Day War, 1967–1977," *Israel Studies* 21, no. 3 (Fall 2016): 126–52.

[31] Nitzan-Shiftan, *Seizing Jerusalem*.

[32] Rachel Kallus, "The Political Role of the Everyday," *City* 8, no. 3 (December 2004): 341–61.

[33] Wendy Pullan and Haim Yacobi, "Jerusalem's Colonial Space as Paradox: Palestinians Living in the Settlements," in *Normalizing Occupation: The Politics of Everyday Life in the West Bank Settlements*, ed. Ariel Handel, Marco Allegra, and Erez Maggor (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017). For more observations of everyday life in Jerusalem, see Wendy Pullan et al., *The Struggle for Jerusalem's Holy Places* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

settlements built in the West Bank, which have been subjected to different juridical systems and designed by different agencies for different users.

In the absence of academic writing on settlements design, Eyal Weizman's work has gained the most attention in academia, even though he is not a historian. In 2003, Weizman published *Civilian Occupation,* a volume he co-edited with Rafi Segal.[34] In *Civilian Occupation*, he used aerial views and maps of the West Bank to argue that settlements act as "territorial weapons." Military generals and government officials, he claims, planted settlements at strategic spots, on high hilltops, near or in-between large Palestinian concentrations, with the aim of "bisecting and squeezing out Palestinian communities."[35] In subsequent publications, Weizman has added that IDF personnel have gone so far as to oversee the design of settlement houses and streets which take on the function of war machinery, or "panoptic fortresses" that gaze out over the surrounding Palestinian cities and villages.[36] By transforming ostensibly civilian settlers into instruments of control and domination, settlements appear to be a paradigmatic case of the militarization of architecture.

In recent years, Weizman has extended this line of argument into new methodological domains. By documenting physical traces—footprints and bullets paths, among others—he has been gathering "forensic evidence" of military conquests and state-led destruction. In 2010, he founded the *Forensic Architecture* group in London. Together they have undertaken a number of forensic investigations in Israel, Palestine, and across the world. Their work has resulted in a series of publications: *The least of all possible evils: humanitarian violence from Arendt to Gaza*, *Forensis: The Architecture of Public Truth*, and *Forensic Architecture: Violence at the Threshold of Detectability*.[37] All aimed at uncovering the relation between military power and the shaping of the built environment.

The impact of Weizman's work can't be overemphasized. Since 2003, scholars across the world have been reproducing his argument and methods in books, articles, and exhibition catalogues. Among these are Anselm Franke's *Territories: Islands, Camps and Other States of Utopia,* Stephen Graham's work on home demolitions in the West Bank, and Michael Sorkin's volume, *Against the Wall: Israel's Barrier to Peace*, which included contributions from well-known writers such as Mike Davis and Rebecca Solnit.[38] More recent works in this genre include Malkit Shoshan's *Atlas of the Conflict* and Léopold Lambert's *Weaponized Architecture*.[39] These authors have been motivated

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[34] Rafi Segal, Eyal Weizman, and David Tartakover, eds., *A Civilian Occupation: The Politics of Israeli Architecture*, Rev. ed (Tel Aviv : London ; New York: Babel ; VERSO, 2003). I discuss the emergence and context of *A Civilian Occupation* in Chapter 5.

[35] B'Tselem and Eyal Weizman, "Map of Israeli Settlements in the West Bank," in *A Civilian Occupation: The Politics of Israeli Architecture*, ed. Rafi Segal, Eyal Weizman, and David Tartakover, Rev. ed (Tel Aviv : London ; New York: Babel ; VERSO, 2003), 109.

[36] Eyal Weizman, "The Politics of Verticality: The West Bank as an Architectural Construction," in Franke, *Territories*, 85; Alessandro Petti, Sandi Hilal, and Eyal Weizman, "The Morning After: Profaning Colonial Architecture," in *Sensible Politics: The Visual Culture of Nongovernmental Activism*, ed. Meg McLagan and Yates McKee (Brooklyn, NY: Zone Books, 2012), 459; Eyal Weizman, *Hollow Land: Israel's Architecture of Occupation* (London ; New York: Verso, 2007), 127–33.

[37] Eyal Weizman, *The Least of All Possible Evils: Humanitarian Violence from Arendt to Gaza* (London ; New York: Verso, 2011); Forensic Architecture (Project) et al., eds., *Forensis: The Architecture of Public Truth* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2014); Eyal Weizman, *Forensic Architecture: Violence at the Threshold of Detectability* (Brooklyn, NY: Zone Books, 2017).

[38] Anselm Franke and Kunst-Werke Berlin, eds., *Territories: Islands, Camps and Other States of Utopia* (Berlin : Köln: KW, Institute for Contemporary Art ; Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2003); Stephen Graham, "Lessons in Urbicide," *New Left Review*, no. 19 (February 2003): 63–77; Stephen Graham, "Constructing Urbicide by Bulldozer in the Occupied Territories," in *Cities, War, and Terrorism: Towards an Urban Geopolitics*, ed. Stephen Graham (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 192–213; Michael Sorkin, ed., *Against the Wall: Israel's Barrier to Peace* (New York: New Press : Distributed by W.W. Norton, 2005).

[39] Malkit Shoshan, *Atlas of the Conflict: Israel-Palestine* (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2010); Léopold Lambert, *Weaponized Architecture. The Impossibility of Innocence* (dpr-barcelona, 2013).

by a desire to unveil the violence perpetrated by Israel, mimicking Weizman's feeling of being "a coroner, investigator of a spatial murder."[40]

But Weizman's argument about the militarization of architecture is based on an assumption that settlements are of uniform design. "Although Israel had built hundreds of thousands of structures in the West Bank, the number of (building) typologies is very limited," he recently explained. "They are all variations on a single- or double-family houses with red roofs. Very suburban typology."[41]

On my first visit to the West Bank in 2013, however, I encountered a very different landscape. As I drove from north to south, passing through the settlements of Elkana, Beit Arye, Kfar Etzion, Kiryat Arba, and many others, I found a heterogeneous landscape of settlement types and housing models, ranging from trailer homes and kibbutz houses, to suburban tract homes and multistoried apartment buildings.-This heterogeneity suggested a far more complex relationship between the design and use of settlements on the one hand and military strategy and state power on the other. This study is an attempt to understand that relationship.

Governments and Settlers

Government officials and settlers have taken important roles in the design of settlements, but the relationship between the two is a perplexing one, especially when compared to other colonial regimes.[42] Colonial governments have often used architecture and urban planning to express power and secure their control over large populations. The French administration in North Africa, for example, applied modern architecture and urbanism to transform the locals. It was a "top down" operation, with state officials and technocrats consciously manipulating the built environment.[43] In contrast, Israeli state officials hadn't seen architecture as means of controlling the West Bank, and the design of settlements was hardly an uninterrupted "top-down" operation. Even though the Ministry of Housing was present at almost every moment, a diverse group of actors, ranging from ultra-Orthodox wives and religious radicals to amateur archeologists and bohemian artists, often commandeered its plans.

The emergence of these actors was made possible by the lack of a clear government policy in the decade that followed the conquest of the West Bank. Members of the left-leaning Alignment party, which ruled the government until 1977, failed to reach a decision regarding the territories Israel conquered during the war. They didn't want to absorb the more than one million Palestinians who resided in the occupied territories, but they also feared that retreating to the pre-1967 borders, without keeping some strongholds, would leave Israel indefensible. For these reasons, they decided not to annex most parts of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, but, at the same time, refused to withdraw or designate the territories as "occupied"—a decision that would have

[40] Weizman, *Forensic Architecture*, 134.
[41] Ana Naomi de Sousa, "The Architecture of Violence," *Rebel Architecture* (Al Jazeera English, September 2, 2014), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ybwJaCeeA9o.
[42] A number of scholars have compared the settlement project and Zionism to colonialism. See, for example, Gershon Shafir, "Zionism and Colonialism: A Comparative Approach," in *Israel in Comparative Perspective: Challenging the Conventional Wisdom*, ed. Michael N. Barnett, SUNY Series in Israeli Studies (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996); Ilan Pappe, "Zionism and Colonialism: A Comparative View of Diluted Colonialism in Asia and Africa," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 1 (October 2008).
[43] Paul Rabinow, *French Modern: Norms and Forms of the Social Environment* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1989); Gwendolyn Wright, *The Politics of Design in French Colonial Urbanism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Zeynep Çelik, *Urban Forms and Colonial Confrontations: Algiers under French Rule* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

foreclosed the possibility of erecting civilian settlements.[44] This ambiguous state policy in the conquered territories created an opening for the rise of civilians who began advocating for settlement plans.

These individual citizens became all the more vocal in the aftermath of the Yom Kippur War in 1973. Launched by Egypt and Syria on Yom Kippur, among the holiest days in the Jewish calendar, the Yom Kippur War caught Israel unprepared. Even though Israel was eventually able to repel the attacks, the high number of casualties led many Israelis to question the status quo. As the political scientist Ian Lustick has explained, the war was followed by a wave of intense discontent that swept the country and encouraged the founding of various grassroots organizations that tried to establish a new political order. Among them was the *Gush Emunim* [Bloc of the Faithful], messianic right-wing activist movement, that organized marches, protests, sit-ins and several, much-publicized attempts to build settlements across the West Bank.

The activists that emerged in the aftermath of the Yom Kippur war organized themselves into close-knit groups known as *Garinim* [seed colonies]. *Garinim* were comprised of predominantly young couples wishing to settle together in the West Bank. The concept of *Garinim* was not a new one. Beginning in the late 19th century, a number of Labor Zionists had organized into associations they named *Garinim* to establish collectivist settlements under Ottoman, and later, British mandatory rule. When settlement activists appropriated the *Garin* model, they embraced its sense of social coherence and eschewed its socialist and agrarian origins. Members of the new *Garinim* often knew each other from school or work. Together, they protested and pressured government officials to allocate them an area of land in the West Bank.

Once granted the right to settle, their activism was often extended to the drawing table. The architect Sa'adiya Mandel, who worked in a couple of settlements at the time, argued that the sense of collectivity experienced by many *Garinim* endowed their members with confidence when faced with Ministry of Housing officials. They were unlike any citizens the Ministry had ever faced. They drew their own plans, sabotaged those formualted by state planners, and, more often than not, forced their vision on state planners.

The settlers' attitude towards architects at the Ministry of Housing in the 1970s and 80s also drew on what political scientist Ehud Sprinzak has called a culture of illegality. According to Sprinzak, Israeli society has formed a political culture that accepts illegal activity. This culture emerged before the founding of Israel, when Jews were living in the diaspora, and, later, had to negotiate their right to settle in Palestine with British officials. They believed their cause justified transgressing the law.[45] In a similar fashion, for many of the settlers associated with *Gush Emunim*, the moral obligation to settle of the West Bank trumped the civil obligation to follow the laws of the state. They considered themselves to be national heroes, expanding the national border and rebuilding the biblical kingdom of Judea, and this placed them above the law.[46]

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[44] On government debates concerning the legal status of the West Bank in the aftermath of the Six-Day War see Gershom Gorenberg, *The Accidental Empire: Israel and the Birth of Settlements, 1967-1977*, 1st ed (New York: Times Books, 2006), 99–102; Tom Segev, *1967: Israel, the War, and the Year That Transformed the Middle East*, 1st U.S. ed (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2007), 576–77. On the legal status of the West Bank under Israeli rule since 1967 to 2015 see Sasson, *'Al Pi Tehom*.

[45] Sprinzak, *Ish Ha-Yashar Be-'enay : I-Legalizm Ba-Ḥevrah Ha-Yiśre'elit*.

[46] As Sprinzak has argued, however, *Gush Emunim* activists were unlike their predecessors in two main ways: first, they were working against the mechanisms of a Jewish democratic state, and second, they often evoked the *halacha* (Jewish traditional law).

Yet, the architectural history this dissertation narrates is not just a story of extremely powerful users who were somehow able to force their vision on absent-minded state officials. The latter were involved in the design and construction of settlements throughout their history, but over time, the involvement of the state took different forms.

In 1981, the state began offering generous grants and favorable loans to Israelis who were willing to settle in the West Bank. According to the historian Danny Gutwein, the government did so in order to solidify the bond between the lower classes and the political right. During a decade that was marked by privatization and the liquidation of the welfare state, settlers enjoyed unprecedented benefits.[47] These monetary incentives were accompanied by new housing schemes that were designed for a public of mostly secular lower class Israelis that were now flocking to the West Bank.

By the late 1980s, the government had shifted its focus to the construction of city-settlements for ultra-Orthodox Jews, and in the aftermath of the Oslo Accords, signed in 1993 and 1995, it developed a new mode of operation: in place of directly funding new settlements, it has channeled money to new settlements indirectly, using different agencies such as regional councils and the Settlement Department at the Jewish Agency. The political geographers Oren Yiftachel and Erez Tzfadia have termed this mode of governance "gray spacing." According to Yiftachel and Tzfadia, gray spacing is a set of techniques through which the state legalizes informality. It does so, they have argued, with the intention of empowering some citizens and oppressing others.[48]

Each change in state policy introduced different settler groups to the West Bank. Rarely have these groups shared the same political and religious views. At present, settlers' population can be roughly divided into three groups: secular, national-religious, and ultra-Orthodox settlers.[49] Each is divided into a number of sub-groups. As Assaf Harel has argued, national-religious settlers are divided among theological and ideological lines.[50] Ultra-Orthodox settlers, on the other hand, are divided into different rabbinic courts that do not interact one with the other. Meanwhile, secular settlers are divided among ideological and class lines, as well as countries of origin.[51] Common to almost all these settler groups, however, were the unexpected demands each posed on architects.

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[47] See Danny Gutwein, "The Settlements and the Relationship between Privatization and Occupation," in *Normalizing Occupation: The Politics of Everyday Life in the West Bank Settlements*, ed. Ariel Handel, Marco Allegra, and Erez Maggor (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017); Danny Gutwein, "Hearot al Hayesodot Hamaamadiyim Shel Hakibush," *Theory and Criticism* 24 (Soring 2004): 203–11.

[48] According to Oren Yiftachel, gray spacing is "the practice of indefinitely positioning populations between the 'lightness' of legality, safety and full membership, and the 'darkness' of eviction, destruction and death." Tzfadia has also argued that the logic behind gray spacing has underpinned the entire history of Jewish settlement in Palestine. See Oren Yiftachel, "Critical Theory and 'Gray Space': Mobilization of the Colonized," *City* 13, no. 2–3 (September 2009): 247–63; Ariel Handel et al., eds., "Informal Outposts in the West Bank: Normality in Gray Space," in *Normalizing Occupation: The Politics of Everyday Life in the West Bank Settlements* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017).

[49] "Population," Settlements Watch (Peace Now, 2016), http://peacenow.org.il/en/settlements-watch/settlements-data/population. For a report from 2009 with relatively similar numbers see "West Bank Settlements – Facts and Figures" (Peace Now, June 1, 2009), http://peacenow.org.il/en/west-bank-settlements-facts-and-figures.

[50] See Ariel Handel et al., eds., "Beyond Gush Emunim: On Contemporary Forms of Messianism among Religiously Motivated Settlers in the West Bank," in *Normalizing Occupation: The Politics of Everyday Life in the West Bank Settlements* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017).

[51] For a fascinating account on immigrants from former USSR in the West Bank settlement of Ariel see Hadas Weiss, "Immigration and West Bank Settlement Normalization," *PoLar: Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 34, no. 1 (2011): 112–30; Hadas Weiss, "Ideology and Practice in the West Bank Settlement Movement" (University of Chicago, 2009). Also, for an excellent study of American settlers in the West Bank see Sara Yael Hirschhorn, *City on a Hilltop: American Jews and the Israeli Settler Movement* (Cambridge, Massachusetts ; London, England: Harvard University Press, 2017). On questions of ethnicity in West Bank settlements see Rivi Gillis, "Ahshav Gam Hem Mitnahalim: Hamorfologiya Haetnit Shel Hahitnahaluyot" (Tel Aviv University, 2009).

This dissertation investigates the design debates that grew out of this unstable and often ambiguous state policy, as the Israeli government refused to colonize the occupied territories but courted different demographic groups to do so. It shows how the design of settlements was a mixture of "top-down" and "bottom-up" processes, in which architectural agency is dispersed across an ever-shifting field of actors.

Architects in a Web of Agencies

Although questions about the relation between government officials and settlers are central to this dissertation, questions about the architectural profession are equally important. The five-decade period this study examines was a time of significant changes in the architectural profession in Israel. It became far more diverse and attuned to the needs of the user, while also seeing a sharp decline in its prestige and authority.

Until the late 1950s, the local architectural scene was a rather uniform one. It was dominated by a small group of European architects, who had immigrated to Israel in the first half of the 20th century. Many of them were trained in Europe and were committed to modernist design principles. In Mandatory Palestine, modernism became all the more appropriate in the minds of these émigré architects. As Alona Nitzan Shiftan has argued, modernism matched the political program of Labor Zionism. It negated the bourgeoisie, the Jewish diaspora, and the orient. Through modernism, Labor Zionists could erase the past, and make space for a "New Jew."[52] After the establishment of the Israeli state in 1948, high modernism also offered quickly constructed housing for the hundreds of thousands of Jews who flocked to the country.[53] Not surprisingly, within just a few years modernism was celebrated as a national tradition in the nascent country.[54]

But by the early 1960s, as Nitzan Shiftan has argued, a new generation of Israeli-born architects began to question the high-modernism of their forefathers. In place of what Nitzan Shiftan terms as "developmental modernism," they sought an aesthetic language that would speak to the history of the region, something more local. More often than not, as Nitzan Shiftan has pointed out, they found that language in the architecture of the Arab village. By adopting Arab architectural forms, they wished to fashion themselves as natives of a place whose bright sunlight easily burned their pale skin. By the mid 1960s, a number of them had won an impressive amount of building commissions. After the Six-Day War, they had played an even greater role in the redesign of East Jerusalem, where Arab architecture was abundant.

The same Israeli-born architects, who were enthralled with Arab architecture, however, took little interest in the settlement movement that took place in the midst of the Muslim-dominated West Bank. In the first few years following the Six-Day War settlement activists and settlements were rarely mentioned in professional publications. When architectural journals did account to settlements, it was often done reluctantly with a dismissive tone. This is not entirely surprising. Most first generation Israeli born architects were leftists and didn't share the expansionist ideology that motivated the

[52] Nitzan-Shiftan, *Seizing Jerusalem*, 30–31.
[53] On housing projects built after independence, see Miriam Tuvya and Michael Boneh, "Shikunim Beshnot Hamishim," in *Binyan Haaretz: Shikunim Beshnot Hamishim*, ed. Miriam Tuvya and Michael Boneh (Tel Aviv: Hakibutz Hameuhad, 1999), 10–18; Kallus, Rachel and Yubert Lu Yun, "The National House and the Personal House: The Role of Public Housing in the Shaping of Space," in *Merhav, Adama, Bayit*, ed. Yehuda Shenhav (Jerusalem: Van Leer Institute, 2003), 166–93.
[54] Nitzan-Shiftan, *Seizing Jerusalem*, 33.

Movement of Greater Israel or the messianic zeal that characterized *Gush Emunim*.[55] Nevertheless, beginning in 1967 and continuing all the way to the present, many of them would find themselves working in settlements.

The encounter with the West Bank was often a difficult one. It forced many architects to lend their services to a political project they resented. To overcome this predicament, they have developed different approaches. Some separated architecture from politics, arguing that they design buildings that could be occupied by anyone—settlers or Palestinians. Others have taken a more nuanced approach, differentiating between "ideological settlements" inhabited by far-right activists, and "non-ideological settlements" that cater to centrist Israelis.[56] Architects have been more inclined to take building commissions in the latter settlements. Architect Yaacov Ya'ar, for example, refused to take a building commission in the Jewish settlement of Hebron, but was willing to design the settlement of Beitar Illit, the second largest settlement in the West Bank.[57] A number of architects, however, insisted that designing settlements, no matter how moderate the residents might be, means supporting the Israeli occupation. Nevertheless, they argued that there was nothing they could do about it. "Architects are always slaves to (political) structures," one of them told me.[58] "The maximum an architect can do (if he opposes his regime) is not to do, but that is not much."

Equally challenging for architects was the encounter with settlement activists, who like *Gush Emunim* I discussed above, often developed their own aesthetic visions. In the first decades following the Six-Day War, many of the activists shared a biblical imaginary that identified the lands of the West Bank with the biblical kingdom of Judea. Accordingly, they demanded architects deliver them an architecture that would fit into this imaginary. Over time, settlers continued forcing different aesthetic visions. Each new group of settlers articulated its own vision. Some sought a suburban ideal while others were inspired by American counter-culture. More often than not, architects who opposed these aesthetic preferences found themselves on the losing end. They were either replaced by other architects, or by settlers who assumed themselves the roles of architects, urban planners and designers.

During the five decades that frame this study, another major transition occurred: the number of practicing architects increased exponentially. If in 1967 there was one accredited architecture school in Israel, by the mid-1990s there were four. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to discuss the various processes that have contributed to this explosion in the number of architects. Nevertheless, as former chief architect at the Ministry of Housing's Administration of Rural and New Settlements Israel Godovich has argued, the construction boom of the 1980s in settlements, and the settlers' dissatisfaction with the Ministry of Housing uniform housing schemes had greatly contributed to this change. In addition, in 2001, an architecture school was opened in the settlement of Ariel. According to Eran Neuman, the head of the architecture school at Tel Aviv University,

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[55] According to Nitzan-Shiftan, first-generation-Israeli-born architects were committed primarily to professional activity rather than political action. To a degree, my findings confirm her observation. Nevertheless, given the resentment many architects have expressed towards settlements, it seems like West Bank settlements built outside of Jerusalem formed a red line for many of them. See Nitzan-Shiftan, 48.

[56] The use of the terms "ideological" and "non-ideological" is hardly accurate, even if it is common in Israel. As I show later in this introduction, settlers population is a fragmented one and cannot be broken into simple binaries.

[57] Yaacov Yaar, *Life and the Architecture* (Haifa: Architectural and Landscape Heritage Research Center, The Faculty of Architecture and Town Planning, The Technion, 2016), 199, 230.

[58] Rita Dunskey Foyershtein, phone interview with the author, December 15, 2015.

Ariel's architecture school has significantly changed the demographic composition of the profession. Unlike other schools, it has been accepting virtually all applicants, reducing the total number of applicants to other schools, and ultimately undermining the prestige of the profession.[59]

This dissertation, then, narrates a story of reluctant architects, who faced numerous challenges over the course of the Israeli occupation. It shows how they had to reinvent their professional identity in response to settlers' demands on the one hand, and the government's ambiguous policy on the other. It considers both leading and less well-known architects. And while none of the examples I discuss in this study forms a distinguished example of architecture, together they offer a unique look into complex social and political structures.

On the other side of the political map, this dissertation also narrates the story of those few architects who had proudly taken part in the settlement project. Often, these were religious architects. Accepting design commissions in the West Bank was both ideologically right and religiously meaningful in their minds. A number of them have tried to speak to the West Bank's biblical history in their designs and experiment with Jewish symbolism. This is the first study to account to their work. In so doing, this dissertation also examines the relation between architecture and piety.

Methods

A large part of the history of settlements design is informal, and thus undocumented. As a result, official archives, such as the Israel State Archives or the Central Zionist Archives, offer only a limited amount of information on the settlement project. To collect data for this study, therefore, I have supplemented archival research with participant observation, interviews, and spatial analysis. The shift from one method to the other was hardly a planned one. As my fieldwork has evolved, time and again I had encountered different impasses that forced me to reinvent my plans.

This study began with participant observation. In January 2014, I moved to the settlement of Bat Ayin. Since the settlement has strict admissions rules, allowing only pious Jews in, I had to rent a Bed and Breakfast unit. Tourists' facilities, as I later learned, have recently become popular in settlements, even in radical ones like Bat Ayin. While there, I attended synagogue services, socialized with my neighbors, documented their homes, and formally interviewed a number of them. After a few weeks, through a contact I made in Bat Ayin, I was able to rent a unit in Pnei Kedem, an unauthorized outpost of some 50 observant families. I resided in Pnei Kedem for the next eleven months. At Pnei Kedem I joined a construction team, took part in the outpost's planning and religion committees, and attended general assembly meetings. In addition, I became part of the social life of the outposts. I attended synagogue services, bar mitzvahs, Shabbat dinners, weddings, and formed strong friendships with a number of informants. I went on night walks, did my grocery shopping, and dined with them. I have continued to visit Pnei Kedem in subsequent years on summer vacations.

In Pnei Kedem and other settlements I was both an outsider and an insider. As a secular Israeli, who had been living abroad for over a decade, without a wife or children, I was not the kind of person the residents of Pnei Kedem were used to. My life style, body language, manners, and speech rendered me as an outsider. I didn't try to hide the

[59] Eran Neuman, conversation with the author, January 4, 2016.

gaps between us. I always introduced myself as a PhD candidate studying the architecture of settlements, and excluding times when I attended services at the synagogue, I didn't wear a Yamaka. Nevertheless, most settlers warmly greeted me. As much as I was an outsider, I was also an insider. I was born and raised in Israel. In addition, even though I am not familiar with many religious rituals, I am Jewish—an important fact in the minds of many of my informants. It made me one of theirs.

In addition to participant observation, I have collected archival materials at both formal and informal archives. I gathered documents that pertain to the Ministry of Housing and government officials at the Israel State Archives, Central Zionist Archives, the Jewish Agency for Israel archive, and Yad Tabenkin Archive. More surprising was material I collected at small archives established by a number of settlements. These archives are relatively new. Often, residents run them on a voluntary basis. They collect photos and documents from the settlement's founders, allocate space, and store the material in unsorted boxes. A settler in charged of one of these archives explained to me that it is very important for the founders' generation to have their stories kept and communicated to the younger generation in the settlement. I have used a number of these archives, including the ones at the settlements of Ofra, Alfei Menashe, Beit Horon, Kfar Etzion, and Neve Tzuf. In addition, thanks to my informants at Pnei Kedem and Bat Ayin I was granted access to private collections that are stored at individual houses. They shared their photo albums, old correspondences, and were always willing to narrate their history.

To complement material that was not available in archives, I have used advertisements, newspaper and magazine articles from 1967 to the present. Major Hebrew newspapers, such as *Yediot Aharonot*, *Maariv*, *Haaretz* and *Davar*, often revealed tensions between political parties, and official declarations made by settler representatives.[60] Smaller, and not as well-known, settler publications, such as *Nakudah* or Pnei Kedem's *Peninon*, provided numerous insights into the internal dynamics of settlers. These magazines often published letters written by settlers, expressing conflicting ideological views and opinions concerning the planning of settlements and settlement houses.

Architectural drawings and planning documents were harder to find. I collected material on Eldar Sharon's work in Kfar Etzion at the David J. Azrieli Central Archives and Israeli Research Center for Architecture in Tel Aviv. In addition, I gained access to a restricted storage space at the Technion, where Yaacov Yaar's archives are stored. In addition, I have reviewed a number of architectural publications. Among these are Ministry of Housing's publications, such as *Israel Builds* and guidebooks, as well as private magazines such as *Tvai*, *Alef Alef*, and *Architectura*. These publications offer insights into Israeli architectural culture.

I treat these architectural drawings both as historical evidence and objects of study. Analyzing floor plans of residential units allowed me to contrast architects' intentions with the everyday practices of the residents. Residents I interviewed voluntarily sketched or diagramed their homes, highlighting the changes they did to the house after the architects left. In some cases I drew floor plans by myself. I based my

[60] In 1996, *Davar* was shut down. It was recently re-launched as *Davar Rishon*. I have drawn material only from the pre-1996 newspaper.

drawings on measurements I have taken on the site. I complement these plans with numerous photographs I have taken.

In addition, I conducted more than 30 interviews with architects who had worked in the West Bank. Almost all the architects I contacted agreed to meet with me, even though they rarely expressed much pride in their work in settlements. They were often surprised to hear I was studying settlement architecture. By and large, I figured, their more impressive body of work was carried out in Israel proper, not in the West Bank. The interviews often lasted for about an hour or two. Almost all were carried out at the interviewees' working space. Most architects I interviewed also gave me access to their private collections of drawings and meeting transcripts. In a couple of instances, architects declined my request for a meeting. One architect explained he was hurt by his interaction with the settlers and preferred not talking about his experiences in the West Bank. Others didn't explain their reasons.

In combining these various methods, this dissertation brings to the fore actors that are often neglected in conventional architectural historiography. It shows how they have played pivotal roles in the settlement project. In so doing, it proposes a new understanding on how political decisions are made, and how the built environment is shaped in the context of a highly contested political site.

Chapter Overview

Organized chronologically, this dissertation traces the debates that accompanied five successive episodes in the history of settlement design. It begins in the first weeks that followed the Six-Day War and ends in the present. Each chapter is framed by major political events, such as the 1977 elections that saw the rise of the right-wing Likud party or the outbreak of the Palestinian uprising in 1987. In referring to these events I follow established conventions of Israeli historiography. Nevertheless, because planning and construction are gradual, many of the chapters extend beyond these events, resulting in some overlapping between chapters. A more accurate way of differentiating the five episodes this dissertation outlines is an attention to the users. Each chapter narrates a different group of settlers, who posed their own demands on architecture.

In Chapter 1, "The First Decade," I investigate the design and construction of the first few settlements built in the West Bank after the Six-Day War. These settlements grew out of pressures that were put forward by different civilians, ranging from religious radicals, leftist intellectuals, and bohemian artists who wanted to get closer to Arab culture. Focusing on the Jewish settlement of Hebron, I trace the ways in which the design of the settlement, at a time when the Israeli government was still debating the administrative fate of the occupied territories, became the site of intense negotiations between settlement activists, government officials, and architects. Each presented conflicting political ideologies and aesthetic visions. At first architects working for the government had sought to mitigate the ambitions of the settlement movement, but their plans were undermined by the emergence of unexpected actors, such as amateur archeologists and volunteer architects, who commandeered their designs. By chronicling the evolution of design in the early years of the settlement movement, I examine the frictions that began to surface in the architectural community, and inner dynamics of the first generation of settlers.

Next, in Chapter 2, I discuss the emergence of the Community Settlement model between the mid-1970s and early 1980s. In the aftermath of the Yom Kippur War from 1973, the activists group of *Gush Emunim* emerged. Known for their messianic zeal, *Gush Emunim* members have embarked on a number of much-publicized settlement attempts in the northern region of the West Bank. This chapter focuses on the settlement Ofra that grew out of one of these grassroots settlement attempts. For almost three years, Ofra operated without government recognition. During this time, settlers developed planning agencies, recruited design professionals, and invented a new settlement type: the Community Settlement. Once the government authorized Ofra, they had to negotiate their plans with Ministry of Housing officials. The latters were often reluctant and, by and large, found the residents to be difficult. Over time, their concerns grew stronger, especially in the face of the settlers design for the main synagogue that took its inspiration from the Old Jewish Temple. I examine how this experience affected the practice of architecture in official planning institutes on the one hand, and the construction of future settlements on the other.

In chapter 3, "Villa Pioneers," I examine the construction boom that began shortly after the 1977 elections and brought to an end by the late 1980s. During these years the number of settlers have increased exponentially. If in 1977 there were only 4,000 settlers, by the end of 1986, there were 51,000. Unlike the previous ones, many among these new settlers were secular Israelis who wanted to enjoy the generous funding packages the government was offering to settlers. The resulting architecture …I analyzed the ways by which architects Ministry of Housing officials and older settlers reacted to this new trend, showing how the latter two were far more flexible, willing to adapt their programs and plans.

The settlement project took a sharp turn in the late 1980s, after the breakout of the first Palestinian uprising, when the government began building city-settlements for ultra-Orthodox publics. In Chapter 4, "Rabbis, Architects, and the Design of Ultra-Orthodox City-Settlements," I show how the design of these city-settlements posed a number of challenges to local architects. Faced with the task of planning the first modern cities ever designed exclusively for ultra-Orthodox Israelis, architects sought an aesthetic language that would speak to the customs of the ultra- Orthodox community. In addition, when many in the ultra-Orthodox community had come to resent these city-settlements, and it was unclear whether young ultra-Orthodox couples would settle in the West Bank, architects began to study and accommodate the unique needs of the ultra-Orthodox community. Although these needs proved to be more complex than the architects had imagined, and most of their attempts failed, these architects provoked a peculiar dialogue between professional planners and the ultra- Orthodox community. I examine how these unexpected negotiations between the two groups resulted in paradoxical outcomes that force us to question the much-celebrated "triumph of the user."

Chapter 5, "Formalizing the Informal," explores the design and construction of new settlements in the aftermath of the Oslo Accords. By signing the accords, Israel committed to stop erecting new settlements. Nevertheless, since the mid 1990s, some 105 new ones have emerged. All have an ambiguous legal status: the state refused to recognize them, but supports them informally. Most outpost residents are young couples, and unlike media representations, are not necessarily committed to a hardline settlement ideology. Built outside the purview of official planning institutes, most outposts have

local building committees in charge of master planning and building codes. Often these committees fail to reach consensus, leaving the design of outposts in the hands of individual residents. Construction of homes is often carried out either by Palestinians or Jewish residents, resulting in a bitter competition between the two. Using the outpost of Pnei Kedem, I examine the many tensions that arise in outposts, their relation to the state, and the special interest outpost residents have taken in counterculture architecture.

I close this dissertation by discussing architects and architectural theorists' attempts to fight the settlement project over the last fifteen years. These voices have emerged alongside the introduction of architectural theory to the local scene.[61] The first, and perhaps the most notable of these attempts has been Eyal Weizman and Rafi Segal's exhibition catalog, *Civilian Occupation*, which was rescinded by the Israeli Association of Architects in 2002. In the following years, others, including well-known architectural writers such as Charles Jencks and Michael Sorkin, have voiced their criticism against their Israeli peers who have been accepting building commissions in the West Bank. Even though these efforts were futile, they raise significant questions concerning the role of architecture in sites of political conflict. Against commonplace interpretations that see architecture and architects as overtly empowers agents, or, otherwise, as the carriers of state power, I propose locating architecture in a web of agencies, characterized by numerous contingencies, contradictions, and paradoxes.

[61] According to Sharon Rotbard, it was mainly French theory that influenced the local architectural scene. Tzvi Efrat, Ariela Azoulay, and Rotbard himself were the ones who introduced French Theory to local architects in the 1990s. The three of them, he explained, obtained higher education abroad and returned to Israel at around the same time. All have held important academic positions in Israel. Efrat was the head of the architecture school at Bezalel Academy, Azoulay had taught at Camera Obscura School of Art, Minshar School of Art, and Bar Ilan University, while Rotbard has taught at Bezalel Academy and founded Babel Publishing House. Sharon Rotbard, interview by the author, July 31, 2016.

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Chapter One: The First Years

Figure 1.1 View of Kiryat Arba from Hebron, Boaz Lanir, c.1985. Source: Harvard, VIA image catalog

In the fall of 1968, some 18 months after Israel conquered the West Bank, architect David Cassuto published a short piece about the Palestinian town of Bethlehem in *Tvai*, one of the three architecture magazines in circulation in Israel. A regular contributor to *Tvai*, Cassuto was known for his interest in pilgrimage sites and places of worship. He developed a strong religious awareness at a young ag. After his father, former chief rabbi of Florence, died in Auschwitz, and Arab forces killed his mother in Jerusalem in 1948, Cassuto was raised by his grandfather, the prominent biblical scholar Umberto Cassuto. After graduating from the Faculty of Architecture at the Technion in 1963, he focused on the study and design of synagogues and worship spaces. Bethlehem, the burial site of Rachel the biblical Matriarch and home to the Church of the Nativity, was among the many religious sites that became available to Cassuto after the conquest of the West Bank. This new landscape, at once so close to his Jerusalem apartment but also foreign and mysterious, inspired him to write the piece, "Bethlehem: An Architectural Survey" for *Tvai*.

Carefully describing his journey through the narrow alleys of the old town, Cassuto's text, complemented by his own photos, offered an intimate look at the city (Figure 1.2). Noting every detail, Cassuto commended the irregular stone tiles, the thick masonry walls and cantilevered balconies that framed the old alleyways. Each alley, he wrote, opened up to another one. All ended in spectacular views, "making every single alleyway miraculous." Equally mesmerizing, Cassuto explained, were the lively markets in the Casbah, as were the small stores facing the streets, and the plaza in front of the Church of the Nativity. In Cassuto's mind, this tapestry of oriental architecture and holy sites created a place where time stood still, provoking "an Eastern atmosphere, memories of ancient times."[1]

[1] David Cassuto, "Beit Lehem: Seker architectoni," *Tvai*, 1968.

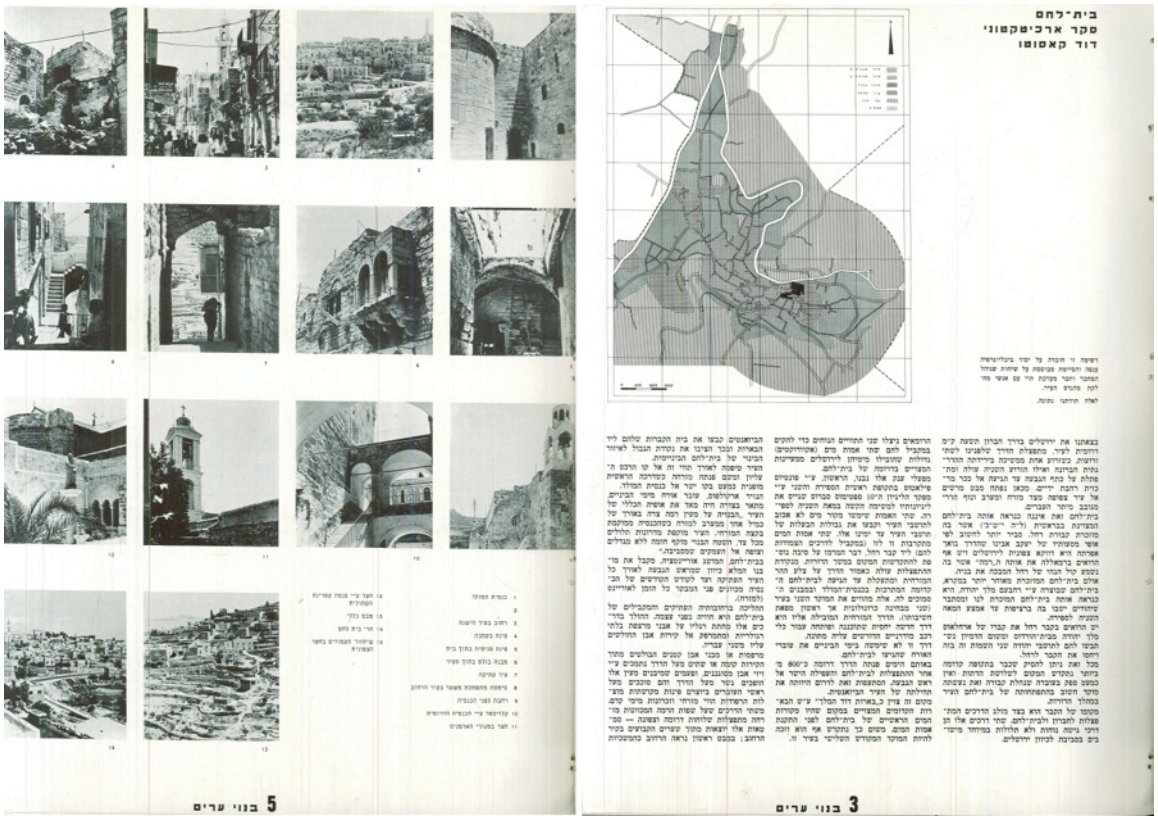

Figure 1.2 David Cassuto, "Beit Lehem: Seker architectoni," *Tvai*, 1968, 3, 5.

Cassuto was so impressed with Bethlehem's unique atmosphere that he insisted the town be preserved and kept away from the ills of modernization. With this goal in mind, he ended his article with a concrete proposal: Bethlehem should be annexed to Jerusalem. This way, hotels and other commercial and industrial buildings needed for Bethlehem's survival could be built in Jerusalem, leaving Bethlehem's fabric intact. Bethlehem, according to Cassuto's plan, should become a museum object under Israeli rule.[2]

Tvai's editors didn't share Cassuto's enthusiasm about Bethlehem and the prospects of annexing the town. In an unusual gesture, they added a short warning note at the end of the article, stressing that Cassuto's observations were ungrounded and didn't represent the views of the editorial team. Altogether, the editors showed no interest in the settlement movement taking shape in the aftermath of the Six-Day War. Cassuto's article was the first appraisal of the West Bank in an architectural publication, a topic rarely reprised afterwards.[3]

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[2] Cassuto was not the only one advocating for the preservation of Bethlehem. In November 1967, for example, two urban planners wrote that Bethlehem shouldn't become an industrial center. They didn't envision annexing Bethlehem, but proposed limiting its development to tourist facilities. See Eliezer Brodetzky and Hanan Aryun, "Preliminary Considerations for Deciding on Urban Centers in the West Bank," *Alon HaIgud Letichnun Svivati* 6 (November 1967): 11.

[3] Tvai continued to exist until 1992. During this time, there were only five issues in which West Bank projects outside of Jerusalem were briefly mentioned. In 1969 an un-built guesthouse in Kfar Etzion by Kalman Katz and Adam Mazor in Tvai was mentioned. Then, in 1973, there was a short description of Shaked, Gvirtzman and Rita's plans for Rosh Tzurim. In 1984, the editors wrote a double spread review of a number of settlements, criticizing their lack of originality and aesthetic consideration. That same issue included a review of Har Gilo Academy in the settlement of Har Gilo. In 1985, the editors included a review of the settlement of Maale Edumim and a sports facility in Kiryat Arba. Finally, in 1992, the editorial team presented a synagogue and day care center in Alfei Menashe. See "Proyect Lebeit Haaraha Bekfar Etzion," *Tvai* 6 (1969): 40–41; "Kibutz Rosh Zurim," *Tvai* 12 (1973): 13–14; "Al

Cassuto's piece and the editors' note reveal tensions in the architectural scene that began to surface in the aftermath of the war. On the one hand, the piece itself shows how a small number of architects, like Cassuto, were excited about the possibility of working in the West Bank. Cassuto's reaction to Bethlehem's "Eastern atmosphere" illustrates the excitement that accompanied their encounter with the architecture of Palestinian towns.[4] On the other hand, *Tvai's* editorial team's reaction shows how establishment architects shied away from the occupied territories.

The article, however, leaves a number of questions unanswered. First, it doesn't discuss the design approach Israeli architects were actually taking in the West Bank. At the time the article was printed, a number of architects were already drafting plans for West Bank settlements. What did their plans look like? Were the architects in charge of settlement design enthralled with Palestinian architecture, and like Cassuto, aimed at preserving it? In addition, it is hard to tell from the article how the predominantly left-leaning local community of architects reacted to the settlements—a highly controversial expansionist project. It also doesn't touch upon their encounter with settlement activists and their biblical imaginary.

In this chapter I examine the peculiar dialog between architects, settlement activists, and government officials that accompanied the construction of settlements in the early years following the Six-Day War. Following a brief review of Kfar Etzion, the first settlement built in the West Bank, I turn my focus to the settlement of Hebron, and the Jewish neighborhood into which it was quickly transformed: Kiryat Arba. The alleged burial town of the Patriarchs and Matriarchs—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Sarah, Rebekah, and Leah—Hebron is among the holiest sites in Judaism, second only to Jerusalem. But it is also sacred to Islam, and when the Israeli settlers arrived, Hebron was home to some thirty-nine thousand Palestinians.[5] It is here—where the biblical imaginary confronts modern geography, and Judaism confronts Islam—that architects most acutely faced the challenges posed by settlement activists and the lack of a clear government policy in the aftermath of the Six-Day War.

Charting the evolution of the settlement, this chapter traces the emergence of various groups that advocated for settling Jews in Hebron, and their encounter with institutional architecture. It analyzes the plans architects at the Ministry of Housing drew for the settlers. The chapter shows how the settlers' unexpected reaction transformed the architects' plans to suit desires that the architects hadn't taken into account. By unearthing the architectural history of the settlement, I aim to first problematize the received history of settlement design as the outcome of decisions made by individual politicians; and second, to highlight the gap between design intentions and outcomes in the context of politically contested spaces. In addition, by discussing some of the aesthetic visions that weren't realized, I aim to emphasize the strong sense of uncertainty that characterized settlements design in the aftermath of the Six-Day War. In so doing,

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Siyur Noge Beyehuda Veshomron," *Tvai* 22 (1984): 64–65; "Hamidrasha Lehinuh Shel Za.Ha.L Behar Gilo," *Tvai* 22 (1984): 66–67; "Maale Adumim - Civic Center," *Tvai* 25–26 (1985): 39–44; "Cultural and Sports Campus - Kiryat Arba," *Tvai* 25–26 (1985): 62–65; "Maon Yom Bealfei Menashe," *Tvai* 29–30 (1992): 78–85.

[4] As I discussed in the introduction, according to Alona Nitzan Shiftan, beginning in the 1950s Israeli-born architects have shown great interest in Arab architecture. For a comprehensive discussion of the matter, see Alona Nitzan-Shiftan, *Seizing Jerusalem: The Architectures of Unilateral Unification* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), 54–61.

[5] Shmuel Shaked and Amos Livnat, "Urban Settlement in Mount Hebron," January 29, 1969, א-112/2, Israel State Archives.

this chapter reminds us with force that the current nature of many settlements—segregated and removed from their surroundings—was not inevitable, nor even desired.

Strange Bedfellows Converge in Hebron

In the months that followed the Six-Day War, the Israeli government debated various alternatives for the West Bank. Some, like government ministers Menachem Begin and Yisrael Galili, promoted a maximalist policy aimed at annexation.[6] Others, who didn't want to absorb the more than one million Palestinians who resided in the occupied territories, proposed different solutions. Minister of Labor Yigal Alon suggested keeping a number of strategic strongholds and establishing a Palestinian Arab entity in the remaining parts of the West Bank. Justice Minister Yaacov Shomshon Shapira, by contrast, insisted the West Bank should be returned to Jordan.[7] For a number of reasons, however, the government failed to take a clear line of action. Instead, they decided not to annex most parts of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip—but at the same time, refused to withdraw.[8]

While government officials failed to reach a decision, Israeli citizens showed a growing interest in the West Bank. Every weekend thousands of Israelis would flock to Palestinian towns such as Nablus, Bethlehem, and Hebron.[9] In the summer of 1967, newspapers reported that some twenty thousand Israelis visited Hebron in only one weekend.[10] Wandering around the colorful markets near the Tomb of the Patriarchs—a monolithic structure sacred to both Muslims and Jews—many visitors were mesmerized by the city's narrow alleyways, unique skyline dotted with vaulted domes, and tall minarets (Figure 1.3). For some like Cassuto, these excursions offered a unique feeling of spiritual awakening; "It was as if the stories of the bible came to life," one recalled.[11] And with this feeling came a strange sense of belonging. As another explained, "When we first drove to Hebron I had this strong feeling of 'I remember this landscape from years ago'…I was amazed to see how many other Jews felt the same…It was a feeling of returning home, to our childhood landscape…"[12] Exotic but also familiar, these towns drew strong emotional reactions among many in Israel.

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6 At first, Begin and Galili didn't discuss the faith of the Palestinian residents of the West Bank, arguing that a decision on their status would be made only later. See Gershom Gorenberg, *The Accidental Empire: Israel and the Birth of Settlements, 1967-1977*, 1st ed (New York: Times Books, 2006), 50–51. By the end of 1968, Begin would add and call for erecting "townships with Jewish inhabitants in Jericho, Hebron, Bethlehem, Nablus, Tulkarem, Jenin, and Qalqiliya." See Yehiel Admoni, *Asor Shel Shiḳul Daat: Hahityashvut Meever Laḳav Hayarok 1967-1977*, (Hakibutz Hamuhad Press, 1992), 58; Idith Zertal and Akiva Eldar, *Lords of the Land: The War over Israel's Settlements in the Occupied Territories: 1967-2007* (New York: Nation Books, 2007), 22.

7 Gorenberg, *The Accidental Empire*, 51–53.

8 The official government line was that the occupied territories were kept as bargaining chips for future negotiations with leaders of the Arab world. See Hagai Segal, *Ahim Yekarim: Korot "Hamahteret Hayehudit"* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1987), 19; Gorenberg, *The Accidental Empire*, 50; Zertal and Eldar, *Lords of the Land*, 6.

9 As Gorenberg has argued, at the same time, Palestinians living in the West Bank were making visits to places like Jaffa that were closed off after the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. See Gorenberg, *The Accidental Empire*, 104.

10 Oded Avishar, *Sefer Ḥevron; Ir Haavot Veyeshuvah Berei Hadorot* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1970), 468; Tzvi Lavie, "Mohammad Ali Jaber honeh et Hadoar hashlishi betoldotav," *Maariv*, July 10, 1967, 3.

11 Ḥagai Huberman, *Ḥanan Porat: Sipur Ḥayaṿ = Hanan Porat: Biography* (Tel-Aviv: Yedi'ot aḥaronot : Sifre ḥemed, 2013), 34.

12 Zehava Native, "Spiura haIshi shel mishpaha mitnahelet," in *Kiryat Arba Hee Hevron: Kovetz Mamarim Vetmunot Bemeliat asor Lehidush Hayeshuv Hayehudi Behevron*, ed. Moshe Ozeri (Hebron: Minhelet Kiryat Arba, 1978), 44.

Figure 1.3 Israelis near the Tomb of the Patriarchs, Hebron, 1967. Source: Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem.

It didn't take long before some began to organize into groups advocating for concrete settlement plans. Even though these groups represented a multitude of conflicting political and religious views, they solidified into a robust coalition for a short period.[13]

The most vocal were the members of the religious Zionist faction. The origins of this group, which until 1967 was considered marginal and politically moderate, can be traced to nineteenth-century Europe.[14] With the rise of Zionism in the nineteenth century, Orthodox Jewry underwent a crisis. As historian Yosef Salmon commented, Zionism challenged all aspects of traditional Judaism. It favored a modern, national identity over the traditional, diasporic one.[15] In addition, Zionism questioned the passivity of Jewish

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[13] For a comprehensive discussion of the unexpected collaboration between religious radicals and left-leaning secularists see Gorenberg, *The Accidental Empire*.

[14] Gideon Aran, *Ḳuḳizm: Shorshe Gush Emunim, Tarbut Ha-Mitnaḥalim, Te'ologyah Tsiyonit, Meshiḥiyut Bi-Zemanenu* (Yerushalayim: Karmel, 2013), 76; Shlomo Swirski, *Meḥir Ha-Yoharah: Ha-Kibush, Ha-Meḥir She-Yiśra'el Meshalemet* (Tel-Aviv: Mapah, hotsa'ah le-or : Merkaz Adyah, 2005), 71. For a comprehensive discussion of religious nationalism between 1948 and 1967, see Dror Greenblum, *Mi-gevurat ha-ruaḥ le-kidush ha-koaḥ : koaḥ u-gevurah ba-tsiyonut ha-datit ben 708 le-727* (Ra'ananah: ha-Universiṭah ha-petuḥah, 2016). For a discussion of the group's political stance until 1967, see Shlomo Avineri, "Zionism and the Jewish Religious Tradition," in *Zionism and Religion*, ed. S. Almog et al., The Tauber Institute for the Study of European Jewry Series 30 (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1998), 7; Eliezer Don-Yehiya, "The Book and the Sword: The Nationalist Yeshivot and Political Radicalism in Israel," in *Accounting for Fundamentalisms: The Dynamic Character of Movements*, ed. Martin E Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), 264–65.

[15] Yosef Salmon, "Zionism and Anti-Zionism in Traditional Judaism in Eastern Europe," in *Zionism and Religion*, ed. S. Almog et al., The Tauber Institute for the Study of European Jewry Series 30 (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1998), 25.

Orthodoxy. Against the traditional belief that the state of Israel would be founded only after the coming of the messiah, Zionists called for active intervention.[16] They refused to wait for the coming of the messiah, and dreamed of building the state of Israel with their own hands.[17] To bridge this gap between the old orthodoxy and Zionism, a number of rabbis revised some traditional stances. Most importantly, they argued that the immigration of Jews to Palestine would form the first step in a long journey to redemption, at the end of which the messiah would appear.[18] During the first half of the 20th century, Rabbi Avraham Yitzhak Hacohen Kook, the first chief Ashkenazi rabbi of Palestine, further emphasized the sacredness of the Zionist project.[19] Together, these disparate voices formed the basis for what came to be known as religious Zionism.

But it was Kook's son, Rabbi Tzvi Yehuda Hacohen Kook, who transformed these ideas into a concrete political project that inspired many in the aftermath of the Six-Day War.[20] In the mid-1930s, he began revising his father's arguments, contending that the settling of the Land of Israel, especially the West Bank, was a religious commandment, or a matter of "divine politics."[21] By the 1960s, Tzvi Yehuda Kook had gathered a circle of young followers who shared his views.[22] For them, the connection between the Jewish people and the Holy Land, especially the southern part of the West Bank—the alleged site of the ancient Kingdom of Judea—was sacred. When the Six-Day War took place, they imagined it as a religious moment.[23] It was God, they believed, who secured Israel's victory in the war, paving the way to redemption.[24] And now it was up to them to take the final step down that path by populating the West Bank with Jewish Israelis and rebuilding the Kingdom of Judea. Armed with messianic zeal and modern nationalism, they quickly took leading roles in the settlement movement.

Equally important were the secular members of *HaTenu'a Lema'an Eretz Yisrael HaSheleima* [The Movement for the Whole Land of Israel]. Founded almost immediately after the war, its leaders included prominent figures like Natan Alterman, luminary poet and recipient of the Israeli Prize, and Moshe Shamir, a famous novelist, playwright, and

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16 Gadi Taub, *The Settlers: And the Struggle over the Meaning of Zionism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 37–38. For a comprehensive discussion of Jewish orthodoxy's response to Jewish nationalism see Aviezer Ravitzky, *Messianism, Zionism, and Jewish Religious Radicalism*, Chicago Studies in the History of Judaism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

17 Taub, *The Settlers*, 37–38.

18 For example, Sephardic rabbi Judah Hai Alkalai contended, "redemption will begin by the efforts of the Jews themselves." They will form the first step to redemption, after which the ultimate messiah would appear. See Avineri, "Zionism and the Jewish Religious Tradition," 3–4. Even more radical was rabbi Shmuel Mohilever who declared that "the Holy One, Blessed be He, prefers that His sons should settle in His land, even if they do not observe the Torah properly." See Salmon, "Zionism and Anti-Zionism in Traditional Judaism in Eastern Europe," 29.

19 Taub, *The Settlers*, 39. Significantly, in 1924, Rabbi Avraham Yitzhak Hacohen Kook founded the yeshiva of Merkaz HaRav. Unlike other yeshivas that saw Zionism as religiously flawed, Merkaz HaRav embraced the Israeli military forces, and showed sympathy towards the general, non-orthodox Jewish society. See Don-Yehiya, "The Book and the Sword: The Nationalist Yeshivot and Political Radicalism in Israel," 267.

20 Don-Yehiya, "The Book and the Sword: The Nationalist Yeshivot and Political Radicalism in Israel," 267.

21 Taub, *The Settlers*, 41–46.

22 Gorenberg, *The Accidental Empire*, 22.

23 A couple of weeks before the Six-Day War broke out Tzvi Yehuda Kook delivered an address to his students and guests asking: "where is our Hebron? Have we forgotten it?! And where is our Shekhem [Nablus]? And our Jericho?" Even though, as Gorenberg has argued, Kook's sermon didn't predict the future, and was merely an expression of sorrow, his disciples saw it as prophetic after the Six-Day War. Gorenberg, 22–23; Taub, *The Settlers*, 42–43; Michael Feige, *Settling in the Hearts: Jewish Fundamentalism in the Occupied Territories*, Raphael Patai Series in Jewish Folklore and Anthropology (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2009), 39.

24 Taub, *The Settlers*, 42.

essayist. In their eyes, the Six-Day War had opened a new era destined to change the fate of the country. Even though many members were associated with the ruling left-leaning party, *Mifleget Poalei Eretz Yisrael* [Workers' Party of the Land of Israel](MAPAI), they opposed any withdrawal from the occupied territories. Instead, they encouraged a Jewish presence in the West Bank and the other regions conquered in the war.[25] Enjoying a privileged position in Israeli society, they recruited notable university professors, artists, poets, and military officers into their ranks within weeks of the war's end. Together, they organized rallies, circulated petitions and even printed journals that featured essays by leading poets and artists who advocated for settlement plans.[26] While marginal in number, the political reach of the elderly members of the Movement was of great importance in the founding of the first settlements.[27]

A more colorful group advocating for settlement plans was *The Canaanites*, or *The Young Hebrews*—an ideological affiliation popular among leading Israeli artists since the late 1930s. The Canaanites aimed at reviving a forgotten Hebrew nation that, preceding the rise of Judaism, stretched across the Levant to encompass multiple ethnic groups.[28] In order to recreate that imagined nation, they argued, the Jewish people must cut themselves from Judaism and return to a more authentic culture, something more local.[29] The conquest of the West Bank, the Sinai Peninsula, and the Gaza Strip seemed to them like an important step. They believed that settling these sites with Jewish Israelis would facilitate the formation of a new regional identity, a mixture of Jewish Israeli and Palestinian cultures.[30] One of the Canaanites even founded the *Vaad Lemaan Hahzakat Hashtahim* [The Committee For Keeping the Territories]. The *Committee* attracted a number of Israeli intellectuals, including Israeli-Palestinian architect and former Knesset member Rostam Bastuni. Together, they envisioned a unified regional culture that would "strengthen the geographic and ethnographic uniformity of the Land of Israel."[31]

While religious Zionists, members of the *Movement for the Whole Land of Israel*, and the *Canaanites* wanted to settle Jewish Israelis across the occupied territories, their calls for a Jewish settlement in Hebron seemed more pressing. Known as King David's capital and the burial site of the Biblical Patriarchs and Matriarchs—Abraham, Isaac,

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[25] Dov Goldstein, "Lo nevater al shum shaal!," *Maariv*, August 31, 1967. Also, see a discussion of the Movement in Ehud Sprinzak, *The Ascendance of Israel's Radical Right* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 38–43. For a discussion of the Movement from the perspective of the national religious faction, see Yair Sheleg, "Heyo Hayta Pa'am Tnua," *Nekuda*, October 1987, 34–37.

[26] For example, in 1967 the Movement circulated a petition that was signed by luminary poets such as Nathan Alterman, Uri Tzvi Greenberg, and Haim Gouri. See Hatenua Lemaan Eretz Yisrael Hashlema, "Lemaan Eretz Yisrael Haslema," *Maariv*, September 9, 1967, 24. Equally effective was Zot Haaretz, the official bi-weekly journal of the Movement. See Yisrael Harel and Hatnua Lemaan Yisrael Hashlema, eds., "Zot Haaretz: du shavuon Hatnua lemaan Yisrael hashlema," 1967.

[27] Haggai Hoberman, *Ke-Neged Kol Ha-Sikuyim : 40 Shenot Ha-Hityashvut Bi-Yehudah Ṿe-Shomron, Binyamin Ṿeha-Biḳ'ah, 727-767* (Ariel: Sifriyat Netsarim, 2008), 43.

[28] Jacob Shavit and Mordechai Eran, *The Hebrew Bible Reborn: From Holy Scripture to the Book of Books: A History of Biblical Culture and the Battles over the Bible in Modern Judaism* (Berlin ; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 487.

[29] Shavit and Eran, 487.

[30] Yair Sheleg, "Cnaanim Lemaan Yisrael Hashlema," *Nekuda*, October 1987, 37.

[31] The collaboration between the Canaanites and the other groups didn't last for long. According to Aharon Amir, who founded the *Committee*, the friction first occurred when secular members of the *Movement for the Whole Land of Israel* refused to include Bastuni and another Druze speaker in the *Movement's* first news conference. Later, Amir got upset when the *Movement* laid out its manifesto. To his dismay, the manifesto announced that "The Whole land of Israel is now in the hands of the Jewish people." Soon after, he ended his relationship with the *Movement*, and began working on settlement plans in Ramallah and other Palestinian towns on his own. Amir claimed that unlike the *Movement's* members, religious settlement activists shared parts of his vision. Sheleg, 37.

Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca, and Leah—Hebron appealed to many.[32] While Israelis made trips to Bethlehem, Ramallah, and Nablus after the war, the number visiting Hebron was unmatched. Most of the visitors, both pious and secular, congregated around the *Tomb of the Patriarchs* or *Ibrahimi Mosque*, a large monolithic structure located in the heart of Hebron, sacred to both native Palestinians and Jewish visitors. Surrounded by markets with affordable commodities and oriental attractions, it was an ideal destination for tourists and pilgrims alike.

The sense of connectedness to Hebron was made all the more concrete with the appearance of yet another group: the descendants of the old Jewish quarter in Hebron. The Jewish Quarter in the heart of Hebron once housed a few hundred Jews.[33] The community, however, suffered great losses during the 1929 Arab riots, and was permanently expelled in 1936.[34] After the West Bank was captured in 1967, their descendants began claiming rights to old property in Hebron that was once owned by their parents and grandparents.[35] Working together, they founded "The Committee for the Restoration of Hebron." The committee demanded that the government clear the decimated Jewish cemetery of Hebron, remove new houses built on top of their property, and re-inhabit them with Jewish Israelis.[36] To their disappointment, Israeli government and military officials refused to collaborate at first, and prohibited them from even selling or renting their old property.[37] To put more pressure on the government, Avraham Franko, guardian of the Sephardic community's property in Hebron, teamed up with other activist groups. Franko announced he would give the property to any Jew that the government permitted to reside in Hebron.[38]

At first, government officials seemed to ignore these grassroots efforts. But in less than a year, these efforts would prove to have powerful consquences, ultimately precipitating the construction of settlements.

First Forays

In the first months after the Six-Day War, getting the required approval to settle in Hebron proved more complex than some settlers expected. The process entailed endless meetings, petitions, and even negotiations with native Palestinians. In the meantime, many activists began collaborating on a slightly less ambitious settlement plan, the settling of Kibbutz Kfar Etzion. Even though the small kibbutz shared little with large

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[32] On the history of the Jewish community in Hebron, spanning from biblical to modern times, see Jerold S. Auerbach, *Hebron Jews: Memory and Conflict in the Land of Israel* (Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009).

[33] According to Ghazi Falah, in 1834, there were 241 Jews residing in Hebron, while in 1881 there were 1,000-1,200. In 1931, their number had dropped to 135. See Falah Ghazi, "Recent Jewish Colonisation in Hebron," in *The Impact of Gush Emunim : Politics and Settlement in the West Bank*, ed. David Newman (London: Croom Helm, 1985), 246–48. On the history of the Jewish community in Hebron, spanning from biblical to modern times, see Auerbach, *Hebron Jews*.

[34] Altogether, some 64 Jews were killed during the 1929 riots and many were wounded. On the 1929 Arab riots in Palestine, see Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881-1999*, 1st ed (New York: Knopf, 1999), 111–20; Josef Lang, "Meoraot Tarpat: Hafraot, Praot o Mered," *Catedra* 47 (March 1988): 134–54.

[35] According to documents that were found at the office of the Jordanian governor in East Jerusalem after the Six-Day War, there were some 20 land plots and 24 buildings registered under names of exiled Jews in Hebron. Avishar, *Sefer Ḥevron; Ir Haavot Veyeshuvah Berei Hadorot*, 471; Ghazi, "Recent Jewish Colonisation in Hebron," 248.

[36] "Vaad Peula leshikum Hayeshuv Hayehudi behevron," *Maariv*, July 2, 1967, 8; Yisrael Cohen, "Harisat Hamivnim shekimu Hayardenim beBeit Hakvarot," *Davar*, January 26, 1968, 14; A.H. Elhanani, "Yehudei Hebron bein Etmol leMahar: Siha im Avraham Franko," *Davar*, May 6, 1968, 7; K. Yisrael, "Behazara LeHevron," *Davar*, January 19, 1968, 11.

[37] Tzvi Lavie, "Shilamti Lamemune Al Hawakf Behevron Dmei Hahirat 800 Dunam--Ad Leshnat 1984," *Maariv*, June 10, 1968, 4.

[38] Yisrael, "Behazara LeHevron."

Palestinian cities like Hebron or Bethlehem, it served as a pilot project for many, a precursor for a much larger settlement project in the town of the Patriarchs.

Founded in 1943 under the British Mandate, Kfar Etzion was a religious kibbutz located north of Hebron in the southwestern part of the West Bank.[39] Riga-born architect Meir Ben Uri drew its original master plan (Figure 1.4). However, some five years after it was founded, and before Ben Uri's plan was completed, Arab forces conquered the kibbutz in the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. Although kibbutz members surrendered, Arab forces executed many of them. Until the Six-Day War, the site remained under Jordanian rule. Once the war ended, 19 years after they had last seen the kibbutz, some of the survivors begun organizing regular visits to the site, demanding that the old kibbutz be rebuilt (Figure 1.5). Seeing an opportunity to establish a first seed in the West Bank, members of the *Movement for the Whole Land of Israel*, a few religious Zionists, and Canaanite Aaron Amir offered their support, arranging meetings between the survivors and government officials.[40] The survivors soon secured government approval for settlement. On September 27, 1967, less than four months after the war ended, they moved to Kfar Etzion, the first settlement in the West Bank.[41]

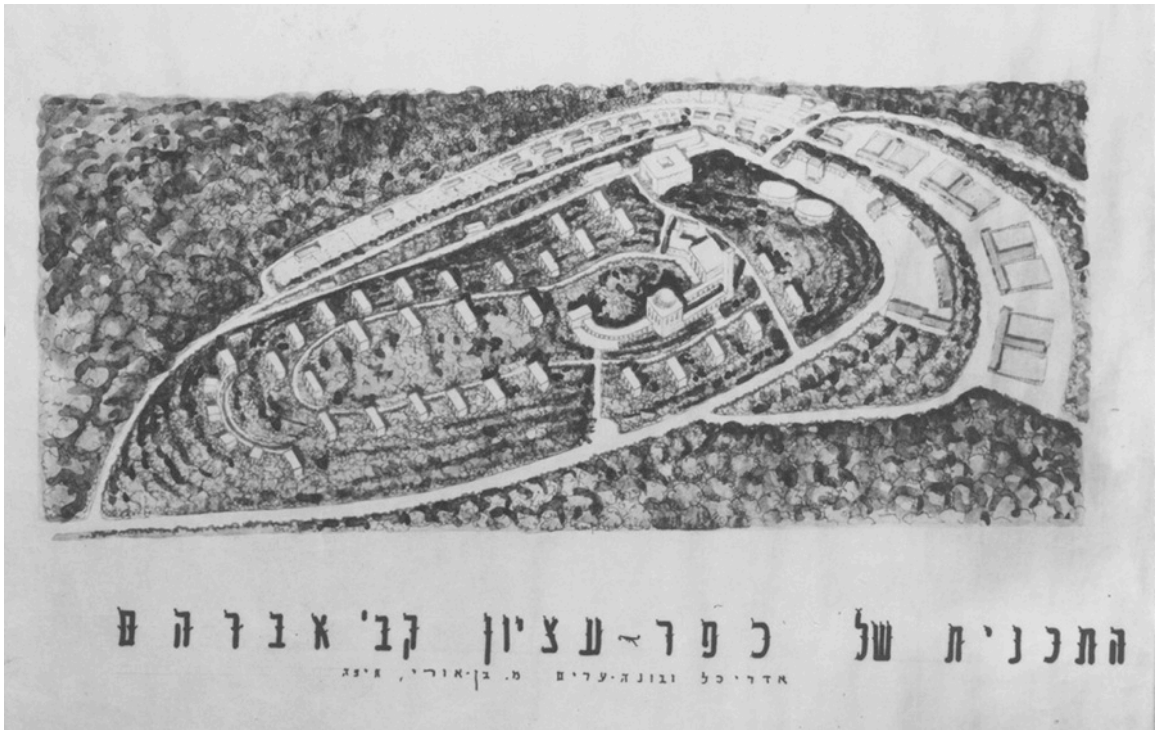

Figure 1.4 Kfar Etzion Plan by Meir Ben-Uri, c.1943. Source: Kfar Etzion Archive.

[39] Before 1943, starting in the late 1920s there were attempts to settle Jews in the area. However, none of these attempts lasted for long. See Hoberman, *Ke-Neged Kol Ha-Sikuyim : 40 Shenot Ha-Hityashvut Bi-Yehudah Ṿe-Shomron, Binyamin Ṿeha-Biḳ'ah, 727-767*, 18–19.

[40] Hoberman, 26–28.

[41] Yisrael Cohen, "A Nahal Seed Ascended to Settle the Lands of Kfar Etzion," *Davar*, September 28, 1967, 1-2. Not all government officials supported the group. Defense Minister Moshe Dayan, for example, objected the idea. To avoid international criticism, officials and news reporters referred to the settlement as a military base (Nahal outpost), and not a civilian settlement. The settlers, on their end, insisted it was a civilian settlement, and even dismantled the wooden sign that indicated the settlement was a military base. See Gorenberg, *The Accidental Empire*, 105–21; Tom Segev, *1967: Israel, the War, and the Year That Transformed the Middle East*, 1st U.S. ed (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2007), 577.

Figure 1.5 Decedents and survivors of Kfar Etzion at memorial ceremony conducted by the ruins of one of the Kibbutz's old structures in June 22, 1967. Source: Kfar Etzion Archive.

On the ruins of the old kibbutz the young settlers discovered an abandoned Jordanian military camp (Figure 1.6). At first, they had to re-use some of the dilapidated military barracks the Jordanians left. One was used as the men's sleeping hall while another one served the women. A third was converted into a communal kitchen, synagogue, and community center. Within just a few days, the young kibbutz members opened a metal workshop and established a herd of cattle.[42] By the end of the first week, on Sabbath, they paid a friendly visit to nearby Palestinian villages where, according to the settlers, they were greeted and offered help.[43]

[42] Huberman, *Ḥanan Porat*, 51.

[43] Shmuel Naftali, "Kah Hitnahalnu Behevron: Reayon im Harav Moshe Levinger," *Davar*, September 5, 1975, 21.

Figure 1.6 Jordanian military barracks on the site of Kfar Etzion, c.1967. Source: Kfar Etzion Archive.

Soon, the Ministry of Housing began drafting plans for the kibbutz. Israel Godovich, chief architect at the Administration of Rural and New Settlements at the ministry, oversaw the project. After graduating from the Technion in 1958, Godovich spent a few years in Tokyo, where he attended the University of Tokyo and worked with architects Kenzo Tange and Arata Isozaki. After his return to Israel in 1963, he joined the ministry.[44] Back in the 1960s and 70s, he often advocated for regional design.[45] By the time he approached the design of Kfar Etzion, thirty-three-year-old Godovich was already in charge of all new settlements in the country. The ministry hired Tel-Aviv-based architects Michael Bar and Arye Hershkovitz to work under his guidance. Together they drafted the kibbutz master plan, and designed a plan for the residential area.

In line with Godovich's interest in regionally inflected functionalist architecture, the collaborators created a modernist plan for Kfar Etzion that incorporated allusions to local building traditions. More specifically, the plan was influenced by the nearby Arab villages, and it differentiated between the living, working, and agricultural zones, as was typical among other kibbutzim (Figure 1.7). The Arab motifs were mainly visible in the design of the residential units (Figures 1.8 and 1:9). Arranged in clusters of two-story identical buildings that flanked vehicle-free courtyards, they all shared stepped flat roofs. In addition, the walls of the first floor of each house were veneered with local rock, while the upper level was cladded with a thin layer of plaster. Yehoshua Altman, Kfar Etzion

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[44] Israel Goodovitch, *Architecturology: An Interim Report* (Tel Aviv: Ad Pub. Co., 1967), "November 1963" and "November 1958" (un-aginated).

[45] For example, in 1970, Godovich lamented the loss of local building forms and materials. To his belief, it resulted in "universal repetitions" in country houses design. Later, in 1973 he produced a film named "Let's Talk About Ecology" with film director and architect Amos Gitai. Israel Goodovitch, "Planning and Development in Rural Areas in the Developing Urban Society" (Jerusalem: Ministry of Housing, 1970), 352.

resident in charge of construction, argued that the cladding gave the impression that the houses were emerging from the rocky landscape in ways that resembled their Palestinian counterparts. Furthermore, the architects sited the houses in ways that required minimal intervention in the natural topography. As a result, several kibbutz members proudly argued the settlement looked "like an Arab village," at least from a distance.[46]

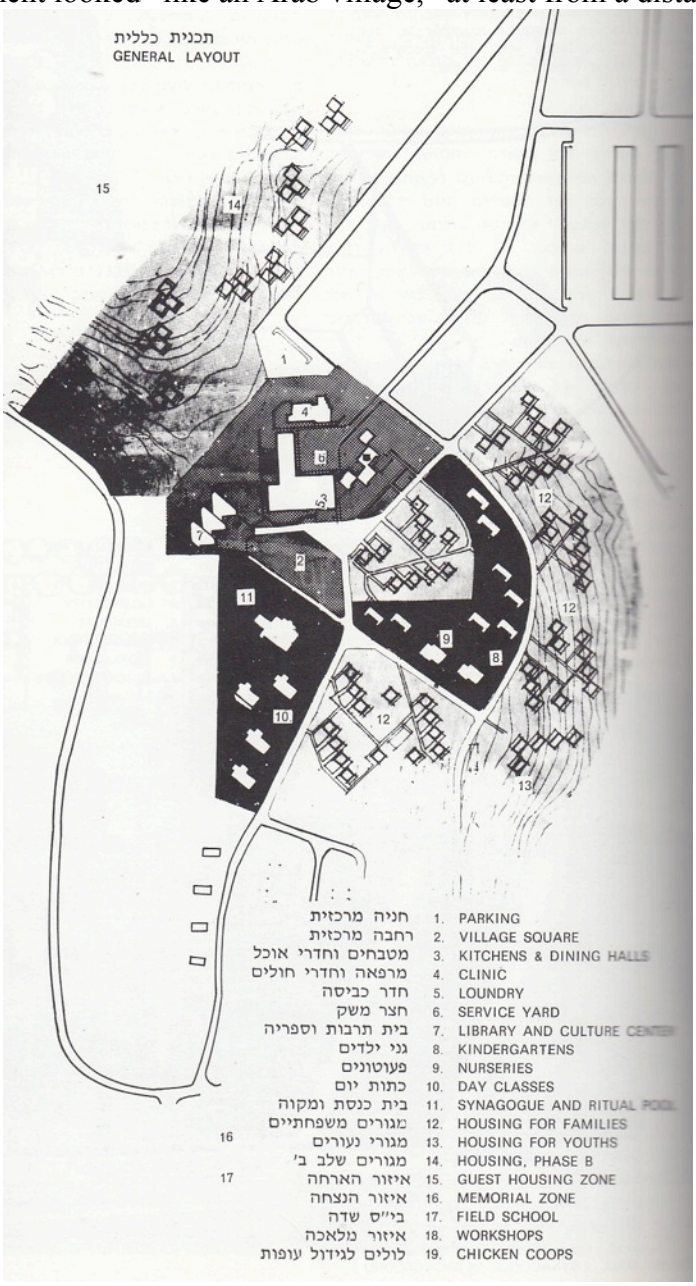

Figure 1.7 The architects arranged the Kibbutz around a number of zones. at the southern edge, where the center of the old kibbutz once stood, the architects created a "memorial zone," commemorating the kibbutz members who died while fighting Arab armies in 1948. Source: Amiram Harlap, ed., *Israel Builds*, 1977 (Tel Aviv: Ministry of Housing, 1977).

[46] Yehoshua Altman, interview with author, July 13, 2015.

Figure 1.8 Housing units in Kfar Etzion. C. 1973. Source: Amiram Harlap, ed., *Israel Builds*, 1977 (Tel Aviv: Ministry of Housing, 1977).

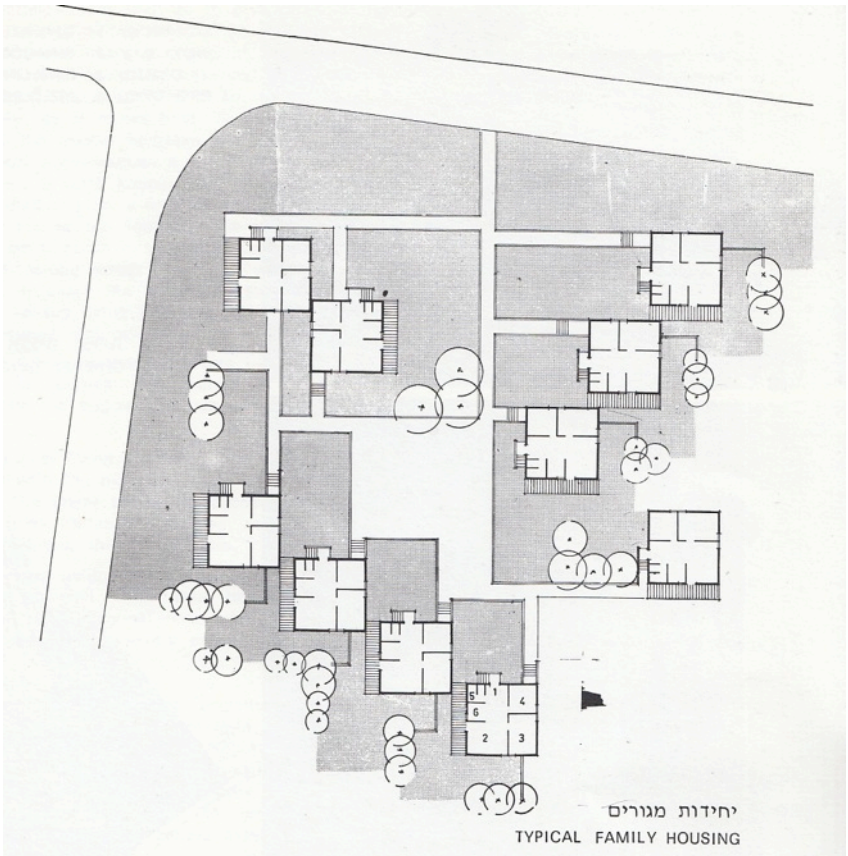

Figure 1.9 Housing cluster in Kfar Etzion. Source: Amiram Harlap, ed., *Israel Builds*, 1977 (Tel Aviv: Ministry of Housing, 1977).

Public buildings designed for the kibbutz made similar references to local building forms. The most notable public building in the settlement was the Field School of Kfar Etzion. Designed by Arieh Sharon, a Bauhaus graduate and former manager of Hans Mayer's office in Berlin, together with his son, Eldar Sharon, it exhibited a number regional building elements. Again, roofs were flat, and the entire complex was woven into the natural topography.[47] Significantly, the school's half-buried structure allowed multiple inner courtyards, echoing the traditional patio house.

Another source of inspiration for the design of Kfar Etzion was the recent (pre-1948) history of the kibbutz. In consultation with the survivors, architects decided to leave untouched the southern edge of the settlement, where the center of the old kibbutz once stood. Dedicated to those who died in 1948, it was to serve as a site of commemoration. Since many settlers feared renewed attacks against the kibbutz, architects designed the houses with thick light artillery-proof concrete walls, and arranged them around several underground shelters.[48]

Shortly after Kfar Etzion was re-settled, the government erected two other settlements, Alon Shvut and Rosh Tzurim, on the adjacent hills.[49] Alon Shvut was originally designed to house the yeshiva of Kfar Etzion.[50] Rosh Tzurim, in contrast, was a kibbutz, built on the ruins of yet another religious kibbutz, Ein Tzurim, that was conquered by the Arab forces and destroyed in 1948. The design of both settlements resembled the plans for Kfar Etzion (Figures 1.10, 1.11, and 1.12). Like Godovich, Rita Dunsky-Feuerstein, who was among the architects in charge of the design of Alon Shvut and Rosh Tzurim, aimed at a "Greek-Mediterranean architecture" that would "merge as much as possible with the surroundings."[51] Following a comprehensive study of the natural conditions in both sites, the architects designed the houses of the two settlements with flat roofs. They staggered the houses along the natural slopes in ways that, like in Kfar Etzion, allowed vehicle-free patio spaces and passageways. At the top of the hill of Rosh Tzurim, the architects left a large land plot for commemoration, recalling the old kibbutz that was destroyed in 1948.[52]

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[47] See the architects' description of the project in Sharon Architects (Kfar Etzion team) to Haim Epshtein, "Beit Sefer Sade Kfar Etzion," November 15, 1970, Folder 965000062968, Israeli Architecture Archives, Tel Aviv.

[48] Yehoshua Altman, Interview with author, July 13, 2015.

[49] Both Rosh Tzurim and Alon Shvut were built a few months after the founding of the settlement of Hebron. The planning of Rosh Tzurim, carried out by Shmuel Shaked and Rita Dunskey Feuerstein began in 1969. The master plan was completed and approved on October 1969. The first 42 permanent units were completed in 1971. During this time, settlers resided in temporary structures. The Master plan for Alon Shvut was approved shortly after on November 1969. For projects details, see Amiram Harlap, ed., *Israel Builds 1977* (Tel Aviv: Ministry of Housing, 1977), 251–53; Yehiel Admoni to Haim Gabati (Ministr of Agriculture), January 22, 1970, 6610/6-G, Israel State Archives.

[50] Yoel Bin-Nun, interview with the author. Also see the recollections of Moshe Moshkovitz, founder of Alon Shvut, in Yoram Snir, "Moshko," *Nekuda*, November 22, 1985, 18–25.

[51] Rita Dunsky-Feuerstein, phone interview with the author, December 15, 2015.

[52] Harlap, *Israel Builds 1977*, 253.

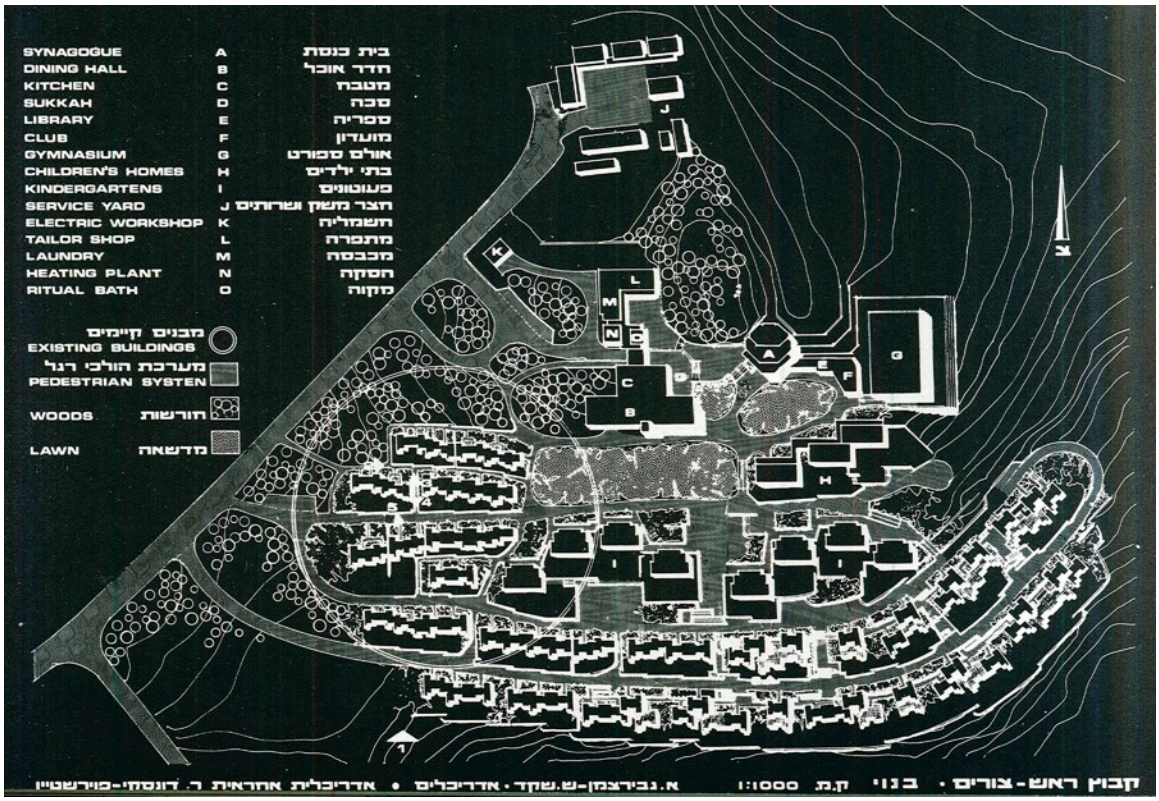

Figure 1.10 Kibbutz Rosh Tzurim, designed by A.Gvirtzman and S.Shaked Architects (project architect: Rita Dunsky-Feuerstein). Source: Tvai, Vol. 12, winter 1973.

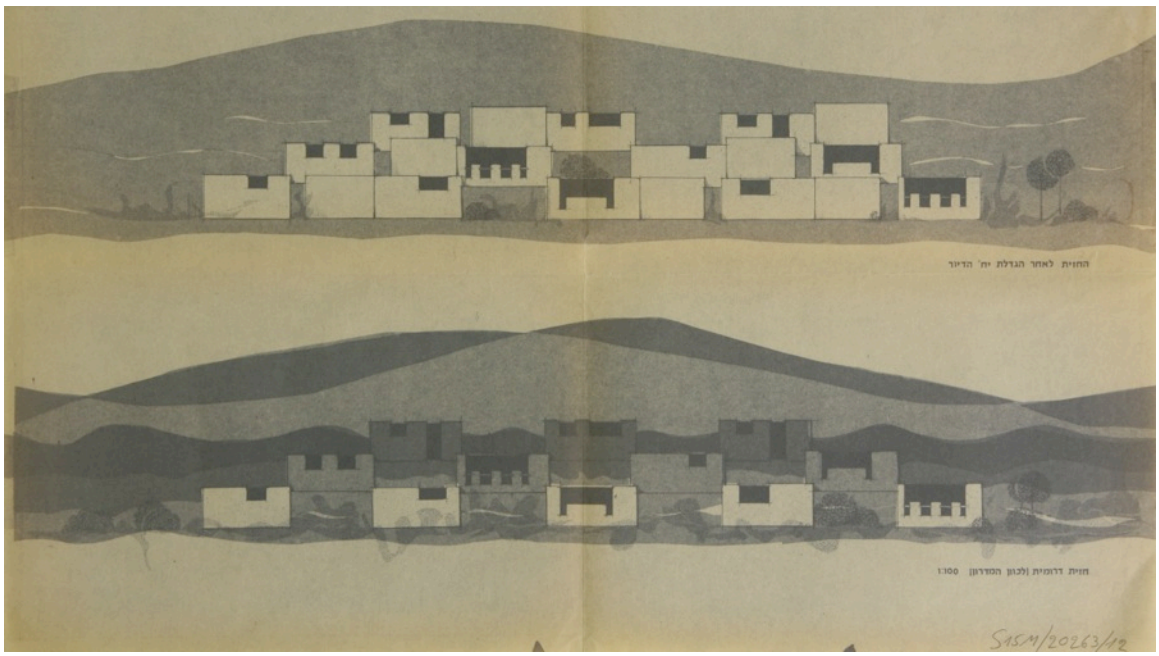

Figure 1.11 Façade drawing of yeshiva dormitories in Alon Shvut. Shmuel Sharked Architects, c.1969. Source: Central Zionist Archives, S15M/20263/12.

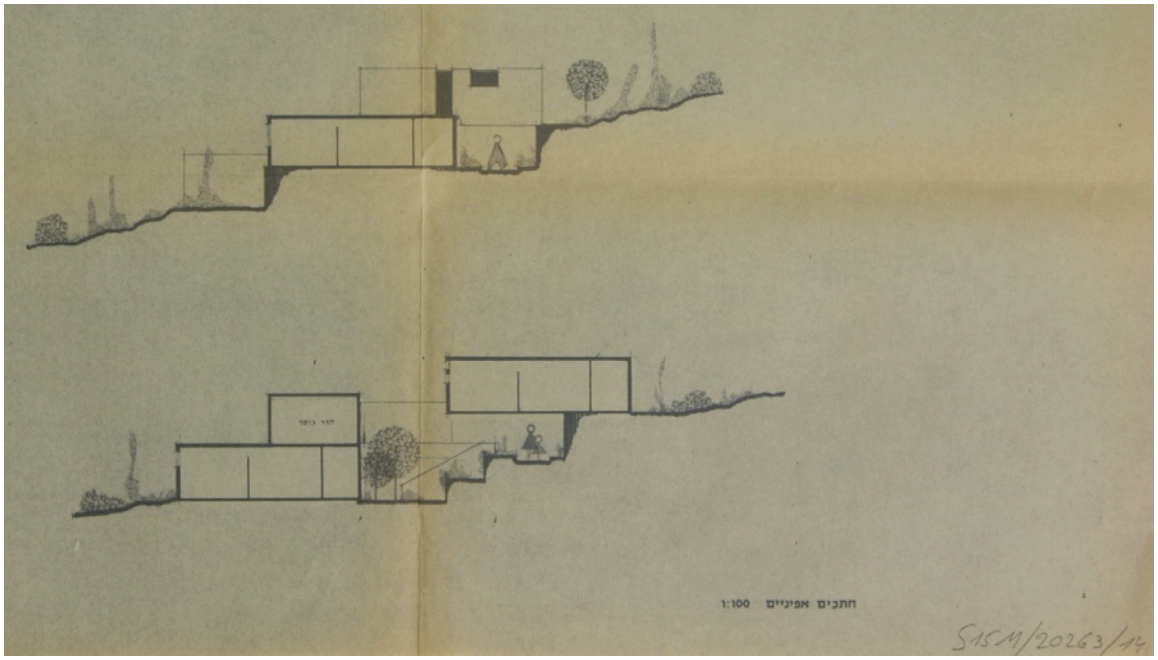

Figure 1.12 Section drawing of yeshiva dormitories in Alon Shvut. Shmuel Sharked Architects, c.1969. Source: Central Zionist Archives, S15M/20263/14.

Many settlement activists saw the founding of Kfar Etzion as a major milestone, and approved its regionally inflected modernist design. However, the new kibbutz provided little consolation to those seeking a return to the ancestral, biblical landscape of the West Bank. Not only did the new construction lack the millennial history of cities like Hebron or Nablus, but like the settlements of Alon Shvut and Rosh Tzurim, it was small and appealed only to those wishing to live in a kibbutz or a rural settlement.[53] Demographically, Kfar Etzion had little effect on the region. About a year after its founding, Kfar Etzion had only 77 residents, with a projected population of only 160 members in total.[54] Those seeking redemption at a national scale, or at least an oriental adventure in a mysterious Palestinian town, had to continue developing a more grandiose settlement plan.

At Home in the Casbah

Just a couple of days after the founding of Kfar Etzion, some of the settlers began plotting the next stage: settling in the Palestinian town of Hebron.[55] Among them was thirty-two-year-old Rabbi Moshe Levinger. An alumnus of Merkaz HaRav Yeshiva and chief rabbi of the Orthodox cooperative farming village of Nehalim, he had moved to Kfar Etzion with the first settlers.[56] On the first Saturday in the kibbutz, he had already

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[53] For example, Rabbi Eliezer Waldman, the future rabbi of Hebron's yeshiva, complained he was rejected by the people of Kfar Etzion because of his old age. See Moshe Levinger, "Kah Hakol Hethil," Moatza Mekomit Kiryat Arba Hevron, accessed April 18, 2018, http://www.kiryat4.org.il/?CategoryID=402; Hoberman, *Ke-Neged Kol Ha-Sikuyim : 40 Shenot Ha-Hityashvut Bi-Yehudah Ve-Shomron, Binyamin Veha-Biḳ'ah, 727-767*, 36.

[54] Admoni to Haim Gabati (Ministr of Agriculture), January 22, 1970.

[55] Naftali, "Kah Hitnahalnu Behevron: Reayon im Harav Moshe Levinger." According to some sources, it was Canaanite Aaron Amir who "reminded" the settlers that Kfar Etzion was only a stop on the way to Hebron. See for example, Segal, *Ahim Yekarim: Korot "Hamahteret Hayehudit,"* 20.

[56] Gorenberg, *The Accidental Empire*, 106–7.

begun discussing the settlement of Hebron with a number of activists.[57] Later, he advocated for settlement attempts in a series of meetings in Tel Aviv with Elyakim Haetzni, a German-born secular lawyer, and other members of the *Movement for the Whole Land of Israel*.[58] Within a few weeks, the activists had elected a committee of seven members who were in charge of the future settlement in Hebron.[59] Quickly, the committee recruited some 150 families who were prepared to move to Hebron as the "seed" of a renewed Jewish quarter.[60] During the winter months, the committee members surveyed the old city, searching for apartments they could buy or rent. According to architect David Cassuto, who participated in the effort, they identified Palestinian landlords willing to sell their properties. However, members of *Smoll Yisraeli Hadash* [New Israeli Left] (SIAH) intervened, and pressured the Palestinians to retract the deals.[61] Government officials also dismissed Levinger and his supporters.[62]

Faced with rejection from all sides, Levinger came to realize that he and the settlers needed a form of settlement unencumbered by legal process. He banded with his supporters to attempt to rent hotel rooms in one of the busiest areas of Hebron. Presenting themselves as a group of tourists from Switzerland eager to celebrate Passover in the town of the Patriarchs, they met with the owner of Nahar El Haled Hotel, or Park Hotel, two weeks before the holiday.[63] Without asking many questions, the hotel manager agreed to lease the entire seventeen-room hotel for ten days. Upon Levinger's request, a note added to the contract allowed the "tourists" to extend their stay for as long as they wished.

Two weeks later, on Passover's eve, April 11, 1968, the group of 10 families and several bachelors arrived to Hebron with two large trucks carrying refrigerators, stoves, and a laundry machine.[64] After unpacking their belongings, Levinger and his supporters had transformed the hotel. They installed Mezuzahs on all the doors, cleaned the kitchen, converted it into a kosher one, and re-arranged the main dinning hall to accommodate a Seder dinner. By evening, Park Hotel was ready for the holiday.

That night, notable figures like poet Moshe Shamir and painter Shmuel Katz joined the group in the hotel. Together, they celebrated a Passover dinner that marked the beginning of the settlement of Hebron. Describing the unique atmosphere at that Passover dinner, Ruth Waldan recalls, "We were sitting in an Arab hotel and talking throughout the night about redemption. We were talking about the redemption of Egypt and in our

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[57] Naftali, "Kah Hitnahalnu Behevron: Reayon im Harav Moshe Levinger," 21.

[58] According to Zartal and Eldar, the first meeting with Haetzni took place a couple of weeks after the initial meeting led by Levinger. See Zertal and Eldar, *Lords of the Land*, 16–17. Also, according to Levinger, at that meeting, Haetzni said it was brought to his attention that former Prime Minister Ben-Gurion was wondering how come there hadn't been any settlement attempts in Hebron. He asked the rabbi of the exiled Hebron Yeshiva how come the pious activists haven't been actively striving towards a return to the town. Sensing the opportunity, Haetzni urged Levinger, "We must do something!" See Levinger, "Kah Hakol Hethil."

[59] Naftali, "Kah Hitnahalnu Behevron: Reayon im Harav Moshe Levinger," 21.

[60] "150 Mishpahot Hibiu Nehonut Lehadesh Hayeshuv Hayehudi Behevron," *Davar*, March 11, 1968, 7.

[61] David Cassuto, interview with author, December 13, 2015.

[62] Minster Yigal Alon had proposed erecting a Jewish neighborhood in Hebron's vicinity already in January 14, 1968. However the proposal was postponed. See Shlomo Gazit, *Peta'im Ba-Malkodet : 30 Shenot Mediniyut Yiśra'el Ba-Sheṭaḥim* (Tel Aviv: Zmora-Bitan Publishers, 1999), 225.

[63] Moshe Levinger, "Yemei HaHitnahalut harishonim," in *Kiryat Arba Hee Hevron: Kovetz Mamarim Vetmunot Bemeliat asor Lehidush Hayeshuv Hayehudi Behevron*, ed. Moshe Ozeri (Hebron: Minhelet Kiryat Arba, 1978), 18.

[64] Avishar, *Sefer Ḥevron; Ir Haavot Veyeshuvah Berei Hadorot*, 482–95.

eyes and hands we felt the coming redemption. We were part of it."[65] For a few hours, the activists imagined no one would ever ask them to leave Hebron again.

In the following days, the settlers began new lives in the old Palestinian town, feeling as if they were a natural part of its fabric. First, they established a yeshiva, a school, and a cardboard box factory inside the hotel.[66] Then, with the help of the Palestinian hotel manager, they began searching for nearby apartments they could rent.[67] After all, as Levinger himself explained, "for how long can one live in a hotel?"[68] Settlers soon began to voice demands. Speaking on behalf of the hotel residents, one settler insisted, "We want to live a normal life here, and also create regular employment opportunities."[69] A few days later, they scheduled a meeting with Sheikh Jabri, the Palestinian mayor of Hebron, to inform him of their desire to remain in the town, and, according to their account, live in peace with the Muslim community of Hebron under his rule. [70]

Willfully ignoring the recent, predominantly Muslim history of Hebron, they imagined that its massive stone buildings, with their large arches and vaulted domes, had been there since King David ruled the city. Failing to recognize the enormous changes wrought upon the town over the preceding centuries, Rabbi Shmuel Avidor HaCohen wrote, "The view of all the houses…The beauty of the city, and the way it sits on the natural topography, can explain why it was chosen to be the capital city of King David."[71] In his mind, Hebron remained untouched for 3 millennia. Since they perceived themselves as the natural inheritors of that biblical kingdom, the old capital was "simply the most natural place to live in" for Levinger and his followers.[72] Speaking to that sense of belonging, a large photograph of the old town of Hebron decorated the cover of the first issue of the journal of the Movement for the Whole Land of Israel (Figure 1.13). Hovering over the town's oriental skyline, dominated by a vertical minaret, appeared the journal title: *Zot Haaretz* [This is the Land].[73]

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65 Ruth Valdan, "Zichronot: Ruth Valdan," in *Hed Hakirya*, ed. Z.Tabtznik, M.Lebman, and Yehudit Katzover (Kiryat Arba, 1975), 39–42.

66 Yisrael, "Behazara LeHevron," 11; Israel Cohen, "100 Talmidim Miyeshivat New York Muhanim Lehitztaref Lamitnahalim Behevron," *Davar*, April 24, 1968, 8; Levinger, "Yemei HaHitnahalut harishonim," 18.

67 Israel Harel, "Hevron: Banim Shavim Legvulam," *Zot Haaretz*, April 26, 1968, 3.

68 Yisrael Cohen, "Hazara le Hevron aharei 39 Shana," *Davar*, April 26, 1968, 11.

69 Harel, "Hevron: Banim Shavim Legvulam," 6.

70 Avishar, *Sefer Ḥevron; Ir Haavot Veyeshuvah Berei Hadorot*, 482–95.

71 Avishar, 478–81.

72 "Rashut Hadibur Lamitnahalim," *Maariv*, April 4, 1969, 16.

73 Harel, Yisrael and Hatnua Lemaan Yisrael Hashlema, eds., "Zot Haaretz: Du Shavuon Hatnua Lemaan Yisrael Hashlema," April 26, 1968, cover page.

Figure 1.13 *Zot Haaretz* with a photo of Hebron, April 1968. Source: National Library of Israel.

First Plan for Jewish Hebron

Architect David Cassuto was among the new Hebronites at Park Hotel. The pious designer, known for his interest in places of worship, was excited at the opportunity to reside in the town of the Patriarchs. Like his visit to Bethlehem, the encounter with Hebron left him with a mysteriously strong sense of belonging and respect for the old urban fabric. Soon, however, Cassuto became disappointed with his fellow settlers. They seemed too radical to him, especially when crowded in the small hotel. After a few days in the old town, he decided to return to his Jerusalem apartment.[74]

Cassuto, however, refused to abandon the dream of settling in Hebron. From his apartment, he began crafting a master plan for a new Jewish neighborhood in the old Palestinian town (Figure 1.14). He worked on it with his colleague Israel Levitt, another

[74] Cassuto, interview with the author, December 13, 2015.

architect.[75] Like Cassuto's earlier plan for Bethlehem, presented in Tvai, the design for what the two called "Jewish Hebron" aimed at preserving the architecture and urban fabric of the Palestinian town.[76] After surveying the city, Cassuto decided a new neighborhood for Jewish settlers should be erected on a small hill where the old Jewish cemetery stood. According to his research, this was one of the four ancient hills of biblical Hebron. It was located right next to the town's heart, and most importantly, near the Tomb of the Patriarchs. Furthermore, since some of the abandoned old Jewish property was on that hill, the area hadn't been densely populated at that point.[77] When considering building massing and style, he thought construction on the hill could replicate other neighborhoods in Hebron and blend into the natural topography. The plan was to create a Jewish presence in the midst of the Palestinian town, without damaging the existing urban fabric that he truly admired.

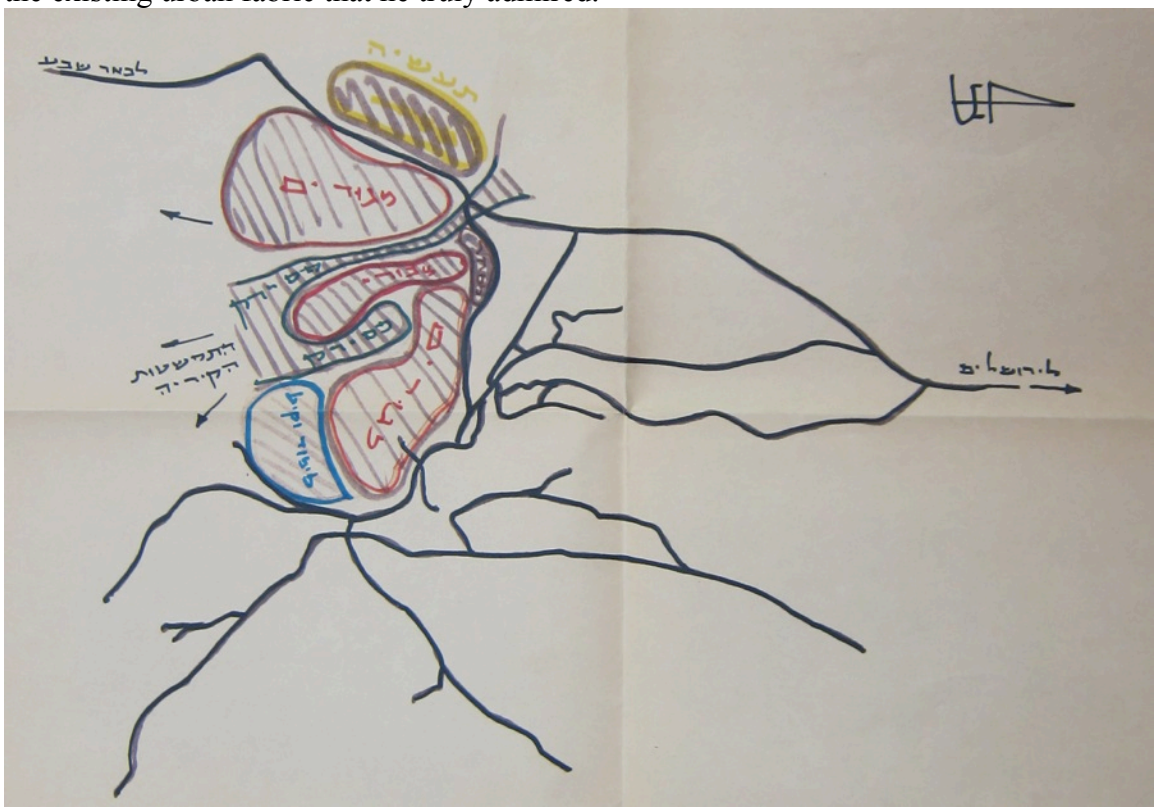

Figure 1.14 David Cassuto, site plan of Jewish Hebron, 1968. Source: 15/Allon/18/4, Yad Tabenkin Archive, Ramat Efal.

With the support of the hotel guests, who by now came to be known as "The Settlers of Hebron," Cassuto submitted his plans to deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Labor Igal Alon.[78] Alon, who had proposed establishing a Jewish neighborhood in the Palestinian town a few months earlier, approved the plan. To Cassuto's disappointment,

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[75] David Cassuto, Interview with author.

[76] Later, when he will be sending the plan to Labor Minister Yigal Alon the name would be changed to "Upper Hebron." See David Cassuto to Yigal Alon (Minister of Labor), April 18, 1968, 15/Allon/18/4, Yad Tabenkin Archive, Ramat Efal.

[77] Cassuto, interview with author.

[78] Cassuto to Yigal Alon (Minister of Labor), April 18, 1968.

however, planners at the Ministry of Housing rejected it. According to Cassuto, the Ministry of Housing's dovish political views made opposition inevitable.[79] Refusing to accept the objection, Cassuto and the settlers forwarded the plan to Security Minister Moshe Dayan and other officials.

In July 1968, Hebron settlers announced that the Ministry of Security was about to approve the plan, and construction on the hill would soon begin. At a meeting with Religious Services Minister Zerach Warhaftig and news reporters, settler representatives described the first stage of construction of what they referred to as the "Settlers Campus" [Kiryat Mitnahalim]. It was to include apartments for Jewish families already in Hebron, as well as student housing for the yeshiva, classrooms, a synagogue, dining hall, health clinic, kindergarten and an elementary school.[80]

There are no documents confirming the settlers' claim that an approval, or even a positive reaction, was pending from the Ministry of Security. By that point, the settlers had moved out of Park Hotel and re-settled in a military complex on one of the hills of Hebron. Housed in a three-story military structure renovated to accommodate some 20 families and 30 yeshiva students, the settlers were eager to have Cassuto's plan realized. They thought media attention might support their endeavor. After all, living in a military complex surrounded by a fence and removed from the outside world was not how they imagined their lives in the town of the Patriarchs.[81]

Without the formal approval of the Ministry of Housing or Security Minister Moshe Dayan, however, the plan had little chance of realization and was quickly abandoned. As Cassuto later explained, "it was a plan without a father or a mother;" no government agency commissioned it.[82] It was a voluntary master plan that reflected the desires of its creator. Yet, even though it was rejected, Cassuto later argued the plan had a lasting effect. It captured the attention of the general public and several politicians. Upon hearing that the plan had been dismissed, the latter pressured the government to find an alternative solution, ultimately forcing the Ministry of Housing to come up with a substitute plan for the settlement.[83] It was the first step in the long and convoluted design process of the settlement of Hebron.

Reluctant Planners

In September 1968, a Special Ministers Committee commissioned a team of architects and planners to draw plans for a Jewish neighborhood near the Tomb of the Patriarchs, around the area where Cassuto had planned his "Jewish Hebron." The committee asked the team, which included officials from the Ministry of Housing and the Israeli Defense Force, to examine the possibility of settling Jewish families who lived in

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79 Cassuto, interview with author.

80 Yossef Tzuriel, "Kiryat Mitnahalim Tukam beHeveron," *Maariv*, July 17, 1968, 3.

81 Some saw the move to the military administration building as a defeat (Sefer Hebron, 482-495). Others simply lamented on the harsh conditions in the building. Once there they had to share a kitchen, and reside in dense apartments. Avishar, *Sefer Ḥevron; Ir Haavot Veyeshuvah Berei Hadorot*, 482–95; Avraham Shvut and Haggai Hoberman, "Kiryat Arba – Hebron," in *Ha'aliyah El Ha-Har* (Ariel: Ha-mikhlala Ha-akademit Yehuda ṿe-Shomron, 2002), 42; Auerbach, *Hebron Jews*, 93.

82 Cassuto, interview with author.

83 Ibid.

the old Jewish Quarter in the heart of Hebron.[84] After a quick study of the surroundings, the team members realized that the site of "Jewish Hebron" was too small. At best, they reported, it could house some 150-180 Jewish families packed in high-density houses with minimal public amenities. To enlarge the neighborhood, the planners suggested leasing available plots from local Palestinians. In addition, they recommended creating a fund that would encourage collaboration between Jews and Muslims on projects in the area of the Tomb of the Patriarchs.[85] Yet, whether due to its limited size or the opposition of the native Palestinians, these plans for a Jewish neighborhood inside of Hebron were also abandoned.

In December 1968, the Ministers Committee commissioned another team of architects to "find a site for a settlement, separated… (but) at a reasonable distance from the city of Hebron."[86] Led by Shmuel Shaked, chief architect at the Ministry of Housing and the owner of an architects firm in Tel Aviv, the team included Technion graduate Amos Livnat and Rita Dunsky-Feuerstein, an architect and town planner trained at the Sorbonne and the University of Geneva.[87] In just a few weeks, they wrote a comprehensive 36-page report, outlining three potential sites for a 50,000-resident settlement in Hebron.[88]

Before discussing the three selected sites, the architects boldly included a warning note. Expressing their concern about the future settlement, they stated:

> At its core, the goal of this settlement is a nationalist one, a matter of state-security. It should be taken into account that such a settlement, no matter what, will damage the local fabric; at first, the local economy will be damaged, and, then, gradually, a change in the relations between the different local Arab settlements, followed by a change in the (cultural) values of the local residents will occur.[89]

Within the context of a technical report, an admonition, expressing the architects' moral and professional reservations about the project, was surprising. Even more remarkable, it recurred in different forms throughout the text.[90]

Following their warning, the architects thoroughly assessed three selected sites. The first was adjacent to Hebron; the other two were further north, at a considerable distance from the old town (Figure 1.15). Using census data, maps and charts, they analyzed the social, economic, topographic, and weather conditions of each site. In addition, they provided an in-depth study of the city of Hebron, its urban structure, main

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[84] See Rural Center in Gush Etzion and Hebron Settlement Ministers Committee, "Merkaz Kafri beGush Etzion veHahityashvut beHevron," September 30, 1968, 7900/26 A, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem; Binyamin Lubetkin to Aharon Harsina (Senior office, IDF), October 11, 1968, 6610/6-C, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

[85] Aharon Harsina to Moshe Dayan, "Hevron," October 16, 1968, 6610/6-C, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

[86] Rural Center in Gush Etzion and Hebron Settlement Ministers Committee, "Tochnit BaIr Hevron," December 10, 1968, 7900/26 A, Israel State Archives.

[87] On the cover page of the report only Shaked and Livnat's names appeared. The name of Rita Dunsky-Feuerstein, who was working with Shaked until 1980, was omitted. I was unable to figure why her name was dropped, but based on other documents and interviews I conducted with Dunsky-Feuerstein, she took a leading role in the project.

[88] The report was submitted on January 29, 1969. Shaked and Livnat, "Urban Settlement in Mount Hebron."

[89] Shaked and Livnat, 3.

[90] See, for examples, Shaked and Livnat, 7, 23.

roads, land ownerships, public centers, building styles, recent urban trends, and projected future population. Summing up their findings, the architects argued that the most appropriate site was one located some 15 miles away from Hebron. The site adjacent to Hebron was less suitable. According to the report, a settlement on the site would interfere in the natural development of the town, require confiscating privately owned Palestinian lands, and was likely to instigate conflicts with the Waqf, resulting in a "clash of cultures."[91]

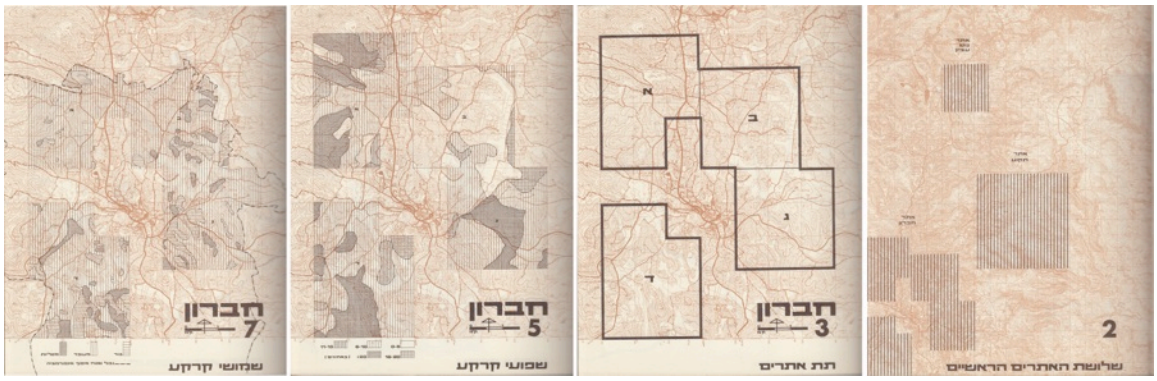

Figure 1.15 Drawings from "Urban Settlement in Mount Hebron" report by Shmuel Shaked and Amos Livnat, January 1969. Source: Israel State Archives, א-112/2.

Confident in their findings, the architects presented their recommendations at a government meeting. To their surprise, the alternative they advocated was rejected. Instead, as Dunsky-Feuerstein recalls, "For purely political reasons…they selected the plan I hated the most," the one adjacent to Hebron.[92] She condescendingly referred to the chosen site as "The Upper Nazareth - Lower Nazareth Alternative" [Nazareth Illit – Nazareth Tachtit]. Upper Nazareth was a Jewish town founded in the late 1950s. The construction of Upper Nazareth reflected government efforts to counter a large concentration of non-Jewish Arab citizens residing in Northern Israel.[93] Built on a hill overlooking Palestinian Nazareth, lacking points of contact between the two populations, Upper Nazareth came to signify urban segregation and social inequality.[94] Ignoring Dunsky-Feuerstein's warnings about the negative prospects of such an alternative, government officials commissioned her and the other team members, working under Shaked's leadership, to draw a master plan for what came to be known as Upper Hebron.[95]

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[91] Shaked and Livnat, "Urban Settlement in Mount Hebron," 33.

[92] Dunsky-Feuerstein, Interview with Author.

[93] For a discussion of planning in Northern Israel in light of the Israeli Palestinian conflict, see Oren Yiftachel, *Planning a Mixed Region in Israel: The Political Geography of Arab-Jewish Relations in the Galilee* (Aldershot, England : Brookfield, Vt., USA: Avebury ; Ashgate Pub. co, 1992).

[94] For an ethnographic study of the town, see Dan Rabinowitz, *Overlooking Nazareth: The Ethnography of Exclusion in Galilee*, Cambridge Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology 105 (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[95] The decision was made on February 2, 1970 by the ministers committee on security issues. See "Hakamat Kiryat Arba Vehafaalata," December 1974, 9482/2-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem. For a preliminary discussion of the plan, see Rubenstein (head of physical planning at the Ministry of Housing) to Tamir, "Hevron," May 18, 1970, 5648/11-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem. On December 2, 1970 it was decided to enlarge the plan and ask Shaked to design 800 more units. See "Pirtei-Kol Miyeshivat Veadat Hevron Shehitkayma Bemisradei Hamenahel Haklali Beyerushalayim," December 2, 1970, 5648/11-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

In an effort to avoid complete segregation when drawing the master plan, the architects tried creating links between Upper Hebron and the old Palestinian town. In their master plan, Upper Hebron occupied seven hills, stretching from south to north. The southernmost hill was located within the city of Hebron, where the Tomb of the Patriarchs stood (Figures 1.16 and 1.17). From there, the other six hills stretched north, away from the old city, and toward the archeological site of Mamre, where Abraham resided according to myth. The plan, they explained, comprised continuous urban development incorporating independent neighborhood units.[96] Further strengthening the connection between Upper Hebron and the Palestinian town, Dunsky-Feuerstein proposed a grand boulevard starting at the northernmost neighborhood of Upper Hebron and ending at the Tomb of the Patriarchs. She named it "The 400 Shekels Boulevard" after the 400 shekels Abraham was asked to pay to purchase the Tomb, according to the biblical myth.[97]

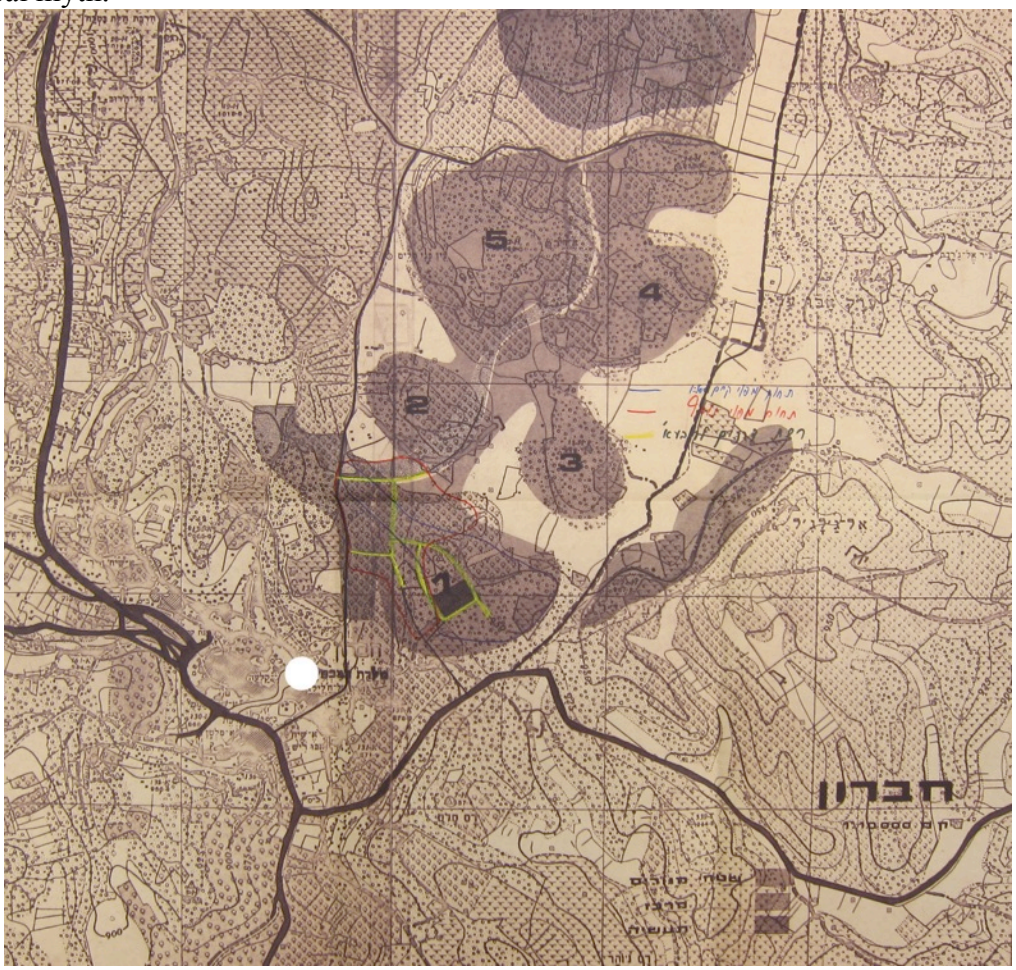

Figure 1.16 Plan for a 50,000 residents settlement, 24 June 1970. Neighborhoods of the Jewish settlement are painted in dark brown. The southwestern part of the settlement extends towards the Tomb of the Patriarchs. The dot marks the location of the Tomb. Source: 5648/11-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem; dot added by author.

96 Amiram Harlap, ed., *Israel Builds 1973* (Tel Aviv: Ministry of Housing, 1973), 126.

97 Dunsky-Feuerstein, interview with author.

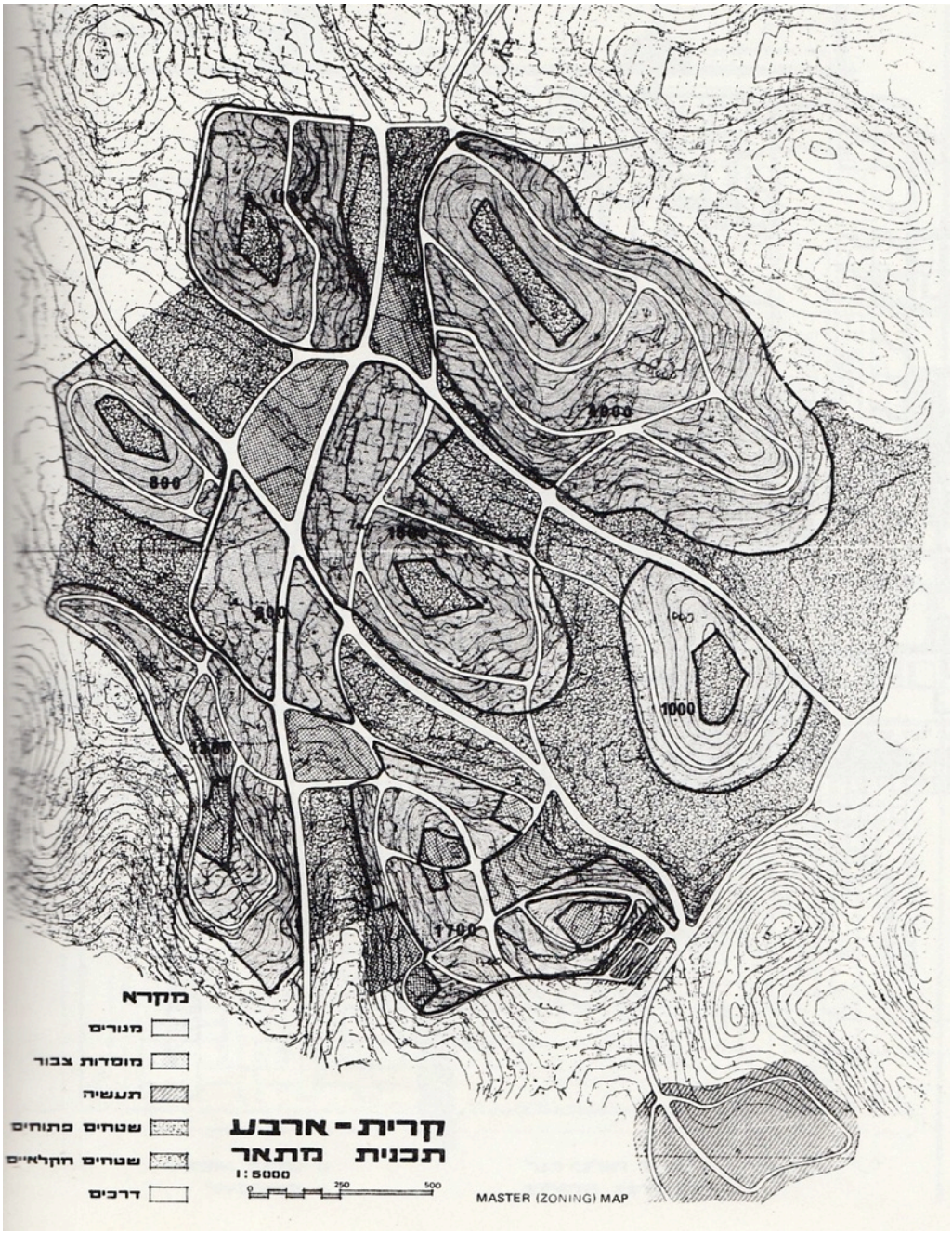

Figure 1.17 Master Plan of Kiryat Arba. Source: Amiram Harlap, ed., *Israel Builds 1973* (Jerusalem: Ministry of Housing, 1973), 127.

The urban integration of Upper Hebron and Palestinian Hebron never happened. While working on the master plan, Dunsky-Feuerstein attended a meeting with the Minister of Housing, the Minister of Security, and Sheikh Jabri, the Palestinian mayor of Hebron. Reacting to her plan to link the two towns, which he saw as an offense against the Muslims of Hebron, Jabri warned his guests:

> Look, we sit here now as if we are no longer enemies, but I must tell you a story... It is about two sheikhs who had a fight. They began struggling. Then, each

> grabbed the other one's balls. And you know who won? The one who loosened his grip two seconds before the other.[98]

Jabri's message to Dunsky-Feuerstein and the Israeli officials was clear: If they wanted to "win" and have a Jewish settlement near Hebron, they shouldn't be too forceful, and they should stay away from the Palestinian neighborhoods. According to Dunsky-Feuerstein, Jabri's warning guided the design of the settlement.[99] Fearing an Arab response, the ministers at Jabri's house decided to "win" the battle, and they canceled any proposed link between Hebron and the new Jewish town. As if to make the separation official, Israeli officials changed the name Upper Hebron to Kiryat Arba. Disappointed with these developments, Dunsky-Feuerstein left the project shortly after the meeting. While she had opposed the paired town scheme, she believed an urban integration could have encouraged a degree of cultural integration, or at least healthy co-existence. In Hebron, she says, this simply turned out to be impossible.[100]

The decision to separate the new settlement from the old Palestinian town influenced the architecture of Kiryat Arba (Figures 1.18-1.21). Renouncing the vaulted domes, tall minarets, and thick stone walls of Hebron, the first neighborhood of Kiryat Arba conformed to modernist principles. Designed by a team of planners working for the Ministry of Housing led by architect Bitush Comforti, head of the Department of Residential Design, the plan was comprised of four almost identical types of multistory apartment buildings. Containing some 250 units, these buildings were replicated and arranged in continuous rows flanking large, vehicle-free open spaces. The architects connected all buildings to a perimeter road through an elaborate network of pedestrian walking paths.[101] Perhaps in an attempt to appease the future residents, all buildings were clad with a thin stone sheathing, referencing the thick stone walls common in Hebron.[102] Other than that, as one of the architects involved in the planning of the settlement concluded, "The design of Kiryat Arba, its shapes and forms, didn't draw anything from Hebron, not a single element."[103] Architects at the Ministry seemed to have had little interest in accommodating the settlers' biblical imaginary.

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98 Ibid.

99 Ibid.

100 Ibid.

101 Designing vehicle-free open spaces was a common design feature in projects authored by the Ministry of Housing at the time. See Harlap, *Israel Builds 1973*, 64–67; Hadas Shadar, *Avne Ha-Binyan Shel Ha-Shikun Ha-Tsiburi : Shishah 'aśorim Shel Beniyah 'ironit Be-Yozmah Tsiburit Be-Yiśra'el* (Tel Aviv: Miśrad ha-binui ṿeha-shikin, 2014), 132–35.

102 For decision to clad all buildings in Kiryat Arba with a layer of stone see Tzvi Gluzman (manager of Jerusalem region at the Ministry of Housing) to A. Ulnik (head of the Planning and Engineering Department at the Ministry of Housing) et al., "Bniya Beeven Bekiryat Arba," October 13, 1970, גל-5648/11, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

103 Eli Gvirtzman, phone conversation with the author, November 30, 2015.

Figure 1.18 Werner Braun, aerial view of Kiryat Arba and Hebron, c.1977. Source: Photo Collection, General Collection, Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem.

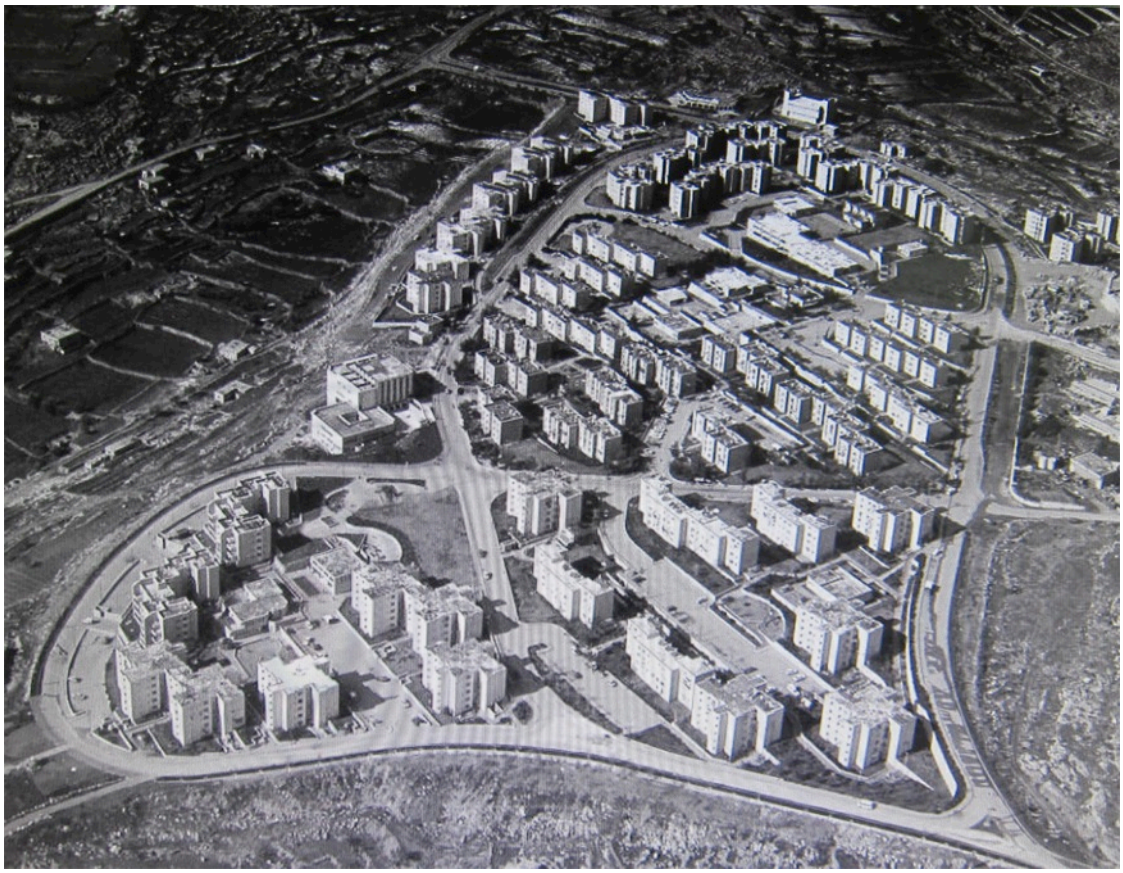

Figure 1.19 Werner Braun, aerial view of Kiryat Arba, c.1977. Source: Photo Collection, General Collection, Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem.

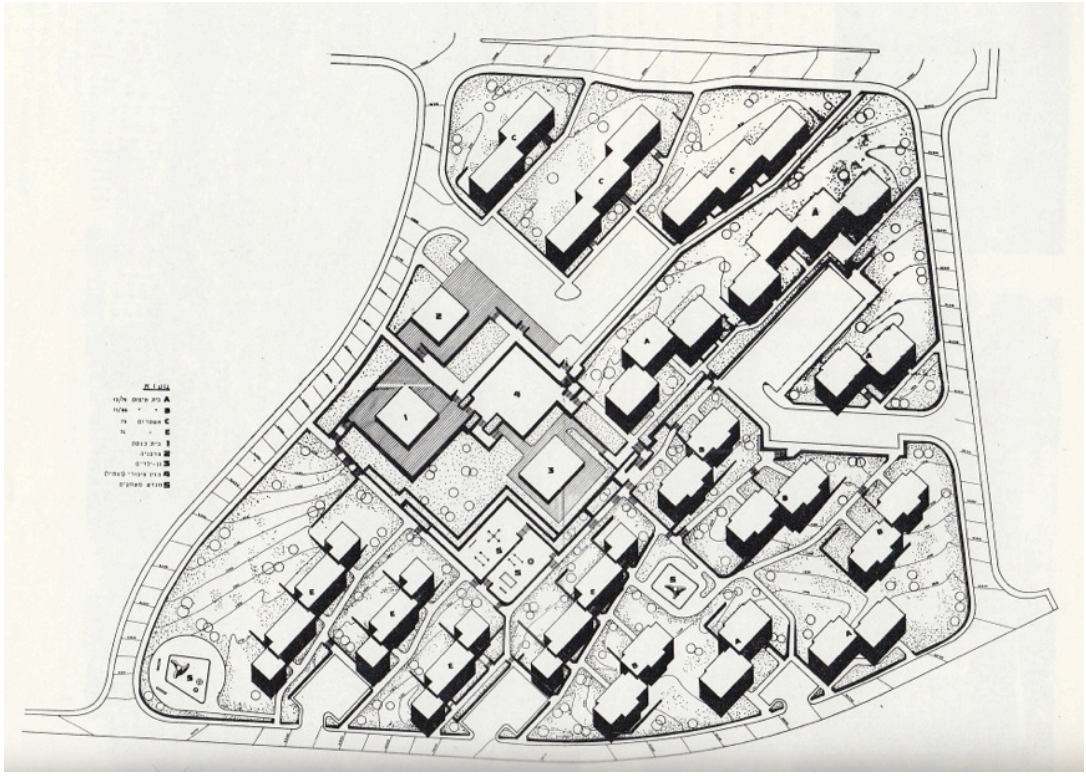

Figure 1.20 Bitush Comforti, site plan of Kiryat Arba's first neighborhood. Source: Amiram Harlap, ed., Israel Builds 1973 (Jerusalem: Ministry of Housing, 1973), 128.

Figure 1.21 Apartment buildings in Kiryat Arba, 1972. Source: Photo Collection, General Collection, Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem.

But it wasn't just the settlers' aesthetic preferences the architects had ignored; a careful look at the residential units reveals they also overlooked the settlers' unique needs. On each of the four building types replicated eight times throughout the neighborhood, architects refused to add an additional room to each small two- or three-bedroom unit in the building—even after representatives of the construction company ensured that the cost of such an addition would be negligible, and that the same idea had been executed in another project the Ministry had just completed.[104] Considering the exceptionally large families residing in the military complex in Hebron and anxiously waiting to move into their new apartments, the planners' decision seems strange. Subsequently, the Ministry also rejected the settlers' request to allow large families to rent two adjacent units and allow them much-needed space.[105]

Even more perplexing was the decision to replicate in Kiryat Arba the residential units first employed in a low-income housing project the Ministry had just completed in Wadi Joz.[106] The Ministry built the units in Wadi Joz for Palestinian refugees who were evacuated from Old Jerusalem after the Six-Day War, and "unable to procure suitable living quarters through their own endeavors."[107] Most were living under harsh conditions in slums and, in some cases, even stone caves. Eager to accommodate the disempowered refugees, architects at the left-leaning Ministry of Housing had encouraged their participation in the design process.[108] Together with members of the Palestinian community, architects crafted flats "planned according to the Arab way of life," which, according to the ministry, meant that "the layout was based on enclosed spaces with a maximum amount of privacy to each."[109] As a result, the units included only minimal open and in-between spaces (Figure 1.22).

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104 M.Shtrum (in charged of prefabricated construction at the Ministry of Housing) and Tzvi Gluzmann (manager of Jerusalem region at the Ministry of Housing), "Binyanei Ashtrum Behevron," December 6, 1970, 4948/2-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

105 Hebron Settlers Secreteriat and Yosef Sharon (manager of the Ministry of Housing), March 29, 1971, 8352/4-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem. The Ministry decided that only families of ten or more will be granted four-bedroom apartments. "Sikum Yeshivat Veadat Hevron Shehitkayma Beyerushalayim Be-10.5.71," May 13, 1971, 5648/11-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

106 For official decision to replicate housing units from Wadi Juz see "Transcripts of Meeting at the General Management Office in Jerusalem and Proposed Construction Site in Hebron," June 8, 1970, 8352/4-גל, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

107 On Wadi Joz project and residents, see Moshe Ravid, "Housing for East Jerusalemites at Wadi El Joz, Jerusalem," in *Israel Builds 1970*, ed. Yehonatan Golani and Gersom Schwarze Dieter (Tel Aviv: Ministry of Housing, 1970), 4.100.

108 Ibid.

109 Ibid.

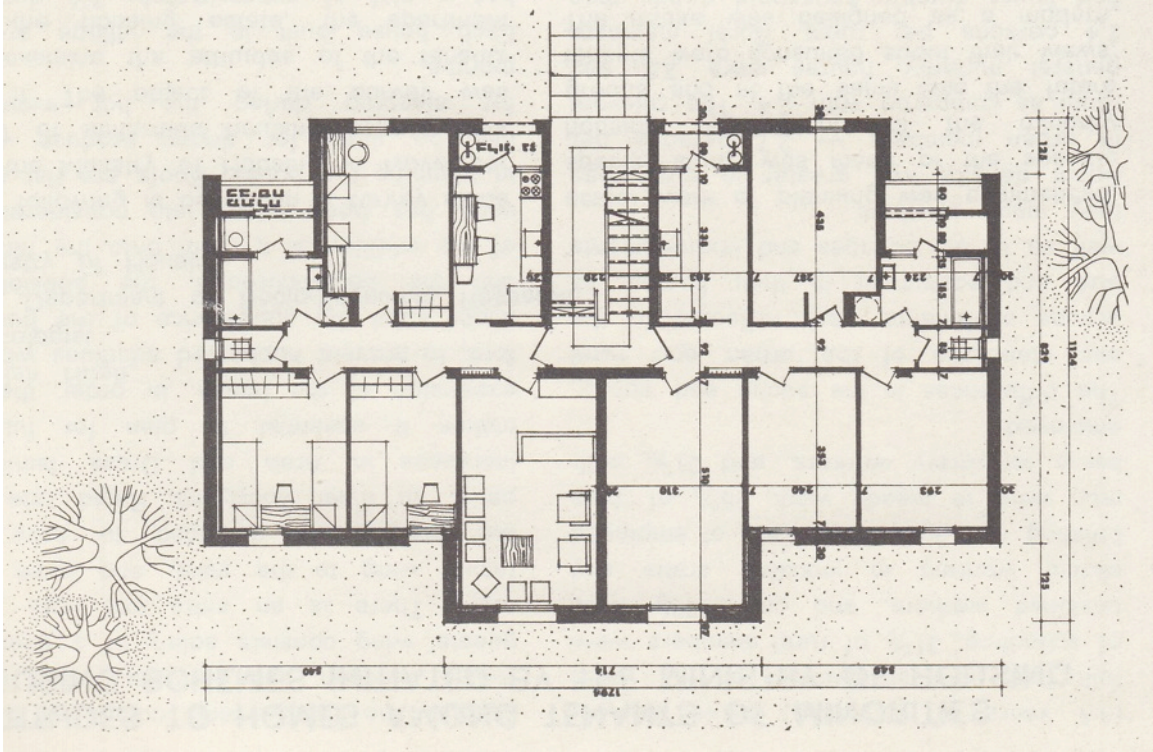

Figure 1.22 Second-floor plan of apartment building designed for Palestinians who were forced out of Jerusalem and relocated to Wadi el Joz. Source: Yehonatan Golani and Gersom Schwarze Dieter, eds., *Israel Builds 1970* (Tel Aviv: Ministry of Housing, 1970), 4.101.

The small units may have suited the needs of Palestinian refugees, but were at odds with the needs of the predominantly religious, middle-class Israeli settlers. Settlers were considerably more affluent, and could afford larger, more spacious flats befitting their relatively large families. Moreover, the claustrophobic layout of the Wadi Joz units was at odds with more open design trends, which allowed in-between spaces like a small foyer between the entrance door and the living room. More significantly, the units' layout didn't allow balconies, leaving the future residents of Kiryat Arba, many of whom were religious, unable to have a sukkah—a temporary outdoor ritual hut—during the holiday of Sukkot. Similarly, units planned for Muslim users lacked double sinks required for kosher kitchens, and other details that could have rendered them adequate for observant Jews.

Making things even worse, the architects arranged the units in a way that rendered the settlement dense and bleak, even in comparison to the refugees' neighborhood. Without enlarging staircase space, the architects added another floor atop the original two-story building—initially designed to accommodate four units—so it would now accommodate six units. In addition, while in the refugees' neighborhood architects scattered buildings "so as to create framed views of the natural and built up landscape" (Figure 1.23), in Kiryat Arba, they attached one building to the other.[110] In so doing, they blocked potential views of the Cave of the Patriarchs and the old city, views that might have rendered the neighborhood a bit less gloomy.

[110] Moshe Ravid, "Housing for East Jerusalemites at Wadi El Joz, Jerusalem," 4.100.

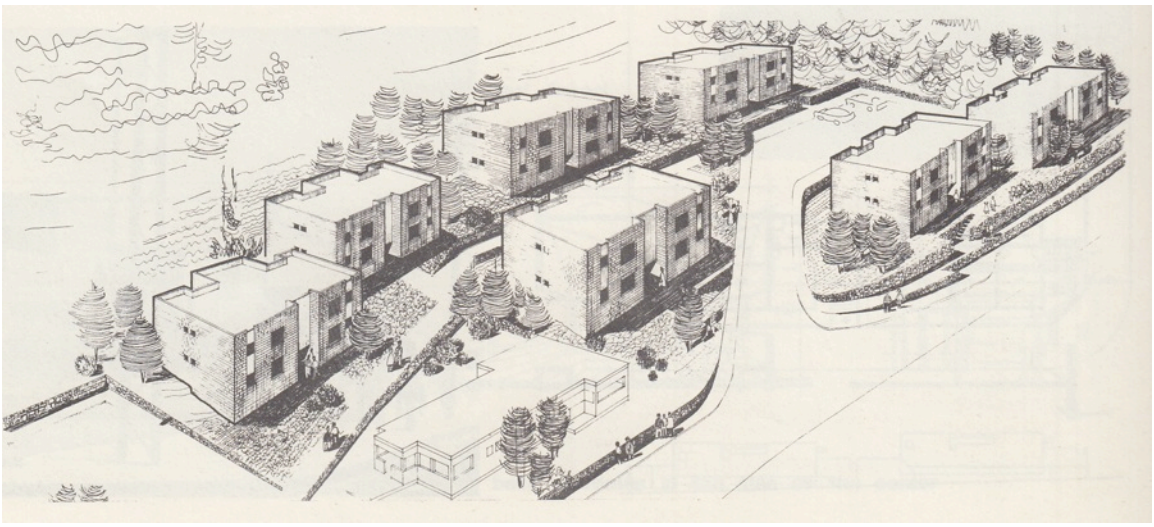

Figure 1.23 Drawing of housing complex for Palestinians who were forced out of Jerusalem and relocated to Wadi el Joz. Source: Yehonatan Golani and Gersom Schwarze Dieter, eds., *Israel Builds 1970* (Tel Aviv: Ministry of Housing, 1970), 4.100.

Public buildings in the neighborhood were equally inadequate. In 1970, Ministry officials asked the architects to plan only one elementary school with two kindergarten classrooms, one general store, and a plot for a future 140 sq. m. synagogue. To save time, the architects replicated an existing school structure from a town near Jerusalem.[111] The synagogue, the settlers complained, was too small. Allowing only 150 seats, the synagogue couldn't accommodate the community, they argued. Equally troubling, they wrote, was the lack of a mikveh—a public bath where Jewish purification rituals are practiced. In all, the plans were suspiciously inadequate for religious users.[112]

Difficult Clients

The settlers filed numerous complaints during the design process. While still at the military complex in Hebron, they carefully followed the Ministry's work. One of the architects who got involved in the project in the 1980s commented that the settlers were unlike other groups that the Ministry of Housing had worked with. Clients of the Ministry were usually passive and fearful, he said, and unable to confront the convoluted bureaucratic system. The settlers, by contrast, were bold and vocal. They repeatedly expressed their unsolicited opinions.[113]

The settlers opposed the original decision to separate Kiryat Arba from Hebron. They wanted to live in the old city. They saw the construction of a small neighborhood outside of Hebron, away from the Tomb of the Patriarchs, as an unwanted compromise.[114] Some settlers believed Kiryat Arba was a cynical government ploy aimed

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111 D.Ben-Elul and Tzvi Gluzmann, "Mosdot Tzibur Bekiryat Arba," July 13, 1970, 4948/2-גל, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

112 Moshe Levinger on behalf of the Hebron Settlers Secretariat to Y. Sharon (manager of the Ministry of Housing), January 20, 1971, 8352/4-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

113 Mandel, interview with the author. Eli Gvirtzman, one of the architects involved in the planning of Kiryat Arba, emphasized the fact that planners never asked the settlers for their opinion. Eli Gvirtzman, phone interview with author.

114 Auerbach, *Hebron Jews*, 92–97. A few years later, settlement activist Sarah Nachshon explained to Ariel Sharon, "Abraham our father came to Hebron, not to Kiryat Arba. King David came to Hebron, not to Kiryat Arba. So did we (the settlers) came to Hebron, to build it from its ruins, not to live in a fenced ghetto called Kiryat Arba." Aharon Dolev, "Neshot Hadasah Bematzor," *Maariv*, May 4, 1979, 33.

at distracting them.[115] Accordingly, they sent multiple letters and petitions to government officials, asking to expand the small neighborhood, purchase land plots in the old city, and connect the two towns.[116] Before moving to Kiryat Arba, settler representatives advised Prime Minister Golda Meir not to found a local council in the place. They feared that an independent local council would "disconnect (Kiryat Arba) from the city of Hebron, the Tomb of the Patriarchs, and all the Jewish (owned) areas in Hebron."[117] In the same fashion, the settlers asked state officials to add the word "Hebron" to the name "Kiryat Arba."[118]

While construction was underway, a number of settlement activists were actively trying to purchase lands in the old city. For example, in May 1971, Edri Mayer, a student at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, asked Prime Minister Golda Meir for permission to live in Hebron. Edri had been trying to purchase a 900 sq. m. land plot in the city. The Palestinian owner, it seems, was willing to sell the plot, but Edri lacked the government approval needed to complete the transaction. Convinced that Jews should live in Hebron, not in Kiryat Arba, Edri asked Meir, "Why would you want to erect a grouped [sic] settlement, meaning gather all in one group, in one neighborhood?"[119] After his request was rejected, Edri wrote again to Meir, expressing his desire to live in the old city. This time, Edri, who apparently was a Mizrahi Jew—descendent of Middle-Eastern Jews—argued: "I would be willing to live under Arab rule [if Israel returns Hebron to Jordan]…I lived for 15 years under Arab rule abroad."[120] Edri's plea remained unanswered.

Some settlement activists were also willing to socialize with the Muslim residents of Hebron in order to become a legitimate part of the town. For instance, the *Movement for the Whole Land of Israel* tried organizing a reconciliation event in Hebron. They wanted to discuss the importance of cohabiting Hebron with the Palestinian. Hebron is the place where "our [Muslims and Jews] shared Patriarchs are buried," one of the movement's founders explained.[121] Speaking on behalf of the pious activists, Levinger added, "We don't intend to make Kiryat Arba a ghetto. If the Arabs would like to come and live in Kiryat Arba, they should come, why not? Good idea. Our entire plan is that Kiryat Arba, at the end of the day, would be connected to Hebron, and become part of it."[122] Even though such statements should not be taken at face value, especially since

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115 Baruh Nachshon, phone interview with author, October 11, 2015.

116 For example, see The Settlers of Hebron to Golda Meir, "Tazkir Al Hatzureh Beharhavat Hayeshuv Hayehudi Behavron," April 21, 1971, 6501/27-G, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem. Also, for a petition requesting Prime Minister Golda Meir to expand the settlement to a 5,000 units settlements see Prof Yohanan Aharoni et al. to Golda Meir, February 8, 1971, 8046/9-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem. Also, see settlers' requests to expand the settlement in Uzi Cohen (settlers' secretary) to Golda Meir, October 14, 1970, 6501/24-G, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem; Moshe Levinger to Golda Meir, June 20, 1971, 6501/27-G, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

117 The Settlers of Hebron to Meir, "Tazkir Al Hatzureh Beharhavat Hayeshuv Hayehudi Behavron."

118 Yitzhak Gvirtz to General Manager at the Ministry of Interior, "Kiryat Arba," August 30, 1972, 47113/13-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

119 Meir Edri to Secretary of the Prime Minister's office, "Ishur Al Kniyat Helkat Adama Behevron," May 24, 1971, 6501/27-G, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

120 Meir Edri to Prime Minister Golda Meir, "Teshuva Dehufa Lemihtavi Bamehirut Haefsharit," October 31, 1971, 6501/27-G, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem. For an important account discussing the role of Mizrahi Jews in the settlement project, and the silencing of their involvement, see Rivi Gillis, "Ahshav Gam Hem Mitnahalim: Hamorfologiya Haetnit Shel Hahitnahaluyot" (Tel Aviv University, 2009).

121 Ari Jabotinsky, "Espeklaria," *Zot Haaretz*, November 1, 1968, sec. Vol. 14.

122 Naftali, "Kah Hitnahalnu Behevron: Reayon im Harav Moshe Levinger," 22. In the early 1980s, at a meeting between the Jewish settlers and Palestinian Hebronites, Levinger would also announce: "we want to live next to our (Palestinian) neighbors, not instead of

many encounters between the two people were rather explosive, they emphasize the settlers' disapproval of the state's plans for Kiryat Arba.

Settlers were equally frustrated with the admissions process that the Ministry of Housing planners enforced. Since all apartments in the settlement were built and owned by the Ministry, anyone wanting to rent a unit—excluding the original settlers who had squatted in Park Hotel—had to submit an application to an admissions committee managed by the Ministry.[123] Favoring families with no more than 3 children, young couples, and individuals with the professional skills required for settlement maintenance, the committee seemed to prefer secular Jews over religious ones, undermining the wishes of many settlers who envisioned a pious community.[124]

To better shape the settlement's character, settlement activists repeatedly asked to take an active role in the admissions process, or at least, have a representative in the ministry's admission committee.[125] "Not letting the settlers to take part in Kiryat Arba's admissions committee," the activists complained, "is like stealing the fruit of a tree that was planted and nurtured over the course of three years by others."[126] But Ministry officials were suspicious of the settlers. As a reporter for a daily newspaper wrote, the planners at the Ministry of Housing "were watching with great concern how 30 yeshiva guys ask to become homeowners, and manage the neighborhood in the same fashion as 'Warsaw Houses' in Mea She'arim (an ultra-Orthodox neighborhood in Jerusalem) or…the (Yiddish speaking and extremely segregated) Ponevezh Yeshiva are managed."[127] Time and again, then, Ministry officials rejected the settlers' requests.[128]

Rebellious Users

Not surprisingly, almost immediately after the settlers began moving into the new neighborhood in 1971, trouble began. Settlers explained to visiting reporters that the units were not only removed from the old city, but also too small for their needs. Two large families of ten and elven members found themselves living in three-bedroom units.[129]

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them." "Hakerah Nishbar," *Nekuda*, November 25, 1983. In 1988, after the outbreak of the Palestinian uprising, settlement activist Yoel Bin-Nun, would argue ""the classic right-wing people of Gush Emunim went to settle in Yesha, and some even in Arab cities (Hebron!) because they believed in co-existence, not so much between states, but definitely between people…" See Yoel Bin-Nun, "Rak Haskama Leumit Taatzor et Hahitdarderut Lemilhama Kolelet," *Nekuda*, February 26, 1988, 21.

123 "Sikum Yeshiva Veadat Hevron Me-15.3.71 Yerushalayim," March 17, 1971, 5648/11-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

124 Out of the first 230 units, the committee allocated 80 units to young couples, 70 to families with no more than three kids, 70 to families with more than three kids, and 10 to bachelors. See Ministry of Housing, Jerusalem District, "Sikum Benosa Ihlus Kiryat-Arba Miyom 18.4.71," April 23, 1971, 8352/4-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem. Later, Ministry officials decided to reject all applicants older than 60 or with more than six children. See "Protocol Veadat Hevron," December 6, 1971, 5648/11-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

125 For example, see settlers' request for representation in the admissions process in Settlers Secretariat to Ze'ev Sherf (Minister of Housing), March 26, 1971, 8352/4-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.
Already at an earlier stage, settlers expressed their concerns about the populating process, urging the ministry to follow certain guidelines so as to appease the settlers preferences. See Moshe Levinger to Sharon (Ministry of Housing manager), January 20, 1971, 8352/4-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem. Later, the settlers asked for an urgent meeting with the minister of housing to discuss the matter. See Moshe Levinger to Ze'ev Sherf, May 23, 1971, 6501/27-G, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

126 See Hebron Settlers Secreteriat to Ze'ev Sherf, July 11, 1971, 6501/27-G, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

127 Danny Rubenstein, "Mi Yishlot Bahitnahalut Behevron: Mahloket bein Misrad Hapnim Vehashikun al Nihula shel Kiryat Arba," *Davar*, November 16, 1971; "Yeshivat Veadat Hevron Shehitkayma Beyerushalayim Be-14.6.71," June 15, 1971, 5648/11-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

128 For Ministry's rejection of settlers' requests see "Sikum Yeshivat Veadat Hevron Shehitkayma Beyerushalayim Be-10.5.71."

129 On October 1971, the ministry decided to add a room for each of the two families. See "Summary of the Hebron Committee meeting," October 25, 1971, 5648/11-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

Many complained about the absence of balconies and fixtures required for religious rituals. A number of activists began questioning the intentions of the settlement's architects. Baruch Nachshon, who moved-in to Kiryat Arba with his nine children, later accused: "Planners at the ministry had intentionally made tiny, terrible apartments that any family would want to escape from as soon as they can."[130]

Many settlers also found the monotonous design of the neighborhood bleak and inappropriate for their middle-class sensibilities. Rabbi Levinger lamented that "not much thought was given to beauty and diversity" in the design of Kiryat Arba, and expressed his hope that "in the planning of new neighborhoods, prettier and less homogenous housing models will be offered."[131] Another settler complained: "Among us are people of means who came here because of our dedication to the idea of renewing the Jewish settlement in the town of the Patriarchs… they don't want to live in standardized public housing apartments."[132] What may have suited other, more passive clients with whom the ministry was working could hardly have satisfied the residents of Kiryat Arba.

To improve the poor living conditions, a number of settlers requested permission to hire private contractors.[133] At one point, they claimed that about 50 settlers and 2 private construction and development companies were interested in using private funds to build some 500 units in the settlement.[134] Yet, time and again, Ministry of Housing officials declined the settlers' requests. The officials insisted that there were no available plots in the area or appropriate legal channels for accommodating private contractors.[135]

Settlers were equally frustrated with the small number of stores in Kiryat Arba. Since the architects designed only one general store, a number of activists wanted to open temporary commercial spaces in unoccupied residential units.[136] In March 1972, for example, one of Kiryat Arba's founders filed an official request, asking to open a clothing store in an empty unit.[137] Later, a female settler filed a similar request.[138] A couple of settlers went a step further by asking for permission to build a commercial center with eight stores in Kiryat Arba.[139] Nevertheless, government officials denied the settlers' requests.[140]

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130 Nachshon, phone interview with author.

131 "Hagiga Bekiryat-Arba," *Davar*, June 2, 1972, 15.

132 Aharon Dolev, "Im Ifretzu HaAravim LaKirya - Hitgonenu BeMaklot," *Maariv*, November 22, 1974, 29.

133 For complaints and requests to have private construction in Kiryat Arba, see, for example, Elyakim Haetzni to Ze'ev Sherf, February 19, 1973, 8352/6-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem; Eli Eyal, "Bein HaKirya shebeHevron lebein HaKirya beYerushalyim," *Maariv*, February 11, 1972, 66–67.

134 According to the letter, some of the 50 settlers were already residing in Kiryat Arba, while others were accepted and waiting for their move-in date. The two companies were Rasko and Shikun Ovdim. See Kiryat Arba-Hebron Local Committee, "Tazkir Al Ikuvei HaBniya Bekiryat Arba," November 25, 1974, 6722/28-G, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem. Later, in 1977, Haetzni would send a request saying he can organize 100 settlers interested in building their own homes with private funds. See Elyakim Haetzni to Gideon Pat (Minister of Housing), September 18, 1977, 12852/12-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

135 For example, see "Protocol Veadat Hevron." Later, the ministry had repeatedly rejected similar requests, arguing that private construction would cause legal problems. For example, see Shmaryahu Cohen (head of Kiryat Arba's Team at the Ministry of Housing) to Tzvi Marcus, April 8, 1973, 6466/2-G, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

136 Three more stores were to be built in the second stage of development. D.Ben-Elul and Gluzmann, "Mosdot Tzibur Bekiryat Arba."

137 "Summary of Hebron Committee meeting," March 17, 1972, 5648/11-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

138 Dolev, "Im Ifretzu HaAravim LaKirya - Hitgonenu BeMaklot."

139 As explained in the official request, the Ministry committed to building the commercial center. The residents, however, were suspicious of the Ministry. In order to save time, they requested to take over the project. See Elyakim Haetzni to Shmaryahu Cohen (head of Kiryat Arba's Founding Team at the Ministry of Housing), "Merkaz Mishari Bekiryat Arba," December 3, 1972, 8352/6-GL,

The lack of commercial spaces foreclosed much-needed employment opportunities in the settlement. Female settlers, in charge of raising the children and unable to leave the settlement during the day, were especially dependent on such jobs.[141] Yet, government officials ignored their pleas. When one female settler requested permission to open an office space in Kiryat Arba, a military general told her she could get the approval from the Arabic-speaking Palestinian Bureau in Ramallah. As the settler explained, such an undertaking was clearly impossible. The general's message, she lamented, was clear: a permit was nowhere near.[142]

Unable to lease empty units, a number of settlers opened restaurants and stores in their private apartments. Some of these makeshift spaces, however, undermined the social fabric of the neighborhood. For example, in June 1972, settlers filed complaints against a police officer residing in Kiryat Arba. The officer had opened a restaurant in his private apartment. To the settlers' dismay, the officer's restaurant attracted Israeli soldiers and Palestinians. The unexpected clients were a nuisance to some settlers, and residents' representatives agreed the restaurant should be closed. A military general argued that it would be an easy task, since the restaurant was illegal. But the general clarified that a legal complaint against the officer would endanger other stores in Kiryat Arba. Almost all of the stores were housed in private units, against local ordinances. The residents were dissatisfied, but they were unable to give up on the settlements' informal network of commercial spaces. They had to tolerate the unwanted guests and the open-minded police officer.[143] Such experiences supported the settlers' suspicion that the Ministry of Housing was "trying to create divides between the residents of the place."[144]

Settlers were also dissatisfied with Kiryat Arba's worship spaces. Shortly after they moved in, the settlers' "Committee on Religious Affairs" complained that the main synagogue was poorly placed. The committee demanded the Ministry re-plan it.[145] Later, the committee argued that there were not enough worship spaces in the settlement. As a result, they lamented, many settlers conducted their prayers in informal spaces, like underground shelters and temporary shacks.[146]

Residents' complaints about the lack of public and commercial spaces were coupled with a concern about the lack of a general master plan. The original master plan,

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Israel State Archives, Jerusalem; Elyakim Haetzni to Ze'ev Sherf, "Bniyat Hanuyot Vedirot Pratiyot Bekiryat Arba-Hevron," February 19, 1973, 8352/6-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

140 Shmaryahu Cohen to Elyakim Haetzni, "Merkaz Mishari," December 11, 1972, 8352/6-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem; "Summary of Hebron Committee meeting"; Dolev, "Im Ifretzu HaAravim LaKirya - Hitgonenu BeMaklot"; "Sikum Yeshivat Veadat Hevron Shehitkayma Beyerushalayim be-26.6.72," June 26, 1972, 5648/11-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem. The lack of commercial spaces in Kiryat Arba continued for a few years. In 1977, for example, settlement activists and lawyer Elyakim Haetzni complained on the lack of a commercial center, arguing that Kiryat Arba was the only "development town" without such a center. See Haetzni to Gideon Pat (Minister of Housing), September 18, 1977.

141 There were a number of factories and workshops in the settlement, such as a wood and metal workshop, operated by men. Moshe Levinger on behalf of the Local Committee of Kiryat Arba-Habron to Government Ministers, December 19, 1971, 6466/2-G, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

142 Dolev, "Im Ifretzu HaAravim LaKirya - Hitgonenu BeMaklot."

143 Gvirtz to General Manager at the Ministry of Interior, "Kiryat Arba."

144 Moshe Levinger on behalf of the Local Committee of Kiryat Arba-Habron to Government Ministers, December 19, 1971.

145 "Sikum Yeshivat Veadat Hevron Shehitkayma Beyerushalayim be-26.6.72"; Shmaryahu Cohen (head of Kiryat Arba Team at the Ministry of Housing) to Kiryat Arba's Religious Committee, "Beit Knesset," July 12, 1972, 8352/6-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

146 A. Yifrah (head of Kiryat Arba's Religious Committee to Prime Minister Menachem Begin, "Mekomot Kdoshim Behevron," January 1, 1978, 12852/12-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

designed to house some 50,000 settlers, was never approved. As a result, a sense of uncertainty prevailed in Kiryat Arba. Throughout the design and construction process, the architects worked on one patch at a time "without a clear conception of the larger scale."[147] Without such a conception, the architects were unable to agree on the amount of public and commercial facilities in the settlement.

Settlers, in contrast, feared that the absence of a master plan signaled the government's disinterest toward the settlement. Some suspected that government officials saw Kiryat Arba as a temporary experiment: a town with a pending evacuation order. Three months after the first settlers moved in to Kiryat Arba, their fears seemed to materialize when planners at the Ministry of Housing refused to accept new applications from potential residents.[148] Even though this decision was soon overturned and work on Kiryat Arba continued, settlement founders continued demanding that the Ministry approve a master plan for Kiryat Arba.[149] They even began drafting one themselves, creating a plan that would allow for some 100,000 residents. Yet, like the plan drawn by Ministry's team, it was never fully developed and was quickly abandoned.[150]

Equally unsettling were the debates around the management of the settlement. Already in 1968, while still in the military compound, the activists elected their own governing body they named the Settlers Secretariat. The Secretariat had managed almost all aspects of life in the temporary settlement until the activists began moving to Kiryat Arba in 1971. But once in Kiryat Arba, Ministry of Housing officials took over the responsibilities of the Secretariat. Most importantly, they allocated apartments to settlers and managed all local services. Settlement founders found this transition to be unreasonable. "We were able to manage our lives during the period of three years and under harsh conditions; we don't need a body [of the Ministry] to manage our lives under normal conditions," one of them wrote to Prime Minister Golda Meir.[151] They demanded the management of the settlement be changed.[152] Settlers got even more upset when state officials elected a military general to manage the settlement in March 1972.[153] Wondering why they were not allowed to elect the settlement's management, the Settlers

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147 Eli Gvirtzman, phone interview with author; Dunskey Fuerstein, interview with the author.

148 Yair Shtern, "Rabim Meunyanim Lehitnahel Behevron Ah Ein Tohnit Lepituah Nosaf," *Mariv*, January 25, 1972, 15.

149 For example, it was reported in the news that the settlers sent a letter to Prime Minister Golda Meir, demanding the government begins executing a master plan. See, for example, "Mitnahalei Hevron Mevakshim Lageshet Miyad Lebitzua Tochnit-Haav Sheushra," *Daver*, February 3, 1972, 2. Settlers continued demanding a master plan in the next few years. See, for examples, Moshe Mayevski (head of Kiryat Arba Arba administration) to Prime Minister Menachem Begin, "Tazkir," June 23, 1977, 6755/4-G, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem; Moshe Miyevsky (Head of Kiryat Arba's Minhala) and Moshe Nahalony (Secretary of Kiryat Arba's Minhala), "Skira Mesakemet Lepeulot Haminhala Bahodashim Tishrei Tashla"z-Nisan Tashla"h" (Minhelet Kiryat Arba, May 7, 1978), The National Library of Israel; "Hahlatat Asifat Am Shel Toshvei Kiryat Arba," August 25, 1979, 12852/12-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

150 Spreading across some twelve hills in the vicinity of Kiryat Arba, the master plan offered a connection to Hebron. Planned for some 20,000 residential units, it had a projected population of 100,000 residents. See Naftali, "Kah Hitnahalnu Behevron: Reayon im Harav Moshe Levinger," 21; "Kiryat Arba He Hevron" (Minhelet Kiryat Arba, 1977), folder V2569/17, National Library of Israel Archives, Jerusalem. It is unclear from archival materials when exactly was the plan abandoned. It would be reasonable to assume it was a tentative plan, rather than a detailed one.

151 Moshe Levinger to Prime Minister Golda Meir, "Mitnahalei Hevron: Hidush Hayeshuv Hayehudi Beir Haavot," September 26, 1971, 6501/24-G, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem. Also see a description of the clash between Levinger and his Secretariat and the Ministry of Housing in Danny Rubenstein, "Atida Hamonitzipali Shel Kiryat Arba: Maavak al Hainyanim Bashcuna Hayehudit shel Hevron," *Davar*, January 6, 1972.

152 Eliezer and Ruth Waldman to Prime Minister Golda Meir, February 3, 1972, 6501/27-G, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem; "Havrei Knesset Siyro Bekiryat Arba Behevron," *Davar*, December 23, 1971.

153 "Sgan-Aluf Muna Ahrai Lenihul Kiryat-Arba," *Davar*, March 15, 1972.

Secretariat ironically complained, "How come the Arabs of Hebron can manage their internal affairs and even organize elections and we cannot? Is it us the occupied population that need a military governance to rule us?"[154]

When their requests remained unanswered, some settlers became more aggressive. To sabotage services delivered by the Ministry of Housing, the settlers organized rallies and signed petitions prohibiting ministry employees from entering the settlement.[155] At one point they went on strike, shutting down all health, commercial, and educational facilities.[156] They formed an alternative admissions committee, enlisted applicants, squatted in empty units, and even began drafting their own plans for the settlement.[157] In addition, they started enforcing their religious laws and blocked the entrance on Saturdays, making it a vehicle-free, Shabbat-observing zone.[158]

These efforts were short-lived and failed to yield lasting results. Planners and architects at the ministry refused to surrender. "The funds invested in the neighborhood was state money, so why should a small group of yeshiva students, followers of Rabbi Levinger [a prominent settlers' leader], be given the right to decide on the nature of the place?" a news reporter explained.[159] At one point, Prime Minister Golda Meir intervened to express unwavering support for the ministry's employees. They will continue working according to their plans, she told the settlers, and warned that the government would not tolerate any squatting attempts.[160]

By 1973, the settlers and their supporters seemed to have arrive at a dead end. As a news reporter for *Davar* wrote, they could no longer "ignore the enormous gap that stretched between their original vision and the reality taking place in front of their eyes. They talk about a Jewish Hebron, but forced to a small segregated neighborhood, that, not by accident, was named 'Kiryat Arba' and not Hebron…a small suburb in the periphery of an Arab city."[161] One of the settlement founders lamented, "Kiryat Arba has no hope," and wondered "if Kiryat Arba was so unwanted, why did the government built it from the first place?"[162] A female settler captured this sense of disappointment in an annotated portrait of the settlement, detailing the Ministry's "mistakes" (Figure 1.24).

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154 Rubenstein, "Atida Hamonitzipali Shel Kiryat Arba: Maavak al Hainyanim Bashcuna Hayehudit shel Hevron." For a similar comparison see Moshe Levinger on behalf of the Local Committee of Kiryat Arba-Habron to Government Ministers, December 19, 1971.

155 Danny Rubenstein, "Hanhalat Hakoalitizya Tadon Behishtatfut Rosh"ham Betzurat Hamemshal Hamekomo BeKiryat Arba: Mahrif Hamaavak Bein Tomhei Levinger Lemisrad Hashikun," *Davar*, December 31, 1971, 1; Rubenstein, "Atida Hamonitzipali Shel Kiryat Arba: Maavak al Hainyanim Bashcuna Hayehudit shel Hevron," 10.

156 "Mitnahalei Kir'-Arba Shavtu Neged Bo Hakatzin Hamemune," *Davar*, March 17, 1972, 2.

157 "Mefunei Kiryat Arba Pathu Beshvita Leyad Batei Haplisha: Hitnagdu Lepinui Harihut Biyedei Aravim," *Maariv*, January 31, 1972, 7; Rubenstein, "Hanhalat Hakoalitizya Tadon Behishtatfut Rosh"ham Betzurat Hamemshal Hamekomo BeKiryat Arba," 1; Danny Rubenstein, "G. Meir Hezhira Mitnahalei Hevron Mipnei Plishot," *Davar*, February 2, 1972, 2; Naftali, "Kah Hitnahalnu Behevron: Reayon im Harav Moshe Levinger," 21.

158 Rubenstein, "Hanhalat Hakoalitizya Tadon Behishtatfut Rosh"ham Betzurat Hamemshal Hamekomo BeKiryat Arba," 1; Rubenstein, "Atida Hamonitzipali Shel Kiryat Arba: Maavak al Hainyanim Bashcuna Hayehudit shel Hevron," 10.

159 Rubenstein, "Mi Yishlot Bahitnahalut Behevron: Mahloket bein Misrad Hapnim Vehashikun al Nihula shel Kiryat Arba," 9.

160 Rubenstein, "G. Meir Hezhira Mitnahalei Hevron Mipnei Plishot," 2.

161 Danny Rubenstein, "Kiryat Arba - Havtahot bli Kisui," *Davar*, March 21, 1973, 9.

162 Elyakim Haetzni, "Toshvei Yisrael Nehashavim 'Nifkadim' Legabei Hashtahim," *Maariv*, February 2, 1972.

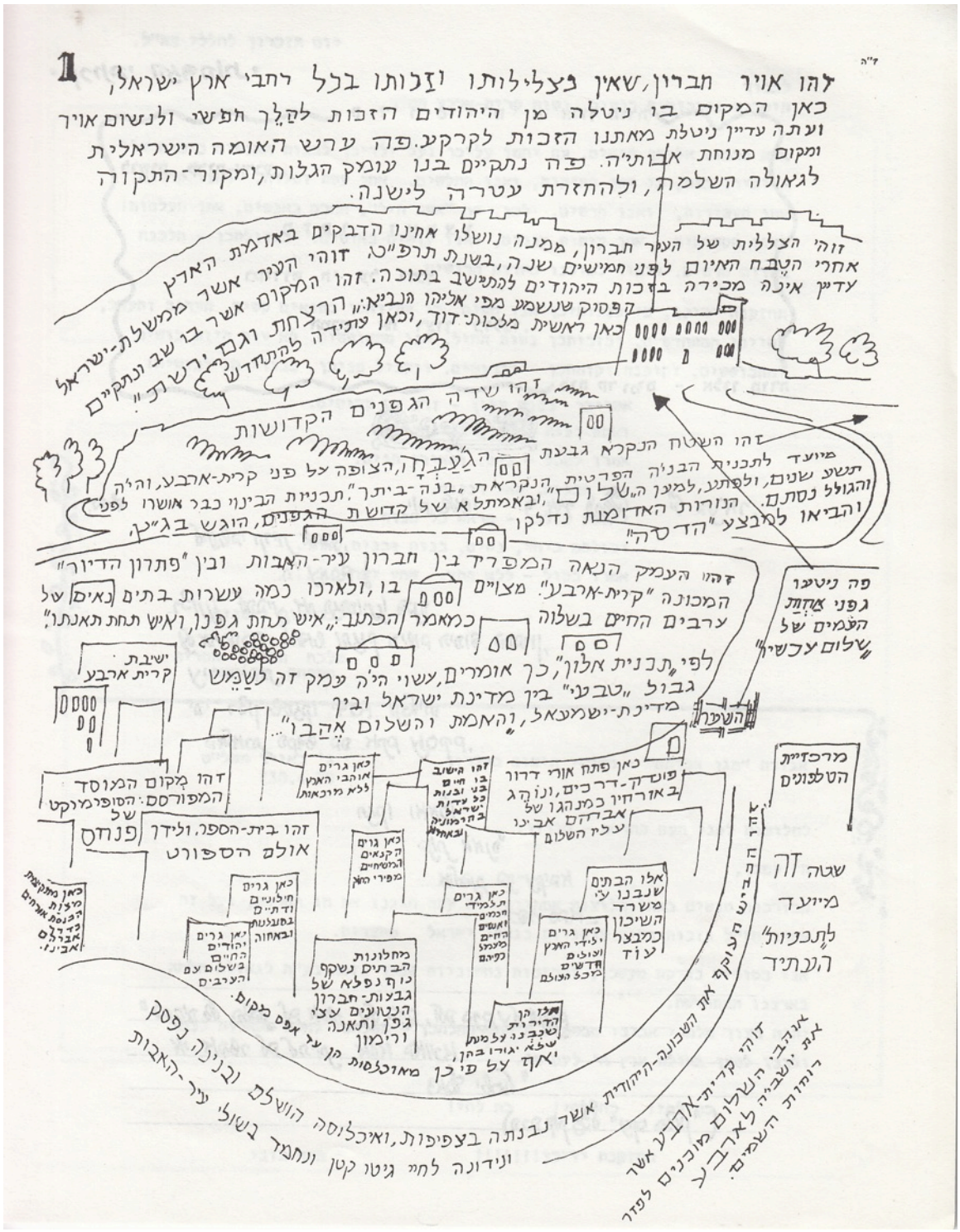

Figure 1.24 Annotated drawing of Kiryat Arba and Hebron, c.1975. Source: 12852/12-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem. At the bottom of are the homogenous apartment buildings of Kiryat Arba. “These are houses built like a fortress by the Ministry of Housing,” the female settler wrote across one of them. On one next to it she wrote: “These are apartments built (in such a way) so no one would live in them.” Above the settlement she drew seven single story Palestinian houses. Between them she wrote: “This is a beautiful valley that separates Hebron, the city of the Patriarchs, from the ‘housing solution’ known as ‘Kiryat Arba.’ There are a few beautiful houses here owned by Arabs who live in peace, as is said in the bible: ‘Under their vine and fig-tree.’” Above a serrated line marking the skyline of Hebron, she inscribed: “This is the

air of Hebron, the clearest and purest in the land of Israel. This is the place where Jews are not allowed to walk and breathe freely."

Over the next couple of years, architects continued developing Kiryat Arba. By 1977, the ministry had overseen the construction of some six hundred new units. At first, architects Shmuel Shaked and Joseph Kolodny planned a new neighborhood that aimed at "reinstating quality of life" in the settlement.[163] They designed houses with flexible floor plans and private patios (Figure 1.25). Yet, their plans were never realized.[164] Instead, the Ministry developed large multistory buildings that resembled the ones built in the first neighborhood (Figure 1.26). Some of the new units were slightly bigger than the first ones, but they were still relatively modest and lacked balconies needed for Jewish rituals.

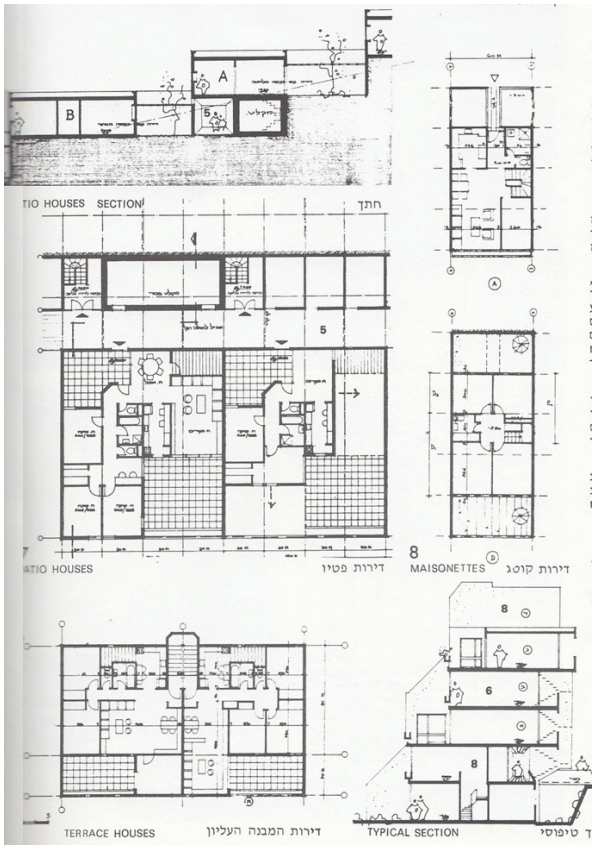

Figure 1.25 Unrealized housing units Shmuel Shaked and Joseph Kolodny planned for the settlers of Kiryat Arba. Source: Amiram Harlap, ed., *Israel Builds 1977* (Tel Aviv: Ministry of Housing, 1977).

163 Harlap, *Israel Builds 1977*, 281–83.

164 Shaked was commissioned to plan the neighborhood on a site known as Jabra hill in March 1973. Originally it was planned for 800 units. See "Sikum Yeshiva Benose Kiryat Arba Miyom 15.3.73," March 26, 1973, 4948/2-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem. In July, it was decided that Shaked will be the head of a team of architects in charge with the planning of Jabra hill. Under him were three other architects: Bahar Israel, Shabtai Meshulam, and Dan Picker. See "Sikum Yeshiva Benose Tihnun (Tohnit Mitar) Kiryat Arba Miyom 18.7.73," July 30, 1973, 4948/2-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem. On September, it was decided that the planning of Jabra would begin only on April 1974. See "Sikum Yeshiva Benose Tihnun Kiryat-Arba Be-10.9.73," September 24, 1973, 4948/2-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem. In 1978, settlers complained about delays in the execution of the plan. According to the settlers, the neighborhood was planned for potential residents for whom "the quality of construction in Kiryat Arba was unsatisfying," See Moshe Miyevsky (Head of Kiryat Arba's Minhala) and Moshe Nahalony (Secretary of Kiryat Arba's Minhala), "Skira Mesakemet Lepeulot Haminhala Bahodashim Tishrei Tashla"z-Nisan Tashla"h," 13.
According to architect Eli Gvirtzman, who was working with Shmuel Shaked on the neighborhood, the neighborhood was not built because of financial concerns. Gvirtzman, phone interview with the author.

Figure 1.26 Kids playground by a multistory apartment building erected after the first stage was completed. Kiryat Arba, c.1984. Source: Harvard, VIA image catalog.

While these new units were under construction, residents began leaving the settlement in large numbers. By 1977, some 400 out of the 877 units in Kiryat Arba were unoccupied.[165] When asked about the large number of empty apartments, a settlement activist blamed the ministry and its architects, "who have been given too much authority in city planning."[166] Another settler later asked, "Why should anyone come to a place that has no development plans? …How can we survive without a commercial center, employment centers, and public transportation to urban centers?"[167] Some of the residents also complained about the expansion of the surrounding Palestinian neighborhoods, which contributed to their feeling of insecurity.[168] In all, Levinger

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165 Among those leaving the settlement, founders' families stood out. According to Zertal and Eldar, 70 families of settlement founders were among those who left the settlement by 1977. See Zertal and Eldar, *Lords of the Land*, 28. According to the settlers, on January 1978, there were only 130 empty units. The remaining ones were either occupied or still under construction. See Ronni Shtarsberg (Kiryat Arba administration), "Tazkir al Kiryat Arba," January 1978, 12852/12-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

166 Moshe Mayevski (head of Kiryat Arba Arba administration) to Prime Minister Menachem Begin, "Tazkir." In a TV interview, settlement activist Gershon Shafat concurred and argued that there are empty units because of the poor planning of the settlement and the lack of amenities. See Teddy Froyes, "Gush Emunim o Tur Veale," *Davar*, October 6, 1977, 11. Another settler complained about housing models in Kiryat Arba. "They build their multi-story houses," he commented. "It is not for me." See Segal, *Ahim Yekarim: Korot "Hamahteret Hayehudit,"* 25.

167 Ronny Shtrasberg (Kiryat Arba's Community Manager), "Tazkir Al Kiryat Arba Hevron," January 1978, 12852/12-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem. At another instance, settler Gershon Shafat from Kfar Etzion posed a relatively similar argument, complaining about Kiryat Arba's poor planning. See Froyes, "Gush Emunim o Tur Veale." Also see Kiryat Arba's officials complaint, arguing that the conditions in the town sabotaged the chances of recruiting new residents in Moshe Miyevsky (Head of Kiryat Arba's Minhala) and Moshe Nahalony (Secretary of Kiryat Arba's Minhala), "Skira Mesakemet Lepeulot Haminhala Bahodashim Tishrei Tashla"z-Nisan Tashla"h."

168 Moshe Levinger to General Vardy (Ministry of Defense), November 23, 1975, 6722/28-G, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem. Levinger argued that Kiryat Arba's slow development encouraged the Palestinians, who at the time, were already involved in a number of attacks against the settlers. See Moshe Levinger to Prime Minister Yizhak Rabin, Minister of Defense Shimon Peres, and General Aryeh Shalev, July 2, 1975, 6722/28-G, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

concluded, "One should wonder how 350 families actually survive here."[169] The first settlement attempt in Hebron, everyone seemed to agree, had failed.

A First Foothold in the Old City

In 1974, just when many began to give up, David Cassuto, the architect who had first sketched a Jewish neighborhood for Hebron, began plotting a new venture. From his office in Jerusalem, he researched the old Jewish Quarter of Hebron. He was especially curious about "Abraham Avinu Synagogue," a famous, centuries-old synagogue that had served the Jewish community in Hebron.[170] Yet, like other buildings in the old Jewish Quarter, the synagogue had been looted and demolished in the decades following the expulsion of the Jewish community in 1936. By 1967, when Israeli forces conquered the city, it was considered gone; no one even knew where it had stood. Cassuto was confident he could find the location, and force the government to rebuild the synagogue, or at least confiscate the site. After all, he thought, it would be difficult for the government to oppose the preservation of one of the holiest sites in the city.[171] Where resettlement strategies had failed, archeology and heritage conservancy, he hoped, might yet prevail.

Consulting aerial views from the 1920s and architectural sketches drawn by architect and archeologist Jacob Pinkerfield in the 1930s (Figure 1.27), Cassuto identified the general location of the old synagogue.[172] Without wasting time, he drove to Hebron and began surveying. To his surprise, there was a sheepfold at the site where, according to his analysis, the synagogue once stood. Cassuto asked the Palestinian goatherd about the synagogue. The goatherd said there were some remnants of an old building on the site. Looking around, Cassuto found an old Hebrew plaque covered with sand and dirt. Clearing the surrounding sand, he found remnants of a thick stone wall that matched Pinkerfield's plan drawing. Upon seeing the wall, he had no doubt he had discovered the site of the lost synagogue.[173]

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169 Moshe Levinger to Prime Minister Menachem Begin, "Kiryat Arba - Hevron," June 1978, 12852/12-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem. In a Block of the Faithful's publication, settlement activists voiced a relatively similar complaint, arguing that the lack of a master plan, the poor planning, and the slow construction, among other things, were "choking" Kiryat Arba. See "Gush Emunim Daf Kesher" (Gush Emunim, C 1976), folder DD1/2309, Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem.

170 Avishar, *Sefer Ḥevron; Ir Haavot Veyeshuvah Berei Hadorot*, 194.

171 Cassuto, interview by author.

172 Cassuto was not working alone. According to settlement activist Noam Arnon, two other activists, Haim Mageni, and rabbi Zalman Koren, helped Cassuto. See Noam Arnon, "Beit Haknesset Avraham Avinu Behevron," in *Kiryat Arba Hee Hevron: Kovetz Mamarim Vetmunot Bemeliat asor Lehidush Hayeshuv Hayehudi Behevron*, ed. Moshe Ozeri (Hebron: Minhelet Kiryat Arba, 1978), 38–39. When I interviewed Cassuto, he explained that Haim Mageni and professor Hirshberg assisted him. Cassuto, interview with the author.

173 Cassuto, interview with the author.

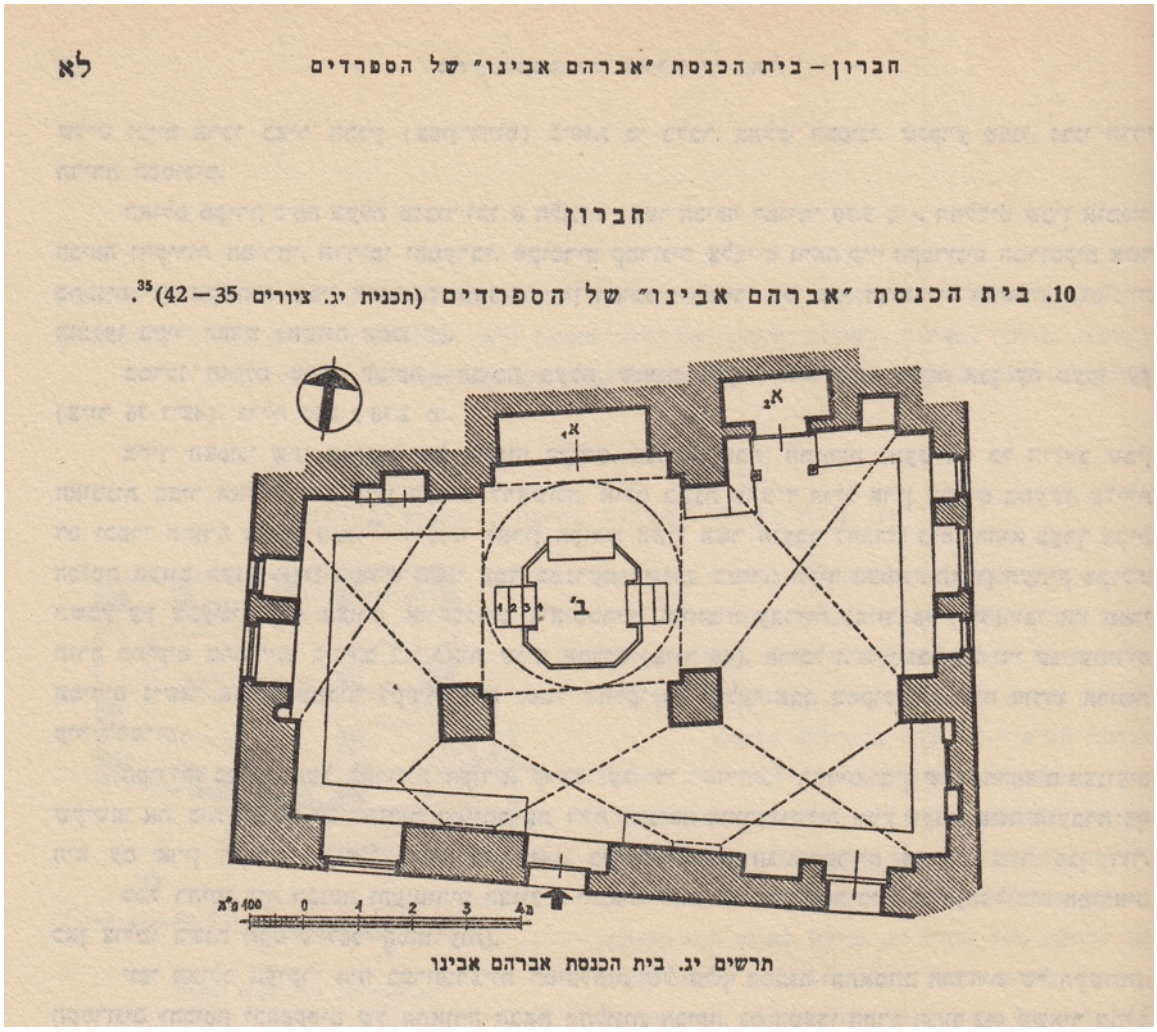

Figure 1.27 Jacob Pinkerfeld, ground-floor plan of Avraham Avinu Synagogue, 1939. Source: Jacob Pinkerfield, Batei Haknesiyot Be'eretz Yisrael:Misof Tkufat Hegeonim Ad Aliyat Hahasidim (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook Sheal Yad Hamizrahi Haolami, 1946), 31.

Government officials didn't take interest in Cassuto's findings. They refused to believe remnants of the building had survived. The residents of Kiryat Arba, on the other hand, were thrilled. One, a recent immigrant from the USSR named Ben Tzion Tavgar, demanded that something be done. The forty-five-year-old immigrant was outraged upon hearing that there was a goat pen on top of the old synagogue. Unlike Cassuto, he saw little point in waiting for government approvals.

In 1975, Tavgar began making facts on the ground. He was working as a guard at the nearby Jewish cemetery that was vandalized in 1929, and he felt at home in the old city.[174] He would go regularly to the site and observe the surroundings. One day he erected a plaque announcing, "This is the Place of the Abraham Avinu Synagogue."[175] Soon after, Tavgar began "official" excavation works. Everyday he would go to the site

[174] In 1975, settlement activist Sarah Nachshon buried her baby in the old cemetery. Once the baby was buried in the old city, Tavgar was assigned to guard the place. See Auerbach, *Hebron Jews*, 98–102; Michael Feige, "Jewish Settlement of Hebron: The Place and the Other," *GeoJournal* 53, no. 3 (2001): 328; Ben Zion Tavger, *Ḥevron sheli* (Jerusalem: Shamir, 1999), 86–87.

[175] Tavger, *Ḥevron sheli*, 101–2; Arnon, "Beit Haknesset Avraham Avinu Behevron."

and clear more layers of dirt and rubble. The Palestinian shepherd, who had lawfully rented the plot, tried stopping him. But the shepherd's complaints fell on deaf ears.[176] Similarly, when Tavgar expanded his excavation site to the backyard of one of the adjacent houses, the owners of the house were helpless.[177] Police officers arrested Tavgar for conducting an illegal dig a number of times. But he was unstoppable.[178] Inspired by his dedication, yeshiva students from Kiryat Arba joined him at the site (Figure 1.28).[179] Within a few months they had excavated large portions of the synagogue and the adjacent housing complex that once had accommodated worshipers.[180]

Figure 1.28 Yeshiva students working at the site of Avraham Avinu Synagogue, Hebron, c.1975. Source: private collection of Noam Arnon.

With findings at hand, Cassuto approached a special ministers committee and demanded that they restore the synagogue.[181] By 1976, the committee acceded to his

[176] In his memoir, Tavger describes an incident where the Palestinian shepherd confronted him, and, in return, some of Kiryat Arba's settlers beaten the Palestinian. The shepherd had to go and get medical treatment at a nearby hospital. He also filed a complaint at the local police station. Tavger admitted that the guy had legally rented the plot. However, he justified his fellow settlers violence, arguing the shepherd had no right to build a sheepfold on the ruins of a synagogue. Tavger, *Ḥevron sheli*, 105–8.

[177] According to Tavger's memoir, the couple was actually complacent with his excavation work. Yet, it is reasonable to assume that Tavger was oblivious to their complaints. See Tavger, 111–12.

[178] Arnon, "Beit Haknesset Avraham Avinu Behevron," 38–39; Tavger, *Ḥevron sheli*, 127–32.

[179] Noam Arnon, interview by the author, July 30, 2017.

[180] On the excavation works at the site of Avraham Avinu Synagogue see Arnon, "Beit Haknesset Avraham Avinu Behevron," 36–40; Tavger, *Ḥevron sheli*, 100–138.

[181] Cassuto, interview by author.

request.[182] A first foothold in the heart of Hebron was achieved, "and it was a big victory," Cassuto later recalled.[183]

Cassuto refused to take on the restoration project, however. "I didn't fight this war in order to get a design commission," he later explained.[184] The government commissioned architects Ora and Yaacov Ya'ar, a well-known pair of Tel Aviv-based architects. But the Ya'ars refused to take part in the project. They thought settling in the midst of Hebron was wrong.[185] The government then commissioned Dan Tanai, an architect who was considered an expert on the design of synagogues, to oversee the work. To Tanai's disappointment, he had little control over the project. On the ground, a group of settlers from Kiryat Arba took over excavation and construction.[186] They expanded the excavations to the nearby plots and dug in areas Tanai insisted should remain untouched. There was little he could have done on his weekly visits to the site.[187]

While construction was underway in 1977, the settlers began conducting religious rituals on the site. At times, military officials would stop them, complaining it was unsafe to have civilians praying at a construction site.[188] But by 1980, construction was completed, and settlers took hold of the synagogue (Figures 1.29 and 1.30).[189] Every day they would pray there. They were now part of the city's fabric.

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182 "Hitkablu Hahatzaot Haoperativiyot shel Sar Habitahon legabei Hevron," *Maariv*, October 11, 1976, 3; Arnon, "Beit Haknesset Avraham Avinu Behevron," 39; Tavger, *Ḥevron sheli*, 179–80.

183 Cassuto, interview by author.

184 Cassuto, interview by the author.

185 Yaacov Yaar, *Life and the Architecture* (Haifa: Architectural and Landscape Heritage Research Center, The Faculty of Architecture and Town Planning, The Technion, 2016), 230.

186 Tavger, *Ḥevron sheli*, 188.

187 Haim Zilber (contractor of Avraham Avinu Synagogue), interview by the author, August 1, 2017.

188 Arnon, interview by author; Arnon, "Beit Haknesset Avraham Avinu Behevron," 40.

189 An inauguration ceremony took place only on May 1981. See, Tavger, *Ḥevron sheli*, 23–27.

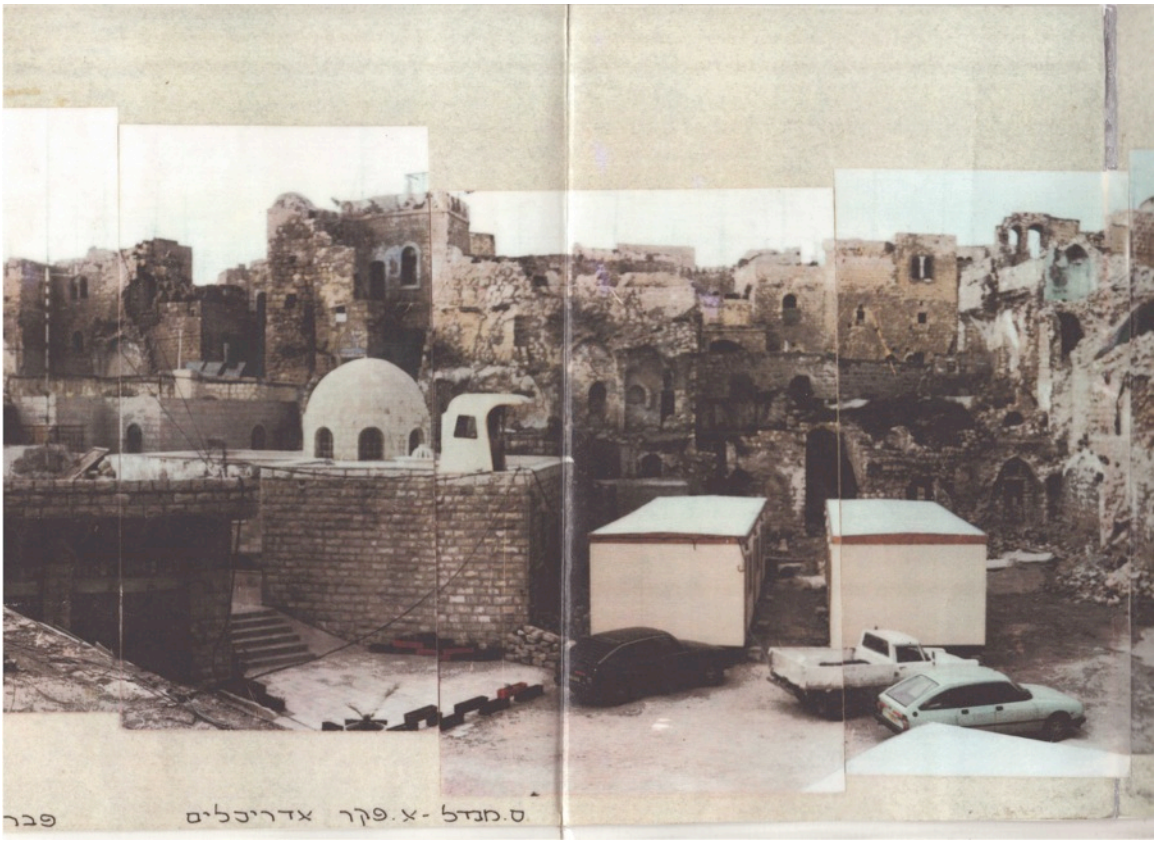

Figure 1.29 Dan Tanai, Avraham Avinu Synagogue, Hebron, c.1981. Source: Noam Arnon's private collection.

Figure 1.30 Avraham Avinu Synagogue, 1983. Source: Harvard VIA image catalog.

Renewing the Jewish Quarter

By the late 1970s, following the 1977 empowerment of the right-wing Likud party, settlers began relocating to houses in the area surrounding the synagogue.[190] They wanted to live in the old city, not just pray there. In March 1980, after an Arab resident of Hebron shot and killed a yeshiva student from Kiryat Arba, government officials decided to extend the synagogue project and renovate the adjacent housing compound, Abraham Avinu Complex, along with several other buildings in the old Jewish Quarter.[191]

Planners and architects at the Ministry of Housing again found themselves drafting plans for the settlers of Hebron. This time, their clients carefully followed the design process. They were outraged upon seeing tentative plans for the Avraham Avinu Complex. The plans, they complained, were too modernist and foreign to Hebron.[192] They demanded that the ministry cancel the plans and replace the party responsible for the unsatisfactory design with Saadia Mandel, a Tel Aviv-based architect known for his involvement in numerous preservation projects.[193]

Born in Yugoslavia, Mendel immigrated to Palestine at a young age in the late 1930s. He was trained at the Architectural Association in London, the École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris, and the Technion, and opened his Jaffa-based practice in 1960. They had never met Mandel, but because he had worked on projects in old Jerusalem, Jaffa, and Acre, settlers believed he would prove an ideal collaborator. After bitter negotiations, ministry officials acceded to the settlers' demands and commissioned Mandel and architect Erol Packer, Mandel's Turkish-born collaborator, to take over the project.[194] For the first time, settlers had succeeded in wresting control of the design process from Ministry's bureaucrats.

Mandel and Packer, on their part, were keen to work in Hebron. Unlike their colleagues at the Ministry, they saw it as an opportunity to connect with history and develop an aesthetic language that spoke to "the spirit of the place."[195] Before drawing new plans, however, Mandel insisted that he and his partner meet with the settlers. Influenced by the work of Berkeley-based landscape architect Lawrence Halprin and his AA professors, who advocated for participatory planning, Mandel was eager to learn about the settlers' unique needs. "I had to understand these strange people who wanted to live in a place surrounded by hostile Arabs," he later explained. Yet, when he told Elinoar

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190 Danny Rubenstein, "'Hashihrur Haamiti' shel Hevron," *Davar*, February 8, 1980, 14. Palestinians protested the entrance of settlers into the city. Yet their protests were largely ignored. See, for example, "Shvitat Mehaa Leshaa Behevron Al Ihlus 2 Batim A"Y Hamitnahalim," *Davar*, May 25, 1981.

191 Dalia Mazori, "Huhal Betichnun Yishuv Harova Hayehudi Behevron," *Maariv*, March 6, 1980, 3; "Habatim Behevron Yibadku Hayom Likrat Ichlusam," *Davar*, March 6, 1980, 2. Already in February, just a few days after the killing of the yeshiva students, settlers invited politicians and news reporters to Hebron and presented them their plans. See "Kutzru Shot Haotzer Behvron Hamitnahalim - Lemivtza Hasbara," *Davar*, February 8, 1980. At around the same time, Agriculture Minister Ariel Sharon asked the settlers to send him a list of structures in Hebron that were ready for occupation and names of settler families willing to move-in. Dalia Mazori and Yossef Tzuriel, "Hadrisha Leafsher Megurei Yehudim Behevron Tidon Bamemshala," *Maariv*, February 5, 1980.

192 Erol Packer, interview by the author, August 10, 2017; Saadia Mandel, interview by the author, November 23, 2015.

193 Mandel was especially intrigued by Palestinian architecture. Commenting on Israeli architects' tendency to ignore the architectures of the Palestinians and other native residents of the region, Mandel once criticized: "This enforced ignorance of the initial settlers has evolved, it is believed, into a degrading habit...One may reach the inevitable conclusion that a major part of Israeli construction generates and develops on a principle of detachment and alienation." See Saadia Mandel, "Israeli Architecture," *Architecture of Israel* 2 (May 1988): 4–5.

194 According to Mandel, officials at the Ministry objected the idea. Mandel argued that Ministry officials had personally resented him. In any case, he added, since some money was already invested in the ministry's preliminary design, the settlers request was seen as wasteful. Mandel, interview by the author.

195 Packer, interview by the author.

Barzaki, then the head of the Jerusalem Region at the Ministry of Housing, she was outraged. She slammed her fist on the table, and, raising her voice, asserted, "Here! Here we will learn and decide on the concept and planning of this project!" As if in an attempt to get back at the group that had been undermining her colleagues for years now, Barzaki added, "I will show them where the fish pees from!" Considering the dovish reputation architects at the ministry had gained in the years leading to that meeting, Mandel shouldn't have been surprised.[196] Since moving in to Kiryat Arba, the settlers had complained about the Ministry's disagreeable attitude; in fact, in 1976, former Housing Minister Abraham Ofer had even equated *Gush Emunim* [Bloc of the Faithful], the main settlers organization, to "a cancer in the heart of the nation."[197]

Ignoring Barzaki's opposition, Mandel scheduled a meeting with settlers' representatives in the old city. Two men and three women arrived to the meeting with Mandel and Packer. A couple of them were already living in the old town. The others walked down from Kiryat Arba. Sitting together on the rooftop of one of the dilapidated structures on the site, Mandel asked them about aesthetic preferences and religious needs. At one point, he bluntly asked: "What did you come to do here? Did you come to live with the Arabs? Next to the Arabs? Instead of the Arabs?"[198] The settlers seemed confused by Mandel's question. To clarify, he addressed the female settlers and asked: "When you take your kid to the kindergarten in the morning, do you want to walk through the same alley that Muhammad and his son take on their way to school?" The settlers then gave him a number of answers which varied widely, he later recalled. Eventually, though, Mandel and Packer learned that the settlers thought they could somehow live next to Palestinian residents. They imagined they would buy groceries at the old city's market, take babies to the local clinic, and use all facilities operated by the Palestinians. At the same time, however, they wanted privacy, some distance from the neighboring Palestinians.[199]

Accordingly, the design team developed an introverted scheme, organizing all units around patio spaces connected to the city by small alleys. This way, they thought, the complex allowed privacy without breaking the pattern of the urban fabric. The alleys branched out of the two roads flanking the compound from north and south. The northern one, Casbah Street, was the old city's main street. It was crowded with street vendors, kiosks and stores. The architects imagined it could serve the residents, linking the compound to the Tomb of the Patriarchs, and other housing projects planned for the settlers (Figure 1.31).[200] It was only natural that they would rely on Hebron's existing infrastructure and roads system, Packer later explained, while recalling how he used to drive through Casbah Street to get to the construction site.[201]

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196 Cassuto, interview with author.

197 See "Hasartan Mihu?," *Maariv*, October 10, 1976, 15.

198 Mandel, interview by author.

199 Ibid: Packer, interview by author.

200 For master plans and planning guidelines in Hebron that Mandel, Packer and others at the Ministry had proposed, see "Renewing the Jewish Settlement in Hebron" (Jerusalem: Ministry of construction and Housing, 1983), Erol Packer private collection; Saadia Mandel et al., "Sikum Tihnun Hayeshuv Hayehudi Behevron: Hamlatzut Lehemsheh Hatichnun" (Jerusalem: Ministry of construction and Housing, September 1984), Erol Packer private collection.

201 Packer, interview by author.

Figure 1.31 Saadia Mandel and Erol Packer, sketch for site plan of Avraham Avinu Quarter and the neighboring Jewish compounds, 1983. Casbah Street is marked with a blue marker; the dots mark the locations of important buildings: 1, Tomb of the Patriarchs; 2, Avraham Avinu Quarter; 3. Beit Romano compound; 4, Beit Haddasah compound. Source: Erol Packer's private collection; dots added by author.

In considering building materials and aesthetic language, Mandel and Packer encountered a problem: the head of the Civil Department at the Israeli State Attorney's Office insisted they use modular, prefabricated housing components. Government officials had not been able to trade ownership of some of the plots in old Hebron slated for settlement construction. If the owners were to suddenly show up and demand the removal of whatever was built on their property, the head of the Civil Department explained, light construction could be simply moved. But after Mandel and Packer drew some sketches for prefabricated units (Figure 1.32), they realized another solution was needed.[202] After all, such units only reiterated the mistakes made in Kiryat Arba. On the advice of a legal consultant, they converted all subplots with unknown owners into patio spaces (Figure 1.33). In doing so, Mandel explained, they removed the danger of future demolition orders, and, equally important, rendered the project part and parcel of Hebron's urban fabric. It now followed historical subdivision lines, resulting in an irregular pattern that was common elsewhere in the city (Figure 1.34).[203]

[202] Packer, interview by author.

[203] Mandel, interview by author.

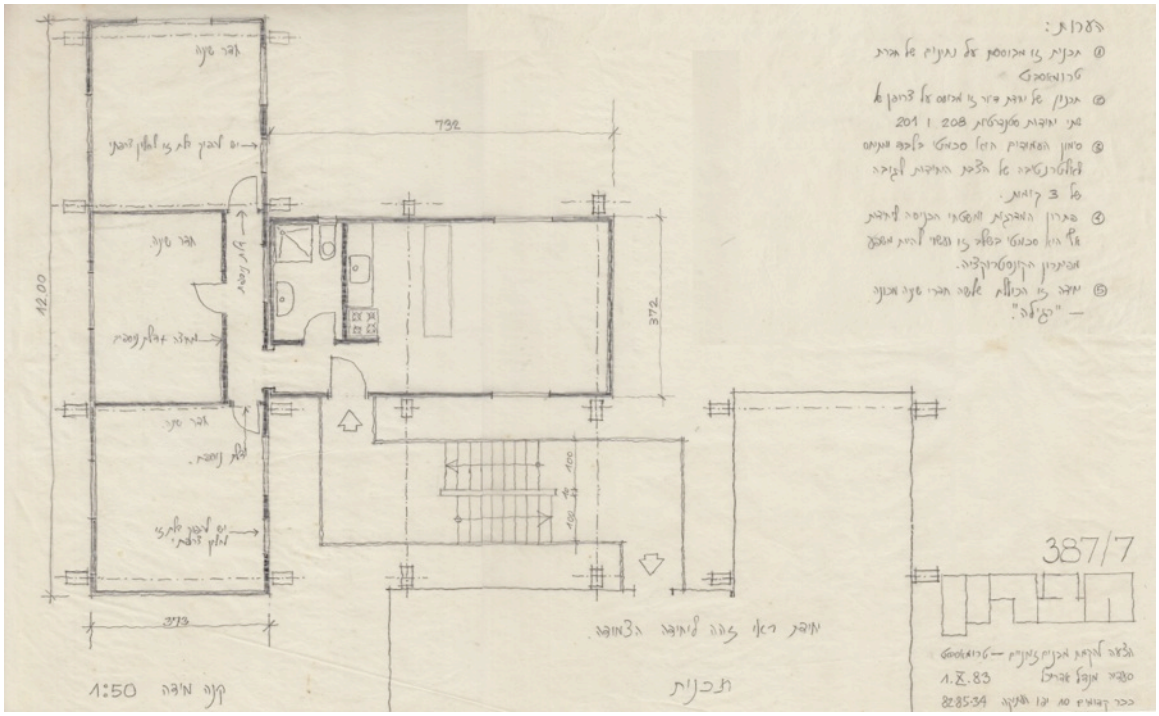

Figure 1.32 Saadia Mandel, typical-floor plan of prefabricated units in Avraham Avinu Quarter, 1983. Source: Erol Packer's private collection.

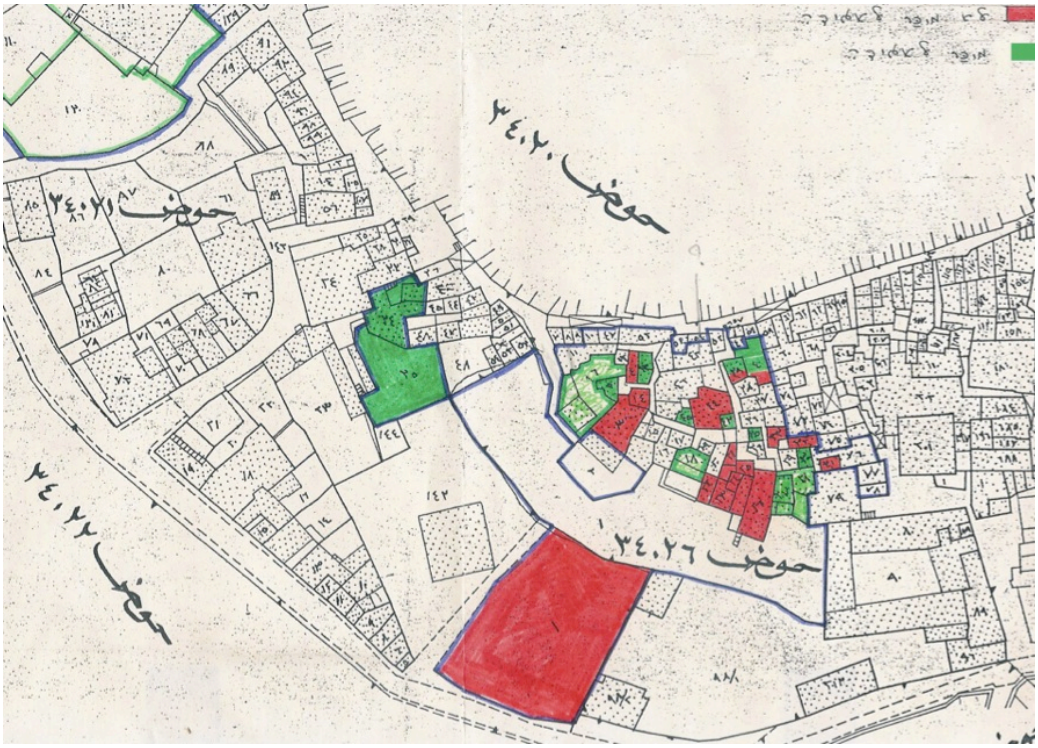

Figure 1.33 Land ownership plan. Subplots whose owners were unknown are marked in red. Source: Saadiya Mandel's private collection.

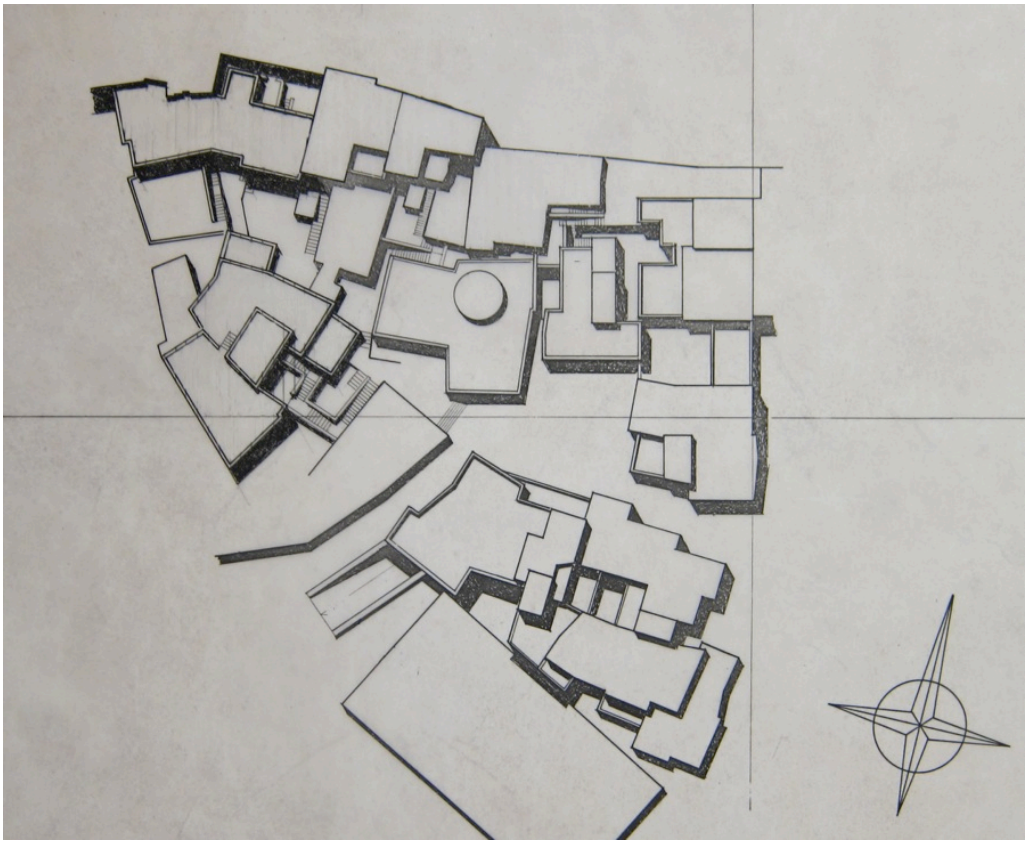

Figure 34 Saadia Mandel and Erol Packer, site plan of Avraham Avinu Quarter, units arranged around small patio spaces, 1986. Source: Saadia Mandel's private collection.

Further blending the project into its surroundings, Mandel and Packer capped all units with flat roofs and covered external walls with a thin layer of stone (Figures 1.35 and 1.36). In addition, they designed some units with one room hovering over the inner courtyard spaces to resemble building forms that they associated with Arab culture. In other areas, they modeled three-dimensional shapes that echoed, albeit in a modern fashion, traditional domed structures (Figure 1.37).[204]

[204] To study building elements that were common in Hebron, the architects toured the city by foot. Packer, interview by author.

Figure 1.35 Saadia Mandel and Erol Packer, drawing of Avraham Avinu Quarter, 1985. Source: Erol Packer's private collection.

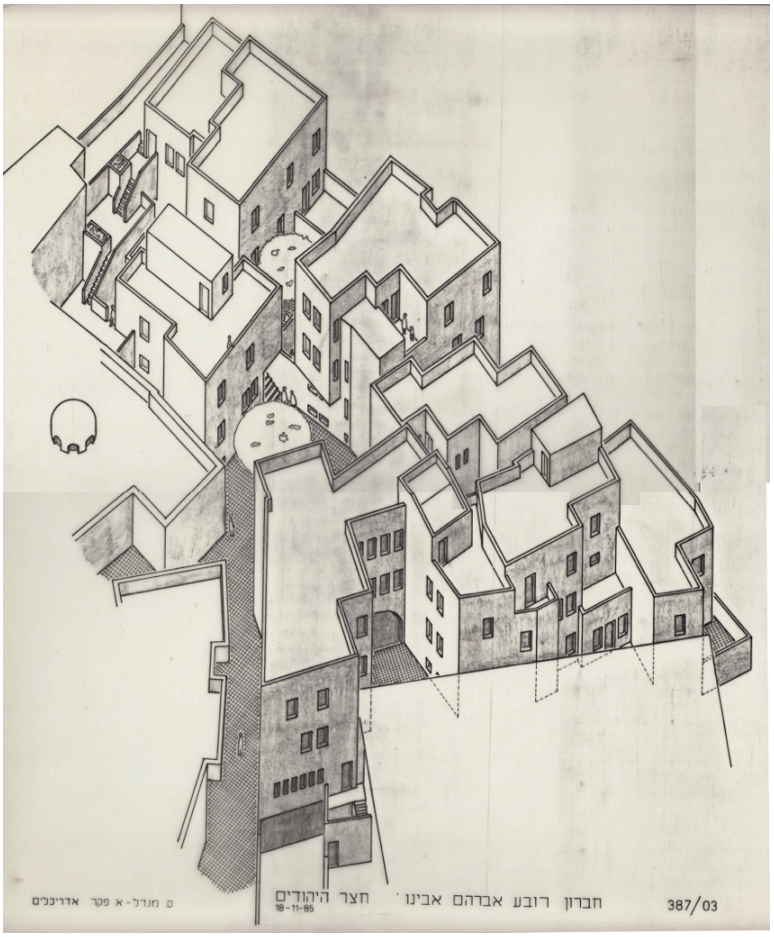

Figure 1.36 Saadia Mandel and Erol Packer, drawing of Avraham Avinu Quarter, 1985. Source: Erol Packer's private collection.

Figure 1.37 Domed passageway in Avraham Avinu Quarter, Hebron, c.1989. Source: Saadia Mandel's private collection.

In designing the residential units, Mandel and Packer paid careful attention to the religious needs of the future residents. On the advice of settler representatives, who took on the roles of both project managers and construction workers, they designed the complex so that each unit would have a balcony, a sink outside the washing room for hand-washing rituals, as well as two sinks at the kitchen (Figure 38). In addition, they replaced the living room of most units with a dinning space that could accommodate large Shabbat dinners.[205] Altogether, Packer explained, the project shared nothing with the standardized housing projects that the Ministry of Housing commissioned.[206]

[205] Mandel, interview by author.

[206] Packer, interview by author.

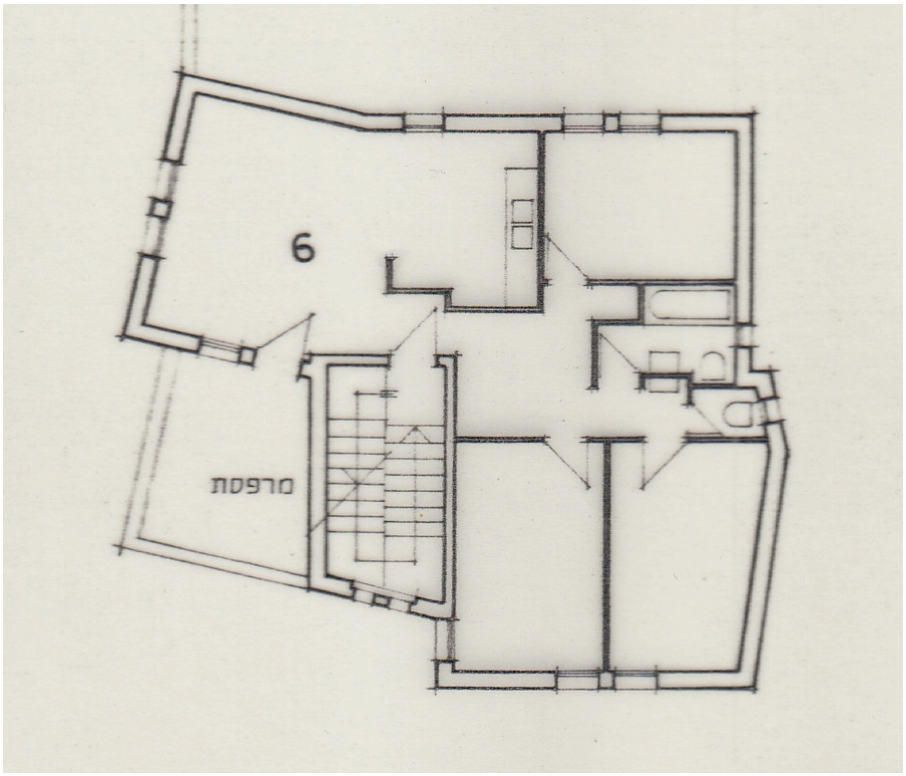

Figure 1.38 Saadia Mandel and Erol Packer, second-floor plan of House 801, Avraham Avinu Quarter, Hebron, 1989. Source: Erol Packer's private collection.

By the end of 1987, a few families had moved into the complex. At an inauguration ceremony, a female settler holding two babies, one in each arm, approached Mandel. She reminded him she was among those settlers who had met with him before construction began. She admitted that she had been skeptical; she never imagined an architect would listen to settlers' requests. But the complex, she announced, was exactly what they needed.[207]

At around the same time, the Ministry oversaw the restoration of other buildings in the old Jewish Quarter. Most notable of these was Beit Hadassah. Built in 1893, Beit Hadassah once served as a hospital, catering to both Jewish and Muslim patients. Yet, the two-story hospital was vandalized in 1929 and closed down. After Israeli soldiers entered Hebron in 1967, the hospital was abandoned, and Palestinian families occupied the adjacent buildings that once housed Jewish Hebronites. In 1973, Kiryat Arba settlers got the title deed for Beit Hadassah from the official heir. But the government prohibited them from moving in.[208] After a few unsuccessful squatting attempts in April 1979, fifteen female settlers and their children entered the building in the middle of the night and refused to leave.[209] The government decided to let the female settlers stay in the

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[207] Mandel, interview.

[208] The settlers received the title deed from the lawyer in charged of the Jewish property in Hebron. Kochava Gershon, the daughter of Ben Tzion Gershon who bought the building in the beginning of the 20th century, however, objected the settlers who had squatted in Beit Hadassah. She demanded thy be evacuated from the building. She found the settlers' behavior distasteful. She wanted to re-open Beit Hadassah as a place that would serve both the Jewish and Muslim residents of Hebron. See David Zohar, "Hatoenet Lebealut Al Beit Hadassah Tovaat Pinui Hamitnahalim Mehabinyan," *Maariv*, July 7, 1980, 19.

[209] Michal Meiron, "Bikarti Etzel Hanashim Bebeit Hadassah Behevron," *Maariv*, February 8, 1980, 18.

building, but prohibited others from joining them. Once a week, on Friday nights, the husbands were allowed in for a large Shabbat dinner.[210] For a while, as one of the female settlers indicated in a drawing she made of Beit Hadassah, the future of the place was unclear (figure 39). In May 1980, however, Palestinians attacked the men on their way to Beit Hadassah, and six were killed. To retaliate, the government decided to rebuild Beit Hadassah and the adjacent buildings.[211]

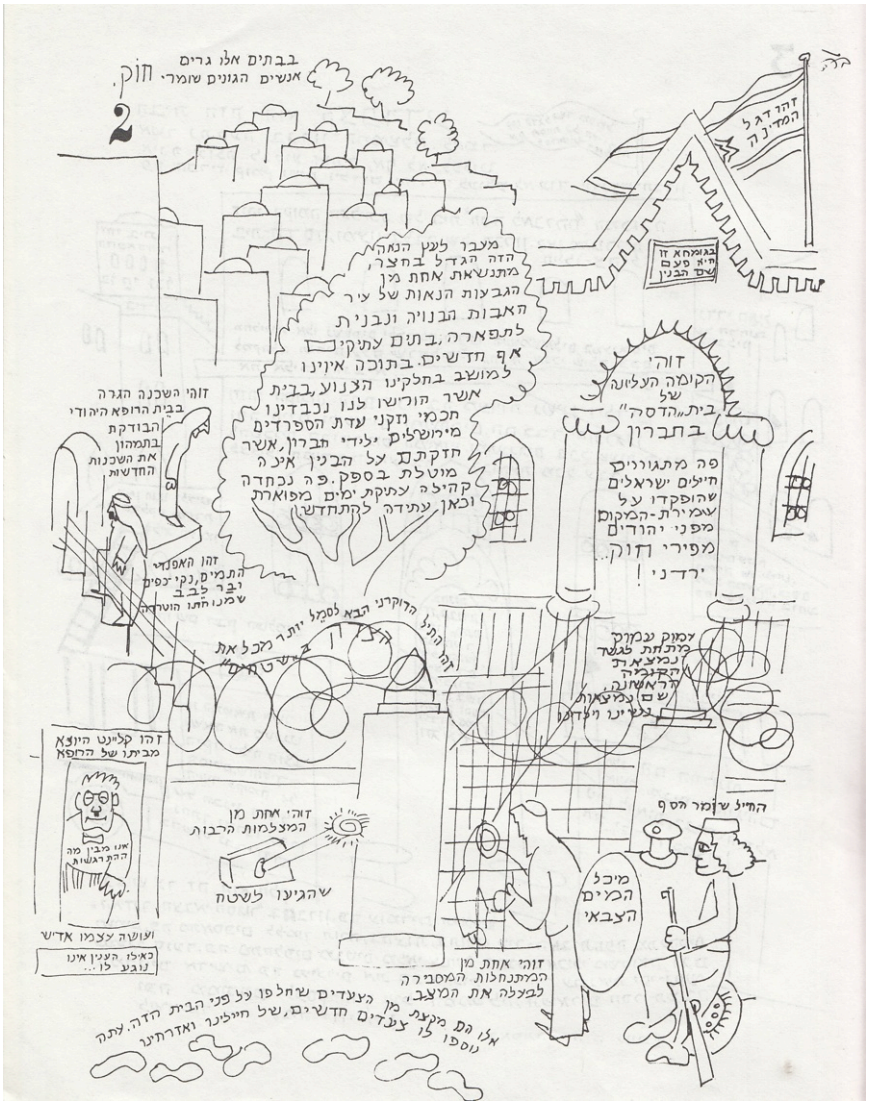

Figure 1.39 Annotated drawing of Kiryat Arba and Hebron. Source: 12852/12-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem. The female settler drew Beit Hadassah on the right, with Hebron on the upper-left corner. Between Beit Hadassah and the city, she placed a tree. "Behind this handsome tree," she wrote on the tree, "is one of the prettiest hills of the town of our fathers, growing magnificently, [with] old and even new

210 Meiron, 18.

211 "Avelim Vezoamim Yardu Haboker Toshvei Kiryat Arba Lehitpalel Bemearat Hamachpela," *Maariv*, May 4, 1980, 1; Aharon Dolev, "Hadmama Hamhushmelet Shekadma Laretzah Behevron," *Maariv*, May 9, 1980, 16; "Hatevah Behevron: Hazaam Vehatvuna," *Davar*, May 4, 1980, 5; Dalia Mazori, "Kiryat Arba Zoemet Al Weizman Vehamemshala; Doreshet Geulat-Dam," *Maariv*, May 4, 1980, 3. Israeli forces bombed three buildings in the vicinity of Beit Hadassah after evacuating them as retaliation. See "Hadayarim Shebateyhem Putetzu Behevron Yifnu Lebegat"z Bebakashat Pitzui," *Davar*, July 10, 1980; "Avelim Vezoamim Yardu Haboker Toshvei Kiryat Arba Lehitpalel Bemearat Hamachpela," 2.

houses. We yearned to live there, in this modest house that the notable…Sephardic [Jews]…the natives of Hebron, bequeathed to us…" Underneath the tree, the settler drew a barbed wire that fenced Beit Hadassah off the rest of Hebron. Next to the barbed wire, she ironically wrote: "This spiky barbed wire symbolizes, more than anything else, justice in the territories."

On the settlers' request, the Ministry of Housing commissioned architect David Cassuto to oversee the renovation project. The project comprised a three-story complex of some 20 residential units and a synagogue on the site of Beit Hadassah, as well as several other residential buildings in the adjacent plots (Figure 1.40). Like Mandel, Cassuto saw the project as "an opportunity to connect with history." He drew inspiration for the renovation from original building elements he found on the site. Most notably, he rebuilt the pediment that decorated the original entrance, and he designed a large arc on top to magnify it, stretching across the upper levels. Inspired by the oriental surroundings, he crafted a window screen that resembled the Arabic Mashrabiya behind the arc. Yet, instead of latticework patterns common in the Levant, Cassuto used a network of interlocking Stars of David to build Beit Hadassah's Mashrabiya (Figure 1.41). Cassuto arranged all the units around an inner courtyard behind the window screen. As he later explained, the inner court referenced traditional building forms common in the Levant, while allowing the residents a sense of privacy. In addition, Cassuto designed all units to suit the needs of religious users.

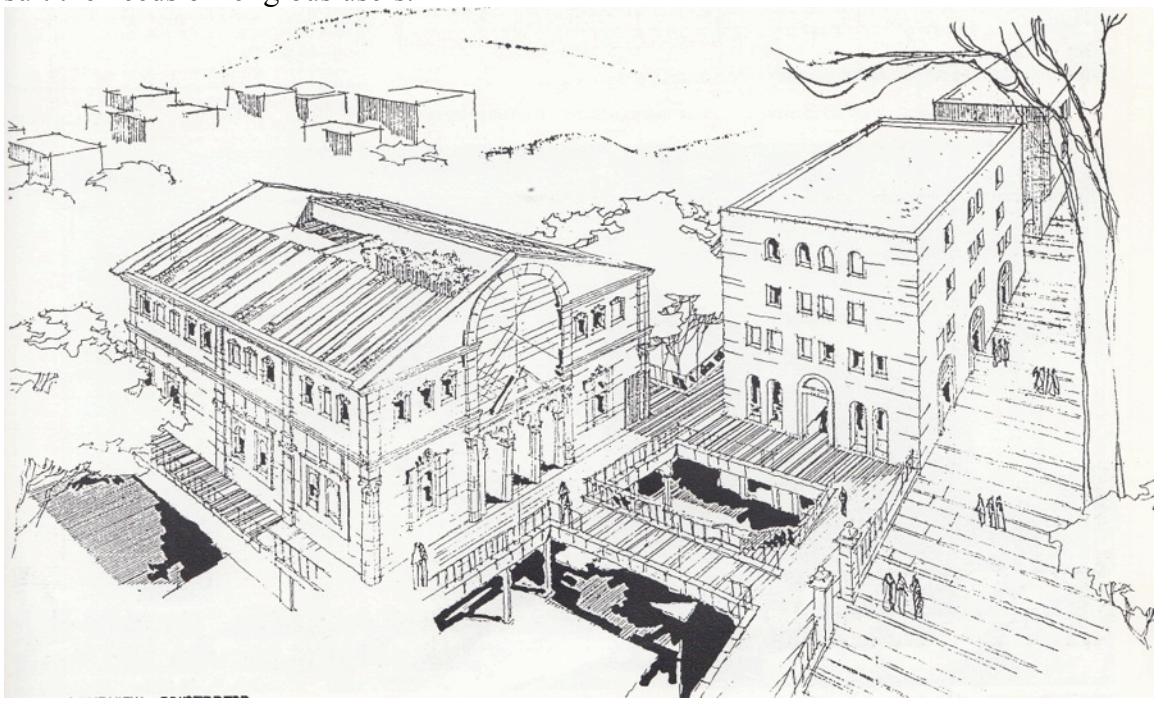

Figure 40 David Cassuto, drawing of Beit Hadassah and neighboring building. Source: Amiram Harlap, ed., *Israel Builds 1988* (Tel Aviv: Ministry of Housing, 1988).

Figure 1.41 Beit Hadassah. Photo by the author.

On January 1986, a special inauguration ceremony attended by Housing Minister David Levi was held on the site of Beit Hadassah.[212] For Cassuto it marked an important milestone. After years of writing, researching, and drafting plans for Hebron, he finally got the chance to leave his mark on the town of the Patriarchs. It also signified an important occasion for Levinger. He felt as if his vision from eighteen years ago, from the time he first entered Hebron, had finally come to life. Once again, Jews resided in the town of the Patriarchs, and, fittingly, the modernist architecture of Kiryat Arba had been replaced by a more vernacular one.

But perhaps this was not quite the original vision—a vision of co-existence in the old Palestinian city—shared by some of the activists who once supported Levinger. Levinger's original supporters would have had a hard time ignoring the violent events leading to the opening of Beit Hadassah. In 1979, for example, Kiryat Arba settlers barged into nearby buildings that had once been owned by Jewish Hebronites, attacking their Palestinian residents.[213] Later, in 1981, the residents of Beit Hadassah broke the ceiling of an upholstery shop underneath Beit Hadassah and beat the Palestinian

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[212] Avinoam Bar-Yosef, "Anu Osim Hayom Behevron Tzedek Histori," *Maariv*, January 21, 1986, 6.

[213] "Hamishtara Toenet Ki Beyadeya Tiur Haanashim Shpartzu Ledirot Haaravim Behevron," *Davar*, May 29, 1979, 1.

storeowner and his son.[214] Then, in 1987, the first intifada—a Palestinian uprising against the Israeli occupation—broke out, and clashes between settlers and the native Palestinians became an everyday matter in Hebron. Making things all the more complex, by the time projects in the old city were completed, many of the original settlers had left. Far more radical settlers moved in to replace them, such as the Brooklyn-born ultra-nationalist Rabbi Meir Kahane and Tavgar.[215] To the architects' surprise, the radicals launched numerous attacks against the neighboring Palestinians once they were granted the right to settle in the old city.

To limit the interaction between the two groups, physical barriers were erected across the Jewish Quarter (Figure 42). For example, Mandel and Packer were asked to eliminate the alleyway connecting Avraham Avinu compound to Casbah Street, the old city's main road. Thinking it was just a matter of time before things calmed down, they merely blocked the gate with a stone wall. Anticipating change, Packer called the blocked entryway "The Peace Gate." But peace never took hold. In the following years, the entire area surrounding Avraham Avinu and the other Jewish compounds was closed off to non-Jews.[216] Today there are more than 1,000 soldiers protecting the 800 settlers in Hebron's old town.[217]

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214 Baruch Meiri, "Mi Garam Lehor Beritzpat Beit Hadassah?," *Maariv*, February 10, 1984, 16.

215 Rabbi Meir Kahane who immigrated to Israel in 1971 founded his election campaign center at Kiryat Arba in 1977. See "Mate Habhirot Shel Harav Kahana Yukam Bekiryat Arba," *Davar*, February 11, 1977, 3.
Probably reacting to Kahane's presence, that same year, settlement activist Elyakim Haetzni wrote a letter to Prime Minister Menachem Begin's secretary, warning him against the radicalization of Kiruat Arba's settlers. The secular activists argued that a number of (presumably moderate) families left the settlement, allowing radical settlers to take over the settlement. The latter ones, he warned, would take the settlement into a "complete chaos." Haetzni suggested the Prime Minister would pay a visit to the settlement and invest more funds in its development in order to ameliorate the situation. See Elyakim Haetzni to Yehiel Kadishai (Prime Minister Menachem Begin's secretary), "Kiryat Arba," September 6, 1977, 12852/12-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

216 Restrictions on the movement of Palestinians in Hebron have changed over the years. According to B'TSELEM, a non-profit organization that has been documenting human rights violations in the Israeli-occupied territories, as of January 2017 there were 18 checkpoints controlling the movement of Palestinians in the areas surrounding the Jewish compounds in Hebron. Palestinian motor traffic is prohibited around the settlement, and some parts are off-limits also to pedestrians. See B'Tselem, "Restriction of movement: Checkpoints, Physical Obstructions, and Forbidden Roads," Feb. 8, 2017, http://www.btselem.org/freedom_of_movement/checkpoints_and_forbidden_roads

217 The exact number of Israeli soldiers stationed in Hebron is unclear. According to some there are more than 1,600 soldiers in the old city. See, Harriet Sherwood, "A ghost city revived: the remarkable transformation of Hebron," The Guardian, June 29, 2015, https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2015/jun/29/hebron-old-city-west-bank-palestinian-ghost-city-revived-transformation; "Israeli settlers occupy Palestinian home in Hebron," Al Jazeera, July 28, 2017, http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/07/israeli-settlers-occupy-palestinian-home-hebron-170728080215824.html. According to a report of the Norwegian Refugee Council, however, there are "several hundred Israeli soldiers" in Hebron, see Norwegian Refugee Council (researched and written by Sarah Adamczyk), "Driven Out: The Continuing Forced Displacement of Palestinian Residents from Hebron's Old City," July 2013, https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/pdf/reports/driven-out-the-continuing-forced-displacement-of-palestinian-residents-from-hebrons-old-city.pdf.

Figure 1.42 Checkpoint near Beit Hadassah, blocking the free movement of Palestinians, August 2017. Photo by the author.

The fate of Kiryat Arba has been equally gloomy. For decades now, the settlement has been struggling with high poverty rates and negative migration. Home to some 7,000 residents, Kiryat Arba barely makes up 10% of its original projected population. In all, the attempts to settle in the town of the Patriarchs had questionable outcomes. As architect Dunsky-Feuerstein commented, "everyone there is messed up." Other than those who simply can't afford living anywhere else, the only ones willing to live there are those driven by an extremist ideology.[218] An unfortunate combination of poverty and extremism, then, has come to characterize the place that was once seen as the site where a new Hebrew or regional culture would emerge.

Conclusion

The fall of Kiryat Arba, the violent clashes between the settlers and the Palestinians, and walls and military checkpoints that now dot Hebron make it hard to evaluate the two settlements in terms of architecture and design. A number of architects involved in the design of Kiryat Arba shared this view. When I interviewed Dunsky-Feuerstein, for example, she couldn't understand why an architectural historian would study the

[218] Dunsky-Feuerstein, interview with the author. In the Ministry of Interior's most recent towns ranking—a ranking system that indexes municipalities on a scale of one to ten according to their socioeconomic status—Kiryat Arba was placed in the second cluster.. Shaul Arieli, "Hahitnahaluyot, Lo Ma Shehashavtem," *Haaretz*, March 2, 2017, https://www.haaretz.co.il/opinions/.premium-1.3901515.

settlement. “This is a project for someone studying politics, not architecture,” she insisted. Architects had nothing to do in the settlement of Hebron, she believed.[219]

Dunsky-Feuerstein is both right and wrong. She is wrong because, as I demonstrated in this chapter, over the period of two decades different architects proposed divergent—indeed, sometimes contradictory—plans for the settlement. Cassuto sketched plans for a “Jewish Hebron.” Architects at the Ministry of Housing designed a settlement that was separated from the old city. Mandel and Packer envisioned an urban integration between the two populations. And yet Dunsky-Feuerstein is right because architects repeatedly encountered unexpected actors who undermined their plans. Those at the Ministry of Housing found themselves negotiating plans with amateur archeologists and volunteer architects. Mandel and Packer—perhaps even Cassuto—saw radicalized settlers undo their vision of urban co-existence. No one left Hebron feeling much control over its design.

Dunsky-Feuerstein’s observation, then, does not assert an absence of architects or architecture from the drama of the settlement of Hebron. Instead, it reminds us that the design of the settlement was hardly the outcome of a single state-led or state-funded planning authority. On the contrary, it marks a breach in the power of the Ministry of Housing and the architectural elite that until the 1970s was unquestioned.

The settlers seemed to have caught official planning institutes unprepared. They had protested against the original plans, intervened in the design process, and ultimately transformed the settlement in ways unforeseen by the architects. To this end, the settlements of Kiryat Arba and Hebron played a crucial role in the decentralization of planning and design in Israel. In the years following the construction of Kiryat Arba, settlement activists would further undermine the status of the Ministry.

But Ministry officials were not the only ones with a feeling of bitter disappointment. Many among the settlement activists were equally frustrated with both settlements. Even though a number of activists had influenced the planning of the settlements, the design process was hardly smooth. The “Eastern atmosphere” and “miraculous alleyways” admired by David Cassuto proved too complex in their eyes, requiring negotiations with planners and architects at the Ministry and interaction with the Palestinians. In addition, as I mentioned before, the ultimate result—a segregated neighborhood defiantly sequestered from its surroundings—was not exactly what the activists had in mind.

For these reasons, in the years that followed the founding of Kiryat Arba, settlement activists shifted their focus from existing Palestinian towns to remote, rural locals across the West Bank. With this change in focus came a change in aesthetic preferences. In place of urban patterns associated with Palestinian culture, settlers sought modernist forms they associated with the Kibbutz and pioneering Zionism. To facilitate this change, they developed proprietary planning and design agencies that only further complicated the fraught relationship between the politics of the region and its built environment.

The short-lived interest settlers have taken in Hebron forms an exception not only in the trajectory of West Bank settlements, but also in the broader history of Zionist colonization. As anthropologist Erik Cohen explained, since the 19th century, Pioneering

[219] Dunsky-Feuerstein, interview by author.

Zionism has shown no interest, sometimes even outright hostility, towards the city.[220] At the same time, pioneering Zionists were disinterested in romantic or atavistic forms, instead prioritizing modernity and modernism.[221] Hebron, Nablus or Ramallah, with their oriental landscapes, were not obvious candidates for a settlement project, especially given that settlement activists perceive themselves as the official heirs of Pioneering Zionism. To this end, the settlements of Kiryat Arba and Hebron are an abnormality that, even if only for a few years, questioned assumptions concerning the shapes of Zionism and Israeli identity. As such, the two settlements formed an appropriate starting point for what would soon evolve into a fraught, decades-long settlement project.

[220] Erik Cohen, *The City in the Zionist Ideology*, (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Institute of Urban and Regional Studies, 1970), 3. Also, for a discussion of the historical preference given to agricultural settlement in Zionism see S. Ilan Troen, *Imagining Zion: Dreams, Designs, and Realities in a Century of Jewish Settlement* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 17.

[221] Cohen, *The City in the Zionist Ideology*, 4.

Chapter Two: Ofra and the Birth of the Community Settlement

In 1988, Shmuel Horwitz, architect and deputy director of the Planning and Implementation Division at the Ministry of Housing's New Settlements Administration, wrote a short article about a new settlement model: the Community Oriented Model, or Community Settlement [Yeshuv Kehilati]. Horwitz, who had just moved with his wife and kids to the settlement of Har Adar in the West Bank, was fascinated with this new model. He believed it continued a heroic tradition of original settlement models that began about a century ago, with the first waves of Jewish immigrants to Palestine. Among these models, he clarified, were Kibbutzim, Cooperative Moshavim—collectivist agricultural settlements where residents owned their homes—and Moshavim—cooperative agricultural settlements of individual farms. Following in the footsteps of these older models, the Community Settlement created "a new framework for those seeking pioneer venues and self-fulfillment suitable to our day and age," Horwitz wrote.[1] So successful was this model that a just decade after its inception in the 1970s, a hundred such Community Settlements had been built. Nearly two thirds of these, he wrote, were built in the West Bank, and about 85% of them were developed by the Ministry of Housing or the Settlement Department at the Jewish Agency.

Such an embrace of the Community Settlement, a model that was predominantly popular in the West Bank, is surprising given how the planners at the Ministry of Housing felt about the settlement project in the previous decade. It is even more surprising in light of the fact that, as Horwitz admitted, this model was only partially developed by architects at the Ministry. By and large, he explained, the Community Settlement was "developed by the settlers themselves and not 'from above' by planners and organizers in the public establishment."[2]

Equally surprising are the drawings and photos of Community Settlements that accompanied Horwitz's article (Figure 2.1). They all showed detached homes, often with pitched red-tile roofs. These houses seemed to be at odds with the aesthetic preferences settlement activists expressed in the previous years. They shared little in common with either the orientalist architecture the settlers of Hebron longed for, or the regional architecture found in the settlements of Alon Shvut and Rosh Tzurim.

[1] Shmuel Horwitz, "The Community Oriented Model: A New Type of Settlement in Israel," in *Israel Builds, 1988* (Ministry of Housing, 1988), 416–17.
[2] Horwitz, 415.

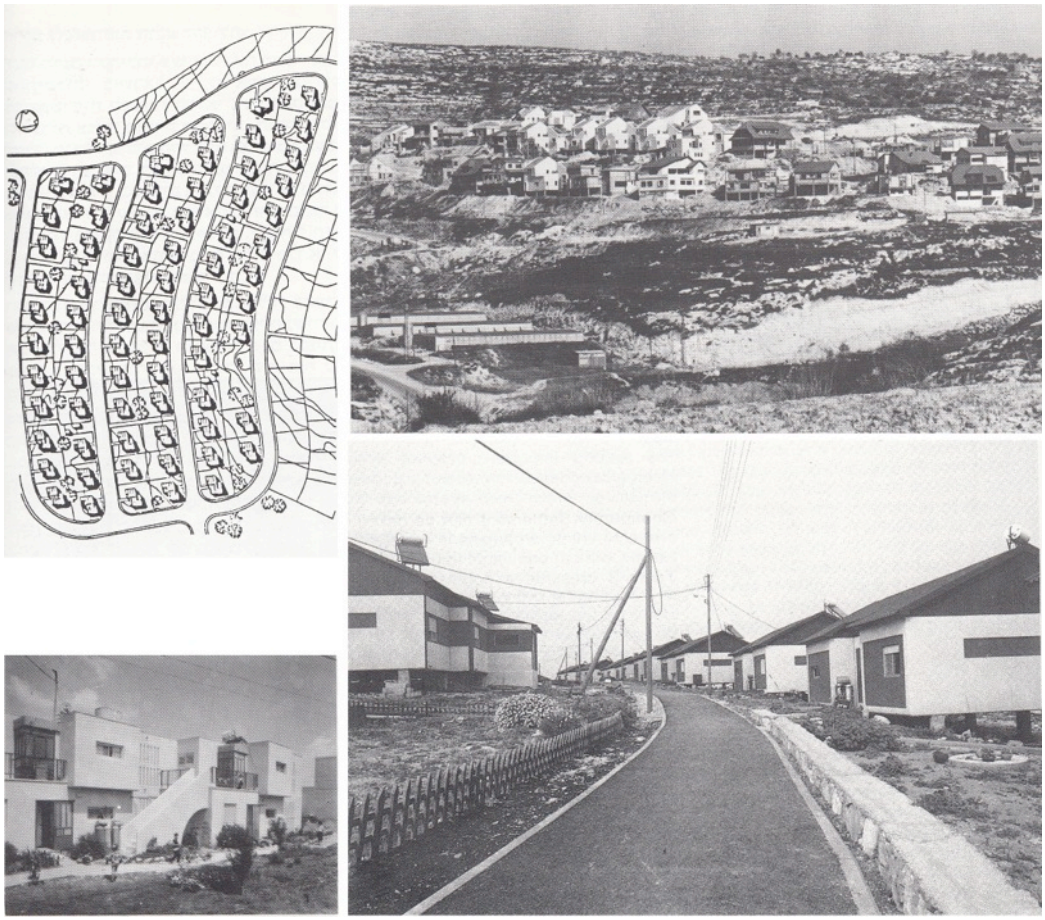

Figure 2.1 Images from Horwitz's article showing the settlements of Ofra, Kedumim, Har Braha, and Psagot. Source: Shmuel Horwitz, "The Community Oriented Model: A New Type of Settlement in Israel," in Israel Builds, 1988 (Ministry of Housing, 1988), 416–17.

While the article clearly expresses Horowitz's fascination with the new Community Settlement model, then, it leaves us with some unanswered questions. First, considering the design debates that accompanied the construction of Kiryat Arba, we are left to wonder how architects at the Ministry of Housing suddenly came to support the settlement project. Second, if indeed the settlers were the ones who developed the new model "from below," why did it share so little with the models for which they had advocated in the previous decade? Moreover, it is unclear from Horwitz's text how a settlement model could have taken form "from below" in the first place—a rather exotic phenomenon in the context of a modern state. And if, as Horwitz has argued, there was some collaboration between those working "from below" and architects working "from above," what role did each side play? What were the consequences each had to face?

To answer some of these questions, this chapter traces the emergence of the Community Settlement from the mid-1970s to the early 1980s. It focuses on the design debates that accompanied the construction of the settlement Ofra, where the Community Settlement model was first conceived. The chapter first discusses insurgency tactics the settlers developed in their attempts to establish the settlement in the mid-1970s. With time, these practices developed into actual planning and design agencies run by activists, religious leaders, and volunteer architects. Working "from below," they designed Ofra

according to the settlers' tastes and aspirations. This chapter thereby offers a unique yet heretofore disregarded look at settlers' internal dynamics and reasoning. It shows how the settlers sought an architectural language that would speak to their identity and ideology.

But the settlers were not the only ones whose identities were being shaped in the design debates that took place in Ofra. Even though official planning institutes got involved only at a later stage, individual architects and planners were present in Ofra from the very beginning. Some volunteered while others were gainfully employed. Yet almost all of them ended up feeling humiliated and disappointed. Settlers had repeatedly questioned the professional authority, and they almost always managed to take over the design process in ways that undermined the architects' original intentions. Over time, these assaults against individual architects were transformed into a more systematic attack against the profession. As settlers embarked upon large-scale projects, like national and regional master plans, they took over important commissions that were traditionally the property of professional architects and planners. As I show towards the end of this chapter, when the architects and planners tried fighting back, they had little chance standing in the settlers' way. To this extent, the story of Ofra also sheds light on large-scale transformations that have had lasting effects on the fields of architecture and planning in Israel.

Religious Radicals Develop New Settling Tactics

After the fall of Kiryat Arba in the early 1970s, settlement activists were keen on developing new settlement tactics. Their endeavors seemed all the more pressing in the aftermath of the Yom Kippur War from 1973. Launched by Arab forces on Yom Kippur, among the holiest days in the Jewish calendar, the war caught Israel unprepared. With Egyptian forces invading from the south, entering the Sinai Peninsula and the Syrians from the north, Israeli forces suffered several defeats in the first days of the war. After some fighting, with massive support from the US, Israel was able to strike back. Yet, the large number of casualties on both sides left many Israelis disillusioned. They realized that their relative military advantage over the neighboring Arab countries was anything but permanent.[3] As political scientist Ian Lustick has explained, this feeling led to a wave of intense discontent that swept the country and encouraged the founding of various grassroots organizations that questioned existing political structures.[4] This feeling of discontent also reached the settlers of Kiryat Arba and Gush Etzion. With or without the support of the government, they agreed, settlements must be erected as quickly as possible in order to secure the country's borders.[5]

In April 1974, leading figures from Kiryat Arba and other settlements founded the messianic right-wing activist movement of *Gush Emunim* [Bloc of the Faithful], an ideological group within the National Religious Party.[6] With Rabbi Tzvi Yehuda Kook as

[3] As Gadi Taub has explained, the war dealt a serious blow on Israeli society, and brought an end to the sense of Euphoria that prevailed after the Six-Day War. See Gadi Taub, *Ha-Mitnaḥalim Ṿeha-Ma'avaḳ 'al Mashma'utah Shel Ha-Tsiyonut*, Prozah (Yedi'ot Aḥaronot) (Tel-Aviv: Yedi'ot aḥaronot : Sifre ḥemed, 2007), 59.

[4] Ian Lustick, *For the Land and the Lord: Jewish Fundamentalism in Israel* (New York, N.Y: Council on Foreign Relations, 1988), 44.

[5] Yoel Bin-Nun, interview with the author, July 25, 2015.

[6] Michael Feige, *Settling in the Hearts: Jewish Fundamentalism in the Occupied Territories*, Raphael Patai Series in Jewish Folklore and Anthropology (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2009), 24. Some scholars have traced the origins of *Gush Emunim* to mid-twentieth century, with the establishment of Gahelet, a group of young religious Zionists. For an in-depth study of the group's origins, see Gideon Aran, *Ḳuḳizm: Shorshe Gush Emunim, Tarbut Ha-Mitnaḥalim, Te'ologyah Tsiyonit, Meshiḥiyut Bi-Zemanenu* (Yerushalayim: Karmel, 2013).

their main authoritative spokesperson, the group promoted the idea of the Whole Land of Israel as their central platform. As I discussed in the first chapter, Rabbi Kook's saw the connection between the Jewish people and the land of Israel as a divine one.[7] Inspired by his preaching, *Gush Emunim* interpreted the Six-Day War and the capturing of the West Bank as a religious moment.[8] They refused to consider any withdrawal from the occupied territories.[9] Instead, they insisted Israel must maintain these regions by erecting new Jewish settlements. In their minds, settling the West Bank with Jewish people was a religious commandant, if not a redemptive act.[10] Such a hardline attitude towards the land of Israel, as political geographer David Newman has explained, marked *Gush Emunim* as radical even amongst other religious Zionists.[11] Subsequently, the group parted ways with the National Religious Party with which it was initially associated.[12] Extreme as it may have been, *Gush Emunim* quickly attracted many religious activists eager to settle in the West Bank.[13]

The activists of *Gush Emunim* may have confused outside observers. Dressed in modern outfits, sometimes even military jackets, with the tassels of their traditional Jewish undergarments [Tzitziyot] popping out from underneath their shirts, and knitted skullcaps covering the top of their heads, they didn't look like orthodox people. Nor did they fully adhere to a modern dress code. In the same fashion, their actions incorporated modern rational thinking with a messianic impulse. But perhaps it was this mixture of modernity with radical religiosity that rendered them so powerful.[14]

Together, the pious activists embarked upon multiple settlement attempts in the northern part of the West Bank—the biblical region of Samaria, as they referred to it. Since government officials thought the region would become part of a Palestinian state

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[7] Lustick, *For the Land and the Lord*, 83–84.
[8] Lustick, 87.
[9] Lustick, 84.
[10] Taub, *Ha-Mitnaḥalim Ṿeha-Ma'avaḳ 'al Mashma'utah Shel Ha-Tsiyonut*, 62.
[11] David Newman, "The Role of Gush Emunim and the Yishuv Kehillati in the West Bank 1974 - 1980" (Durham University, 1981), 64, http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/9372/. Michael Feige has also argued that there are differences between *Gush Emunim* and other national religious groups. See Feige, *Settling in the Hearts*, 28. Relating Gush Emunim to Israeli society, however, Ehud Sprinzak has argued that Gush Emunim should not be seen as a radical abnormality within the context of a long history of illgalism in Israel in general, and, more specifically, the ideology and beliefs of the national religious party. Ehud Sprinzak, *Ish Ha-Yashar Be-'enaṿ : I-Legalizm Ba-Ḥevrah Ha-Yiśre'elit* (Tel Aviv: Sifriyat po'alim, 1986).
[12] According to Michael Feige, the break from the National Religious Party stemmed from two reasons: (1) the ideological gap between the two and (2) *Gush Emunim's* need to reach a broader audience. Feige, *Settling in the Hearts*, 24.
[13] According to Michael Feige, the majority of *Gush Emunim* supporters were religious Israelis. Only a few secular Israelis took leading roles in the movement, even though having seculars members was important to the ideology of *Gush Emunim*. See Feige, 33–34.
Many among Gush Emunim members joined the movement from the settling seed of Elon Moreh that was conceived in Kiryat Arba. Yeshiva students Benny Katzover and Menachem Felix founded Elon Moreh seed. The two gathered a group of some 80 people, most of whom were also yeshiva students from Kiryat Arba interested in forming a settlement near the Palestinian town of Nablus. They envisioned a Jewish neighborhood overlooking the Palestinian town in ways that resembled Kiryat Arba and its adjacency to Hebron. They even called it "Kiryat Shechem" [Nablus Campus]. Yet, after their requests for government approvals were denied, the settlers decided to take things into their own hands. Early in the morning of June 5 1974, the group headed in twelve trucks to Hawara, located south of Nablus. Once on the site, in less than an hour time, they erected some fifteen tents, a playground, and a communal kitchen. They even managed fencing the area. While work was in full swing, Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook, General Ariel Sharon and other Knesset members from the right joined the group. Yet, by noontime, military officials arrived and asked the settlers to leave the site. After some negotiations with the soldiers, the settlers agreed to abandon the site. It was the first "Aliya" [ascendance], or unauthorized settlement attempt, in the northern mountainous ridge of the West Bank. Regardless of its ultimate failure, the media coverage and modest support from rightist politicians encouraged the settlers to embark on similar grassroots settling attempts in the following months. After the failure of the second settlement attempt near Nablus in July 1974, the members of Elon Moreh merged with the religious radicals of *Gush Emunim* [Bloc of the Faithful]. See Idith Zertal and Akiva Eldar, *Lords of the Land: The War over Israel's Settlements in the Occupied Territories: 1967-2007* (New York: Nation Books, 2007), 30–32; Haggai Hoberman, *Ke-Neged Kol Ha-Sikuyim : 40 Shenot Ha-Hityashvut Bi-Yehudah Ṿe-Shomron, Binyamin Ṿeha-Biḳ'ah, 727-767* (Ariel: Sifriyat Netsarim, 2008), 71–75; Lustick, *For the Land and the Lord*, 45; Aharon Dolev, "Haholhim Lehityashev Beshhem Haasura," *Maariv*, June 14, 1974, 24.
[14] For a discussion of *Gush Emunim's* use of rationality with religiosity see Akiva Eldar and Idith Zartal, *Adonei Haaretz: Hamitnahalim Vemedinat Yisrael 1967-2004* (Or Yehuda: Kineret, 2004), 245; Feige, *Settling in the Hearts*, 31–33; Aran, *Ḳuḳizm*.

one day, they opposed the activists' endeavors.[15] Faced with government opposition, they developed multiple tactics of insurgency. The most well-known are their repeated attempts to settle at the abandoned train station of Sebastia (Mas'udiyya), located some six miles north of Nablus. Time and again, the settlers would arrive to the station early in the morning, erect tents and other ephemeral structures, only to be forcefully evacuated a few hours, sometimes even days, later.

Equally provocative was a settling attempt of about one hundred activists on the hill of Ba'al Hatzor [Tall Asur]. The activists entered a stone cave underneath the hill, erected a metal fence that blocked the way out, and locked themselves inside (Figure 2.2). Only after midnight, hours after they first arrived to the site, an army patrol noticed the fortified settlers.[16] After some negotiations, a group of more than 100 soldiers opened the bars and arrested the activists by noon the following day.[17] Other tactics included marches to strategic destinations in the West Bank, guided tours, and hakafot—religious ceremonies where believers dance around various sites with Torah scrolls.[18]

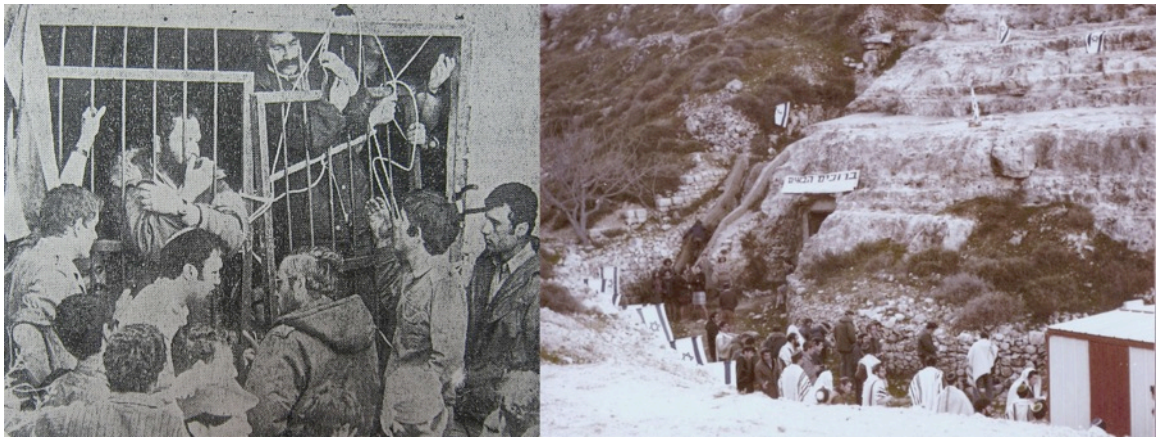

Figure 2.2 Gush Emunim activists by the cave in Ba'al Hatzor Hill. Source: Ofra Archives**.**

For a while, though, it was unclear whether these events carried the potential to bring a change in government settlement policy. On the one hand, with each settlement attempt, *Gush Emunim* gained more supporters.[19] And, as their numbers grew, military officials found it increasingly difficult to control the group and its activities.[20] On the other hand, none of the activists' attempts proved successful. After a number of unsuccessful attempts, many in Israel began mocking the activists of *Gush Emunim*, saying they were nothing more than professional protestors. Even among the activists there was a strong sense of uncertainty. Some wondered about the intentions of those taking part in these highly publicized attempts.[21] "Will they actually stay if one day we

[15] For an analysis of government settlement policy and the areas it left empty of Jewish presence between 1967 and 1977, see David Newman, *Population, Settlement, and Conflict: Israel and the West Bank*, Update (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 26–27.
[16] Yosef Waxman, "Tzahal Nishlah Lefanot 100 Mitnahalim Behar Baal Hatzor," *Maariv*, March 11, 1975, 1–2.
[17] Yosef Waxman, "Behol Hamoed Nahazor Im Revavot Hitnahamu Hamefunim Mibaal Hatzor," *Maariv*, March 12, 1975, Ofra Archives.
[18] See, for example, Hanan Porat, "Bakasha Leishur Tiyul," December 11, 1974, Ofra Archives.
[19] Zertal and Eldar, *Lords of the Land*, 32.
[20] For example, in an attempt to limit the number of potential participants, officials blocked the gates of Kiryat Arba that was home to many of the settlement activists. "Punu Ke-100 Mitnahalim Sheneehzu Halayla Bebaal Hatzor," *Maariv*, October 16, 1974, 12.
[21] These settlement attempts were paralleled by intense debates about the form future settlements in the West Bank should take. Back at time, there were only two settlement types in the West Bank: Kibbutzim and the modernist neighborhood of Kiryat Arba. Neither

will win?" a *Gush Emunim* member wondered to himself.[22]

Occupation

Tired of unsuccessful settlement attempts, some of the activists would go on long hikes in the West Bank, hoping to find potential settlement sites. On one of these hikes, settlement activist Hanan Porat noticed a deserted military camp. There, construction work was being carried out near the hill of Ba'al Hatzor, some 9 kilometers north of Ramallah.[23] The sight of the construction site triggered Porat's companion—Rachel Yanait Ben-Zvi, widow of former president Yitzhak Ben-Zvi. It reminded Ben-Zvi of the pre-state years, when Palestine was under British Mandate rule. Back in the early 1920s, she told Porat, she and her collaborators formed workers groups that came to be known as *Gedudei Haavoda* [Labor Brigade, or Work Battalion]. They would introduce themselves to British officials as construction workers and obtain official contracts for construction projects across the country. Once on the site, they would quickly turn these "construction sites" into Jewish colonies. Pointing at the Ba'ar Hatzor hill in front of them, she asked Porat, "Why don't you erect a Labor Brigade here?"[24]

Once back at *Gush Emunim* headquarters in Jerusalem, Porat introduced Ben-Zvi's idea to his fellow activists. While many remained indifferent, twenty-three-year-old Yehuda Etzion, who had just graduated from *Har Etzion Yeshiva* in the settlement of Alon Shvut,[25] was fascinated. He had spent his childhood in a kibbutz, so he was not bothered by manual labor. Furthermore, Etzion was living in *Gush Emunim's* headquarters at the time. He didn't have to worry about paying rent or having a steady income. He immediately decided to take the project on himself.

Soon after, Etzion scheduled a meeting with the contractor in charge of construction on the site of Ba'al Hatzor hill.[26] At the meeting, the contractor explained he was looking for a group of workers to build a four kilometers long, 1.8 meters high fence around the Jordanian military camp. Etzion and his friends lacked the required skills. Nevertheless, they said they would be happy to take the job; after a brief conversation, they were hired.[27]

In the following months, Etzion drove from Jerusalem to the construction site every morning (Figure 2.3). At first, other activists joined him. Over time, however,

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appealed to many. A kibbutz could attract only few Israelis, mainly young couples who were able to work the land and take part in an agrarian society. Kiryat Arba, on the other hand, as I discuss in the first chapter of this dissertation, was impoverished and bleak. For this reason, settlement activists met at *Gush Emunim's* headquarters in Jerusalem almost every night and spent hours discussing the "right" model. Pinhas Valershtein, interview with the author, June 28, 2015.

Different settlement activists advocated for different settlement types in these meetings. For example, twenty-three year old kibbutz native Yehuda Etzion was fascinated with the possibility of forming a settlement around a yeshiva, or, as it came to be known, "yeshuv plus yeshiva" [settlement plus yeshiva]. Others proposed erecting a network of field schools in the occupied territories. These field schools were to introduce Israeli youth to the region through organized trips and seminars, and only at a later stage develop into full functioning settlements. Other members of *Gush Emunim*, Etzion later recalled, argued it would be simpler erecting a smaller number of settlements that would house larger number of settlers, maybe even in multistory buildings. Yehuda Etzion, interview by author, August 17, 2015.

According to a news report, trying to reach a decision, the activists had even met with architects and planners to discussed settlement models. See Menahem Michelson, "Mitnahalei Shilo Yoshvim Al Ha'paklah'," *Yediot Aharonot*, December 6, 1974, 13.

[22] Hoberman, *Ke-Neged Kol Ha-Sikuyim : 40 Shenot Ha-Hityashvut Bi-Yehudah Ṿe-Shomron, Binyamin Ṿeha-Biḳ'ah, 727-767*, 95.

[23] Just a few months earlier, a number of settlement activists locked themselves in a stone cave near that hill. Since then, two other settlement attempts on the site had also failed. See Zertal and Eldar, *Lords of the Land*, 33; Hoberman, *Ke-Neged Kol Ha-Sikuyim : 40 Shenot Ha-Hityashvut Bi-Yehudah Ṿe-Shomron, Binyamin Ṿeha-Biḳ'ah, 727-767*, 88.

[24] Hoberman, *Ke-Neged Kol Ha-Sikuyim : 40 Shenot Ha-Hityashvut Bi-Yehudah Ṿe-Shomron, Binyamin Ṿeha-Biḳ'ah, 727-767*, 87; Zertal and Eldar, *Lords of the Land*, 33–34; Hemdat Shani, "Mekimei Hagader - Hasipur Hamale," 2005, Ofra Archives.

[25] The yeshiva was first erected at Kfar Etzion. While Etzion was there, the yeshiva was moved to the settlement of Alon Shvut.

[26] Shani, "Mekimei Hagader - Hasipur Hamale."

[27] Shani; Menahem Michelson, "Hasod Shel 'Ofra,'" *Yediot Aharonot*, June 8, 1975, 21.

many of them gave up. The work proved more complex than what they had imagined, and from the beginning, many of the activists had questioned Etzion's plan.[28] But on April 20, 1975, some eight months after he first arrived on the site, Etzion and twenty-two other activists drove to Ba'al Hatzor in the morning, with the intention of staying. When evening arrived, instead of heading back to Jerusalem, they settled in the dilapidated Jordanian military barracks near the construction site and refused to leave.[29] The matter was brought to the attention of Defense Minister Shimon Peres. After some negotiations, Peres agreed to let the settlers stay, on the condition that the settlement would be treated as a workers camp and kept secret.[30]

Figure 2.3 Etzion (in the front) with other *Gush Emunim* activists by the construction site. Source: Ofra Archives.

Etzion and the other activists spent the first night in one of the concrete military barracks. The morning after, they woke up to find a sizable task ahead of them: transform the abandoned military base into a Jewish settlement, the first in Samaria. Straightforward solutions weren't available. Not only was the place planned for military training, but since construction on the base begun shortly before the Six-Day War broke out, none of the structures were ever completed. All barracks had been abandoned in different stages of construction, and they lacked windows, doors, and restrooms. Paved roads and infrastructure were also missing. The place was in such a poor shape, Etzion's wife later recalled, that she could barely get any sleep in her first night there. Soon after,

[28] Etzion, on the other hand, urged his fellow activists to stop wasting time in long ideological debates and join the work force on the site. Shani, "Mekimei Hagader - Hasipur Hamale."

[29] Hoberman, *Ke-Neged Kol Ha-Sikuyim : 40 Shenot Ha-Hityashvut Bi-Yehudah Ṿe-Shomron, Binyamin Ṿeha-Biḳ'ah, 727-767*, 92; "Gush Emunim: Dapei Meida" (Gush Emunim, May 1975), folder 46 box 4, Ofra Archives.

[30] On hearing about the events on Ba'al Hatzor, Defense Minister Shimon Peres first ordered the immediate evacuation of the settlement activists. After some negotiations and a visit from Porat and settler activist Uri Elitzur, however, Peres changed his decision. The army will not help the settlers, he explained, but will also avoid hindering their efforts. Zertal and Eldar, *Lords of the Land*, 34–35; Hoberman, *Ke-Neged Kol Ha-Sikuyim : 40 Shenot Ha-Hityashvut Bi-Yehudah Ṿe-Shomron, Binyamin Ṿeha-Biḳ'ah, 727-767*, 92; Yehiel Limor, "Peres: Ani Natati Haishur Lehakamat Mahane Haavoda 'Ofra' Leyad Rammalla," June 18, 1975, Ofra Archives; Yosef Harif, "Mishulhan Hamemshala," *Maariv*, December 5, 1975, Ofra Archives.

An official approval arrived a few months later, however. Only in December, the Ministry of Security sent the settlers an official letter confirming that the government recognizes the encampment as a workers camp. See Yosef Waxman, "Ofra: Hamihtav Hegi'a," *Maariv*, December 5, 1975, Ofra Archives; Michelson, "Hasod Shel 'Ofra.'"

According to most accounts, Peres interest in Ofra stemmed from his rivalry with Yitzhak Rabin—not from his belief in the settlement's significance. Analyzing Peres's motivations is beyond the scope of this dissertation. For more details see Yehiel Admoni, *Aśor Shel Shiḳul Da'at : Ha-Hityashvut Me-'ever La-Ḳav Ha-Yaroḳ 1967-1977* (Tel Aviv: ha-Ḳibuts ha-me'uḥad, 1992), 150; Hoberman, *Ke-Neged Kol Ha-Sikuyim : 40 Shenot Ha-Hityashvut Bi-Yehudah Ṿe-Shomron, Binyamin Ṿeha-Biḳ'ah, 727-767*, 99.

she decided to move back to her parents place until conditions improved in Ofra.[31] Reflecting on the poor conditions of the base, one of the female activists laughed, "if only we had waited with the Six-Day War, now we would have had great living conditions."[32]

Figure 2.4 The Jordanian military Camp after the Six-Day War. Source: Ofra Archive.

Within just a few days, Etzion and the other activists began transforming the place. They blocked the empty window frames with plastic bags, and covered the doorframes with blankets (Figure 2.5). On one of the barracks, the activists placed a sign saying "Ba'al Hatzor Workers Camp." Soon, the words "workers camp" were erased, and "Ba'al Hatzor" was replaced with "Ofra," the biblical capital of the region that was transferred from the Kingdom of Samaria to the Kingdom of Judea in 145 B.C.[33] Once the word about the mysterious workers camp reached the public, people from across the country started donating furniture like bed frames and refrigerators, as well as building materials. Some citizens came to the site and offered their help building the place. For example, one Jerusalem-based contractor came every night to Ofra after a long day of work in the city, and worked in the military camp for a couple of hours before heading back home.[34] By the end of May, a month after they first entered the military base, the settlers had transformed the place. By that point, they had also begun making plans for a metal workshop and an educational center dedicated to "biblical studies, history, botany and geography of Judea and Samaria."[35]

[31] Haya Etzion, Sipuro Shel Makom: Proyekt Reayonot Im Vatikei Hahityashvut Bebinyamin, interview by Ofra Erlih, January 1, 2013, Ofra Archives.
[32] Hoberman, *Ke-Neged Kol Ha-Sikuyim : 40 Shenot Ha-Hityashvut Bi-Yehudah Ṿe-Shomron, Binyamin Ṿeha-Biḳ'ah, 727-767*, 93.
[33] Zertal and Eldar, *Lords of the Land*, 32.
[34] Hoberman, *Ke-Neged Kol Ha-Sikuyim : 40 Shenot Ha-Hityashvut Bi-Yehudah Ṿe-Shomron, Binyamin Ṿeha-Biḳ'ah, 727-767*, 94; Admoni, *Aśor Shel Shiḳul Da'at : Ha-Hityashvut Me-'ever La-Ḳav Ha-Yaroḳ 1967-1977*, 151.
[35] "Gush Emunim: Dapei Meida."

Figure 2.5 Settlement activists renovate the military barracks (Etzion on the right in the two images on the left). Source: Ofra Archive.

It was not long before the settlers realized they needed a professional architect. One of them suggested contacting his friend Zalman Deutch, an American-born architect who was living in Jerusalem at the time. Trained at Pratt Institute in New York, Deutch immigrated to Israel after the Six-Day War.[36] Like many who immigrated after the war, he identified with the settlers' ideology. Later he would move with his family to the settlement of Alon Shvut. At the time, however, he was working for Sheinberger Katz Architects, the same firm where David Cassuto, who was involved in the settlement of Hebron, used to work. A religious man, Deutch considered himself lucky to work at Sheinberger's office. Sheinberger was an orthodox Jew who came to be known for his work on spaces of worship. While at his office, Deutch gained valuable experience designing synagogues, yeshivas, and mikve structures.[37]

When the settlers of Ofra approached Deutch he immediately agreed to their request. In fact, he even offered to do the work for free.[38] The pious architect probably saw it as an opportunity to experiment with an aesthetic language that would speak to the ancient history of the site. For Deutch, building and design in Judea and Samaria, the heart of the biblical land of Israel, was unlike building in other places. Here, it was a matter of connecting to something higher, more spiritual. A couple of years later, for example, when working on a new synagogue for the settlement of Shiloh, he would replicate elements from the biblical tabernacle of Shiloh, where the Ark of the Covenant was kept according to the myth.

But after surveying the military base, it became clear to Deutch that Ofra had an urgent need for decent, even if temporary, housing for the families on the site. "Aesthetic consideration," he later explained, "was marginal at that point." Abandoning any grandiose plans he may have had, Deutch began redesigning the existing barracks (Figure 2.6). He added partitions, openings, kitchen fixtures, and other basic elements to four barracks. The budget, Deutch recalled, "was maybe good for buying a shoe lace," and

[36] Zalman Deutch, interview by author, phone, July 25, 2016.
[37] Zalman Deutch, interview by author, April 27, 2015; Deutch, interview, July 25, 2016.
[38] Deutch, interview, July 25, 2016.

some of the units were as small as 30 sq. m.[39] Nevertheless, Deutch was committed to the settlers. Seeing Etzion and the other activists work all day long in the camp, executing his plans, filled him with hope and a sense of mission. In the next few months, he spent hours transforming the dilapidated military base into temporary but livable settlement.[40]

In addition, Deutch designed several prefabricated structures that came to be known as *Diyur Laole* [Housing for the Immigrant]. These long, rectilinear structures were based on prefabricated storage containers used by the Israeli army.[41] Under Deutch's command, however, they were transformed into housing units, serving bachelors and the many young volunteers who came to Ofra for a few days and took part in the settlers' efforts.[42]

Rudimentary as they were, the converted barracks and storage structures were designed in ways that encouraged a sense of community and, in some cases, even intimacy among the settlers. For example, Deutch arranged some of the units in rows, so they would share a communal balcony in the front façade, as was common in kibbutzim houses (Figure 2.6). For Etzion, who grew up in a kibbutz and dreamed of dotting the West Bank with small communal settlements, such design features were of great importance. Other units exhibited more unexpected, though equally evocative building elements. For instance, settlement activist Yehoram Rasis Tal recalled how his family shared a military structure that was transformed into a two-unit house. The wall that partitioned the two units, he recalled, was punctured with a window that connected the living room of Rasis Tal with his neighbors' living room. This way, only one adult had to stay home and watch over both families' kids while the rest could stay out and take part in unending assembly meetings, or much-needed cleaning and construction work.[43]

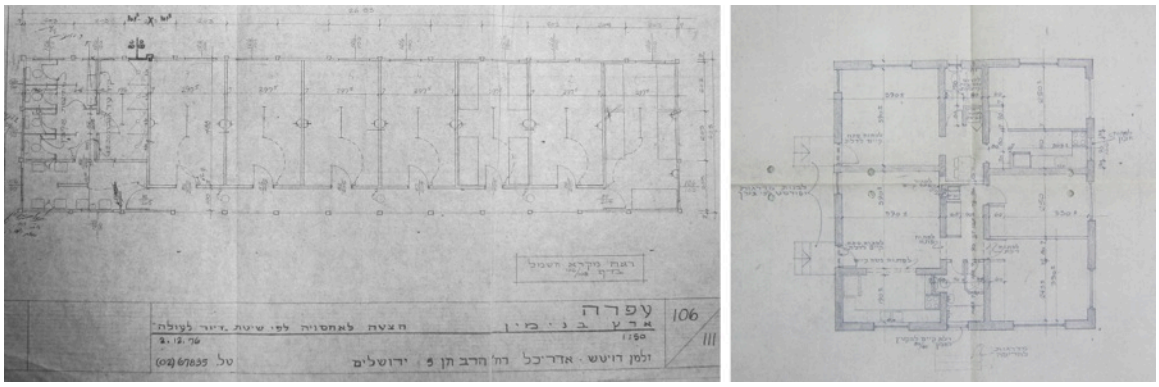

Figure 2.6 "Diyur Laole" (left) and a converted military structure (right) by Zalman Deutch, 1975. Source: Ofra Archive.

Deutch had the liberty to design Ofra's barracks and prefabricated containers according to his own taste. He consulted with Etzion and the other activists, but he was never asked to follow any design guidelines or get building permits from official planning bodies. Official planning institutes, like the Ministry of Housing or the Settlement Department, were absent throughout the design process. Both the Ministry of

[39] Deutch.
[40] Deutch.
[41] Yoske Manor (resident and former head of Ofra's construction committee), interview by author, June 11, 2015.
[42] Some of the light structures were designed by architect Israel Levitt.
[43] Rasis-Tal argued that it was his father who redesigned the abandoned military structure. Yehoram Rasis-Tal, interview by author, May 12, 2015.

Housing and the Settlement Department opposed the settlement. After planners from the Settlement Department surveyed the area, they concluded it was simply impossible to erect a neighborhood on the site.[44] They couldn't have imagined anyone wanting to live in a deserted military base. But their report probably never reached the settlers of Ofra—and if it did, it had little effect on the settlers. By the time the report was published, the settlers had transformed the camp into a relatively functioning civilian settlement. When Yehiel Admoni, second in command at the Settlement Department, visited the site for the first time a few weeks later, he was "amazed and perplexed at the same time." On seeing the converted barracks and infrastructure he wondered why "without any help from the Settlement Department… [the settlers'] achievements were significantly superior to those settling seeds that enjoyed massive support from the Settlement Department."[45]

Etzion and his friends were well aware of their achievements. Like Admoni, they had realized that working outside the purview of official planning institutes was actually empowering. And while government agencies were debating whether Ofra had the right to exist, the settlers continued developing the settlement over the next few months. To speed up the process, they even created their own planning and design agencies that would have a lasting effect on the settlement project.

Figure 2.7 Settlers celebrating Ofra's first anniversary. Source: Ofra Archive.

A Settlement Model "From Below"

Once there were enough temporary housing units, the settlers of Ofra continued to their next task: developing guidelines and a plan for a permanent settlement. At first, Ofra functioned like a kibbutz: all residents received modest salaries from the settlement, ate at the dinning hall, and took part in various voluntary committees in charge of each aspect of daily life. But after six months, almost everyone agreed the model of the kibbutz had to be replaced. They knew a kibbutz couldn't attract large masses of Israelis to the West Bank. In addition, since all the settlers were religious, the institutes around which most kibbutzim were laid out—the dinning hall or community center—were too secular and

[44] Defense Minister Shimon Peres was the one who requested the Settlement Department to survey the area of the settlement. Back at the time he considered different plans for the settlement. On June 17, 1975, for example, Peres announced on a plan to build public housing for the workers of Ofra. Nevertheless, according to the Settlement Department findings: "physically, it was impossible to erect a neighborhood on the site. The area was too small. Located on the top of the hill, it was exposed to weather hazards, and the equipment (left by the Jordanian army) had the potential to impact (negatively) on the quality of life of the residents."
See Yehiel Limor, "Peres: I Gave the Permission to Erect the Workers Camp 'Ofra' Near Ramallah," *Haaretz*, June 18, 1975; Admoni, *Aśor Shel Shiḳul Da'at : Ha-Hityashvut Me-'ever La-Ḳav Ha-Yaroḳ 1967-1977*, 154.

[45] Admoni, 154.

inadequate for their needs.[46] In addition, many residents of Ofra grew up in urban centers and saw little merit in economic cooperation.[47] For example, in one of the many assembly meetings dedicated to the issue of economic cooperation, one resident bluntly stated, "Had anyone of us wanted to live in a kibbutz… he would have done so long ago… Personally, I prefer a settlement form where one doesn't intervene in the life of his neighbor…I am against any form of cooperation..." Another resident concurred, "Whenever I hear about cooperation, I get noxious."[48]

In the search for an alternative model, Ofra became a laboratory for settlement patterns.[49] Each night the residents would meet and discuss potential models. Yet these debates were long and not always productive. As settlement activist and first secretary of Ofra Pinhas Valershtein later recalled, "There were ridiculous propositions we discussed." For example, he recounted, "Once, there was a member who proposed that we all continue working outside of the settlement, and our individual salaries will all go to the settlement, and get distributed among residents according to the family sizes."[50] Other proposals, he explained, were equally awkward.[51] For a while, the settlers seemed unable to reach a mature model.

Then, in the spring of 1975, three Gush Emunim activists decided to drive to Moshav Halevie, located some 20 miles north of Tel Aviv, to meet with Uzi Gdor.[52] A friend had told them that Gdor was an urban planner with an unconventional approach who might be able to help them.[53] Indeed, the energetic forty-year-old had expansive experience in developing new regional models and working with planning institutes. By the time the three activists arrived at his house, Gdor had already worked for a few years for the Settlement Department as lead planner for the Negev region, before he was made chief planner of the Golan Heights region for the Ministry of Security. At the Ministry, he also got involved in the master planning of the Sinai Peninsula.[54] Despite this impressive background, the settlers recalled that Gdor was also humble and friendly. As his colleagues describe him, Gdor was a true "melah haaretz" [salt of the land]—blue-eyed, privileged, and well-educated, but not pretentious.

At his living room, the three activists explained they had a problem: they already had several settlements on the ground, but lacked a settlement model, preferably a rural one. They explained they also needed a centralized planning body that would oversee their settlements and work with government officials. They asked him to take on the task and manage such an agency.[55] Gdor agreed on the condition that they get official

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[46] Etzion, interview.
[47] Yoske Manor (resident and former head of Ofra's construction committee), interview; Pliya Applebaum and David Newman, *Bein Kfar Leparvar: Tzurot Yeshuv Hadashot Beyisrael* (Rehovot: Hamerkaz Leheker Hityashvut Kafrit Veironit, 1989), 25.
[48] "Protokol Aseifat Haverim Shehitkayma Bemotzash Pr' Truma Tashlaz," 1977, 2–3, resident assemblies transcripts, Ofra Archives.
[49] Pinhas Valershtein, interview by author, June 28, 2015; Etzion, interview; "Soda Shel Ofra," *Nekuda*, June 13, 1980.
[50] Valershtein, interview.
[51] Valershtein; "Aseifat Haverim Betarih U"G Tamuz Tashla (22.6)," June 22, 1975, resident assemblies transcripts, Ofra Archives.
[52] Yehuda Harel from the Golan Heights knew Gdor and recommended the activists to try and contact him. Yoel Bin-Nun, interview by author, July 25, 2015.
[53] At the time, there was also a problem in Alon Shvut: people couldn't become homeowners since it was defined as a "regional center." Hence, the settlers were looking for a legal loophole that would allow Alon Shvut's settlers to buy their homes. Bin-Nun.
[54] Uzi Gdor, interview by author, August 4, 2015.
[55] The agency was named "The Movement for New Urban Settlement." For a detailed description of the movement see Newman, "The Role of Gush Emunim and the Yishuv Kehillati in the West Bank 1974 - 1980," 237–40.

government approval before undertaking any projects.[56] "I am not going to run on the hilltops of the West Bank in the middle of the night," he told the young settlers.[57]

After the men left his house, Gdor sat at his desk and wrote a short text he entitled "The Community Settlement."[58] In that text, Gdor delineated the main principles of a new kind of rural settlement that would change the face of the West Bank.

When drafting his text, Gdor had to consider existing rural settlement models. He recalled that most models available in Israel at the time, like the kibbutz and the cooperative moshav, were developed in the early 20th century. Aimed at overturning the urban lifestyle and employment patterns that had been associated with Jews in Europe, these settlements were based on agricultural production and manual labor.[59] But, as Gdor knew, agricultural production was virtually impossible on the mountainous terrain of the northern West Bank. In any case, Gdor insisted, agrarian lifestyles were becoming less popular in the country by the 1970s.[60]

Other settlement models—not based on agriculture—were also inadequate, Gdor observed. The "Industrial Village" [kfar taasiyati] that the Settlement Department had developed in the early 1970s was centered around in-house factories.[61] It wasn't planned for commuters, and couldn't have served many of *Gush Emunim's* activists who were employed in city centers.[62] Equally inadequate was the "Rural Center," a settlement type designed to provide general services, such as education and healthcare, to nearby agricultural settlements.[63] Since Rural Center residents were considered temporary, they couldn't become homeowners. This model was therefore at odds with the settlers' desire to set roots in the West Bank.[64] Gdor concluded that he must invent a new model to overcome these shortcomings.

When laying out the principles of this new model, Gdor faced a challenge: He wanted to create a strong sense of community among homeowners who worked in remote urban centers and didn't share their income or means of production. To that end, he limited the model to 250 or 500 families. This way, Gdor thought, everyone would know everyone in the settlement.[65] In addition, he insisted it was important to have some

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[56] According to David Newman, the first meeting of the new planning agency took place on August 17, 1975 in Tel Aviv.

[57] Gdor's condition probably stemmed from the reputation Gush Emunim already gained at the time. After a number of illegal settlement attempts, many Israelis saw them as professional protestors, eager to fight with law enforcement authorities. After they accepted his condition, the new planning agency met for the first time on August 17, 1975 in Tel Aviv. Gdor, interview; Newman, "The Role of Gush Emunim and the Yishuv Kehillati in the West Bank 1974 - 1980," 238.

[58] Gdor, interview.

[59] For detailed accounts of these settlement models and their ideological significance see Erik Cohen, *The City in the Zionist Ideology*, (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Institute of Urban and Regional Studies, 1970); S. Ilan Troen, *Imagining Zion: Dreams, Designs, and Realities in a Century of Jewish Settlement* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 17; Newman, "The Role of Gush Emunim and the Yishuv Kehillati in the West Bank 1974 - 1980," 172–82.

[60] Gdor, interview.

[61] Only in the 1970s Settlement Department's planners began to experiment with rural settlements that were based on industry instead of agriculture. These experiments were bolstered by the introduction of industry into some kibbutzim. The idea was that residents would live in rural settlements but work in factories. In 1974, the first program for an "Industrial Village" [kfar taasiyati] was issued. In the next few years, between 1974 and 1978, four such villages were founded inside Israel. At first, these villages replicated governance practices from the cooperative moshav. But some of the residents opposed the collectivist nature, and it was changed. For a thorough discussion of these experiments see Applebaum and Newman, *Bein Kfar Leparvar: Tzurot Yeshuv Hadashot Beyisrael*, 14–37.

[62] At the time, there were already people who resided in rural settlements in Israel who worked in city centers. However, they were granted the right to do so only because they had to complement the settlement's income from agriculture. Newman, "The Role of Gush Emunim and the Yishuv Kehillati in the West Bank 1974 - 1980," 245–46.

[63] For a detailed discussion of the Rural Center see Newman, 230–36.

[64] One of Gush Emunim's settlements, Alon Shvut, was defined as a Rural Center. When the settlers first made contact with Gdor, they were equally concerned about Alon Shvut. They wanted to change the status of the settlement so residents would have the right to purchase their homes. Bin-Nun, interview.

[65] Gdor, interview; Uzi Gdor to Shmuel Ofan (Ofra), "Hayeshuv Hakehilati," October 17, 1975, 2–3, Ofra Archives.

homogeneity among the residents. As long as the residents shared a system of beliefs, like the ideology of *Gush Emunim*, the settlement could function as a closed-knit society. He imagined a shared ideology would also encourage residents to organize community events and provide services, such as extracurricular school and youth movement activities and homecare for the elderly. Such voluntary activities would complement government services and render the settlement more appealing than others.[66] To secure this homogeneity, Gdor concluded, the settlement had to function as a closed system. All residents would be members of a cooperative union, and anyone wanting to move in would have to be vetted by a settlement's union.[67] As Gdor later recalled, they were keen on having a screening mechanism since the activists worried native Palestinians might move in to Ofra.[68]

Gdor didn't pay much attention to questions of aesthetics when delineating his model. Nevertheless, in meetings and personal correspondences, he underlined the importance of uniformity.[69] Since the social structure of the Community Settlement allowed economic stratification, it was important to have some equality among the residents, at least at the level of aesthetics. Therefore, Gdor explained, houses had to look the same. If needed, he added, a Community Settlement could develop a couple of model homes, but not more than that. "It was important not to allow residents to build whatever they wanted," Gdor emphasized.[70] He also insisted that model homes should be relatively small. The Community Settlement wasn't planned for multistory houses, especially since plot sizes were significantly smaller than those in older rural settlements types like the kibbutz or the moshav.[71]

To Gdor's disappointment, the settlers didn't feel comfortable with his aesthetic preferences and overall conception. When he first drove to Ofra to present his model to the general assembly on November 16, 1975, Gdor encountered an opposition. In the early evening hours, he met with members of Ofra's secretariat. From that meeting Gdor learned that many among the settlers of Ofra were aiming for something bigger and more open—something that would resemble an urban center. They considered rural settlement models only because they lacked land tenure and funds for a large settlement. Later that evening, when he presented the Community Settlement model to everyone at a residents' assembly, Gdor got even more lackluster reactions. Aware of the settlers' aspirations, he explained that Ofra could become a city at a later point. But in the meantime, in order to avoid complete chaos, he insisted, the settlers had to adopt the Community Settlement, or at least parts of it.[72]

The residents were unmoved by Gdor's warning. One of them blatantly told Gdor, "Most of the people here came to Ofra not in order to erect some kind of a community model, or a moshav or a kibbutz…We came here to settle the land of Judea… And for

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[66]Gdor, interview; Gdor to Shmuel Ofan (Ofra), "Hayeshuv Hakehilati," 2; Uzi Gdor, "Tipuah Maarahot Kehilatiyot Keemtzaee Leidud Meoravut Hevratit," April 1, 1975, Uzi Gdor's private collection.
[67] Gdor to Shmuel Ofan (Ofra), "Hayeshuv Hakehilati," 1; Gdor, interview.
[68] Gdor, interview.
[69] I was unable to find detailed aesthetic guidelines in Gdor's texts. In one text, Gdor only mentioned the need to have a union in charged of preserving the character of the settlement through reviewing all building and landscape plans. See Gdor to Shmuel Ofan (Ofra), "Hayeshuv Hakehilati," 2. However, when I interviewed him, Gdor insisted there were other texts he authored at the time that explicitly outlined his vision of uniformity in construction. Settlement founders I interviewed confirmed Gdor's argument. Gdor, interview; Valershtein, interview; Etzion, interview.
[70] Gdor, interview.
[71] Gdor; Valershtein, interview.
[72] "Pgishat Hamazkirut Im Uzi Gdor Mitnuat Hayeshuvim Haironiim Hahadashim: 16.11.75 Shaa 18:00," November 16, 1975, resident assemblies transcripts, Ofra Archives.

this cause I am willing to have some chaos if it helps developing the settlement and the land of Israel. If a member develops an uncontrolled agricultural enterprise, I would be happy as long as it expands our thing." Another settler added, "This (the Community Settlement model) doesn't solve our immediate problems. And our main problem is to enlarge the settlement…" Gdor was perplexed by the residents' criticism. As if to mock their indecisiveness, he ironically replied, "I know of one settlement where everyone is constantly preoccupied with ideological debates and instead of growing larger, they only end up splitting."[73]

Less than three months after that meeting, in February 1976, the settlers handed a draft for a master plan to a Ministry of Security official. Many of Gdor's ideas were missing from that document.[74] According to the draft, Ofra was not going to be a commuters' settlement. Instead, about one-third of Ofra's projected population, 200 families in total, would work in agricultural fields and factories scattered across the settlement. In addition, they stated that there would be three housing types in Ofra: converted barracks and prefabricated units that would be rented to young couples and singles; twenty identical houses, each with two units of about 70 sq. m., and single-family houses built according to the residents' taste, on large plots of 750 sq. m. The latter type was the most popular. The vast majority of the settlers, according to the draft, were to live in single-family houses.[75] In a later draft from 1977, the settlers reiterated these principles. This time, however, the 20 identical double-family houses were removed, leaving more room for private construction of single-family houses.[76]

It is unclear whether Gdor was aware of the settlers' draft from 1976. By that point, his relationship with the settlers was on a decline anyway.[77] As he later recalled, he could no longer ignore the huge gap between his professional interest as a planner and the ideas that motivated the settlers. "My approach was a planning approach. I am a planner," Gdor explained. "But *Gush Emunim* was busy founding as many settlements as possible. So we had conflicts."[78] To make matters worse, Gdor thought that the activists were too aggressive. They had little respect for the law or his planning guidelines. Six months after Gdor first met the activists, his relationship with Gush Emunim was even worse, and he resigned.[79]

Still today, now that dozens of Community Settlements have been built in the West Bank, Gdor believes his work had little to do with the political project of *Gush Emunim*. Reflecting on his involvement with the activists, he insists, "I gave them a formula. Politics had nothing to do with it."[80] But politics certainly had an impact on the

[73] "Pgishat Hamazkirut Im Uzi Gdor Mitnuat Hayeshuvim Haironiim Hahadashim."
[74] The term Community Settlement appears only once in the document. See comments on the settlers' master plan made by Moshe Netzer, head of the department of settling and security in the Ministry and the author of the document, in Moshe Netzer to Minister of Security, "Hatzaa Lehakamat Yeshuv Beofra," February 5, 1976, 6756/35-G, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.
[75] Netzer to Minister of Security.
[76] In this later version, however, land plots were shrank from 750 sq. m. to 500 sq. m. "Ofra - Mitoh Tyotat Tohnit Av," April 1977, Ofra Archives.
[77] Ofra's settlers were not the only ones with whom Gdor had to deliberate. As the head of The Movement for New Urban Settlements, Gdor also encountered opposition from Moshe Moskovitch, the founder of the settlement of Alon Shvut. Established in 1970 around Har Etzion Yeshiva, a yeshiva headed by Moskovich, it enjoyed the status of a regional center in which all residents – students, maintenance workers and teachers – were associated with the yeshiva. According to Gdor, Moskovich was concerned when he saw Gdor's Community Settlement model. Moskovich realized that transforming Alon Shvut into a Community Settlement would leave him with significantly less power over the residents. Accordingly, he "objected it in every possible way," Gdor later recalled. Gdor, interview.
[78] Gdor.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid.

way *Gush Emunim* used Gdor's formula. As he suspected, they cared more about populating the West Bank with Jewish Israelis than planning guidelines. They adopted only a few of his recommendations: the label "Community Settlement" that became a legal category state planners have come to recognize, and the admissions process. Beyond these, the activists changed almost all Gdor's planning guidelines. "*Gush Emunim* took my model from my own hands and ignored the important things," Gdor later lamented. "All these Community Settlements (they erected)," he concluded, "are distortions of the model."[81] Like other planners and architects who would soon work with the settlers, Gdor left Ofra feeling he had only a marginal influence over its form.

Giving Form to the Community Settlement

While Gdor paid little attention to architecture, Ofra's settlers were very much concerned with questions of form and design. As one of them later recalled, "Contrary to what many think about settlers," assuming they were oblivious to aesthetics, "at Ofra, from the start…it was obvious to us that our theoretical thinking had to be accompanied by a strategic architectural thinking."[82] Less than a year after they first settled in the Jordanian military base, the settlers teamed with Jerusalem based architect Israel Levitt who volunteered to develop design guidelines for the settlement.[83]

Unlike Deutch, who renovated Ofra's military barracks, Levitt was an established architect. After graduating from the Technion, he researched under the guidance of Alfred Newman, among the most notable architecture professors at the Technion.[84] He later founded his own practice in Jerusalem. Described by his colleagues as a "Woody Allen kind of guy," he was short, slim, and energetic.[85] These qualities rendered him likable among many. He quickly took on a leading role in the Architects and Engineers Association in Jerusalem. Whether because of his talent or social skills, he started receiving large building commissions shortly after opening his firm, working mainly on housing projects in East Jerusalem for the Ministry of Housing. Such extensive work experience with the Ministry of Housing must have rendered Levitt attractive in the eyes of the settlers who sought after recognition from planning institutes.

Levitt, for his part, was no stranger to *Gush Emunim's* ideology and the settlement project. Even though he was not among the core activists of the movement, nor was he even religious, he shared some of their views. By the mid-1970s he had already taken part in several building projects in the West Bank. In 1968, he collaborated with architect David Cassuto on what came to be known as "Jewish Hebron" (Figure 1.14).[86] Later, in the early 1970s he designed one of the housing models replicated

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[81] Gdor, interview.

[82] Valershtein, interview.

[83] It is hard to tell when exactly Levitt first got in touch with the settlers. The mater plan, dated to "1975/6," is the first document signed by Levitt in Ofra Archives. According to Valershtein, Levitt was there from the start. According to Zalman Deutch, however, Levitt joined only later, after Deutch himself was already recruited to renovate the Jordanian barracks. According to settlement activist Yoske Manor, who oversaw all construction in Ofra, Levitt joined the settlers after the latter ones already agreed to have uniformed houses. Regardless, by April 1977, as I discuss in this chapter, Levitt completed an elaborate set of plans for Ofra. In addition, in a news article from April 1977, it is made clear that Levitt volunteered to do the work, without asking for monetary compensation. Combining these sources, it is likely to assume that by 1976 Levitt was already in touch with the settlers. Valershtein; Deutch, interview, July 25, 2016; Aharon Dolev, "Betahbulot Taase Leha Yeshuv," *Maariv*, April 15, 1977, 23; Israel Levitt and Ofra's Building Committee, "Givat Ofra," April 1977, folder 46 box 4, Ofra Archives.

[84] For a thorough discussion of Newman's work see Rafael Segal, "Unit, Pattern, Site: The Space Packed Architecture of Alfred Neumann, 1949–1968" (Princeton University, 2011).

[85] Yonatah Shiloni, interview by author, November 29, 2015; Lou Gelehrter (architect in charge of landscaping and development at Ofra), interview by author, August 8, 2016.

[86] See a discussion of Levitt and Cassuto's plan in the first chapter of this dissertation.

several times in the settlement of Kiryat Arba. It is interesting to note that the units he designed for Kiryat Arba lacked balconies, extra sinks, and other features that would have rendered them appropriate for religious users. But when Levitt offered his professional help without asking for anything in return, the pious settlers were willing to ignore his past mistakes.

By 1976, Levitt had completed a draft for Ofra's first neighborhood (Figure 2.8).[87] At the time, authorities still viewed the settlement as a workers camp, but under Levitt's care it was to become a residential neighborhood housing some 142 units and an adjacent industrial area.

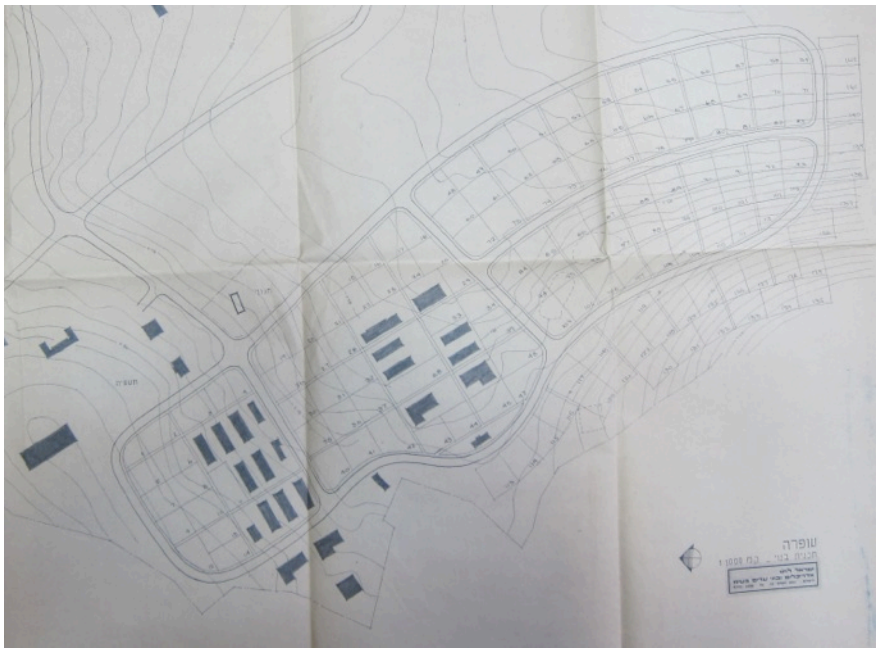


Figure 2.8 The first neighborhood in Levitt's initial plan was comprised of four blocks and bounded by a ring road. Each block housed multiple, almost uniform private land plots. The plots were connected one to the other by a network of pedestrian-only path walks. There were some oversights in Levitt's plan. First, not all plots enjoyed direct access to the ring road. Second, the plan showed no consideration of much-needed parking spaces or public buildings. On the other hand, Levitt gave special care to the existing military structures (painted in black) that Deutch transformed into housing units, weaving them into the neighborhood's fabric of path-walks. Source: Ofra Archive.

I was unable to find the settlers' reaction to Levitt's plan, but, for some reason, he quickly revised the plan and drew up a different, much more grandiose one (Figure 2.9). The latter plan was delineated in a set of drawings Ofra's voluntary building committee circulated among the settlers between April and May 1977 and later, sent abroad to potential donors. Planned for some 200 families, this second plan was significantly larger than the first one. It was also drawn in greater detail, and unlike the first draft, it had an area for public buildings at the heart of the settlement: a synagogue, school, gymnasium, youth club, community center, and some shops. Adjacent to these was a large plot left open for natural recreation. All houses were placed on 500 sq. m. plots and arranged around these two public areas, leaving the southeastern part of the settlement open. The

[87] In the archive of Ofra, the plan is dated to 1975/6. It is likely the plan was only completed in 1976 though.

settlers were satisfied with the master plan; "As far as we can see," members of Ofra's building committee asserted, "it will not go through serious changes in the future."[88]

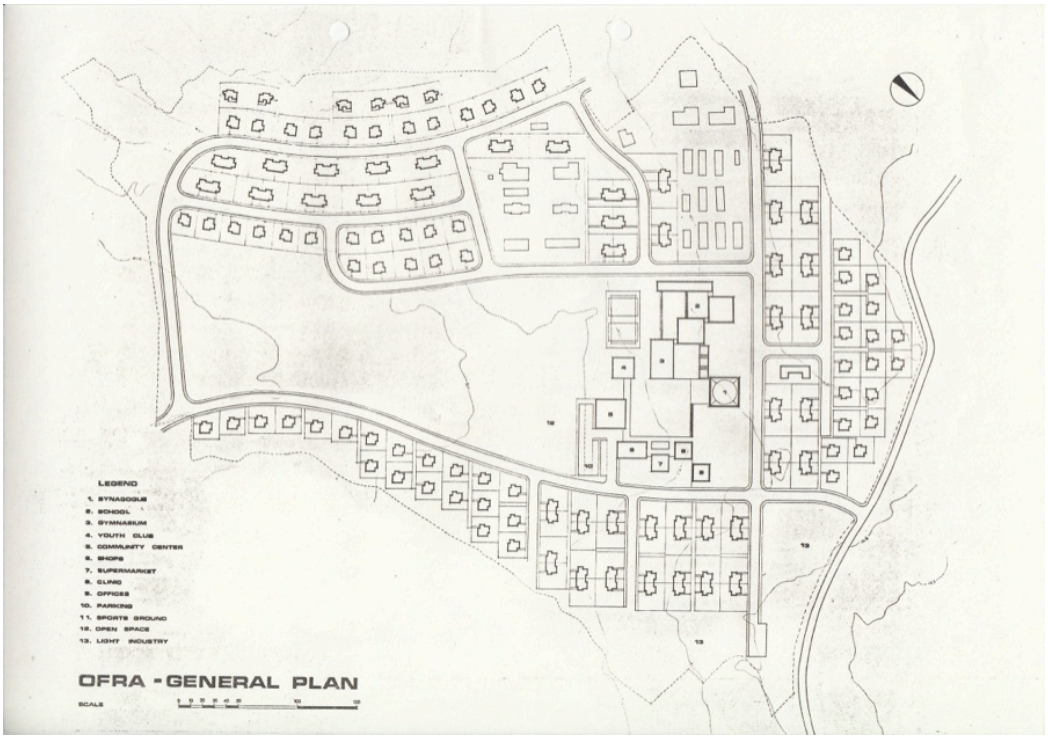
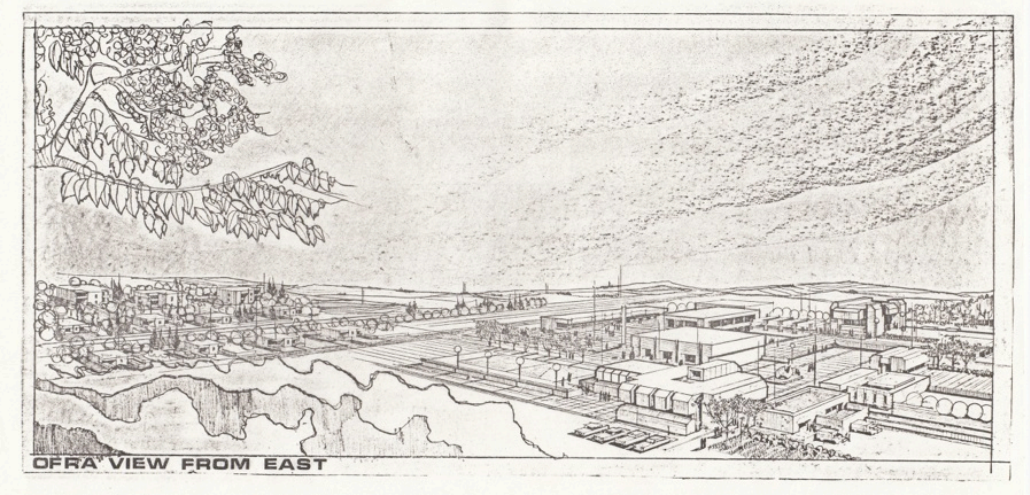


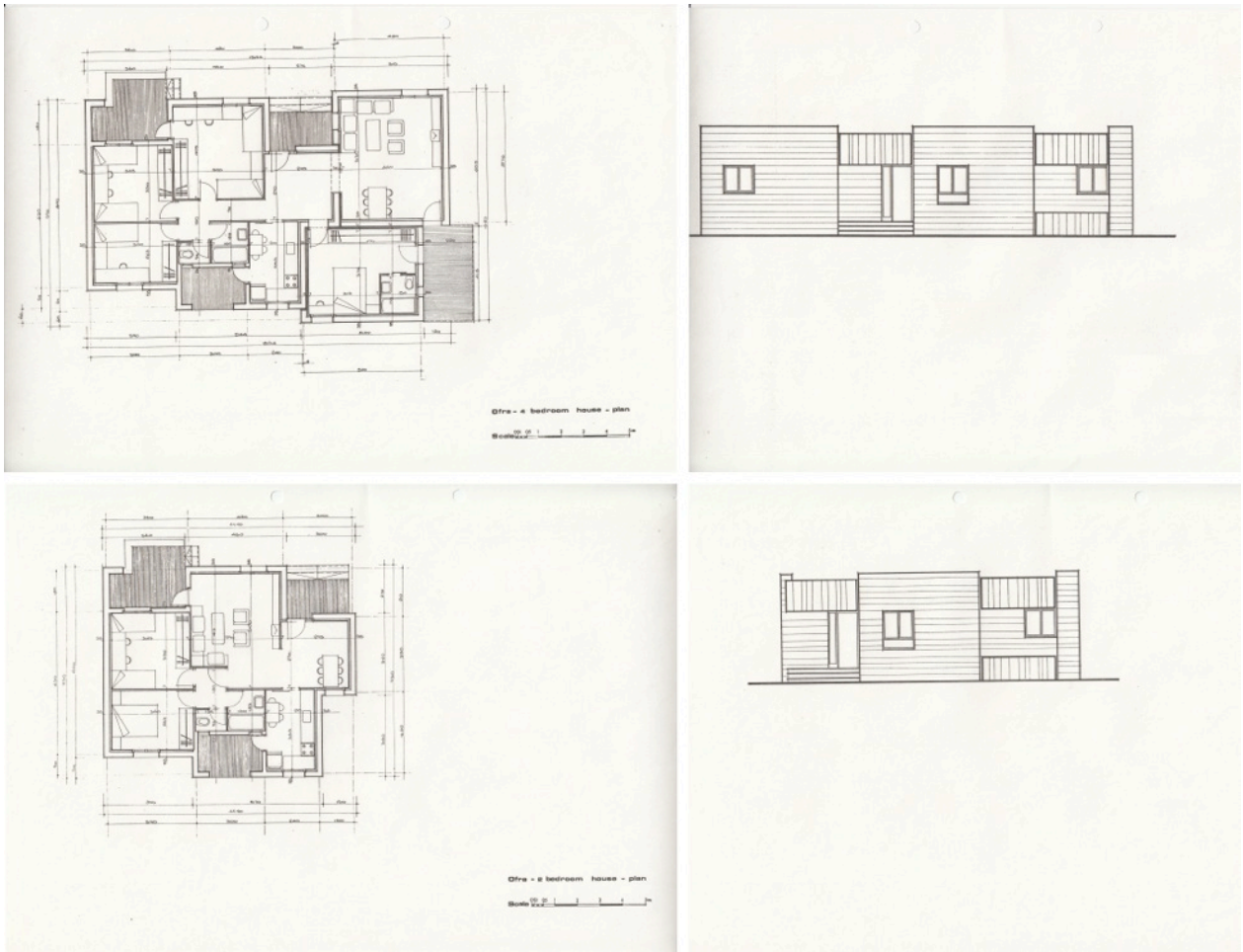
Figure 2.9 Unlike the first plan, Levitt's plan from 1977 was a concentric one. All buildings, including the original Jordanian military barracks, were arranged around the public center. A domed building that was to serve as the main synagogue dominated the center. Levitt placed a parking lot next to the community center that allowed easy access to the synagogue and other public buildings. Altogether, Levitt gave careful attention to questions of parking and transportation that were important for a commuters' settlement. As members of the building committee highlighted, almost all houses had direct access to one of the main roads.[89] In addition, many of the path walks that dominated the first plan were canceled. Source: Ofra Archive.



[88] Levitt and Ofra's Building Committee, "Givat Ofra."
[89] Levitt and Ofra's Building Committee.

Figure 2.10 Among the drawings Levitt prepared for the settlers was an artist impression showing the civic center of Ofra with some houses in the background. All public buildings, even the synagogue that in the plan drawing was designed as a domed structure, had flat roofs. The houses on the left shared the same orthogonal geometry, and seemed to blur into the landscape. At the time, the settlers favored such a design attitude. As one of them explained to a news reporter, "the goal of the plan is to weave the settlement organically into the other settlements of Shiloh."[90] Source: Ofra Archive.

Levitt also designed a model home that accompanied the revised plan. Residents could choose between two iterations of the home (Figure 2.11). One had two bedrooms while the other had four. As an activist recalled, settler representatives asked Levitt to develop the two model homes so that families with moderate income could purchase the smaller iteration, and then transform it into a four-bedroom house once funds became available to them, without having to make many renovations.[91] Levitt cladded both model homes with horizontal stone tiles. In so doing, he highlighted the sense of connectedness to Jerusalem many of the settlers shared. To the settlers' disappointment, however, his model homes showed little consideration for their religious needs.



[90] It is unclear what were these "other settlements of Shiloh" Valershtein referred to. They could be either Jewish or Palestinian settlements. However, since there were very few Jewish ones at the time, it is likely that he referred to Palestinian settlements. Dolev, "Betahbulot Taase Leha Yeshuv," 23.
[91] Valershtein, interview.

Figure 2.11 Ignoring the religious customs of the settlers, Levitt designed an in between space located right next to the entrance door. Given the relatively large average family-size typical for religious people, the space was considered wasteful. The units also lacked extra sinks in the kitchen required for a kosher house, and an additional sink for hand washing rituals outside the restroom. Levitt also placed a TV set in the living room, ignoring the fact that religious families rarely owned a TV. Source: Ofra Archive.

Settlers were suspicious of Levitt's model homes. Members of Ofra's building committee even circulated a letter among the residents, warning them not to take Levitt's model homes too seriously.[92] The letter stated that even though the members, who lacked professional training in architecture, were satisfied with the general master plan, they had some reservations. For one thing, they were unsure about the stone cladding Levitt proposed. In addition, they wrote, even though Levitt's drawings show flat-roofed homes, the committee members preferred pitched roofs. Moreover, they claimed that Levitt's artist's impression was misleading, for it ignored the mountainous landscape of Ofra. Altogether, they concluded, "there are many issues (in Levitt's model homes) that hadn't been raised in this document and we will have to think about as we continue in our work."[93]

The then-secretary of Ofra also showed little attachment to Levitt's plans. When a news reporter asked him about the future of Ofra in 1977, he indicated that the residents had an alternative plan. "If the government won't (recognize Ofra)," he warned, "we will…realize our objectives with a 'Build Your Own House' scheme. Each family will get a land plot for free, sell its house in the city and build a home in Ofra."[94] Levitt's model homes and public buildings were to be ignored in such a case.

It is hard to tell Levitt's reaction to the settlers' reservations. But since Levitt was aware of the legal constraints under which the settlers were operating, he might have showed some sympathy. After all, the government still refused to recognize Ofra as a settlement. No one could have predicted the future of what was then regarded as a workers camp.

Planners "from Below" meet Planners "From Above"

Just a few weeks after Levitt shared his drawings with the settlers, things began to change in Ofra. On May 17, 1977, the right-leaning Likud party won the elections. Two months later, on July 26, the Committee for Settling, comprised of government and Jewish Agency officials, authorized Ofra and two other West Bank settlements.[95] A week later, the Committee for Settling assigned the planning and development of Ofra to the Settlement Department.[96] The settlers were pleased. For years they had been asking government officials to recognize Ofra as a civilian settlement.[97] But, as the settlers complained to Prime Minister Yizhak Rabin, state officials had always dismissed them,

[92] The letter was attached to Levitt's drawings set. Levitt and Ofra's Building Committee, "Givat Ofra."
[93] Ibid.
[94] Dolev, "Betahbulot Taase Leha Yeshuv," 23.
[95] A. Lishanski (Prime Minister's secretary), "HT/20, HT/21," July 26, 1977, 7006/12-A, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.
[96] The Ministry of Housing was made in charged of one of the other settlements that were just approved—Maale Edumim. The third one—Elon Moreh—was still under reviewed. See "Protocol: Yeshivat Haveada Leinyanei Hityashvut Hameshutefet Lamemshala Velahistadrut Hatziyonit," August 2, 1977, 7006/12-A, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.
[97] Moshe Merhaviya (first secretary of Ofra), interview by author, December 24, 2015. Also see Yosef Waxman, "The Settlements of Maale Edumim, Ofra and Kedum Demand Recognition," c.Febraury 1976, Ofra Archives; Yosef Waxman, "'Worker Camps' in Samaria Demand Permanent Settlement Status," *Maariv*, October 24, 1976, p.14.

saying Ofra was merely a workers camp.[98] Those same officials were suddenly at their service.[99]

Within just a few weeks, the settlers' feeling of bliss, however, was replaced with endless debates and negotiations with official planning institutes. Architects and planners from the Settlement Department first came to Ofra where they met with the settlers and later with Levitt. These meetings left the officials with many concerns. Some worried Ofra's preliminary plans—drafted before the Settlement Department was assigned to the project—were inadequate. Chief architect at the Settlement Department Gavriel Krien noted that Levitt's master plan was "incomplete, and, in any case, extremely superficial."[100] Others questioned the entire design concept of Ofra and the principles of the Community Settlement.

Soon, planners came to realize that negotiating with the settlers was nearly impossible. The settlers had come to the site long before official planning institutes. They had been living there for more than two years. During this time, they had developed a sense of ownership over the place. Architect Lu Gelehrter, who was hired by the Ministry to oversee the landscaping and development [tochnit pituah] of Ofra, later explained that working on the settlement was unlike any other projects he had undertaken. In other projects, like residential neighborhoods he designed in Jerusalem, he was communicating exclusively with the Ministry of Housing, or with private developers and contractors. The future tenants played only a passive role. But now, he suddenly found himself serving people who were already living on the site.[101]

The settlers' attitude did little to ease the tension. As Gelehrter later recalled, when he first met with the activists, it was obvious to him they were a group of intelligent people who knew very well what they wanted. They didn't feel threatened by the presence of professional architects and planners. On the contrary, since the settlers saw themselves as national heroes, they felt entitled.[102] When communicating with him and other professional planners, they acted as if they had extra rights. "They were not cowards," he concluded, "they knew how to demand what they thought was 'theirs.' And I use 'theirs' ironically here."[103]

Planners, architects and other officials at the Ministry of Housing and the Settlement Department quickly came to learn that it was too late to turn back time and establish a more conventional planning process in Ofra. One time, as settlement activist Yoel Bin-Nun later recalled, officials from the Settlement Department met with several activists at Ofra. For an entire day they tried convincing the settlers they had to change

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[98] Ofra's Secretariat to Prime Minister Yizhak Rabin, "Bakasha Lepgisha," August 14, 1975.

[99] Very quickly, state officials began assisting the settlers build temporary housing units. The state hired Levitt to do oversee the design of individual temporary units. These units were placed according to a master plan drawn by architect Aaron Erlich from the Settlement Department in November 14, 1978. See Erlich's plans in Aharon Erlich, "Ofra - Mikum 10 Batim," November 14, 1978, folder 16 box 2, Ofra Archives; Efraim Marinianscky (consulting engineer), "Ofra - 10 Mivnim Leyad Gan Hayeladim," n.d., folder 16 box 2, Ofra Archives.
See Levitt's plans in Israel Levitt Architects and Town Builders Ltd., "Tochniyot," November 28, 1977, folder 15 box 2, Ofra Archives; Israel Levitt Architects and Town Builders Ltd., "Megurim Zmaniim - Shlav Bet," 1978, folder 15 box 2, Ofra Archives.

[100] Krein didn't mention Levitt's name in the letter. But since this was the only available master plan, it is almost certain he was referring to Levitt. See Gavriel Krien to S.Tzukerman (Haagaf Letihnun Hityashvuti), "Ofra," September 30, 1977, 104338, Jewish Agency for Israel Archives.

[101] Lou Gelehrter (architect in charge of landscaping and development at Ofra), interview.

[102] Gelehrter's observation seems rather accurate. In an interview I conducted with former secretary of Ofra, Moshe Merhaviya, he recalled that, back at the time, Ofra settlers saw themselves as serving the people of Israel. Moshe Merhaviya (first secretary of Ofra), interview.

[103] Lou Gelehrter (architect in charge of landscaping and development at Ofra), interview.

their plans. But, by the end of the day, he recalls, one of the officials admitted, "it is impossible to take this baby back into the womb."[104]

In December, the Settlement Department agreed to some of the settlers' demands and commissioned Levitt to develop his master plan for Ofra.[105] Officials gave Levitt three and a half months to come up with final plans.[106] During this time, Levitt had the freedom to develop his plans according to his taste. He had only one meeting with planners from the Settlement Department, Ministry of Housing, and Gdor, who was now working for the Ministry of Security, where they discussed the plans.[107] Then, on March 6, 1978, Levitt presented his plans to a special review committee at the settlement Department for evaluation (Figure 2.12).

Members of the review committee were not entirely satisfied with Levitt's plans. The private land plots, they complained, were too big. They also asked Levitt to try and eliminate some of the roads he drew. They proposed removing the dead-end roads, replacing them with pedestrian-only path-walks and centralized parking areas.[108] These changes aimed at making Ofra look more like a kibbutz, a rural settlement the committee members were familiar with. They asked Levitt to make a number of changes and re-submit the drawings. Nevertheless, by the end of that meeting, the review committee had approved the master plan.[109]

[104] Bin-Nun, interview.

[105] On 19.12.1977 Gavriel Krein sent the final version of the hiring contract to Levitt. See Gavriel Krien to Israel Levitt, "Heskem Avoda Ltihnun Ofra," December 19, 1977, 104338, Jewish Agency for Israel Archives. On 21.12.1977 Levitt accepted the offer. See Israel Levitt to Gavriel Krien, "Heskem Avoda Letihnun Ofra," December 21, 1977, 104338, Jewish Agency for Israel Archives.

[106] See employment contract in World Zionist Organization and Israel Levitt, "Heskem [Contract]," December 21, 1977, 104338, Jewish Agency for Israel Archives.

While Levitt was working, regional planner Yossi Sakoza and geographer Ilana Ben conducted a study of the environmental conditions of Ofra's area for the Settlement Department. See their report in Yossi Sakoza and Ilana Ben, "Do"h Lemikumei Keva," February 1978, 104338, Jewish Agency for Israel Archives.

[107] At that meeting, that took place on January 5, 1978, it was agreed to allow a centralized parking space for about 30 vehicles. Levitt was asked to prepare a master plan at the scale of 1:1000 meters as soon as possible. There are no records at the Settlement Department indicating that there were any other such meetings. transcribed by Gavriel Krien, "Sikum Veada Miktzzoit Ofra Miyom 5.1.78," January 18, 1978, Jewish Agency for Israel Archives.

[108] "Sikum Veada Shiput - Ofra Miyom 6.3.78" (World Zionist Organization, March 15, 1978), 103242, Jewish Agency for Israel Archives.

[109] Yossie Naim to Ofra secretariat, September 13, 1979, 104338, Jewish Agency for Israel Archives.

Figure 2.12 In January, 1978, Levitt shared his master plan with Settlement Department officials. Levitt arranged all private plots (painted in orange) around a civic center (in brown). In all, there were some 276 private plots, and an industrial area at the top-right corner (in purple) that was divided into 145 plots. Levitt allocated a large plot for agriculture (marked with slanted green lines) between the residential and industrial areas. Not everyone wanted these agricultural fields. Many settlers thought it was wasteful. But Etzion, who spent a few years in a kibbutz as a kid, insisted on having agriculture.[110] Eventually, he succeeded convincing his fellow activists that some agriculture would render their stay in Ofra more permanent.

Designing Ofra's Model Home

Once officials approved the master plan, the settlers focused their efforts on the design of permanent houses. From the start, they weren't excited about Levitt's model homes. Now, some of the residents were asking for more freedom in the design of their private

[110] Etzion, Sipuro Shel Makom: Proyekt Reayonot Im Vatikei Hahityashvut Bebinyamin.

homes.[111] They even contacted the Ministry of Housing, asking for a more flexible housing option that came to be known as Build Your Own Home.[112] According to the Build Your Own Home scheme, each resident could design his house according to his own taste.

Soon, however, the settlers abandoned the idea. Pinhas Valershtein, the first secretary of Ofra, insisted that having full freedom in the design of private houses was likely to render construction far more expensive. Accordingly, the plan was at odds with the limited resources of the predominantly young residents of Ofra.[113] He himself was only twenty-eight years old at the time and had just graduated from the Faculty of Agriculture at the Hebrew University. Until he was elected to Ofra's secretariat, he was working as a teacher at an elementary school. He couldn't have afforded hiring his own architect, contractor, etc.

In addition, Valershtein worried the settlers would lose their right for government funding if they chose a Build Your Own Home scheme. Normally, the government would fund the construction of all houses in rural settlements. The houses the Ministry funded were small and rudimentary, measuring 68 sq. m. They were either handed over to the residents for as long as they remained in the kibbutz, or sold under favorable conditions, as was true in the moshav.[114] The settlers of Ofra were keen on getting the same support.[115]

To the settlers' relief, Ministry officials agreed to negotiate the design of the rudimentary houses.[116] A number of settler representatives—including Valershtein, and Yossef Mano, who was in charged of construction at Ofra—showed Levitt's model homes to planners at the ministry.[117] Reacting to Levitt's drawings, the planners laughed. "Gentlemen, these are not our models," they told the settlers and showed them alternative model homes that were built in other rural settlements.[118] But Valershtein and his friends weren't moved by the planners' disinterest in Levitt's plans. Though they too were unimpressed by the plans, they were just as disappointed by the small size of the

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[111] During a tour to Ofra and other settlements, attended by Agriculture Minister Ariel Sharon and news reporters on August 7, 1978, it was argued that the first houses would be built according to a Build Your Own House scheme. See Haggai Ashad, "Sharon: The Framework for New Settlements is Complete," *Davar*, August 8, 1978.

[112] Your Own Home scheme allowed individuals to design and build detached homes according to their own taste on land plots the state leased to them. The government, in turn, installed all infrastructure and public buildings. See more details on Build Your Own Home in the third chapter of this dissertation.

[113] Valershtein, interview.

[114] Newman, "The Role of Gush Emunim and the Yishuv Kehillati in the West Bank 1974 - 1980," 322; Yoske Manor (resident and former head of Ofra's construction committee), interview.

[115] Perhaps due to Ofra's novelty, for a while, it was unclear whether the settlers would get funding from the Ministry. See settlers protesting their right for such funding in Mordechai Besuk, "2 Yeshuvim Hadashim Yaalu Bekarov Al Hakarka," *Al Hamishmar*, 1980, Ofra Archives.

It is unclear where Levitt was when these debates were taking place in Ofra. The earliest correspondence about the issue where Levitt was among the recipients I was able to find is dated to December 1978. It was sent after Ofra residents voted against Build Your Own House scheme, and the Ministry agreed to treat Ofra like other rural settlements. Y. Margalit (head of the new settlements and rural administration) and Rural construction engineer at Jerusalem region, "Programa Lebniya - Ofra: Tochnit 1978," December 13, 1978, 104338, Jewish Agency for Israel Archives.

[116] Residents were entitled for rural settlement infrastructure. The Ministry, however, agreed to install infrastructure for an urban settlements. The residents, however, were asked to pay for the difference between rural infrastructure and an urban one however. See Y. Margalit (head of the new settlements and rural administration) and Rural construction engineer at Jerusalem region, "Programa Lebniya - Ofra: Tochnit 1978."

It is hard to tell what was Levitt's reaction. I was unable to find a reply letter on his behalf at the archives of the Jewish Agency for Israel nor the Israeli State Archives and Ofra Archives. It seems like he believed his model home could be built with the Ministry's funding, and saw little point in reacting. His model home was not significantly larger than the standard rural models in other settlements that enjoyed these funds. Soon, however, such hopes, if they ever existed, would be dissolved.

[117] According to interviews I conducted, Levitt was not among those present at the meeting, nor the ones that followed it. Moshe Merhaviya (first secretary of Ofra), interview; Valershtein, interview.

[118] Yoske Manor (resident and former head of Ofra's construction committee), interview.

alternative model homes. The settlers insisted they needed bigger homes. They were older than most couples moving to moshavim and kibbutzim and had more kids, they explained.[119]

After some negotiations, a compromise was reached. The settlers were granted the right to make amendments and additions to one of the Ministry's model homes. These changes, it was agreed, were to be decided-on together with architects working for Ashtrum, a private company the ministry collaborated with. The people of Ofra, then, had to sign two contracts, one with the ministry of housing, and the other with Ashtrum. The one with the ministry applied only for the first 68 sq. m. while the second one covered all building additions.[120]

Architects at Ashtrum offered another model home to the settlers. Ashtrum had built that model home in other rural settlements in Israel (Figure 2.13). Valershtein and his fellow settlers took interest in Ashtrum's model home for a number of reasons. Most importantly, as Valershtein recalled, it was relatively cheap and easy to assemble. Moreover, although it was a two-bedroom house, it was about 10 sq. m. larger than the one commonly built in rural settlements. It could also be expanded into a four-bedroom house.[121]

Figure 2.13 The model home Ashtrum's architects presented to the settlers. Source: Ofra Archive.

Twenty-seven-year-old, kibbutz-born Moshe Merhavya, who joined Valershtein as Ofra's co-secretary, favored Ashtrum's model home for another reason. Unlike Levitt's model home, Ashtrum's one had a pitched red-tiles roof.[122] The red roof, Merhavya insisted, made the home look like a typical housing unit in a kibbutz. To his belief, the people of Ofra were the forbearers of early twentieth century Zionists who founded the kibbutzim. "We saw them as our rabbis and teachers," he later recalled.[123]

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[119] Yoske Manor (resident and former head of Ofra's construction committee); Moshe Merhaviya (first secretary of Ofra), interview.
[120] Yoske Manor (resident and former head of Ofra's construction committee), interview.
[121] Homebuyers could add one or two bedrooms. Those who added one bedroom had a 90 sq. m house. Those adding two bedroom enjoyed a 105 sq. m. house. Yoske Manor (resident and former head of Ofra's construction committee).
[122] Red tiled rooftops were common in kibbutzim. They were also common in the earlier moshavot from the late 19th century. For a discussion of red tile rooftops in rural settlements in Israel from the late 19th century to the present see Yossi Ben-Artzi, "Landscape and Identity – The Israeli Roof During the Last Generations," in *Ha-'Agalah Ha-Mele'ah: Me'ah Ye-'eśrim Shenot Tarbut Yiśra'el*, ed. Yiśra'el Barṭal and Merkaz Ts'eriḳ le-toldot ha-Tsiyonut, ha-yishuv u-medinat Yiśra'el (Yerushalayim: Hotsa'at sefarim 'a. sh. Y.L. Magnes, ha-Universiṭah ha-'Ivrit, 2002), 266–72.
[123] During my interview with Merhaviya, he acknowledged the fact that his admiration of the kibbutzim didn't work in both ways. Many kibbutz movements members associated with the left resented Ofra and other settlements. Moshe Merhaviya (first secretary of Ofra), interview.

Adopting their architectural forms seemed only natural to Merhavya. And, since the model of the Community Settlement lacked the economic basis of the kibbutz, "we had to make the association with the kibbutz clearer, at least at the level of form, both to ourselves and to the settling institutes."[124]

Associating Ofra with the kibbutz was a wise move, even if not an entirely conscious one. At the time, the kibbutz was probably the most celebrated social form in the country. Drawing a connection to the kibbutz, artificial as that connection may have been, promised the settlers a place in the heart of the Israeli consensus, if not into the pantheon of national heroes.

At first, some of the activists opposed Merhavya. They thought the pitched roof was unnecessary and foreign to the region. In fact, as I showed in the previous chapter, settlers and their architects aspired for a regional architecture in Kfar Etzion and the settlement of Hebron. The red roof was at odds with these earlier attempts. Some laughed at Merhavya, saying he was influenced by popular ads for a local chocolate brand that featured a pastoral home with a pitched red-tiles roof.[125] But after a while, the settlers were convinced the roof was appropriate for Ofra. After all, the sloped roof guaranteed some uniformity, and allowed an attic space that could be used as an extra bedroom.[126] The settlers were probably unaware of the lasting effect their decision would have on the settlement project. But in the following years, more settlements would adopt Ofra's red-tiled rooftops, making the red roof the ultimate signifiers of West Bank settlements.

Valershtein and his fellow settlers made some changes to Ashtrum's model home so it would fit their religious lifestyle (Figure 2.14). Most importantly, Valershtein recalls, they moved the kitchen from its original location in the living room.[127] While appropriate for secular users, many of the settlers preferred having the kitchen closed off from the living room. This way, as settlement activist and former secretary Aaron Halamish later explained, the living room could have served as an additional bedroom.[128] An extra bedroom was usually needed during the holidays, when distant family members would come visit, or if the family grew and needed more space. Further, moving the kitchen allowed it to be enlarged to serve larger families and holiday dinners. The settlers also added two sinks, required for a kosher kitchen.[129]

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[124] Moshe Merhaviya (first secretary of Ofra).

[125] Yehuda Etzion, conversation with author, December 7, 2015.

[126] Aaron Halamish (Ofra secretary in 1980-1), interview by author, May 18, 2015. Other activists I interviewed confirmed Halamish's comments. Etzion, for example, also argued that the red rooftops appealed to the settlers because such rooftops were common in kibbutzim. Meanwhile, Manor said it appealed to the settlers because it offered uniformity. Valershtein, on his part, emphasized the advantage of having an attic space. Etzion, interview; Yoske Manor (resident and former head of Ofra's construction committee), interview; Valershtein, interview.

[127] Hemdat Shani, conversation with author, May 5, 2015; Valershtein, interview; Aaron Halamish (Ofra secretary in 1980-1), interview.

Since the kitchen's original window—an elongated rectilinear window placed at the living room—was never changed, it is easy to see where the kitchen was originally placed in all of the first 50 houses.

[128] Aaron Halamish (Ofra secretary in 1980-1), interview.

[129] Valershtein, interview.

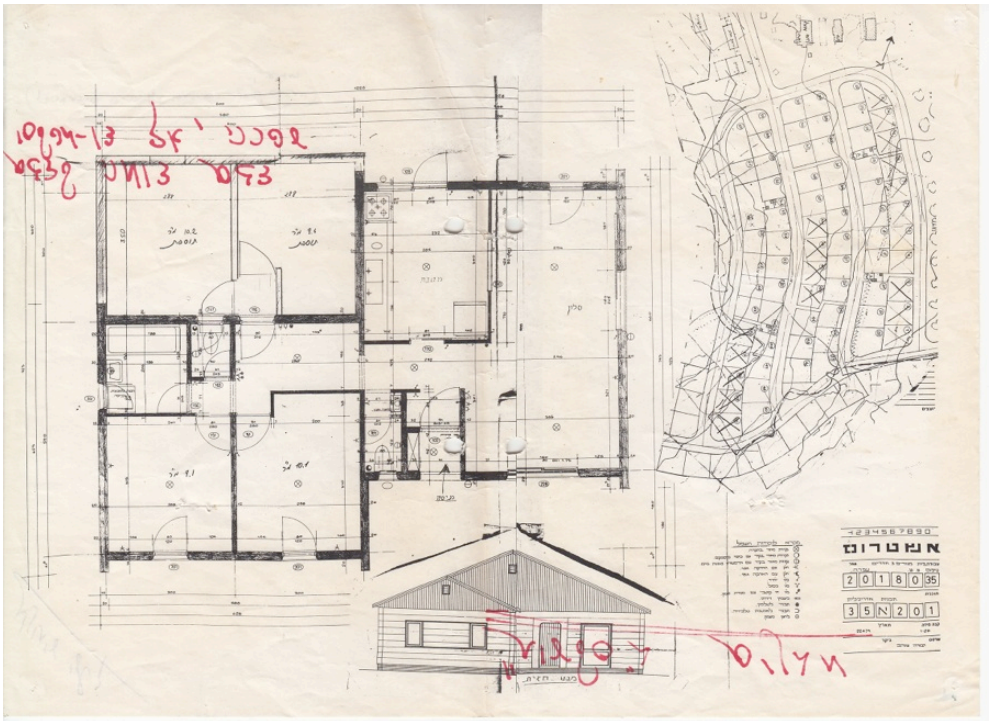


Figure 2.14 Each family was asked to pay $25,000 for a basic unit of two bedrooms.[130] Those who wished to had the option of adding one or two bedrooms, as shown in the drawing (in the upper left corner). The idea of a growing house was among the principles the settlers developed with Levitt when working on his original model homes.[131] They also adopted Levitt's stone cladding layer. To the settlers' disappointment, however, since Ashtrum never worked with stone and lacked the needed equipment, the stone layer they ended up producing was very thin.[132] Otherwise, the new model home shared little with Levitt's model. As Manor explained, any similarity between the plan drawings of the two is incidental.[133] Source: Ofra Archive.

Not everyone was satisfied with the new model home. When Valershtein and Merhavya presented it to the settlers' assembly, they encountered harsh criticism. To their disappointment, many settlers voiced their concerns, saying the model home lacked the needed insulation, and, altogether, was of very poor quality. Valershtein was not entirely surprised at their opposition. Even the people at Ashtrum warned him against the model.[134] It didn't fit the climate conditions of the mountainous region, they cautioned. "It really was a terrible house," Valershtein later admitted. But he thought they should still go ahead with it, or it would take much more time for construction to begin. His pleas didn't help, however, and the assembly voted against the model home.

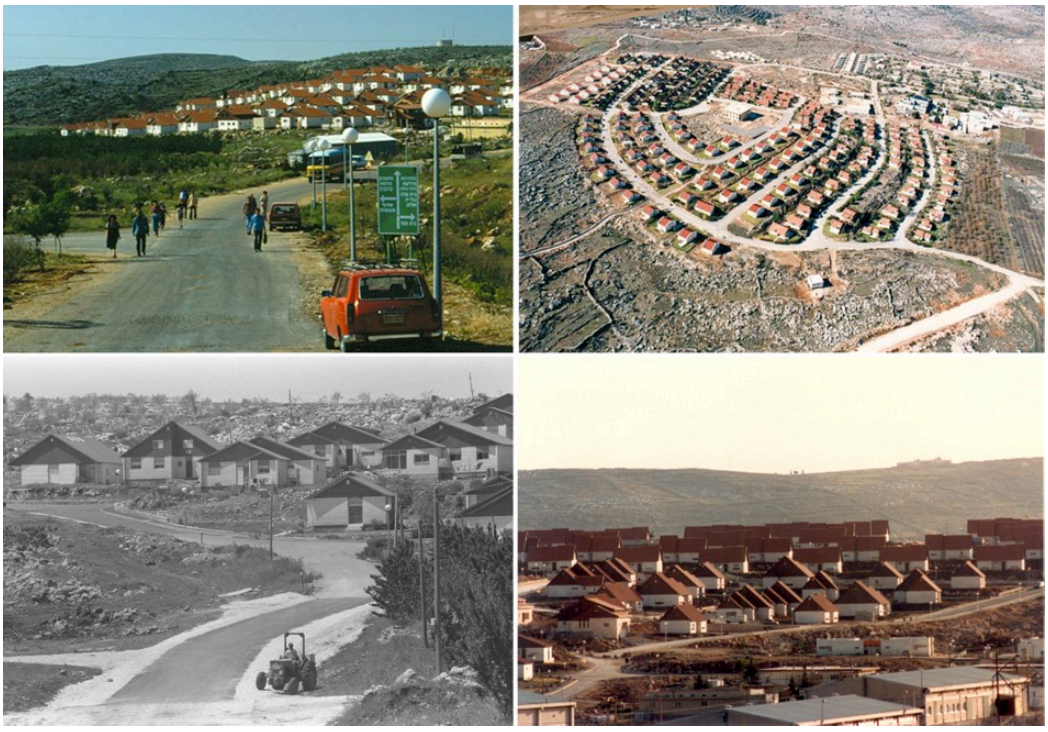
Once the meeting ended, Valershtein and Merhavya had to think fast. They had two options: They could listen to the assembly, forget about the new model home they developed with Ashtrum, and publish a bid using Levitt's drawings, or they ignore the vote and sign the contract with Ashtrum. They chose the latter option. "We understood that if these homes will not be approved, construction would get stuck," Valershtein

[130] "Facilities in Ofra," *Israel Scene*, September 1980, Ofra Archives.
[131] Valershtein, interview.
[132] Aaron Halamish (Ofra secretary in 1980-1), interview.
[133] Yoske Manor (resident and former head of Ofra's construction committee), interview.
[134] Rasis-Tal, interview.

explained.[135] The following morning, the two drove to Jerusalem and finalized the contract with Ashtrum.

The day after they signed the contract, the general assembly met again. On hearing about what the two had done, the residents of Ofra were outraged. In a way, they got a taste of their own manners. Only this time it wasn't Gdor or Levitt whose opinion was blatantly ignored—it was theirs. And they couldn't tolerate it. They unanimously agreed Valershtein and Merhavya must step down from their roles as co-secretaries of Ofra. For a couple of days, it was unclear whether the contract with Ashtrum could be retracted, and, equally important, who would take the lead as Ofra's new secretary. Yet, by the end of that week, Valershtein and Merhavya were re-elected. "The members of the assembly realized," Valershtein recalled, "we had to make a decision…and they understood this was the right building model for us."

By October 1980, construction of the first fifty houses was in full swing. By September of the following year, they were all occupied.[136] With time, the settlers learned to love the model home. Even though many changed its original layout over the years, most settlers I interviewed said they were satisfied with the model home. They felt like it represented their religious needs and national ambitions. In the following years, as more neighborhoods were built in Ofra, the residents decided that all new houses would have to follow the original model home design principles—namely the pitched roof and stone clad.[137] The settlers continued adhering to these guidelines even after Ministry of Housing officials requested they avoid both.[138]



[135] Valershtein, interview.
[136] Hagai Segal, "Shchunat Keva Rishona Beofra," September 23, 1981, Ofra Archives.
[137] For Ofra's building code, see Ofra's Building Committee, "Taktzir Takanot Habniya Beofra Venohalei Hagashat Habakashot Leishurei Bniya," January 1993, folder 26 box 2, Ofra Archives.
[138] See Ministry of Housing request to remove the settlers' insistence on pitched red-tiles roof and stone cladding in D. Ben-Yishai (Jerusalem region engineer) and Yossie Naim, September 28, 1979, 104338, Jewish Agency for Israel Archives.

Figure 2.15 The red-tiled roofs were of great importance to the settlers. As Merhavya explained, "we thought we could become authentic through resembling the kibbutz."[139] Accordingly, when one of the residents refused to have his chimney painted in red, Moshe Merhavya climbed on his rooftop and painted it himself. Source: Ofra Archive.

The only one who probably didn't like the model homes was Levitt. Throughout the design process, he took only a minor role. His plans for an elegant flat roofed, maybe even regional model home were replaced by a completely different model home. In all, he had little influence over the settlement's eventual shape. In 1979, he re-submitted a detailed master plan to the Settlement Department, listing some guidelines the settlers decided on.[140] He was unhappy with the final outcome. When working on other projects in the following years, Levitt would always refer to Ofra as a negative example, one of his colleagues recalled. "Just not Ofra houses again," he would tell one of his employees.[141]

But Levitt's frustration didn't affect the settlers. Even though they thought he was a nice guy, they never saw him as one of their own. As Marhaviya recalled, "he was not a man of ideology." And as far as his design skills were at stake, "he was mainly convenient…he wasn't like these architects who get attached to their design."[142] Soon however, once the work on public buildings in Ofra would begin, he would stop being so "convenient," and quickly find himself dismissed altogether.

A Diminished Sanctuary

Once construction of the first fifty homes was completed, the people of Ofra went on to their next major project: designing public buildings. While few showed interest in Levitt's designs for commercial and office spaces, the synagogue became the object of scrutiny. For many settlers, it was the most important building in the settlement. They saw it as a key step on the path to redemption.[143]

Since Levitt was the one who drew the master plan, it was agreed he would also be the one designing the synagogue.[144] By the end of 1981, Levitt completed two detailed design alternatives for the building (Figure 2.16).[145] The first showed a two-story structure with four crystal shaped towers topping the ceiling. These vertical elements, combined with the rather dramatic floor plan, a superimposition of two identical square shapes, made the building stand out. The second alternative showed a slightly smaller two-story structure. Taking the shape of a hexagon, it was capped by a Star of David, and could accommodate some four hundred guests. The ground floor of both alternatives was allocated for the men, while the upper level was for women. Levitt decided the second alternative was more appropriate for the settlement. [146] He then built a model of the

[139] Moshe Merhaviya (first secretary of Ofra), interview.
[140] For example, see Levitt's specifications for pitched red tiles roofs for all houses in Ofra in his Detailed Master Plan from 1979. Israel Levitt, "Tohnit Mitar Meforetet Leshnat 1979 Leyeshuv Ofra" (World Zionist Organization, 1979).
[141] Since both Levitt and the employee—Yael Shiloni—died, it was her husband, Yonathan Shiloni, who shared this memory. Yonatah Shiloni, interview.
[142] Moshe Merhaviya (first secretary of Ofra), interview.
[143] For example, Etzion wrote in 1982, "the plan (of the synagogue) should give an earthly expression, casted in a building, to the yearnings of a prayer for the wholeness of redemption…" See Yehuda Etzion, "Beit Hatfila," *Et Ofra*, December 10, 1982, Ofra Archives.
[144] Etzion, interview.
[145] Israel Levitt, "Synagogue Plans," 1981, folder 28 box 2, Ofra Archives.
[146] It is unclear when exactly Levitt decide on the second alternative. However, when Etzion and the members of the Synagogue Committee reacted to Levitt's design, they were commenting on the second alternative only. See Levitt.

second alternative and placed it at Ofra's temporary synagogue so the residents could observe it.

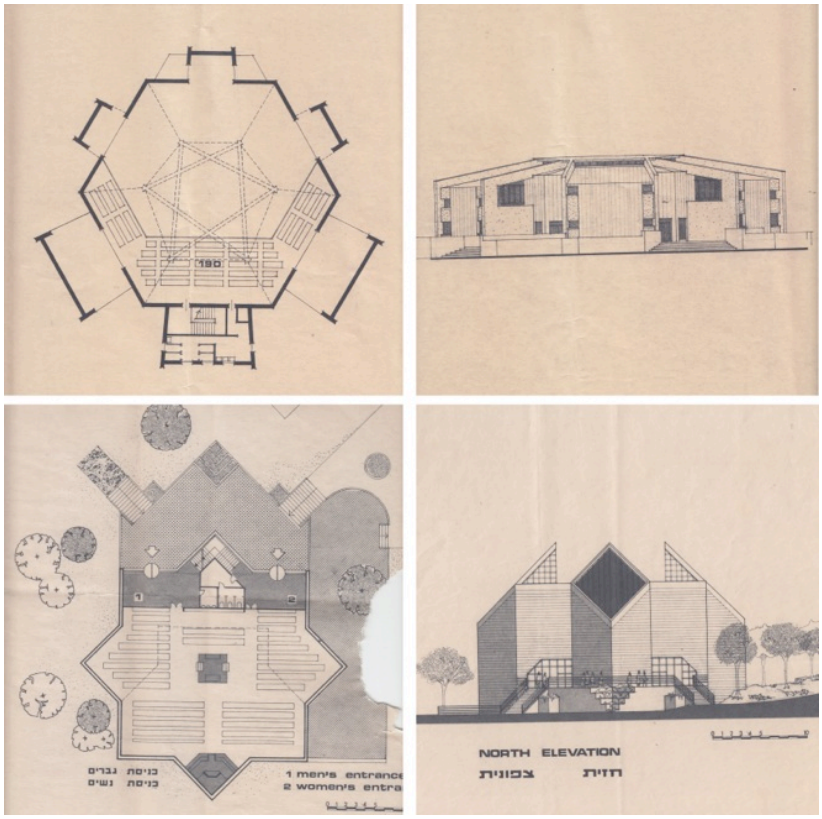


Figure 2.16: The two alternatives Levitt designed for the synagogue. Source: Ofra Archive, folder 28 box 2.

When Yehuda Etzion, the young yeshiva graduate who initiated the works in Ba'al Hatzor some six years earlier, saw Levitt's model, he was outraged. He felt like Levitt's entire design approach was wrong. In a letter he circulated among the settlers, he insisted Levitt's design lacked beauty, and "even if there was any beauty in Levitt's plan, other than the Star of David, created by the beams of the ceiling, its beauty was arbitrary."[147] By arbitrary beauty, Etzion was referring to the plan's complex geometry. To his belief, "A synagogue structure should have simple lines so they would match the simplicity and honesty a prayer should express."[148] And, as for the Star of David, Etzion lamented, it was a symbol the Jewish people had adopted long after the second temple was destroyed. It definitely wasn't something "worth casting with dozens of cubic meters of fortified concrete."[149] Equally troubling, he insisted, was the lack of public participation in the design process. For, as Etzion's friend and founder of Ofra's field school Ze'ev Erlich would later write, "it doesn't seem right that the synagogue, the heart of the settlement, both physically and spiritually, would be imposed on us by an outside

[147] Etzion, "Beit Hatfila," 10–11.
[148] Yehuda Etzion on behalf of the synagogue committee, "Leromem Et Beit Elokeinu," *Et Ofra*, June 11, 1983, 11–12, Ofra Archives.
[149] Etzion, "Beit Hatfila," 10–11.

force."[150] Soon after, together with Erlich, Etzion founded a residents' committee that oversaw the re-design and construction of Ofra's synagogue.[151]

On behalf of the committee, Erlich conducted a thorough examination of Levitt's plan. To his disappointment, he learned that not only did Levitt fail to apply the "right" symbols, but he also ignored some of the settlers' more practical needs. By placing the women's court in the upper level, Erlich complained, Levitt failed to account for the exceptionally large number of kids in the settlement. "We all know the phenomenon (in synagogues where the females court is on the upper level)—kids of all ages go up and down the stairs and disturb the (men) who pray." In addition, Erlich argued, the hexagon shape of Levitt's plan rendered future expansions virtually impossible. Since the settlers of Ofra were known for their excessive use of the synagogue and unapologetic expansion plans, he believed a more flexible design, one that would allow significant future additions, was needed. Finally, joining Etzion's criticism, Erlich lamented, "Levitt's proposal seems to lack a 'soul'…it lacks an additional dimension, a somewhat spiritual one, something I would have expected from a synagogue."[152]

The Synagogue Committee circulated Erlich's comments among the residents. The committee members enclosed a tentative design proposal they drafted alongside Erlich's notes (Figure 2.17). The proposal had a clear source of inspiration—the old Jewish Temple that stood on Temple Mount in Jerusalem until 70 AD. To Etzion's belief, a modern-day synagogue was merely a substitute for the Temple. The synagogue, therefore, had to remind the viewers of the old temple. Striving towards this end, the committee members drew some sketches of rectilinear synagogues that were built shortly after the destruction of the Temple. These old synagogues were closer to the origin—the Jewish Temple. Etzion and the other members of the committee used them to extract design principles for their own proposal. They also argued that the old synagogues' rectilinear scheme solved the flaws in Levitt's plan: The women's court could be placed in the two halls adjacent to the main prayer hall, and the entire structure could be easily expanded. Furthermore, they showed how the rectilinear structure could be adorned with an entrance space and interior details. Among these were steps leading to the Torah Ark, where the Torah scrolls are kept, and other elements "that would remind us, the people coming to pray, of the glorious days of the people of Israel."[153]

[150] Jabo (Zeev Hanoh Erlih on behalf of the synagogue committee), "Tohnit Hadasha Lebeit Knesset Hakavua," August 21, 1982, Ofra Archives.
[151] Etzion, interview. It is unclear if a synagogue committee existed before Etzion saw Levitt's model. Regardless, as Erlih commented, the committee was expanded and began to work seriously on the issue only afterwards. Jabo (Zeev Hanoh Erlih on behalf of the synagogue committee), "Tohnit Hadasha Lebeit Knesset Hakavua."
[152] Jabo (Zeev Hanoh Erlih on behalf of the synagogue committee), "Tohnit Hadasha Lebeit Knesset Hakavua."
[153] Ibid.

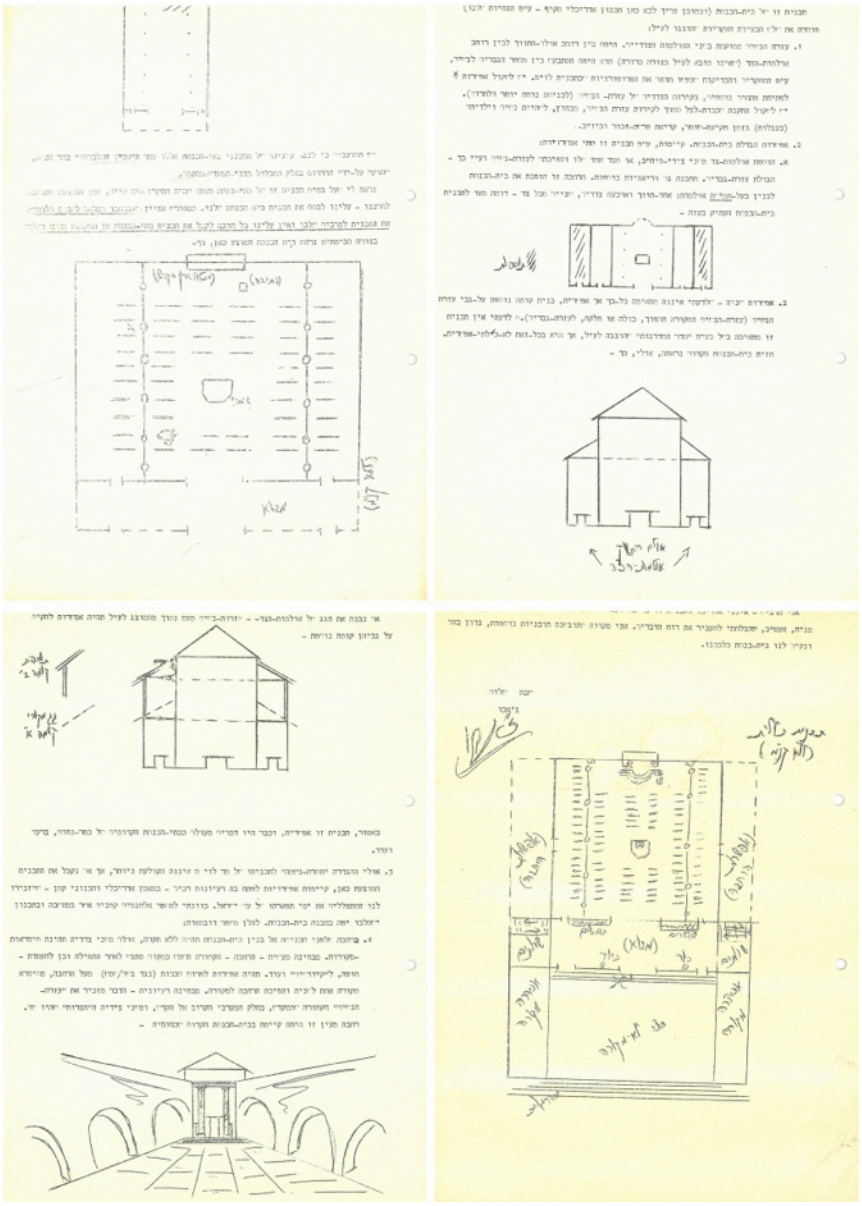


Figure 2.17 Sketches from the proposal the members of the synagogue committee circulated among the residents of Ofra. Source: Jabo, "Tohnit Hadasha Lebeit Knesset Hakavua," Ofra Archives.

To render the proposal more concrete, the settlers later contacted Etzion's friend, Gideon Charlap. A graduate of the far-right Nir Yeshiva in Kiryat Arba and a fifth-year architecture student at the Technion, Charlap shared Etzion's political and religious views.[154] Back then, Charlap was about to complete his design thesis about Ofra. For his thesis, he developed a new public center for the settlement, a revised model home, and a synagogue. It was only natural for him to join Etzion and the members of the synagogue committee.

At their first meeting with Charlap, Etzion and Erlich shared their vision for the synagogue with the young architecture student. By that point, it was clear to them that the

[154] Gershom Gorenberg, *The End of Days : Fundamentalism and the Struggle for the Temple Mount* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 198.

synagogue would be planned according to the guidelines they developed. They were only concerned about making the "right" references to the Holy Temple. Accordingly, they didn't ask Charlap to develop a new design. Instead, they discussed with him the various religious prohibitions he should keep in mind while developing building details. Most importantly, Etzion warned him, he should not make an exact replica of the Holy Temple. Instead, he should make an incomplete copy of the temple, or a "Mikdash Me'at" [Diminished Temple], as it is referred to in the scriptures.[155] An incomplete replica, Etzion explained to Charlap, had the power to "encourage the people to build the actual place of gathering—the Temple."[156]

By the end of 1982, Charlap completed a set of drawings. Etzion then presented the work to the general assembly in Ofra (Figure 2.18).[157] The synagogue's layout, Etzion explained to his fellow settlers, was borrowed from the Old Temple's women's court.[158] Like the ancient court, Charlap's synagogue had a square floor plan, with three monumental gates. To highlight the structure's incompleteness, the three gates were designed in such away so they would be taller than the synagogue's walls and transcend the ceiling. "Here lies a first expression to the pending wholeness we have not reached yet," Etzion clarified. To bolster this sense of incompleteness, two of the gates were blocked. In addition, Etzion pointed, the closet by the main podium, where the Torah Scrolls were to be kept, was pushed backwards and recessed into the wall. The recessed closet was surrounded by five glass slits from all sides. The slits, Etzion clarified, referenced the five wooden gates that surrounded the Torah Ark in the Temple.

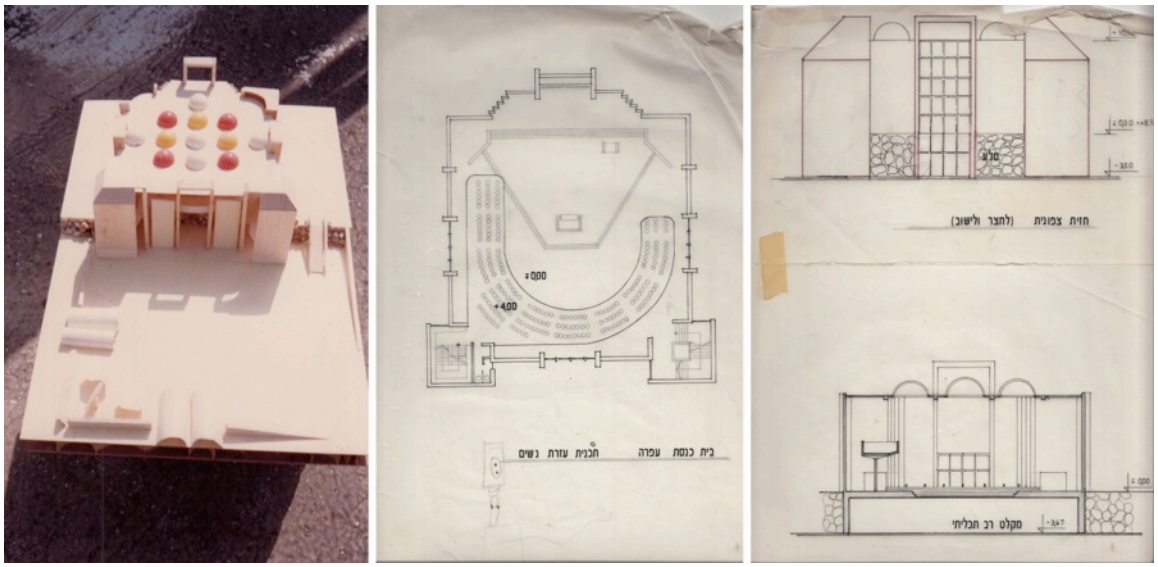


Figure 2.18 Charlap's design was loaded with references to the old Temple. For example, he placed rounded sinks made of copper for priests, as was common in the old Temple. In addition, he suspended the gallery space and placed it on a "forest of columns," so it won't touch the walls of the building. The image on the left shows how the gates passed the ceiling, emphasizing the incompleteness of the building. Source: Gideon Charlap's private collection.

[155] Yehuda Etzion on behalf of Yoel Bin-Nun and Jabo, "Mikdash Meat," *Et Ofra*, October 29, 1982, 3–4, Ofra Archives.
[156] See Yehuda Etzion on behalf of Yoel and Jabo to Gideon Charlap, October 1983, Gideon Charlap private collection.
[157] Etzion, "Beit Hatfila," 10–11.
[158] According to Etzion, it was a square-shaped inner courtyard adjacent to the main hall. It was the site where most prayers took place. Moreover, he explained, it was also the space from where priests would ascend to the main hall of the Temple. See Charlaps drawings drawing in figure 18.

After seeing Charlap's drawings, the residents were asked to decide which design alternative they preferred: Levitt's or the newer one. To Etzion and Charlap's disappointment, the setters voted against both options. While all agreed Levitt's plan was wrong, Charlap seemed too young and inexperienced to the settlers. Some also raised concerns about the plan's disregard to questions of function.[159] Charlap was outraged. He couldn't understand why they didn't choose his proposal, especially since he so meticulously followed Etzion's instructions. Still today, Charlap insists his proposal was dismissed only once he begun asking for money.[160]

While Charlap's age raised some concerns, Etzion's idea of a Diminished Temple appealed to many of the settlers. They decided that Etzion and the synagogue committee would get in touch with another architect, Meiron Poliakin, and present him their idea. Together, it was decided, they would try and render their Diminished Temple more concrete. Poliakin, a Jerusalem-based architect, was relatively young at the time, but already had his own practice. Even though he was secular, he seemed to be open-minded when Etzion first described to him the project and his vision for the building.

Quickly, Etzion and Poliakin became close friends. "It was truly an intimate relationship, the most intimate a friendship can be," Etzion recalled. The two would spend hours at Poliakin's office drafting sketches for the synagogue. Poliakin would listen carefully to Etzion, fleshing out his ideas with architectural solutions. Together, for example, they agreed the Torah Ark should be placed in one of the corners, framed by a wall with three unequal gates that echoed the main façade of the Old Temple (Figure 2.19).[161]

[159] Yehuda Etzion on behalf of the synagogue committee, "Leromem Et Beit Elokeinu," 11–12.
[160] Gideon Charlap, interview by author, August 23, 2016.
[161] Etzion, interview; Yehuda Etzion on behalf of the synagogue committee, "Leromem Et Beit Elokeinu."

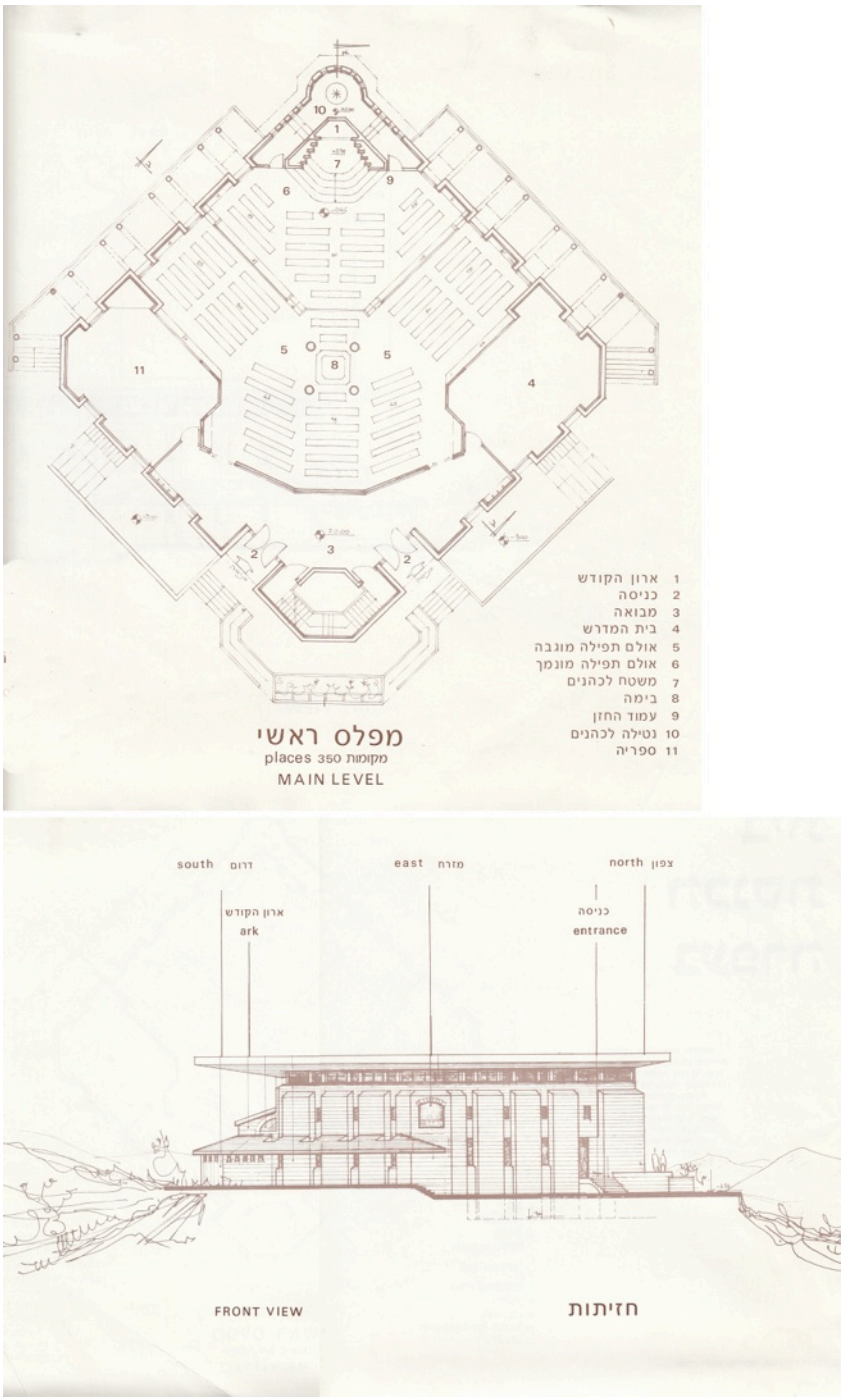


Figure 2.19 Plan and elevation drawn by Poliakin. By placing the Torah's Ark at the top corner, according to Etzion, the seating arrangement combined Ashkenazi tradition, where the seats were arranged in straight rows, with Sephardic custom, according to which the seats would go around the Ark from three sides. The Ark, as was proposed in Charlap's plan, was framed by five slits that referenced the wooden gates of the Temple. Source: Ofra Archives.

By June 1983, the two had completed the design of the 560-seat synagogue. When Etzion presented the synagogue plans to the settlers, they seemed satisfied. Not only did they decide it should be built, but they even agreed to make changes to Levitt's

master plan so it would suit the new design. On Etzion's advice, they moved the site Levitt allocated for the synagogue from the civic center, where it was to stand next to all other public buildings at the highest point in the settlement. After all, Etzion insisted, it was written in the scriptures that a synagogue must be placed at the highest point in a city [beemeroma shel ir].[162] Soon after, enough funds were raised and construction had finally begun.

Etzion was ecstatic. Everyday he would spend hours on the site with the construction workers. Finally, after two years of intense design work, he had the pleasure of seeing his vision comes to life.

But then, on a spring day in 1984, a group of police officers arrived at the construction site. At the time, Etzion was not only preoccupied with a Diminished Temple; he was also developing plans for a real Temple. And unlike the one in Ofra, the second one was to be built on the ruins of the Dome of the Rock, which Etzion, alongside his fellows from what came to be known as the Jewish Underground, was planning to blow up. Etzion and the other members of the Jewish Underground were involved in a series of terror attacks against Palestinian civilians and officials.[163] Etzion was taken from the construction sites and sent to prison, where he would spend the next seven years.

On hearing about Etzion's arrest, Poliakin was terrified. He could never have imagined that one of his most intimate friends, a pious man with whom he had been sharing his artistic vision and innermost thoughts, was a terrorist.[164] All of a sudden, it occurred to Poliakin that his unending talks with Etzion about the Temple and about redemption were anything but naïve. Etzion and the other settlers of Ofra were not playing with abstract ideas. They had a concrete political program, and Poliakin, unwittingly, had put his professional skills at their service. Offended and perplexed, Poliakin, according to the rumor in Ofra, never returned to the construction site.

While Poliakin was away, Etzion continued working on the design of the synagogue from his prison cell. Some of the details were not finalized by the time he was arrested, and he just couldn't let it go. For example, he drew sketches for the four main columns that framed the pulpit, insisting they should take the shape of palm trees.[165] The palm tree, he explained in a letter to Poliakin, was among the motifs in the old Temple, and appeared on the two columns at the main gate of the Temple. In addition, he proposed printing curvilinear lines on the stone cladded wall behind the Torah Ark in ways that resembled the Menorah—a seven-lamp lampstand used in the old Temple. But, to Etzion's disappointment, his pleas fell on deaf ears.[166] By that point, Poliakin was unwilling to listen to him and his design suggestions. He mainly wanted the building to be completed so he could forget about the entire story.

In 1987, the synagogue was opened to the public. Even though some felt uncomfortable with Etzion's criminal activity, the pious settlers were satisfied with the design. And they had good reasons to feel this way. Almost each and every detail in the building was loaded with religious meaning. Etzion, together with his many collaborators, was able to generate a formal language that originated in the scriptures.

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[162] Etzion, interview.
[163] For a detailed account describing the events and the activities of the Jewish Underground see Hagai Segal, *Ahim Yekarim: Korot "Hamahteret Hayehudit"* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1987).
[164] Etzion told me about Poliakin's reaction. Poliakin himself refused to communicate with me after I explained to him I was studying Ofra's synagogue.
[165] Etzion, interview.
[166] Ibid.

And even though some, like David Cassuto, criticized the overt symbolism and grandiose scale of the building, almost all shared enthusiasm at the finished product.[167]

The only ones who truly hated the project were the architects. They were all hurt by the process in one way or the other: Levitt, an established architect who had donated his time to the settlers from their first days in the military base, was replaced by an undergraduate student; Charlap insisted the settlers used him, that once they had his drawings, with all the details he had carefully developed—details that were later included in Poliakin's design, he complained—they abandoned him, and Poliakin, who was "tricked" into a project he never really understood, refuses to talk about the synagogue and the design process to this day.[168]

Grandiose Plans

Offended as Poliakin and Levitt may have been, the synagogue and the overall design of the settlement were a huge success from the settlers' point of view. In the years that followed the founding of Ofra, the model of the Community Settlement was replicated throughout the West Bank. Even though, as I will show in the next chapter, many of these Community Settlements didn't look look like Ofra, they maintained some of its features. Most notably, almost all had a relatively similar curvilinear road system, regular division into private plots, and pitched red-tile roofs. It was not long before the model was also imported to Israel, where it became equally popular. By 1987, only ten years after the government authorized Ofra, there were some 100 Community Settlements, and quickly it would become the most popular settlement model in the country.[169]

The unprecedented success of Ofra encouraged the settlers to embark upon much more grandiose projects. Already in 1976, they published Yes"h Plan, a master plan for some 60 new settlements in the West Bank. Two years later, in 1978, they would publish an even more elaborate master plan for some two million residents scattered across the country (Figure 2.20). And, unlike "regular" master plans drawn by professional planners, the settlers' plan was guided by religious principles aimed at precipitating the coming of the messiah. For example, the first guiding principle they enlisted in the latter master plan was the religious commandment to settle the land of Israel.[170] And in the name of the very same commandment, they would embark upon even more grandiose master plans in the coming decades.[171]

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[167] See, for example, Hava Pinhas-Cohen, "Livroah Min Haklishaot: Interview with David Cassuto," *Nekuda*, September 21, 1984, 36–37; Nekuda team, "Harutinizatziya Shel Hahagshama (Conversation with Leon Vizeltir," *Nekuda*, October 1987, 32–33.
; interview with another guy in Nekuda.

[168] When I called Poliakin he refused to meet with me and announced: "it is personal and emotional, don't bother me ever again with this!"

[169] Horwitz, "The Community Oriented Model: A New Type of Settlement in Israel," 30. By May 1984, 10% of Jewish non-urban settlements in Israel and the West Bank were Community Settlements. Planners at the Ministry were worried, wondering how these settlements will operate in the long run, or fit different communities. See Shmuel Horwitz, "Hadegem Hakehilati Bemisgeret Hityashvut Hadasha," in *Leket Hatrtzaot Benosei Tichnun Binui Iichlus*, ed. Zehava Bar-Yosef (Jerusalem: Ministry of Housing, 1985), 6–20.

[170] Gush Emunim, "Tohnit Av Lehityashvut Beyehuda Veshomron," 1978, 5, Hovrot, Ofra Archives.

[171] For example see master plan for Binyamin region from 1983. R. Ben-Bassat and A. Silverston, "Tihnun Ezori Kolel Mate Binyamin" (Binyamin Regional Council and the World Zionist Organization, November 1983). A more ambitious plan would be Etzion's Jerusalem Book that proposes a whole new design for Jerusalem. Yehuda Etzion, ed., *Sefer Yerushalayim Habnuya* (Jerusalem, 2010); Yehuda Etzion, ed., *Sefer Yerushalayim Habnuya (Behahana)*, 2014.

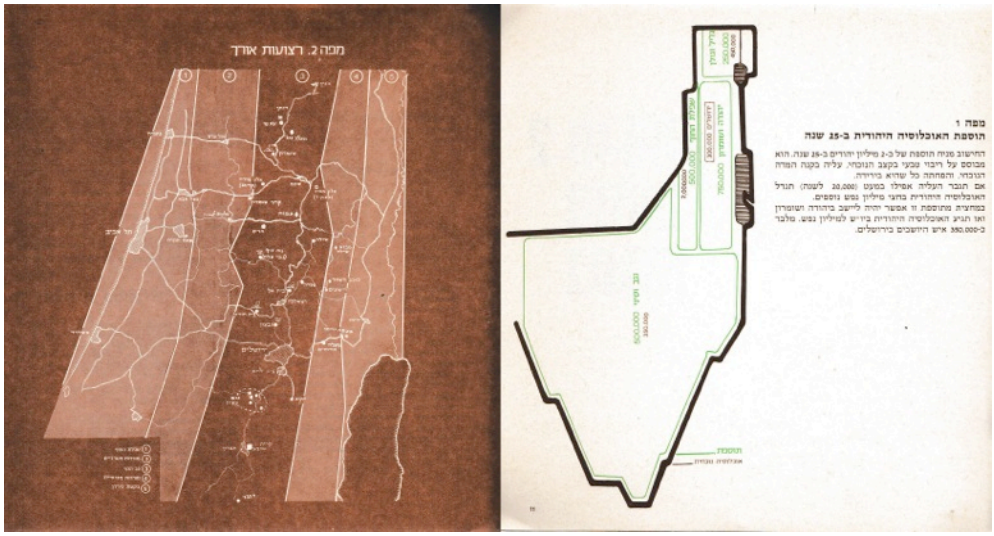

Figure 2.20 Drawings from Gush Emunim's master plan from 1978.

While not all their plans would prove to be as successful as Ofra, and the messiah has yet to come, the settlers were able to replace master plans and building schemes drawn by official planning institutes more often than not.

Architects Face Insurgency

Levitt and Poliakin were not the only architects whose design and authority the settlers had called into question. Almost everyone working for official planning institutes—especially those associated with the rural sector—found themselves under attack on two fronts with the rise of settlers' planning agencies. First, the design principles of the Community Settlement had little to do with the models they had been developing and advocating for. Second, *Gush Emunim's* planning agencies undermined the authority of planners and architects working for the Settlement Department, the Rural Administration, and the Planning Department of the Kibbutz Movement. All of a sudden, it was no longer up to the institutes to decide on the shape of the country.

Many of the architects working for planning institutes grew up in agrarian settlements: kibbutzim or cooperative moshavim. When approaching the drafting table, they aimed at reproducing design features that reflected the socialist ideals they were intimately familiar with. For example, chief architect at the Settlement Department Gavriel Krien grew up in kibbutz Tel Katzir, and for his thesis project at the University of North Carolina he developed a new design scheme for the kibbutz. On his return to Israel in 1970, it was only natural for him to join the Settlement Department where he could continue developing new designs for communal living. Quickly after joining the Settlement Department, he developed new schemes for cooperative agrarian settlements that were built around clusters of single-family houses and shared vehicle-free open spaces and an adjacent agricultural center (Figure 2.21).

But once Gush Emunim activists began erecting Community Settlements, Krien's car-free zones and shared open spaces became obsolete.[172] "These people, they were not farmers. They had no interest in these forms," he later lamented. He also felt like the

[172] This process of reinventing Krien plans was gradual. As Krien explained to me, at first, some settlements still maintained some of the features he developed, like pedestrian path walks. Gavriel Krien, interview by author, November 26, 2015.

planning of most Community Settlements was unsophisticated when compared to his elaborate designs. Usually, he reflected, Community Settlements were comprised of monotonous rows of private plots that were distributed along repetitive roads with a synagogue and some services in the middle.[173] Sharing Krien's view, head of the Settlement Department, Ra'anan Weiss, once told Gdor, "I am allergic to your Community Settlement model!"[174]

Figure 2.21 A cooperative moshav with clusters that can expand outwards designed by Gavriel Krien. Source: Central Zionist Archives.

The public buildings around which Community Settlements were often laid out—the synagogue and mikve—were equally foreign to planning institutes. In most kibbutzim, for instance, the main public building was the dinning hall. Zalman Gester, head of the Kibbutz Planning Department, once explained, "it was the most representative building of the kibbutz…it showed in the starkest way possible the togetherness of the kibbutz…(the dinning hall was) an expression of the economic, organizational and cultural reaches of the kibbutz."[175] Accordingly, architects invested great effort blending the dinning hall into its surroundings so it would express modesty while simultaneously serving social functions such as general assembly gatherings, performances, screenings, and, above all, eating.[176]

Kibbutz Kalya's dining hall illustrates the design intentions of architects working for official planning institutes (Figure 2.22). Kibbutz native and architect at the Planning Department Arnona Axelrod drew plans for the dinning hall at the same time that Etzion was designing Ofra's synagogue. Kaly"a is one of the few kibbutzim and cooperative

[173] Ibid.
[174] Gdor, interview.
[175] Zalman Gester, "Heder Ohel," *Daf Meyda*, June 1983, 8, Bniya 12/9, Yad Tabenkin Archive, Ramat Efal.
[176] Gester, 8–9; Arnona Axelrod, interview by author, August 9, 2016.

agrarian settlements the government built in the 1970s along the Jordan Valley, at the eastern edge of the West Bank.[177] Axelrod believed Kaly"a's dining hall should be single-story, even though the Ministry of Housing was willing to fund a two-story structure. It would blend more naturally into its immediate surroundings this way, she insisted.[178] "We were modest people back then," she later explained.[179] Together with some vernacular elements she crafted, the austere dinning hall was nothing like the grandiose temple-look-alike-synagogue of Ofra.[180]

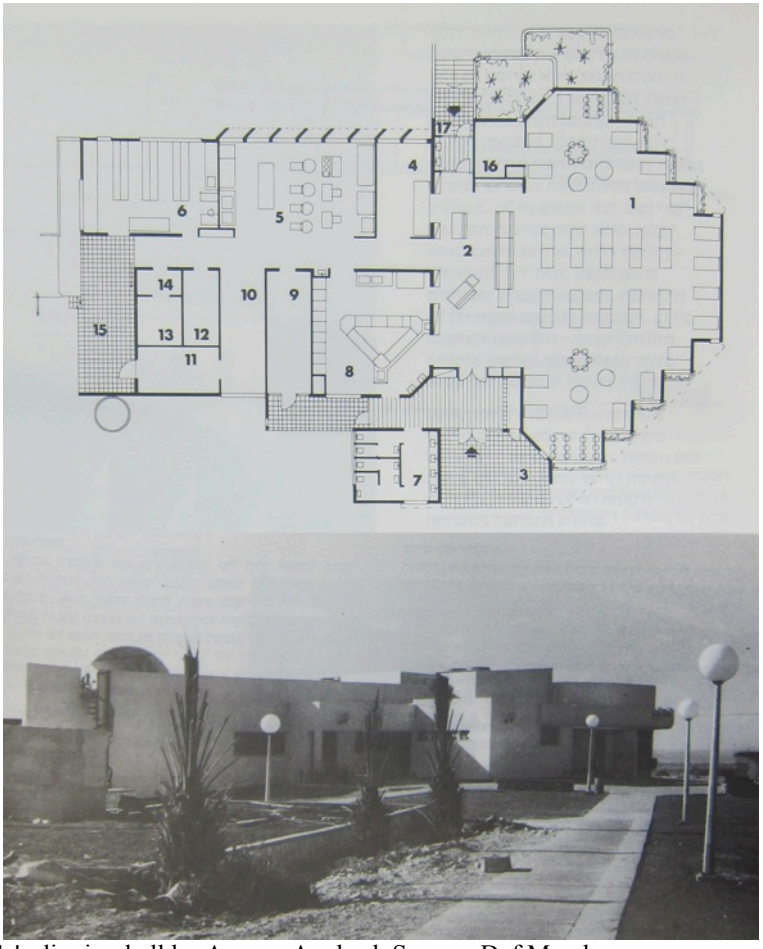

Figure 2.22 Kaly"a's dinning hall by Arnona Axelrod. Source: Daf Meyda.

The residents of Kaly"a, like members of other kibbutzim, didn't share Axelrod's adherence to austerity. Already in October 1977, she was asked to come up with design alternatives that would allow the residents of Kaly"a to expand their private homes.[181] The homes were originally planned to house only the parents, without their children, who were supposed to sleep in the children's house. Now, the houses seemed too modest to the residents. Soon after, the Kaly"a's residents also asked to have the kibbutz

[177] These settlements were built as part of a government strategy, aimed at fortifying the border with Jordan.
[178] The Ministry of Housing offered to fund an extra floor. To Axelrod relief, though, the offer was canceled so it was obvious a single story building was the most the people of Kaly"a could aspire for. Arnona Axelrod, "Mivne Leheder Ohel Bekibutz Kalya," *Daf Meyda*, September 1987, 32–33, Yad Tabenkin Archive, Ramat Efal.
[179] Axelrod, interview.
[180] Axelrod, "Mivne Leheder Ohel Bekibutz Kalya," 34–35.
[181] Oded Barzilai, "Do"h Bikur Bekalya Be-24.10.77," October 26, 1977, Kaliya 4-14/11/8, Yad Tabenkin Archive, Ramat Efal.

transformed into a Community Settlement.[182] Their request was not irrational. While kibbutz Kaly"a was struggling to survive, Community Settlements like Ofra were flourishing. Community Settlements residents had much bigger houses and higher income. The design of Kaly"a and other rural settlements seemed poor and outdated in comparison to the Community Settlement.

Krien and Axelrod were not the first architects who had the misfortune of seeing their design principles become obsolete. Design trends change, and there was little architects could do to fight the popularity of the Community Settlement. But Israeli architects were not willing to give up on their authority and professional status—not without a fight. The rise of Ofra marked a low point in the profession. The settlement was founded, planned, and executed with little intervention from professional planners and architects. The master plans the settlers began issuing after the founding of Ofra were also laid out without consulting planning institutes. The activists of *Gush Emunim* were taking over what once used to be exclusively under the control of professional planners and architects.

Abraham Wachman, the dean of the Faculty of Architecture at the Technion—then the only architecture school in the country—decided something must be done to overturn this trend. The Polish-born, forty-five-year-old architect, who had enjoyed unprecedented popularity among his students, was known among his peers for his strong views and charisma. In January 1976, Wachman sent a thin booklet, entitled "The Double Axis Plan," to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.[183] Accompanied by several plan drawings, the booklet outlined his unsolicited vision for the future of the country and the occupied territories. It was perhaps the most ambitious attempt from a professional architect to take part in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Wachman was aware of the high-stakes. "This booklet," he wrote to Rabin, "deals with two of the most difficult problems our country is pondering over: A - The need to make the right decision about the (occupied) territories and our national borders, (and) B – The lack of a comprehensive long-term physical planning…from which regional, and local planning decisions could be extrapolated."[184] The latter problem had only worsened, Wachman insisted, in the aftermath of the Six-Day War. As he later commented, since 1967 "a policy of 'not deciding'…. A clear decision not to decide, not to draw maps and plans, not to say what we want," became the unofficial policy of the government.[185] "For practical reasons, but also for the mental strength of the (Israeli) people," he insisted, "it is important to have clearly stated goals, (and) translate such goals to a physical map (master plan) of the state clarifying: Where, how many, and what shape will the country take in so and so years from now."[186]

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[182] Axelrod, interview.

[183] The booklet is dated to December 1975. See Avraham Wachman, "Tohnit Hashdeira Hakfula (Rashei Prakim Lpitron Territorially Veletohnit Fizit Kolelet Letvah Aroh)," December 1975, 7452/20-G, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem. However, Wachman mentioned January 1976 as the date of issuance of the plan in an article he published shortly after. See Avraham Wachman, "Tohnit Hashdeira Hakfula," *Amudim-Betaon Hakibutz Hadati*, April 1977, 272–83, 15/Galili/68/4, Yad Tabenkin Archive, Ramat Efal. A newspaper clipping confirm January as the exact date. See Yerah Tal, "Amud Hashdra Behazono Shel Arik Sharon," September 23, 1977, 15/Galili/68/4, Yad Tabenkin Archive, Ramat Efal; Aharon Bahar, "Tohnit Hahitnahalut Shel Arik Sharon Nolda Behashraat Memshelet Yitzhak Rabin," *Yediot Aharonot*, September 23, 1977, 7, 15/Galili/68/4/58, Yad Tabenkin Archive, Ramat Efal.

[184] Wachman, "Tohnit Hashdeira Hakfula (Rashei Prakim Lpitron Territorially Veletohnit Fizit Kolelet Letvah Aroh)," 1–2.

[185] Wachman, "Tohnit Hashdeira Hakfula."

[186] Wachman, "Tohnit Hashdeira Hakfula (Rashei Prakim Lpitron Territorially Veletohnit Fizit Kolelet Letvah Aroh)," 5. Wachman warned against a "decision not to make plans," and argued it has extremely negative effects on the people, resulting in moral degradation, and, worse, a lingering civil war. See Wachman, "Tohnit Hashdeira Hakfula."

Professional planners must be consulted, Wachman urged Rabin. Only professionals could survey Israel and the occupied territories and come up with a clear master plan. Such a plan, he insisted, had to be based on "a physical-functional structure," and not on "that national-historical attitude that highlights the (principle of) "The Land of the Patriarchs," or other politically driven principles.[187] Relying on such principles, Wachman warned Rabin, may result in irreversible mistakes. The government may give up on precious parts of the occupied territories, and, based on a professionally irrelevant principle, insist on maintaining other, densely-populated and less than desirable ones.[188] To avoid this unfortunate trajectory, Wachman believed, the government had to adopt the Double Axis plan.

Wachman assumed that some territorial concessions were necessary. Nevertheless, he opposed a full withdrawal from the occupied territories. He thought that Israel had to retain some strongholds in the occupied territories to fortify its borders. With this goal in mind, Wachman considered a number of options for a master plan. Each proposed allocating settlements in different ways (Figure 2.23).[189] The first option was comprised of a single axis of settlements. Wachman explained this option resembled the current state in Israel proper: a dense axis of overcrowded urban settlements running along the coastal plain with few green spaces and high levels of air pollution. But "this megalopolis along the beach coast," he warned, was doomed to reach an intolerable state within just a few years.[190] Wachman insisted a multi-axes system of parallel rows of settlements was preferable over this scheme. Considering the size of the country and the existing "Coastal Axis," he concluded that a double-axis system was the most appropriate. An additional "Eastern Axis," he thought, should run parallel to the existing "Coastal Axis."[191]

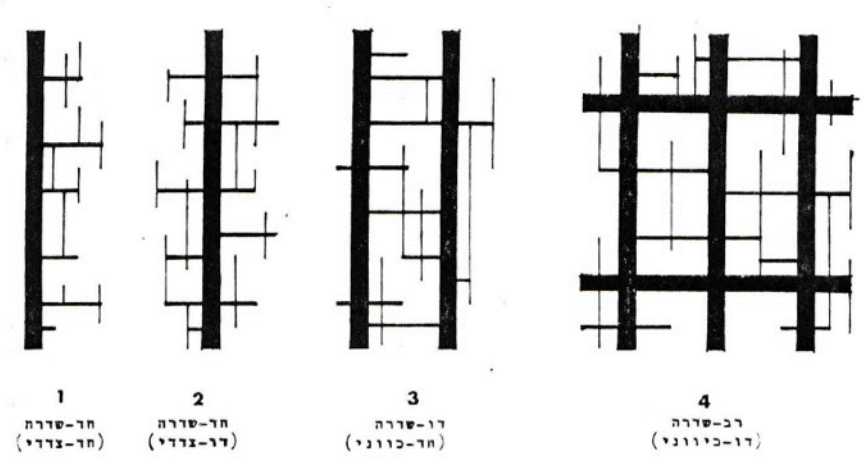

Figure 2.23 Diagrams from Wachman's booklet sent to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. On the left is a diagram showing an unwanted situation, according to Wachman. On the right are multi-axes schemes. "The more axes the scheme has, the more connectivity it has," he clarified. Wachman believed that the third scheme was the most appropriate one. Source: Israel State Archives.

[187] See Wachman, "Tohnit Hashdeira Hakfula (Rashei Prakim Lpitron Territorially Veletohnit Fizit Kolelet Letvah Aroh)," 14. Wachman was not entirely opposed to Gush Emunim's ideology. As I will discuss in the following, he acknowledged the importance of both Gush Emunim and its opponents at the Left, and held complex political views.
[188] Wachman, 2.
[189] Wachman, 8.
[190] Ibid, 3, 8.
[191] Ibid.

Wachman's "Eastern Axis" was basically a row of interconnected urban settlements. It was to run all the way from the Golan Heights in the northernmost part of the occupied territories, through the West Bank, and all the way down to the Sinai Peninsula (Figure 2.24). Wachman imagined that some two million Jewish Israelis could live in the Eastern Axis before the year 2000. It could form a barrier between Jordan and a future Palestinian entity that was to take place in the remaining parts of the West Bank (Figure 2.25).[192] It would be placed between the Western and the Eastern axes of Jewish settlements. Wachman believed that the Palestinians could decide whether they wanted to remain under Jordanian rule or have full independence.[193] In any case, he insisted, fixed corridors, bisecting the "Eastern Axes," were to connect the Palestinians with the neighboring Arab countries.[194]

Wachman believed this solution was ideal for both sides. According to his survey, the parts of the "Eastern Axis" that run through the West Bank had a marginal Palestinian population of less than 50,000 people.[195] He therefore believed that confiscating these lands would form only a minor obstacle in future peace accords.[196] Moreover, time and again, he would emphasize his disinterest in claiming "more territories" for the sake of an expansionist vision. The Eastern Axis, he explained, was not about that. It was about "functionality."[197]

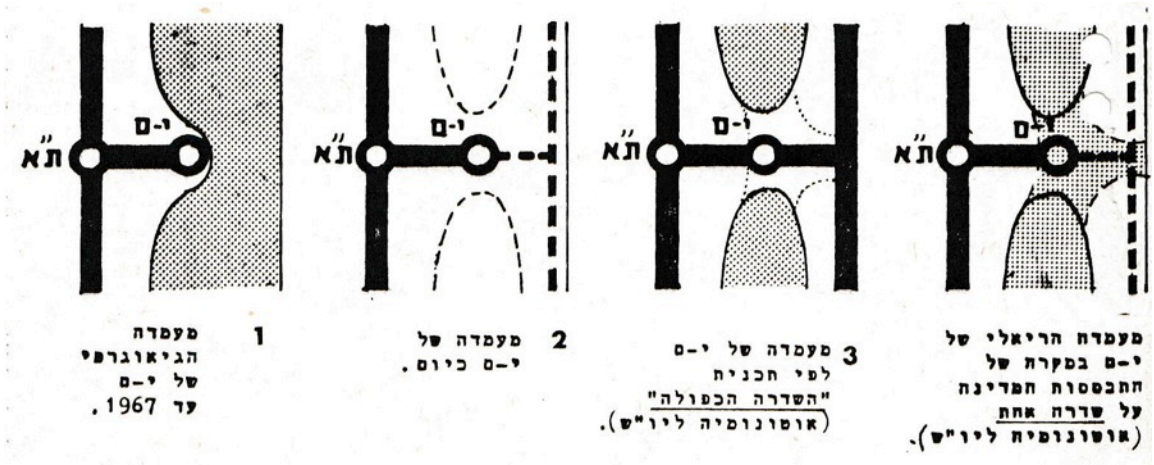

Figure 2.24: A diagrams from Wachman's booklet showing how Jerusalem would become part of a horizontal strip connecting the "Coastal" and "Eastern" settlement axes (sketch number 3). The Palestinian autonomy is marked in grey. Source: Israel State Archives, 7452/20-G.

[192] Ibid, 12-13.
[193] Wachman, "Tohnit Hashdeira Hakfula," 274.
[194] Wachman, "Tohnit Hashdeira Hakfula (Rashei Prakim Lpitron Territorially Veletohnit Fizit Kolelet Letvah Aroh)," 12.
[195] Bahar, "Tohnit Hahitnahalut Shel Arik Sharon Nolda Behashraat Memshelet Yitzhak Rabin," 7.
[196] Wachman, "Tohnit Hashdeira Hakfula (Rashei Prakim Lpitron Territorially Veletohnit Fizit Kolelet Letvah Aroh)," 7.
[197] Wachman, 12.

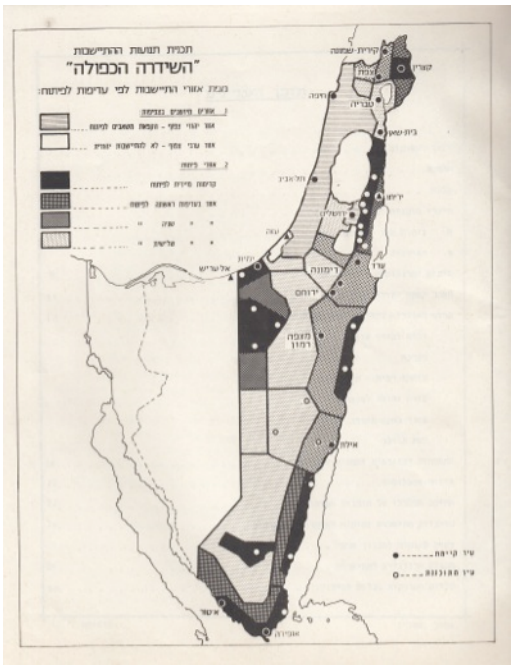

Figure 2.25 The two axes on a map of Israel and the West Bank. Painted in black and grey are the areas that were to form the Eastern Axis. In white, above and below Jerusalem, were the territories to be under Palestinian control.

Prime Minister Rabin was not entirely moved by Wachman's Double-Axis Plan. Minister Israel Galili, however, embraced it wholeheartedly. In the months that followed its first appearance, Galili began promoting the Double Axis Plan among his colleagues at the labor Party. At one point, he even tried making Wachman's plan the party's main campaign platform.[198] Though not everyone shared his enthusiasm, by October 1976, a special government-funded "Steering Committee to the Matter of the Eastern Axis" began working alongside a special planning committee.[199] Among the committee members were Wachman, representatives from the Settlement Department, the various kibbutz movements, the Moshav Movement, and several Labor party leaders.[200]

But conflicts soon arose. Representatives from the kibbutz movement insisted Wachman's plan was driven by an expansionist impulse. If it were executed, they feared, the plan would foreclose future peace accords with the Arab countries.[201] "The real settling challenge is (not in the occupied territories, but) in the Negev and the Galilee," they asserted, "and the real national challenge is in promoting peace accords, with the

[198] Yisrael Galili to Haim Gabati, August 22, 1976, 15-46/2/3, Yad Tabenkin Archive, Ramat Efal.

[199] Yisrael Galili to Haim Gabati, October 28, 1976, Yad Tabenkin Archive, Ramat Efal. It is unclear when was the planning committee formed. In October 21, 1976, Haim Gabati, the manager of the steering committee, announced it was decided to form a planning committee. Haim Gabati to Micha Efrati et al., January 26, 1977, 15/Galili/68/4, Yad Tabenkin Archive, Ramat Efal. Later, he stated that the planning committee was formed only on January 1977. Yisrael Galili to Bar Lev et al., February 18, 1977, 15-46/2/3, Yad Tabenkin Archive, Ramat Efal.

[200] Galili to Gabati, October 28, 1976.

[201] See, for examples, "Sikum Beinyan Hashdeira Hakfula (Tohnit Wachman)" (Hakibutz Haartzi Hashomer Hatzair, October 20, 1976), 15/Galili/68/4, Yad Tabenkin Archive, Ramat Efal; Yaacov Tzur, "Tohnit Wachman Alef," n.d., 15/Galili/68/4/30, Yad Tabenkin Archive, Ramat Efal.
Also, see various letters Galili sent to members of various kibbutz movements, urging them to adopt the plan: Yisrael Galili to Uri Pinkerfeld, October 5, 1976, 15/Galili/2/3, Yad Tabenkin Archive, Ramat Efal; Yisrael Galili to Uri Pinkerfeld, "Hakibutz Haartzi," November 2, 1976, 15/Galili/2/3/105, Yad Tabenkin Archive, Ramat Efal; Yisrael Galili and Natan Peled (havaad hapoel shel hakibutz haartzi), October 31, 1976, 15/Galili/1/3/104, Yad Tabenkin Archive, Ramat Efal.

required territorial concessions…"[202] Galili continued recruiting supporters from the Labor party, and, at one point, even gained the support of Shimon Peres.[203] Nevertheless, in 1977, after the Likud came to power, efforts to promote the plan had subsided.[204]

Wachman's plan, however, wasn't fully abandoned. After the 1977 elections, former Labor party member Ariel Sharon was made Minister of Agriculture. Known for his expansionist ideology, Sharon continued pursuing some of the goals Wachman delineated. But there was a problem, Wachman insisted, "He added to it. You could say he did 'the Eastern Axis Plan Plus.' He settled the Axis but he also settled the (rest of the) West Bank. He executed my plan, but not in the direction I thought was right. He executed it in the direction *Gush Emunim* wanted."[205]

Like the plans Gdor and Levitt had drawn for the settlers, Wachman's project was "kidnapped" and put into the service of Gush Emunim's ideology. An architect, he learned, could do little to fight the recalcitrant activists and their supporters. And indeed, it would take some three decades before Israeli architects would again try to voice their opposition to the occupation, and even then, as I show in the closing chapter of this dissertation, these attempts would prove futile.

Conclusion

When the settlers of Ofra were still working on the first model home, a number of them suggested, not without irony, that it shouldn't have foundation poles. Once an evacuation order is issued, they thought, residents should at least be able to take their homes with them.[206] At the time, few dared to imagine that the settlement—then a makeshift workers camp—would last for long. Forty years later, with about 3,500 residents, some of whom occupy leading roles in the Knesset and the Ministry of Housing, it seems like Ofra is not going anywhere.[207] In 1996, settlement activist Yoske Manor revised Ofra's original master plan, turning it into a 20,000-resident settlement.[208] Manor's plan hadn't been approved yet. Meanwhile, settlers had begun talking about building multistory apartment buildings to accommodate the growing demands for new units in the settlement. Ofra, all agreed, had exceeded expectations.

Still today, settlers take pride in Ofra's design. Over time, as the settlement has expanded, residents have maintained a strict building code.[209] All homebuyers and architects have adhered to the design guidelines the settlers agreed on in the early design debates I described in this chapter.[210] The pitched red-tile rooftops and stone cladding,

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[202] "Sikum Beinyan Hashdeira Hakfula (Tohnit Wachman)."

[203] Shimon Peres to Yisrael Galili, March 10, 1977, 15/Galili/68/4/39, Yad Tabenkin Archive, Ramat Efal.

[204] Some officials continued to work on the plan after the 1977 elections. Nevertheless, the work was far less intense than previously, and didn't have much impact on decision makers.
Micha Efrati, "Shdeira Kfula," June 17, 1977, 15/Galili/68/4/53, Yad Tabenkin Archive, Ramat Efal.

[205] Boaz Gaon, "Ma Kara Learik: Proyect Meyuhad," *Maariv NRG*, June 5, 2003,
https://www.makorrishon.co.il/nrg/online/archive/ART/489/009.html.

[206] Etzion, interview.

[207] First secretary of Ofra, Moshe Merhaviya, for example, is the director of the Ministry of Housing's Jerusalem district agency. It is important to note that in 2016, there were pending demolition orders for nine buildings in Ofra. However, it seems like the government is hesitant, and prefers not demolishing the houses.

[208] Yoske Manor (resident and former head of Ofra's construction committee), interview.
The plan could not be approved given that large parts of the settlement sit on privately owned Palestinian lands.

[209] Ofra's Building Committee, "Taktzir Takanot Habniya Beofra Venohalei Hagashat Habakashot Leishurei Bniya."
The building code had become so powerful, that, according to the myth, when one resident refused to have his chimney painted in red, Merhavya, then the secretary of Ofra, climbed on his roof and painted it by himself.

[210] Three houses that were built between 1981 and 1983, after the first neighborhood was completed, were not subjected to Ofra's building code. Since they were built on lands whose legal status was unclear, Ofra officials granted full freedom for anyone who was willing to take a risk and build his home there. Hemdat Shani (Ofra's archivist and resident), conversation with author, May 5, 2015.

among other building elements, have become part of the settlers' identity. It helped them define themselves as a distinctive group associated—even if only tenuously—with the kibbutz movement. To this end, the architectural history of Ofra shows how design played an important role in the formation of settlers' subjectivities.

The settlers are so proud of Ofra and its history that they have created an archive with a rich collection of documents that is maintained by two part-time archivists. In addition, residents have organized yearly events, including symposia, exhibitions, and rallies, to narrate the settlement's history. In 2015, they began preserving the original makeshift houses from the mid 1970s, adding plaques with texts and images that tell their history. These endeavors construct a shared imaginary among the settlers that also shape individual identities. For the settlers, even those who just moved to Ofra, the settlement is hardly a "typical" commuters' suburb. Instead, they see it as a site of pioneer-ship and bravery.

A close analysis of the design debates that accompanied the construction of Ofra complicates existing accounts that interpret settlement houses as a paradigmatic case of the militarization of architecture. The most notable of these accounts has been that of architectural theorist Eyal Weizman. According to Weizman, military strategists guided the design of settlement houses. They were the ones who ordered the construction of red-tiled rooftops, among other things. They did so, Weizman has argued, so Israeli Defense Force pilots could differentiate Jewish settlements from Palestinian villages during airstrikes.[211] The documentary record, however, reveals a far more complex history. As I described above, the red tiles were chosen for benign reasons. For the most part, military officials were absent from the design debates in Ofra—the flagship settlement of *Gush Emunim* that inspired subsequent settlements to adopt red tiles. The drama of Ofra, then, reminds us that the relationship between state power and architecture is hardly a simple, unidirectional one.

But it wasn't just military officials who were left out; planning institutes were also absent from many of the discussions surrounding the design of Ofra. By and large, it was the settlers and their supporters who developed Ofra's master plan, model home, public buildings, and forms of governance. Ofra formed a break from traditional planning and design practices in Israel. Up until the 1970s, the Ministry of Housing and the Settlement Department had almost exclusive power over the design and management of all new towns and settlements. In Ofra, these top-down design processes were replaced with bottom-up ones.[212]

And once these top-down processes were overturned in Ofra, alongside other political events, dramatic change arose in the fields of planning and design. The Community Settlement model, with its pitch roofed single-family houses and private yards, seemed to have touched the hearts of Israelis in ways older, more austere models couldn't have done. Quickly, official planning institutes had to catch up and revise their rural settlement models and housing types. For example, instead of large multistory apartment buildings, like the ones built in the settlement of Kiryat Arba, the ministry was

[211] Weizman doesn't give a reference to this asspumption in his book. He saates it as a fact. He has repeated this argument a couple of years ago in an interview he gave to al Jazeera. In all my conversations with settlement activists and military officials his observation was dismissed. The latter ones usually laughed on hearing about Weziman imaginative idea. See Eyal Weizman, *Hollow Land: Israel's Architecture of Occupation* (London ; New York: Verso, 2007), 126–27; Ana Naomi de Sousa, "The Architecture of Violence," *Rebel Architecture* (Al Jazeera English, September 2, 2014), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ybwJaCeeA9o.

[212] For a detailed study of the Ministry of Housing over the course of six decades see Hadas Shadar, *Avne Ha-Binyan Shel Ha-Shikun Ha-Tsiburi : Shishah 'aśorim Shel Beniyah 'ironit Be-Yozmah Tsiburit Be-Yiśra'el* (Tel Aviv: Miśrad ha-binui ṿeha-shikin, 2014).

now forced to build small single-family houses with private yards and parking spots.[213] Moreover, while the Ministry had been in charge of funding in the past, as well as planning, construction and management of nearly all projects, now it began allocating commissions to private settling companies, like Amana, a settling company *Gush Emunim* founded in 1979.[214] These commissions were relatively flexible and granted settling companies the freedom to develop their projects according to clients' preferences.[215] To this end, the design of Ofra helped establish more pluralistic design and planning practices in Israel.

But this openness brought about by Ofra also has a darker side, which, in turn, forces us to rethink intellectual frameworks that celebrate bottom-up design processes. In the absence of planning institutes, some unwanted actors were allowed into the fields of planning and design in Ofra. For example, according to reports submitted by human rights organizations, the settlers have expanded Ofra on privately owned Palestinian lands.[216] In addition, in the years that followed the founding of the settlement, some Ofra settlers, like Valershtein, planted multiple unauthorized outposts on privately owned Palestinian lands in Ofra's vicinity and across the West Bank.

Inspired by their success in Ofra, a number of activists have pursued even more ambitious planning projects. The most notable ones are Yehuda Etzion's Third Temple and Greater Jerusalem projects (Figure 2.26). For a number of years, Etzion has been working with Yehoram Ginsburg, an architect and lecturer at the Architecture School in Ariel University, on detailed plan drawings for a Third Temple that would replace the Dome of the Rock—one of the holiest sites in Islam—and change the face of Jerusalem.[217] Etzion and Ginsburg carefully studied the Old Temple from two thousand years ago, and modeled the Third Temple after its biblical precedent—making it taller to dominate the city's skyline. Without much hesitation, they eliminated the Dome of the Rock and other pilgrimage sites in their drawings. At present, the project is merely a vision. If executed, however, it would instigate war with the neighboring Arab countries.

The confiscation of Palestinian lands alongside Etzion's apocalyptic vision doesn't fit well into narratives that see the triumph of the user as a positive. They remind us that some users, who see themselves as "the oppressed" much as the settlers do, can author environments that violate others' rights.

The question of bottom-up design process and its merits will become more prevalent in the following chapters, when various actors assume different roles in the settlement project. But, for now, it will suffice to mention that apocalyptic and strong-willed as Etzion's plans for the Third Temple may seem, neither he nor his fellow activists maintained their control over the planning and design of the West Bank. As I will show in the next chapter, within just a couple of years they were replaced by equally

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[213] Yehonatan Golani (former cheif architect at the Ministry of Housing), "Revahat Haadam Vehakehila Kematrato Hamerkazit Shel Maase Hatihnun," in *Israel Builds, 1988* (Ministry of Housing, 1988), 14–16.

[214] Already in February 1978, settlement activists decided to create a settling company. It was originally called "Council of Block of the Faithful's Settlements." In February 1979, when they registered it as an official agency with *Rasham HaAgudot HaShitufiyot*, the settlers named it "Amana." As a settling company Amana was now in charge creating and fostering settling seeds for new settlements, representing settlements and connecting them with state officials, among other things. See Hoberman, *Ke-Neged Kol Ha-Sikuyim : 40 Shenot Ha-Hityashvut Bi-Yehudah Ye-Shomron, Binyamin Ṿeha-Biḳ'ah, 727-767*, 162.

[215] Yehonatan Golani (former cheif architect at the Ministry of Housing), "Revahat Haadam Vehakehila Kematrato Hamerkazit Shel Maase Hatihnun," 16.

[216] See, for example, Nir Shalev, "Hahitnahalut Ofra: Maahaz Bilti-Murshe" (B'TSELEM, December 2008), https://www.btselem.org/download/200812_ofra_heb.pdf.

[217] See Etzion and Ginsburg's plans in Etzion, *Sefer Yerushalayim Habnuya*; Etzion, *Sefer Yerushalayim Habnuya (Behahana)*.

powerful actors: secular middle class Israelis who loved the cheap real-estate and beautiful vistas of the West Bank, but had little interest in the messiah.

Figure 2.26 Before and after views, showing how the Jewish temple would be built on top of Al-Aqsa Mosque. Yehuda Etzion and Yehoram Ginsburg, 2014. Source: Yehuda Etzion ed., Sefer Yerushalayim Habnuya (Behahana), 2014. Etzion's private collection.

Third Chapter: “Pioneers in Villas”

Figure 3.1 Settlers family in the Settlement of Alfei Menashe, c.1984. Source: Alfei Menashe Archive.

On March 30, 1983, "The Achievements of the Settlement of Judea and Samaria Exhibition" [Ta'aruhat Heisegei Hahityashvut BeYehuda VeShomron] opened in the *Israeli Center for Building* in Tel Aviv. Curated by Israel Godovich, former chief architect at the Ministry of Housing's Rural and New Settlements Administration, the show introduced the general public to recent construction projects in some thirty West Bank settlements. It was unprecedented. Never before had settlements been presented to the public in such a festive way. And, as Godovich later explained, it offered the public a once-in-a-lifetime experience.[1]

Upon their arrival, visitors were welcomed by a row of Fiat 127 cars (Figure 3.2). All were wrapped with red gift ribbons. Anyone buying a house in one of the settlements on view in the show was to get one. Behind the Fiat cars were four identical gates leading to the main entrance (Figure 3.3). The gates resembled the silhouette of a pitched-roof house. On the upper part of each gate was a map of Israel and the West Bank. A Star of David that was surrounded by six pitched-roof houses framed the map. Underneath, on the sides of each gate, were posters indicating the number of settlements built since 1967. The message these posters conveyed was clear: settlement construction was growing faster and faster. According to the posters, if there were only 24 settlements in 1977, by 1983 there were more than 60.[2]

Figure 3.2 A row of FIAT 127 cars welcoming visitors to "The Achievements of the Settlement of Judea and Samaria Exhibition," Tel Aviv, 1983. Source: Israel Godovich's private collection.

[1] Israel Godovich, interview with the author, March 31, 2015.
[2] Each poster indicated the number of settlements built at a different time. There were four gates. According to the posters there were 16 settlements built between 1967 and 1971; 24 settlements between 1972 and 1976; 54 between 1977 and 1982; and more than 60 by 1983.

Figure 3.3 Four gates leading to the main entrance. "The Achievements of the Settlement of Judea and Samaria Exhibition," Tel Aviv, 1983. Source: Israel Godovich's private collection.

After passing through the four gates, visitors entered the main exhibition hall. There they encountered a large-scale model of the West Bank made of sand and rocks brought in from the bare hilltops of the Occupied Territories (Figure 3.4). Rising from the rocky landscape of the model were street signs with settlement names. A gift ribbon stretched between each of these signs, and a large map of Israel and the West Bank was placed in a corner of the hall. Each settlement on the map was marked with a small light bulb: a torch in the "darkness" of the West Bank.

Figure 3.4 Model of the West Bank made of rocks and sand in "The Achievements of the Settlement of Judea and Samaria Exhibition," Tel Aviv, 1983. Source: Israel Godovich's private collection.

Moving forward, pass the model, visitor arrived at a large patio space. Ten screens that were supported by tall columns dominated the space (Figure 3.5). On each screen images of construction projects in the West Bank were projected. The screens were synchronized so at each given moment they would present the same project, or present data that related to the images projected on the other screens.

Figure 3.5 Ten screens installation in "The Achievements of the Settlement of Judea and Samaria Exhibition," Tel Aviv, 1983. Source: Israel Godovich's private collection.

Dozens of sales booths were scattered around these screens and in the adjacent exhibition spaces (Figure 3.6). Installed by private developers, they invited potential homebuyers to examine architectural plans and 3D models of hundreds of new settlement houses. All were on sale. The houses on view shared little in common with the rudimentary model-homes of Ofra or the repetitive housing blocks of Kiryat Arba. They were significantly bigger and exhibited eclectic building styles, ranging from Middle Eastern arches to modernist cubic shapes with Mediterranean plaster cladding. Against the bare landscape of Ofra, they were adorned with lush lawns and fruit trees. Some even had swimming pools.

Figure 3.6 Sale Booths in "The Achievements of the Settlement of Judea and Samaria Exhibition," Tel Aviv, 1983. Source: Israel Godovich's private collection.

The settlements themselves were also very different from the modest Community Settlement model the religious members of Bloc of the Faithful developed in the preceding decade. They were bigger, lacked admission committees, and many bore names such as "Tree Tops" [Tzamarot], "Scenery" [Nofim], and "Together" [Tzavata]. Nothing about them alluded to the messianic zeal that characterized earlier settlements.[3]

But it seems like everyone—settlements activists, homebuyers, and politicians—were happy with these new and rather luxurious settlements. When one of the visitors was perplexed by a housing project named Santa Barbara—"Isn't Santa Barbara in California?" she wondered—her husband, settlement activist Elyakim Haetzni, smiled. "Finally," he replied, "Jews discovered they have the same quality of life as in California."[4] Like Haetzni, Ministry of Housing officials also seemed to have embraced this new discovery. During the opening event, Minister of Housing, David Levi, greeted the visitors. As one reporter described, the Minister did his best to make sure no one else would get all the credit for the construction boom in the West Bank.[5]

The only one who really hated the show was the curator, architect Israel Godovich. "You won't find pictures of me standing by these plan drawings and models," he told me while browsing through photos of the exhibition. "It was ridiculous," he recalls; "Totally inappropriate." The scattered pattern of these settlements, and the eclectic design of the houses, made no sense to him. Nor did they appeal to other

[3] Among the 30 settlements presented in the exhibition, some settlements, like Ariel and Beit El, did have religious names.
[4] Benny Avni, "Sar Lekol Rohesh," *Ha'ir*, April 1, 1983, 9.
[5] Avni, "Sar Lekol Rohesh."

architects, who, by and large, shied away from the exhibition. "I tried to express some criticism in my curatorial work," Godovich explained. "Look at this," he told me while holding a picture of the miniaturized model of the West Bank, "the density of the street signs says it all. And, on top of that, I placed these signs on these miserable sand dunes and rocks—not a pretty sight at all…I wanted visitors to see how unsightly it all actually was." But he knows the visitors didn't see it this way. "The people didn't choose my way," Godovich lamented. A couple of months after the show closed, he left Israel for seven years. "I escaped. I had to repress the memories of the show," he recalls.[6]

A large gap stretched between settlement activists, homebuyers, and ministry officials on the one hand, and Godovich on the other. Each experienced the exhibition in radically different ways. For the former, it attested to a major success—a demographic, economic, and even spiritual success. For Godovich, the show marked a failure—cultural degeneration, and vanishing professional authority.

In this chapter, I examine this gap and analyze the tensions between settlement activists, Ministry of Housing officials, and architects the show encapsulated. Drawing on archival materials and interviews I conducted, I show how, over a period that spans less than a decade, members of each group had to constantly adapt and reinvent themselves to keep up with homebuyers' demands. For example, architects like Godovich weren't always opposed to the new settlements. In fact, during the early 1980s, building commissions in the West Bank allowed architects a much-needed space to experiment with new design trends. And indeed, many of them accepted building projects in settlements. In the same fashion, officials at the Ministry of Housing and the activists of Block of the Faithful didn't always support these settlements. For a while, settlement activists even feared the new settlements, with their luxurious houses and lush lawns, formed a concrete threat to the settlement project as a whole.

I limit my discussion in this chapter to the decade that started with the rise of the right-wing Likud party in the 1977 election and ended in 1987 with the outbreak of the *First Intifada*—the Palestinian uprising against the Israeli occupation.[7] During these ten years, settlement construction reached unprecedented heights. While in 1977, ten years after the Six-Day War, only 4,000 Israelis resided in the West Bank, by the end of 1986, there were 51,000 settlers. The majority of them moved to the West Bank only after 1981.[8] It is reasonable to argue that these years, especially the early 1980s, were the heydays of the settlement process.

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[6] Godovich, interview with the author.

[7] My periodization is accurate only to a limited degree. It is reasonable to argue this period of intense settlement construction was brought to an end already in 1984 following formation of a National Unity Government in which the Likud formed a ruling coalition with the Labor party. In addition, as I will show in the following, construction accelerated only in 1981, not 1977. I chose to look at the entire decade mainly because architecture and construction require time and tend to be gradual. Accordingly, even if some of the developments I describe took place only in 1981, they were directly related to decisions made earlier. In the same fashion, construction projects that may have began before 1984 sometimes continued years after.

In addition, highlighting the rise of the Likud as a turning point in the course of the settlement project—as the start point of this process—is also debatable. Some, like Maco Allegra, argue the Likud government only accelerated what the Labor government already began before 1977. Allegra is basing his argument on the intense settlement construction efforts in East Jerusalem and its environs that took place in the years that followed the Six Day War. See Marco Allegra, "'Outside Jerusalem—Yet so Near': Ma'ale Adumim, Jerusalem, and the Suburbanization of Israel's Settlement Policy," in *Normalizing Occupation: The Politics of Everyday Life in the West Bank Settlements*, ed. Ariel Handel, Erez Maggor, and Marco Allegra (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017); Marco Allegra, "Habanaliyut Shel Hakibush Vahapolitika Shel Haparvar: Hamikre Shel Maale Edumim," *Theory and Criticism* 47 (Winter 2016): 95–99.

[8] In 1977, there were some 4,000 settlers. Between 1977 and 1981, their number grew in 3,000 every year, leading to 16,000 in 1981. Meanwhile, between 1981 and 1986 some 35,000 Israelis immigrated to the hilly landscapes of the West Bank. These numbers do not include Israelis moving to East Jerusalem .See Erez Maggor, "State, Market and the Israeli Settlements: The Ministry of Housing and the Shift from Messianic Outposts to Urban Settlements in the Early 1980s," *Israeli Sociology* 16, no. 2 (2015): 157.

To account for this intense period of settlement constriction, I will discuss three settlements: Beit Arye, Alfei Menashe, and Nofim. I have chosen these three settlements for a couple of reasons: First, all were built in the northern part of the West Bank, near the border with Israel, where a large portion of the overall construction took place at the time. Second, they offer a clear chronological trajectory—Beit Arye was founded in 1981, Alfei Menashe in 1983, and Nofim in 1987. Third, each had a different funding model: While Beit Arye was planned and built by the Ministry of Housing and the Settlement Department at the Jewish Agency, Alfei Menashe was the outcome of a collaboration between the Ministry of Housing and a group of private developers, and Nofim was planned by a private developer. Together, they illustrate a gradual movement from public to private construction.

However, this trajectory, starting with Beit Arye and ending with Nofim, is accurate only to a limited degree. Indeed, private developers entered the West Bank only after the construction boom of the 1980s had already begun. But the Ministry of Housing and the Settlement Department continued building new settlements with public money throughout the decade. In addition, many developers who worked in settlements were unable to bear the high costs of flattening the rocky landscape of the West Bank to lay infrastructure, so they sought the support of the ministry. To this end, the story I present through these three settlements is not a story of outright neo-liberalization. Nor is it a linear one. Instead, it is a story of numerous contradictions, of tenuous alliances between the private and the public sectors in Israel that, for a few years, fluctuated rapidly in an attempt to appease the whims of a new species of settler.

1. New Settlers Against Old Settlers: The Settlement of Beit Arye

1.1 A Secular Settlement

In the first few years after the 1977 elections, almost all new settlements followed the model of the Community Settlement. Catering to the religious followers of Bloc of the Faithful, the majority of them remained small and remote.[9] Only gradually, towards

[9] As Erez Maggor argues, until the 1980s, settlement construction was mainly instigated from forces working from below. It therefore lacked an overall regional conception. See Maggor, 145.

In fact, the majority of settlements built shortly after the 1977 elections began as military outposts. To avoid international criticism, settlement activists were ordered to dress in military uniform and pose as if they were military officials. In addition, these outposts were to be founded gradually, one or two outposts every month. Only gradually did they become fully functioning settlements. See Haggai Hoberman, *Ke-Neged Kol Ha-Sikuyim : 40 Shenot Ha-Hityashvut Bi-Yehudah Ve-Shomron, Binyamin Veha-Biḳ'ah, 727-767* (Ariel: Sifriyat Netsarim, 2008), 144.

The settlements of Elkana, Kiryat Arba and Ariel were exceptions to this rule. They were weren't sponsored by Block of the Faithful. As David Newman explains, this is simply because they were defined as urban settlements rather than rural ones, and therefore didn't need the sponsorship of a settlement movement. See David Newman, "The Role of Gush Emunim and the Yishuv Kehillati in the West Bank 1974 - 1980" (Durham University, 1981), http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/9372/.

This settlement pattern was against the hopes of many settlement activists, who believed that the rise of the Likud would result in an immediate change in settlement policy. Their hopes for a more favorable planning policy were not ungrounded, and relied on several announcements. For example, in the months that followed the elections several government officials, including Prime Minister Menachem Begin, made multiple gestures expressing their unambiguous support of the settlement project. First and foremost, as mentioned in the last chapter, already in July, the government authorized Ofra and two other settlements. See A. Lishanski (government secretary) to goverment members, "Elon Moreh, Ofra, Vemaale Edumim," July 26, 1977, 7006/12-A, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

An equally important milestone was the Begin's visit to the settlement of Kadum where he expressed his support of the settlers' endeavors. Soon after, in September of 1977, Minister of Agriculture and chairperson of the Ministers Settlement Committee Ariel Sharon presented his plan for settling some two million Jewish Israelis in the West Bank. See Newman, "The Role of Gush Emunim and the Yishuv Kehillati in the West Bank 1974 - 1980," 125–29; Akiva Eldar and Idith Zartal, *Adonei Haaretz: Hamitnahalim Vemedinat Yisrael 1967-2004* (Or Yehuda: Kineret, 2004), 87–88.

Sharon's plan was followed by several other plans proposed for the West Bank between 1977 and 1979. Among these was Weizman's plan for some six large urban centers, as well as plans submitted by Gush Emunim, and Matetyahu Drobles's plan. For

the early 1980s, did a new type of settlement—bigger, closer to the border with Israel, and secular—begin to take shape.

Several government decisions facilitated the rise of this new settlement type. Among these was an unprecedented mapping project the government undertook in the late 1970 to locate uncultivated land parcels in the West Bank.[10] Based on the Ottoman Land Code from 1858, such parcels could be designated as "state lands" and serve as sites for settlement construction.[11] By 1984, state officials "found" tens of thousands of dunams of "state lands," paving the way for grandiose settlement plans.[12] In addition, beginning in the early 1980s, government agencies began offering exceptionally generous funding packages for Israelis building their homes in the West Bank.[13] Equally important was the government's decision to open the settlement project to different civilian groups, regardless of their association with Block of the Faithful.[14]

One such group was *Gar'in Levona* [Levona Seed]. Three engineers from the Israel Aerospace Industry had founded the group in 1977. They wanted to build a neighborhood for their colleagues in the aerospace industry.[15] In line with suburbanization trends that gained prominence in Israel in the 1970s, they envisioned a quiet and relaxing place.[16] As Ya'acov Norodetzky, a founder of the group who immigrated to Israel from the Ukraine in the mid-1970s, clarifies: "We wanted a place where it is pleasant to make and raise kids."[17] The idea seemed to have touched the hearts

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discussion of these plans see Newman, "The Role of Gush Emunim and the Yishuv Kehillati in the West Bank 1974 - 1980." But these plans and announcements, by large, remained unfulfilled. Among the various reasons for the delay in settlement activity was American pressure. After meeting with President Jimmy Carter, who insisted Israel halts any settlement activity, Prime Minister Begin adopted a slightly less favorable attitude towards the settlement project shortly after he was elected.

[10] This process was accelerated in the aftermath of the Elon Moreh Bagatz from 1979 that ruled the confiscation of Palestinian owned lands for the construction of a civilian settlement illegal. For discussion of the Elon Moreh Bagatz seePlia Albeck, "Karkaot Beyehuda Veshomron: Tadpis Hartzaata Shel O"d Pliya Albeck," May 28, 1985, S136_3770, Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem; Maggor, "State, Market and the Israeli Settlements: The Ministry of Housing and the Shift from Messianic Outposts to Urban Settlements in the Early 1980s," 145–46.

[11] See Albeck, "Karkaot Beyehuda Veshomron: Tadpis Hartzaata Shel O"d Pliya Albeck"; Eyal Weizman, *Hollow Land: Israel's Architecture of Occupation* (London ; New York: Verso, 2007), 116–20; Meron Benvenisti and West Bank Data Base Project, *The West Bank and Gaza Atlas* (Jerusalem: WBDP : The Jerusalem Post, 1988), 61.

[12] By 1992, some 25% of West Bank lands were designated as "State Lands." This data ignores lands confiscated in Jerusalem. Nir Shalev, "Beetztala Shel Hukiyut: Hahrazot Al Admot Medina Bagada Hamaaravit" (B'TSELEM, February 2012), https://www.btselem.org/download/201203_under_the_guise_of_legality_heb.pdf. According to Erez Maggor, most of the mapping and land status changes were made between 1980 and 1984. Maggor, "State, Market and the Israeli Settlements: The Ministry of Housing and the Shift from Messianic Outposts to Urban Settlements in the Early 1980s," 146.

[13] According to historian Daniel Gutwein allocating these funding packages and other economic benefits to settlers was a compensation mechanism that partially replaced the services provided by the welfare country the Likud was attacking. Through these funding packages the government created some kind of a welfare country in West Bank settlements while Israel there were less and less services provided by the government. In this way, lower classes began to align with the settlement project and the Right. See Danny Gutwein, "Hearot al Hayesodot Hamaamadiyim Shel Hakibush," *Theory and Criticism* 24 (Soring 2004): 206.

[14] David Newman, *Population, Settlement, and Conflict: Israel and the West Bank*, Update (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 29. Until that time, *Gush Emunim* members were the ones who negotiated with the government the right to erect new settlements, and accordingly had control over these sites and their inhabitants. In addition, as I mentioned above, most 1970s settlements first took the shape of a military outposts, and were extremely rudimentary. They thus had a limited appeal on secular Israelis. It wouldn't be entirely impossible to argue that due to their religious convictions, *Gush Emunim* activists were more willing to endure the harsh conditions in these outposts.

[15] Reuven (former head of Beit Arye's building committee), interview with the author, July 2014. In 1978 they registered as an official group (Aguda Shitufit). Norodetzky, interview with the author, July 9, 2015.

[16] To evaluate this trend, the geographer Amiram Gonen has also examined building styles. He found that in 1971 only 11.2% of construction in residential buildings was recorded in buildings of 1-2 stories, but by 1991 it rose to 52.4%. Gonen argues that this suburbanization trend began already in the 1960s. See Amiram Gonen, *Between City and Suburb: Urban Residential Patterns and Processes in Israel* (Aldershot, England; Brookfield, Vt.: Ashgate, 1999), 114, 120. Also, see David Newman, "Settlements as Suburbanization: The Banality of Colonization," in *Normalizing Occupation: The Politics of Everyday Life in the West Bank Settlements*, ed. Ariel Handel, Marco Allegra, and Erez Maggor (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017), 35; Dikla Yizhar, "Proyect Beni Beitha: Hamerhav Habanui Benkudat Shinui Hevratit Tarbutit Vemiktzoit" (Technion - Israel Institute of Technology, 2008), 93.

[17] Norodetzky, interview with the author.

of many in the aerospace industry, and in just a few months, some 50 families joined the group. "All of them," a reporter noted later, "wanted to build their dream home."[18]

Most group members didn't have a clear political ideology. "We didn't care if the neighborhood would be located inside or outside the 'Green Line' [the pre-1967 border]," Norodetzky recalls. It only had to be close enough to the airport, where everyone worked.[19] After surveying potential sites in Israel, the group made a visit to the West Bank.[20] Once there, they agreed that the northwestern region of the West Bank, near the border with Israel, was ideal for their needs. It was cheap, pristine, and allowed easy commute to the airport.[21]

To get authorization from the government, they first tried working with Block of the Faithful's settlement movement: Amana.[22] They were required to be sponsored by a settlement movement, and Amana was the only settlement movement working in the West Bank.[23] But the relationship between the two groups was not an easy one. Unlike the people of Block of the Faithful, almost all members of Gar'in Levona were secular. They didn't share Block of the Faithful's messianic zeal and felt uncomfortable with their modes of action—namely, protests, sit-ins, and other forms of civil disobedience.[24] They believed fighting the government or acting illegally would yield negative outcomes.[25] In addition, they worried Amana could only work with small settler groups of no more than 20 families. Accordingly, the urban vision Amana promoted was different from theirs. Whereas Amana encouraged the establishment of small Community Settlements, many among the members of Garin Levona aimed to build a relatively large suburban neighborhood of some 400-500 families. And indeed, when the people of Block of the Faithful heard about their plans, Norodetzky recalled, "they told us we were crazy."[26]

At one point, the relationship between the two became intolerable and Norodetzky decided they had to part ways.[27] After some negotiations, they succeeded in convincing

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[18] Uri Urbah, "Beit Arye: Yeshuv Al Hamaslul," *Nekuda*, February 21, 1986, 8.

[19] Norodetzky, interview with the author.

[20] Norodetzky had some acquaintances in the settlement of Neve Tzuf who encouraged him to consider the West Bank. Norodetzky, interview with the author.

[21] According to Norodetzky, the final decision to settle in the West Bank was not entirely deprived of nationalist ideology. He explained to me that it was clear to him that erecting a settlement there had a strategic role—it formed a buffer zone between Israel and the West Bank. Norodetzky, interview with the author.

[22] Any group that wants to establish a rural settlement in Israel or the West Bank must find a settlement movement that would sponsor it. The settlement movement normally represents the group in front of the Settlement Department. For details about the founding of Amana, and some of the rules that apply to Settlement Movements See Newman, "The Role of Gush Emunim and the Yishuv Kehillati in the West Bank 1974 - 1980," 129, 249–52.

[23] Effi, interview with the author, B1. Also, a relatively similar story was told by Norodetzky, interview with the author; Victor Smadar, interview with the author, B3.

[24] Reuven, interview with the author; Victor Smadar (among the founders of Beit Arye), interview with the author, August 2, 2015; Urbah, "Beit Arye: Yeshuv Al Hamaslul," 8.

[25] Gar'in Levona members preferred lobbying, and making personal contacts with government officials. Norodetzky, interview with the author. For example, see copy of a letter members of the group sent to Knesset members in Gar'in Levona members to Knesset members, "Gar'in Levona," June 20, 1979, Beit Arye Local Council. This strategy seemed to have worked in their favor. For example, see Shimon Peres' follow up letter to Raanan Weitz in Shimon Peres to Raanan Weitz, November 19, 1979, Beit Arye Local Council.

[26] Norodetzky, interview with the author; Smadar, interview with the author; Urbah, "Beit Arye: Yeshuv Al Hamaslul."

[27] According to some of Gar'in Levona members I interviewed they decided to part ways with Amana after Amana recruited them to one of their protests. The specific protest came to be known as "The Outposts Day." During the "Outposts Day," the members of the group had illegally climbed on one of the hilltops of the West Bank, erected a couple of tents, and "settled." They were soon evacuated by the army. Many of the members of the group thought the protest was unnecessary and embarrassing. Smadar, interview with the author; Bat Sheva Hermoni, interview with the author, August 9, 2015.

Prior to the "Outposts Day," there were other clashes. Once, members of Gar'in Levona were asked to settle illegally in the West Bank at a specific site. They were asked to wait in the synagogue of the settlement of Neve Tzuf until 1:30 am, and only then try to settle at the specific site. Something happened between the settlers however, and one of the people of Gar'in Levona called a Maariv reporter and photographer and invited them to come over. He did that against the approval of the people of Neve Tzuf, who wished to keep the attempt a secret. See Amos Levav, "Shenutzlu," *Maariv*, n.d., Beit Arye Local Council.

Mishkei Heirut Betar—a settlement movement associated with the non-religious right—to take over the role of Amana.[28] It was the first time Mishkei Heirut Betar worked in the West Bank.[29] But their collaboration with Norodetzky and his friends worked well. For example, on Mishkei Heirut Beitar's advice, the members of the group changed their name from Levona to Beit Arye, after former Knesset Member and Irgun[30] activist Aryeh Ben-Eliezer. This way, officials at Mishkei Heirut Betar argued, his widow Yehudit Ben-Eliezer, who knew Prime Minister Begin from a young age, would help promote their case. And indeed, in January 1980, with Ben-Eliezer on their side, government officials decided a settlement named Beit Arye would be founded on a land tract located six kilometers east of the border with Israel.[31]

1.2 Undoing the Architecture of the State

Once a decision was made, government officials commissioned planners at the Settlement Department in the Jewish Agency to prepare detailed plan drawings for Beit Arye. Elza Kaplan, one of the architects at the Settlement Department, was asked to lead the design. When approaching the drafting table, she paid careful attention to land tenure issues. Since the mountain slope and valley areas could not be designated as "state lands," Kaplan divided the settlement into two neighborhoods (Figure 3.7). Each occupied a separate hilltop.[32]

Figure 3.7 Plan drawings of Beit Arye from 1981 (left) and 1984 (right). Arranged around two separate public centers, all plots were uniformed in size. At one point, one of the future residents proposed enlarging

[28] Bat Sheva Hermoni was working for Mishkei Heirut Beitar. She was the person in charge of Beit Arye on behalf of Mishkei Heirut Beitar. Her father, Knesset member Haim Kaufman from the Likud, put Gar'in Levona in touch with Mishkei Heirut Beitar on the request of Norodetzky. Hermoni, interview with the author.

[29] Norodetzky, interview with the author. At the very same time, Mishkei Heirut Beitar began to work in a number of West Bank settlements. They supported the settlements of Barkan, Ma'ale Amos (both were founded in 1981), and Alei Zahav (founded in 1983).

[30] The Irgun, or Irgun Tsvai Leumi Be-Eretz Yisrael [National Military Organization in the Land of Israel], was a pre-state militia affiliated with the Revisionists.

[31] According to Norodetzky, the decision came when the group was still named Gar'in Levona. Norodetzky, interview with the author.

[32] By and large, Kaplan had limited interactions with Norodetzky and his collaborators. Unlike the people of Ofra and Gush Emunim, Gar'in Levona members didn't feel they had the right to intervene in her work. Hermony, interview with the author. Norodetzky, interview with the author.

the plots. But his proposal was quickly dismissed, and it was probably the only time when the future residents tried intervening in the master plan.[33] Source: Central Zionist Archives.

As for the design of individual houses, planners at the ministry and Mishkei Heirut Beitar decided they should be uniform, at least in the first neighborhood. Specifically, they were keen on using a new model home that came to be known as Ashcubit Houses (Figure 3.8).[34] Each Ashcubit House was comprised of a couple of 24 sq. m. box-shaped prefabricated units. The arrangement and number of units determined the size of each house. One could order an Ascubit House of one, two, three or more units, depending on his needs. In either case, the units were brought to the site with all finishing trades already installed in the factory, rendering construction time on the site exceptionally short[35]—an invaluable feature in West Bank settlements, where a strong sense of immediacy characterized almost all construction projects.[36]

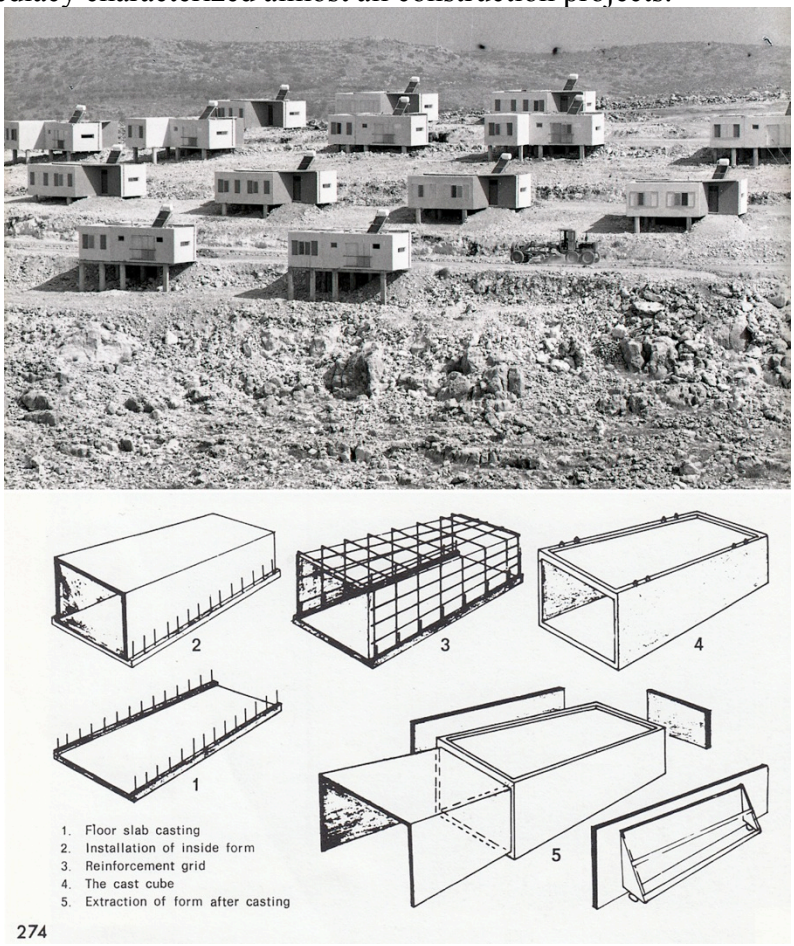

Figure 3.8 Ashcubit houses in a West Bank settlement, c.1982 (top), and technical drawings of Ashcubit house's basic unit from Israel Bona, a publication of the Ministry of Housing, 1977 (bottom). Back in the

[33] Smadar, interview with the author.
[34] Hermoni, interview with the author. According to Reuven, who took part in the settlement's building committee, the building committee first saw the Ashcubit House in the settlement of Ariel. It happened before anyone at Mishkei Heirut Beitar or the Settlement Department mentioned Aschubit Houses to the settlers. Since many settlements were installing Ashcubit Houses at the time, it is likely to believe that planning institutes and settlement movements were the ones advocating for Ashcubit Houses. Reuven, interview with the author.
[35] Amiram Harlap, ed., *Israel Builds 1977* (Tel Aviv: Ministry of Housing, 1977), 274.
[36] In addition, planners at the Settlement Department saw Ashcubit Houses as a wise investment. Unlike temporary housing solutions, like the ones that were first built in Ofra, Ashcubit houses were permanent. Hermoni, interview with the author.

early 1980s, planning institutes encouraged settlers across the West Bank to adopt Ashcubit Houses. As Hermoni from Mishkei Heirut Beitar explained to me, unlike portable and metal structures, Aschubit houses were permanent. Accordingly, many saw them as a wise investment.[37] In addition, it was a time when architects at the ministry were investing great efforts into incorporating prefabricated building technologies in the Israeli construction industry. Ashcubit houses, then, were probably seen as another experiment with prefabrication that, if proved successful in the West Bank, could be applied on mass in Israel proper. Sources: Asher Koralek's private collection (top), and Amiram Harlap, ed., *Israel Builds*, 1977 (Tel Aviv: Ministry of Housing, 1977).

Planners introduced the Ashcubit Houses to representatives of the future settlers. Until that point, the settlers didn't take part in the planning process. But after they were contacted, they quickly formed a voluntary building committee. Members of the committee traveled across the West Bank and examined different Ashcubit Houses in other settlements. After a short while, they acceded to the planners' requests and ordered three different types of Ashcubit Houses: a small one, comprised of two modular units; a slightly bigger one made of two and a half units, and a three-unit house for large families.[38]

In June 1981, a special inauguration ceremony, attended by Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Minister of Agriculture Ariel Sharon (Figure 3.9), took place on the site. Then, in July 1981, the first Ashcubit Houses were brought to the site and residents began moving in to the settlement.[39] By March 1982, all 61 families of Gar'in Levona had settled in the northern hill of Beit Arye (Figure 3.10).

Figure 3.9 Beit Arye's Inauguration ceremony attended by Yehudith Ben Eliezer (in orange at the center) and Prime Minister Begin (on her right). June 17, 1981. Source: Beit Arye archive.

[37] Hermoni, interview with the author.
[38] Reuven, interview with the author; "Levona" (Settlement Department, September 1980), S15M2037817, Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem. According to Reuven the smallest house measured 48 sq. m., the medium one – 56 sq. m., and the largest house – 70 sq. m. According to the plan I found at the Central Zionist Archives home sizes were: 47, 58, and 70 sq. m.
[39] Not all 61 families moved at once. It took a couple of months before everyone arrived. See Norodetzky, interview.

Figure 3.10 Residents take shelter from the sun underneath an Ashcubit house and view of three Ascubit houses. Beit Arye, c.1981. Source: Beit Arye Archive.

But, to Norodetzky's disappointment, some of the original settlers began complaining about the Ashcubit Houses soon after they moved in. The houses were just too small and modest for them. Something had to be done about them, the residents complained. A couple of families even left the settlement.[40] Life in a small, prefabricated single story house on a hilltop, poorly insulated, with only limited public services was not exactly what they had in mind when they first registered for Gar'in Levona.

Fearing others would also leave, in 1983, the secretariat of the settlement issued a decree allowing residents to renovate and expand their Ashcubit Houses according to their own taste.[41] All residents had to do was purchase their Ashcubit house from the Jewish Agency for $25,000.[42]

The secretariat's decision might seem obvious, a matter of simple logic. But, within the context of Israeli settlement planning, it was hardly an obvious one. In fact, in the past, it probably wouldn't have been possible. Until the 1970s, all single-family houses built on state lands—in Israel or the West Bank—were built by public or semi-public building companies, using conventional model homes. Accordingly, anyone residing on state lands, like the residents of Beit Arye, couldn't just design his own home.[43] Only those very few Israelis living on privately owned lands could have enjoyed such a privilege.

However, this decree was changed in the 1970s, when officials at the Ministry of Housing developed a new design scheme that came to be known as Build Your Own Home.[44] Simply put, Build Your Own Home allowed individuals to design and build

[40] Norodetzky, interview.
[41] Norodetzky.
[42] Effi (Archivist of Beit Arye and one of the settlement's founders), interview with the author, July 29, 2015. According to Reuven each paid $25,000. Reuven, interview with the author.
[43] Yizhar, "Proyect Beni Beitha: Hamerhav Habanui Benkudat Shinui Hevratit Tarbutit Vemiktzoit," 47–48.
[44] According to the architectural historian Dikla Yizhar, who wrote a comprehensive history of Build Your Own House, the first Build Your Own House project took place in Arad in 1963. However, only in the 1970s did Build Your Own Home became a matter of government policy. See, Yizhar, "Proyect Beni Beitha: Hamerhav Habanui Benkudat Shinui Hevratit Tarbutit Vemiktzoit."

detached homes according to their own taste on land plots the state leased to them.[45] The government, in turn, installed all infrastructure and public buildings serving the residents of these houses. The scheme was conceived in order to strengthen Development towns—impoverished modernist towns of repetitive housing blocks the government built in the 1950s to absorb the masses of immigrants that flocked to the country after independence.[46] But, by the 1980s, the government began offering a relatively similar funding scheme to West Bank settlers. The settlers could now lease "state lands" for 5% of their value, building their homes according to their own taste without having to worry about infrastructure and other development fees the government committed to paying.[47]

Beit Arye was among the first settlements to take advantage of this scheme in the West Bank.[48] And the residents reacted very positively to the decision. Quickly, almost all families purchased their Ashcubit Houses and began making expansion plans. Each hired his own architect or contractor. A few families tried working together with the same contractor, but these endeavors seemed to have failed.[49] The result was extremely eclectic. Building materials, style, and overall design varied tremendously. Each added

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[45] The lands were not given, but leased for long periods of time, as is common in Israel proper.

[46] By allocating land plots for single-family houses—a building form that gained unprecedented popularity in the 1970s—ministry officials hoped to attract stronger publics to these towns, and allow existing residents to improve their living conditions without having to leave their community. See Dan Raz, "Planning Guidelines for 'Build Your Own Home' Neighborhoods," in *Israel Builds 1988* (Ministry of Housing, 1988), 386; Harry Brand, *Bdikat Mifal "Bne Beitha": Doh Mesakem* (Ministry of Housing, 1982), 1.

For comprehensive studies of development towns from the 1950s see Miriam Tuvya and Michael Boneh, "Shikunim Beshnot Hamishim," in *Binyan Haaretz: Shikunim Beshnot Hamishim*, ed. Miriam Tuvya and Michael Boneh (Tel Aviv: Hakibutz Hameuhad, 1999), 10–18; Kallus, Rachel and Yubert Lu Yun, "The National House and the Personal House: The Role of Public Housing in the Shaping of Space," in *Merhav, Adama, Bayit*, ed. Yehuda Shenhav (Jerusalem: Van Leer Institute, 2003), 166–93.

For the "pre-history" of Development Towns or New Towns see Shira Wilkof, "New Towns, New Nation: Europe and the Emergence of Zionist Israeli National Planning Between the Wars," in *Planting New Towns in Europe in the Interwar Years: Experiments and Dreams for Future Societies*, ed. Helen Meller and Heleni Forfyriou (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016), 195–228.

[47] Land was given to West Bank settlers for 5% of its value. At first, all settlers, regardless of their settlement's exact location got the same funding packages that were equivalent to those in given to development towns' residents. See Benny Katzover (former head of the Shomrom Regional Council), "Yeshuvei Hashomron Keezor Pituah," December 8, 1981, 8487/10-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

In December 1981, there was a decision to allocate different funding packages to different settlements, according to their location in the West Bank. See Yossi Margalit (head of the new settlements and rural administration) to Uri Ariel, "Bniya Atzmit Beyshuvim Kehilatiyim Veironiyim-Idkun Tohnit Hasiyua 1981," February 1, 1982, 8487/9-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem; Uri Ariel and Yossi Margalit, "Bniya Atzmit Beyshuvim Kehilatiyim Veironiyim: Idkun Tohnit Hasiyua 1981," January 7, 1982, 8487/9-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

The closer a settlement was to Tel Aviv and the shore area, the less funding it was entitled for. See Dan Granit, "Bonim et Hashomron," *Haaretz*, 1983, sec. Binyan VeDiyor; Aharon Dolev, "Hamahapah Bemapat Hashomron," *Maariv*, December 17, 1982. The West Bank was divided into three zones according to their distance form the border. Each got a different funding package. The region closest to the shore area was the most desirable area. Israelis moving to settlements in that area got a modest funding package of about $80,000 (in addition to other benefits given to young couples across the country). Israelis settling in the heart of Samaria and the mountain ridge—areas of medium demand—got some $210,000 ($30,000 of which was given only if the residents stayed put for at least 5 years. Finally, those moving to areas of low demand, the Jordan rift Valley and south Mount Hebron, received $250,000. $37,000 of which was dependent on them staying put as well. These funding packages were offered for Israelis for whom this was their first house. Those who already owned one, had a different finding arrangement. See Granit, "Bonim et Hashomron"; "Protokol Miyeshivat Haveada Leinyanei Bikoret Hamedina Shitkayma Beyom Gimel, K"A Beshvat, Hatashm"a, 12.2.85, Sha'a 12:30," February 12, 1985, 1423/26-K, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem; Ministry of Housing, "Siyua Lebniya Verehisha Beyeshuvim Kehilatiyim Veironiyim Beyehuda Veshomron - Tadrih Hafala," May 1, 1983, 14616/1-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem; Ministry of Housing, "Tohnit Siyua 1982 - Tadrih Hafala," June 1982, 14616/1-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem; Advertisement by the Ministry of Housing, "Keitzad Mekablim Siyua Livnot Bayit Beyehuda Veshomron?," *Nekuda*, February 4, 1983.

Each family paid only 5% of the value of the land. These 5% were counted as if they were 80% of the value of the land. The remaining 20% were to be paid much later, over the period of 20 years. See "Hahharat Karka Lemishtaknim Beyehuda Veshomron - Nohal," July 21, 1982, 7618/2-A, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem; State Comptroller of Israel office to A. Winner (general manager of the Ministry of Housing), "Peulot Misrad Habinui Vehashikun Beyishuv Yehuda Vehashomron," January 5, 1984, 14616/9-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem; "Protokol Yeshivat Haveada Lehityashvut Hameshutefet Lamemshala Velahistadrut Hatziyonit Haolamit," July 26, 1981, 7618/1-A, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

[48] According to my findings, Kedumim was the first settlement where Build Your Own Houses scheme was applied.

[49] For example, some ten families contacted a contractor from Ramallah who was known for his work with stone. But, since many refused to pay the amount he demanded, the idea was canceled. Reuven, interview with the author.

rooms, entire floors and cladding layers without much consideration to his neighbors (Figure 3.11).[50] As if to compensate for the time spent in the poor Ashcubit Houses, many built exceptionally large, multi-story houses. Not without irony, Norodetzky referred to these houses as "the palaces."[51]

Figure 3.11 A renovated Ashcubit house in Beit Arye with two stories added—one on top and the other below the original Ashcubit house. Additions also include red-tiled rooftop, bay windows, rooftop balcony, arched window, and stone cladding. Remanents of the original, single-story Ashcubit house are painted in grey. Photos by the author.

The residents of Beit Arye, however, were not the only ones building "palaces" in the West Bank. Once Build Your Own Home was introduced to West Bank settlements, settlers across the West Bank started building equally ambitious houses. For example, some five families in the settlement of Beit Horon, who also lived in Ashcubit Houses for a couple of years, decided to go with "Tuscany style" houses, and had their homes built behind a miniaturized aqueduct (Figure 3.12).[52]

Figure 3.12 Tuscany style houses behind a fake aqueduct in the settlement of Beit Horon. Source: Beit Horon Archive.

The residents of the settlement of Neve Tzuf, located some 9 miles north of Beit Arye, came up with an even more surprising housing scheme. "After spending some time in a temporary encampment surrounded by all these trees," one of them recalls, "we had this thought: if we live in this place, surrounded by greenery, why not build a 'little Switzerland' right here and have all homes built of wood."[53] Accordingly, they selected

[50] There was a building code Beit Arye residents had to abide to. However it was a very modest one with minimal limitations. In any case, no one intended to penalize those not following it.
[51] Norodetzky, interview with the author.
[52] Unlike their counterparts in Beit Arye, the residents of Beit Horon didn't build homes on top of Ashcubit Houses. They left the latter behind for new comers, and built new homes on an adjacent hilltop. A few years later the settlement hired a contractor to convert the old Ashcubit houses into multistory row houses.
[53] Shmuel Kravitz, interview with the author, May 30, 2015.

three contractors who specialized in wood construction, a rather expensive and rare building method in Israel. Each contractor offered a different building style. One contractor offered "American Houses," built by construction workers brought especially from Atlanta. Another contractor developed "Finnish Houses" built by Finnish and Palestinian construction workers, and the third contractor designed "Swedish Houses" (Figure 3.13).[54] The residents were very happy with the outcomes. One of the residents proudly told me that the settlement of Neve Tzuf has the largest concentration of wooden houses in the country even today.[55]

Figure 3.13 "American" (left), "Finnish" (center), and "Swedish" houses in the settlement of Neve Tzuf (Halamish). Photos by author.

1.3 Reaction

But other than the residents, few seemed to have found much merit in these new settlement houses. Among those who resented them were architects at the Ministry of Housing. Dan Raz, chief architect at the ministry, once complained: "Total (design) freedom and lack of supervision on part of the authorities resulted in the construction of neighborhoods that became visual eyesores."[56] Each house was built with different building materials and showed no consideration for the overall look of the neighborhood, he lamented.[57]

He explained that these unfortunate outcomes were not exclusive to West Bank settlements. The same had happened in those Development Towns from the 1950s, where Build Your Own Home schemes were first applied. However, in Development Towns, Raz argued, these houses still formed "an integral part of the town – socially, economically, and planning wise."[58] In West Bank settlements like Beit Arye, by contrast, these eclectic neighborhoods were on their own. They lacked any point of reference, or ordering principle, he insisted. In addition, the steep topography of the West Bank only exacerbated this unwanted heterogeneity, resulting in what Raz referred to as an "uncontrolled skyline."[59]

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[54] Each "Finnish house" cost $60,000. The government gave each homebuilder a loan at the amount of two million IL, and paid 600,000 IL for infrastructure for each house. Kravitz, interview with the author; Niva Lanir-Plavesky, "Ashmat Shomron - Shem Kavua," *Davar*, February 12, 1982.

[55] Kravitz, interview.

[56] Raz, "Planning Guidelines for 'Build Your Own Home' Neighborhoods," 386. Israel Godovich expressed the same criticism when I interviewed him. However, he was more concerned with the economic burden this posed on the country. Godovich, interview with the author.

[57] Raz, 386. For a comprehensive analysis of Build your Own Home scheme and the challenges it presented see Brand, *Bdikat Mifal "Bne Beitha": Doh Mesakem*.

[58] Raz, "Planning Guidelines for 'Build Your Own Home' Neighborhoods," 386.

[59] Ibid.

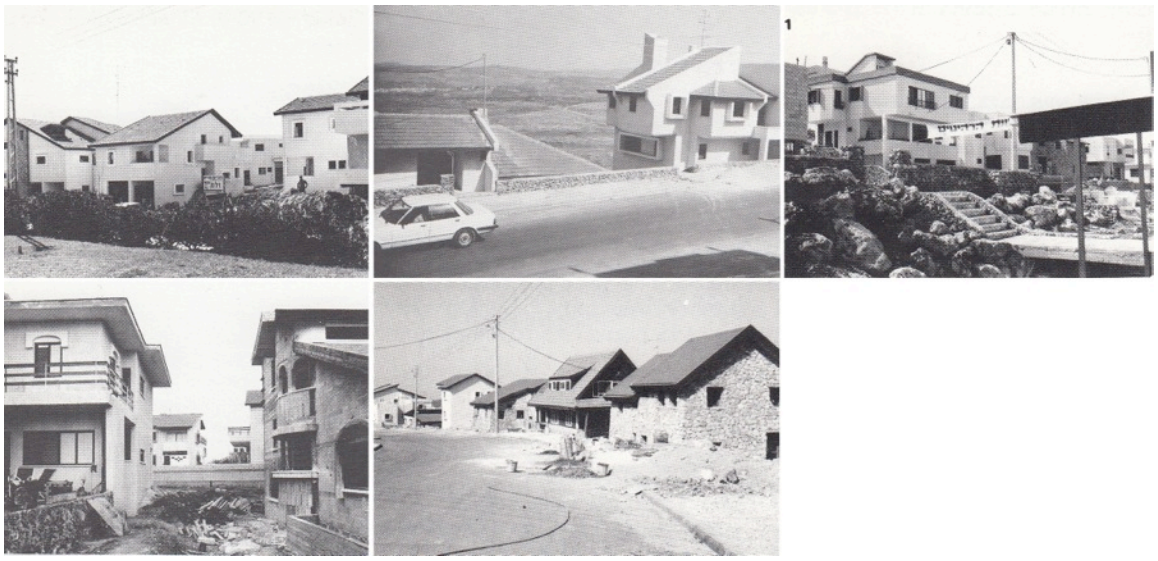

Figure 3.14 Photos of houses in the settlement of Ariel Raz included in his article. All were built according to Build Your Own Home scheme. Raz added captions to the images where he expressed some of his concerns. For example, he described the image at the bottom-center as: "Chaotic Street Façade resulting from lack of uniformity in choice of building material." Describing the image above it, Raz wrote: "Disharmony resulting from differences in scale of houses and their relationship to the street."[60]

Leading Tel Aviv-based architects also resented the eclectic houses of Beit Arye and other West Bank settlements. For example, when the editorial team of Tvai visited ten settlements in the West Bank—a rather unusual destination for architects of their status—they were appalled. "We didn't expect much," they wrote, "but we still hoped that those architects who build on these spectacular landscapes will avoid the banal dryness and won't bring here all that is mediocre and below that." They were especially troubled by some of the houses in the settlement of Ariel that, like those in Beit Arye, were built according to the Build Your Own Home scheme. "No repetitive construction, boring as it may be, could be as ugly," they wrote. "Most houses are plain ugly, some are repulsing in their pretentions, and others are gross because of their screaming 'uniqueness' that exhibits an explicit disrespect to their neighbors."[61]

But no one was more concerned about this new building trend than the activists of *Gush Emunim*.[62] In their minds, it didn't only look "ugly," but it also posed several risks to the settlement project as a whole: First, as former secretary of Ofra Moshe Merhaviya

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[60] Ibid.

[61] In their criticism, they explain that other neighborhoods built according to BYOH scheme, like in Arad, were equally distasteful. See "Al Siyur Noge Beyehuda Veshomron," *Tvai* 22 (1984): 64–65.
In another occasion, the well known architect Eldar Sharon expressed his disinterest in settlements. See
Another such instance where a leading Tel Aviv based architect mocks settlement construction can be found in an interview Eldar Sharon gave to Yediot Aharonot. See Yitzhak Ben-Ner, Alex Anski, and Eldar Sharon, "Architectura Shel Tohu Vavohu," *Yediot Aharonot*, April 1, 1983, sec. Seven Days.
Architects criticized Build Your Own Home in Israel proper as well. For example David Knafo wrote in Architecture of Israel Quarterly: "The danger that this "new style"…will influence architecture in Israel is real. If an immediate and firm reaction is not presented from architects and their institutions the day will come when laymen will do architecture and architects will do the sketches for them." See David Knafo, "Bne-Beitha - Adrihalut o 'Kitch,'" *Architecture of Israel Quarterly*, May 1988.
For critical analysis of architects' criticism of Build Your Own Home scheme see Hadas Shadar, "Al Bayit Veal Baal Habayit," in *Tsurot Megurim: Adrikhalut Ṿe-Ḥevrah Be-Yiśra'el*, ed. Shelly Cohen and Ṭulah 'Amir (Tel Aviv: Ḥargol : 'Am 'oved, 2007), 30–37; Yizhar, "Proyect Beni Beitha: Hamerhav Habanui Benkudat Shinui Hevratit Tarbutit Vemiktzoit," 97–98.

[62] Some settler leaders, like Daniela Weiss from Kedumim, were in favor of Build Your Own House. The settlers of Ofra—the flagship settlement of *Gush Emunim*—however, were unanimous about their opposition to Build Your Own Home.

explained in an article from 1981, allowing each family to design their home had slowed construction in many settlements (Figure 3.15). Instead of simply moving into a given model home, settlers were now investing months into choosing ceramic tiles, kitchen cabinets, and bathroom accessories. All this, he lamented, went against the need to bring as many Jewish Israelis to the West Bank in the shortest time possible. Even worse, Merhavya complained, since some had built large houses far beyond their means, they were unable to complete their homes. "And in a small settlement," Merhaviya explained, "the stain of an unfinished structure has extremely negative physiological and political effects."[63] In addition, Merhaviya warned his fellow settlers against the negative effect the new design trend was likely to have on the social fabric of settlements. He claimed it would lead to "an unrestrained competition between residents, fighting who has the fanciest and most sophisticated house…a competition that ruins the friendly relations between people and results in excessive pretentiousness, on the one hand, and jealousy and bitterness, on the other."[64]

Figure 3.15 An image pair showing houses in Ofra (right) and an unfinished multistory house in an unknown settlement (left) Moshe Merhaviya added to his article in Nekuda from 1981. Emphasizing the merits of Ofra's houses, he wrote in the caption: "Success Against Failure: the Advantage of an organized construction (Ofra's permanent houses) is that it is fast, cheap, and allows overall treatment, and determines a social-spiritual nature of a settlement."[65] Source: Moshe Merhaviya, "Habniya Haatzmit: Shat Hamivhan Shel Hahityashvut Hahadasha," *Nekuda*, January 30, 1981.

Merhaviya's latter concern was not ungrounded. Once construction began in Beit Arye, some felt as if the sense of community that characterized the place in the first year was lost. One settler explained to me that at first, when everyone was still living in small Ashcubit Houses, residents would regularly meet at one of the Ashcubit structures that functioned as a social club. They would drink beer, chat, and get to know each other. "We were like a big family back then," he recalled.[66] But slowly this sense of belonging

[63] Moshe Merhaviya, "Habniya Haatzmit: Shat Hamivhan Shel Hahityashvut Hahadasha," *Nekuda*, January 30, 1981. Another settler expressed his concern about the large unit sizes, wondering "Why should a young couple start their life in a 150 sq. m. apartment? As if 80 sq. m. are not enough." See "Shalosh Shnot Pituah," *Nekuda*, October 8, 1984, 30–35.
[64] Merhaviya, "Habniya Haatzmit: Shat Hamivhan Shel Hahityashvut Hahadasha." Former head of Amana voiced the same argument in an article he wrote for Nekuda in 1983. See Uri Ariel, "Marbit Habniya Beyo"sh Mitbatzaat Bethumei Tohnit Alon," *Nekuda*, November 25, 1983.
[65] Merhaviya, "Habniya Haatzmit: Shat Hamivhan Shel Hahityashvut Hahadasha."
[66] Smadar, interview with the author.

diminished. People simply preferred staying in their renovated homes. The same had happened in other settlements. For example, in 1984, former secretary of the settlement of Shavei Shomron complained:

> "There is a huge difference between the era of the Ashcubit houses and the era of the villas. When we were living in Ashcubit houses people were willing to contribute way more than what they are willing to today. It really bothers me… This chase after a higher quality of life damages the [social] strength of our settlements."[67]

In addition, some worried the lack of uniformity and overall "bad taste" attested to broader defects among settler society. For example, in 1983, Yisrael Har'el from the settlement of Ofra wrote that, "If architecture, and gardening attest to a group's culture, then we have created in our settlements an image that attests to a defected interiority. It is enough to take a glimpse at our settlements. Usually what we see is a random collection of shapes, built without any planning or taste. We have scarred the landscape and you can see it everywhere."[68]

But, beyond their concerns about the social fabric and slow building pace, Merhaviya and other activists of Block of the Faithful mainly feared the new luxurious houses were going to damage the settlement project's reputation among the general public in Israel. Since the mid 1970s, settlement activists had invested great effort into making the Community Settlement resemble the kibbutz: They built their homes with pitched red-tiled rooftops, followed a strict building code, and, altogether, aimed at modesty and uniformity. In doing so, they rendered the settlement project as part and parcel of pre-state pioneering Zionism, something few Israelis would dare to oppose. But now, as settlers were building three-story "Swedish" and "Finnish" houses, it was becoming increasingly difficult to maintain this imagery. As an activist from the settlement of Psagot complained: "this building style… had created an absurd formula: 'Villa-Settling' …something kept only for the rich!"[69]

And, indeed, it wasn't long before many Israelis began questioning the ideological grounding of these new settlers. For example, in a short piece that appeared in the daily newspaper of Yediot Aharonot in 1984, columnist and translator Boaz Evron ironically commented:

> "I regularly get all the issues of Nekuda, Block of the Faithful's journal. Browsing through the pages of the journal I get worried, and not only because of the political attitude that guides it, but by the spiritual self-portrait it expresses…of (settlers) being an elite group guiding the people of Israel, on 'Zionism,' on 'Idealism'…And all this 'idealism' is accompanied by large advertisements for 'Italian porcelain tiles,' and 'natural marble floor tiles'…exquisite furniture, cabinet rooms, kitchens, cladding materials…And you see these double story villas, all this luxury built on my and your expense, all, of course, in the name of galvanized 'idealism.' No kibbutz, even after years of hard work, ever reached such levels of luxury…the reason for that is obvious: Kibbutz people made their money out of hard labor. The

[67] "Shalosh Shnot Pituah," 34.
[68] "Tarbut, Dibur," *Nekuda*, November 7, 1986, 82. Originally published in Nekuda, Volume 65.
[69] Rafi Vaknin, "Bemo Yadeinu Mananu Hityashvut Masivit Beyesh"a," *Nekuda*, July 26, 1985, 26–27.

'settlers' are building their palaces on our expense. [So] next time you hear the words 'idealism,' 'sacredness,' and 'Zionism'—grab your wallet."[70]

In the same fashion, reporter Danny Rubenstein compared Beit Arye to Savyon, an affluent neighborhood near Tel Aviv deprived of any political ideology. Beit Arye, he added, was "Savyon for the poor."[71] The houses—big, clumsy, and eclectic—only attested to the residents' poor background, proving that they had, according to Rubenstein, moved to the West Bank from dull and repetitive public housing projects in Israel. Wondering why their houses were so big, he cynically argued,

> "The Israeli who (until not long ago) was counting the scarce square meters of his small public housing apartment [dirat shikun] is out in the open here, adding one meter here, another meter there. And since he is used to seeing his neighbor's kitchen and living room [from his days in a public housing block], he also builds his big villa so the restrooms and sleeping rooms will be one inside the other. (And) the mixture of style is terrible. A Poble Espanyol-esque villa sprayed with plaster attached to a wooden house imported from Finland; a Swiss-styled castle attached to an Arab house made of arches cladded with red stone… Each and every one here realizes his dream house in the a way more distorted and scream-ish than his neighbor."[72]

Figure 3.16 Ads for "Building Carpentry like Abroad" (left), and "American Villa" (right). Source: Nekuda, May 1983.

Quickly, members of the kibbutz movement, the very people the activists of Block of the Faithful saw as their forefathers, joined these critics and emphasized the enormous gap stretched between settlements like Beit Arye and the kibbutzim.[73] For example, Eyal Kafkafi from kibbutz Maoz Haim bluntly wrote she "had never heard of

[70] Boaz Evron, "Tfos Bearnakha," *Yediot Aharonot (Reprinted in Nekuda, Vol. 72, April 16, 1984)*, March 30, 1984.
[71] Danny Rubenstein, "Shilton Hakitch Vehakiur," *Davar*, February 4, 1983, 17.
[72] Rubenstein, 17.
[73] Among those settlers who saw the kibbutz people as their forefathers were founders of *Gush Emunim*. For examples see Merhaviya, interview with the author; Daniela Weiss, "Meolam Lo Amarti Al Hakibutzim 'Hityashvut Koshelet,'" *Nekuda*, March 13, 1987, 27, 33.

anyone [in a West Bank settlement] who had changed his lifestyle like we [in the kibbutz] had to." And while many kibbutzim served as a security belt, protecting Israel's borders, she added, "Settlements in Judea and Samaria do not contribute anything to Israel's security. If anything, they might encourage Arabs to join terror organizations."[74]

It wasn't long before *Gush Emunim* activists decided they had to do something. They feared such critiques may have a bad impact on decision makers—and they never really liked the new building trend anyway.[75] Accordingly, in August 1980, Block of the Faithful gathered the secretaries of all settlements for a meeting on the matter. During the meeting, Block of the Faithful's representatives agreed it was important to allow "different types of settlers" to take part in the settlement project. Nevertheless, they emphasized, it was essential to develop "construction methods… that fit the unique nature of the Community Settlement."[76] In place of unrestrained freedom in the design of individual homes, they insisted, houses should be more modest and built uniformly.[77] They even suggested that settlements that followed their recommendations would enjoy a generous monetary support.[78] A couple of years later, in 1983, the members of Judea, Samaria and Gaza Council (Yesha Council) went a step further. They tried changing the building codes for all settlements so the construction of what they referred to as "unreasonably large houses" would be strictly prohibited.[79] Yet, these formal attempts all failed.

Refusing to give up, settlement activists then tried appealing to the hearts of their counterparts through numerous pleas in the Nekuda journal. Time and again, they published articles and letters asking settlers to avoid building excessively large houses. For example, in an article entitled "Let's Keep it Modest" [BoUo Natznia Lehet], a settler from Kedumim insisted,

> "We must limit the size of our construction projects so they fulfill only our basic needs, but not beyond that…Those of us who were able to live for years under harsh conditions in portables, and Ashcubit Houses, and didn't feel any difficulty

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[74] Eyal Kafkafi, "Hayeshuvim Beyo"sh Lo Tormim Labitahon," *Nekuda*, November 1987, 4. For other examples where kibbutz members criticized settlements see Kalman Kleiman, "Hityashvut - O Hitnahalut," *Maariv*, May 15, 1986, 11; Yitzhak Ben-Aharon, "Hamitpatmim Mehahon Haleumi," *Davar (Reprinted in Nekuda, Vol. 110)*, April 6, 1987; Reuma Ziskind, "Mi Shemehapes Hayeyey Shituf Yeleh Lakibutz Velo Lehitnahaluyot," *Maariv*, February 16, 1987, 13; Oved Tzur (Kibbutz Malkiya), "Shuvu Habayta, Alu Artza!," *Nekuda*, May 15, 1988.

[75] *Gush Emunim's* fear was not ungrounded. Many Israelis were wondering if all the money allocated to settlement construction was on the expense of Israel's impoverished Development Towns. In 1983, Beige Shohat from the Alignment Party, announced that something must be done in order to correct the unequal allocation of funds between the two publics: West Bank settlers and Development Town residents. See Rubenstein, "Shilton Hakitch Vehakiur," 17.
That same year, the manager of Amana, Uri Ariel, reported that some ministry officials told him they think the ministry should stop giving settlements generous funding schemes. After all, they explained, it makes no sense to give public money to people who build huge houses, with a built area some 220 sq. m. Ariel, "Marbit Habniya Beyo"sh Mitbatzaat Bethumei Tohnit Alon," 5.

[76] "Bniyat Keva Bayeshuv Hakehilati: Kinus Mazkirei Yeshuvim" (Amana: The Settlement Movement of Gush Emunim, August 5, 1980), S136/6848, Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem.

[77] At the meeting it was said that each settlement should organize together and build all houses at once in one style. Merhaviya's article ends with what looks like a summary of that same meeting highlights the importance of also having these uniform houses designed modestly. "Bniyat Keva Bayeshuv Hakehilati: Kinus Mazkirei Yeshuvim," 2; Merhaviya, "Habniya Haatzmit: Shat Hamivhan Shel Hahityashvut Hahadasha," 6.
Also, see similar idea in "Bou Natznia Lehet," *Nekuda*, November 25, 1983, 14.

[78] It is not entirely clear to whom did the settlers representatives referred to in "Settling Institutes." It is possible to assume they referred not only to Amana, *Gush Emunim's* Settlement Movement, but also to the Ministry of Housing and the Settlement Department. See "Bniyat Keva Bayeshuv Hakehilati: Kinus Mazkirei Yeshuvim."
A couple of months later, Merhaviya wrote that the settlers have reached an agreement with the Ministry of Housing that grants additional monetary support for settlements that follow these guidelines. Merhaviya, "Habniya Haatzmit: Shat Hamivhan Shel Hahityashvut Hahadasha."

[79] According to Uri Ariel, settler representatives didn't define what "unreasonably large house" actually meant. Ariel, "Marbit Habniya Beyo"sh Mitbatzaat Bethumei Tohnit Alon."

> thanks to the their belief it was important for the settling of the land of Israel, they can avoid building a large and luxurious house…In the same way as we were pioneers in so many areas [of life], we should also be pioneers in this matter."[80]

In the same fashion, founder of Ofra Yehuda Etzion later insisted,

> "The villas and the castles – built in wood and stone – that rise in many of Judea and Samaria's settlements... They sting in the eyes of the beholder from the outside, and might also harden the heart of the person inside. I pray hoping the chance is still there, that it is not too late… Let's build in a modest way! Modesty is beautiful…not just at the level of the building but also, and mostly, in the hearts…"[81]

In addition, Block of the Faithful activists tried putting pressure on individual settlements. They traveled across the West Bank, talked with settlement secretaries, gave lectures, and offered professional consultation. Secretary of Ofra Pinhas Valershtein went to the settlement of Beit Horon and tried convincing the residents to use only one relatively modest model home. He even had two modest model homes installed in the center of the settlement.[82] But his attempts fell on deaf ears. "We don't want to have a kibbutz here," they explained to him, and insisted each family would design its home according to their own taste.[83]

1.4 Villa Pioneers

The settlers of Beit Arye and nearby settlements didn't understand these pleas voiced by Valershtein and his collaborators from Block of the Faithful. As one of them commented, "Valershtein's uniform design could only work for his people in Ofra, but not with us."[84] In fact, his insistence on modesty in construction seemed counter-productive to some of them. After all, as an American-born settler from the settlement of Tekoa argued,

> "It is much more comfortable to live and raise kids in a single-family house with a private yard…. [more comfortable] than in a 'standardized unit' of 72.3 sq. m. that causes overcrowded-ness, hostility and discourages families from making lots of kids. Why shouldn't we [settlers] be fighting for the right to develop single-family houses that take more space the same way as our [Palestinian] cousins do?"[85]

If at first, such announcements took an apologetic tone, but they soon adopted a more assertive one. Tired of "old-fashioned" settlers and their patronizing attitude, some began questioning the austerity of older settlements. "Maybe they didn't build luxurious

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[80] "Bou Natznia Lehet," 14. For similar pleas see Ezra Zohar, "Heihan Hahilonim Veanshei Hashunot?," *Nekuda*, October 23, 1985, 10–11; Hava Pinhas-Cohen, "Livroah Min Haklishaot: Interview with David Cassuto," *Nekuda*, September 21, 1984, 36–37; Rabbi Israel Rosen (from settlement of Alon Shvut), "Kina Gdola Kineu," *Nekuda*, May 25, 1984, 10–11; Zeev Marganit (architect) and Aviya Loz (psychologist from settlement of Kedumim), "Lagur Kemo Batana"h," *Nekuda*, May 17, 1983, 16–17.

[81] Yehuda Etzion, "Halea Hakibush Hamashhit," *Nekuda*, May 27, 1987, 18–21.

[82] Both model homes were built by the same contractor who did all the houses in Ofra. Ilana (archivist of Beit Horon), conversation with the author, May 19, 2015.

[83] Ora (archivist of Beit Horon), conversation with the author, May 19, 2015; Ilana (archivist of Beit Horon), conversation with the author.

[84] Hermoni, interview with the author. A large number of the eclectic and non-uniform settlement homes could be found also in religious settlements. Even in Beit Horon a large portion of the residents were associated with the national-religious faction.

[85] The settler was residing in the settlement of Tekoa—not Beit Arye. Amiel Ungar, "Hafahnu Lihiyot Helek Min Hamemsad," *Nekuda*, July 11, 1986, 38–39.

villas. Maybe they didn't build anything. Maybe they accept the most ascetic conditions when they are in Samaria," Arye Rokah from Kedumim, a settlement known for its luxurious villas, wrote in 1986. "But was the land they came from [in Israel] ascetic and poor?" he wondered. The answer, he insisted, was obvious—it wasn't. And, since the settlers' ultimate goal was to make the West Bank an integrated part of Israel, living in metal shacks was counter-productive. For this reason, he felt proud of his settlement and its fancy villas. "Kedumim with its permanent houses," he proudly concluded, "is the Tel Aviv of Samaria."[86] And like Rokah, the people of Beit Arye began to take pride in their luxurious villas. They even embraced their settlement's association with Savyon, the affluent neighborhood near Tel Aviv. "Beit Arye is the Savyon of the Shomron [Samaria]," one of them explained to me without irony.[87]

In another article, entitled "Pioneers in Villas" [Halutzim Bevilla], Rokah went a step further and celebrated the villa as a sign of pioneering and bravery. He boldly announced:

> "It is important to recognize that the one who built a villa – from his own money – is now a pioneer and an idealist, much more than how he used to be when he was still living in a portable or an Ashcubit House built on the expense of the Jewish Agency or the state. **Building a villa, big as it may be, marks a high level of pioneer-ship**…The one who left a place beyond the Green Line [in Israel] and sold his house in the city in order to build a home in Judea and Samaria is on a higher level compared to the one who lives in a settlement where the residents found a way to avoid the need to sell their private residences [in Israel] and live in structures erected by the people of Israel [meaning the state of Israel]. And there are such settlements. So please: Stop falling for outside appearances. Portables are pretty and romantic, but the one living in a portable is not as pioneer as the one who built his home with his own money. His villa doesn't look like a matter of pioneering because the people residing inside are not "miserable" like the one living in a portable. But what matters is the content inside. One gave up important assets in order to build an important asset with his own means, and the other one wraps himself with a romantic aura of portables and generators, but lives on the expense of the Israeli people (i.e. the state). **We shouldn't be shy about our villas. Let us put them on show, and hide the portables, the Ashkubit houses**, and all those buildings that are not our property and are not the outcome of our labor."[88]

Rokah's argument was not entirely accurate. Almost all of those "Pioneers in Villas" were enjoying generous funding packages from the Ministry of Housing. But few dared correct him. And soon, his attitude gained more and more popularity among the neophyte settlers.

But the "new" settlers' counterattacks against their critics didn't stop there. By the mid 1980s, they began launching equally harsh attacks against the members of the kibbutz movement—the ultimate archetypes of pioneer-ship in Israel, the ones the settlers from Ofra aimed to emulate. In numerous articles and op-ed pieces, they argued that the austerity of the kibbutz and its socialist underpinnings were flawed, especially when

[86] Aryeh Rokah, "Nahala, Lo Menuha," *Nekuda*, February 21, 1986, 2.
[87] Savyon is an affluent neighborhood in Israel. At first, the association of Beit Arye with Savyon was made in order to mock the settlers. But now they embraced it. Michal, interview with the author, July 2014.
[88] Aryeh Rokah, "Halutzim Bevilot," *Nekuda*, October 14, 1983, 10. Author's underlining.

compared to the integrity of the settlers' villas. For example, a female settler from Kedumim wrote to her fellow kibbutz members:

> "With our very own money we built our houses, the houses you [kibbutz members] call 'luxurious houses'… My husband and I built a house according to our means. Construction took us five years and we didn't ask for a dime from the state…Meanwhile the only thing you [kibbutz members] are doing is to get by on the expense of the state…"[89]

In the same fashion, settler leader Daniela Weiss emphasized that many kibbutzim relied on state funding. Compared to kibbutzim, she argued, "The settlement of Judea, Samaria and Gaza is a successful one." Settlements required less funding and were significantly more popular. "And economically speaking," she added, "it is wise to invest in a successful business."[90] The kibbutz, for its socialism and austerity, was a dead business.

These attacks against kibbutzim and "older" settlements signified a transformation in settlers' subjectivity and self-fashioning.[91] It marked the coming of age of a new species of settlers for whom being a pioneer didn't mean being pious, socialist, or austere. Instead, it meant being a homeowner, individualist, and, at times, even flashy.

Interestingly, once "older" settlement activists realized fighting the "younger" generation was futile, they began amending their own views. Among other things, they attempted to find a building form that could appeal to the "new" settlers without being too ostentatious. Striving towards this end, they developed several planning agencies that offered housing solutions that accounted for the new settlers' wishes while maintaining some uniformity. One such agency was SHEBA Engineering – a collaboration between Block of the Faithful's Amana and local companies – that offered elaborate model homes that could compete with the fancy Build Your Own Home houses.[92] In the mid-1980s, they designed five relatively large, two-story model homes for a new neighborhood in Beit Arye (Figure 3.17). Dotted with arches that enclosed multiple balconies, and designed with flexible interior spaces, these model homes were significantly more luxurious than the Ashcubit Houses or Ofra's rudimentary model home.[93] Nevertheless, they were homogenous and relatively humble.

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[89] Haggai Hoberman, "Hazikaron Hakatzar Shel Eyal Kafkafi," *Nekuda*, July 31, 1987, 5.
The criticism concerning the kibbutz reliance on state money refers to the severe crisis the kibbutz movements were going through in the 1980s. Another settler voiced a relatively similar criticism accusing:

> "It is in the kibbutz where the false terms 'ghost-settlements' and 'sleeping dormitories' [used to denigrate settlements] came from. And…they are the ones who invented the demagogic slogan 'The Villas' [as a name tag for settlers]…Yet, they never thought to themselves that… it is them, they are the ones living in 'houses made of glass'…How many of them hold on to huge parcels of land [latifundiums] maintained by an army of foreigners [mainly European volunteers] that is destroying the youth with their bad habits leading to nomadism, laziness, hashish, inter-racial marriage [with non-Jews] and immigration?...And all this in Israel…with [state] subsidies…"

See "Mi Shegar Bebeit Zchuchit...," *Nekuda*, October 1984, 27.
[90] Weiss was among the early activists of the settlement movement. Nevertheless, her views talked to the state of mind of those settlers who flocked to the West Bank during the 1980s. Weiss, "Meolam Lo Amarti Al Hakibutzim 'Hityashvut Koshelet.'"
[91] Criticism of kibbutz was fairly popular at the time in Nekuda. For other articles where settlers expressed their criticism of the kibbutz also see "Hataka"m Mitztaref La'megia Li'," *Nekuda*, February 13, 1987, 7; Uri Urbah, "Basignon Hahu Bazman Hazeh," *Nekuda*, February 13, 1987, 107; Hava Gofer, "Lehahrim, Lenadot, Legaresh," *Nekuda*, July 31, 1987, 5.
[92] SHEBA Engineering was in charge of the founding and management of settlement houses and master planning. The houses SHEBA designed and built could be considered as "Build Your Own House" as far as state funding goes. For a detailed description of the company's structure, goals, subsidiary companies, and projects see, Yehoshua Zohar, "Anahnu Rotzim Lihiyot Kemo Hevrat-Haovdim Lelo Histaavuyoteia," *Nekuda*, March 1, 1985, 6–7; Yair Sheleg, "Kedumim: Hamenuha Vehanahala," *Nekuda*, December 20, 1985, 6–7, 19.
[93] Advertisement by SHEBA, "Haemuna Shel SH.B.A.," *Nekuda*, January 9, 1987, 2.

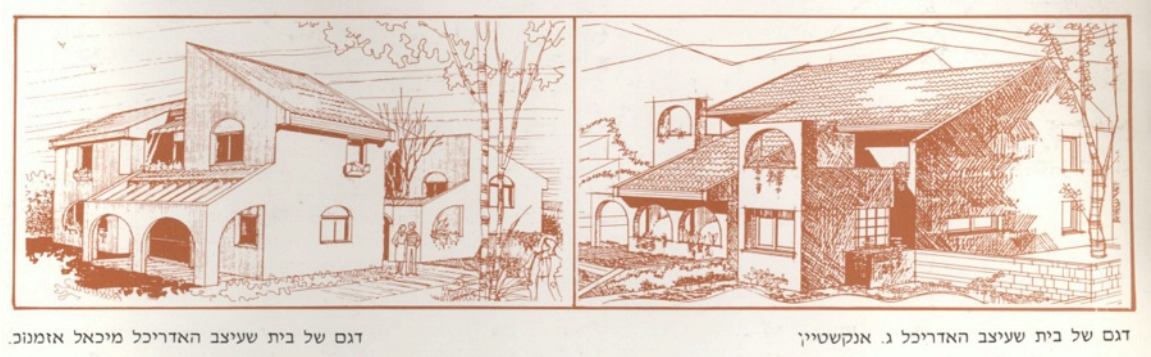

Figure 3.17 Ad for new houses in Beit Arye, Nekuda Journal, January 1987. Designed by architects Michael Azmanov and Gershon Ankenstein, and supervised by architect Hugo Shpengental from SHEBA Engineering, all model homes had red-tiled rooftops and decorative arches. While still in line with homebuyers' taste, they were relatively modest, and allowed fast construction. Source: "Haemuna Shel SH.B.A.," Nekuda, January 9, 1987, 2.

Another such agency was Kedumim Building Company, which oversaw the design and construction of the second neighborhood in the settlement of Kedumim. "The pace of Build Your Own Home (in the first neighborhood of Kedumim) was unsatisfactory to us, and so did the level of quality of construction…so we founded our own company," explained the manager of the company.[94] Indeed, within 14 months, they had completed 70 houses (Figure 3.18).[95] All followed a uniform design, with some minor iterations, allowing residents to choose either a double-story or single-story house.

Figure 3.18 Houses in Givat Shalem, the second neighborhood of the settlement of Kedumim, c.1986. Relatively luxurious but uniform, the houses in Givat Shalem looked more like a project of the state—a compromise between the ambitions of "new" and "old" settlers. Source: Asher Koralek's private collection.

[94] Sheleg, "Kedumim: Hamenuha Vehanahala," 19; David Arbel, "Lo Banu El Hamenuha," *Nekuda*, January 21, 1986, 14–15.
[95] Arbel, "Lo Banu El Hamenuha," 15.

With these developments, criticism of the "new" settlers among "older" setters had subsided by the mid-1980s. The majority of settlers, religious and secular, could now celebrate the change in building styles and the new publics it introduced to the settlement project. For example, in an article from 1986, religious news-reporter and future Knesset Member Uri Urbach praised the settlement of Beit Arye. Reflecting on an interview he conducted with Tamar, a left-leaning Israeli who moved to Beit Arye from the city of Ra'anana where she "missed a garden and trees," Urbach wrote that,

> "Tamar is the greatest achievement of the settlement in Judea and Samria. No, not Tamar in person. But all those people who came here not for ideological reasons, and often with so and so reservations. Those who are not afraid of being condemned as long as they have a [private] yard. If eight or ten years ago the settlement project was a matter of a small minority of people crazed about the issue, in the last few years it had become the territory of the general public. It is a reversed process we face here today: First people come here to live, and only later they gain hours of ideology. The place charms the people."[96]

Urbach and his fellow activists' embrace of Tamar and other Israelis who were "charmed" by Beit Arye's private yards proved productive. In the following years, more and more Israelis moved to Beit Arye and similar settlements. In 2015, there were 4,721 Israelis residing in Beit Arye.[97] Currently, there are plans for a 1000-unit neighborhood of multistory apartment buildings, waiting for government approval.[98]

2. Planners Encounter New Settlers: Alfei Menashe

2.1 "Five Minutes from Kfar Saba"

Even though settlements like Beit Arye facilitated the rise of a new building style and forced settler leaders to change their aesthetic preferences, they left many basic principles of the Community Settlement model untouched. Most importantly, they maintained the restricted nature of the Community Settlement. They all had admissions committees that screened potential residents.[99] In addition, they didn't question the authority of planners at the Ministry of Housing and the Settlement Department. These agencies oversaw the design and construction of all settlements, even if reluctantly.

These principles, however, were changed once commercial developers entered the settlement project. In 1979, government officials began amending laws that prohibited private developers from working in settlements.[100] Many in the Likud-led government

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[96] Urbah, "Beit Arye: Yeshuv Al Hamaslul," 10.

[97] "Beit Arye (Publication Number 1683)" (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, 2015), http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications17/local_authorities15_1683/pdf/384_3652.pdf.

[98] Avi Naim (head of Beit Arye's local council), interview with the author, August 12, 2015.

[99] In addition, civilian-settling seeds founded most settlements during the 1970s.

[100] In April 1979, Security Minister Ezer Weizman submitted a proposal to the government asking to allow Jewish Israelis to purchase lands in the West Bank. Avinoam Bar-Yosef, "'25 Elef Dunamim Shenimkeru Beyo"sh Nisharu Bemodaot Hapirsomot'," *Maariv*, December 10, 1985, 13.

In September 16, 1979, the government allowed Israelis and Israeli corporations to buy lands in the West Bank. The legal consultant to the government prepared guidelines for purchasing lands in November 1979. Individuals, he wrote, could buy lands in urban and quasi-urban areas, while corporates could buy lands at any place. See Yitzhak Zamir (government's legal consultant) to Ezer Weizman (Minister of Security), "Hanhayot Lekniyat Mekarkein Be'ezor Yehuda Veshomron," November 8, 1979, 7006/12-A, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

According to the political geographer David Newman, the decision to allow private developers buy lands in the West Bank was the outcome of the Elon Moreh Bagatz and the repeated complaints of settlement activists. Newman, "The Role of Gush Emunim and the Yishuv Kehillati in the West Bank 1974 - 1980," 122.

believed this was an easy way to complement and accelerate settlement construction without spending extra public funds.[101] Commercial developers and contractors, for their own part, were keen on working in the West Bank. At the time, the Israeli building industry was going through a recession partially because of a shortage in lands available for construction.[102] The newly "discovered" state lands in the West Bank could offer a much-needed repository of cheap real estate.[103] Moreover, if the government was to allocate them these lands for free or for 5% of their value, as it had with the settlers of Beit Arye, developers could sell any unit in the West Bank for about two-thirds of the price it would have been worth in Israel, where land constituted 33%-40% of apartment prices.[104] Combined with the generous government loans and grants offered to homebuyers in the West Bank, such units were likely to get sold easily.

With both government officials and private developers eager to collaborate, it was only a matter of time before an opportunity would pave the way for developers to enter the West Bank. That opportunity took place in 1981 in the settlement of Alfei Menashe.[105]

Alfei Menashe was first conceived in 1979. Initially, it followed the "regular" track of West Bank settlements like Beit Arye: A group of military generals and Ministry of Security employees, who sought after an affordable suburban life, began pressuring government agencies, asking to have a settlement built exclusively for them.[106] Once they gained the support of several government officials in August 1979, the Inter-Ministerial Settlement Committee allocated them a tract of land in the Northern part of the West Bank, some 8 kilometers east of the Israeli town of Kfar Saba.[107] Soon after, planners and architects at the Ministry of Housing's Administration of Rural and New Settlements were asked to prepare plan drawings for the settlement.[108] The instructions they received were clear: "create an attractive settlement with a high quality of life."[109]

But soon, conflict arose over how they would define "quality of life": the residents and their representatives insisted all houses should have private yards, even

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Only later, in April 1982, however, a more conclusive decision that allowed private developers to erect settlements in the West Bank was made. See Meeting of the Committee for State Critique, February 12, 1985, folder כ-1423/26, transcripts number 31, Israel State Archive, Jerusalem. Also, for general information on private initiative in settlement construction (in Israel and the West Bank), see Leviya Applebaum and David Newman, "The Private Sector Settlements in Israel" (Rehovot: hamerkaz le-limud ha-pituah, 1991).

[101] Plia Albeck to the director of settlement implamentation committee, September 23, 1983, 11, 7618/5-A, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem; Michael Dekel (vice minister of agriculture), "Tazkir," July 5, 1983, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

[102] Maggor, "State, Market and the Israeli Settlements: The Ministry of Housing and the Shift from Messianic Outposts to Urban Settlements in the Early 1980s," 153–54.

[103] Ibid.

[104] Otherwise, if bought directly from Palestinian landowners, lands were still significantly cheaper than anywhere else in the country. Niva Lanir-Plavesky, "Tafasta Merobe, Tafasta," *Davar*, February 19, 1982, 34–35, 47.

[105] State Comptroller of Israel office to Asher Winner (general manager at the Ministry of Housing), "Hakamat Alfei Menashe (Karnei Shommron G')," February 26, 1984, 2, 14616/10-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem; State Comptroller of Israel office, "Hakamat Alfei Menashe," n.d., 2, 14616/10-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

That same year people started moving in to Alfei Menashe, settlers also began moving to the settlement of Shearey Tikva. The altter, however, got government authorization only after Alfei Menashe. Har Adar was populated in 1986 and Oranit 1985. See Applebaum and Newman, "The Private Sector Settlements in Israel," 90.

[106] Shlomo Amar (In charge of Judea and Samaria at the Civil Administration) to Tova Alinson (Ministry of Interior), "Bakashat Hayeshuv Alfei Menashe Lehakamat Moatza Mekomit," November 4, 1984, 56775/2-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem; Alfei Menashe Local Council, "Alfei Menashe - Kah Hakol Hethil," n.d., Alfei Menashe Archive.

[107] State Comptroller of Israel office to Asher Winner (general manager at the Ministry of Housing), "Hakamat Alfei Menashe (Karnei Shommron G')."

[108] "Do"h Tikun Likuyim," n.d., 14616/10-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

[109] State Comptroller of Israel office, "Hakamat Alfei Menashe."

after planners warned it would be expensive due to the steep topography of the site.[110] Representatives of the future residents also refused to have the settlement moved 8 miles eastwards, where, according to the planners, the site conditions allowed fast and cheap construction.[111]

The residents' opposition was to be expected. They wanted to remain as close as possible to the Israeli city of Kfar Saba.[112] After all, as a reporter for Nekuda Journal later explained:

> "They weren't young couples looking for a shelter, and willing to reside in a prefabricated house. For all of them this wasn't even their first apartment. They sold former apartments or left rented ones in order to fulfill the private, though common to all Israelis, dream: a lovely villa, with a yard, even if small, attached to their house, at a place that is outside of the city, but close enough to the center…"[113]

Nevertheless, the site conditions, combined with the residents' demands, seemed to have posed too much of a challenge to architects and planners at the ministry. In 1981, they agreed to outsource the detailed planning and construction of the settlement to Tzavta: a corporation of six commercial construction companies and two development firms.[114] Since this was the first attempt to collaborate with private developers in the West Bank,[115] government officials were keen on insuring its success.[116] They therefore offered the developers a generous support package: the Israel Land Administration gave them the land plots, while the Ministry of Housing installed infrastructure, built public buildings, offered loans and grants. Moreover, the government committed to purchasing 50% of the first 500 units if they remained empty after completion,[117] and to giving

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[110] State Comptroller of Israel office to Asher Winner (general manager at the Ministry of Housing), "Hakamat Alfei Menashe (Karnei Shommron G')."

[111] Ibid

[112] According to the report, future residents' representatives were blunt about their interest in short commute time to Kfar Saba. They argued it was important in making the settlement "more attractive." Ibid.

[113] Yair Sheleg, "Vehem Alfei Menashe," *Nekuda*, May 27, 1987, 22–23.

[114] State Comptroller of Israel office to Asher Winner (general manager at the Ministry of Housing), "Hakamat Alfei Menashe (Karnei Shommron G')"; D.Ish Shalom (manager of inspection) and H. Eliad (inspection manager at the Ministry of Housing), "Hearotenu Letyotat Do"h Hakamat Alfei Menashe," February 2, 1984, 14616/10-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem; "Do"h Tikun Likuyim"; State Comptroller of Israel office, "Hakamat Alfei Menashe"; State Comptroller of Israel office to Asher Winner (general manager at the Ministry of Housing), "Hakamat Alfei Menashe (Karnei Shommron G')."

The ministry was initially going to do only the master planning. Tzavta was to do all the rest. But then in the actual contract it was agreed that the Ministry of Housing would do more, leaving Tzavta in charge only of the residential units' plans and the settlement's landscaping. According to another document, the Ministry of Housing indeed planned to do only the master planning, but due to some delays that resulted from the negotiations with Tzavta, who wanted the ministry to guarantee them the planning of the first 2000 units (a guarantee the ministry felt uncomfortable giving), planners at the ministry began working on some of the detailed plans. According to another report, since the ministry refused to give Tzavtra the 2,000 units, the ministry did the development works. Also, it is important to note, that the ministry outsourced the work to Tzavta, "due to the limits of direct (Ministry) building in the execution of the project." However, in another document someone added a hand written note saying that the Ministry of Housing had no problem doing the work on its own. See State Comptroller of Israel office, "Hakamat Alfei Menashe"; D.Ish Shalom (manager of inspection) and H. Eliad (inspection manager at the Ministry of Housing), "Hearotenu Letyotat Do"h Hakamat Alfei Menashe"; "Do"h Tikun Likuyim"; State Comptroller of Israel office to Asher Winner (general manager at the Ministry of Housing), "Hakamat Alfei Menashe (Karnei Shommron G')."

[115] State Comptroller of Israel office, "Hakamat Alfei Menashe"; "Do"h Tikun Likuyim."

Decentralization and privatization processes in the Ministry of Housing had began already in the 1970s and continued to the 1980s in Israel. See Hadas Shadar, *Avne Ha-Binyan Shel Ha-Shikun Ha-Tsiburi : Shishah 'aśorim Shel Beniyah 'ironit Be-Yozmah Tsiburit Be-Yiśra'el* (Tel Aviv: Miśrad ha-binui ṿeha-shikin, 2014), 121–31, 162–64.

[116] "Do"h Tikun Likuyim"; D.Ish Shalom (manager of inspection) and H. Eliad (inspection manager at the Ministry of Housing), "Hearotenu Letyotat Do"h Hakamat Alfei Menashe."

[117] State Comptroller of Israel office to Asher Winner (general manager at the Ministry of Housing), "Hakamat Alfei Menashe (Karnei Shommron G')."

homebuyers generous funding packages.[118] On top of these benefits, a steering committee at the Ministry of Housing was assigned to support and supervise the planning and construction process.[119]

2.2 Hybrid Public Housing Units

To overcome the difficulties posed by the steep topography and the residents' demands, the project management company hired Avraham Yaski's leading architects' firm.[120] Yaski's firm had years of experience working with the Ministry of Housing. It was an ideal candidate for the task.[121] Yaski also wanted the commission; it was an opportunity for him to create a new place from scratch in a very short period of time, something few architects would refuse. And to that end, he was willing to endure the criticism of some of his employees who felt uncomfortable working in the West Bank, [122]

When approaching the drafting table, architect Yossi Sivan, who was assigned to the project in Yaski's office, didn't take much interest in the architecture of the nearby settlements. "I hated all that post-modernism that was being built there," he explained. "I thought it was terrible, a visual chaos." He especially resented the red-tiled rooftops that proved popular among the settlers and the people at Tzavta. "It fits a little house in Switzerland, but it doesn't fit Mediterranean houses," he insisted.[123]

Instead, Sivan sought after "something local, a place-oriented building method."[124] Like other Israeli architects of his generation, he was influenced by Bernard Rudofsky's exhibition from 1964, Architecture Without Architects.[125] Questioning some of the main pillars of modernist planning, the exhibition celebrated "the unfamiliar world of non-pedigreed architecture."[126] And it was this fascination with non-pedigreed environments that led Sivan to what may seem like an unexpected source of inspiration for a settlement: the Palestinian village. The village seemed ideal. It looked exactly like those unplanned human inhabitants Rudfsky presented, and as Sivan explained, it "sat so neatly on the steep topography,"[127] the same topography planners at the Ministry of Housing were worried about.[128]

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[118] Ibid.
[119] D.Ish Shalom (manager of inspection) and H. Eliad (inspection manager at the Ministry of Housing), "Hearotenu Letyotat Do"h Hakamat Alfei Menashe."
[120] "Do"h Tikun Likuyim." The document states that Yaski was commissioned to do the project together with the office of Shrager-Karmin. However, plan drawings included only Yaski's firm name.
[121] For an excellent analysis of many of Yaski's projects, excluding his work in the West Bank, see Sharon Rotbard, *Avraham Yaṣḳi : adrikhalut ḳonḳreṭit* (Tel Aviv: Babel, 2007).
[122] Yossi Sivan, the project architect for Alfei Menashe and later partner at the firm, refused to discuss the political issues, and the resistance the project generated at the office. He did say that a number of architects at the office had issues with the fact that the office had taken a commission in the West Bank. Yossi Sivan, interview with the author, December 10, 2015.
[123] Sivan, interview with the author.
[124] Sivan, interview.
[125] Architects of Sivan generation, as Alona Nitzan Shiftan has shown, were inspired by the work of Bernard Rudophsky and other postwar critiques of modernism. See Alona Nitzan-Shiftan, "Israelizing Jerusalem: The Encounter Between Architectural and National Ideologies 1967-1977" (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2002), 165–96.
[126] Bernard Rudofsky, *Architecture without Architects: A Short Introduction to Non-Pedigreed Architecture* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1987), introduction.
Sivan made references to Rudophsky during our interview. Sivan, interview.
[127] Sivan, interview.
[128] By the early 1980s, Yaski's office has overseen the construction of several building projects, most notably the ones in East Jerusalem, where elements associated with Palestinian vernacular architecture were incorporated. According to Alona Nitzan Shiftan, they were an apogee, or a coming of age of Israeli born (Sabra) generation of architects who aimed at challenging the architecture of their predecessors who imported European modernism, without much consideration of the place. See Nitzan-Shiftan, "Israelizing Jerusalem: The Encounter Between Architectural and National Ideologies 1967-1977."

Accordingly, he incorporated some elements he associated with the Palestinian village into his design. He arranged all the houses in rows that followed the natural topography, and he carved public passageways between some of the houses, connecting the upper levels with the lower ones. In addition, he broke large building masses into small box-shaped ones, layering them one on top of the other (Figures 3.19 and 3.20). All had flat roofs that, theoretically, could have been used by the residents.

Figure 3.19 Plan of Alfei Menashe from March 1985 (bottom) [ISA] and view of Alfie Menashe (top), 1984. Sources: Israel State Archives and the National Photos Collection of Israel.

Figure 3.20 Houses in Alfei Menashe, 1984. Source: National Photos Collection of Israel.

But, as Sivan admitted, the references he made to the Palestinian village were relatively superficial. His goal was to have Alfei Menashe look like a Palestinian village only from a distance.[129] He didn't want to replicate the street grid, or the irregular division to private land parcels common in the Palestinian village. Nor did he even replicate the building materials and details he may have seen in the nearby villages. For example, Sivan refused to use arches or apply stone cladding. In addition, the layout of the houses shared no resemblance to Palestinian Houses. He created these differences because he knew the two cultures—Palestinian and Jewish Israeli—were radically different. "And we planned the houses for Israelis, not for Arabs," he clarified.[130]

Commenting on the residential units (Figure 3.21), Sivan argued that they were a hybrid of detached houses and repetitive modernist housing blocks the Ministry of Housing had been building since the 1950s. "Even though it was private construction, not a public housing project [shikun]," he clarified, "it was based on modernist public housing projects [shikunim]." On the one hand, units enjoyed private yards, and about half of them had five bedrooms with an overall area of 140-170 sq. m.—twice the size of the largest Ashcubit House in Beit Arye or Ofra's model-home. [131] But, on the other hand, as was common in modernist public housing projects, Sivan arranged all the units in repetitive rows and built them with modest materials—exposed concrete and white plaster—with limited flexibility. Altogether then, the units were not luxurious, Sivan concluded.[132]

[129] Sivan, interview.
[130] Sivan, interview.
[131] State Comptroller of Israel office to Asher Winner (general manager at the Ministry of Housing), "Hakamat Alfei Menashe (Karnei Shommron G')."
[132] Sivan, interview.

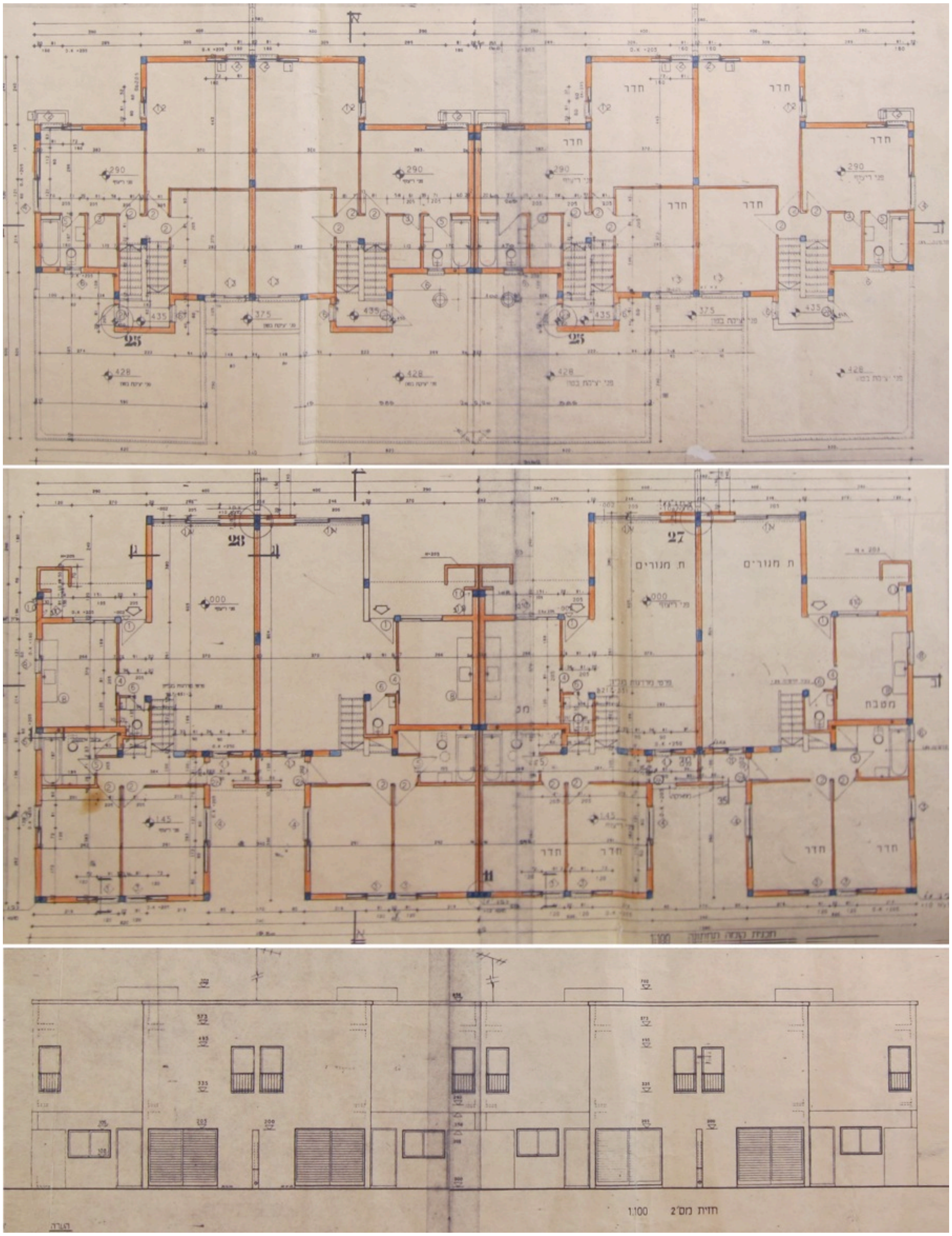

Figure 3.21 Upper (top) and lower (center) level plans as well as façade (bottom) drawings of four identical units in Alfei Menashe, January 1985. The units were radically different from those built in Ofra. Most importantly, they were significantly bigger. In addition, planned for secular residents, the entrance door led directly to the living room, and the kitchen had no special fixtures. But, as Sivan argued, they shared some resemblance to public housing units built in the 1950s. This was mainly evident in the fact that they were arranged in row houses, and had only two, rather than four, exposures. Source: Alfei Menashe's Local Council.

2.3 Disappointed Homebuyers

But perhaps the units were still too modest. When employees of the Ministry of Security, the people for whom the settlement was designed, saw the plans, they were extremely disappointed. The units were not as luxurious as they had envisioned, and even more troubling, they were not as cheap as they had expected.[133] They were cheaper than their equivalents in nearby Israeli cities, but in terms of West Bank settlements, where land was virtually free, they were expensive.[134] Quickly, many canceled their plans of moving to the West Bank. Out of 5,000 families that had registered for the settlement before planning had begun,[135] only 110 families ended up purchasing a home.[136]

Once it became clear that security personnel were not going to purchase the remaining 390 units in September 1982, the government gave Tzavta a permission to sell houses in Alfei Menashe to anyone, regardless of their association with the military or the Ministry of Security.[137] Soon after, Tzavta embarked on a sales campaign directed at middle-class Israelis. In promotional material, Tzavta's copywriters marketed Alfei Menashe as a suburban ideal: "Just Five Minutes from [the Israeli city of] Kfar Saba," a place where "Dreams Become Reality," or simply "A place where you can mix high quality of life with high latitude."[138] In addition, they installed a sales booth at "The Achievements of the Settlement of Judea and Samaria Exhibition," which Godovich curated in 1983 (Figure 3.22). At the booth, visitors could observe floor plans and a 3D model of the units Sivan had designed. Anyone making an initial payment of $10,000 at the show could secure himself a house in the settlement.[139] Admissions criteria, so pertinent to the Community Settlement model, were abolished.[140]

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[133] Prices for security personal were as follows: 4.5 million shekels (Shekel Yashan) for small unit, and 8.7 million shekels for big units. State Comptroller of Israel office, "Hakamat Alfei Menashe," 16.

[134] Edna Blepolsky, interview with the author, July 8, 2015. See unit prices above.

[135] State Comptroller of Israel office to Asher Winner (general manager at the Ministry of Housing), "Hakamat Alfei Menashe (Karnei Shommron G')," 4. Those who had initially registered didn't commit to purchasing a house and were not asked to put a down payment. According to Nekuda, there were 4,000 families registered. See Sheleg, "Vehem Alfei Menashe," 22–25.

[136] This is the number of homebuyers was registered in August 1982. Sheleg, "Vehem Alfei Menashe." Later on, only two more units were sold to Ministry of Security personal. Alfei Menashe Local Council, "Schunat Yovelim (Ashron) Ashtrum Veashdar," n.d., Alfei Menashe Archive.

[137] It is unclear what were the exact terms of the agreement between Tzavta and the state. According to one document, Tzavta was granted the right to sell the units to anyone who was interested after it chose not to take advantage of the government's commitment to purchasing 250 units. Apartments sold to non Ministry of Security personal were sold for higher prices. The cheapest units went for 6.66 million Shekels, and the most expensive ones went for 9.8 million shekels. State Comptroller of Israel office, "Hakamat Alfei Menashe," 14 and 16.

In 11.15.1982, Alfei Menashe was moved from the Rural Construction Department at the Ministry of Housing to the Department of Urban Construction. See State Comptroller of Israel office to Asher Winner (general manager at the Ministry of Housing), "Hakamat Alfei Menashe (Karnei Shommron G')," 4.

[138] For example see news paper ads in "Helkat Elohim Ktana - Bealfei Menashe," *Maariv*, November 29, 1985, 146; "Tzavta Bealfei Menashe - Sipur Htzlaha," *Maariv*, December 27, 1985. Also see billboards from the exhibition "The Achievements of Construction in Judea and Samaria," 1983 in Figure 22.

[139] $10,000 was the initial down payment. The full price of the units ranged from $80,000 to $120,000. According to a news report from Davar, houses went for $84,000-$115,000. Figure 22, and "Meot Batim Bealfei Menashe Bemilyonei Shkalim," *Davar*, June 10, 1983, 5.

[140] By that point, the settlement was no longer in the hands of the Ministry of Housing's Administration of Rural Construction. It was under its Urban construction Department. See note above.

Figure 3.22 Tzavta's sales booth at the 1983 exhibition. A large plaque announcing "Alfei Menashe, A Luxurious Cottages Neighborhood, On the Hills at the Edge of Kfar Saba (Five Minutes from the Main Road)," welcomed visitors to the booth. Another poster described Alfei Menashe as "The New Garden City." Source: Israel Godovich's private collection.

On September 1983, 60 units were completed and the first residents moved in.[141] In the following months, more and more families joined them.[142] Quickly, the place became a fully-functioning settlement with elementary public services available on site.[143] Compared to other settlements, where the founders resided in metal shacks or Ashcubit Houses, the residents of Alfei Menashe had a far easier start.

Nevertheless, some units remained empty for months,[144] and those already residing in the place were clearly unhappy. They felt like construction and public services were not as good as they had expected. In addition, many resented the repetitive and austere design of Alfei Menashe. It seems like they felt uncomfortable with how their row houses resembled older modernist housing blocks. For example, a few years later, one of them complained, "We wanted to create a high-quality settlement, not a socialist one."[145]

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[141] State Comptroller of Israel office, "Hakamat Alfei Menashe," 16.

[142] By October 1984, there were some 290 families residing in Alfei Menashe. See Shlomo Amar (In charge of Judea and Samaria at the Civil Administration) to Tova Alinson (Ministry of Interior), "Bakashat Hayeshuv Alfei Menashe Lehakamat Moatza Mekomit," 1.

[143] Some infrastructure was still lacking in Alfei Menashe in the first few months after residents moved in. See Alfei Menashe Local Council, "Alfei Menashe - Kah Hakol Hethil."
According to a news report from Maariv, Tzavta failed to deliver on time some of the facilities it committed to. See Baruch Na'e, "Bealfei Menashe Lo Maaminim Behavtahot," *Maariv*, July 8, 1984, 7.

[144] For example, by February 1984, still not all units were sold. "Do"h Tikun Likuyim," 7.
Document is undated. I am basing the date on the document's location in the archive's files.

[145] Edna Blepolsky and Orly Kalinski, "Hahalom Veshivro," *Alfei Menashe*, mid-1990s, 6, Alfei Menashe Archive.

More than any other building element, the settlers resented the exposed concrete walls (Figure 3.23). For instance, one of the residents lamented,

> "You invest a fortune renovating your house and arrange a (private) yard like in the movies, but then you walk outside towards the entrance space leading to your house and you see these terrible walls and you feel like you live in a bomb shelter."[146]

In the same fashion, another resident wrote, "Everything here looks pitiable and neglected, you won't see such ugly concrete walls in any other settlement throughout the country."[147] At one point, some even tried adding a thin layer of stone cladding on top of the exposed concrete walls. However, perhaps due to the unsightly results, they stopped in the middle, leaving only one street's intersection cladded.[148] Later, they even tried contacting people from the School of Architecture at Bezalel Academy, asking for their help hiding the concrete walls.[149]

Figure 3.23 View of Alfei Menashe, c.1986. In order to mitigate the uniformity and bleak appearance of the concrete walls, residents developed elaborate private gardens. Source: Alfei Menashe Archives.

In 1984, the residents' concerns about their settlement's resemblance to a public housing project became all the more concrete when the Ministry of Housing commissioned the design of seven low-budget multistory apartment buildings in the heart of Alfei Menashe (Figure 3.24). With 130 small units, these buildings were at odds with the intentions of the residents who sought a "quality of life settlement." But the settlers' pleas to officials fell on deaf ears. When Minister of Housing David Levi, whose office had been supporting the settlement since day one, visited the place, he bluntly replied to their requests: "You won't have a millionaires-only settlement here!"[150] Even when the

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Kokhav Ya'ir was founded in the 1980s right by the border, from the Israeli side. Later it was incorporated into what came to be known as the "Stars Settlements," that some argue aimed at blurring the Green Line. For more details about the Stars Settlements see Pnina Gazit and Arnon Sofer, *Merhav Hatefer Bein Sharon Lashomron* (Haifa: Haifa University, 2005).

[146] Blepolsky and Kalinski, "Hahalom Veshivro," 6.

[147] Ibid.

[148] Ibid.

[149] Ibid, 7. I was unable to find Bezalel's reply to the settlers. It is reasonable to assume that Bezalel never replied.

[150] Blepolsky, interview with the author.

people at Tzavta tried to intervene, asking to oversee the project, the ministry remained unmoved.[151] After all, as chairperson of the Planning Department at the ministry explained, the Ministry of Housing invested great amounts of money in Alfei Menashe. It was only natural for them to seek additional revenue and build more densely.[152] And indeed, construction began just a few months later (Figure 3.25).

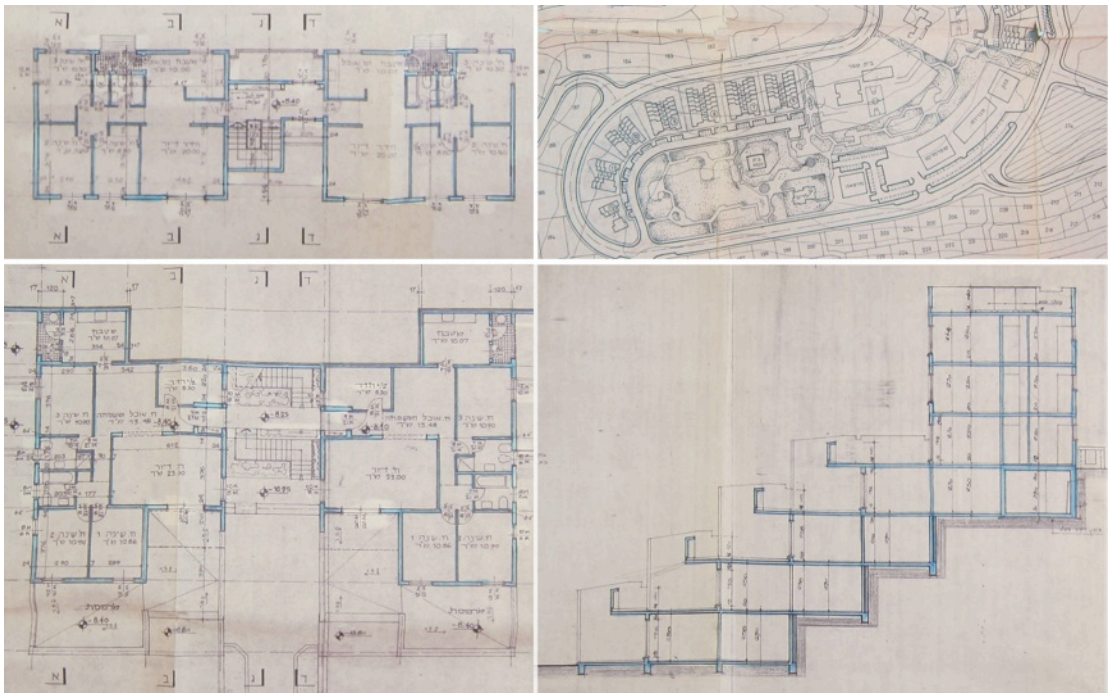

Figure 3.24 Low budget multistory buildings in Alfei Menashe designed by Yitzhak Perlshtein for the Ministry of Housing. Plan drawings of a three and four-and-half bedroom units (top and bottom left), and layout plan of five out of the seven multistory buildings (top right), 1984. Source: Alfei Menashe Local Council.

[151] A. Shahar (Tzavta manager) to A. Soroka (planning and engineering department manager at the Ministry of Housing), "Bniyat Dirot Bemerkaz Hayeshuv - Alfei Menashe," January 3, 1984, 14616/10-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.
[152] A. Soroka (planning and engineering department manager at the Ministry of Housing) to A. Shahar (Tzavta manager), "Bniyat Dirot Bemerkaz Hayshuv - Alfei Menashe," January 9, 1984, 14616/10-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

Figure 3.25 Low budget multistory buildings in Alfei Menashe, c.1986. Source: Alfei Menashe Archives.

A careful look at the seven buildings, however, reveals that architects working on the project were not entirely oblivious to the settlers' demands. For example, they designed the buildings with major setbacks that broke the large, monotonous façade. In addition, some of the units had four bedrooms and enjoyed exceptionally large balconies. Altogether, like Sivan's row houses, these buildings were a new species of public housing, somewhere between a typical modernist housing block and something more individualistic and far less Spartan.

But in the eyes of many of Alfei Menashe's residents, the buildings were a mistake that never should have happened. In their minds, these buildings made visible the cruelty of planners at the ministry.[153]

The residents of Alfei Menashe were not the only ones who felt uncomfortable with the Ministry of Housing and its conventional housing schemes in the West Bank. At the time, residents of other settlements voiced relatively similar complaints. For example, in November 1982, settler representatives in the settlement of Ariel tried stopping the construction of a new neighborhood designed by a large development company named Rassco. They did so after they learned that all houses in Rassco's plans—plans Rassco developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Housing—were arranged in multistory row houses, with only half of the units enjoying private yards (Figure 3.26).[154] Explaining the settlers' concerns, a reporter for Nekuda Journal wrote: "The construction of apartment buildings [batim meshutafim], will only bring the residents of Ariel back to the density they escaped when moving to Samaria. Therefore, it doesn't form a desirable

[153] Blepolsky, interview it the author.
[154] Rasko to Ministry of Housing, "Proyekt Ariel Dromi," November 22, 1982, 14615/9-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

solution."[155] Probably for the same reason, the residents of Ariel also objected to the construction of prefabricated housing units in the settlement.[156] Yet most of their requests were ignored. [157]

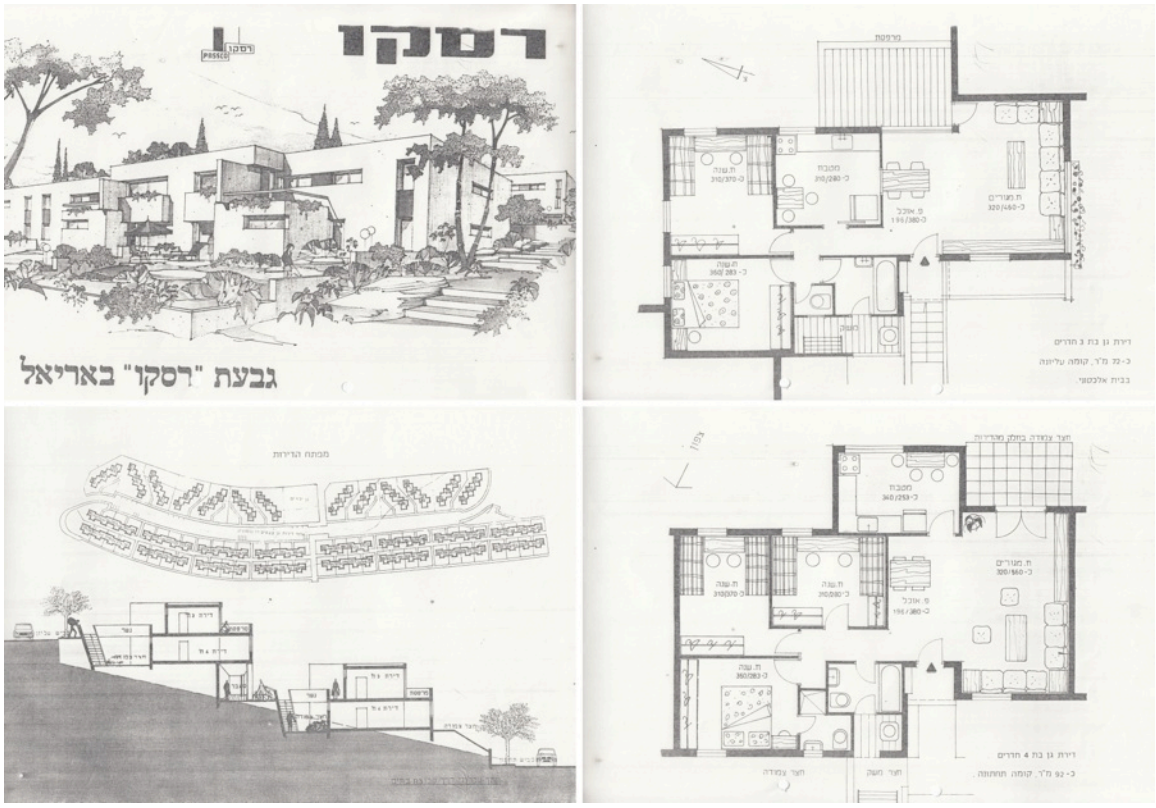

Figure 3.26 Row houses designed by Rassco in collaboration with architect Zigu Schwartz and the Rural Administration at the Ministry of Housing. Units had either three bedrooms unit of 72 sq. m. or a four bedrooms unit of 92 sq. m. Only those purchasing a four bedrooms unit (bottom right) enjoyed a private yard. In place of a yard, those buying a smaller unit (top right) had a large balcony that could be converted into an extra room. Compared to houses built in other West Bank settlements at the time, such units were considered small, and were at odds with settlers' preference for detached houses. Source: Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

2.4 Planners Accede to the Settlers' Demands

But the story of Alfei Menashe is not just a story of disempowered residents whom the government tricked into living in a public housing project they never really wanted. On the contrary, once their requests remained unanswered, the residents adopted a more aggressive tone, demanding Tzavta improved infrastructure, renovate existing units, and erect more public buildings. On one occasion, in July 1984, they blocked the road leading

[155] Avi Rosenfeld, "Ariel: Eihut-Haim, Tziyonut - Vehashshot," *Nekuda*, January 9, 1981, 12–13. The settlers of Yitzhar and Braha had also opposed the construction of row houses. See "Inyan Shel Ofi," *Daf Meyda, Amana (Reprinted in Nekuda)*, September 1986, 32.

[156] For requests submitted on behalf of the residents by a Ministry of Housing official, see Shmuel Shteiner to Eitan Soroka (planning and engineering department manager at the Ministry of Housing), "Programat Bniya Beshhuna B' Beariel," October 18, 1983, 14616/1-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem; Shmuel Shteiner to Tzimerman (properties and accomodation department, Ministry of Housing), "Programat Bniya Ariel 1984/5," March 6, 1984, 5, 14616/10-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem; Ariel Council members to Yaacov Feitelson (Head of Ariel Council), "Rova B' Beariel," October 11, 1983, 14616/1-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

[157] See, for example, the reply of the head of the planning and engineering department at the Ministry of Housing to the residents in A. Soroka (planning and engineering department manager at the Ministry of Housing) to Shmuel Shteiner, "Bniya Tromit Sehuna B' - Ariel," October 30, 1983, 14616/1-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

to the settlement with empty barrels, and protested in front of Tzavta's headquarters. Only after police forces intervened did the residents withdraw.[158] A couple of months later, they filed an official request asking to form their own local council.[159] Having a local council, they knew, was likely to reduce the involvement of both the Ministry of Housing and Tzavta in the settlement. It would also help disassociate Alfei Menashe from the Samaria Regional Council, a largely religious and ideological institute many in Alfei Menashe felt uncomfortable with.

In about a year's time, their struggle proved successful when Alfei Menashe's local council was established.[160] With their own council, the residents now had almost exclusive control over the settlement's internal affairs, including the right to issue building permits and codes.

Soon after, many began making building additions that mitigated the bleak aesthetics of the original neighborhood. They added cladding layers, archways, and balconies. Following the breakout of the Palestinian uprising in 1987, a grassroots resistance to the Israeli occupation that included occasional attacks against Jewish Israelis, these additions usually altered the original flat roofs (Figure 3.27). The flat roof, which was associated with Palestinian culture, became the object of condemnation. As one of the residents explained to me:

> "At the time, everyone felt like flat roofs, like the ones in the old neighborhood, were bad. They looked unsophisticated. They looked too much like [rooftops in] Arab houses, not sophisticated, you know. So… many in the old neighborhood added tiled roofs on top of their flat ones."[161]

It is hard to tell whether the Palestinian uprising was the main reason for the settlers' dislike for flat roofs.[162] Nevertheless, it surely altered the settlement's original design in ways unforeseen by the architects.

Figure 3.27 Houses in Alfei Menashe with pitch red tiled rooftops added on top of the original flat roofs. Photos by author.

[158] Na'e, "Bealfei Menashe Lo Maaminim Behavtahot," 7.
[159] ISee the reaction of Shlomo Amar (Civil Administration official) to the setters' request to have their own local council in Shlomo Amar (In charge of Judea and Samaria at the Civil Administration) to Tova Alinson (Ministry of Interior), "Bakashat Hayeshuv Alfei Menashe Lehakamat Moatza Mekomit."
[160] The council was formed in 1986. See Aryeh Hecht (Local Governance administration manager at the Ministry of Interior) to Shlomo Amar (in charge of settlements in Judea and Samaria), "Alfei Menashe Vechu'," February 28, 1986, 56775/2-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.
[161] Blepolsky, interview with the author.
[162] Architectural historian Alona Nitzan Shiftan noted that the architecture of annexed Jerusalem—built in the decade that followed the Six-Day War and characterized by references to Palestinian vernacular—was also devalued after the Palestinian Uprising broke out. See Nitzan-Shiftan, "Israelizing Jerusalem: The Encounter Between Architectural and National Ideologies 1967-1977," 190–92.

The second neighborhood of Alfei Menashe was built a couple of years later, in 1989. Designed by architect Meir Buchman, it accounted for many of the residents' wishes. Most importantly, all 190 units in the neighborhood were built as detached houses and placed on large private land plots of 600 to 800 sq. m.[163] Residents could pick their house from a limited number of relatively large model homes. As emphasized in a sales brochure, "all model homes were up-to-date" in their design and had a pitched red-tiles rooftop (Figure 3.28).[164] In addition, they were designed with special built-in planters, and the streets surrounding them were built with red bricks in place of the grey asphalt of the first neighborhood.

Figure 3.28 Houses in Kfir Yossef, the second neighborhood built in the settlement of Alfei Menashe. C.1989. Source: Alfei menashe Archive.

At last the settlers of Alfei Menashe had gotten what they wanted: large, pitched-roof houses with lush loans, a car garage, and beautiful vistas. And, surprisingly enough, planners and architects at the Ministry of Housing had come to accept the residents' preferences. They oversaw the entire design process of the second neighborhood, and even funded major parts of the construction. They treated it as if it was yet another quasi-public housing project, regardless of its ostentatious style and large plot sizes.[165] In just a

[163] All houses were built according to a Build Your Own Home scheme that was done centrally, with only a few model homes. "Skirat Tichnun Alfei Menashe," July 12, 1989, 3812/5-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem; Tzavta-Hevra Leshikun Vebniya Baa"m, "Shahnea et Haverha Lihiyot Baal Bayit BeAlfei-Menashe Vetihiye Baal Menaya Bemoadon Hasport," July 1989, Alfei Menashe Archive.

[164] Tzavta-Hevra Leshikun Vebniya Baa"m, "Shahnea et Haverha Lihiyot Baal Bayit BeAlfei-Menashe Vetihiye Baal Menaya Bemoadon Hasport."

[165] In 1989, the Ministry of Housing committed to funding 50% of construction costs. The ministry also committed to helping with paving of roads and sidewalks in up to 350,000 shekels. See Ministry of Housing, "Sikum Bikur Sgan Roha"m Vesar Habinui Vehashikun Mar David Levi, Bealfei Menashe Beyom 23.10.1989," November 7, 1989, 3812/5-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

few years, planners at the ministry had learned to accommodate the demands of the new and not-so-ideological settlers, just like "older" settlement activists.

Over the next few years, more neighborhoods were built in Alfei Menashe. Today, with some 8,000 residents, it is considered a success story. In times of political turmoil the settlement suffered from economic instability, but real-estate values have steadily increased since Israel built the separation wall, and the place is economically viable.[166] In the Ministry of Interior's most recent towns ranking—a ranking system that indexes municipalities on a scale of one to ten according to their socioeconomic status—Alfei Menashe was placed in the 8th cluster, together with well-established Israeli towns.[167] Not surprisingly, other than those few who remained in the original and rather bleak neighborhood, the residents love it.

3. Architects and Real Estate Developers: Nofim

3.1 "I Want to Build a City"

Even though Alfei Menashe had successfully evolved into a middle-class settlement, it never became a high-end residential neighborhood. It didn't make it to the Ministry of Interior 10th cluster. But this should come as no surprise. After all, as Sivan explained, the Ministry of Housing funded and supervised the planning process.[168] And although ministry officials were willing to negotiate the planning and design of the second neighborhood, they couldn't allocate land plots larger than 600-800 sq. m. to individual families. These were still quasi-public-housing units. In addition, as one of the settlers complained to me, it is impossible to erase those low-budget multistory apartment buildings the ministry forced on the settlers.[169] They will always dominate the settlement.

More affluent settlements became possible shortly after Alfei Menashe was founded, when commercial developers began building settlements with only marginal intervention from planners at the ministry. Developers wanting to build such settlements had two options. For one, they could get "state lands" from the government; indeed, by the end of 1982, some 50 commercial companies filed official requests for "state lands."[170] Otherwise, they could purchase privately-owned lands from the native Palestinians for a very low price of less than a few of thousand dollars per dunam in the early 1980s.[171] Whether built on state lands or privately-owned lands, erecting

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[166] See discussion of the impact of the separation wall on Alfei Menashe in Irit Mark, "Alfei Kotegim," *Zman Hasharon*, February 25, 2005, Alfei Menashe Archive.

Alfei Menashe has been so successful that when a new neighborhood was announced in November 1995, some 150 families from the original residents signed up for a new plot, presumably for their kids. See "Hakriteryonim Leproyekt 'Bne Beitha' Bealfei Menashe - Shivyon o Aflaya?," March 2000, Alfei Menashe Archive. Relatively similar numbers appeared in a letter from the head of Alfei Menashe's local council. See Shlomo Katan (head of Alfei Menashe's local council) and homebuyers in Build your Own Home Plan, "Bne Beyetha - Matzav Haproyekt," November 13, 1996, Alfei Menashe Archive.

[167] Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, "Alfei Menashe (Publication Number 1609)" (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, 2013), http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications15/local_authorities13_1609/pdf/375_3750.pdf..

[168] Sivan, interview.

[169] Blepolsky, interview.

[170] Amos Levav, "Yisraelim Kvar Rahshu 1/2 Milyon Dunam," *Maariv*, December 14, 1982.

[171] Land prices ranged according to the land's proximity to the border with Israel. According to a news report, at around the beginning of 1981, one Dunam in Kedumim cost homebuyers $500-$1000. By the end of 1982 went for $3000-$6000. In the settlement of Elon Moreh, that was located further east, in by the beginning of 1981, a dunam wuld go for $300-$500 (again, this price was for homebuyers, not developers) and by the end of 1982- $1,500-$2,000. In contrast, a dunam in the settlement of Shearey Tikva that was close to the border with Israel cost for $15,000-$20,000 in December 1982. Dolev, "Hamahapah Bemapat Hashomron," 34.

settlements was cheap, fast, and—given what some referred to as a "ravenous hunger" among Israeli homebuyers—a very promising investment.[172]

One developer who was especially intrigued by the economic prospects of settlements construction was Danny Weinmann. The owner of an insurance company and former deputy mayor of the city of Givatayim,[173] Weinmann enjoyed easy access to government officials. In 1981, he went on a tour of the West Bank with a few of his acquaintances. At one point during the trip, assistant to minister Ariel Sharon Uri Bar On pointed at a bare hilltop and urged Weinmann: "Take this mountain and plan it."[174]

Weinmann took on the challenge. Upon returning from the West Bank, he paid a visit to the office of architect Haim Katseff. Egyptian-born Katseff immigrated to Israel to pursue his architectural training at the Technion in the 1950s. After graduating in 1961, he worked for many years at the office of Dov and Ram Karmi, one of Israel's most prolific architects' firms.[175] About a decade later, Katseff opened his own practice in a small basement apartment in Tel Aviv.

Katseff remembers the first time he met Weinmann. "He walked into my office," Katseff recalls, "and just said 'Hello, I am Danny Weinman, I am an insurance agent… I want to build a city.'" Katseff was perplexed. He never had imagined someone would just knock on his door and commission a city. That's not how cities are founded, he thought to himself. And, in any case, his office was small, with 6-8 people, not the kind of office anyone wanting to build a city would go to. Weinmann, however, was determined. He bluntly told Katseff he found a way to get a lot of land in the West Bank and needed an architect.[176]

Even though Katseff had a bad feeling about Weinmann, he accepted the job. After all, Katseff explains, "There was nothing there," just a bare hilltop, "so it was an opportunity to create something completely new, something different." On Katseff's advice, Weinmann added architect Shmuel Shaked to the project. Shaked once worked as chief architect at the Ministry of Housing, so Katseff believed he could use his contacts at the ministry to expedite the process.[177]

But Shaked didn't help with the design, and soon Katseff began struggling with unreasonably heavy workloads. From the start, Weinmann insisted on a very tight schedule. He wanted to have detailed plan drawings as soon as possible so he could start selling units, Katseff recalled. He didn't care about the quality of the plans, nor did he listen to Katseff, who warned him that a city was a complex thing, not something one plans in a couple of weeks.[178]

Katseff quickly developed a tentative master plan (Figure 29). His plan showed some 2,000 units. Each unit sat on a 1,000 square meter land plot—about twice or even three times the size of private plots in other settlements. Katseff allocated some of the plots for public buildings. But, as Katseff admitted, he wasn't sure how many public buildings were actually needed, and overall, the plan was tentative.

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[172] Levav, "Yisraelim Kvar Rahshu 1/2 Milyon Dunam," 45. Also see Yair Kotler, "Bulmus Bniya Beyehuda Veshomron - Bemehirim Markiim," *Maariv*, October 1, 1982, 17.
[173] Moshe Meizles, "Ha'im Mutar Lehvrot Hastadrutiyot Livnot Beyehuda Veshomron?," *Maariv*, December 24, 1982, 25.
[174] Levav, "Yisraelim Kvar Rahshu 1/2 Milyon Dunam," 45.
[175] When Katseff first arrived, Dov Karmi led the office. But after Katseff joined, Dov died and his son Ram Karmi took the lead. Haim Katseff, interview with the author, December 8, 2015.
[176] Katseff, interview with the author.
[177] Ibid.
[178] Ibid.

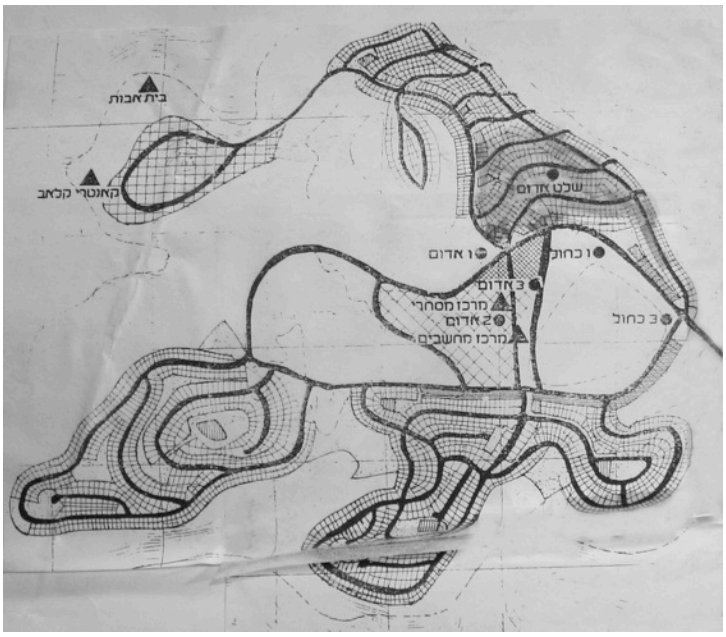

Figure 3.29 Master plan of Nofim, c.1982. Katseff arranged all units in three neighborhoods with vast open spaces separating one neighborhood from the other. As was common in other settlements, long serpentine roads that run through the settlement connected all three neighborhoods to the settlements' main gate. Individual plots, however, were unlike plots in other settlements. In order to have authorities approve their exceptionally large size, Katseff divided each into two areas: one for construction and the other designated as "private open space" over which construction was prohibited. Perhaps due to the tight schedule, however, many of the plots were drawn inaccurately, resulting in an unwanted variety of plot sizes and asymmetries. But Weinmann didn't care. He wanted to sell units as fast as possible. Source: Miri Levi's private collection.

Katseff also designed four model homes (Figure 3.30). Like Sivan, Katseff looked at the architecture of the neighboring Palestinians for inspiration. Each of his model homes exhibited different elements Katseff associated with Palestinian dwellings, or "the Arab House," as he referred to them.[179] For example, he designed three of the model homes with flat roofs, and added arched windows in one of them. Whenever possible, he also broke large masses into smaller ones. In doing so, he made the houses seem as if they were built over time, in multiple stages, like some of the houses one can find in Palestinian villages.

[179] The term "Arab House" was and still is a common one among Israeli architects. It denotes some features associated with houses found across the Levant. For a critical discussion of Palestinian houses, see Aharon Fuchs, "The Palestinian Arab House Reconsidered, Part A: Pre-Industrial Vernacular," *Cathedra* 89 (1988): 83–126; Aharon Fuchs, "The Palestinian Arab House Reconsidered, Part B: The Changes of the 19th Century," *Cathedra* 90 (1998): 53–86; Aharon Fuchs, "The Palestinian Arab House and the Islamic 'Primitive Hut,'" *Muqarnas* 15 (1998): 157–77.

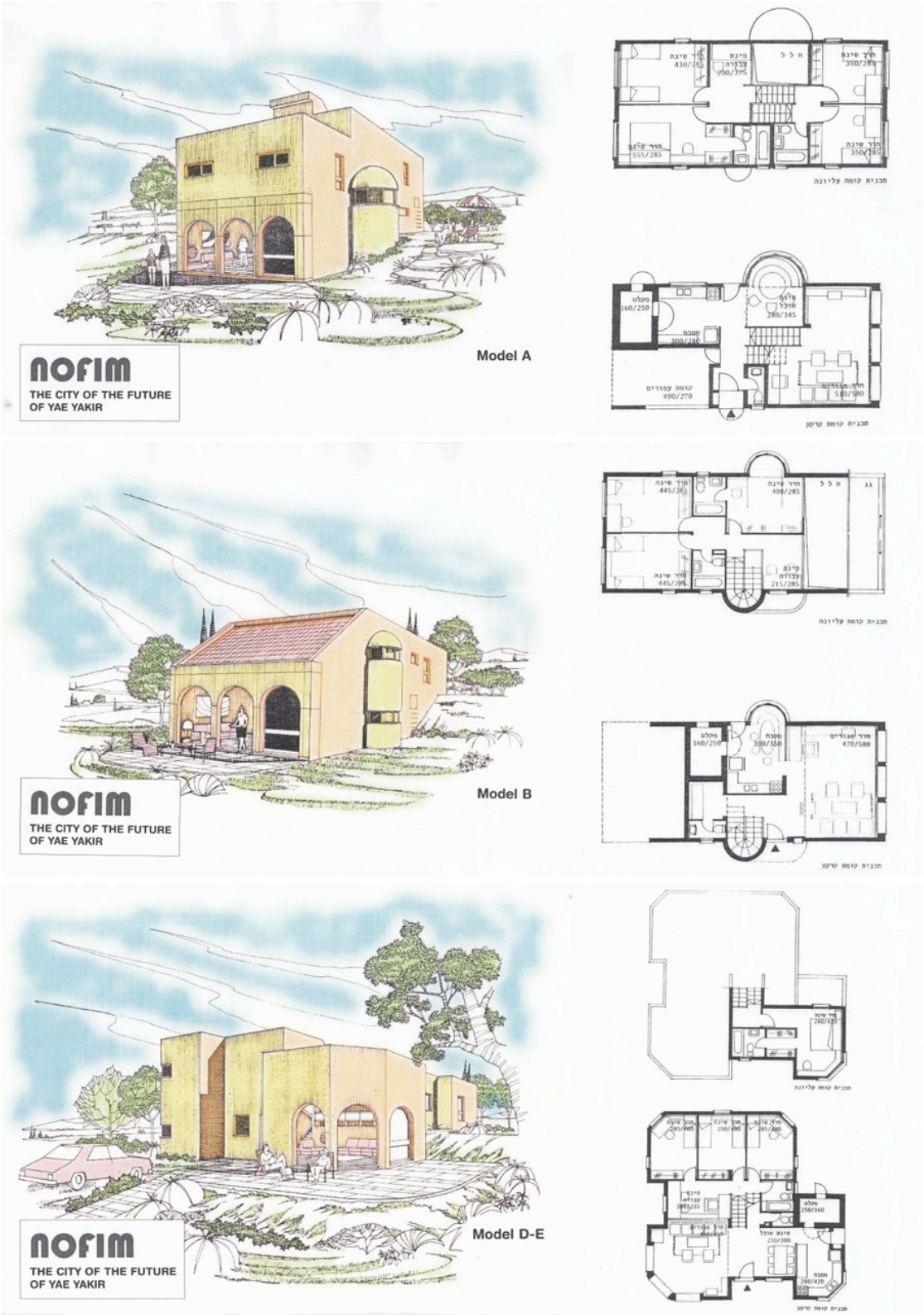

Figure 3.30 Three of the four model homes Katseff designed for Nofim, c.1982 (Renderings added at a later stage, after the mid 1980s, by Yae Yakir, a developers company that considered purchasing the project). Source: Miri Levi's private collection.

Katseff's references to Palestinian vernacular weren't limited to outside appearances. He also incorporated different Palestinian motives in the interior spaces of his model homes. For example, he tried replicating the *Liwan*. The *Liwan*, sometimes referred to as *iwan* or *diwaniyah*, usually denotes a semi-open space common in traditional Middle Eastern homes.[180] Serving as a reception or dining room for male visitors, it usually has only three walls with arches or columns constituting the fourth, leaving it open to the outside. Inspired by the Liwan, Katseff placed the living room of three of the model homes at the front of the house, and pierced the wall facing the road with large arches. In his renderings, these arched openings remain unsealed, without even glass panels to block the rain, just like the Liwan. In addition, Katseff explained he drew the idea to separate the dining area and the kitchen from the Palestinian house. For the same reason, he recalled, he even wanted to place the refrigerator outside of the house.[181] Moreover, he put the dining area inside a cylindrical shape that imitated a Minaret.[182]

Katseff's model homes contained multiple contradictions. First, even though they may have fitted the needs of the Palestinians, they were at odds with those of middle-class Israelis. For example, the semi-open living room space was inappropriate for their modern lifestyles—it was too public, and it would have been virtually impossible to keep it clean. In addition, the appropriation of a Palestinian vernacular in the context of a West Bank settlement—among the most obvious symbols of the occupation in the eyes of many Palestinians—seems cynical. Besides, most of Katseff's references to Palestinian vernacular were hardly accurate.

But, as with the master plan, Weinmann didn't care about the quality of the houses. Nor did it make much difference to him if they looked like Palestinian or European ones; he only cared about getting the drawings done.

3.2 Nofim's Sales Campaign

With Katseff's drawings at hand in 1982, Weinmann hired the services of a famous Tel Aviv-based advertising agency. Together, they embarked on an unprecedented sales campaign.[183] The campaign emphasized the pastoral nature of the settlement. In contrast to those biblical names of earlier West Bank settlements, Weinmann and his copywriters chose a romantic name: "Nofim" [meaning "views" or "scenery" in Hebrew].[184] Their ads described the settlement as a reaction to an ill-planned landscape of densely populated and air-polluted Israeli cities. One newspaper ad from 1982 explained that:

> "Those who had been living in the big city, and not from yesterday, they can no longer take it. They are tired. Tired of living in a box, tired of being part of

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[180] Different terms are used to describe the space allocated for hosting guests. The term *iwan* was used in Syria, Turkey, and Cairo to refer to semi-open spaces. The *iwan* takes a slightly different shape in each site. In Syria, for example, it is characterized by arches, while in Turkey it lacks arches. Fuchs, "The Palestinian Arab House and the Islamic 'Primitive Hut,'" 165–66.
In Kuwait the term *Diwaniyah* is used. See Susan Slyomovics, *The Object of Memory: Arab and Jew Narrate the Palestinian Village* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 140.

[181] Katseff, interview.

[182] For careful analysis of Palestinian vernacular, see for example, Suad Amiry and Vera Tamari, *The Palestinian Village Home* (London: Published for the Trustees of the British Museum by British Museum Publications, 1989). For critical evaluation of studies of Palestinian vernacular see Fuchs, "The Palestinian Arab House and the Islamic 'Primitive Hut.'"

[183] First Weinmann worked with Tal-Erviu, who won the "Israeli Oscar Award" for their campaign for Weinmann. See Niva Lanir, "Jabotinsky Over Lasoher 'Baruah Haaza Parah Min Hadegel Hamagen-David," *Davar*, April 22, 1983, 2.

[184] Ads for Nofim were not an exception at the time. Other settlements were also advertised in such a way. often their their ideological grounding was pushed to the side in favor of material benefits. See Newman, *Population, Settlement, and Conflict*, 29.
According to Maggor in ads done for other settlements at the time, the involvement of the Ministry of Housing was emphasized in order to encourage hoembuyers and make them feel safe purchasing units. See Maggor, "State, Market and the Israeli Settlements: The Ministry of Housing and the Shift from Messianic Outposts to Urban Settlements in the Early 1980s," 155.

unending rows of boxes. They want to see the horizon, brief fresh air. Instead of seeing their neighbor, they want to see a hill from their window. Sociologists would say these people need more space."[185]

And for these people, Nofim offered a solution. "The most beautiful residential village in Israel," according to the ad, would offer an exceptional experience:

> "First the views [Nofim in Hebrew]. To open the window and see a landscape of endless hills and mountains, rich lush greenery, with the good old Israeli Oak tree. Even the weather there is very convenient. This combination sounds unreal, but the windows of the houses in Nofim open to such views [Nofim]. This is what the residents of Nofim would see every morning."[186]

Complementing the anti-urban rhetoric, the campaign offered homebuyers rewards that rendered life in a suburb more convenient. For example, as mentioned before, anyone who purchased a house at Nofim's sales booth in the "The Achievements of Construction in Judea and Samaria Exhibition" received a Fiat 127 car—a much-needed gift for commuters moving to the settlement.[187] Wrapped in decorative ribbons, the row of Fiat 127 cars parked by the entrance to the exhibition space was striking. Never before had a developer distributed cars to homebuyers in Israel. In addition, anyone who visited Nofim's sales booth received a free ticket to the musical *Fame* (Figure 3.31).[188]

Figure 3.31 A newspaper ad for Nofim (left) and a Photo of Minister of Housing David Levi by Nofim's sales booth (right), 1983. Sources: "Kah Ota, He Shelha Bematana!," Yediot Aharonot, 7 Yamim, April 1, 1983 (left), and Israel Godovich's private collection (right).

In addition, Weinmann organized sales events on the bare hilltop. The events attracted thousands of Israelis.[189] Reflecting on one of these events, Katseff commented:

[185] "Nofim - Kedai Ahshav," *Maariv*, December 24, 1982, 146.
[186] Ibid.
[187] Godovich, interview with the author; "Kah Ota, He Shelha Bematana!," *Yediot Aharonot, 7 Yamim*, April 1, 1983.
[188] Free tickets were limited to the first 1,000 visitors to the sales booth. "Kah Ota, He Shelha Bematana!"
[189] A news report mentioned that thousands of interested homebuyers drove to one of the sales events on the site of the future settlement, resulting in heavy traffic. "Nofim Tzfufim," *Nekuda (Reprinted from Haaretz)*, November 12, 1982, 20. See another news

> "There was nothing there, not even a road," but Weinmann installed some flags, printed large posters, and set up a few tables with sale contracts. And, as if from nowhere, people just flocked to the place. "I will never forget that day," he recalled, "people arrived there, they stood in long lines, they begged Weinmann, asking for a piece of land."[190]

Those Israelis who stood in line and begged Weinmann had a good reason to do so. The houses in Nofim were sold for exceptionally cheap prices. In December 1982, the smallest house in Nofim went for $95,000. Some $20,000-$40,000 of this amount were to be paid by the government as part of generous funding packages offered to Israelis moving to the West Bank.[191] To secure a house, homebuyers needed only to make a down payment of $15,000.[192] With time, these prices were reduced. In January 1984, the price of the smallest house was $65,000, and the down payment—$5,000.[193]

No surprisingly, some 250 families bought a home in Nofim shortly after Weinmann launched the campaign. He was satisfied. "The (mental) barrier was broken. It is no longer weird to live in Samaria," Weinmann told a news reporter.[194] But soon things were about to take a different turn. Living to Samaria, it seems, was still weird.

3.3 The Fall of Nofim

In December 1982, Weinmann began to encounter trouble. At first, the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel and the Israel Nature and Parks Authority discovered Katseff planned the settlement on lands designated as a nature preserve.[195] They insisted Weinmann had to change the plans. The residents of the settlement of Yakir, located on the adjacent hilltop, joined the demand. Just like the people of Nofim, they also wanted to see endless green hilltops from their windows, not settlement houses.[196] After some negotiations, Weinmann agreed to alter areas in the plan where construction hadn't yet begun, two out of three planned areas.[197] Nevertheless, some at the Society for the Protection of Nature continued fighting Nofim, and, at one point, even stopped the construction for short while.[198]

By the end of 1983, the news reported that Weinmann's company was going through severe financial difficulties. Sales had slowed down, and the company lacked the funds needed to continue developing the rocky hilltop.[199] In an attempt to save the

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report from 1986 where Nofim's sales events were recalled Eli Danon, "Haish Sheholeh Al Hevel Dak," *Maariv*, September 3, 1986, 13.

[190] Katseff, interview with the author.

[191] Citizens for whom this was their first house got higher funding than those who already owned a house. "Nofim - Kedai Ahshav."

[192] All homebuyers had to bring was a down payment of $15,000. The company offered help for anyone needing it even for this amount. Ibid.

[193] "Nofim - Ahshav Hazman," *Maariv*, January 3, 1984, 34.

[194] Levav, "Yisraelim Kvar Rahshu 1/2 Milyon Dunam," 45.

[195] The lands were designated as a nature preserve already during the British Mandate days. See Nili Fridlander, "Benofim Hufseka Avidat Dahpor," *Maariv*, December 29, 1982, 9.

[196] Fridlander, "Benofim Hufseka Avidat Dahpor"; "Hatohnit Lebniyat 'Nofim' Teshune Beshel Pgi'a Banof," *Maariv*, December 27, 1982, 16.

[197] "Hatohnit Lebniyat 'Nofim' Teshune Beshel Pgi'a Banof," 16.

[198] Fridlander, "Benofim Hufseka Avidat Dahpor," 9.

[199] "Kvutzat Avi Dudai Mevakeshet Lirkosh Hashlita Be'Nofim'," *Maariv*, February 10, 1984, 3.

project, Weinmann contacted the Ministry of Housing and asked for help.[200] But his request remained unanswered.[201]

Once it was clear Weinmann was unable to continue on his own, three developers considered taking over the project.[202] They had a few conditions though: First, they demanded Katseff's plans be changed. They insisted the private plots he designed—plots Weinmann already sold—were too big. They had to be tightened to make the infrastructure more affordable.[203] Second, they demanded the Ministry of Housing install all infrastructure in the settlement with public money, as was common in other West Bank settlements.[204] They were confident the ministry would agree to their demands. After all, one of them explained, "It is not only Nofim that would get hurt if we don't get such funding (from the ministry). Who would want to buy an apartment in (other settlements in) Judea and Samaria without the government's backup?"[205] But to their surprise, the ministry remained unmoved. Shortly thereafter, the developers backed off.[206]

On February 1984, Weinmann ran out of money and construction was stopped. On the site were some 126 unfinished houses (Figure 3.32). None of them was near completion.[207] As a news reporter wrote, the site looked like "a huge cemetery for fancy villas."[208] Homebuyers, he added, were devastated. By that point, they had already paid about $20,000-50,000 to Weinmann. Some even gave him their old homes in place of money.[209] Now, it was all gone, and there was nothing they could do. "Every day about two-three clients (homebuyers) come here," one of the two guards who remained on the site told the reporter. "They stand quietly, they look at their house as if it was a silent tombstone in a graveyard, and then they drive away. They don't say a word, [they are] sad."[210]

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[200] Danny Weinmann to David Levy (Minister of Housing), December 14, 1983, 14616/8-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.
[201] Danny Weinmann to David Levy (Minister of Housing), "Michtavenu Miyom 14.12.83," December 27, 1983, 14616/8-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.
[202] The three businessmen considered buying 76% of the company. One of them was former assistant the Minister Ariel Sharon and member of Heirut party. For these reasons commentators believed he would have more chances of getting government support. 1984,"Kvutzat Avi Dudai Mevakeshet Lirkosh Hashlita Be'Nofim'," 3.
[203] Baruch Na'e and Amiram Fleisher, "Halom Hahayim Hayafim Be'Nofim' Hitnapetz: Konei Havilot Bashomron Mehakim Le'moshi'a'," *Maariv*, February 17, 1984, 3.
[204] For examples, see Avi Dudai and Asher Winner (general manager at the Ministry of Housing), "Bakasha Lepgisha Benose Proyekt 'Nofim,'" February 17, 1984, 14616/8-GL, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem; Na'e and Fleisher, "Halom Hahayim Hayafim Be'Nofim' Hitnapetz: Konei Havilot Bashomron Mehakim Le'moshi'a'," 3; "Proyekt 'Nofim' Zakuk Lehazramat Ksafim Miyadit," *Maariv*, February 12, 1984, 5.
[205] Na'e and Fleisher, "Halom Hahayim Hayafim Be'Nofim' Hitnapetz: Konei Havilot Bashomron Mehakim Le'moshi'a'," 3.
[206] Baruch Na'e, "'Nofim' Hem Lifamim Gaagu'im Lavilla Shenagoza," *Maariv*, September 3, 1986, 13. Some news reports argued that the developers' company name was G.A.D. See Na'e and Fleisher, "Halom Hahayim Hayafim Be'Nofim' Hitnapetz: Konei Havilot Bashomron Mehakim Le'moshi'a'," 3; "Kvutzat Avi Dudai Mevakeshet Lirkosh Hashlita Be'Nofim'," 3. Another news report mentioned a company named Yaeh Yakir as the company that considered taking over the project. See Eli Danon, "Leahar Shnatayim Kipaon Asuya Lehithadesh Habniya Be'Nofim'," *Maariv*, December 27, 1985, 2.
[207] Na'e and Fleisher, "Halom Hahayim Hayafim Be'Nofim' Hitnapetz: Konei Havilot Bashomron Mehakim Le'moshi'a'," 3; Na'e, "'Nofim' Hem Lifamim Gaagu'im Lavilla Shenagoza," 13.
[208] Na'e and Fleisher, "Halom Hahayim Hayafim Be'Nofim' Hitnapetz: Konei Havilot Bashomron Mehakim Le'moshi'a'," 3.
[209] Na'e, "'Nofim' Hem Lifamim Gaagu'im Lavilla Shenagoza," 13.
[210] Na'e and Fleisher, "Halom Hahayim Hayafim Be'Nofim' Hitnapetz: Konei Havilot Bashomron Mehakim Le'moshi'a'," 3.

חלום החיים היפים ב„נופים" התנפץ;
קוני הווילות בשומרון מחכים ל„מושיע'

מיבצע הפרסום הגדול הסתיים בקול דממה דקה * עבודות הבנייה שותקו משום שחברת „נופים" שקעה בחובות ודרושים מיליוני דולרים לסיים בניית הווילות

מאת ברוך נאה ועמירם פריישר

חלומם של לקוחות שהתנפץ: בנייתו של פרוייקט נופים בשומרון שותקה. (צילום: ברוך נאה)

Figure 3.32 "The Dream of a Beautiful Life Exploded: Villa Buyers in Samaria are waiting for a Savior," an article about Nofim that appeared in the daily newspaper of Ma'ariv in February 1984. Source: Baruch Na'e and Amiram Fleisher, "Halom Hahayim Hayafim Be'Nofim' Hitnapetz: Konei Havilot Bashomron Mehakim Le'moshi'a'," Maariv, February 17, 1984, 3.

Some of these frustrated homebuyers filed a lawsuit against Weinmann. They argued Weinmann misled them, that he never had the funds needed for the construction of the settlement, that he sold them lands before the Israel Land Administration allocated those lands to him, and that he misused their money—in place of investing it all in Nofim, he transferred some of it to his insurance company. A couple of homebuyers also complained that Weinmann refused to give them their money back after they canceled the contract despite promising he would do so.[211]

About a year later, police investigators confirmed some of these complaints and concluded that Weinmann "committed severe criminal offenses, never intended to build a settlement, and planned to mislead the people of Israel by taking money from hundreds of people without giving them homes or a settlement in return."[212] On September 1986, Weinmann was arrested and legal procedures began against him.[213] As he was being taken to the courtroom, Weinmann announced: "Nofim would Still Rise!"[214] [Nofim od kom ta'kum]. Over the next few months, Weinmann convinced the judges his intentions were not all wrong and avoided a severe sentence, but there was little he could do to help Nofim "rise."

The fall of Nofim and Weinmann's arrest were not entirely surprising. At the time, several developers were being trialed for dubious real estate deals in the West Bank. The allocation of thousands of acres of "state lands" in the West Bank to private developers in a relatively short period of time resulted in numerous legal disputes. In

[211] Aya Orenshtein and Aharon Priel, "Konei Batim Benofim Tovim Peiruk Hahevra," *Maariv*, February 27, 1984, 2.
[212] Na'e, "'Nofim' Hem Lifamim Gaagu'im Lavilla Shenagoza," 13.
[213] Na'e, "'Nofim' Hem Lifamim Gaagu'im Lavilla Shenagoza"; Eli Danon and Ilan Bahar, "Neetzar Danny Weinmann Manka"l Nofim Lesheavar; Hashud Shekibel Bemirma Milyonei Dolarim Memishtaknim," *Maariv*, September 1, 1986, 1; Baruch Na'e, "Yazam 'Nofim' Yuasham Bekabalat Davar Bemirma," *Maariv*, January 13, 1987, 6.
[214] Na'e, "'Nofim' Hem Lifamim Gaagu'im Lavilla Shenagoza," 13.

May 1983, the head of the Civil Department at the Israeli State Attorney's Office Pliya Albeck complained that the same land tract was often allocated to different developers. In addition, she lamented, the status of lands that were being distributed as "state lands" wasn't always clear. Worse, according to Albeck, many developers capitalized on "state lands" in unfair ways. They would get "state lands" from the government for 5% of their value but sell them for full price. In some cases, she added, they sold plots to individual homebuyers before land was even allocated to them.[215]

Things got even worse when privately owned lands, which developers allegedly bought from Palestinians, were at stake. Away from the purview of Israeli law enforcement agencies, these transactions were rarely free of complications. According to a news reporter, out of some 30,000 dunams developers claimed they purchased in the West Bank, only 5,000 dunams were actually bought. The rest were taken illegally.[216] At times, these dubious deals had a deadly price. One exceptionally tragic story took place near the Palestinian town of Biddya. A developer falsely announced he purchased lands in the area; though Albeck from the State Attorney's Office had warned him not to do so, he had his construction team start flattening the land. When members of the El-Akra family, the legal owners of the land, arrived to the site and tried blocking his workers, a violent confrontation broke out. When border patrol soldiers arrived, they began shooting at the Palestinian protestors. Seventy-five-year-old Ibrahim El-Akra was killed and two other members of El-Akra family were wounded in the shooting.[217]

Such unfortunate stories, like Weinmann's arrest, made it to the news and made waves among homebuyers. Soon, sales of settlements dropped sharply. "It made many people stay away from settlements," a reporter for Nekuda Journal wrote. "People are afraid of getting into economic trouble."[218] And indeed, in June 1983, deputy minister of Agriculture Michael Dekel reported that some 3,500 homebuyers had canceled contracts they signed with private developers in the West Bank.[219]

Some older settlement activists were frustrated. "The collapse of Nofim and other private developments gave a bad name to the entire settlement project," one of them complained.[220] And all this because of settlements that were located by the border and therefore marginal to their ultimate goal—annexing the West Bank in its entirety.[221] Altogether, as a reporter for the daily newspaper of Ma'ariv wrote,

> "The arranged marriage (shidduch)…between the idealists of Block of the Faithful and the 'profiteers' who wanted to enjoy state funding and live '20 minutes from Kfar Saba' [an Israeli city near Tel Aviv] revealed itself to be a shameful mistake."[222]

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[215] See Plia Albeck to Head of the Ministers Committee on Settlements, May 8, 1983, 7618/2-A, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.
[216] Bar-Yosef, "'25 Elef Dunamim Shenimkeru Beyo"sh Nisharu Bemodaot Hapirsomot'," 13.
[217] Albeck to the director of settlement implamentation committee, September 23, 1983; Plia Albeck to Minister of Justice, "Bidiya - Sheih Tzabah - Elkana Dalet," May 15, 1983, 7618/2-A, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem; Danny Rubenstein, "Haavodot Lehahsharat Hakarka Nimshehu Etmol Belkana Dalet," *Davar*, May 4, 1983, 1.
[218] Uri Urbah, "Makom Tov Baemtza," *Nekuda*, August 13, 1986, 12.
[219] Michael Dekel (vice minister of agriculture) to Prime Minister Menachem Begin, "Hityashvut Beyo"sh," June 19, 1983, 8193/5-A, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.
[220] Hagai Segal, "Ma Kara Letohnit Hamea?," *Nekuda*, December 9, 1986, 9–10.
[221] Some of them worried settlements like Nofim actually came on the expense of more strategic settlements in the depths of the West Bank. For example, see Haggai Segal's complaint against Michael Dekel who supported privately developed settlements. According to Segal, Dekel ignored the fact that the latter settlements were going to come on the expense—both demographically and economically—of settlements located on the mountain ridge. Segal, 9.
[222] Elitzur Yuval, "Hatragediya Shel Gush Emunim," *Maariv*, October 22, 1984, 8.

But the activists of Block of the Faithful were not the only ones who found themselves on the losing end. Katseff, the architect of Nofim, was equally frustrated. Once the collapse of Nofim made it to the news, his reputation was severely damaged. It took him years to recover and gain the trust of new clients. After all, "they (homebuyers) were tricked in so many ways (in Nofim), and… in those days I was a collaborator, I gave my hand to it, I donated to it," Katseff lamented. In addition, he never really got paid for all the work he did for Weinmann. After construction stopped, Weinmann was broke. "I give up," he told Katseff. "I owe you money. My dog just gave birth, pick yourself one of the puppies and we can close our bill." Katseff took one of the Samoyed puppies. He knew he wouldn't get anything else otherwise. And that was the last time they met.

"Nofim is a very bad memory for me," Katseff confessed to me in 2015.[223] "I was a young architect back then, I was thirsty for work, and I regret ever working on it."[224]

Rebuilding Nofim

Devastating as the fall of Nofim may have been, some of the residents refused to give up. In 1986, while Weinmann was being trialed, one couple that bought two units decided to rebuild their home by themselves. By the end of that year, construction on their plot had begun.

On the site were concrete foundations and unfinished walls Weinmann's workers had left behind them. But other than some basic features from Katseff's design—namely, the arches and general positioning on the plot—the couple redesigned the entire house. They added another floor on the top, enlarged the ground plan, and installed an indoor Jacuzzi, as well as a private pool and tennis court in the backyard [figure 33].

[223] Katseff, interview.
[224] Katseff, phone interview with the author, November 8, 2015.

Figure 3.33 Miri Levi sitting in her backyard in Nofim by the swimming pool she and her husband installed, 2004. Source: Uri Yavlonka, "Ahuzot Al Hagvaot," Maariv, September 3, 2004, 19.

Soon after, other homebuyers followed in their footsteps and began re-building their own unfinished houses. No one, however, consulted Katseff. "If you have a fantasy," one of them explained to me, "then why get an architect?"[225]

That same year, officials at the Ministry of Housing also changed their attitude towards Nofim. While in the past they insisted the settlement was a matter of private initiative and refused to allocate funds to Nofim, now they committed to installing all infrastructure.[226] Moreover, in November 1987, after the first couple moved in, ministry officials organized a ceremony to celebrate the renewal of construction in Nofim. Minister of Housing David Levi spoke at the event, announcing his office would help other settlements that were founded by private developers and had encountered similar difficulties. Encouraged by the ministry's support, more families moved to Nofim in the following years.

Nevertheless, Nofim never became the large city-settlement Weinmann had envisioned. In place of 2,000 families, today there are only 160 families in the settlement.[227] To this end, Nofim is a failure. From settlement activists' point of view, it is also far from a success story. It is a small and meaningless settlement—it does nothing

[225] Miri Levi, interview with the author, November 24, 2015.
[226] "Do"h Yesh"a," *Nekuda*, August 28, 1987, 39.
[227] Levi, interview. According to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, in 2016 there were 690 residents in Nofim. See "Yeshuvim, Uchlusiyatam Vemeyda Nosaf (2016)" (Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel), accessed June 5, 2018, http://www.cbs.gov.il/reader/?MIval=%2Fpop_in_locs%2Fpop_in_locs_h.html&Name_h=%F0%E5%F4%E9%ED.

to outbalance the Palestinian majority of the West Bank. From an economic point of view, the place is hardly sustainable. In fact, if the Ministry of Housing had not installed infrastructure with public money, it is highly unlikely even the most determined residents would have survived on the hilltop.

If we consider the settlers of Nofim or Beit Arye and Alfei Menashe, however, Nofim is not really a failure. On the contrary, perhaps it is the place where their goals were achieved to their fullest extent. The plots are enormous, the houses are luxurious, the views are spectacular, and commuting time to Tel Aviv is marginal. Probably for these reasons, not a single family left the place until 2007.[228] One reporter even referred to the settlement as "the fortress of settlers' high society" [asiron elyon].[229] Not surprisingly, when asked about life in Nofim, afemale resident who used to live in Tel Aviv explained:

> "Look around you, where can you find such views from a private balcony? Nofim is some 412 meters above sea level, and on a good day I can even see Azrieli Towers [in Tel Aviv]. People from Tel Aviv Metropolitan Area think I live in a dark and remote place [me'ever leharei hahosheh], but not long ago I was walking around Schuster Center in Ramat Aviv [high end commercial center in Tel Aviv] and I was feeling sorry for these people living in boxes, one on top of the other. And, anyway, I get to the Tel Aviv Metropolitan Area in 25 minutes."[230]

Conclusion

But by the time the settlers of Nofim moved into their luxurious houses, the construction boom in the West Bank was already slowing down. In September 1984, after the right-wing Likud party failed to win enough votes in the elections, it formed a national unity government with the left-leaning Alignment party. Almost immediately after it was established, the unity government reduced the construction of new settlements.[231] Though between 1979 and 1984 the government oversaw the construction of some 58 settlements, between 1985 and 1990 only 14 new settlements were built.[232] And even though construction in existing settlements continued, the overall number of Israelis moving to the West Bank decreased. While 14,000 Israelis moved into settlements between 1984 and 1985, on average only 5,000 Israelis joined them every year between 1986 and 1989.[233] This pace was further slowed in December 1987, when the First Intifada broke out. All of a sudden, Israelis could no longer feel safe in the West Bank, and many who otherwise would have considered moving to large settlement houses were now sticking to their modest apartments in Israel.[234] Another episode in the settlement project was brought to an end.

The construction boom that took place in the years leading to the First Intifada, however, had a lasting effect on the West Bank. The location and distribution of

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[228] Guy Tzabari, "Hakiru Et Nofim, 'Ramat Aviv Gimel' Shel Hashomron," *Nana 10*, December 23, 2007, http://docu.nana10.co.il/Article/?ArticleID=528325.
[229] Uri Yavlonka, "Ahuzot Al Hagvaot," *Maariv*, September 3, 2004, 18.
[230] Yavlonka, 19.
[231] According to Idith Zartal and Akiva Eldar, the decline in settlement construction was also an outcome of an economic recession. Eldar and Zartal, *Adonei Haaretz: Hamitnahalim Vemedinat Yisrael 1967-2004*, 142–43.
[232] Eldar and Zartal, 140; "Settlements Database" (Peace Now, n.d.).
[233] Eldar and Zartal, *Adonei Haaretz: Hamitnahalim Vemedinat Yisrael 1967-2004*, 140. The number of settlers continued to increase over this period. As the political geographer David Newman has shown, between 1984 and 1988 the settlers' population grew from 44,000 to 67,000. See Newman, *Population, Settlement, and Conflict*, 29–31.
[234] Eldar and Zartal, *Adonei Haaretz: Hamitnahalim Vemedinat Yisrael 1967-2004*, 143.

settlements were radically altered in those years. Instead of small and remote ones, settlements were now bigger in size and closer to the border with Israel ("the Green Line").[235] According to other scholars, this trend would only increase in the next few years. For example, if by 1985 about 75% of West Bank settlers resided by the border with Israel,[236] by the 1990s, about 90% of them resided in the same area.[237]

As I showed in this chapter, the sudden increase in settlement construction also affected planning institutes. The publics flocking to the West Bank in those years had no interest in the rudimentary housing schemes of the Ministry of Housing, or the Spartan model homes many among the people of Block of the Faithful were proud of. Instead, they demanded detached single-family houses with lush lawns, car garages, and, preferably, some aesthetic references to Tuscany, Scandinavia, or the United States. While this demand was not exclusive to West Bank settlers, it was far more intense, and ultimately resulted in more radical outcomes in settlements than anywhere else in the country.

This should come as no surprise. After all, given government incentives and the availability of lands, it was only in settlements that lower- and middle-class Israelis could actually afford such houses. In addition, since settlements were built from scratch, they were not confined by existing infrastructure and building styles. For example, in Israel some took advantage of the ministry's Build Your Own House scheme to build detached homes in existing towns by repetitive housing blocks—but in the West Bank, entire settlements were built of such houses. Architects, Ministry of Housing officials, and settlement activists who were involved in the planning and design of settlements, then, were facing serious challenges. They had to adjust their design principles, housing schemes, and, in some cases, even ideology to accommodate homebuyers' wishes.

Each of these three actors reacted differently to the demands of this new species of settler. Among the three, architects were the least prepared to cater to the new settlers. From the start, they resented the settlers' aesthetic preferences. These preferences were at odds with the modernist design principles their forefathers celebrated as a national tradition. And those few architects who attempted to accommodate the settlers' wishes—like Katseff, who incorporated eclectic design elements in the units he drafted for Nofim—quickly found themselves regretting the moment they laid foot in the West Bank. Construction was too fast, the budget was too tight, and more often than not, the developers who hired them were engaged in dubious real estate deals that interfered with their work. In some cases, architects who worked in the West Bank encountered resistance from employees who opposed the occupation. Nevertheless, this opposition was negligible and didn't mature into a concrete resistance until 1988, when 100 architects signed a petition calling on their colleagues to boycott settlements.[238]

But it wasn't just a clash of aesthetic preferences or an encounter with difficult developers and recalcitrant employees that architects had to struggle with. According to Godovich, the curator of the 1983 exhibition and former chief architect at the Ministry of Housing's Administration of Rural and New Settlements, the settlers' demand for more

[235] As the sociologist Erez Maggor has shown, beginning in the early 1980s, the Ministry of Housing preferred large settlements over smaller ones. See Maggor, "State, Market and the Israeli Settlements: The Ministry of Housing and the Shift from Messianic Outposts to Urban Settlements in the Early 1980s," 148.
[236] Newman, "Settlements as Suburbanization: The Banality of Colonization," 156.
[237] Ibid.
[238] I discuss the 1988 petition in the Introduction of the dissertation.

individualistic designs resulted in a structural change in the profession. "By 1983, all of the sudden, each family needed an architect to build their house in the settlements of Ariel, Karnei Samaria, or Efrat," Godovich explained. Until that time, it was common to house people in repetitive housing blocks or even to replicate housing projects from one place to another. "It was a big change then," Godovich argued. "All of a sudden you had three different architecture schools that were opened. Before that you only had the Technion."[239] The emergence of these architecture schools probably stemmed from a few changes in Israel, only one of which was the settlement project. Nevertheless, as Godovich insisted, the construction boom in the West Bank offered work to many of their graduates. To this end, it contributed to a broader decentralization process that ultimately resulted in a greater number of certified architects working in Israel. Inevitably, it also frustrated older architects who now had to compete with more architects over building commissions.

Ministry of Housing officials were far more flexible than architects. After all, right-wing Likud party members had controlled the ministry since the 1977 elections.[240] And indeed, under their lead, the ministry allocated exceptionally generous funding packages to homebuyers in the West Bank.[241] Nevertheless, the change in housing schemes that planners and officials at the Ministry of Housing oversaw—from repetitive housing blocks to quasi-public housing projects of large single-family houses—was hardly an obvious one.

As I showed in this chapter, over the course of a few years, ministry officials experimented with housing models and policies before reaching a solution that fit homebuyers' demands. This was most evident in Alfei Menashe, where planners at the ministry first crafted a more conventional housing scheme. Then, once they realized the future residents wanted private yards that required landscape development that was beyond their skills, they teamed up with private developers and hired the leading architects' firm of Avraham Yaski. Later, once the residents were dissatisfied with Yaski's units—which were a hybrid of repetitive housing blocks and detached houses—they contacted new architects with whom they developed housing units that were more in line with the settlers' wishes.

Finally, like Ministry of Housing officials, activists of Block of the Faithful also found themselves adjusting their plans to accommodate the needs of the new settlers. For them, however, it wasn't just a matter of money or a change in housing policy; it was also a matter of ideology and self-fashioning. Luxurious and eclectic houses by the border

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[239] Godovich, interview. The other schools that were opened were "The Environment College: A Workshop for Design and Architecture" [Mihlelet Hasviva – Sadna LeItzuv VeAdrihaut] from 1981, the Department for Environmental Design in Bezalel Academy that until 1983 was part of the Department of Industrial Design and offered graduates a degree in design, not architecture. (That same year, Bezalel submitted an official application requesting permission to give graduates of the department a professional degree in architecture.) The architecture school at Tel Aviv University was granted the right to offer a Bachelor of Architecture Degree in 1994.

[240] For an excellent discussion of the role taken by the Ministry of Housing in the 1980s, see Maggor, "State, Market and the Israeli Settlements: The Ministry of Housing and the Shift from Messianic Outposts to Urban Settlements in the Early 1980s."

[241] The historian Daniel Gutwein has argued that by these incentives, the ministry of Housing didn't just support the settlement project, but also strengthened the bond between the lower classes in Israel and the political Right. All the lower classes had to do in order to enjoy high living standards that were not available to them in the increasingly privatized housing market in Israel was to move to the West Bank. Danny Gutwein, "The Settlements and the Relationship Beetween Privatization and Occupation," in *Normalizing Occupation: The Politics of Everyday Life in the West Bank Settlements*, ed. Ariel Handel, Marco Allegra, and Erez Maggor (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017); Gutwein, "Hearot al Hayesodot Hamaamadiyim Shel Hakibush."
According to sociologist Maggor, the various benefits offered to settlers created "an alternative to the welfare state (that once) existed in Israel in the West Bank." Maggor, "State, Market and the Israeli Settlements: The Ministry of Housing and the Shift from Messianic Outposts to Urban Settlements in the Early 1980s," 142.

with Israel, they feared, carried a message that was at odds with their pioneering spirit and reputation among the broader Israeli public. Accordingly, Block of the Faithful activists first fought this trend. They tried to enforce building codes, offered monetary incentives to those willing to follow their ways, wrote numerous pleas over the pages of Nekuda Journal, and even paid visits to individual settlements. Yet, as I showed in this chapter, once their attempts proved unsuccessful, they developed new planning and construction agencies that accommodated the needs of the new settlers while maintaining some uniformity. The development and outcomes of these agencies reveal how pragmatic and flexible the religious radicals of Block of the Faithful actually were.

Flexible as they may have been, by the mid 1980s, the activists of Block of the Faithful had lost their privileged position as the vanguards of the settlement project. Other, equally powerful actors, such as real estate developers, secular settlers, and Ministry of Housing officials, were now guiding its development.[242] But the power equation and demographic composition of settlements had hardly stabilized. In the coming years, while the First Intifada was still on, a new public of Israelis—anti-Zionist ultra-Orthodox Jews—would start flocking to the West Bank. They would soon outnumber both the religious radicals of Block of the Faithful and those secular profiteers. And, as had happened before, the introduction of a new public would place new and unexpected demands on architects and planners.

[242] According to Maggor, during the 1980s the government became the main driving force behind the settlement project, laying cornerstones for future developments in the West Bank. See Ibid.

Chapter Four: Faithful Cities

Figure 4.1 Ministry of Housing officials and representatives of the ultra-Orthodox community negotiate the allocation of synagogues in Geffen Neighborhood, Beitar Illit, 2003. Source: "Pahot Mishana Mehaihlus: Lemaala Meesrim Batei Knesset Beshchunat Hagefen." *Zo Irenu 33* (May 13, 2003): 3.

By the late 1980s, the number of Israelis moving to the West Bank had decreased. Following the outbreak of the first intifada, the West Bank no longer appealed to secular Israelis who sought a tranquil suburban life. In addition, beginning in 1985, the government reduced the construction of new settlements. For a while, some may have wondered if the settlement project had reached a dead-end.

But these thoughts, if they ever had existed, didn't last for long. By the early 1990s, a new species of settlers had emerged, ensuring the gradual growth of Jewish presence in the occupied territories. A push on the right inside Israel proper to increase the number of Jewish settlers in the West Bank, combined with a housing crisis experienced by the ultra-Orthodox community, had resulted in an influx of ultra-Orthodox families whose religious beliefs and practices made a new kind of demand on the construction of settlements. In response to these demands, a new kind of settlement emerged: the ultra-Orthodox city-settlement. Among the ultra-Orthodox community these new cities—mainly comprised of state-funded, large multistory apartment buildings designed for lower-income families—were called, not without both irony and pathos, "the Projects." However, today, with half of the construction in settlements in the West Bank taking place in these cities, they have come to form one-third of the total population of Jewish settlers.[1]

The design of city-settlements for the ultra-Orthodox community posed a number of challenges to local architects. Faced with the task of planning the first modern cities ever designed exclusively for ultra-Orthodox Israelis, architects sought an aesthetic language that would speak to the customs of the ultra-Orthodox community. Seeing ultra-Orthodox Jews as resistant to modernity and adhering to traditional Jewish laws, many architects experimented with forms they associated with quaint or sentimental notions of tradition and antiquity. This experimentation went in unexpected directions, such as sourcing architectural elements from native Palestinian building practices and urban forms from Catholic Europe.[2] In addition, when many in the ultra-Orthodox community had come to resent the Projects, and it was unclear whether young ultra-Orthodox couples would settle in the West Bank, architects began to study and accommodate the unique needs of the ultra-Orthodox community. Although these needs proved to be more complex than what the architects had imagined, and most of their attempts failed, these architects provoked a peculiar dialogue between secular design professionals and the ultra-Orthodox community.

This chapter unpacks the short history of these city-settlements and the design debates that accompanied their development. Focusing on the settlement of Beitar Illit and its predecessor, Immanuel, it shows how these negotiations between the planners and the residents resulted in paradoxical outcomes that, perhaps more than any other episode in the settlement project, problematize the received narrative of the history of settlements design as the outcome of decisions made by individual politicians or state planners. Instead, these negotiations and their outcomes point to the intricate relations between top-down and bottom-up design processes in engendering the urban formation around which

[1] Lea Cahaner and Yossef Shilhav, "Ultra-Orthodox Settlements in Judea and Samaria," *Social Issues in Israel* 16 (2013): 41. Exact numbers of ultra-Orthodox settlers residing in the West Bank, as recorded in 2009, are available in the reports of Peace Now's Settlements Watch. See Peace Now, "Settlements and Outposts," 2009.

[2] This was not the first time Israeli architects had referred to Palestinian architecture. In fact, Israeli architects had already been attracted to Palestinian vernacular before 1967. For an extensive study of Israeli architects' approach to Palestinian architecture and the Arab village, see Alona Nitzan-Shiftan, "Israelizing Jerusalem: The Encounter Between Architectural and National Ideologies 1967-1977" (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2002), especially 165-96..

the Israeli occupation is built. In turn, they also complicate intellectual frameworks that foreground the emancipatory nature of bottom-up design processes, and force us to question whether the much-lauded "triumph of the user" is always a good thing.

Unlikely Settlers

Until the 1980s, the ultra-Orthodox community was an unlikely candidate to take part in the settlements project. Because they believed the state of Israel would be reconstituted only after the coming of the Messiah, leaders of the ultra-Orthodox community deemed the founding of modern Israel and, later, the occupation of the West Bank religiously flawed. In fact, they prohibited their followers from moving to the occupied territories. Not only were they uninterested in taking part in such a nationalist project, but, considering other countries' opposition to the settlement project, they perceived the construction of settlements as "teasing the *goyim*" [Gentiles]—a strict religious prohibition.[3]

The lifestyle and customs of ultra-Orthodox Israelis were also at odds with the commuter-based suburban pattern of most settlements. Insisting on traditional forms of life that had developed in Eastern Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, most ultra-Orthodox people lacked professional skills.[4] Combined with their high fertility rates, standing at an average of seven children per family,[5] and the fact that most men dedicated their time to the study of rabbinic literature, they consistently suffered from high poverty rates.[6] Accordingly, many ultra-Orthodox families did not own a car, and life in a remote settlement, poorly connected to an urban center with commercial, religious, and educational facilities, would have doomed them to impossible isolation.

Therefore, even though ultra-Orthodox people approached secular urban culture with suspicion and usually resided in segregated neighborhoods, they preferred living in mixed cities, where they could take advantage of various public services.[7] Until the 1960s, they centered in two main urban areas: the northern neighborhoods of Jerusalem and the city of Bnei Brak at the outskirts of Tel Aviv. But by the mid 1960s these areas became too small for the rapidly growing community, and many young couples were forced to move out. At first, some moved to neighborhoods in existing medium-sized cities and remote towns known as development towns.[8] But these locales were either too expensive or too small, and, more often than not, their secular residents expressed hostility toward the new ultra-Orthodox tenants. By the early 1980s, as more and more

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[3] Yossef Shilhav, *Ultra-Orthodoxy in Urban Governance in Israel*, trans. Lisa Perlman (Jerusalem: Floersheimer Institute for Policy Studies, 1998), 43; Cahaner and Shilhav, "Ultra-Orthodox Settlements," 42-43. In addition, moving to the West Bank involved transgressing another religious commandment—"Shomer Nafsho, Irhak"—that prohibits ultra-Orthodox Jews from residing in a hostile environment, away from large Jewish concentrations, where there is a danger to their lives. See Aviva Luri, "Immanuel Lo Mitpashetet," *Mussaf Haaretz*, November 13, 1998, 32-38.

[4] Shilhav, *Ultra-Orthodoxy in Urban Governance*, 1, 7.

[5] Cahaner and Shilhav, "Ultra-Orthodox Settlements," 45.

[6] Shilhav, *Ultra-Orthodoxy in Urban Governance*, 128. In a study from 2009 it was found that 59 percent of those identifying as ultra-Orthodox in Israel were living below the poverty line. See the National Economic Council at the Prime Minister's Office, *The Haredi Sector: Empowerment through Employment*, Haggai Levin (Jerusalem: Prime Minister's Office, 2009), 10.

[7] Shilhav, *Ultra-Orthodoxy in Urban Governance*, 3.

[8] Cahaner and Shilhav, "Ultra-Orthodox Settlements," 50; Shilhav, *Ultra-Orthodoxy in Urban Governance*, 3-6. Development towns, initially referred to as new towns, are modernist towns the Israeli government built in the country's periphery in order to absorb the masses of immigrants that flocked the country after independence. For studies of development towns, see Miriam Tuvya and Michael Boneh, eds., *Building the Land: Public Housing in the 1950s* (Tel Aviv: Ha'Kibbutz Ha'Meuchad, 1999); Rachel Kallush and Yubert Lu Yun, "The National House and the Personal House: The Role of Public Housing in the Shaping of Space," in *Space, Land, Home*, ed. Yehuda Shenhav (Tel Aviv: Hakibutz Hameuchad, 2003), 166-93.

ultra-Orthodox couples were trapped in small apartments with rocketing rent prices, a more comprehensive solution was needed.[9]

Traditional Landscape for Tradition-Abiding Residents

The first serious attempt to solve the ultra-Orthodox housing crisis came from a rather unexpected source. Following a series of government decisions from 1979 to 1982 that, as discussed in the last chapter, aimed at opening the settlements project to private developers, ultra-Orthodox developers decided to erect an ultra-Orthodox city-settlement in the heart of the West Bank.[10] The first of its kind, both in the occupied territories and Israel proper, it was planned for some two hundred thousand residents and named after one of the characters from the book of Isaiah: Immanuel.[11] Even though the ultra-Orthodox developers lacked extensive experience with large-scale construction projects, and failed to satisfy some of the preliminary requirements government officials demanded, they somehow obtained the required approvals.[12] By the end of 1982, construction was in full swing.[13]

To overcome influential rabbis' opposition to the idea of erecting an ultra-Orthodox city in the occupied territories, and to downplay its remote location, the developers embarked on an unprecedented marketing campaign. The campaign included free flight tickets from across the world for potential homebuyers, guided tours, lectures, and a Hassidic music festival on the bare hilltop, attended by some ten thousand ultra-Orthodox people (Figure 4.2).[14] The city, as it was promoted in these events, was to bring the newest technologies from abroad and adopt them to suit traditional Jewish customs. For example, describing his plans for the city, one of the developers explained, "I have seen this in the US: a computer in each house. You press a button and you order a cottage

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[9] Haim Nachum Freeman, "Beitar—A City That Brings Pride and Honor," interview by Y. Ben Moshe, *Hamodia*, September 29, 1989; Shilhav, interview with author, June 30, 2015; Cahaner and Shilhav, "Ultra-Orthodox Settlements," 51. For a discussion of efforts initiated by leaders of the ultra-Orthodox community and the founding of "Miskenot Shaananim" in the 1990s, see also "Aser Shnot Pitronot," Hadshot Beitar, April 1992

[10] This process had begun after the rise of the Likud Party in 1977. See Shlomo Gazit, *Trapped Fools: Thirty Years of Israeli Policy in the Territories* (Tel Aviv: Zmora Beitan, 1999), 244-45. Pertinent to the founding of Immanuel, in 1979 it was agreed to open Ministry of Housing bids to a larger number of private construction firms. Firms that wanted to be included in these bids, however, had to show proof of extensive experience with large-scale construction projects. See Bathia Avlin to the State Comptroller of Israel, June 10, 1985, folder 14616/12-Israe ,גל State Archives. Only later, in April 1982, was a more conclusive decision allowing private developers to erect settlements in the West Bank made. See Meeting of the Committee for State Critique, February 12, 1985, folder כ-1423/26, transcript number 31, Israel State Archive.

[11] According to some promotional material the city was planned for some 200,000 residents. However, it is important to note that according to an article that appeared in the official newsletter of Immanuel, the master plan was designed to accommodate only 10,000 units, with 1,200 planned for the first stage of construction. A publication of the Ministry of Housing also stated that the city was planned for some 10,000 units. Meanwhile, in a booklet of plan drawings from 1983-4, the architects indicated that there would be only 5,000 units in the city, housing some 28,000 settlers. Nevertheless, they drew vast areas for potential future expansions, tripling the size of Immanuel. See "544 Units Are Under Construction," *Immanuel—The Newspaper of the City of Immanuel. A City That Is a Home*, c 1982, גל-14615/9, Israel State Archives; Star of Samaria/Gal. Beit-El, "Emmanuel-The Big City," c 1982, Star of Samaria Officers in Emmanuel; Amiram Harlap, ed., "Emmanuel-A New Town in Samaria," in *Israel Builds 1988* (Jerusalem: Ministry of Housing, 1988), 147; Thomas Leitersdorff and Y. Goldenberg, "Immanuel, A City That Is a Home: Appendix to the Budget Book of the City's Management, 1983-4" (City Planning Division of Immanuel, April 1983), City Planning Division of Immanuel.

[12] This was done mainly because state officials believed it was important to have ultra-Orthodox, rather than secular developers overseeing construction. Bathia Avlin to the State Comptroller of Israel, June 10, 1985.

[13] Bathia Avlin (legal consultant to the Ministry of Housing) to the State Comptroller of Israel, June 10, 1985, folder 14616/12- ,גל Israel State Archives. . Already in August 1982, a special ceremony was held on the site, celebrating the construction of the main road leading to Immanuel. See "Invitation to the Inauguration Ceremony of our City's Road—Immanuel," August 1982, folder גל-14615/9, Israel State Archives; Pinhas Arenreich and Yaacov Kaufman (Star of Samaria managers) to Asher Weiner (manager of the Ministry of Housing), September 30, 1982, folder גל-14615/9, Israel State Archives.

[14] Haim (manager of Star of Samaria, founders of Samaria), interview with the author, December 22, 2015; Pinhas Arenreich and Yaacov Kaufman (Star of Samaria managers) to Minister of Housing and vice-Prime Minister David Levi, November 2, 1982, folder 14615/9- ",ISA; "Tzuyim Revavot Besimhat Beit Hashoeva ,גל*Immanuel—The Newspaper of the City of Immanuel. A City that is a Home*, Vol. 2, September 1982.

cheese . . . you want to order a baby sitter—you press a button; you have a question about Halakha [traditional Jewish law]—you press the button and the Halakhic computer replies. . . . I even plan a video recording studio that will broadcast Gamara and Judaism classes."[15] In addition, autonomous, driverless trolley carts were to serve the residents, crisscrossing the settlement.[16]

Figure 4.2 Thousands of potential homebuyers at a special festival celebrating the construction of Immanuel. According to Star of Samaria, some 70,000 people attended the event. Source: Star of Samaria Offices in Immanuel.

Visual references to history and tradition also played an important role in both the promotion and planning of Immanuel. In advertisements, graphic designers underlined Immanuel's resemblance to the Old City of Jerusalem. In the renderings they crafted, domed buildings and large arches dominated Immanuel's skyline (figure 4.3). In some promotional material, the religious significance of the site of Immanuel was emphasized.[17]

[15] Pinhas Arnreich, "Forgotten City," interview by Yedidiya Meir, *Haaretz*, December 16, 2001, B3. A relatively same description was recalled in another article, see Aviva Luri, "Immanuel Lo Mitpashetet," Haaretz, November 13, 1998, Mussaf 34.
[16] "A Special Plan for Keeping the Quality of Life of Immanuel's Residents," Immanuel: The Newspaper of Immanual, a City that is a House, vol. 1, c.1982. For unit prices and loan conditions see "Rochshei Hadirot BeImmanuel Yochlu Lekabel Mashkantaot Vehalvaot ad 95% Mimehiran," Immanuel: The Newspaper of Immanual, a City that is a House, vol. 1 (undated), גל-14615/9 Folder, Israel State Archives; Tzabar Azriel (Assessment Officer at the Civili Administration, IDF), "Land Allocation for Construction—Immanuel," September 20, 1983, גל-14616/1, Israel State Archives; Pinhas Arnreich (manager of Star of Samaria) to Eli Nataf, November 28, 1983, folder גל-14616/1, Israel State Archives; "Hashefel Beshuk Hadirot Kimat Lo Heshpia Al Hamehirim," *Immanuel—The Newspaper of the City of Immanuel. A City that is a Home*, Vol. 2, September 1982.
[17] For example, see "Immanuel Nivnet Belev Eizor History-Dati," *Immanuel—The Newspaper of the City of Immanuel. A City that is a Home*, Vol. 2, September 1982.

Figure 4.3 "Immanuel: A City That Is a Home." Ad for Immanuel inspired by representations of the Old City of Jerusalem, 1982. Source: Star of Samaria offices in Immanuel.

The architects involved in the planning of Immanuel were also keen on weaving historical building forms into their design. Not only were their clients known for their hostility toward modernity, but also they themselves were overwhelmed by the oriental landscapes of the West Bank. As Yossi Sivan, one of the architects involved in the project, explained, "We felt like the local [architectural] language there [in the West Bank] was very important, and there was a lot to draw upon there."[18]

Like Sivan, Thomas Leitersdorff, a graduate of the Architectural Association and lead designer of Immanuel's master plan, was fascinated by the architecture of the Arab village. Romanticizing many of the Palestinian villages he saw on his way to the bare

[18] Yossi Sivan, interview with the author, December 10, 2015. For an in-depth study of the special interest Israeli architects of Sivan's generation took in Palestinian vernacular in the aftermath of the Six-Day War, see Alona Nitzan-Shiftan, Seizing Jerusalem: The Architectures of Unilateral Unification (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017); Alona Nitzan-Shiftan, "Seizing Locality in Jerusalem," in The End of Tradition, ed. Nezar AlSayyad (Routledge, 2004), 231–55.

hilltop, he imagined they were places where time stood still. Their unpaved, curvilinear pathways and the lack of division lines between the plots represented purity for him, something architects "could only ruin."[19] Accordingly, when he approached the drafting table, he attempted to echo the unplanned road network of the Arab village, designed a few curvilinear walking paths, and proposed to break up monolithic building masses into smaller units, layering them one atop the other in a staggered pattern (Figure 4.4-4.6).[20]

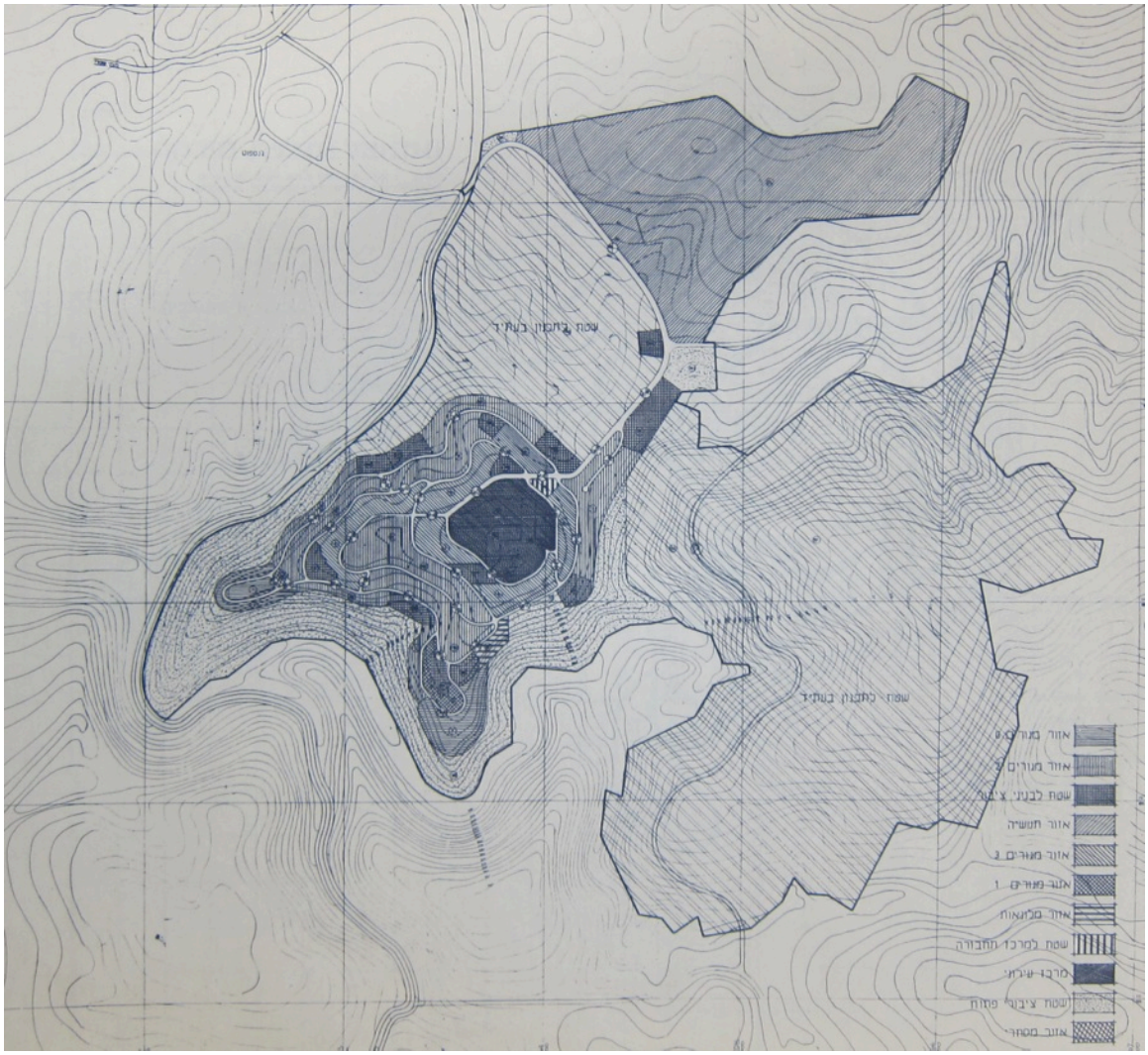


Figure 4.4 Master plan showing areas for future expansion of Immanuel. Leitersdorf Goldenberg Planning & Architecture Ltd., c. 1982. Source: "Immanuel: A City that is a Home" booklet, City Planning Division, Immanuel.

[19] Thomas Leitersdorff, "Starting a City from Scratch," interview by Eran Tamir Tawil, 2002, http://readingmachine.co.il/home/books/book_1_85984_549_5/1193036487.
[20] Ibid.

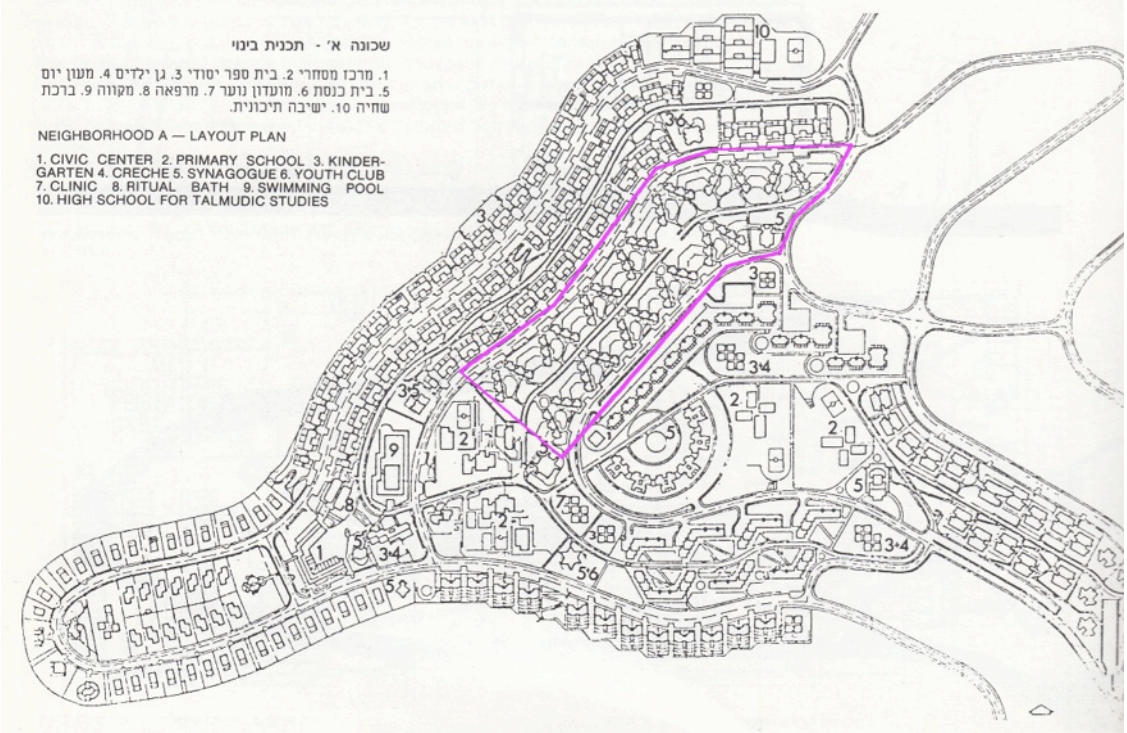


Figure 4.5 Master plan of Immanuel's first neighborhood. Area with curvilinear paths marked in pink. The architects dotted the city with some 14 synagogues and Torah study spaces, 12 kindergartens, 5 nurseries, 4 elementary schools, a seminar, ritual bath, clinic, clinic hall and commercial center.[21] Leitersdorf Goldenberg Planning & Architecture Ltd., c. 1982. Image Source: Amiram Harlap, ed., "Emmanuel – A New Town in Samaria," *Israel Builds 1988* (Jerusalem: Ministry of Housing, 1988).

[21] Amiram Harlap, ed., "Emmanuel – A New Town in Samaria," *Israel Builds 1988* (Jerusalem: Ministry of Housing, 1988), 147.

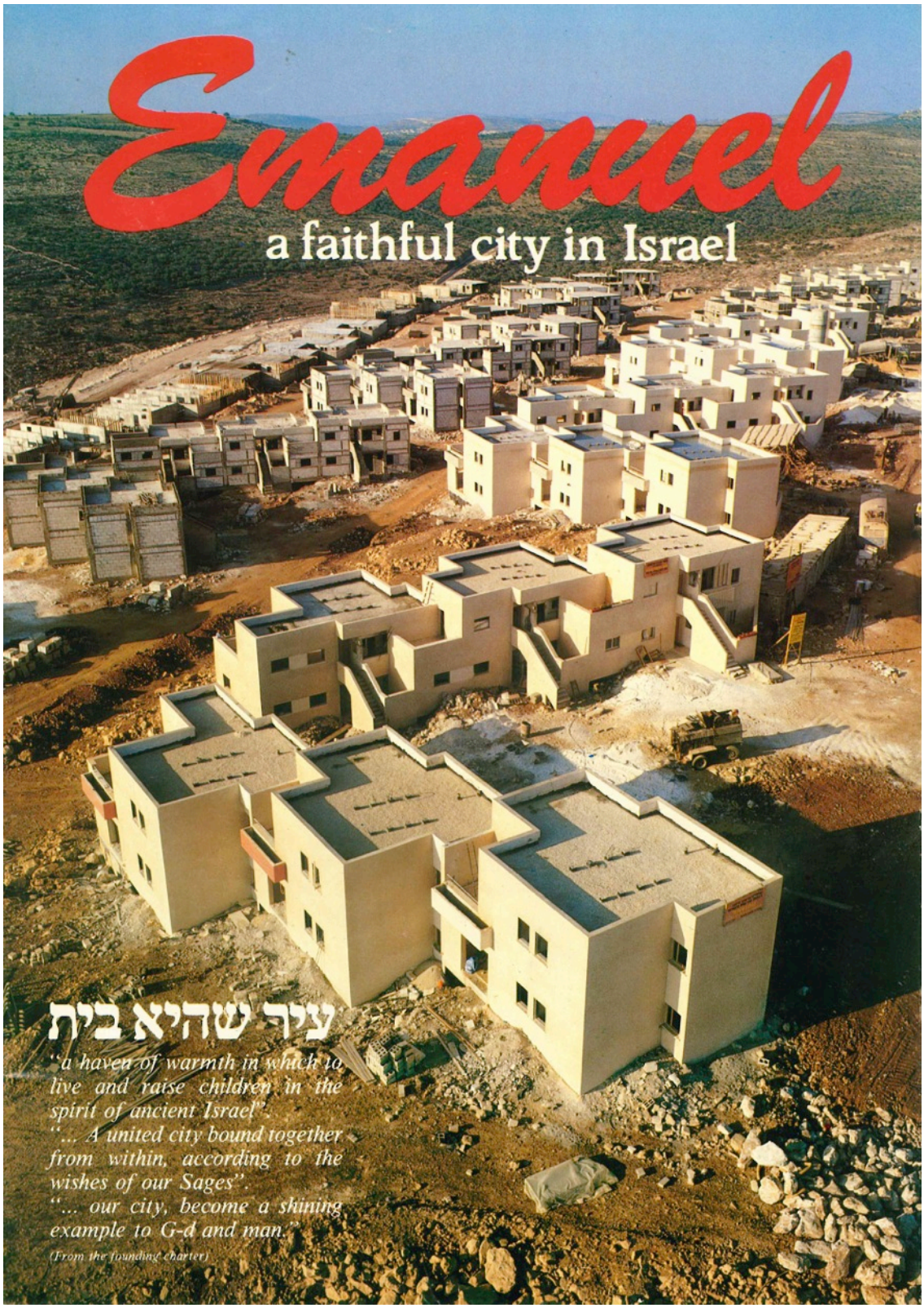


Figure 4.6 Ad for Immanuel (spelled as Emanuel) showing residential units arranged in a staggered pattern, ca. 1982. Source: Star of Samaria offices in Immanuel.

Sharing Leitersorff's vision, other architects responsible for designing buildings in Immanuel also drew their inspiration from the Arab house (Figure 4.7). Most notably, designs for houses in the neighborhoods of Shevo and Leshem, located in the western part of the city, incorporated various allusions to Palestinian building elements (Figure 4.8). For example, the multistory apartment buildings in Leshem neighborhood were dotted with prefabricated concrete arches and covered with a thin layer of stone, referencing the local *tubsa* stone. Below them, woven into the natural topography, seventy-two cottages, also decorated with concrete arches, were staggered one on top of the other, enclosing multiple inner courtyards in ways that resonated with the traditional patio house.

Figure 4.7 Un-built Torah Center designed with arches and domes. Unknown architect. C.1982. Source: Star of Samaria offices in Immanuel.

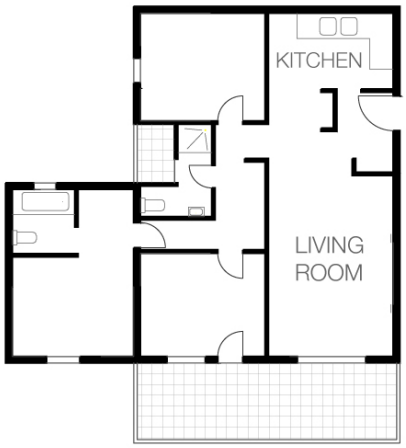
Figure 4.8 Residential units that were partially inspired by Palestinian architecture: (a) two-story house in the neighborhood of Shevo, unknown architect, 1983. The house was to be replicated 18 times to form a uniformed cottage houses neighborhood; (b) housing complex in the neighborhood of Leshem designed by Yaski-Gil-Sivan Architects in collaboration with R.Sheinfeld and N.Karhas, 1983. The latter housing complex was planned to have 12 multistory apartment buildings as well as 72 cottage houses. Source: City Planning Division in Immanuel.

It is hard to tell whether these allusions to an Arab vernacular were to satisfy the aesthetic preferences of the ultra-Orthodox community. Soon after the plans were finalized, the developers encountered financial difficulties and pressured the architects to work under an extremely tight budget. Under the new constraints, most of the houses in Leshem and Shevo neighborhoods were never executed. Instead, the few buildings that were actually built in Immanuel were extremely rudimentary. As architect David Nofar,

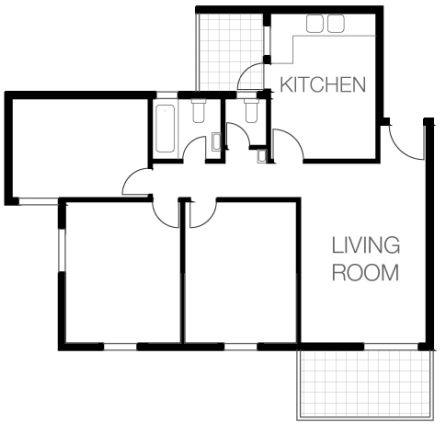
who designed many of the residential buildings, explained: "We did…the simplest and most banal design one could think of…[i.e.] as many units as possible for as little investment possible."[22] Significantly, they showed no consideration of vernacular aesthetics. Nor of the special needs of the ultra-Orthodox community.[23]

In order to accommodate the strict modesty rules and religious customs of ultra-Orthodox people, the living space must incorporate several design features. Among these, the most basic features include a balcony big enough to serve as a sukkah on *Sukkot* holiday, as well as the spatial division of the house into areas accommodating the wife and children and those serving the husband and his male friends (Figure 4.9.1). Perplexed by the original challenge of designing the first modern ultra-Orthodox city and the increasing budget cuts, some of the architects failed to account for these special needs.[24] For example, the units in one building that was replicated in large numbers in Immanuel were too small and had no partition between the entrance door and the living room, resulting in unwanted interactions between men and women (Figure 4.9.2). Another multistory house, built already after the first stage of construction, had rounded balconies that rendered them too small for a *sukkah*, and had no partitions dividing the living room from the kitchen or the parents' bedroom (Figure 4.9.4). Adding to this, the apartments had in-between spaces, such as small family corners, that were considered wasted and unusable space. Furthermore, the placement of the bathroom door in the parents' bedroom made it impossible to lay out two twin beds, leaving ultra-Orthodox couples unable to follow strict gender segregation rules requiring them to sleep in separate beds. As a result, many of these apartments remained unoccupied.

[22] David Nofar, phone interview with the author, December 3, 2015.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Already in 1985, City official Raziel Pri-Gan had to address the residents of Immanuel and acknowledge that there is a problem with Immanuel's units being overcrowded. He warned the residents, however, to avoid from making illegal building additions in their attempt to expand their overcrowded units, and explained the local government had contacted the planners, asking them to come up with a solution. See "Open Letter to the Resident," Immanuel—the newspaper Immanuel's Municipality, Vol. 2, July 1985.



4.9.1



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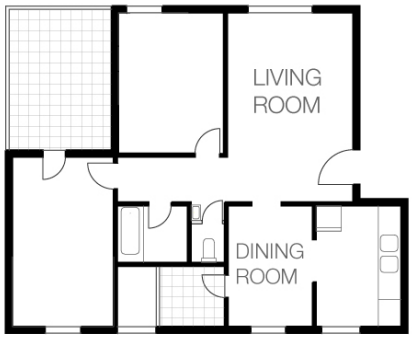

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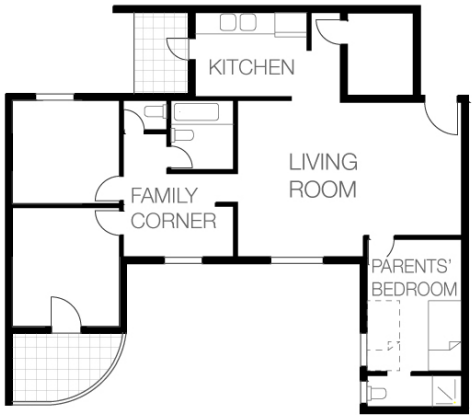

4.9.4

Figure 4.9 Apartment layouts in Immanuel: (4.9.1) a three-bedroom unit, showing partition walls that separate the living room from the entrance space, the kitchen, and the bedrooms. Original plan by Leitersdorf Goldenberg Planning & Architecture Ltd., ca. 1982; (4.9.2 and 4.9.3) Units lacking partitions between the entrance door and the living room planned by architect David Nofar and replicated approximately 219 times in Immanuel (9.2) and architect Israel Levitt (4.9.3), ca. 1983; (4.9.4) A unit with no partitions dividing the private from the public spaces of the house, but with a balcony too small to serve as a sukkah, a family corner, and a master bedroom that cannot accommodate two twin beds. Originally planned by architect Meir Buchman and later redrawn by the developer. Schematic plans drawn by the author. Author's drawings based on original plans available at The City Planning Division and Star of Samaria offices in Immanuel.

In addition, some of the public buildings were inadequate for ultra-Orthodox people. Most notably, in an attempt to appease the religious imaginary of the residents, one of the architects designed a synagogue that took the shape of a Star of David (Figures 4.10 and 4.11). Yet, as one of Immanuel's residents explained to me, ultra-Orthodox people don't care so much about such symbolism. On the contrary, they are very pragmatic. Ultra-orthodox people have large families, he admitted, and accordingly they

need as many seats as possible in any synagogue. They can't afford unusable spaces, like those angular spaces of the synagogue.[25] In fact, as David Kassuto has argued, such an overt use of symbolism is religiously prohibited.[26]

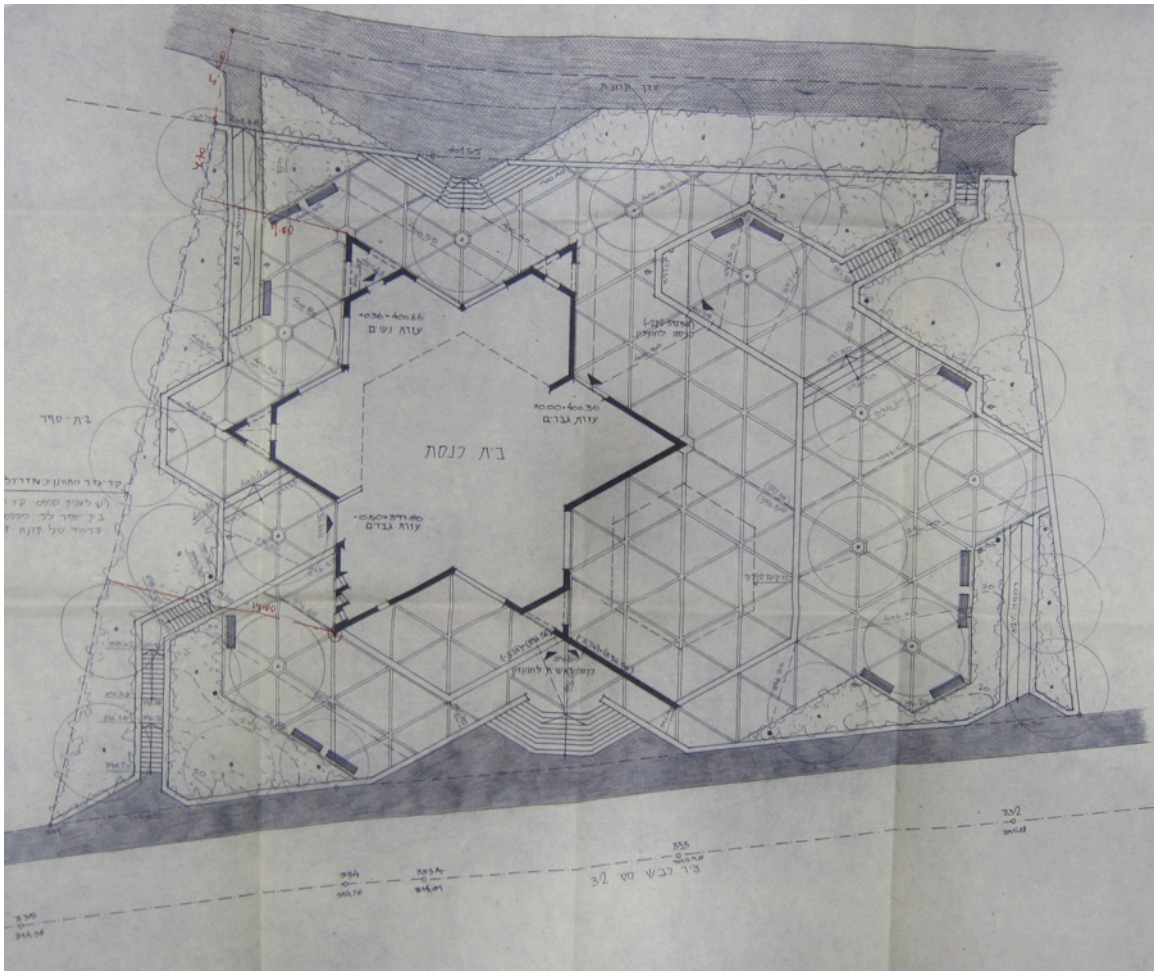

Figure 4.10 Star of David-shaped synagogue in Immanuel, architect Eli First. Landscape architecture by Gideon Sarig, c.1983. Source: The City Planning Division and Star of Samaria offices in Immanuel.

[25] Haim (manager of Star of Samaria, founders of Samaria), interview by author, December 22, 2015. The architect of the synagogue was not the only one who misinterpreted the residents' interest in Jewish symbolism. Reflecting on a civic center he designed for an ultra-Orthodox community in the Israeli town of Elad, architect Meir Buchman, who also worked in Immanuel, insisted that religious users have a strange fascination with what he identified as unworthy symbolism. "They would have been happy had I planned them, say, twelve windows representing the twelve [Israelite] tribes, with arches and stone-cladded colonnades." See Ester Zandberg, "Torah Mefoeret Bekli Mefoar," *Haaretz*, May 27, 1999.

[26] "Livroah Min Haklishaot: interview with David Kassuto," Nekuda Journal, Vol. 78, September 1984, 36-7.

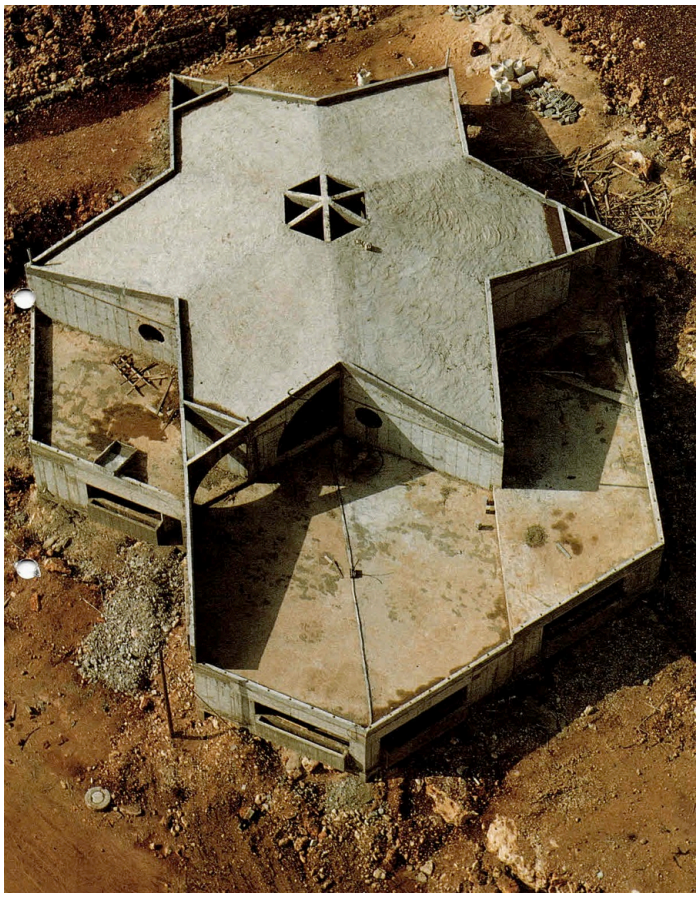

Figure 4.11 Star of David-shaped synagogue in Immanuel under construction. C.1984. Source: Star of Samaria offices in Immanuel.

Things got even worse when the developers went into bankruptcy, causing construction to stop in 1985.[27] At that point, many homebuyers found themselves paying

[27] Construction halt occurred in stages. Already in March 1984 construction of 258 units that were in different stages of development was stopped. That same time the construction of a number of synagogues and a youth center was also stopped. Shmuel Stiener to Asher Winner, March 15, 1984, גל-14616/10, Israel State Archives. A number of days later, an official at the Ministry of Housing warned that soon some 500 units that were in different stages of construction were to be abandoned. See Shmuel Stiener to Eitan Soroka (manager of Planning and Engineering Department at the Ministry of Housing), March 21, 1984, folder גל-14616/10, Israel State Archives. Soon construction has stopped completely. See Asher Winner (general manager of the Ministry of Housing) to General Manager, June 13, 1985,גל – 14616/12, Israel State Archives. By that point, in 1985, there were some 1000 incomplete units where construction was stopped. In addition, there were some 450 families who had already moved in and suffered from the lack of basic infrastructure. See Yaacov Neeman, "Kohav Hashomron ltd. (receivership) - The City of Immanuel," November 28, 1985, גל-14616/12, ISA.

Star of Samaria collapsed for several reasons. First, the developers had serious fights among themselves, resulting in a construction halt. See Asher Winner (general manager at the Ministry of Housing) to General Director at the Ministry of Finances, June 13, 1985, folder 14616- ,ISA. At one point they parted ways. Aviva Luri ,גל"Immanuel Lo Mitpashetet," *Mussaf Haaretz*, November 13, 1998, 32-38. In addition, the developers and their representatives had repeatedly complained that the Ministry of Housing discriminated against them, allocating far greater funding packages to other settlements. See, for example, A. Zichroni (lawyer representing Star of Samaria) to State Comptroller Committee, June 11, 1985, folder 14616/12- ;ISA ,גלLeibovitz, interview with the author; Yaacov Neeman (lawyer in charge of receivership for Star of Samaria's property) to Asher Winner (manager of the Ministry of Housing), November 5, 1985, folder 14616/12-גל, ISA. For demands voiced by Star of Samaria people, requesting the Ministry of Housing allocate them more funds also see, Pinhas Ainriech (Star of Samaria manager) to Department of Planning and Development at the Ministry of Housing, May 9, 1983, folder גל-14616/1, Israel State Archives; Pinhas Aienriech to Asher Winner, Nobvmeber 10, 1983, גל-14616/1, Israel State Archives. Pliya Elbak, Civilian Department manager at the State Attorney Office, concurred with the latters' complaint. See Pliya Elbak to Bathia Avlin, July 26, 1985, folder 14616/12- ISA. Regardless, by 1985, it ,גל was found that Star of Samaria had debts in the total amount of 1,131,943,342 Shekels. See David Ben Yehuda (calculator for the

mortgages for apartments they would never own, and those who had already moved in were isolated in the middle of the West Bank, with almost no public facilities, nor even paved roads leading to their houses.[28] If all this was not enough, the outbreak of the Palestinian uprising, a grassroots resistance to the Israeli occupation that included occasional stone-throwing at Jewish settlers and lasted from 1987 to 1993, dealt a final blow to Immanuel. Within just a few years, those who could afford it moved out, leaving behind them a poor community that, still today, barely makes up 2 percent of the city's projected population (Figures 4.12 and 4.13).[29]

Figure 4.12 Abandoned houses in Immanuel. Once construction had stopped, many of the housing compounds in Immanuel were left in different stages of construction. The vast majority of them have remained abandoned. Photo by author.

Ministry of Housing) to Yaacov Ne'eman (lawyer in charge of receivership for Star of Samaria's property), July 26, 1985, folderגל – 14616/12, Israel State Archives.

[28] Elihu Merav (head of Immanuel's local council) to Asher Winner (manager of the Ministry of Housing), March 12, 1985, folder 14616/12- ;Israel State Arcives ,גלBaruh Ovitz (resident of Immanuel) to Asher Winner, July 7, 1985, גל – 14616/12, Israel State Archives; Baruh Ovitz to Eitan Soroka, "Lack of Road and Pavement in Hatam Sofer Street in Immanuel," November 6, 1985, גל-14616/12, ISA. For interviews with residents, see Aviva Luri, "Immanuel Doesn't Spread," *Mussaf Haaretz*, Novermber 13, 1998, 32-38. In addition, Star of Samaria housed some homebuyers whose units were not finished in units whose owners hadn't moved in yet. As a result, owners of these units demanded they get rent from the inhabitants until their units are ready. See M.Sheinfeld to Yaacov Ne'eman, November 12, 1985, folderגל – 14616/12, Israel State Archives.

[29] In 2016, there were 3,300 people residing in Immanuel. See "Statistics for Immanuel" (National Insurance Institute of Israel, December 1, 2016), https://www.btl.gov.il/Mediniyut/Situation/statistics/BtlStatistics.aspx.

Figure 4.13 Abandoned houses in Immanuel. Photo by author.

Siena on the Hills of Judea

After the fall of Immanuel, few imagined that the ultra-Orthodox community could be recruited again to the settlements project. But by the late 1980s, the housing crisis facing the ultra-Orthodox community had grown worse, finally reaching a tipping point.[30] At the same time, Teddy Kollek, the then mayor of Jerusalem, saw the ultra-Orthodox community as an economic burden and wanted to reduce their number in the city.[31] Furthermore, as the Palestinian uprising continued discouraging middle-class Israelis from moving to settlements, someone, preferably with a high fertility rate, had to ensure the gradual growth of Jewish presence in the occupied territories. Together, these disparate forces rendered a second attempt to settle ultra-Orthodox people in the West Bank—where land was cheap, and the political stakes were high—almost inevitable.

In the mid-1980s, a special governmental committee in charge of new settlements heard about three bare hilltops located a few hundred meters away from the Israeli Green Line. Joe Rosenberg, a modern-Orthodox Jew who immigrated to Israel from South Africa, had been trying to establish a suburban settlement on the three hilltops since 1982.[32] Rosenberg named it "Eliza Hill" after Eliza Begin, the wife of Prime Minister

[30] Y. Ben Moshe, "A Glamorous City: Conversation with the Manager of Mishkenot Shaananim," Hamodia, September 29, 1989; Meir Rabinovich, "With the Blessing of Rabbi Shah," *Nekuda Journal*, no. 145 (November 1990): 13, 39.
[31] Moshe Leibovitz (first mayor of Beitar Illit), interview with the author, May 11, 2015.
[32] See decision to erect a settlement, to be called "Beitar" in Transcript of Settlement Committee (Shared by the government and the World Zionist Organization) Meeting, August 8, 1982, folder 7618/2- page 2, ISA. For discussions and memos concerning early ,א attempts to settle the area see Shilhav, *Ultra-Orthodoxy in Urban Governance*, 18-18, and Uri Bar On (assistant to the minister of security) to Yehuda Nahari (commissioner of government property), November 2, 1982; Israel Dekel (vice minister of security) to

Menachem Begin.[33] Later, the settlement's name was changed to Hadar Beitar. With the help of settlement activist Hanan Porat, Rosenberg brought some portables to the site (Figure 4.14). He thought the settlement would cater for national-religious settlers. But Rosenberg was unable to recruit residents. Very few Israelis were willing to move to Hadar Beitar. And those who did quickly found themselves entrapped in rudimentary portables that failed to protect them from the harsh weather conditions. Soon, they began leaving the settlement. At one point, only two settlers remained on the hilltop.[34] Later, Rosenberg died from a stroke.[35] With Rosenberg's death it became clear that Hadar Beitar was doomed to failure.

Figure 4.14 A national-religious family moving into a portable in Hadar Beitar. Source: Shlomo's private collection.

The government's Committee on Settlements identified the site's potential—namely, its proximity to Jerusalem—and by the mid-1980s it made a decision: an ultra-Orthodox city-settlement, to be called Beitar Illit, would be erected on the bare hills, with the first move-in date scheduled for May 1990.[36] At first, planners thought it could also

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Yehuda Nahari, November 7, 1982' Nahari to Yeshuv Beitar Ltd., March 27, 1983; and Bar on to Nahari, September 2, 1984, folder 46701-גל, Israel State Archives

[33] Leibovitz, interview with the interview.

[34] Urbah, Uri. "Erez Bemkom Dardar." Nekuda, November 22, 1985.

[35] Leibovitz, interview.

[36] Already on December 23, 1985 planners at the Ministry of Housing were discussing the program for the city that would mainly cater for ultra-Orthodox publics. See Ministry of Housing, Department of Planning and Engineering, "Beitar Illit - Master Plan," December 23, 1985, Yaar collection, 77 Beitar, Avie and Sarah Arenson Built Heritage Research Center, The Technion. According to a newspaper clipping I found in Yaar's collection, in the following year, planners at the Ministry of Housing began doing some

accommodate national-religious settlers.[37] But the two groups refused to share the settlement. "You are too Zionist for us," ultra-Orthodox residents told one of Hadar Beitar's national-religious settlers.[38] Ministry of Housing officials thus changed their initial plans and focused their efforts on the first hilltop that was planned exclusively for ultra-Orthodox residents.

To overcome the opposition of leading rabbis, and attract ultra-Orthodox families, the Ministry of Housing offered generous funding packages, comprised of grants and favorable government loans. For example, two bedroom units were sold for $54,000, out of which only $6,000 were to be paid in advance. The remaining amount was to be paid with long-term, no-interest government loans.[39] Furthermore, the location of the settlement—outside the recognized borders of Israel—was attenuated. For instance, in one publication it was falsely stated that the settlement was "built on the Green Line, stretching only 800 meters eastwards," and, accordingly, the term "occupied territories" was removed from all sales contracts.[40] In another publication, the manager of the Ministry of Housing was quoted saying that Beitar Illit would be built on both sides of the Green Line: parts of it in Israel proper, and others in the occupied territories.[41] In addition, the Ministry of Housing founded a special steering committee of rabbis and community leaders in charge of promoting the city among young ultra-Orthodox couples (figures 4.15 and 4.16).[42]

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preliminary research, questioning members of the ultra-Orthodox community if they would be willing to move to the settlement. Only later they began considering more detailed plans. See Nadav Shragai, "Hayir Hahadasha Beitar Teyoad Leharedim," *Haaretz*, March 25, 1987. Then On March 25, 1987 there was a special cornerstone laying of the city ceremony attended by Minister of Housing David Levi. See Ministry of Housing, "Invitation for Cornerstone Laying for the city of Beitar," March 1987, Yaar collection, 77 Beitar, Avie and Sarah Arenson Built Heritage Research Center, The Technion.

[37] "Permits Committee Meeting from January 18, 1988 at the Ministry of Housing in Jerusalem 2/88 Transcripts," February 12, 1988, Folder Beitar 77, Avie and Sarah Arenson Built Heritage Research Center, The Technion; "Draft for Planning Area C in the City of Beitar Illit," c 1988, Yaar collection, 77 Beitar, Avie and Sarah Arenson Built Heritage Research Center, The Technion.

[38] Meir Rabinowitz, "Behehsher Harav Shah," *Nekuda*, November 1990, 15.

[39] According to Nahum Freeman, homebuyers had the option of paying the $6,000 in ten installments. Y. Ben Moshe, "Beitar – Ir Letiferet Uolegaon," *Hamodia*, September 29, 1989. For more details on buying options that were available for homebuyers in 1989 see, Heikef Mashkantaot Lelo Ribit Bebeitar, *Hadshot Beitar*, October 1989; Moshe Cohen, "'Moreh Nevohim' Besugiyat Hamashkantaot," *Hadshot Beitar*, December 1989. In 1994, three-bedroom units were sold for $90,000. Each homebuyer received a grant in the amount of $17,500 that was reduced from the above amount, in addition to favorable government loans. According to Nahum Freeman, who was involved in the Steering Committee, until 1994, government grants to homebuyers reached $27,500. H.Dovrat, "Beitar me'halom le'ir," Mishpacha: Hashavuon Labayit Hayehudi, vol. 167, 1994, un-paginated. According to a news report, the rate for 3 bedrooms apartments remained similar, and estimated at $90,000-100,000. Nadav Shragai, "Bekarov: Hair Hagdola Bagada – Haredit," *Haaretz*, July 13, 2003. However, with time, real-estate values went up. In 2008, apartments, on average were sold for approximately $145,000, in 2010 for $210,000, reaching $250,000 in 2013. In the same fashion, a five bedrooms unit that went for $480,000-500,000 in 2007 was sold for twice the amount in 2013. Akiva Novik, "Ir Ktana Veyeladim Ba Harbe," *Yediot Aharonot: Mamon*, August 28, 2013.

[40] The settlement doesn't touch the Green Line; it is located in the West Bank. Nevertheless such statements were made repeatedly. See, for example, Ben Moshe, "Beitar – Ir Letiferet Uolegaon."

[41] "Beitar - Berosh Sulam Haadifuyot," *Hadshot Beitar*, October 1989.

[42] Leibovitz, interview with the author.

Figure 4.15 Beitar Illit's special steering committee by the entrance to the city, 1989. Hadshot Beitar Journal 1 (October 1989): 5.

Figure 4.16 Members of the special steering committee at a meeting. Preliminary drawings of Beitar Illit are pinned to the wall in the back. Source: Moshe Leibovitz's private collection.

To further attenuate the nationalist nature of the project, the Ministry of Housing's involvement was limited to funding and supervision, while construction and promotion were allocated to a private company—Ashdar.[43] Promotional material drew a connection between Beitar Illit and important milestones in Jewish history. In one advertisement, for example, the establishment of Beitar Illit was compared to the departure from the walled city of Jerusalem in the mid-19th century—a process that expanded Jerusalem and allowed many to enjoy higher living standards in the holy city.[44] In another advertisement, parallels were drawn between Beitar Illit and the biblical city of Beitar, where, according to some sources, 400 synagogues once flourished.[45]

Hoping to avoid the planning mistakes that contributed to the fall of Immanuel, Ashdar hired Ora and Ya'acov Ya'ar, a pair of well-known Tel Aviv based architects, who had designed numerous housing projects across the country and taken part in the redevelopment and preservation of Old Jerusalem. Uncertain about the future prospects of the settlement, the Ya'ars and their team of architects began planning the first hilltop of Beitar Illit, designed for some seven thousand young families. When approaching the drafting table, the architects did not consider the Arab village as a source of inspiration, as their counterparts in Immanuel had a few years prior; after all, it proved to be a failure in Immanuel, and with the outbreak of the Palestinian uprising, many Israelis, especially those residing in the West Bank, had expressed a clear dislike of Palestinian building elements.[46] Instead, influenced by works of the New Urbanism group, the architects looked at the Italian towns of Siena and Florence for inspiration. Accordingly, they designed all houses with pitched red-tile roofs and created mixed-use streets with commercial spaces on the ground floor (Figure 4.17).[47]

[43] Meir Rabinowich, "The Report Is on the Table, the Outcomes Are on the Ground," *Nekuda Journal*, no. 145 (November 1990): 14.
[44] Eshel B. Z., "Beshearei Hadshot Beitar," *Hadshot Beitar*, October 1989.
[45] "Kan Yashva Hasanhedrin," *Hadshopt Beitar*, September 1990.
[46] Edna (archivist of the settlement of Alfei Menashe), interview with the author, July 8, 2015. Also, these aesthetic preferences become clear when examining settlers' publications from the late 1980s. In these publications, Palestinian towns were presented as places of decay and cultural backwardness, and Palestinian construction workers were condemned as unprofessional. For examples, see Hanan Sever, "Curfew on All Settlements," *Nekuda Journal*, no. 115 (November 1987), 22-25, 48, and Yehuda Etzion, "The Occupation Destroys: Hebrew Labor," *Nekuda Journal*, no. 111 (May 1987), 18-21.
[47] Ya'acov and Aviv Ya'ar, interview with the author, April 20, 2015. Together with his wife, Ora Ya'ar, Yaacov Ya'ar took a relatively similar approach when designing Pisgat Ze'ev, a residential neighborhood in Jerusalem. As in Beitar Illit, they aimed at emulating elements from what they referred to as "traditional cities." When describing the project, they explained: "dwelling and shopping facilities were interwoven at the center of the city, as is the case in traditional cities. As a result, the street in Pisgat Zeev gains back its traditional meaning: a real defined and protected urban place, which serves also as a means of orientation." See Amiram Harlap, ed., "General and Detailed Town Plan, Pisgat Zeev," *Israel Builds 1988* (Jerusalem: Ministry of Housing, 1988), 95. In fact, when discussing the new trend of emulating traditional cities and how this trend has begun penetrating Israeli architecture, architect and writer Abba Elhanani referred to Pisgat Zeev in 1992. See Abba Elhanani, "Perek 25: Habayatiyut Shel Harehov Hayisraeli Hamatzyui," *Tvai*, Vol. 29-30, 15. Not surprisingly, in a very early planning meeting from September 1985, attended by Ora Yaar, as well as a number of Ministry of Housing officials, including Elinoar Barzaki, it was agreed that the planning of Beitar Illit would follow the design principles of Pisgat Zeev. See Ministry of Housing, Jerusalem District, "Beitar Illit," September 8, 1985, Yaar collection, 77 Beitar, Avie and Sarah Arenson Built Heritage Research Center, The Technion.

Figure 4.17 Mixed-use street in Beitar Illit with commerce on the ground floor, behind the arched colonnade on the left, 1991. Source: Moshe Leibovitz's private collection.

To study the specific needs of ultra-Orthodox people, the Ya'ars made a trip to the ultra-Orthodox neighborhoods of Jerusalem with David, a civil engineer assigned to the project who happened to be ultra-Orthodox. Together, they walked around the crowded streets of Jerusalem and discussed the residents' lifestyles and elements that are unique to the ultra-Orthodox apartment. Satisfied with the information they collected, the architects returned to the office and adjusted the plan drawings. They enlarged the balconies, added small sinks outside the restrooms for hand-washing rituals, and paid careful attention to the gendered division of the house. Most notably, they closed the living room off from the rest of the house whenever possible, so it could function as a study room for the husband (Figure 4.18).[48] Proud of the design process, Ya'acov Ya'ar later concluded, "Planning a city for ultra-Orthodox people is, first and foremost, an original challenge. When approaching it, planners have to carefully study the needs and customs of the people. . . . And, indeed, we did it, both in the design of the residential units and the planning of public spaces."[49]

[48] Ibid. Last year, Ya'acov Ya'ar published an autobiography in Hebrew. In the autobiography, Ya'ar mentions the trip to Jerusalem With David Lev. He argues that his wife, Ora Ya'ar, was inspired by the trip, and, on their return, designed unique units for ultra-Orthodox residents. Nevertheless, according to the autobiography, developers rejected her plans. I was unable to find her sketches in Ya'ar's archives at the Avie and Sarah Arenson Built Heritage Research Center, or at Beitar Illit's Planning Department. See Yaacov Yaar, Life and the Architecture (Haifa: Architectural and Landscape Heritage Research Center, The Faculty of Architecture and Town Planning, The Technion 2016), 201-2.

[49] Yaacov Ya'ar, "Beitar Will be a Beautiful City with a High Quality of Life and Maximum Adjustment for the Ultra-Orthodox Public: Interview with Architect Yaacov Ya'ar," *Hadshot Beitar Journal* 2 (December 1989): 8-9

Figure 4.18 Typical residential unit with a living room closed off from the rest of the house. Beitar Illit, Hill A, Ya'ar Architects, ca. 1989. Schematic plan drawn by author. Author's drawing based on original plan available at The City Planning Division of Beitar Illit.

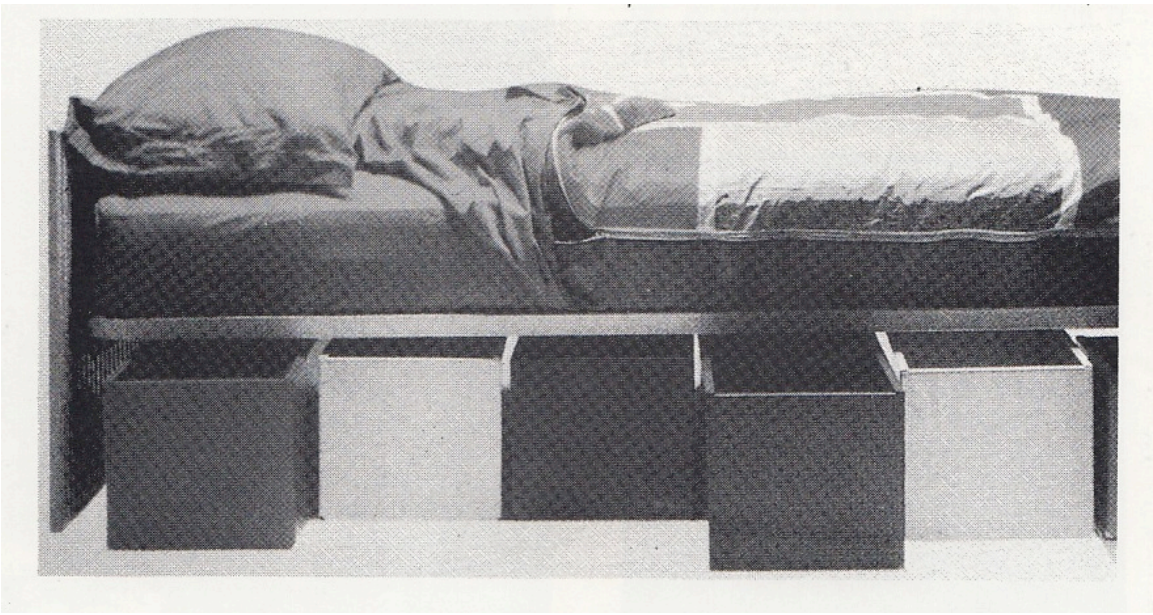

Figure 4.19 Ultra-Orthodox apartments are often perceived as messy and disordered in comparison to secular houses. To overcome this, Ashdar distributed promotional material with DIY solutions aimed at helping ultra-Orthodox wives who were in charged of keeping the apartments tidy and clean.[50] Source: Hadshot Beitar, March 1991.

[50] See, for examples, "Bemo Yadeinu," *Hadshot Beitar*, December 1989, 12; "Osim Seder," *Hadshot Beitar*, March 1990, 12; "Seder Behadrei Hayaladim," Hadshot Beitar, March 1991, 13-14.

Yet, when residents started moving into the first neighborhood, Ya'ar's self-congratulatory statement proved to be too hasty, and Moshe Leibovitz, the first mayor of Beitar Illit, found himself struggling to somehow keep the city from falling apart. As he explained, "The architects got everything wrong. Whatever planners shouldn't do when planning for the ultra-Orthodox community—they did."[51] Most significantly, he complained, they gathered all public facilities—the central synagogue, school, community center, and park—in one large land plot.[52] In doing so, they failed to account for the numerous sects that constitute the ultra-Orthodox community.[53] Each sect conducts its own ceremonies, daily prayers, and educational system, and refers to different textual traditions. Mixing between sects is unacceptable. In fact, it is so unacceptable that in 1990, when Raphael Dankner, the former manager of the City Planning Division, tried to convince a resident to send his three-year-old daughter to a kindergarten that catered to children of another sect, the man was appalled and asked, "You think their girls are like mine?"[54] Not surprisingly, then, almost all of the spacious public buildings the architects designed remained empty (Figure 4.20). Making things all the more complex, Leibovitz complained, the architects failed to accommodate the large number of kids in the city, and there was a severe shortage of playgrounds.[55]

[51] Leibovitz, interview with the author.

[52] Interestingly, at a meeting that took place at the Ministry of Housing offices in Jerusalem in January 1990, someone raised the question of open public spaces, and the lack of these spaces near each apartment building. The landscape architect replied, explaining that the open spaces near the houses will serve only those residing in ground floor apartments. A centralized open space will be allocated for the residents of all other units at the heart of the city. In the concluding notes of that meeting, it is specifically stated that there is a need to ensure space for kids' playgrounds for each group of buildings. See Ministry of Housing, Jerusalem District, "Permits Committee Meeting from 12.21.89 Transcripts Number 14/89," January 20, 1990, Yaar collection, 77 Beitar, Avie and Sarah Arenson Built Heritage Research Center, The Technion. Also, in August 1990, at a meeting at the Ministry of Housing, Moshe Leibovitz asked Ya'ar to consider using open areas near the apartment buildings for public playgrounds, right next to the private gardens. See Yahal Mehandesim, "Proyect Beitar: Discussion Number P-B-247 from August 21, 1990," August 22, 1990, Yaar collection, 77 Beitar, Avie and Sarah Arenson Built Heritage Research Center, The Technion-Israel Institute of Technology.

[53] For reference, today in the city of Immanuel there is a synagogue for every thirty to thirty-five families. Aviv Ya'ar had confirmed this observation of Leibovitz, saying it was a mistake to follow a conventional master plan. Aviv Ya'ar, interview with the author.

[54] Raphael Dankner (first manager of Beitar Illit's City Planning Division), interview with the author, July 22, 2015.

[55] For example, at a meeting from 1992, Leibovitz argued that because of the shortage in playgrounds, kids in Beitar Illit were playing on the sidewalks near vehicles transportation. See Yigal Margalit to David Ovadiya, "Beitar A1 - Changes to Trasportation in the Neighborhood's Roads," December 21, 1992, Yaar collection, Beitar Binder 1, Avie and Sarah Arenson Built Heritage Research Center, The Technion-Israel Institute of Technology.

Figure 4.20 As members of different sects preferred not to interact one with the other, Beitar Illit's main square remained empty. At the center of the photograph are a few soldiers and officers, who gathered for an official visit of the Minister of Housing. Beitar Illit, March 1991. Source: Moshe Leibovitz's private collection.

The architects' assumptions concerning the buying behavior and labor capacity of the ultra-Orthodox community were also flawed. Considering the scarce funds available to most ultra-Orthodox families, very few were able to afford renting the spacious ground-floor commercial spaces Ya'ar borrowed from Siena, and many remained empty.[56] In addition, the planners didn't believe the ultra-Orthodox residents were likely to take on real jobs. Accordingly, they planned only one industrial area, and placed it at a small site with harsh topographical conditions that foreclosed much-needed employment opportunities, damaging the city's economic prospects.[57]

Equally troubling, Leibovitz complained, was the lack of an adequate public transportation system. "Planners thought this was just going to be another settlement," he

[56] In August 1990, Leibovitz asked Ya'ar to allow other, alternative commercial spaces, outside of the main road. Later, in 1991, on the request of the residents, a representative from Ashdar asked Ya'ar to cancel some of the commercial spaces, and allow residents to convert them into residential units. Later that year, Ya'ar, Leibovitz and government officials were still debating alternative uses for these commercial spaces. Ya'ar proposed placing temporary functions, such as emergency services, storage, and spaces for religious practice for specific Hassidic courts, in place of commercial functions. To his disappointment, however, Leibovitz argued that using these spaces for religious purposes was religiously prohibited. Government officials, on the other hand, insisted that these spaces couldn't serve as small workshops, or, otherwise, municipal offices. See Yahal Mehandesim, "Proyect Beitar: Discussion Number P-B-247 from August 21, 1990"; Z. Gluzmann to Yaacov Yaar and Z. Ovadiya, January 8, 1991, Yaar collection, 77 Beitar, Avie and Sarah Arenson Built Heritage Research Center, The Technion; Adi Shrist (project manager), "Beitar Project - Discussion Number P-B-355," October 27, 1991, Yaar collection, Beitar Binder 1, Avie and Sarah Arenson Built Heritage Research Center, The Technion-Israel Institute of Technology.

[57] Moshe Leibovitz, interview with the author; "Council Meeting No. 9," July 16, 1991, Yaar collection, Beitar Binder 1, Avie and Sarah Arenson Built Heritage Research Center, The Technion-Israel Institute of Technology.

lamented. They imagined that most residents would have private cars, as was common in other settlements. They thus planned only one bus line connecting Beitar Illit to Jerusalem. The bus made three daily trips: in the morning, afternoon and evening time. But, as Leibovitz recalls, back at the time, few ultra-Orthodox families in Beitar Illit owned a car, and almost everyone commuted to Jerusalem on a daily base. After all, Beitar Illit was small, and lacked basic public services. Making things even worse, government officials refused to offer much-needed low-fare bus tickets to Beitar Illit's disproportionally high number of low-income families.[58] As a result, many found themselves disconnected from Jerusalem.[59]

As for the residential units, even though the Ya'ars and their team tried to accommodate some of the elementary needs of ultra-Orthodox families, they never really consulted with the future residents, and most units were inadequate. Most notably, as Tamar, a draftsperson of ultra-Orthodox faith, explained, the architects failed to account for the exceptionally large ultra-Orthodox family size—nine members, on average.[60] Among the first families that moved in was a family of 17 people.[61] Planned for standard families, the units in the first neighborhood were too small and allowed little space for future expansions. Moreover, the Ya'ars' insistence on designing the living room as a secluded study space for the husband worked against the main purpose of the ultraorthodox living room: accommodating Shabbat dinners for the extended family. As Avishai Meiron, manager of the City Planning Division in Beitar, observed, such dinners require an elongated space leaving enough room for an exceptionally long dining table and easy access to the kitchen.[62] Replacing this space with a study room was unnecessary in the eyes of many of the residents. As one of them explained, the men spend the entire day in the Kollel—a Talmud and rabbinic literature school for married men—so they don't actually need a study space at home.[63]

In addition, the small and rudimentary units discouraged middle-aged and potentially more affluent residents from moving to Beitar Illit. According to Leibovitz, the absence of middle-aged ultra-Orthodox people in the settlement broke important inter-generational support networks that were common among ultra-Orthodox families. Normally, young ultra-Orthodox couples rely on their parents for moral and general guidance. For example, Leibovitz explained, after a young female gets married, she constantly consults her mother, asking how to raise a family, cook, and behave in intimate situations with her husband. "If the [ultra-Orthodox] daughter has a problem with her husband, she wouldn't go to a psychologist," he explained. "She would go and talk to her mother about it."[64] For this reason, many young couples prefer residing near their parents. But planners overlooked this support network, and designed the city with only young couples in mind.[65]

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[58] According to Leibovitz, considering the total amount of money large families had to spend on public transportation, residents were better off renting an apartment in Jerusalem. Leibovitz, interview with the author.
[59] Leibovitz, interview with the author; "Council Meeting No. 9."
[60] Tamar, interview with the author, June 26, 2015; Leibovitz, interview with the author.
[61] Raphael Dankner, interview with the author.
[62] Avishai Meiron (manager of the City Planning Division in Beitar Illit), interview with the author, June 6, 2015.
[63] In fact, the resident explained that he never heard of such a study room among ultra-Orthodox people. David (resident of Beitar Illit), interview with the author, June 10, 2015.
[64] Leibovitz, interview with the author.
[65] In addition, Ya'ar's insisted that a TV antenna be installed on the rooftop of each building. In so doing, he ignored the fact that many ultra-Orthodox rabbis prohibit their followers from watching TV. Residents thus complained about the antennas, and a representative from Ashdar had to contact Ya'ar, asking him to cancel all antennas. See Gluzmann to Yaar and Ovadiya, January 8, 1991.

With overcrowded apartments, inadequate public transportation system, and dysfunctioning public spaces many worried that Beitar Illit, which quickly came to be known as The Projects, was doomed to end up like its older sister—Immanuel.

From Public Participation to Self-Governance

Frustrated with secular planners and the conventional housing programs they drew upon, the leaders of the local ultra-Orthodox community decided to take things into their own hands. Since only the first neighborhood was completed, they focused their efforts on the other ones. With little time at hand, Mayor Moshe Leibovitz scheduled a meeting with Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. Before heading to the meeting, he took the master plan of the city and painted it in black, leaving only public and green spaces in white. The plan, as Leibovitz recounted, was almost entirely black. With this plan at hand, Leibovitz approached Rabin and explained, "I am not going to be part of this mistake the state is about to make. Look at how it all looks here? All looks black! You will place blacks (colloquial name for ultra-Orthodox people in Israel) in black areas, and you will mark the state with black. . . . Where do you think kids could play here? Would you send your grandkids to live here?" When he saw the prime minister laughing, Leibovitz insisted, "Don't laugh, Mr. Prime Minister, they may be Ba'aley Teshuva ['born again Jews'] and live in Beitar."[66] It is hard to imagine Rabin was convinced by the latter argument, but by the end of that meeting the two had agreed that the design must be changed.

Overseeing all design decisions in the following months, Leibovitz and his team of community representatives transformed the Projects.[67] Under their direction, the architects added public buildings and green spaces, subdivided existing ones into smaller plots, and distributed them across the city. In addition, they drew clusters of buildings that enclosed small public courtyards, allowing vehicle-free playgrounds for the disproportionately high number of children residing in the city (Figures 4.21-4.24).[68] Furthermore, they supervised the redesign of the residential units. Apartments in the circumference of these playgrounds were designed with their kitchens facing the courtyard, allowing the moms to watch over their kids playing downstairs while they cooked and breastfed. Accommodating the needs of large families, Leibovitz and his team also insisted that in order to get building permits, architects include plan drawings outlining future additions of at least two rooms for each new unit. To strengthen the city's

[66] Moshe Leibovitz, interview with the author.

[67] Some of these transformations were done in collaboration with Ya'ar's team. On the demand of and Leibovitz and his representatives, for example, the architects updated their plans, adding public spaces as well as public buildings that were allocated to different Hassidic courts. Later, in response to the ever-increasing pressures of the residents, Ya'ar and planners at the Ministry of Housing considered allocating more land plots for synagogues that were to serve specific sub-communities in the city. Leibovitz, however, repeatedly complained that these minor adjustments were not enough. It is not surprising then that other interventions in the settlement's planning and design were done against the protests of Ya'ar and his team. For example, in 1991, the architects complained about the "massive scattering" of temporary public buildings across the city. See Yaar, Yaacov to Adi Shrist (project manager), "Beitar A1 - Changes to Master Plan," May 27, 1991, Yaar collection, Beitar Binder 1, Avie and Sarah Arenson Built Heritage Research Center, The Technion; Aliza Kaviti, "Finding Sites for Synagogues in Beitar-Transcripts of Meeting from December 7, 1992," December 8, 1992, Yaar collection, Beitar Binder 1, Avie and Sarah Arenson Built Heritage Research Center, The Technion-Israel Institute of Technology; "Council Meeting No. 9"; Yaar, Yaacov to David Ovadiya, "Beitar - Supervision Office," April 17, 1991, Yaar collection, Beitar Binder 1, Avie and Sarah Arenson Built Heritage Research Center, The Technion-Israel Institute of Technology.

[68] In the initial design stages, the architects considered arranging the houses around inner courts. However, due to the harsh topographical conditions, they abandoned these plans. See "Permits Committee Meeting from January 18, 1988 at the Ministry of Housing in Jerusalem 2/88 Transcripts."

connection to Jerusalem, they even initiated a low-rate "kosher" transportation system, the first of its kind (Figure 4.25).[69]

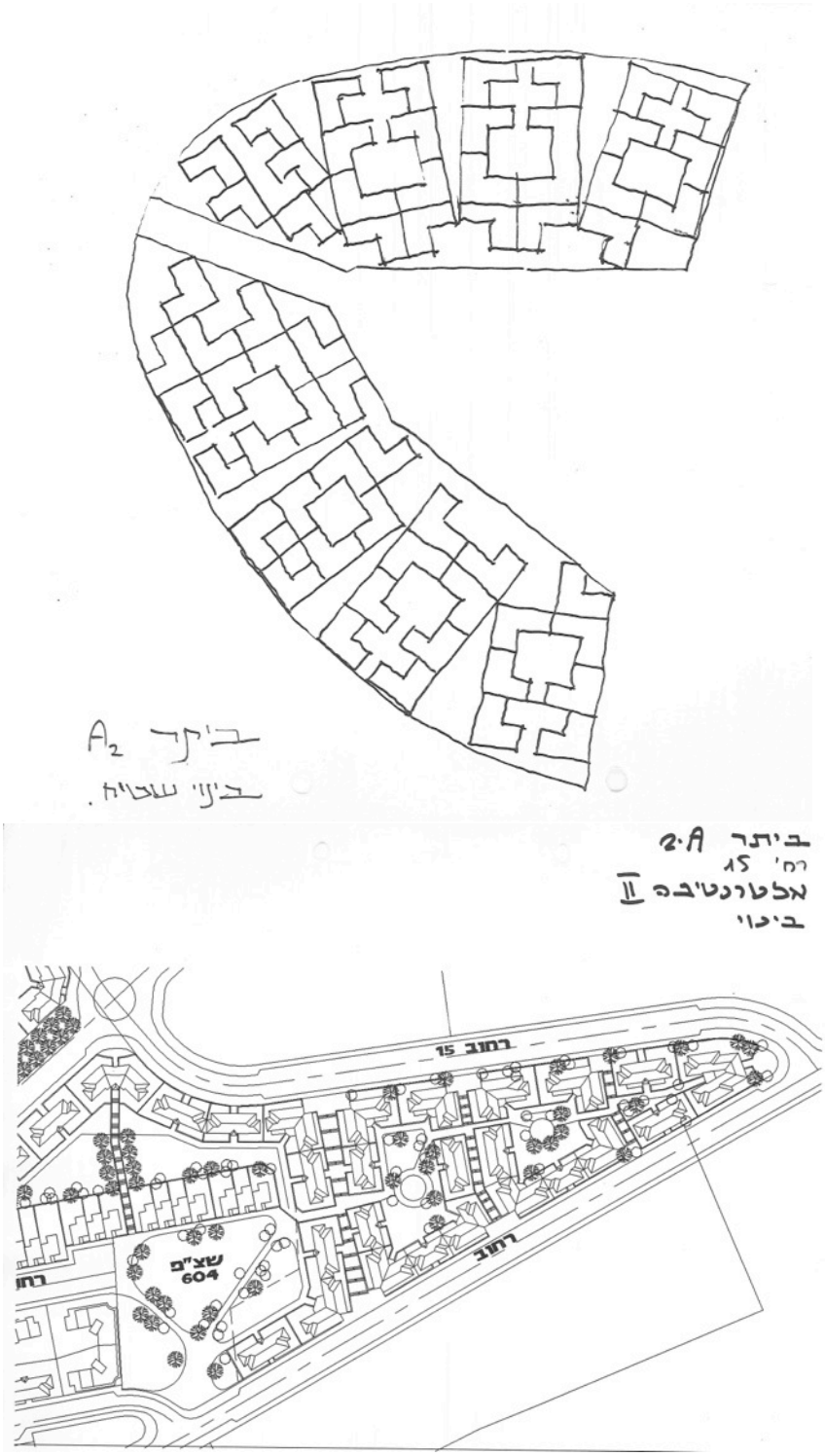

Figure 4.21 Sketches for building clusters that enclose small public courtyards by Ya'acov Ya'ar. September 3, 1993.[70] Source: Yaar, Yaacov to Yair Eshel, September 3, 1993, Yaar collection, Beitar

[69] Leibovitz, interview with the author.

Binder 1, Avie and Sarah Arenson Built Heritage Research Center, The Technion-Israel Institute of Technology.

Figure 4.22 Vehicle free playgrounds in Beitar Illit, Hill B. Photos by author.

Figure 4.23 Vehicle free playgrounds in Modi'in Illit, an ultra-Orthodox city-settlement that followed the design principles of Beitar Illit. Photos by author.

[70] Yaar, Yaacov to Yair Eshel, September 3, 1993, Yaar collection, Beitar Binder 1, Avie and Sarah Arenson Built Heritage Research Center, The Technion-Israel Institute of Technology.

Figure 4.24 Moshe Leibovitz presents alternative plans for Beitar Illit to government officials in 1995. Dotted with small public buildings and numerous vehicle-free playgrounds, the plans aimed at accommodating the special needs of ultra-Orthodox families. Source: Moshe Leibovitz's private collection.

Figure 4.25 Moshe Leibovitz launches Beitar Tours Ltd—the first "kosher" bus company, providing fast, cheap, and gender-segregated transportation lines from Beitar Illit to Jerusalem and other urban centers in Israel. Source: Moshe Leibovitz's private collection.

Over time, other design ideas were conceived so as to better serve the residents. For example, many multi-story buildings were designed with two main facades: a flat one facing the main street, and a cascading one facing the surrounding landscape. The latter allowed exceptionally large balconies needed for *Sukkot* holiday. In addition, ramps were installed across the city, accommodating the movement of baby strollers—the main means of transportation in Beitar Illit.

According to Leibovitz, Ya'acov Ya'ar and his son, architect Aviv Ya'ar, as well as officials at the Ministry of Housing have all opposed some of these initiatives. Many of his demands seemed "hallucinatory" to them. "These were serious wars I had with the architects," Leibovtiz explained. "We screamed at each other. Screams that reached the sky." At one point he even kicked Ministry of Housing planners out of his office, and blocked construction projects he deemed inadequate.[71] It was through such "wars" that Leibovitz and his supporters achieved control over the design of Beitar Illit.

The residents, in turn, also helped transform the city. Instead of the commercial spaces the architects crafted for them on the ground floor, they opened small stores in private apartments, usually in one of the bedrooms, or other, more informal spaces like the building's staircase and corridors (Figures 4.26-4.28). These stores are illegal. Nevertheless, the law prohibiting commercial spaces in residential buildings has rarely been enforced in Beitar Illit, and many storeowners have even decorated their balconies with billboards advertising their products (Figure 4.28).[72] The manager of the City Planning Division of Modi'in Illit, an ultra-Orthodox city-settlement that was built a few of years after Beitar Illit, recently issued a new ordinance, allowing residents to use parts of their units for commercial uses.[73] It is reasonable to assume that Beitar Illit would do the same in the near future. In the same fashion, different sub-communities in Beitar Illit had opened small synagogues and other public facilities in portable structures and private apartments.[74]

[71] Ibid.
[72] Meiron, interview with the author.
[73] Sarit Tzolshein (manager of the City Planning Division in Modi'in Illit), interview with the author, June 10, 2015.
[74] Today, across Beitar Illit, one can find more than two separate synagogues—catering to different sects—built on one land plot. Meiron, interview with the author.

Figure 4.26 Menswear store at a building's staircase. Photo by the author.

Figure 4.27 Informal toy store occupying one of the bedrooms of a residential unit. Photo by the author.

Figure 4.28 A sign directing potential clients to a store that sells toys and yarmulkes, and provides fax and photocopying services and is located inside of a private unit. Photo by the author.

Moreover, in order to adjust the overcrowded apartments built in the first neighborhood, a number of ultra-Orthodox wives, most with a two-year diploma in architectural engineering, had overseen the expansion of almost all units (Figure 4.29).[75] "Those who don't get a building addition get fined here," one of them laughed when describing the high volume of work she has overseen in Beitar Illit.[76] The experience they gained in the first years encouraged many others to acquire professional skills, and today some of them occupy leading roles in the city. In Modi'in Illit the manager of the City Planning Division and her entire stuff are ultra-Orthodox wives. The division's manager also teaches young ultra-Orthodox wives architectural drafting at a community college in Jerusalem.[77] Meanwhile in Beitar Illit some ultra-Orthodox wives are involved in the design of a new industrial zone, intended to create new employment opportunities. According to Meiron, who oversees the planning of the industrial area, it is the first

[75] Reizi (a young ultra-Orthodox female designer working in Beitar Illit), interview with the author, June 18, 2015. Also, Tamar, interview with the author. It is interesting to note that in February 1993, Beitar Illit officials contacted Ya'ar, asking him to give them the permission to allocate building expansion plans to planners other than himself. Ya'ar refused. Nevertheless, their correspondence seemed to have ended shortly after. In fact, Yaar's letter proposing his services for the task remained unanswered. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that city officials found a way to ignore Ya'ar's initial refusal, and work with other people. See Eli Aziza to Yaar Architects, "Expansion Plans - Beitar Illit," February 28, 1993, Yaar collection, Beitar Binder 1, Avie and Sarah Arenson Built Heritage Research Center, The Technion; Yaacov Yaar to Eli Aziza, "Beitar - Housing Expansions," March 2, 1993, Yaar collection, Beitar Binder 1, Avie and Sarah Arenson Built Heritage Research Center, The Technion; Yaar, Yaacov to Eli Aziza, "Planning Housing Expansion in Beita"r - Communications Proposal," June 21, 1993, Yaar collection, Beitar Binder 1, Avie and Sarah Arenson Built Heritage Research Center, The Technion.

[76] Reizi, interview with the author. According to the local newspaper of Kore Bebeitar, just between 2008 and 2009 the City Planning Division had approved some 200 building additions with a total area of some 10,000 sq. m. *Kore BeBeitar*, Jan. 24, 2011, 5.

[77] Sarit Tzolshein (manager of the City Planning Division in Modi'in Illit), interview with the author, June 10, 2015.

industrial area that was ever planned exclusively for ultra-Orthodox females, with all the needed services.[78]

Figure 4.29 Building additions in Beitar Illit. Additions highlighted in white. Beitar Illit, 2015. Photographs by author.

[78] Meiron, interview with the author. Work on the industrial began already in the early 2000s. According to an article from Zo Irenu, it was one of Leibovich's initiatives. See "Nehtam Hoze Lehakamt Eizor Hataasiya Harishon Bebeitar Illit," *Zo Irenu*, November 9, 2003; "Hayar Haangli Huhnas Lethum Hashiput Hamoniciplay Shel Beitar Illit," *Zo Irenu*, February 23, 2006.

Figure 4.30 Staircase space in Beitar Illit. Those lacking the means to renovate and expand their apartments have often extended their units towards the staircase. They have placed wardrobes and cabinets in the space leading to their apartments. Many also use the shared spaces of the building as storage space for baby strollers and bicycles. Photo by the author.

In newer neighborhoods, community representatives have had a greater influence on the planning and maintenance of the settlement. For example, in 2003, they scattered more than 20 synagogues in one neighborhood.[79] The previous year, they allocated 34 land plots for new synagogues across the city.[80] At around the same time, leading rabbis decided to close off the gates of the settlement on Saturdays. In so doing, they precluded the entrance of outsiders, who didn't observe Shabbat, and disturbed the Shabbat-observing residents. In addition, to ensure the well being of the faithful settlers, they prohibited anyone from using cars inside the settlement during Saturdays.[81]

Over time, these spatial tactics have evolved into new forms of self-governance and management. Suspicious of secular planners working at the Ministry of Housing, Beitar's residents founded a number of community organizations that took over many of the ministry's responsibilities. Most notably, shortly after the first residents moved in, they founded an informal "Populating Committee." The committee, comprised of rabbis and community representatives, was mainly in charge of securing the religious nature of the settlement. Among its various activities, it enforced new property laws, requiring all potential homebuyers and renters to submit an application specifying their religious affiliation and family status. In addition, the committee initiated an unofficial call center

[79] To ease the costs and save construction time, many of the synagogues were housed in portables. "Pahot Mishana Mehaihlus: Lemaala Meesrim Batei Knesset Beshchunat Hagefen," *Zo Irenu*, May 13, 2003.
[80] "Ushru Haktzaot Veshiryunim Shel Kehamishim Karkaot Berahvei Hair Lehakamt Batei Knesset Vemosdot Hinuh," *Zo Irenu*, September 19, 2002.
[81] "Likrat Shabbat Lehu Vanelha: Behoraat Raboteinu Mari Deatara Shalit"a: Shearei Haknisa Lebietar Illit Yinaalu Beyemei Vav' 40 Dakot Lifnei Hashkiaa," *Zo Irenu*, December 29, 2002.

for residents' complaints about "spiritual hazards," and a plethora of community-based charity funds.[82]

The Tyranny of the Users

Within just a few years, the Populating Committee and other informal groups had gained a significant amount of power, yet some of their activities transformed the city in unexpected ways. For instance, the Populating Committee has been accused of applying discriminatory practices, favoring applicants from certain rabbinic dynasties or ethnic backgrounds over others. In addition, after gaining control over the city's building laws and real estate market, the committee gave unofficial, disproportionately generous building permits to several individuals. Their decisions were based on an arbitrary logic, and more often than not these permits were given at the expense of open public spaces or other individuals. A young couple, for example, complained to me that a grocery store in their building received an unofficial permit to extend their store, stretching over what is officially public space.[83] Making things all the more complex, the identities of Populating Committee members are kept secret and remain unknown to residents. Equally unexpected was the establishment of an informal police force, run by another residents group, that had been patrolling the city and penalizing residents who did not follow the city's unofficial laws. Among these were females caught wearing jeans or other clothing items that did not adhere to a strict dress code, men who associated with unmarried females, and those who used the wrong entrance to the bus (men at the front; women at the back).[84] To ensure female's adherence to the ultra-Orthodox dress code, a "Female Rabbis Committee," in charged of surveying all clothing stores in Beitar Illit, was also founded. Among the many rules they have enforced was a clear prohibition of red, pink, and orange dresses, or any other clothing item with "loud or flashy patterns."[85]

It didn't take long before these residents' organizations had extended their reach and enforced rules that applied to the private sphere. For instance, a special committee took it on itself to make sure residents did not have TV sets or Internet connection in their homes. Since enforcing this rule required access to all units in Beitar Illit, a task beyond the committee members' reach, they circulated leaflets that encouraged residents to report any suspicious satellite dishes their neighbors might have installed, or unwarranted TV sets they had noticed.[86] Residents who felt uncomfortable with these laws developed tactics that afforded them some freedom. For example, some have succeeded installing Internet connection in their homes without being reported. In Modi'in Illit, where relatively similar laws have been applied, a few have hosted martial arts classes, which

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[82] Avishai Ben-Haim, "Haredi to Their City," *Ma'ariv*, July 9, 2007, 16.

[83] Tamar and Avi (residents of Beitar Illit), interview with the author, June 26, 2015. In general, it seems like city officials have no power over such occupations of space. In a survey conducted by Geo-Cartography in 2007, some 90 percent of the residents complained, saying city officials must intervene and fine those who ignore the official law or use unofficial permits. See "Haskama Gorefet BekerevToshvei Hair Sheyesh Lifol Keneged Harigot Bniya," *Zo Irenu*, March 22, 2007.

[84] Akiva Peled, "This Is How the Modesty Patrol Worked," *Kooker*, May 22, 2013, http://www.kooker.co.il/הצניעות-משמרת-פעלה-כך/ and ,'Yossef Pe'er, "Police Statement: Investigation of Rubinstein and the Modesty Patrols Will Continue," *Kikar HaShabat*, February 18, 2013, http://www.kikar.co.il/רובינשטיין-חקירת-המשטרה- ",html; "To the Cautious, and the One Warning.תימשך *Kore BeBeitar Journal* 1 (2008): 6. For a discussion of the "Kosher" bus lines and the strict rules that applied to them, see "Hitanyenut Goveret Berikuzim Harediyim Im Hafaalat Hatahbura Hatziburit Bebeitar Illit Bematkonet Melea Shel 'Mehdrin,'" *Kore BeBeitar*, March 13, 2008; "Hahel Miyom A Hakarov: Hatahbura Hatziburit Tufal Bematkonet Mehadrin Melea," *Kore BeBeitar*, February 5, 2008.

[85] Akiva Novik and Yaron Doron, "Mishmarot Tzniut Behasut Hairiya," *Yediot Aharonot*, February 19, 2013. Also, see general comments on clothing stores and dress codes made by leading rabbis in Beitar Illit in "Hahlatot Hakinus: Hukreu Al Yedei Hever Habadatz Hagaratz Braverman Shalit"a," *Zo Irenu*, February 7, 2007.

[86] Ben-Haim, "Haredi to Their City," 16.

were prohibited in public space in their private apartments.[87] But these are rare, and those found violating such city laws are likely to be deprived of elementary public services and become the subject of public condemnation.[88] According to news reports, some were even imprisoned or violently attacked by agents working for the city's informal police forces.[89] As a young resident of Modi'in Illit explained to me, "you have to be very careful here…if you don't strictly follow their norms, they would simply cancel you."[90] Therefore, while many residents have found these committees favorable, allowing them to adhere to Jewish laws in their strictest form, some view them as oppressive and exclusionary.

Neither the residents who found themselves disempowered by these groups nor officials at the Ministry of Housing have been able to balance the committees' increasing influence. For example, in 2007, following multiple resident complaints, the Ministry of Housing attempted to end the committees' unlawful activity. After all, not only did the committee members apply discriminatory measures in allocating apartments to certain groups, but these apartments were the property of the Ministry of Housing. Since committee members' identities were unknown and direct contact with them was impossible, Ministry of Housing officials decided to circulate a warning message, underlining the illegality of the committee and its land laws. However, residents and local newspapers refused to collaborate and did not publish the message, and it remained unnoticed. When asked for his assistance, the former mayor of Beitar Illit admitted he had no control over the Populating Committee.[91] In fact, when his deputy submitted an application for a new apartment to the Populating Committee, it was rejected.[92]

Furthermore, while those who did not obey the city laws of Beitar Illit or did not belong to the right rabbinic court were unwelcome, the Palestinian residents of neighboring villages were subjected to greater offenses. Even though many residents of Beitar Illit do not identify with the settlers' movement, and some even think that Beitar Illit is not really a settlement,[93] it is hard to ignore the fact that Beitar sits on lands that were confiscated and declared "state lands"[94] despite the protests of native Palestinians.[95]

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[87] Israel (resident of Modi'in Illit, second ultra-Orthodox city-settlement built after Beitar Illit), interview with the author, June 21, 2015.

[88] For example, parents who failed to follow the city's modesty codes encountered trouble when registering their kids to school. To their disappointment, however, there was little they could do about it. According to an ordinance issued by a number of leading rabbis "Those who do not align with the orders of the great rabbis of our times have no right to demand having their kids accepted to schools in the city." See "Hahlatot Hakinus: Hukreu Al Yedei Hever Habadatz Hagaratz Braverman Shalit"a."

[89] Novik and Doron, "Mishmarot Tzniut Behasut Hairiya"; Novik, "Ir Ktana Veyeladim Ba Harbe."

[90] Israel, interview with the author.

[91] Ben-Haim, "Haredi to Their City."

[92] Tamar Rotem, "You Shall Not Live Here," *Haaretz*, February 8, 2008, Hashavua.

[93] For example, when I interviewed Yigal, a resident of Beitar Illit, he insisted that only half of Beitar Illit—hill A—is located in the West Bank, outside the internationally recognized borders of Israel. Yigal (Beitar Illit resident), conversation with the author, June 8, 2015 and July 16, 2015. In the same fashion, when I asked one of the residents of Modi'in Illit how did he and other residents feel about living beyond the Green Line, he dismissed my question. Even though, unlike the resident of Beitar Illit, he was well aware of Modi'in Illit's location in the West Bank, he thought it still he thought it had no bearing on the settlement. "What are you talking about? I have lived here for so many years and I have never heard anyone even talking about this," he replied. Israel, interview with the author.

[94] Taking advantage of Ottoman land laws that were never revoked in the West Bank, the Israeli government gained the right to confiscate for public use lands that had not been cultivated over the period of at least three years. These lands are officially designated "state lands." According to Talia Sasson, former head of the State Prosecution Criminal Department, since 1979 the practice of declaring uncultivated lands "state lands" in the West Bank has become an unfair mechanism that facilitates the construction and expansion of new and existing settlements. She argues that the mapping of these lands and their allocation to certain groups were ill-conceived and suffered from severe inaccuracies. For example, she recalls hearing the head of the Civil Administration admitting that about 30 percent of all "state lands" in the West Bank were mistakenly registered as such. In addition, she recalls, by 2013, while 37 percent of these "state lands" were allocated to settlers, only 0.7 percent were given to Palestinians. See Talia Sasson, *At the Edge of the Abyss* (Jerusalem: Keter, 2015), 113-25.

It is also hard to ignore the numerous military watchtowers and checkpoints erected in its vicinity. Built in order to secure the uninterrupted daily activities of the residents of Beitar Illit, they have severely limited the mobility of the Palestinians and subjected them to occasional security checks.[96] Although military officials and politicians ordered these measures, it was the residents of Beitar Illit who pressured for them and, later, oversaw their execution (Figure 4.31).

Figure 4.31 Ministry of Housing officials and representatives of the ultra-Orthodox community pose for a picture by a new tunnel road that goes underneath the Palestinian town of Beit Jala.

In fact, the benign attitude of the residents of Beitar Illit towards their Palestinian neighbors changed over time. Initially, as anti-Zionist residents of the West Bank, the settlers had frequently visited the nearby Palestinian town of Husan, where they did most of their shopping. "It was the downtown of Beitar Illit," one resident recalled.[97] They even signed multiple peace agreements with the residents of the neighboring Palestinian villages. "We the sons of Abraham" were the words that opened most of these agreements, which aimed at suppressing stone-throwing attacks on passing cars and, in some cases, ordered the channeling of electricity and water from Beitar Illit to its

[95] In June 1983, the Palestinian residents of Hussan submitted an appeal against the commissioner of government property, arguing some of the lands allocated to the future settlement were privately owned. According to their appeal, about four thousand *dunams* were confiscated from the residents of Hussan, Nahalin, and Wadi Fukin. After deliberation by the court, however, the appeal was dismissed on January 9, 1985. A few years later, when work on Beitar Illit were in full swing, it was reported that Palestinians from the nearby villages and towns were uprooting trees planted at the outskirts of the city, blocking roads leading to the construction site, and throwing stones at workers for the Jewish National Fund. See Mahmud Hayun, *Ali Shvahin et al. v. Commissioner of Government Property*, 23/83-ערר (VA, 1985); Joe Rosenberg, "Beitar—an Urban Settlement in Etzion Block," January 21, 1985, folder 46701- ,גל Israel State Archives; Nathan Sass to Shlomo Ariav, June 14, 1987, and Sass to Mordechei Roh, March 2, 1989, folder KKL5/64425, Central Zionist Archives.

[96] For example, journalist Amira Hass describes, how in December 1999, a new military checkpoint was erected next to Hussan, limiting the access of Palestinians to the local commercial center. According to Hass, some of the residents of Beitar were encouraging the soldiers and construction workers while the checkpoint was being erected. Amira Hass, "All of a Sudden, the Green Line Got Closer to Hussan," *Haaretz*, February 19, 2000, B3.

[97] Tamar, interview with the author.

neighbors.[98] In 1994, Leibovitz took these initiatives a step forward and collaborated with Jordanian officials on a daily helicopter line that was to connect Beitar Illit with Wadi Moussa in Jordan. According to the belief, biblical Aaron is buried in Wadi Moussa. Leibovitz imagined residents of Beitar Illit would flock the pilgrimage site.[99] But as political tensions grew, these agreements were increasingly cast aside and forgotten (Figure 4.32). In the same fashion, the settlers stopped attending Husan. Life in the West Bank seems to have hardened the views of the ultra-Orthodox community, and in recent years they have become more directly involved in actions common in other settlements. For example, at times of political tension in 2015, the residents of Beitar Illit decided to expel all the Palestinian day laborers working at the city's numerous construction sites.

Figure 4.32 Prayer/protest that took place after a Palestinian attack against the settlers of Beitar Illit. Such attacks have hardened the views of the residents of Beitar Illit, pushing them towards the Right.

Conclusion

Such activities on the part of the residents make it hard to assess Beitar Illit. On the one hand, they attest to a success story, a story of a weak and stigmatized public that, against all odds, managed to transform a poorly planned public housing project and adapt it to its unique needs. And indeed, in surveys, the majority of the residents have expressed their unambiguous satisfaction with Beitar Illit. In 2005, 80 percent of the residents indicated they were very much satisfied with the living quality in Beitar Illit.[100] In the following

[98] Offer Petersburg, "Yalla Beitar Yalla," *Ma'ariv*, August 30, 1994, Business, 10; Koby Blich, "Alilot Moshe Ba'ir Haktana," *Ma'ariv Hayom*, May 23, 1995, 16; Avirama Golan, "They Will Bring a Sheep, We Will Bring a Butcher," *Haaretz*, November 13, 1994, B2.
[99] Koby Blich, "Alilot Moshe Ba'ir Haktana," *Ma'ariv Hayom*, May 23, 1995, 16.
[100] "Seker Geocartographia: 80% Mitoshvei Beitar Illit Sveei Ratzon Bemida Raba ad Raba Meod Min Hamegurim Bebeitar," *Zo Irenu*, July 14, 2005.

year, 79 percent of the settlers of Beitar Illit expressed satisfaction with their housing conditions and the municipal services available in the city.[101] The city has also won numerous awards for its beauty and design.[102] In fact, it proved to be so successful that it came to form a model, an urban type that was replicated elsewhere, both in the West Bank and in Israel. But, on the other hand, it is hard to ignore the darker side of the techniques the residents of Beitar Illit employed in order to appropriate the Projects, techniques that proved to be oppressive toward others.

The double-sided nature of these practices complicates recent accounts that prioritize bottom-up design processes. Following Michel de Certeau's notion of "tactics" and the ideas developed by Henri Lefebvre in *The Production of Space*, many works in the fields of architectural history and urban studies have highlighted the ways in which the user, through ephemeral everyday practices or permanent design interventions "from below," is able to coauthor the built environment.[103] Astutely, these accounts show how, in places like Sao Paulo, Los Angeles, or Stockholm, the practices of the user facilitate the fight of subaltern groups over their right to the city, which, in turn, endows them with a sense of active citizenship. Common to almost all of these accounts is the understanding that these practices make space more inclusive. In Beitar Illit, however, the everyday practices of the users promoted the creation of spaces of exclusion. The right to transform the city afforded an imaginary of autonomous space where basic social contracts between men are ignored. As such, the case of Beitar Illit reminds us that the user can also be an active participant in the engendering of spatial domination in ways that may counter his disadvantaged position.

The emergence of the tyranny of the users in Beitar Illit also highlights the gap between *intention* and *practice* in the design of West Bank settlements. It points towards a chain of mistakes, a process unforeseen by its founders that resulted in paradoxical outcomes: anti-Zionist settlers, architects crafting a Palestinian village lookalike city-settlement or model one after a medieval town for ultra-Orthodox users, and a public housing project over which the government lost control. To this end, more than any other settlement type, the ultra-Orthodox city-settlement make it difficult to interpret settlements design as the outcome of a clear political ideology, as war machinery, or panoptic mechanisms, as suggested by other scholars like Eyal Weizman.[104] For, as Michel Foucault explains, architecture can serve such ends only if the intentions of the architects coincide with the practices of the users.[105]

Regardless of the tensions between design professionals and the users, the number of ultra-Orthodox settlers in the West Bank has continued to grow rapidly in the

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[101] "Rov Toshvei Beitar Illit Svei Ratzon Mehamegurim Bair, Mehasherutim Haironiim Vemetifkud Hairiya Bihlal," *Zo Irenu*, October 5, 2006.

[102] For example, in 2002, Beitar Illit won the same award and title. See "Beitar Illit Zachta Behamisha Kohavey Yofi Mehamoatza Leisrael Yaffa," *Zo Irenu*, December 15, 2002. In 2003 the city won "five stars" in a national competition organized by the Council for a Beautiful Israel, which also crowned it "The Prettiest Ultra-Orthodox City." See "Beitar Illit Won Five Stars and Enjoys the Title: The Prettiest Ultra-Orthodox City," *Zo Irenu*, December 11, 2003, 3. Three years later, Beitar Illit won a "Golden Star" for having won "five stars" in the Council's competition. "Beitar Illit-Hair Haharedit Harishona Shezoha Be'Kohav Hazahav' Shel 'Hamoatza Leyisrael Yaffa,'" *Zo Irenu*, January 4, 2007.

[103] For examples, see John Chase, Margaret Crawford, John Kaliski, eds., *Everyday Urbanism* (New York: Monacelli Press, 1999); James Holston, *Insurgent Citizenship* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009); Teresa P. R. Caldeira, *City of Walls: Crime, Segregation, and Citizenship in Sao Paulo* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001); and Jennifer Mack, "New Swedes in the New Town," in *Use Matters: An Alternative History of Architecture*, ed. Kenny Cupers (London: Routledge, 2013).

[104] See Eyal Weizman, *Hollow Land: The Architecture of the Israeli Occupation* (London: Verso, 2007).

[105] Michel Foucault, "Space, Knowledge, and Power," interview by Paul Rabinow, in *Architecture Theory since 1968*, ed. K. Michael Hays (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2000), 433-34.

following years. In 2016, there were some 51,600 residents in Beitar Illit, and 66,800 in Modi'in Illit.[106] These two cities are the largest settlements in the West Bank. Today, ultra-Orthodox people constitute about one third of the total population of West Bank settlers. In 2015, some 40% of all new settlers—15,523 in total—were babies that were born to ultra-Orthodox settler families.[107]

The growth of the ultra-Orthodox population in the West Bank, however, is limited to city-settlements that were founded by the mid-1990s. The Israeli government stopped authorizing new settlements in the West Bank after signing the Oslo Accords in 1993 and 1995.[108] As a result, no new ultra-Orthodox city-settlements have been built over the last two decades. In their place, small, unauthorized settlements—developed by much younger, and far less conservative Israelis—have emerged, setting the new vanguard of settlement construction.

[106] Data taken from the National Insurance Institute of Israel's website. See "Statistics for Beitar Illit" (National Insurance Institute of Israel, December 1, 2016), https://www.btl.gov.il/mediniyut/situation/statistics/btlstatistics.aspx?type=1&id=3780; "Statistics for Modi'in Illit" (National Insurance Institute of Israel, December 1, 2016), https://www.btl.gov.il/mediniyut/situation/statistics/btlstatistics.aspx?type=1&id=3780.
[107] Shaul Arieli, "Mifal Hahitnahaluyot Nihshal," *Haaretz*, June 16, 2016, https://www.haaretz.co.il/opinions/.premium-1.2977962.
[108] I discuss the Oslo Accords at length in the next chapter of this dissertation.

Chapter Five: Formalizing the Informal

Figure 5.1 Builder in the outpost of Pnei Kedem. Photo by the author.

The settlement project underwent a major change in the early 1990s. In 1992, Yizhak Rabin won the elections and formed a left-leaning government. As Idith Zertal and Akiva Eldar have explained, it was the first government since 1977 without a single supporter of the settlement movement.[1] Within a year, Rabin and his ministers had significantly reduced government support to existing settlements, and, at least officially, paused all plans for new ones.[2] In 1993, government officials embarked on initial peace negotiations with the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). These negotiations culminated in the Oslo Accords that were signed in 1993 and 1995.[3] Setting a roadmap for a future peace agreement between the two people, the Oslo Accords created the Palestinian Authority and announced the withdrawal of Israel from the Gaza Strip and Jericho. Even though the exact geographic borders of the Palestinian Authority and the faith of most Jewish settlements were not outlined in the accords, settlers would find it increasingly difficult to get building permits for projects in the West Bank. By the mid 1990s, the Israeli government would stop authorizing new West Bank settlements altogether. Some settlement activists began worrying the settlement project had reached its end.

These fears, however, would prove wrong in just a couple of years. As former senior attorney in the Justice Ministry Talia Sasson revealed in a report commissioned by former Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in 2004, some 105 settlements were erected in the West Bank between the mid 1990s and 2005.[4] These settlements, Sasson highlighted, were not neighborhoods adjacent to existing settlements where construction had continued anyway; they were new and autonomous settlements.[5] Yet, unlike older settlements, the latter ones were built without the official support of the Israeli government.[6] None were founded according to a government decision, and almost all failed to achieve government authorization retroactively. In addition, they all lacked an approved master plan with detailed planning documents.[7] All were built illegally, and accordingly, they came to be known as "unauthorized outposts" [ma'achazim bilti murshim or just "ma'achazim" meaning holders].

Illegal as they may be, only few of these unauthorized outposts have faced demolition orders and legal proceedings in the last two decades. As an attorney at the Civil Administration—the governing body that operates in the West Bank— explained to me, the Israeli government is not so keen on evacuating outposts. Some ministers, he explained, support the settlement ideology, and would oppose the destruction of any settlement, legal or illegal. Others, who may not be committed to the settlement process, do whatever they can in order to avoid issuing demolition orders that may decrease their

[1] Idith Zertal and Akiva Eldar, *Lords of the Land: The War over Israel's Settlements in the Occupied Territories: 1967-2007* (New York: Nation Books, 2007), 129.
[2] According to the agreements, work on all master plans that hadn't been approved would be stopped. There was, however, an "exempt committee" that had the power to promote certain plans. Akiva Eldar and Idith Zartal, *Adonei Haaretz: Hamitnahalim Vemedinat Yisrael 1967-2004* (Or Yehuda: Kineret, 2004), 176–78; Haggai Hoberman, *Ke-Neged Kol Ha-Sikuyim : 40 Shenot Ha-Hityashvut Bi-Yehudah Ṿe-Shomron, Binyamin Ṿeha-Biḳ'ah, 727-767* (Ariel: Sifriyat Netsarim, 2008), 255.
[3] The first part of the Oslo accords was signed in 1993 in the White House. The second part was signed in 1995 in Taba.
[4] Sasson's report was submitted only in 2005. By 2008, according to the political geographer Erez Tzfadia, there were 132 outposts. Erez Tzfadia, "Informality as Control: The Legal Geography of Colonization of the West Bank," in *Cities to Be Tamed?: Spatial Investigations across the Urban South*, ed. Francesco Chiodelli, Beatrice De Carli, and Maddalena Falletti (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), 200.
[5] Talia Sasson, *'Al Pi Tehom: Ha-Im Nitsaḥon Ha-Hitnaḥaluyot Hu Sofah Shel Ha-Demoḳratyah Ha-Yiśre'elit? = On the Brink of the Abyss: Is the Triumph of the Settlements the End of Israeli Democracy?* (Yerushalayim: Ḳeter, 2015), 41.
[6] Talia Sasson, "Havat Daat (Beynayim) Benose Maahazim Bilti Hukiyim" (Office of the Prime Minister, 2005), 19, http://www.pmo.gov.il/SiteCollectionDocuments/PMO/Communication/Spokesman/sason2.pdf.
[7] Sasson, 21.

popularity among rightist Israelis. But, he said, neither side has the audacity to legalize these outposts. Such an act would be likely to instigate an international reaction few Israeli politicians are willing to risk. In addition, since some outposts were built on privately owned Palestinian lands, legalizing them would pose great difficulties for the Israeli Supreme Court. Given these circumstances, as the attorney put it, "outposts are in a legal limbo," and their illegality may not be as fatal as it may seem at first sight.[8]

Accordingly, even though the government cannot allocate public funds to the planning and maintenance of outposts, support from the state reaches them indirectly through various channels. For example, according to Sasson's report, outposts received money from regional councils in the West Bank, and the Settlement Department at the Jewish Agency – both of which are funded by the government. In some cases, Sasson reveals, outposts even enjoyed the direct support of the Ministry of Housing.[9] Thanks to these informal funding networks, many outposts have developed into almost fully functioning settlements. Nevertheless, unauthorized outposts are unlike previous settlements. They present us with a new settlement model.

In this chapter I trace the development of unauthorized outposts over the last two decades. I begin by reviewing the emergence of a new species of settlers who build and reside in unauthorized outposts. I then move on to my main case study—Pnei Kedem, an unauthorized outpost located some 20 miles south of Jerusalem. Founded in 2001, today it houses some 50 families. Through the story of Pnei Kedem, I highlight some of the design processes common in most outposts built after the mid 1990s. Among these are the retreat of professional planners, the rise of participatory design, and the emergence of a new aesthetic language that incorporates a strange combination of American counterculture architecture with Jewish symbolism. I close this chapter with reflections on the power of self-taught architects and their impact on the occupation and the settlement project in the present.

In chronicling the evolution of Pnei Kedem I aim to complicate existing accounts that depict outpost residents as radical and dangerous. In addition, I wish to investigate alternative planning models outpost residents have developed. These models are based on majority vote. Often, however, they fail to achieve control, leaving the design of outposts to competing individual initiatives. In this chapter I examine a number of plans residents proposed for Pnei Kedem and reflect on the ways by which they negotiated them with their fellow settlers and official planning institutes.

A New Generation of Settlers

According to most media accounts, a large portion of the people residing in unauthorized outposts are young, recalcitrant, blood-thirsty rightists, whose ideology seems troubling even compared to their predecessors who founded the first settlements in the aftermath of the Six-Day War. These accounts are bolstered by terror attacks against Palestinian civilians carried out by youth groups, known as Youth of the Hills, that came to be associated with outposts. Occasional clashes between outposts' residents and police

[8] Eyal, interview with the author. Also see Elisha Efrat, *Ge'ografyah Shel Kibush*, Temunat Matsav (Yerushalayim: Karmel, 2002), 50. Political geographer Erez Tzfadia argues that informality has come to operate as a tool serving Israel's "ethno-national" project of territorial control. See Tzfadia, "Informality as Control: The Legal Geography of Colonization of the West Bank."

[9] As I was going through archival material with classified materials, I learned the Ministry of Housing, the regional Council of Gush Etzion and the Settlement Department had all supported the outpost of Pnei Kedem at various points in the history. See "Sikum Mosadot Shetomhim Beyeshuv Pnei Kedem," September 24, 2001, Pnei Kedem Archive, Pnei Kedem. For a more comprehensive discussion of the matter, see Sasson, *'Al Pi Tehom*.

forces that usually facilitate home demolitions have further worsened the reputation of outposts' dwellers among the general public. The most notorious incident in recent years was a clash between military officers and a few thousand activists, who came to protest the demolition of nine structures in the outpost of Amona in 2006. Resulting in hundreds of injured protestors and security personnel, the clash was exceptionally violent. For many, it confirmed what they always suspected: young, unpredictable, and unmoved by state authorities, outpost residents were the worst of settler society, if not Israeli society altogether.

To my surprise, however, when I began making visits to outposts, and later, resided in the outpost of Pnei Kedem, I encountered relatively ordinary people. There were usually no more than 40 families in each outpost. Most of them were young couples in their twenties or thirties with more than three kids. Usually they observed Judaism and were associated with the national-religious faction. Many of the women I met worked as schoolteachers or social workers. The men seemed to have more diverse career paths; some worked as lawyers, computer programmers, construction workers, or real estate agents in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, while others opened small businesses, such as restaurants, vineyards and wineries, inside outposts or nearby commercial centers.

Many of the people I met were second generation settlers. Having grown up in the West Bank, it was only natural for them to remain close to their parents. In addition, many imagined the illegality of their outpost was temporary. After all, many explained to me, some of the settlements their parents had erected just a couple of decades ago, such as Ofra or Kedumim, also started as quasi-legal encampments.[10] And, in fact, some insisted, the history of settlement planning in Israel, especially under the British Mandate, was a history of illegal construction.[11] Altogether, illegality didn't feel so exotic for them.[12]

More importantly, though, a house in an outpost was the best many of them could have afforded. Real estate in older and more established settlements, I was told, had become relatively expensive, and beyond their means. Coming from religious families, they usually had more than three siblings, so couldn't rely on the support of their parents when buying a home. In addition, since they themselves usually had a few kids, they needed large homes with at least three bedrooms.[13] Outposts offered them an easy solution. Sold by residents' unions, without much intervention from the regional council, land is very cheap in outposts. In the outpost of Pnei Kedem, for example, half a dunam goes for about $10,000. For the same plot in an established settlement, they would pay at least $50,000. In addition, construction is relatively cheap in outposts. Many hire Palestinian contractors, who pay their employees very low salaries, below the minimum wage in Israel, and avoid state taxes. Under these conditions, buying a home in an outpost becomes a wise investment, even at the risk of getting a demolition order.[14]

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[10] Even though very few of these older settlements were actually illegal according to the Israeli law, and none remained illegal for more than a couple of years, they created an ethos of illegality.

[11] Hila (resident of Pnei Kedem), conversation with author, September 30, 2015; interview with David (resident of Maale Rechavam), interview with the author, October 16, 2015.

[12] Ehud Shprinzak wrote about the phenomenon of illegality in Israel and referred to West Bank settlement, already before unauthorized outposts had emerged. See Ehud Sprinzak, *Ish Ha-Yashar Be-'enay : I-Legalizm Ba-Ḥevrah Ha-Yiśre'elit* (Tel Aviv: Sifriyat po'alim, 1986).

[13] Interview with Saggi (resident of Pnei Kedem), conversation with author, August 26, 2015.

[14] It is important to note outposts residents cannot get mortgage because of the illegal condition of outposts. While I was conducting fieldwork some of the residents were talking about a new arrangement that is supposed to grant them some kind of a mortgage, but none was able to get it.

In fact, some older settlers I met, especially those living in more ideological settlements, have come to resent outposts because of their economic underpinnings. "I hate what the young generation is doing… they are greedy and have no ideology," a settler from the settlement of Mihmash once told me when I asked him about outposts.[15] And, surprisingly enough, some of the people I met in outposts tended to agree with the latter statement. For example, a twenty-something-year-old resident of the outpost of Tekoa Dalet once confessed to me: "My parents were idealists. They had money but they chose to move to the settlement of Talmon and live in a shack. In a portable! I was born the year after they moved-in. So they chose to move there because they had ideals. Today you won't find this kind of idealism. People don't build outposts because of ideals. You had that in the past; not today."[16]

But it would be a mistake to attribute the existence of outposts to sheer greed. From what I observed, people living in outposts do have ideals. These ideals, however, are different from the ones that guided their parents' generation. Most importantly, in place of a hardline settling ideology, many outpost residents have developed an interest in a variety of New Age practices. Some do yoga, others attend laughter and poetry workshops, and almost all share an odd desire to go back to nature. In addition, many outpost residents I met followed the preaching of the late Rabbi Menachem Froman, a longtime settlement activist, who encouraged singing and dancing, and even advocated for a strange kind of coexistence with the Palestinians. While Froman's commitment to coexistence is less than convincing—not the least of which because of his repeated homophobic comments—his rising popularity among outpost residents speaks to their search after a new ideology, an ideology that is significantly less militant than the one that guided their parents' generation.

Nevertheless, outpost residents hadn't fully abandoned their parents' ways, especially not their pioneering spirit. Many outpost residents I met repeatedly commented on the bravery of their predecessors from the 1970s and 1980s. They were fascinated by their parents' ability to create something – the settlement project – out of nothing. Their parents were a true avant-garde group, many believe. And now, it was up to them, the younger generation, to find new venues for pioneering in the West Bank.

Settlers Against Settlers

One such settler was David (Figure 5.2). Born in England, David grew up hearing about the heroic acts of his uncle who immigrated to Israel after the Six-Day War and was among the founders of the settlement of Ofra. David's parents, however, were afraid of leaving the UK. Only after he graduated with a degree in law from Queen Mary College at the University of London did he join his uncle in Ofra in 1994. Soon after, he began planning to found a new settlement, just like his uncle once did. In 1995, together with a couple of friends from Ofra, he founded a settling seed. They named it "Gar'in Ofni" [Ofni Seed] after the biblical Israelite town of Ofni that, according to some, once stood on a hill near Ofra they wanted to settle.

[15] Haim (resident of Mihmash), June 11, 2015.
[16] Nadav (resident of Tekoa Dalet), Tal (resident of Tekoa), and David (resident of Bnei Adam), interview with the author, April 19, 2015.

Figure 5.2 David on the hill of Ofni, c.1998 (left) Members of the Ofni Seed with David and Leah in the center, undated (right). Source: Pnei Kedem Archive.

By 1998, they began working on a master plan for a 150-family settlement that aimed "to recreate the ancient Israelite town on the site but in the spirit of the 21st century."[17] The spirit of the 21st century, David and his friends argued, was the spirit of sustainability and ecological design. According to their plans, the residents of the settlement would live in harmony with nature. All houses, they insisted, would follow the natural contours of the hill, and rely on renewable energy. As a pilot project, before the young men attempted to settle on the bare hill, they erected a wind turbine on the site (Figure 5.3). The turbine, it was stated in a brochure they issued in 1998, was a major success. "Everybody who is anybody in Judea and Samaria" came to see it.[18] Ecological design proved useful in attracting the attention of potential supporters. And as Jonathan, who would join the group in a couple of years, commented, it was a welcomed addition to the older settling ideology; "It is a positive direction that as part of our return to our land, we would also return to nature," he explained to a news reporter.[19]

Figure 5.3 Wind turbine on the hill of Ofni. Source: Ofni Building for the Future brouchure. Micael Lorea's private collection.

[17] "Ofni: Building for the Future," c 1998, Pnei Kedem Archive, Pnei Kedem.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Meir Tzeri, "Pnei Kedem," *Gushpanka - Pirsumeyda*, February 7, 2003, 5, Pnei Kedem Archive, Pnei Kedem.

Following the success of the wind turbine, in March 1998, the group was officially recognized as a settling seed of Amana,[20] the official settlement body founded by Block of the Faithful in the late 1970s. With Amana backing them, the members of the seed began negotiating their right to settle Ofni's hill with government officials.[21] An authorization, they believed, was at the doorstep. So hopeful were the young men that they even drafted a program for employment centers and public attractions in the settlement. Strangely enough, among these were a "miniature golf course with a biblical theme," an "Australian rules football court," and water amusement park.[22]

To their disappointment, however, a government authorization failed to arrive. Faced with repeated rejections, David and his friends realized they had to take the law into their own hands. The hill must be settled, regardless of its legal status, they agreed. After some deliberations, they managed to ship a couple of metal containers to the site, and without anyone noticing, they moved in. For four weeks, they were able to survive on their own. But then, when David approached the secretariat of the nearby settlement of Ofra and asked for their help, things started falling apart. To his surprise, some of them worried an unauthorized outpost in the vicinity of Ofra may attract unwanted media attention, and, in turn, endanger other illegal construction projects in the settlement of Ofra.[23] To avoid such attention, shortly after David reached out to them, one of the members of the secretariat contacted officials at the Civil Administration and informed them about the illegal outpost. The officials quickly forced the members of Ofni Seed out of their containers.[24] The first settling attempt failed—not because of international pressure or complaints from native Palestinians, but because of other settlement activists.

But David and some of his collaborators refused to give up. Over the next few months, they searched for an alternative site, preferably as far as possible from Ofra, the settlement that betrayed them. On the advice of a friend, one day they drove to a valley located some 20 miles south of Jerusalem, where they were told some land might be available for them. Unfortunately, the valley was dark and had no vistas. It didn't seem like an appropriate site for a settlement, they agreed. But then, as they were getting ready to leave, one of David's friends noticed there were some electricity lines on a nearby hilltop. Their maps indicated the place was empty. Curious to see what was there, they decided to go and check the strange hilltop. To their surprise, they found some forty abandoned portable structures (Figure 5.4). All were in a bad shape. Some had Hebrew door signs. No one was there, however.[25]

[20] "Ofni: Building for the Future."
[21] Ibid.
[22] Ibid.
[23] The people of Ofra mainly feared it would result in the demolition of Amona, an outpost initiated by Ofra's former secretary Pinhas Valershtein. Moshe, interview with the author; David, interview with the author.
[24] Moshe, interview with the author.
[25] Sarah, interview with the author.

Figure 5.4 Aerial view of the abandoned portables, c.2000 (bottom), and a photo of one of the abandoned portables taken by the settlers, c.2000 (top). About half of the portables were clustered in one corner, while the rest were placed along an unpaved road that stretched out towards the southern part of the hilltop. Source: Pnei Kedem Archive.

The abandoned portables, as David and his friends would later learn, were part of a religious boarding school named Metzudat David.[26] Founded by American born Mordehai Goldstein, head of the Diaspora Yeshiva in Jerusalem, it catered to ultra-Orthodox youth who dropped out from other educational institutes. It was an important foothold in a small kingdom Goldstein was trying to create in the West Bank. Just a mile away, on a nearby hill, was the settlement of Meitzad, which he founded in 1984 for his loyal followers – a strange group of American-born Jews who abandoned hippie culture in favor of Jewish ultra-Orthodoxy.[27] But, despite Goldstein's hopes, the school failed to

[26] Haggai Sari, "Goldshtein Neged Goldshtein," *Makor Rishon*, September 8, 2000, 28.
[27] When the people of Ofni settled in the place, there were 38 ultraorthodox families in Meitzad. See Nava Cohen-Tzuriel, "Meizad Ehad Meizad Sheni," *Kol Hazman*, September 8, 2000. Goldstein himself resided in Jerusalem. To have control over Meizad and the yeshiva, he had his son live there. See Sayed Kashua, "Meizad Ehad Ledaber, Meizad Sheni Lehahtif," *Kol Ha'ir*, September 8, 2000; Leora Eren Frucht, "Unsettled Territory," *The Jerusalem Post*, September 8, 2000.

attract students, and within just a couple of years the place was abandoned.[28]

Now, David and the other members of Ofni Seed agreed, it was time to re-inhabit the site. Over the next few months, David reached out to government officials, the Settlement Department, and Gush Etzion regional council to seek their support. Even though the government failed to grant their authorization, he gained the support of the head of Gush Etzion regional council. Together they decided on a move-in date: Wednesday, August 30, 2000.[29]

On the morning of that day, the members of Ofni Seed—five couples and four bachelors—together with about ten to twenty supporters, drove in a couple dozen cars to the hilltop.[30] Once on the site, the young settlers began preparing the place for the first Shabbat. They surveyed the portables and allocated the ones that were in decent shape for the five couples, one for each, and bachelors. They transformed a couple of portables into a communal kitchen, a dining hall, and a synagogue. In the remaining time, the settlers began cleaning the surroundings. By Friday, when a group of supporters arrived, everything was ready. The evening prayers felt especially festive. On Saturday, after the morning prayers, some of the men went on a hike and paid a friendly visit to the neighboring Bedouin encampment, where they were welcomed with tea and friendly faces. Finally, some of the young settlers thought to themselves, they had succeeded. Things were working in their favor.

But then, on their return, the men were surprised to see Rabbi Goldstein waiting for them. The Rabbi seemed angry. He insisted the abandoned site and portables were his, and demanded they leave immediately.[31] In an attempt to appease the raging sixty-eight-year-old rabbi, the settlers suggested he join the communal dinner they prepared so they could discuss the issue. The rabbi agreed and sat. But when the women began singing, the event took a bad turn. The rabbi was outraged.[32] Hearing females sing was absolutely prohibited in his community. It was a matter of modesty. He stood up and shouted: "This place, a place where females sing next to a rabbi, will be destroyed and a curse will sit on it!" He then picked up one of the tables and threw it, with all the food that was on it, at the women. One of them was injured. In return, her husband pushed the table back at the rabbi.[33] One of Goldstein's pupils who came along panicked and run back to Meitzad to tell his friends about the event. Quickly, the men of Meitzad, who worried their guru was being beaten, ran to the new outpost and started fighting with David and his friends, vandalizing the portables, and smashing their cars. The women of Ofni Seed took shelter in one of the portables as violence continued escalating. At one point, the son of rabbi Goldstein had his arm and leg broken. Only after some 30 police officers arrived to the site was the violence halted.[34]

The settlement of Meitzad was first founded by the Israeli Defense Force as a Naha"l outpost in 1983. The government intended to transform it into a Community Settlement housing some 250 families. See "Protokol Yeshivat Haveada Lehityashvut Hameshutefet Lamemshala Velahistadrut Hatziyonit Haolamit," October 5, 1983, 7618/5-A, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.
For an announcement on the founding of the settlement and its occupation with civilians, see "Nira Lemerhakim," *Nekuda*, 1984, 30.

[28] Kashua, "Meizad Ehad Ledaber, Meizad Sheni Lehahtif"; Eren Frucht, "Unsettled Territory."

[29] "Pnei Kedem (Brochure)" (Gush Etzion Regional Council, n.d.), Pnei Kedem Archive, Pnei Kedem.

[30] A video footage of the car ride is available on YouTube. See Michael Lourie, *The First Day in Pnei Kedem YOM HAALIYA 29th Menachem Av 5760 30th August 2000*, accessed May 28, 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8m0elSsqLX4&app=desktop.

[31] Goldstein was no stranger to trespassing and territorial disputes. According to other publications, his Jerusalem-based yeshiva was known for its illegal attempts to expand territorially, and he was once even arrested and faced multiple charges. See Eren Frucht, "Unsettled Territory"; Cohen-Tzuriel, "Meizad Ehad Meizad Sheni."

[32] Cohen-Tzuriel, "Meizad Ehad Meizad Sheni."

[33] Kashua, "Meizad Ehad Ledaber, Meizad Sheni Lehahtif."

[34] Cohen-Tzuriel, "Meizad Ehad Meizad Sheni."

Figure 5.5 The son of rabbi Goldstein at the hospital after the violent incident (left) and a settler from Meitzad next to one of his new neighbors from Pnei Kedem (right). Still today, some of the settlers of Pnei Kedem refer to the events of the first weekend on the hilltop as "the pogrom." Source: Shimi Nehtailer, Kol Hazman, Sept. 8, 2000.

In the next couple of weeks, Goldstein and his disciples continued demanding David and his friends leave the site. They insisted anyone who wishes to live in the vicinity of Meitzad must be a follower of Goldstein.[35] "I don't mind having two, even three hundred new families," Goldstein's son explained. "The only condition we have is that they will live under our rule, and accept the authority of Rabbi Mordehai (Goldstein) on all public matters."[36]

A resident of Meitzad, a follower of Goldstein and, for all the wrong reasons, a Peace Now activist, added that the ultra-Orthodox residents of Meitzad had a good relationship with the neighboring Palestinians. The young settlers of Pnei Kedem, associated with the national-religious faction, he feared, were likely to ruin their tenuous relationship, and instigate unwanted fights with the Palestinians.[37] But, as news reporter Nava Cohen Tzuriel argued, the residents of Meitzad weren't so concerned with the wellbeing of the Palestinians. They were worried about something else. According to the Oslo Accords, the area of Meitzad was to be evacuated and returned to the Palestinians within a few years. The residents of Meitzad, who would have to leave their homes, were promised a generous compensation package—an expensive land plot in Jerusalem, near rabbi Goldstein's yeshiva. For years they had been waiting for this moment to come. Life on the remote hilltop was tormenting. They moved there only because it was affordable. But now, all of the sudden, they worried that David and his friends were going to ruin it all.[38] Known for their uncompromising settlement ideology, the members of Ofni Seed objected to evacuation, and were likely to force the government to keep the area, with Meitzad's residents, under Israeli control. But the pleas of Goldstein's followers didn't work. Nor even the repeated lawsuits they filed against their new neighbors. The members of Ofni Seed stayed put.

Transforming a Boarding School into a Settlement

Once the fights with Goldstein and his disciples subsided, David and his friends turned to their next task: transforming the dilapidated boarding school into a settlement. They started by renaming the place. Ofni, the name of the ancient Israelite town located miles

[35] Sari, "Goldshtein Neged Goldshtein."
[36] Sari.
[37] Yuval Karni, "Mitnahalim Neged Mitnahalim," *Yediot Aharonot*, August 2000; Eren Frucht, "Unsettled Territory."
[38] Cohen-Tzuriel, "Meizad Ehad Meizad Sheni"; "What Is Really Happening at Meitzad?," *Israel Wire*, September 10, 2000.

away, was no longer relevant. Nor was Meitzad Bet, the name the settlers of Meitzad gave to the site. Instead, one of the settlers, who had recently immigrated from Australia, proposed "Kan Garoo," which alluded to his home country, and which means "Here they Once Lived" in Hebrew. But, to his disappointment, the group preferred the name "Pnei Kedem," meaning "Facing East."[39] Once the name was changed, they moved on to planting some two hundred trees.[40] Soon after, they began repairing the forty portables that once served the yeshiva students.

Portables – commonly referred to as caravans – are the most common building type in outposts. Like in most other outposts, the portables that became home to the people of Pnei Kedem were arranged in a couple of rows with only small gaps separating one portable from each other (Figure 5.6). None had a fence defining the limits of their private territory, nor were there sidewalks, street names or numbers. This arrangement fitted the needs of David and his friends – a group of some 20 young settlers surrounded by hostile neighbors, Palestinian and Jewish. Having all houses clustered one next to the other, with no fences between them, gave David and the other settlers a sense of security. With time, it also helped generate a strong sense of community. Even though each couple lived in a separate portable, they usually kept the doors open, and spent hours outdoors. The portable was just too small for many of them. Quickly, the space between the portables became an extension of their domestic spaces, shared by all the residents.

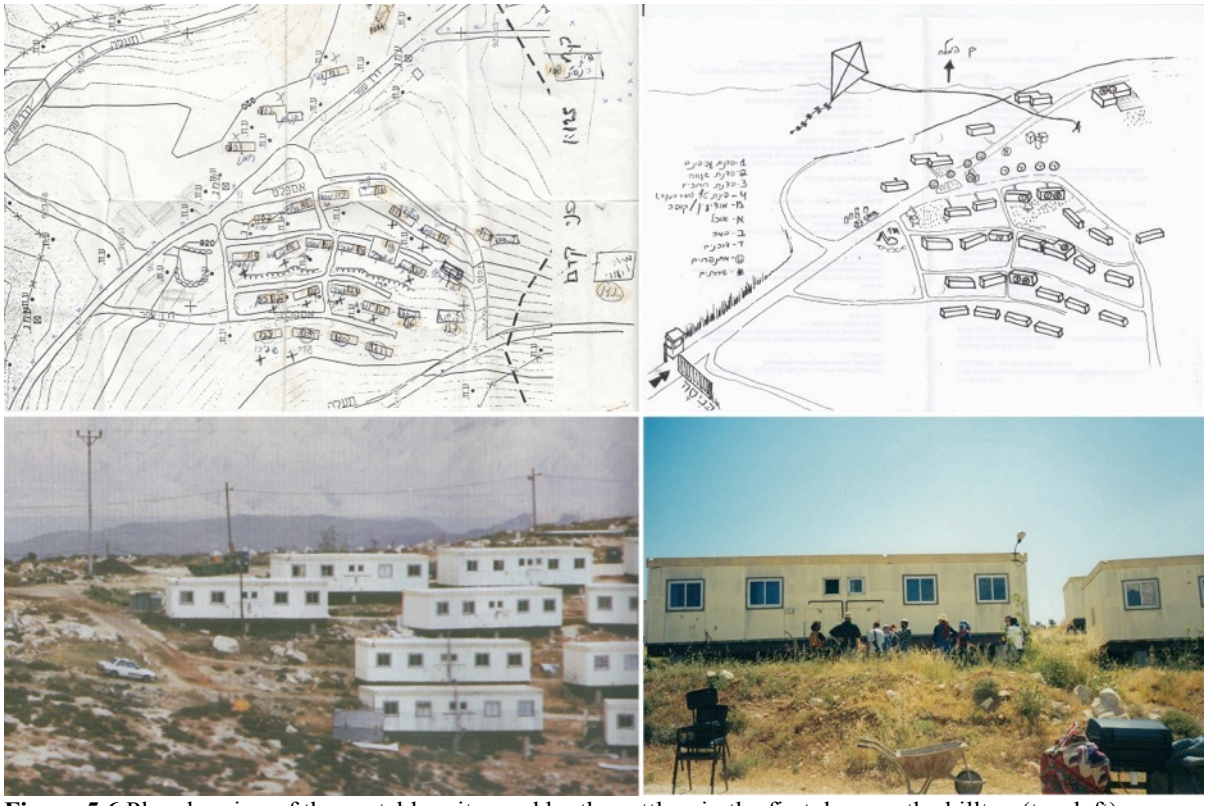

Figure 5.6 Plan drawing of the portables site used by the settlers in the first days on the hilltop (top-left), a photo of the hilltop taken from the road leading to the outpost, c.2000 (bottom-left), view of settlement

[39] David Shteinman, "Route 165: Where Life Goes On," *The Australian Jewish News*, June 22, 2001; "Rosh Hashana Hatshsa BePnei Kedem," September 30, 2000, Pnei Kedem Archive, Pnei Kedem.
[40] "Growing with Meitzad Bet," *Voices*, October 2000, Pnei Kedem Archive, Pnei Kedem.

activists standing near one of the portables, c.2000 (bottom-right), and sketch of the area with the portables drawn by one of the settlers for a kites festival from 2004 (top-right). Even though more portables were laid out in a row on southern part of the hill, the residents chose to settle only in those clustered in one group. Source: Pnei Kedem's Archive.

This semi-public space has become a common feature in many outposts. And, by large, outpost residents seem to appreciate the social setting it creates. In fact, when a young couple from the outpost of Avigail, located 20 miles south of Pnei Kedem, built a permanent home with a fenced backyard, some of their neighbors felt uncomfortable with the new house. It was at odds with the sense of community that prevailed in the portables neighborhood with its shared in-between space. "That's quite a private corner you've got there for yourself," one of their neighbors complained to them.[41]

The interior space of most portables, like the ones in Pnei Kedem, follows a simple, rather rudimentary, layout: Two bedrooms, one on each end of the house, that flank a small, multi-purposed living room (Figure 5.7). Inside the living room, next to the entry door, a modest kitchen sink is mounted on the wall. A couch or a sofa and a small dining table are usually placed in front of the sink.

Figure 5.7 Plan drawing of a typical portable (left), and view of interior space of one of the portables in Pnei Kedem, 2015 (right). In the past most portable residents decorated their temporary homes with photos of Rabbi Kook and other leaders of the settlement movement. Today, it is less common. In Pnei Kedem, only two families had photos of rabbis in their portables. The rest preferred Indian fabrics, Mandalas, and other elements borrowed from the East. Drawing and photo by the author

With time, some of the settlers of Pnei Kedem began customizing their portables. Since all lacked a door that would lead to the backside of the house, they focused their efforts on the front side. Some installed artificial grass lawns, while others placed inflatable swimming pools outside, as well as patio furniture that created an inviting semi-public front yard. Soon, some built wooden roofing elements that provided much-needed shaded spaces where they could have dinners and other social events (Figure 5.8). Some went a step further and added a small room, made of metal panels, to their portable.

[41] Keren, conversation with the author, September 19, 2015.

Figure 5.8 A portable with a roofed front porch in Pnei Kedem, 2015 (left). Portables in other West Bank outposts with different front yard installments, 2013 (right). Photos by the author.

At first, the portables and these informal additions were welcomed. They were seen as a natural stage in the development of the outpost. After all, portables had been a common sight in West Bank settlements since the 1970s. They usually served as a temporary housing solution, accommodating the settlers while they were working on their permanent homes. About 86 percent of settlements had such temporary portables neighborhoods that facilitated their growth.[42] Associated with the founding years of most settlements, when infrastructure was not always available and living conditions were harsh, the portable, according to the sociologist Michael Feige, has even come to signify pioneering bravery and commitment among settlers.[43]

But with time, David began to resent the portables in Pnei Kedem. He worried portables were going to become a permanent housing solution, rather than a transitory one. The illegal status of the outpost discouraged people in Pnei Kedem from building permanent homes. Without government authorization, they were unable to apply for bank mortgages or get building permits. Anything they built, they feared, would be subjected to a demolition order. The same had happened in almost all other outposts in the West Bank. Fearing home demolitions, residents would rent portables from Amana or the secretariat of the outpost for a modest monthly fee—$70 a month for a portable at Pnei Kedem in 2001—and stay there for years. And without a permanent home to anchor them, David and some of his friends worried, residents would leave the minute a better opportunity came their way. In addition, the portable, with its metal panels and crude design, was at odds with the New Age aesthetics many of the residents aimed for. "It is terrible! It is terrible for nature. It is so not sustainable or recyclable," one of them explained to me. It looks foreign to the place, completely removed from its immediate surroundings, she added.[44] Under these circumstances, the portable, a structure that once signified bravery, has come to represent weakness and stagnation.

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[42] Michael Feige, *Settling in the Hearts: Jewish Fundamentalism in the Occupied Territories*, Raphael Patai Series in Jewish Folklore and Anthropology (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2009), 79.
[43] Feige, 79.
[44] Leah, interview with the author, March 7, 2015.

For this reason, David and core members of Ofni Seed agreed they must have a professionally drawn master plan at hand. A master plan, one they could submit to the Civil Administration, was a needed step in the process of legalization. And once that step was achieved, they thought, residents would start building permanent homes in the outpost.

The Failure of Authoritative Planning

Before contacting a professional architect, David and the settlers of Pnei Kedem had a few meetings to discuss the design of the outpost. While some wanted a conventional scheme that would resemble other West Bank settlements, many preferred something different, something more "ecological." As Sarah, a New York-born settler, told a news reporter, "We want to build an ecological seed… [and to live] like how people once used to live. We want a green area with natural energies: recycling and making wind energy. We all love nature. We even have a donkey here."[45] Such an "ecological seed," they believed, would benefit the place and offer an alternative settlement model that could be replicated throughout the West Bank.

By August 2001, the settlers had transformed these tentative ideas into a two-page document – "Pnei Kedem – A Program for an Ecological Neighborhood." The text opened with a critique of the Community Settlement, the most popular settlement model in the West Bank. This model, the settlers wrote, suffered from several design flaws: private land plots were too small and repetitive, houses were dull, uniformed and oblivious to the natural topography, and the roads, mainly ring roads, were too wide and tended to dominate the place. Altogether, they lamented, Community Settlements in the West Bank "created urban places in the midst of a rural environment. They don't blend into the natural surroundings, and are likely to increase the sense of alienation between the residents and their surroundings."[46]

In contrast with the Community Settlement, the ecological settlement that David and his friends envisioned was much more in tune with the land. "We want it to look like a rural village that developed over a long period of time, gradually, without heavy infrastructure that deformed the landscape in irreversible ways," they wrote. In order to achieve this, they explained, "We don't want repetitive rectilinear private land parcels. In addition, we don't want to see people flattening and 'shaving' the rocky land." Instead, they suggested arranging all homes in small irregular clusters of 6-8 houses. At the heart of each cluster they proposed leaving a shared open public space. The houses, they imagined, would be built of local materials and incorporate multiple ecological installments like photovoltaic cells. In place of asphalt ring roads they suggested a network of pedestrian path walks, complemented by few narrow stone-paved roads that would connect the different clusters. "Such a planning attitude," they concluded, "is more appropriate for rural development; it looks aesthetic, and encourages a sense of community."[47]

[45] Alon Hadar, "Pnei Kedem: New-Age," *Malabem*, November 1, 2002, 52, Pnei Kedem Archive, Pnei Kedem.
[46] Pnei Kedem Secretariat, "Pnei Kedem: Programa Lehakamt Shehuna Ekologit," 2001, Pnei Kedem Archive, Pnei Kedem.
[47] Pnei Kedem Secretariat.

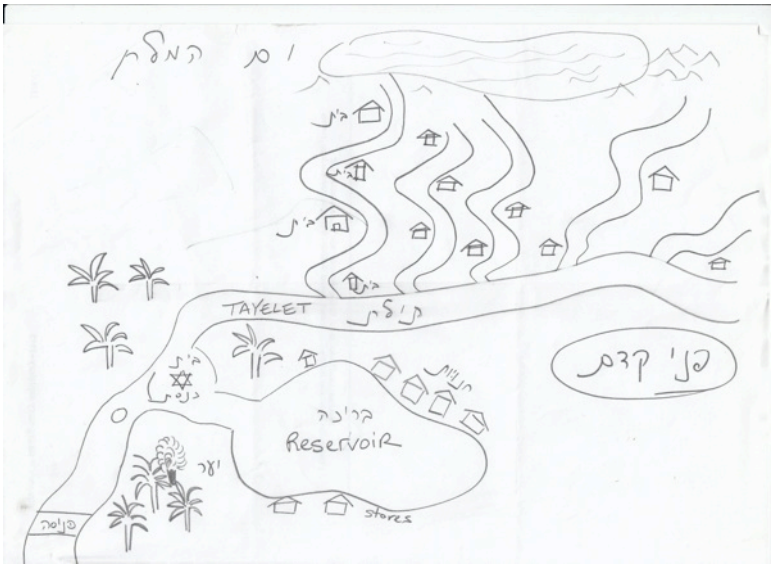

Figure 5.9 A Sketch drawn by the settlers before official planning had began, c.2001. Since at the time no one among the settlers had the required technical skills, the group avoided making definitive drawings that could have accompanied the Program they outlined. Nevertheless, they did sketch some of their ideas. The sketch above was drawn by Sarah, one of the residents who wanted to convey the ideas laid out in the text to planning institutes. At the heart of the settlement, strangely enough, she drew a reservoir. Next to it was the main promenade also described in the Program. Unlike what was written in the Program, however, the houses were not arranged in clusters. Instead, they stretched eastwards towards the Dead Sea, located some 15 miles from Pnei Kedem. Absurd as the drawing may seem, it ended up having a relatively significant impact on the final design of Pnei Kedem. Source: Pnei Kedem Archive.

A couple of months later, in November 2001, David first met architect Rachel Waldan, who was recruited to the project by the Settlement Department, and tried explaining the settlers' vision to her.[48] Waldan was not a stranger to the settlement project. After graduating from the Technion with a bachelors degree in architecture, she worked for a couple of Tel Aviv based firms, including Thomas Leitersdorff's office, where she helped plan the settlements of Immanuel and Maale Edumim. Later, after opening her own practice in 1982, she received planning commissions in many other West Bank settlements, such as Ariel, Karnei Shomron, and Beit Aryeh. Such an extensive work experience in the West Bank, where she worked closely with the Settlement Department, Ministry of Housing and the Civil Administration, must have appealed to the settlers. In addition, the fact Waldan herself was an observant Jew and a supporter of the settlement process rendered communications with David and his friends simpler. She was one of them.[49]

When describing the settlers' concept of an ecological settlement to Waldan, David mainly highlighted the demand for exceptionally large private land plots.[50] Without such plots, he explained, residents would not be able to plant small orchards and

[48] It is not entirely clear who was the one who hired Waldan. Given the illegal nature of Pnei Kedem, the matter is regarded as secret. In a talk with Waldan, she said one of the two had contacted her. To the best of my knowledge, she was hired by an inter-departmental committee shared by the Settlement Department and the Ministry of Housing. For sure, she wasn't hired by the settlers themselves: all meetings took place at the Settlement Department, and representatives from the Department and the Ministry of Housing were present according to all transcripts.
[49] Waldan would soon even move her office to the settlement of Revava in the northern part of the West Bank, where she still works.
[50] "Dvar Hamazkirut," November 16, 2001, Pnei Kedem Archive, Pnei Kedem; "Protokol Yeshivat Mazkirut - Gimel Kislev Hatashsav 18/11/2001," November 18, 2001, Pnei Kedem Archive, Pnei Kedem.

other agricultural fields for their self-maintenance.[51] In addition, he believed, large plots would help attract new residents to the remote outpost.[52] Even though Waldan and other Settlement Department officials who were present didn't give a final answer on the matter, David and his friends thought the meeting went well.[53] Before heading back to Pnei Kedem, they agreed that David would be the contact person going forward, and that he would be responsible for communicating with Waldan.[54]

A few months later, in March 2002, another meeting was held at the Settlement Department. During the meeting, Waldan showed her sketches to David and officials from the Ministry of Housing, Amana, and Gush Etzion regional council. The drawings, she explained, addressed some of the settlers' wishes: They showed only few asphalt roads, complemented by exceptionally narrow pathways, as well as medium-sized private land plots. Nevertheless, David insisted the plots were not big enough. After some negotiation, Waldan agreed to enlarge some of them. None, however, would be larger than 1.5 dunams—about four times the standard plot size in Community Settlements. Once the issue was settled, Waldan was asked to prepare plan drawings for 20 low-budget units that were to be partially funded by the Ministry of Housing and sold to settlers at a reduced price.[55] For a while, Waldan thought Pnei Kedem was on the right track.

But it didn't take long before Waldan began realizing the settlers would present serious obstacles to her work. She got a first taste of their recalcitrant manners soon after she sent them a draft of the revised master plan (Figure 5.10).[56] Arranged in two rows of houses that flanked a large open space, the overall scheme fulfilled some of their wishes. But perhaps it was not enough. The disappointed settlers sent her an edited plan, with about thirty changes. They added an axis for public buildings, a zone for housing for the elders, narrowed all the roads, canceled parking spots, added an area for extremely large private plots, moved the synagogue, and even added a small water reservoir.[57]

[51] Pnei Kedem Secretariat, "Pnei Kedem: Programa Lehakamt Shehuna Ekologit."
[52] The latter point doesn't appear in the meeting transcripts, but was explained to me in an interview with David's wife – Leah. Leah, interview with the author.
[53] "Dvar Hamazkirut."
[54] "Protokol Yeshivat Mazkirut - Gimel Kislev Hatashsav 18/11/2001."
[55] At the same time, the Ministry of Housing was requested to develop infrastructure plans for half of the units. See "Sikum Yeshiva Benose Tihnun Pnei Kedem Miyom 11/3/2002," March 12, 2002, Pnei Kedem Archive, Pnei Kedem.
[56] It is unclear to me why she drew a master plan for 50 units instead of 100. I was unable to find any document notifying Waldan or the setters about the change in number. But, since the Ministry of Housing was in charged of drawing infrastructure for 50 units, it is reasonable to assume that the plan was a first stage in a larger plan.
[57] Pnei Kedem's Building Committee, "Hatzaa Leshinuyim Betohnit Hamitar Vemadrih Lemikum Atarim Ktanim Bayeshuv," November 14, 2002, Pnei Kedem Archive, Pnei Kedem.

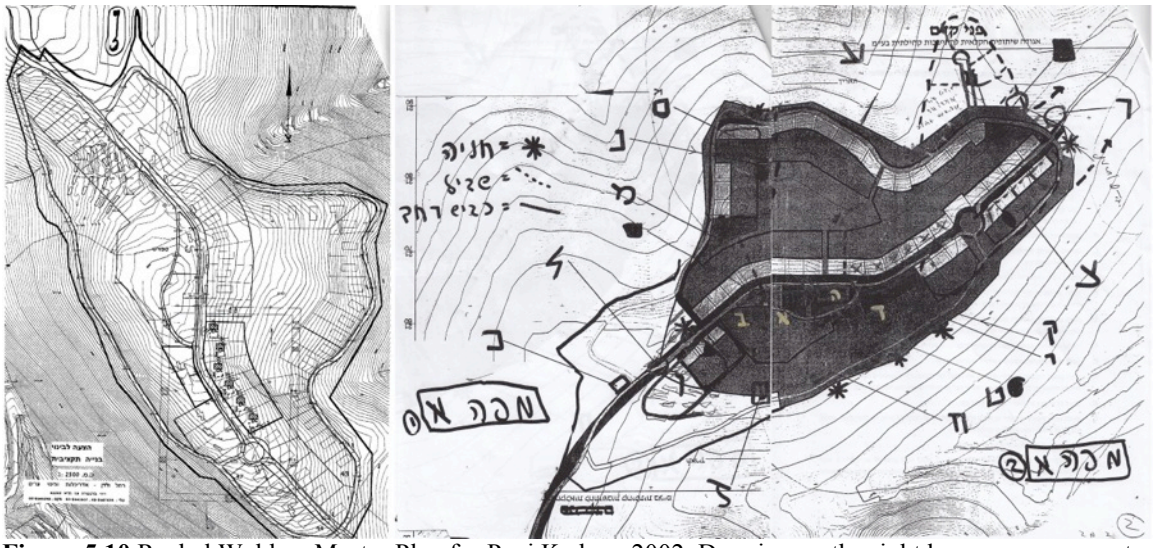

Figure 5.10 Rachel Waldan, Master Plan for Pnei Kedem, 2002. Drawing on the right has some comments made by the settlers and is rotated. Compared to other West Bank settlements, Waldan's original plan was unique. Planned only for 50 units, it allowed relatively large land plots with big private yards. Some were arranged around an open space, as the settlers originally proposed. Nevertheless, the settlers were dissatisfied, and, later, the Civil Administration rejected the plan. Source: Pnei Kedem's Archive.

After Waldan drew another iteration of the master plan (Figure 5.11), a group of residents, who thought her plan was too conventional, simply drew an alternative one (Figure 5.12). Their plan claimed much bigger areas for the outpost, and was dotted with large green spaces. Named after Australian animals, like Kangaroo and Kuala, each neighborhood in their plan was arranged around a shared patio space. In addition, there was an area allocated for tourism, and another for huts made of mud. Surrounded by natural preservations, it was bounded by an alpine slide and an esplanade on one side. Many settlers thought the alternative plan would do better service to the outpost than Waldan's plan. Some, however, feared it was unfeasible. Fights over the master plan became almost intolerable, until finally the residents agreed to have a vote. Each had to pick one plan—Waldan's or the residents'. To the disappointment of some, the residents' plan lost by one vote.[58] Nevertheless, they continued undermining Waldan's plan for years—and it was never authorized anyway.

[58] On December, the regional council approved the plan and sent it onwards to the Civil Administration, where it still lies, waiting for an approval of the Minister of Security.

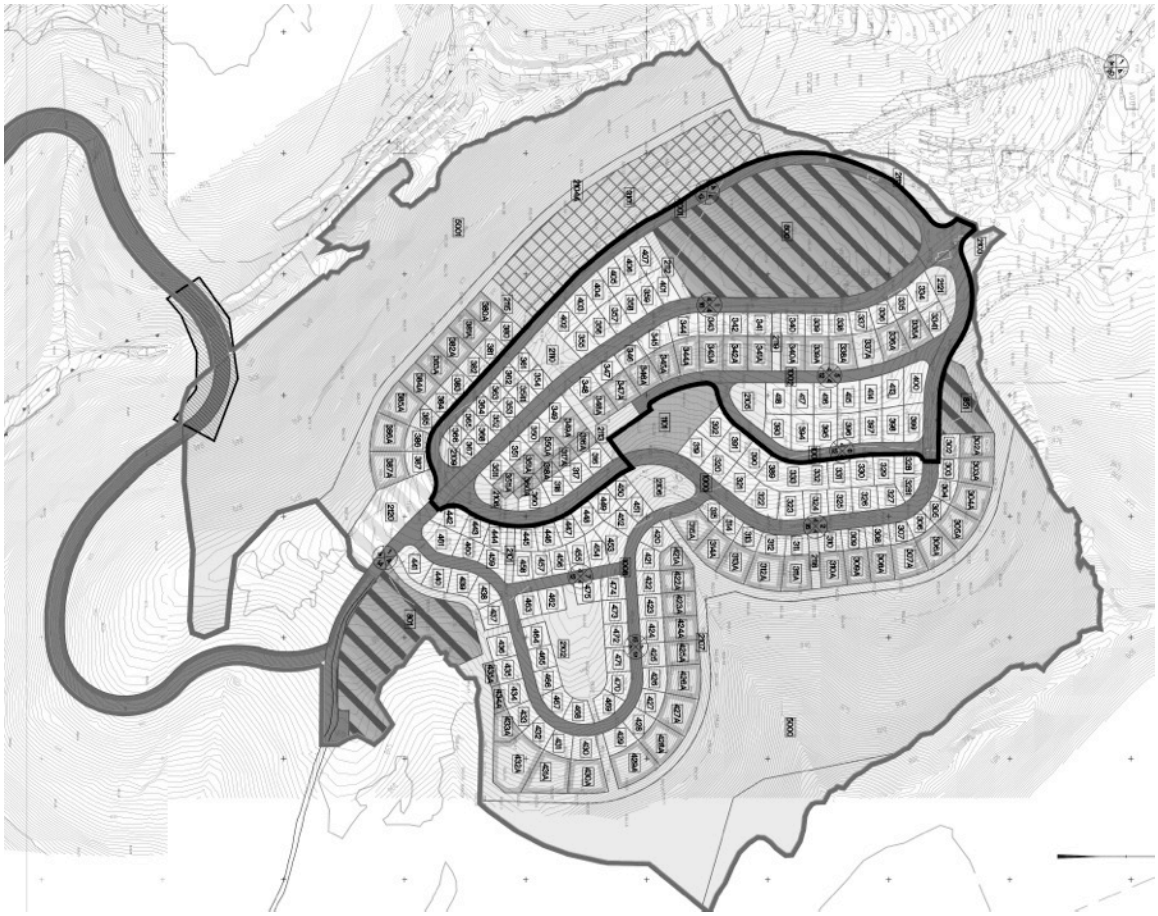

Figure 5.11 Rachel Waldan, master plan for Pnei Kedem. The most recent plan Waldan drew was significantly bigger than the original one. It had about 150 private land plots, almost all of which were two times bigger than the average plot size in other Community Settlements. In order to have these exceptionally large plots approved by the Civil Administration, she designated two-thirds of each as "Privately Owned Open Space" over which construction was prohibited (painted in dark gray in the plan). In the future, Waldan explains, these spaces could be subdivided and sold to new settlers as regular plots.[59] In addition, in light of the settlers' repeated requests, she added some green spaces and path walks, and, at the eastern edge of the settlement, created a cluster of houses arranged around an open public space. To the disappointment of the settlers, however, it was impossible to have exceptionally narrow roads. It would be too expensive, they were told. In addition, Waldan dismissed the residents' requests to have a reservoir inside the settlement. As much as the residents believed it would give the place an "ecological" feel, it was likely to cause trouble once in the hands of planning authorities.[60] Source: Rachel Waldan's private collection.

[59] Rachel Waldan, interview with the author, March 12, 2015.
[60] Meeting summary notes sent to all residents on Sept. 4, 2012. See Taba Committee, "Idkun Menaanea Benose Hataba," September 4, 2012.

Figure 5.12 Sarah, master plan for Pnei Kedem. Sketched by an American born settler, who was heavily influenced by her husband's country of birth – Australia – the plan seemed to be at odds with the dry climate of the region. Nevertheless, it captured some of the hopes of her fellow settlers. Source: Pnei Kedem Archive.

The settlers reacted in the same way when Waldan began working on the low-budget units the Ministry of Housing commissioned for the outpost. From the start, some of the residents of Pnei Kedem opposed the idea. Even though these units were likely to save many of them a lot of money, the settlers feared they would ruin their ecological vision. Low-budget units, they knew, were often uniform and built of cheap materials like metal and plaster, not the local materials they envisioned. On the whole, they were suspicious of the Ministry of Housing.[61] As they complained in a letter to the Ministry of Environmental Protection, "It is a well-known problem that the institutes in charge of construction and development do not acknowledge the importance and feasibility of ecologically oriented planning." And among these institutes, they clarified, the Ministry of Housing stood out in its refusal to collaborate with settlers, especially those seeking unconventional design.[62] At one point they even threatened to cancel the project.[63]

Regardless of their opposition, Waldan had completed a set of drawings for six identical low-budget units by June 2002, which she then sent to David (Figure 5.13). The

[61] "Protokol Yeshivat Mazkirut - Gimel Kislev Hatashsav 18/11/2001."
[62] Akiva Shapiro (member of Pnei Kedem's building and development committee) to Ministry of Environmental Protection, "Bakashat Yeutz Vetmiha Bepituah Hayeshuv Pnei Kedem Keyeshuv Ekology," n.d., Pnei Kedem Archive, Pnei Kedem.
[63] In an attempt to fight this trend, the settlers demanded the regional council would hire someone representing their ecological vision to oversee the design process. Otherwise, they would cancel the project. See Akiva Shapiro (resident of Pnei Kedem) and Shaul Goldshtein (vice head of the regional council), "Mazkir Layeshuv Pnei Kedem," January 4, 2002, Pnei Kedem Archive, Pnei Kedem.

units were simple but efficient, and they fitted the needs of religious users. All had two bedrooms with a large dinning space that was connected to the living room and capped with a red-tiled roof.[64]

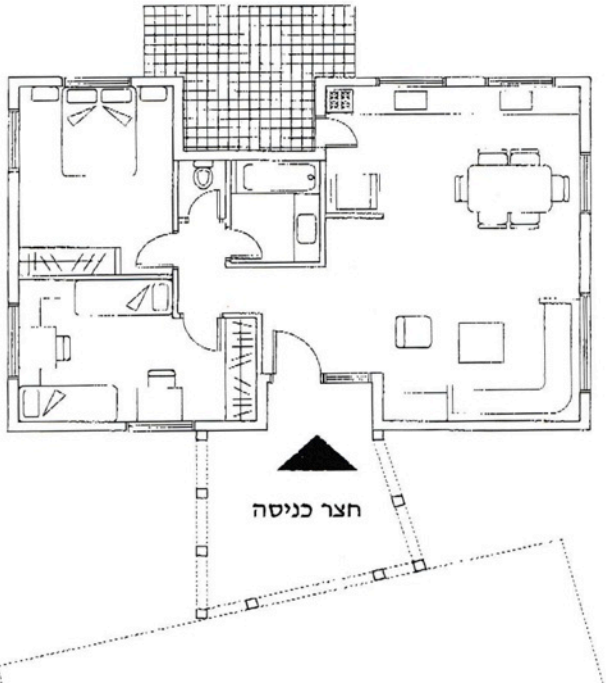

Figure 5.13 Rachel Waldan, plan drawing for low-budget units in Pnei Kedem, 2002. A pious architect, Waldan planned the units with double sinks required for a kosher kitchen, and allowed a clear separation between the private and the public functions of the house. But for the residents of Pnei Kedem it was not enough. Source: Pnei Kedem Archive.

And yet, some of the people in Pnei Kedem continued opposing the design. "Why should anyone come to Pnei Kedem and have a conventional house he could have anywhere else?" one of the settlers recalled her neighbors' reaction to Waldan's plans.[65] They wanted something special, something that would look more local, and, most importantly, something larger.

Some of the settlers were so troubled that the day after Waldan's drawings reached the outpost, they drafted a building code disputing Waldan's design and laying out their envisioned design for the outpost's houses. All houses, they insisted, must have flat roofs.[66] "Mediterranean construction is characterized by flat roofs, and therefore it is recommended to build flat roofs in order to merge into the local landscape," they would later explain.[67] If one decides to use tiles, they added, the tiles must not be painted in red, as is common in other West Bank settlements they highlighted, and they should preferably be hidden with a decorative element.[68] In addition, they insisted, cladding

[64] There is no indication of the roofing solution in the documents I was able to find. However, based on the settlers' reaction, it is reasonable to assume they were made of red-tiles.
[65] I was unable to find documents clarifying how and when exactly were Waldan's plans dismissed. However, according to Leah, the residents denied the plans, and, after a while, they were forgotten. Leah, conversation with the author, Feb. 28, 2015.
[66] "Takanon Bniya (Helek Alef)," June 17, 2002, Pnei Kedem Archive, Pnei Kedem.
[67] "Takanon Bniya Pratit," n.d., Pnei Kedem Archive, Pnei Kedem.
[68] "Takanon Bniya Pratit"; "Takanon Bniya (Helek Alef)."

must be done with natural materials like mud, wood, and stone.[69] Furthermore, they claimed all houses must incorporate elements made of un-refined wild stone, like an arc decorating the entrance door or a pediment. Referring specifically to the units Waldan had drawn, the residents mentioned they must be cladded with stone and positioned according to the settlers' preference, not Waldan's plan.[70] Soon after, the units were canceled altogether.[71]

The settlers' opposition to Waldan's work, especially to her master plan, was only typical of outposts' residents and was driven by a few key factors.[72] First, since professional architects like Waldan are hired only after the settlers have been living in the outpost for a while and already drafted plans of their own, they are seen as outsiders, endangering what was already achieved. And since the regional council, the Settlement Department, or the Ministry of Housing usually hire these architects, the settlers feel like their architects are not loyal to them but to the institutes that hired them.[73]

More importantly, though, the residents' opposition has a clear monetary incentive. Since most outposts, like Pnei Kedem, were founded without a master plan, those who moved in first usually claimed exceptionally large land plots for themselves.[74] These plots cannot be acknowledged in professionally-drawn master plans. They are at odds with standardized guidelines and budgetary concerns. As a result, an official master plan means some had to relinquish part of their private plot. In other cases, homeowners were asked to renovate their homes to fit the new master plan. For example, a resident I met in the outpost of Tekoa Dalet, where the residents recently agreed on a professionally-drawn master plan, was asked to move his house to another plot.[75] Moreover, an approved master plan is considered an important step in the process of legalization, at the end of which the residents are likely to be subjected to unwelcome new fees, such as a $50,000 development fee.[76] Considering the relatively low price of houses in outposts—$70,000 for a three-bedroom house, on average, in Pnei Kedem—some would rather keep the outpost illegal and endure the low risk that their home might be demolished.

The relationship between outpost residents and architects is made all the more

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[69] "Takanon Bniya (Helek Alef)."

[70] Throughout the document, the residents avoided mentioning Waldan's name. Instead they talked about the units built in "Bniya Taktzivit" or low budget units. Since these are the units drawn by Waldan it reasonable to assume they were talking about Waldan's designs. "Takanon Bniya (Helek Alef)."

[71] It is unclear if the units were canceled because of the settlers' opposition, or because of legal constraints the Ministry of Housing might have encountered. It is likely to believe both factors influenced the decision to cancel the project.

[72] Usually, when the need for a master plan becomes pressing, some residents want to have a conventional plan, while others insist on maintaining the wild nature of the outpost. In some cases, these internal disagreements have had destructive consequences. For example, in Maale Rechav'am, after the residents voted against a conventional plan that was drawn by an architect working for the regional council in 2015, the council stopped supporting the outpost. They cut their electricity and water supply, and soon after, the soldiers in charge of securing the place instead abandoned it. Unable to survive without these basic services, and, in some cases, upset with those opposing the conventional plan, 12 families by November. As of May 2016, running water and electricity were still lacking in the outpost. Drori Bar Levav, phone interview with the author; Dan, interview with the author, October 16, 2015. Also, see Haim Levinson, "Bishvil Meyasdei Hamaachazim, Hasharatam He Lo Tamid Hadashot Tovot," *Haaretz*, June 11, 2015, https://www.haaretz.co.il/news/politics/.premium-1.2770226; Dror Bar Levav, "Besi Hahom - Yeshuv Shalem Lelo Mayim Vehashmal," *Arutz 20*, May 19, 2016, http://www.20il.co.il/וחשמל-מים-ללא-שלם-יישוב-החום-בשיא/.

[73] Sarah, conversation with the author, March 9, 2015. As I mentioned before, it is unclear who actually hired Waldan. Given the illegality of the project, and the clear rules against using state money in outpost, I was unable to get solid answers. Nevertheless, according to meeting transcripts, representatives from both organizations were involved.

[74] This is only partially true in Pnei Kedem. The founders of Pnei Kedem enjoy large land plot. Nevertheless, in other outposts, like Maale Rechavam, plots are bigger.

[75] Roy, interview with the author, March 27, 2015. Another resident learned that a road is going to cross through his land plot because of the same plan. Michael (resident of Tekoa Dalet, interview with the author, April 22, 2015 (group interview. Other interviewees were Shy and Lior. Shy is a contractor and Lior a builder and resident of Tekoa Dalet).

[76] Lior (builder and resident of Tekoa Dalet), Shy and Michael, group interview with the author, March 18, 2015.

complex by the sense of urgency that characterizes outposts. As I will show later in this chapter, most projects in Pnei Kedem and other outposts have to be built fast. Under these conditions, architects constantly see their plans ignored in favor of ad hoc interventions. For example, in describing the numerous difficulties she encountered in Pnei Kedem, Waldan complained, "on the one hand they want to do whatever they desire, but on the other, they expect me to 'plan' it after they already built it."[77]

But the settlers' attitude is not the only challenge Waldan and other architects working in outposts have been facing. The Planning Department at the Civil Administration, the body in charge of approving master plans and issuing building permits in the West Bank, has been posing even greater obstacles to their work.[78] For example, all of Waldan's master plans for Pnei Kedem, submitted with or without the settlers' support, were denied by officials at the Civil Administration. Each time, they asked her to revise the plan in unpredictable, sometimes contradictory ways.[79] In February 2003, for instance, she was suddenly told that major parts of her plan were on a nature reserve.[80] At a later point, they complained the entrance road in her plan crossed through what they only recently realized was a privately owned Palestinian land.[81] From what I learned, these mistakes or oversights were not really Waldan's fault. An architect with more than three decades of work experience, she examined carefully land ownership maps before drawing her plan, and her drawings were impeccable. Civil Administration officials simply couldn't really approve her plans as long as there was no government decision to authorize the outpost. But since they wanted to keep the outpost going, and encourage the residents to continue developing it, they created these minor obstacles instead of rejecting the plans up front. The same has happened in other outposts.[82] Altogether, then, Waldan's professional skills and authority, like those of other architects working in outposts, were irrelevant from the perspective of the Civil Administration. The quality of their drawings didn't matter whatsoever.

With the settlers' opposition on the one hand, and the unwillingness of the Civil Administration to collaborate on the other, none of Waldan's drawings—neither the master plan nor her housing units—was ever taken seriously. Shortly after one of her master plans was rejected in 2004, she withdrew from the project, leaving the residents on their own for a few years.[83] In her place, the residents' Building Committee and individual initiatives would try to take the lead on all design matters.

Outlaw Builders Borrow a Palestinian Vernacular

Even though none of Waldan's master plans was approved, the settlers had distributed among themselves ten plots from her first draft by the end of 2003.[84] Each family was asked to pay $60 in addition to a $2,000 deposit to secure a plot. According to the outposts' building code, the plot was to remain theirs as long as they finished building

[77] Waldan, interview with the author.
[78] Wadan, interview; Bella Nudelman, interview with the author, August 5, 2013.
[79] Waldan submitted two master plans between 2001 and 2004, and another one in 2011.
[80] "Mishulhana Shel Veadat Bniya Atidit," *Pninei Kedem: Alon Pnei Kedem*, February 2003.
[81] Waldan, interview.
[82] For example, a landscape architect who worked in the outpost of Havat yair complained she encountered the same obstacles. Nudelman, interview the author.
[83] Waldan was called-in again in 2011. She then drew the master plan I discussed above. Since all of Waldan's plans were dismissed by both the residents and the Civil Administration, I included her work from 2011 here, with the first plans.
[84] Moshe, interview with the author, February 25, 2015.

their home within seven years.[85] All plots were taken immediately. Yet, for a while, no one dared build anything, and the plots remained empty. After all, despite Waldan's best attempts, the legal status of the outpost remained unresolved, and no one could attain building permits.[86]

The residents' fears from building their homes illegally became all the more concrete in 2005, when one of the couples began working on their house.[87] Shortly after the concrete foundations for the house were poured, the couple received a demolition order from the Civil Administration.[88] They didn't know if and when the order would be executed—nor did they know the ramifications of the order. Nevertheless, they immediately stopped all construction and hid the foundations. That same night, everyone in the outpost came to help them cover the foundations with sand and place a portable on top of it.[89] Once they finished, it looked as if construction had never taken place on the site – just another portable standing on the bare hilltop. The day after, the couple moved in to the portable where they still live today (Figure 5.14). Their house was never built.[90] And for those who were there that night, the event served as a warning sign. It made it clear that whoever built his home in Pnei Kedem would be taking a risk. For years, this fear would haunt them. "We were traumatized for life," one told to me.[91]

Figure 5.14 The portable placed on top of the covered concrete foundations. After some six months the couple started renovating the portable, they added rooms, a balcony space, and cladded it with a thin layer of stone. Later, with time, they added more and more spaces, and today, in addition to their own unit, they have a rental one, all arranged around the original portable. Photo by the author.

But David, the original founder of Pnei Kedem, refused to give up. In fact, before

[85] According to the building code, construction had to start within less than three years from the date of the purchase. In case a family fails to either start building by that point, or finish construction within seven years, their $2,000 deposit would be given back. See "Takanon Bniya Pratit," 4.
I was unable to get the exact date when plots were distributed among the residents. From conversations with the residents, I understood it was done between 2002 and 2003.
[86] The building code the settlers drafted, requiring flat roofs and natural building materials alongside other elements they perceived as local, rendered construction relatively expensive.
[87] Ben Shahar Family, "Ratzinu Lomar," *Pninei Kedem: Alon Pnei Kedem*, November 18, 2005, Pnei Kedem Archive, Pnei Kedem.
[88] Mordechai, conversation with the author, March 4, 2015.
[89] Ayala, conversation with the author, March 21, 2015.
[90] Mordechai, conversation with the author.
[91] Ayala, conversation with the author.

that traumatizing night, he had met Leah (Figure 5.2), a young architect who just graduated from the Architecture Department at Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem. Together they began thinking about building their house in the outpost. Leah was raised in the settlement of Alon Shvut, where many American-born Jews like her parents settled after the Six-Day War. Like her parents, she was committed to the settlement ideology. And like the people of Pnei Kedem, she was committed to ecological design and to finding a new aesthetic language that would speak to their sense of belonging to the land. The planning of older settlements was misguided, she believes. For her parents' generation, Leah argues, "it was just about having as many housing units as possible…(they wanted) to populate Judea and Samaria, instead of settling it." And settling a place, to her belief, was about "connecting to the land."[92] Only once such a connection is achieved, she insists, there could be peace with the neighboring Palestinians.[93] Equally important, she thought, was finding ways that would encourage strong social ties among the settlers. In fact, in her thesis project at Bezalel, she investigated design alternatives for communal life. Now, at Pnei Kedem, she had the opportunity to realize some of her ideas.

And indeed, it didn't take long before Leah got involved in Pnei Kedem's Building Committee. She soon started drafting plans for her future house with David. She thought the house could be truly ecological; she was inspired by the work of the New-Mexico based architect, Mike Reynolds. Since the 1970s, Reynolds has been developing his "Earthship" houses—passive solar houses made almost exclusively of recyclable materials like used tires and beer bottles. For a while, Leah thought she might be able to design an Earthship house in Pnei Kedem. But after meeting with a few settlers who had recently built their homes in the nearby outpost of Sde Boaz, she learned it would take too much time. The faster they build, she was told, the better: once a home is completed and fully occupied, it is significantly more difficult for the Civil Administration to issue and execute a demolition order. She was told construction must not take more than six weeks.

Accordingly, Leah decided to simplify her plans. She replaced the U-shaped plan, typical of "Earthship" houses, with a square one, and the earth-filled used tires and other found materials with lightweight precast foam concrete blocks. Nevertheless, she did manage to incorporate some vernacular building elements. Most importantly, she laid out the rooms of the house around a patio space, as is common in Middle Eastern houses. In addition, she insisted the house would have a flat roof and be painted brown, the color of the bare hilltop. It had to set a good example. After all, it was the first house to be built in Pnei Kedem, and others, she hoped, would follow her footsteps.

Once the plans were finalized, David brought two metal containers to the site. They were needed as storage space and restrooms for the construction workers. But, to the surprise of the young couple, inspectors from the Civil Administration arrived at the site two days later. Apparently, one of the settlers of Meitzad, the neighboring ultra-Orthodox settlement, saw the containers and suspected construction was taking place; he then contacted the Civil Administration. David and Leah, however, were lucky this time. Since construction hadn't really begun, the inspectors couldn't report anything. The following day, they painted the containers white so they would look like portables and

[92] Leah, interview with the author, March 7, 2015.
[93] Leah, interview with the author.

blend into their surroundings while construction took place.[94]

Leah and David were not the first outpost residents who decided to use camouflage. On one of my visits to Tekoa Dalet, an outpost located some 7 miles north of Pnei Kedem, I was surprised to see a house painted blue with white clouds dotting its flat surface (Figure 5.15). The owner of the house, a talented craftsman who dropped out of architecture school in South Africa before immigrating to Israel, explained the camouflage was necessary to evade the gaze of the Civil Administration. While it is hard to believe inspectors missed the house only because of its painted façade, he was confident it helped.

Figure 5.15 Camouflaged house in the outpost of Tekoa Dalet. Source: Roy's private collection.

Back in Pnei Kedem, Leah and David faced another problem once construction began: their construction workers were too slow. At the time, according to the building code of Pnei Kedem, residents were not allowed to hire Palestinian contractors and construction workers. Only Jewish Israelis – "Hebrew Labor" as was stated in the building code – were allowed. It was safer and more appropriate, the settlers believed. Unfortunately, it was also much more expensive and significantly slower. After a few days, Leah and David realized their Jewish workers must be replaced before it was too late. They explained the situation to their neighbors, and asked to have Palestinian workers allowed in to Pnei Kedem. In the past, residents had refused to discuss the matter.[95] But this time, since construction had already begun and no one wanted to see Leah and David's home demolished, the people of Pnei Kedem agreed to their request. And once the decision was made, their contractor brought in ten Palestinian construction workers; within six weeks, the house was completed (Figure 5.16).

[94] Leah, interview.

[95] According to one of my informants, one resident had threated he would leave the outpost if Palestinian construction workers be allowed in to the outpost. Ayala, conversation with the author. Also, for official proposal to allow only Jewish construction worker enter the outpost, see "Takanon Avoda Ivrit: Beyozmat Akiva Yonatan Shapira," n.d., Pnei Kedem Archive, Pnei Kedem.

Figure 5.16 Leah and David's house, 2015. Photos by the author.

Though Leah was happy to see the house completed, she couldn't ignore the gap between the house she had dreamed of and the one she just built. The house shared very little with Earthship houses, and since everything was done so quickly, she had no chance to fix mistakes made during construction.[96] "You can't build a house in six weeks. It is just not enough," she laments. But she finds comfort thinking about how the house helped transform the outpost. "We gave others the understanding they can build," she explains.[97] And indeed, shortly after the house was completed, others also started building. And with each new house that they built, the residents felt more confident investing more time in construction and design.

As I will show in the following section, those who built their homes in the subsequent years didn't always follow Leah's footsteps, but many shared her interest in building elements they associated with local, mainly Palestinian building traditions. Most importantly, even though the building code was changed to allow various roofing systems, many chose a flat roof. More than any other building element, the flat roof had come to represent vernacular architecture in the eyes of the residents of Pnei Kedem. It is what they usually see when they pass Palestinian villages, and, strangely enough, they have come to envy their neighbors. In the same fashion, some incorporated vaulted arcs and painted their homes "natural" colors, such as brown and beige (Figure 5.17).

[96] Leah, interview.
[97] Leah, interview.

Figure 5.17 Permanent houses in Pnei Kedem with flat roofs. All were built shortly after Leah's house was completed. Painted in beige or decorated with an arced entrance, their design makes reference to Palestinian architecture. Photos by the author.

The search for vernacular architecture, usually borrowed from the neighboring Palestinians, is common to many outposts across the West Bank. In fact, in some outposts, residents have invested much time and money to try and reproduce Palestinian architecture. For example, one of the residents of the outpost of Nativ Ha'avot replicated the façade of a two-story house he saw in Talbiya, a neighborhood built for affluent Arabs of Christian faith in Jerusalem in the 1920s (Figure 5.18).[98] Named after the fifth Abbasid Caliph, Harun al-Rashid, the original house was clad with rough stone tiles, decorated with vaulted arcs, and as architectural historian David Kroyanker explained, had "the splendor of the Arabian Nights."[99] Replicating this oriental splendor in the outpost of Nativ Ha'avot, as the resident recalls, was not an easy task. After finding architectural drawings of the old building, he struggled to find construction workers familiar with traditional building techniques needed to replicate some of the façade elements. After weeks of searching, he was able to find one in a nearby Palestinian village. Construction was slow, but as many of the residents of Pnei Kedem learned, Shlomo knew his house was unlikely to be demolished, and, as he explained to me, this was his "dream house."[100]

[98] After the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, the neighborhood was repopulated with Jewish residents, and many of the original residents lost the right to their property in Talbiya. For details about the displacement of the Arab residents in Talbiya and elsewhere see Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947-1949* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
[99] David Kroyanker, *Adrihalut Beyerushalayim: Tkufot Vesignonot* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1983), 267.
[100] Shlomo, interview with the author, May 17, 2015. About a 15 months after I met with Shlomo, the Supreme Court had issued a demolition order for a few houses in the outpost. See Yotam Berger and Yehonatan Lis, "Bagatz Hora Lamedina Laharos 17 Mivnim Bamaahaz Native Haavot; Benet: Bagatz Mcharsem Beemun Hatzibur," *Haaretz*, September 1, 2016, http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/politics/.premium-1.3056389.

Figure 5.18 Shlomo's house in the outpost of Nativ Ha'avot (left) and an architectural drawing of Villa Harun al-Rashid, drafted by David Kroyanker, he consulted when replicating the building's façade (right). Other than some changes, such as moving the doubled windows from the second to the first floor, and lowering the ceiling of the upper balcony, Shlomo attempted to replicate the original façade with full earnest. Regardless of the obvious Arab origins of the house, though, he insisted it was a German Templers' house. Photo by the author.

The settlers' search for a Palestinian vernacular is not without contradictions and, sometimes, complete denial. For example, when describing the house he replicated, Shlomo insisted German Templers – not Christian Arabs – were the ones who built it. The house, he insisted, followed their unique building traditions.[101] German Templers were members of a sect within the German Protestant church who had immigrated to the Holy Land in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, erecting several colonies across the country. At the time, their buildings stood out because of their pitched red-shingled roofs and other motifs they brought from Germany. Even though, as geographer Yossi Ben-Artzi argues, they occasionally incorporated local building elements like arcs, rounded windows, and stone cladding, the house Shlomo replicated shared very little with the architecture of German Templers.[102] In fact, the drawings Shlomo had consulted when researching the house clearly indicated Arabic sources. But associating vernacular architecture with Arabic culture seemed difficult for Shlomo, as it was for many other outpost residents I met—perhaps even impossible.

The Failure of the Building Committee

As more and more settlers began building their homes in Pnei Kedem, the Building Committee of the outpost – comprised of five resident representatives, with Leah as the unofficial chairperson – became more important. As in other outposts, the committee members were in charge of giving quasi-official building permits, building inspection, and allocating land plots to new residents. Their main task was to reformulate the building code guiding the design of private houses. As I discussed above, before anyone

[101] Shlomo, interview with the author.

[102] According to the historian Yossi Ben Artzi, the elements like the pitched roof that were common to Templer architecture in Israel were not replicas of German architecture. Instead, he argues, they were tweaked so they would fit the local weather and surroundings. According to Ben Artzi, the Templers even attempted to build flat rooftops, but, due to technological shortcomings, they gave up on such a roofing system, and drew on the pitched rooftop they were familiar with from Europe. For a discussion of Templers' architecture in the Holy Land, and how Templers attempted to replicate several building elements common in the region see Yossi Ben-Artzi, "Landscape and Identity – The Israeli Roof During the Last Generations," in *Ha-'Agalah Ha-Mele'ah: Me'ah Ṿe-'eśrim Shenot Tarbut Yiśra'el*, ed. Yiśra'el Barṭal and Merkaz Ts'eriḳ le-toldot ha-Tsiyonut, ha-yishuv u-medinat Yiśra'el (Yerushalayim: Hotsa'at sefarim 'a. sh. Y.L. Magnes, ha-Universiṭah ha-'Ivrit, 2002), 264–66.

dared building permanent homes on the barren hilltop, the settlers had drafted building codes. But these early building codes were a bit immature. Some of the rules they outlined were unrealistic, while others were not definitive enough. Waldan's master plans also laid out some laws regarding building style and size. But her plan was never officially approved, and many of the residents opposed Waldan's plan anyway.[103] The Building Committee members had to write a new building code. Otherwise, they feared, chaos would rule in Pnei Kedem.

When drafting the building code, the committee members attempted to get the residents involved; they thought it would be more appropriate to collaborate on it. Therefore, they circulated questionnaires, organized consultation meetings, and, whenever a new building law was about to be decided on, they gathered everyone for an open debate that was usually followed by a democratic vote. A new law could be added to the building code only if the majority of the residents supported it

But the attempts of the committee weren't always productive. As Leah recalls, the questionnaires they circulated mainly demonstrated the settlers were unable to reach a consensus on some of the most basic issues. Each held to his private vision and showed little concern for others. The debates the committee orchestrated were too frequent, long, and rarely resulted in definitive decisions. And even when a decision was reached, no one really followed it, Leah laments.

Once their homes were at stake, the residents didn't find it necessary to follow the building code. And with time, their disrespect for the committee and the building code only grew stronger. For example, when I asked one of the residents, who was planning to build his house on a plot outside the current borders of the outpost, if he was worried about violating the codes set by the Building Committee, he immediately dismissed my concerns. "How can they tell me not to build there? It is all illegal here!" In the same fashion, another resident, who wanted to build a house that exceeded the allowed building size and encountered some opposition from the Building Committee, bluntly told me, "I wrote the building code! So they think they can tell me now how to use it? …(And, anyway) the building code has no validity. We don't have a (government) approved master plan yet. So I can do whatever I want!"[104] In addition, he complained, given the democratic nature of the Building Committee, the building code in Pnei Kedem is changing on a constant base. In under a year, it was changed twice.[105]

[103] For example, many wanted to overturn the rule that prohibited landowners from building additional rental units on their property. Others proposed limiting the maximum building size. See Meital Sade, "Aseifat Haverim Mahar 3-2-14," February 2, 2014; Taba Committee of Pnei Kedem, "Sheleot Leishur Hatoshavim Beiasefat Hatoshavim Hakrova," February 2, 2014.
[104] Simha, conversations with the author, March 10 and 15, 2015.
[105] Simha, conversations with the author.

Figure 5.19 Structures built by a settler on lands where, according to the Building Committee, construction was prohibited. Photos by the author.

To Leah's disappointment, the Building Committee was also unable to control the development of public spaces in the outpost. A few years ago, Leah sketched a preliminary plan with all public buildings gathered in one area. In consultation with the committee, she placed the main synagogue there, as well as an outdoor theater, and a clinic, among other public facilities. She showed it to some of the residents and to the outpost's secretariat, and they seemed to like the general scheme. But regardless of their enthusiasm, she quickly learned, whenever money for public facilities became available, no one would consult her or the plan.

For example, a few years ago one of the settlers got a donation from an American supporter of the settlement process for a kids' playground. Fearing the money might be taken back, he decided to go ahead. Without consulting anyone, he erected the playground in less than a day on the highest point in Pnei Kedem (Figure 5.20).[106] Leah, who was at work during the day, was shocked when she saw it on her way home. Considering the high altitude and strong winds in Pnei Kedem, she knew the playground should be placed at a lower spot. And yet, when she confronted the settler who oversaw the work he replied, "Well, I was following your plan!" What plan? She wondered. Her plan only indicated the location of the main synagogue and a few other facilities, not a kids' playground. She only wrote the words "kids playground" on the map, without any demarcation lines indicating the exact location of the playground. She planned to work on it at a later stage. He just placed it on top of one or two of the letters p-l-a-y-g-r-o-u-n-d she wrote, Leah recalls with anger.[107] It was too late, though. Once the concrete was poured, it was virtually impossible to move the playground, which, still today, stands empty throughout the year.

[106] Simha, conversation.
[107] Leah, conversation with the author.

Figure 5.20 Located on the highest point in the outpost, where it is exposed to all weather hazards, the playground is rarely in use. Photo by the author.

The design of the main synagogue was equally frustrating. For years, the people of Pnei Kedem have been dreaming of a permanent synagogue structure to replace the current one, which is made of a couple of portables attached to one other. In 2001, one of the founders laid out design guidelines for the structure: a two-story glass building, with inner walls dotted with arcs that enclose a huge mosaic delineating the ancient Israelites' adventures in the Holy Land.[108] But without the needed funding, there was nothing the settlers could do. Then, recently, a rumor about a pending generous donation for the synagogue reached the residents of Pnei Kedem. Quickly, the Building Committee created a special sub-committee in charge of designing the synagogue. Comprised of six members, the sub-committee began making plans for the new synagogue. At the same time, however, a few other settlers, who were suspicious of the Building Committee's subgroup, formed a competing Synagogue Committee that drew different plans for the building. Each group worked independently. Soon, the Building Committee's subgroup broke into two opposing camps. The members simply couldn't agree on the program for the building – mainly, the number of future residents the synagogue should plan for – and, more importantly, the design principles. While some wanted a relatively conventional structure, others wanted a gigantic geodesic dome bisected by a rectilinear shape. At one point, it became clear the rumor about the pending donation was false. There was no money for the synagogue, so the efforts of all three groups were pointless.

Shortly after the playground was erected, Leah, the main force behind the committee, decided to resign. Like Waldan, she realized the settlers had little respect for her professional skills or the authority of the Building Committee. Nor were they able to take part in a democratic planning model. "The problem here," she once explained to me, "is that each and every person living in this place feels like the final word must be his; it

[108] Moshe Lamed, "Tihnun Atidi Shel Beit Haknesset BePnei Kedem: Hazon Shel Moshe Lamed," December 4, 2001, Pnei Kedem Archive, Pnei Kedem.

is an anarchy!" And, at the end of the day, she lamented, "no one cares here about anyone else." Each just builds whatever he wants. "And I care too much. This place is important for me. But here people just don't care," she concluded.

Soon after Leah left, the remaining members of the Building Committee were unable to work together and broke into two committees that rarely communicated. Each group met separately and usually refuted whatever the other group agreed on. About a year ago, whereas one group decided the main public area, the one Leah sketched a while ago, would function as a large green space, with only few buildings, the other group agreed on a more conventional center. Not surprisingly, the Building Committee(s) lost any influence over the residents.[109] After the failure of Waldan and official planning, self-governance and participatory design had also failed to take control over the development of the outpost. The same had happened in almost all other outposts.

Hippie Architecture

With the fall of the Building Committee in Pnei Kedem and other outposts throughout the West Bank, a new building trend has emerged. Small construction teams of no more than five settlers, usually in their 20s and 30s, have been taking over many building commissions in outposts. In charge of the design and execution, their work questions existing building styles and methods in West Bank settlements. Unlike Leah and the founders of Pnei Kedem, these young settlers are not interested in replicating vernacular elements borrowed from the neighboring Palestinians. Instead, they are fascinated with Jewish iconography. Symbols like the Star of David or the Jewish Menorah usually dominate the houses they build. In addition, unlike many of their predecessors, they refuse to work with Palestinian construction workers. The Kingdom of Judea must be built by the Jewish people, many of them insist.

In Pnei Kedem there was one such team (Figure 5.21). Dotan, a thirty-six-year-old Russian-born settler, founded it a couple of years ago. Raised in a secular house, the West Bank and Jewish messianism were foreign to Dotan until after he had a drug-infused spiritual awakening in Asia in his early twenties. Soon after, he returned to Israel and moved to an ultra-Orthodox yeshiva in Jerusalem. There, he devoted his time to the study of old Jewish scriptures. After two years in the yeshiva he moved to the settlement of Bat Ayin. In Bat Ayin, he started experimenting with building techniques and even built himself a house near the settlement. To his disappointment, the Civil Administration demolished the house soon after it was completed.[110] A few years ago, he started getting building commissions in the area, and was able to gather a group of 3 to 4 builders from Pnei Kedem to work under his command.[111] Together, they have been working on several houses in Pnei Kedem and nearby outposts, where their work mainly appeals to those who are more ideologically inclined.

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[109] For example, in 2015, when one of the residents wanted to build a small neighborhood on a hill adjacent to Pnei Kedem (where "he would be the king"), he didn't even think of contacting the committee. The neighborhood was officially referred to as a farm. Gal, conversations with the author, September 6, 8 and 10, 2015. In the same fashion, another resident who has been developing a plan for a wind turbines farm in Pnei Kedem avoided making contact with Pnei Kedem's Building Committee. The settler did contact the settlement of Meitzad since he had to offer them some compensation for the hassle and potential noise caused by the wind turbines. Moshe, interview with the author.

[110] Tovah Lazaroff and Yaakov Lappin, "Settler Homes near Bat Ayin Demolished. Structures Built in Memory of Slain Musician Erez Levanon," *The Jerusalem Post*, June 24, 2010.

[111] Dotan, the manager, was paying each employee $75 dollars a day, without issuing employment contracts.

Figure 5.21 The team working on a private house in Pnei Kedem. Dotan showing a sketch for a new project in the nearby outpost of Eivei Nahal (bottom-right). Photos by the author.

Two such settlers were Hila and Evyatar. Before moving to Pnei Kedem, the former kibbutz member and her husband, who grew up in the far-right settlement of Kedumim, went through a spiritual journey that started in Tel Aviv and culminated in India, where they re-discovered Judaism. Soon after, they returned to Israel and moved to Pnei Kedem. There, they developed uncompromising religious and nationalistic views that stood out even in the context of Pnei Kedem. After living in a portable for a few years, they began thinking about building their permanent home. Dotan and his team seemed ideal to them. Given their views, it was obvious to them their home had to be built by Jewish people rather than Palestinians. In addition, they wanted something mystical, something that would speak to their strong sense of piety, and perhaps even remind them of their time in India.

Hila and Eviyatar were especially impressed with Dotan's use of Jewish symbolism. By the time they began discussing design alternatives with him, Dotan was already engaged in several projects where Jewish symbols dictated the entire design. For

example, the floor plan of two structures he designed—a private house in Pnei Kedem and a community center in the nearby outpost of Eivei Nahal—took the shape of Hotam Shlomo, an octagonal shape comprised of two Stars of David superimposed one on top of the other (Figure 5.22).[112] In other projects, he incorporated images of the Jewish Menorah or Stars of David in interior elements and furnishings (Figure 5.23). He treated these forms with great care. After all, he once told me, when referring to the design of sacred shapes: "it is our claim to the land."[113]

Figure 5.22 Two houses Dotan and his team were working on. The design of both was based on a superimposition of two Stars of David.

Figure 5.23 A fireplace emanating from a Star of David built by Dotan and his collaborators (left), and a ceiling elements designed with a Star of David by Roy, a builder from the outpost of Tekoa Dalet. Photos by the author.

[112] The first house was under construction in 2015, while the one in Eivei Nahal was in preliminary design stages.
[113] Dotan, interview with the author, February 25, 2015.

Together with Dotan the couple began sketching design alternatives for their house. They told him they want something rounded, "something holistic," so Dotan suggested building a geodesic dome. Such domes, he explained, "are very local; they are regional shapes."[114] They were definitely not just a matter of hippie architecture, as I dared suggesting at one of our many meetings. "I hate hippies," he shouted while tying his dreadlocks. Evyatar, who seemed to be unaware of irony, concurred, and insisted it was a holistic form, something very spiritual, appropriate for a pious Jewish family.[115] Complementing the spiritual qualities of the dome, they decided a huge Star of David, carved out of the dome's shell, would dominate the façade.

Figure 5.24 An abandoned geodesic dome in the outpost of Bat Ayin Bet (left), and a yurt structure in the outpost of Tekoa Dalet, 2015 (right). Regardless of its association with free love and other counterculture values, hippie architecture has been gaining popularity in recent years in West Bank outposts. Photos by the author.

When sorting through possible building materials for the dome, it was clear to both Dotan and the young couple it must be made of local materials. This is how the ancient Israelites built their homes, and this is how homes in Judea and Samaria should be built, they agreed. Dotan usually prefers working with local stone. He believes the craft of stonemasonry has meditative qualities. And, equally important, stone walls make new buildings look old, maybe even ancient. Young Jewish builders working in other outposts, such as Nativ Ha'avot and Bnei Adam, share this preference for stonemasonry (Figure 5.25). This time, however, Dotan had to work with another material: the dome's irregular surface rendered stone far too complicated. Instead, he proposed using a wooden frame with mud floor and walls. Eviyatar and Hila thought it was a great idea, and altogether were very happy with the design process.

[114] The issue was brought up many times in our conversations and group meetings. For example, see Dotan, interview with the author, June 16, 2015.

[115] American counterculture dome builders voiced relatively similar arguments. For a discussion of some of these claims see Stephanie Barron et al., eds., "Alternative Shelter: Counterculture Architecture in Northern California," in *Reading California: Art, Image, and Identity, 1900-2000* (Los Angeles : Berkeley: Los Angeles County Museum of Art ; University of California Press, 2000), 256–57.

Figure 5.25 Metal-panel-structures covered with a thick layer of stone in the outposts of Tekoa Dalet (left) and Bnei Adam (right). Photo by the author.

But when construction began, things stopped looking so promising. Work was slow, and it quickly became clear to everyone that Dotan's schedule—he had planned to spend about three months working on the building—was unfeasible. Hila, who was about to give birth to a little boy she named "The Eternity of Israel" [Netzah Israel], was mad. She had been sure the birthday and circumcision celebrations would take place in their new 30-feet-wide geodesic dome. But instead, she gave birth while still at their shabby portable—a relatively modest house for raising "The Eternity of Israel." In addition, the design of the interior space became a painful issue. When the couple originally hired Dotan, they didn't have a lot of money. They thus agreed he would only build the general structure—the dome's shell, floor, and other basic elements. Only if they get more money, he would do the rest – interior walls, bathroom installments, etc. But to the surprise of Eviyatar and Hila, when money became available to them a few weeks later, Dotan refused to take it. By that point he had realized how complex building a geodesic dome actually was; he also confessed to me that like many others in the outpost, he didn't get along with the ultra-nationalist couple and wanted to get away from them as soon as possible.

Things looked even worse once mud was brought in. Since Dotan and his team were not familiar with mud construction techniques, they added Shlomi to the project. Twenty-eight-year-old Shlomi, who was living in a nearby settlement, insisted he was an expert in mud architecture, and even had a grand narrative describing the history of mud construction in the region. He insisted mud was a common building material in biblical Israel. The ancient Israelites and the Canaanites, he argued, used mud. The Palestinians, to his belief, arrived to the region much later, a couple of hundred years ago perhaps, and found some abandoned stone houses left by earlier civilizations. All they had to do was to move-in to pre-existing structures. They never had to develop building techniques, he contended. This is why, according to Shlomi, there is no mud construction in the region anymore.[116] And, now, it was his role to revive these forgotten building traditions, which he learned from watching youtube videos.[117] But perhaps his youtube training was not enough. The mud floor he built for Hila and Eviyatar was tilted and full of cracks; it

[116] Shaul said that there are some mud structures in Jericho. He explained that unlike other Arab communities in the area, the one in Jericho has been there for a longer period of time. Shaul, interview with the interview, June 22, 2015.
[117] Shaul, interview with the author.

looked nothing like an actual floor. And then, at one point, he simply disappeared, leaving Dotan and his team to deal with the mess he left behind.[118]

While Shlomi's disappearance surprised everyone, his distorted narration of the history of the region and the Palestinian people was not entirely foreign to Dotan and his collaborators. I heard them express similar statements on different occasions. For example, when talking with a potential client who considered replacing his Palestinian contractor him, Dotan insisted, "Arabs are not the ones who invented anything here. They are not the ones who master traditional building methods here."[119] He and his Jewish builders were way more fluent in these building techniques, he repeatedly argued.

Competing with Palestinian builders was a central motif in Dotan's work, if not the main one. And it was not an easy competition. Palestinians have been building homes in the region for centuries. They were significantly faster and more skilled, and the homes are cheaper.[120] But Dotan and his friends couldn't accept their inferiority, and not only because it made it harder for them to make a living. For the pious builders, it also created a theological problem: According to the belief, the return of the Jewish people to the Promised Land should "generate sacredness, it should generate beauty," Dotan explains.[121] Whatever a person of Jewish faith builds on this land should be magical: It is his place in the world, and he should know it better than anyone else. Admitting Palestinians build better would mean admitting something in their return to the land had gone wrong—or worse, the prophecy itself.

For this reason, Dotan and Shlomi had to invent a history in which strange building methods – methods the Palestinians were not familiar with – were prevalent. And while some truly believed these methods, like mud architecture, were common among the ancient Israelites, many of them were fully aware of their actual origins. For example, after I had spent hours with Dotan, he admitted the geodesic dome he was building for Evyatar and Hila was not really traditional, holistic, or anything. It simply gave him an advantage over the Palestinians. "There is not a single Arab who could build such a thing! No Arab is building stuff like this," he proudly announced. And, to Dotan's belief, once Eviyatar's dome is completed, "[a]ll of a sudden, the people of Pnei Kedem," who prefer building their homes with Palestinians, "will see something they can't get from these Arab contractors." And finally, he envisioned, the building of Judea and Samaria will be in the hands of the Jewish people.

Promising as Dotan's plan may sound, Palestinian contractors working in the outpost were not so worried about having to compete with their messianic counterparts. For example, Mohammad Issa, a Palestinian contractor who has been working in Jewish settlements since he was a teenager in the 1980s, laughed when I asked him about the works of Jewish contractors in outposts. He thought they still have a lot to learn. Recently, he even found himself assisting a Jewish contractor who was about to make some irreparable mistakes. According to Mohammad, though, it didn't help. The contractor continued without paying attention to his suggestions, and still today the house

[118] Naphtali, conversation with the author, Sept. 10, 2015.
[119] Dotan, conversation with the author and clients in Eivei Nahal, June 16, 2015.
[120] For example, according to what I was told, the daily salary of a Jewish construction worker is three times higher than that of a Palestinian one. A settler who had his house built with Issa told me the construction workers received about $25 dollars for a day of work. Simha, interview with the author. Dotan pays his employees more than $75 a day. One couple in Pnei Kedem who began working with Jewish builders had to replace them with Palestinian ones. The formers were too slow. Yuval, interview with the author, March 5, 2015.
[121] Dotan, interview with the author, February 25, 2015.

cannot be occupied. As for Dotan's geodesic dome that was under construction at the time: he actually liked it. Though laughing about its monumental dimensions, he ironically commented: "When I want to pray, I should go there instead of going to the Dome of the Rock."[122]

But what Mohammad couldn't laugh about was the residents' fear of the Palestinians, regardless of their construction skills. This fear would escalate whenever an attack against Jewish settlers in the area took place, and, at times, would have severe effects on his work. One such event happened in October 2015, when Dotan was still working on Hila and Evyatar's geodesic dome. While driving on the road leading to the outpost, a settler was attacked. A large vehicle blocked his car, and unidentified assailants threw stones at him. After a stone hit his head, one of the attackers stabbed him in the chest. Fortunately, the settler managed to pull out his gun and began shooting, almost unconsciously, until the attackers ran away. On hearing about the event, all Palestinian construction workers were immediately expelled from the outpost. Suddenly they weren't just cheap labor force. They were the enemy. Mohammad, who was at another settlement at the time, was rushed to the outpost. His employees were gathered outside of Pnei Kedem, waiting for him to drive them back home. From now on, some of the settlers demanded, no Palestinian should be allowed into the outpost.

At around the same time Dotan took off to South Africa for a couple of weeks. Eviyatar and Hila's geodesic dome was far from completion. Dotan had already lost a lot of money on it, and it was unclear if he actually had the resources required for finishing it. The same applied to another house he was working on in the outpost. Some worried he would not come back. Hila and Evyatar found themselves facing an unknown future—much like those who had hired Palestinian contractors and didn't know if they would ever see their homes completed after the attack. Perhaps in Hila and Evyatar's case, though, it was a bit more painful; after all, it was their own people who tricked them.

But the concerns of the residents, at least those working with Palestinian contractors, quickly dissolved. A few days after the attack, Mohammad and his workers were allowed in again. Construction on their homes continued as usual.[123] And, a few weeks after leaving, Dotan returned to Pnei Kedem with renewed energy. He was happy to be back, and as always, eager to show there is nothing like "Hebrew Labor." Unfortunately, his messianic zeal was not enough. Even after he had finished covering the dome with wood and other materials, water still leaked in (Figure 5.26). Since Dotan had refused to work on the interior space, Evyatar tried doing it himself. He bought wood, hired someone to help him, and began working. But adding partitions to the dome was difficult, and he soon gave up. A year later, the dome, with a huge Star of David decorating its façade, still stands empty. Hila and Evyatar, together with The Eternity of Israel and their other children, remain in their old portable.

[122] Mohammad Issa, conversation with the author, October 6, 2015.

[123] Some of the rules, however, were tighten. In the past, a Jewish guard could watch over two construction sites. Now, each construction site had to have its own guard. Also, some residents began asking to limit Mohammad and other contractors' freedom of mobility in the outpost, demanding they be grounded to their construction sites, and only when escorted by a Jewish guard, be allowed to drive or walk around.

Figure 5.26 Hila and Evyatar's geodesic dome, 2015. Since the above pictures were taken, Dotan and his team had covered the wooden shell with different materials. Nevertheless, it is still uninhabitable. Photos by the author.

The same had happened to another couple in Pnei Kedem who hired Dotan and his team. Other outpost residents who chose to work with such teams of Jewish builders usually had relatively similar experiences, even if, unlike Hila and Evyatar, they were eventually able to move in to their homes. Time and again, like authoritative and participatory planning, "Hebrew Labor" seems to fail in outposts.

Conclusion

In this chapter I chronicled the narratives of three individuals who believed in the power of architecture. They all thought architecture could make a difference in the West Bank. Each had a different architectural vision: While Waldan merely envisioned a Community Settlement with serpentine ring roads and uniformed houses, Leah sought to connect to the land through a Palestinian vernacular, and Dotan attempted to precipitate the coming of the messiah with "Hebrew Labor." One after the other, however, they all seemed to have failed to realize their visions. Each failure had different outcomes and offers different insights about the agency of architecture in the settlement project today.

Waldan's failure to get her master plan and low-budget units approved was the least complicated one. Shortly after she was introduced to the project, Waldan grew tired of her recalcitrant clients and those unfavorable officers at the Planning Department in

the Civil Administration. By 2004, after a couple of her master plan drawings were rejected, she withdrew from the project. When she was contacted again in 2011 and asked to prepare another master plan, she did the best she could to avoid wasting time on the plan. She knew it had no chance. Regardless of its merits, officials at the Civil Administration cannot approve her plan as long as Pnei Kedem remains illegal. To this end, Waldan's failure points to the authorities' limited reach in outposts.

The failure of Leah and the Building Committee to enforce a building code and oversee the design of the public center was more complex. At first, the retreat of Waldan and the break from official planning authorities gave Leah and the other settlers a sense of empowerment. They felt like architects from the outside were ignorant of their true needs, and like some contemporary scholars, they believed planning should be a participatory endeavor. And, indeed, once in their hands, design was democratized: all design decisions were conceived collaboratively, and debated and voted-on by all the residents. But, soon, trouble began. The settlers were unable to reach a consensus on most matters, and chaos took over. "Today," Leah once told me, "it's an anarchy," and no one really cares about vernacular architecture. Accordingly, the rise and fall of the Building Committee highlights the inability of settlement activists themselves to attain control over the design of outposts. In turn, it also points at the pitfalls of extreme forms of participatory planning.

Dotan's failure to deliver his clients livable spaces, and, more broadly, to develop a coherent aesthetic language that would speak to their sense of piety and belonging to the land—something other than hippie architecture dotted with oversized Stars of David—may seem comic. Nevertheless, it lends us two important insights. First, it reminds us that architectural forms have no fixed political meanings in and of themselves. The geodesic dome that has come to represent American counterculture values—peace and love, among them—can be put into the service of less-than-peaceful causes, like the Israeli occupation.[124] However, the settlers' interest in counterculture architecture, even if taken only as a lifestyle signifier, offers a unique look at their internal dynamics and reasoning. It points at the desire of young settlers to rebel against their parents' generation, whose settlements, they argue, reflected their ideology – crude, utilitarian, and uncompromising. And it is through hippie architecture, alongside other New Age practices, that they attempt to articulate a new settling ideology, one that is more ambiguous, less political, and, like Evyatar and Hila's leaking dome, much more tenuous.

But the story of Pnei Kedem is hardly a narrative of loss and failure. Upon a closer look, it becomes apparent that even though Waldan, Leah, and Dotan were unable to fulfill their plans in their entirety, each had an impact on the design of Pnei Kedem. Waldan's original master plan formed the basis for the outpost, and the general layout of the place follows her ideas, albeit with some changes. Leah's house encouraged others to build their homes, and at least for a while, established vernacular architecture as a standard. As for Dotan, despite the disappointment of his clients, he continues to work in the area; last time we met, his team had more projects than ever before.

In aggregate, Waldan, Leah and Dotan's attempts to intervene in the design of Pnei Kedem have resulted in a relatively functioning outpost. Even though almost all residents I interviewed had some complaints, they also seemed to be satisfied with the

[124] For a critical overview of American counterculture architecture, and their transformation into markers of life style, see Barron et al., "Alternative Shelter: Counterculture Architecture in Northern California."

outpost. In fact, since I left Pnei Kedem, it has doubled its size. In 2016, students' dormitories, catering to students who go to school in Jerusalem, were built in the outskirts of Pnei Kedem. In the following year, one of the residents has opened a farm on an adjacent hill, adding another neighborhood to the outpost. Meanwhile, Pnei Kedem's secretariat is actively negotiating the legalization of the outpost with state officials. The prospects of these negotiations are unclear, nevertheless it would be reasonable to assume that in the next few years Pnei Kedem will continue growing.

Epilogue

Over the last decade, settlements have continued to expand. In 2017, Israel oversaw the construction of some 3,000 residential units in the West Bank, and experts argue that these numbers are likely to grow in the coming years.[1] Some fear that the settlement project has reached a "point of no return," as so many Israelis now live in the West Bank that a withdrawal to the pre-1967 borders is unthinkable.[2]

Interestingly, just when political commentators began to give up, Israeli architects and architectural theorists have started to seek after venues of action.[3] Following the outbreak of the second Intifada and the collapse of the Oslo Accords, they have curated exhibitions, organized symposia, and written essays, asking whether they could intervene in the trajectory of the Israeli occupation. Ignoring the fragmented architectural history of settlements, many of them often assumed that they could. They thought that design professionals enjoyed an authoritative power over the construction of settlements, and accordingly that power could be undone.

Marking the rise of this trend were the events leading to the World Congress of the International Union of Architects (UIA) in Berlin from July 2002. Earlier that year, the Israeli Association of United Architects (IAUA) selected Eyal Weizman and Rafi Segal—then graduate students in their thirties—to curate the Israeli pavilion in the World Congress. Weizman and Segal initially entitled the pavilion "The Instinct to Inhabit" [HaInstinkt HaHityashvuti].[4] The exhibition, they explained, "was an examination of the underpinnings of the urge to inhabit and create a new world from scratch as the most representative phenomenon of modern thinking, which was also imprinted in Israeli-Zionist thinking."[5] It is this urge, the curators asserted, that led to the erection of some 800 new villages and towns in Israel since 1948. They proposed exhibiting plan drawings of some 150 towns and villages in Israel and the West Bank that captured this urge (Figure 6.1).[6]

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[1] The exact number of units built in 2017 is hard to estimate. According to a news report between April 2016 and March 2017 construction of 2,758 had begun. This number doesn't include units that were already under construction, or units that were built in unauthorized outposts. See Yotam Berger, "Aliya Shel 70% Behathalot Bniya Behitnahaluyot Bashana Haaharona," *Haaretz*, June 19, 2017, https://www.haaretz.co.il/news/politics/.premium-1.4180851.

[2] See, for examples, Asher Schechter, "Why Israel Will Never Be Able to Withdraw From the West Bank," *Haaretz*, July 30, 2015, https://www.haaretz.com/.premium-why-israel-will-never-be-able-to-withdraw-from-the-west-bank-1.5381292; "Evacuating Israeli Settlements Could Spark Civil War, US Envoy Reportedly Warns," *I24NEWS*, February 19, 2018, https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/israel/168087-180220-evacuating-israeli-settlements-could-lead-to-civil-war-warns-us-envoy-report.

[3] A number of attempts to reach an agreement with the Palestinian had taken place during this time. Notable among these were the Taba Summit from 2001, the negotiations between Ehud Olmert and Mahmoud Abbas from 2006-2008, the 2010–11 Israeli–Palestinian peace talks, and, to a degree, the 2005 Israeli disengagement from Gaza. All of these attempts had failed.

[4] Weizman and Segal used the term hityashvut rather than hitnachalut. In Israel, Hityashvut mainly refers to pre-state settlements (the Yeshuv). Meanwhile Hitnahalut refers to post-1967 West Bank settlements. For this reason I chose to translate hityashvut to "inhabit" rather than "settle," even though both could be translated into "settle" in English. For a discussion of the two terms and how each has a different meaning in Hebrew see David Newman, "The Territorial Politics of Exurbanization: Reflections on 25 Years of Jewish Settlement in the West Bank," *Israel Affairs* 3, no. 1 (1996): 71–73.

[5] Ester Zandberg, "Al Hadahaf Livro Olam Hadash," *Haaretz*, May 1, 2002, D1 and D4.

[6] Zandberg, D1.

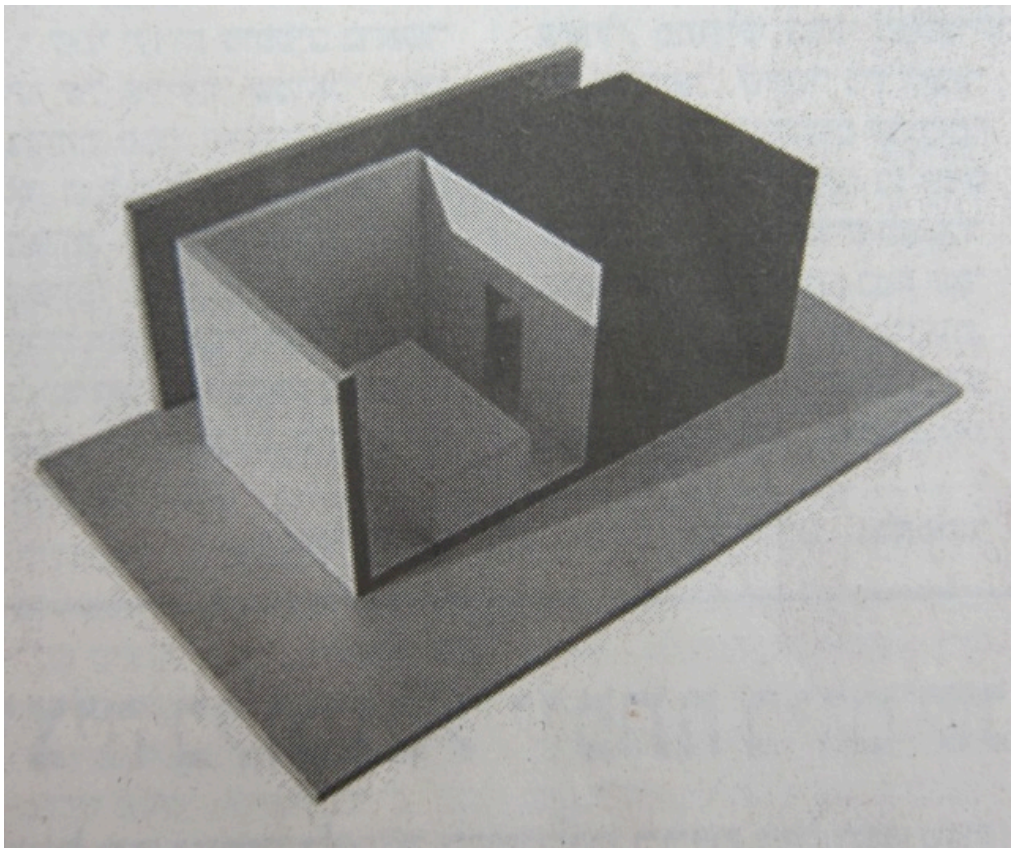

Figure 6.1 Weizman and Segal's original proposal for the exhibition space. The space was to be divided into two: a white room with plan drawings, and a dark room with a film showing the drawn site in their current condition. Source: Haaretz, May 1, 2002, D1.

The chairperson of IAUA, Uri Zerubavel, found the proposal promising. "Since 1948 to 2000 we have housed masses of people. From 600,000 people to 6 million! That's a ten-times increase!" he later reflected.[7] He was so excited about the show that he even put one of his employees in the service of Weizman and Segal. His employee made schematic plan drawings of West Bank settlements for the exhibition catalog. Zerubavel himself was not a supporter of the settlement project, and had even declined two large-scale building commissions in West Bank settlements in the past. But, for the show, he thought it was legitimate to have West Bank settlements presented alongside more established Israeli towns. After all, he later explained, they were part of the story.[8] Regardless, one of Weizman's maps of the West Bank was printed on the Israeli pavilion in the Venice Biennale that same year (Figure 6.2).[9]

[7] Uri Zerubavel, interview with the author, Aug 15, 2016.
[8] Zerubavel, interview with the author.
[9] See Zvi Efrat, *Borderlinedisorder* (Ministry of Science, Culture and Sport, 2002).

Figure 6.2 Borderline Disorder, curated by Zvi Efrat, 2002. The Israeli Pavilion in Venice was wrapped with a layer of plastic blinds—a common Israeli building element. The curators used it as a metaphor to Israel's fuzzy borders. A map of the West Bank, drawn by Weizman, was printed on the blinds. Other works that were equally critical of the Israeli occupation were included in the exhibition's catalog.[10] The Israeli Ministry of Culture was the main source of funding for the show. Source: Efrat Kowalsky Architects' website, http://www.efrat-kowalsky.co.il/project/borderlinedisorder-8th-architecture-biennale/.

But when Zerubavel saw copies of the catalog four days before the opening, he was outraged.[11] Weizman and Segal had changed the original title, "The Instinct to Inhabit," with a new one: "A Civilian Occupation: The Politics of Israeli Architecture." On the cover page was a silhouette of the West Bank painted in red, "as if it was a blood stain," Zerubavel later recalled (Figure 3). Browsing through the catalog all he saw were aerial views of settlements and photos of military equipment (Figure 4).[12] The following day, the IAUA's board of trustees decided not to send the catalog to Berlin, and banned the 5000 printed copies. "If you are a political party," Zerubavel explained the decision to a New York Times reporter, "you can do what they [Weizman and Segal] have done. But the association [IAUA] is apolitical," he argued. "It has members on the left and on the right." Regardless, he explained, "We are an association of architects, not a political party."[13] Accordingly, he explained to another reporter, "The IAUA thinks the things presented in the catalog are not architecture."[14]

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[10] Efrat.
[11] Zerubavel, interview.
[12] Zrubavel, interview; Alan Riding, "Are Politics Built into Architecture?," *The New York Times*, August 10, 2002, sec. Arts, https://www.nytimes.com/2002/08/10/arts/are-politics-built-into-architecture.html?pagewanted=1.
[13] Riding.
[14] Ester Zandberg, "Butla Hataaruha Haisraelit Bekenes Haadrihalim Bebrlin," *Haaretz*, July 10, 2002, D1. For Zerubavel's official press release see Uri Zerubavel, "Bitul Matzeget Berlin - Divrei Yo"r Amutat Haadrihalim," July 19, 2002, http://www.archijob.co.il/archijob_news/one_news.asp?IDNews=285#.WxePyhQbb4g.

Figure 6.3 Front and back cover pages of the original catalog of *A Civilian Occupation*. Designed by graphic designer and activist David Tartakover, the front cover (right side) shows a silhouette of the West Bank in red. In a series of collage works, titled "Stain," Tartakover juxtaposed the same silhouette on top of Israeli politicians' portraits. When Zerubavel saw the cover piece, he was outraged. The red stain, he knew, represented a bleeding wound. Zerubavel marked out with a blue pen the names of all those associated with the IAUA. Source: Uri Zerubavel's personal collection.

Figure 6.4 Spreads from *A Civilian Occupation*. The catalog included many aerial views of West Bank settlements (top). In addition, there was a map of the West Bank drawn by Weizman (bottom left). Weizman drew the map for B'TSELEM, a non-profit organization dedicated to documenting human right violations. On the bottom right are plan drawings of West Bank settlements that Zerubavel's employee had drawn. Source: Uri Zerubavel's private collection.

Unlike the IAUA, architects around the world thought the catalog was very much about architecture. The story of the two young architects, who dared expose what many believed to be Israel's darkest secret, and in return, saw their work censored, touched the hearts of many.[15] Weizamn stole 850 copies of the catalog from the printing shop in Tel Aviv and passed them out at the Congress, where they became the hottest item in the Congress' book fair.[16] Soon after, the show was presented at the Storefront for Art and Architecture gallery in New York and the Worth-Ryder Gallery at UC Berkeley. In

[15] Weizman and other commentators have argued the catalog was censured. However, since the state of Israel was not involved in the decision not to send the catalog, the term "censured" is inaccurate to describe IAUA's decision.
[16] Zerubavel, interview.

addition, it was featured in Berlin, Stockholm, and Rotterdam. In 2003, Verso and Babel reprinted the catalog. A French edition appeared the following year.

The show communicated a clear message: architecture *is* a powerful agent. "Just like the gun or the tank," Weizman explained, architecture and planning have become military weapons.[17] When asked about an appropriate course of action, Weizman proposed trying Israeli architects at the International Criminal Court at The Hague.[18].[19] Weizman's proposal gained popularity among his international peers. But to their disappointment, Weizman was unable to try a single Israeli architect at The Hague.

Over the following years, a number of architectural organizations across the world began to hold architects responsible—at least partially—for the Israeli occupation. The most notable is *Architects and Planners for Justice in Palestine* (APJP).[20] APJP enjoyed a very promising start, when some sixty high-profile architects and writers, showed up for its inaugural meeting at Richard Rogers' headquarters in London to discuss possible measures against their Israeli peers.[21] But like Weizman, APJP didn't gain much power. In fact, less than four weeks after APJP's inaugural meeting, in light of criticism voiced by some of his Jewish clients in New York, Rogers himself released a statement denouncing the group.[22] "I am not now nor have I ever been a member," Rogers insisted.[23] In fact, in a battle between Palestine and Israel, or, as he put it, between "a country that is a terrorist state and a country that's a democratic state," Rogers asserted he is "all for the democratic state."[24] Probably on the advice of his public relations consultant Howard Rubenstein, Rogers also recalled the good times he and his wife had on their honeymoon in Israel.[25] Like other such attempts, APJP failed to intervene in the course of the Israeli occupation.

The inability of these initiatives to make a difference led many architects and commentators to the conclusion that architecture has no political agency. Even Sharon Rotbard, Weizman's friend and an activist in his own right, has admitted defeat. "The problem was that I had this dream that we could apply this thing [political criticism] in architecture," he told me. But it didn't happen. What Weizman and these other

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[17] Eyal Weizman, "The Evil Architects Do," in *Content: Triumph of Realization*, ed. Rem Koolhaas and Brendan McGetrick (Köln: Taschen, 2004), 60. A relatively similar argument appears in A Civilian Occupation, see Rafi Segal, Eyal Weizman, and David Tartakover, eds., *A Civilian Occupation: The Politics of Israeli Architecture*, Rev. ed (Tel Aviv : London ; New York: Babel ; VERSO, 2003).

[18] Weizman and Segal make a relatively similar argument in the introduction they wrote for the reprinted volume that Verso and Babel published in 2003. Segal, Weizman, and Tartakover, *A Civilian Occupation*, 25.

[19] Weizman, "The Evil Architects Do," 63.

[20] For example, APJP called architects to boycott Israeli architects in 2006. That same year, APJP demanded the organizers of the 10th International Architecture Biennale in Venice cancel the Israeli show "Life Saver: Typology of Commemoration in Israel." Ester Zandberg, "Adrihalim Britim Korim Leherem Al Yisrael," *Haaretz*, February 12, 2006, https://www.haaretz.co.il/gallery/1.1082367; Architects and Planners for Justice in Palestine, "Petition to the Organizers 10th International Architecture Biennale Venice - September 2006," accessed June 5, 2018, http://apjp.org/venice-biennale/; Assaf Uni, "Habianale Leadrihalut Bevenetziya Nidreshet Levatel Histatfut Yisrael," *Haaretz*, September 6, 2006, https://www.haaretz.co.il/gallery/1.1134717.

[21] Oliver Duff, Rob Sharp, and Eric Silver, "Architects Threaten to Boycott Israel over 'apartheid' Barrier," *The Independent*, February 10, 2006, 8.

[22] The State Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, Comptroller Alan Hevesi, and New York Congressman Anthony Wiener were among the people who voiced their opposition to Rogers' association with APJP. They demanded Rogers be dropped from the Javits Center project—a 1.7 billion dollars project—and that tax credits be withdrawn from Silvercup Studios—a 1 billion dollars commission—unless Rogers be dismissed. Meanwhile, Rogers was also summoned to New York in order to explain himself to Empire State Development Corporation chair Charles Gargano. See Michael Sorkin, "Guilt by Association: Political Expression and Architecture," *Architectural Record*, July 2006, 53–54; "An American Inquisition?," *The Nation*, March 16, 2006, https://www.thenation.com/article/american-inquisition/; Alan G. Brake, "Despite Controversy, Rogers Will Keep Javits Commission," *Architectural Record*, April 2006, 33.

[23] Sorkin, "Guilt by Association: Political Expression and Architecture," 53–54.

[24] "An American Inquisition?"

[25] Sorkin, "Guilt by Association: Political Expression and Architecture"; "An American Inquisition?"

organizations had offered was to monitor and expose the evils of others, "and that's not a constructive action," Rotbard lamented. The failure to achieve a positive action led Rotbard to the conclusion that architecture cannot become an active agent in the occupation.[26]

By analyzing the architectural history of settlements, this study has shown that architecture did have some agency. Settlement activists used specific architectural styles to articulate their identities and attract Israelis to the West Bank. The settlers of Ofra commissioned kibbutz houses to bolster a sense of community among themselves, and, along the way, gain the support of the general public. Later, *Gush Emunim* activists applied eclectic building styles to attract secular profiteers who sought a suburban ideal. Recently, outpost residents have replicated counterculture architecture to articulate a new settling ideology. Architecture has been an active agent under the hands of settlers.

This dissertation has also shown that professional architects have taken part in the settlement project. They provided designs that often intervened in the everyday lives of settlers. Rita Dunskey Foyershtein and Shmuel Shaked designed modernist housing blocs in Kiryat Arba that countered the settlers' biblical imaginary in the early 1970s. Later, Saadiya Mandel and Erol Packer designed Palestinian-inspired housing complexes that supported the settlers' ambitions. In the 1980s, Avraham Yaski and Yossi Sivan designed modest row houses that eventually sabotaged real-estate developers' attempts to attract potential homebuyers to the West Bank. Over the course of five decades of settlements construction, architects have repeatedly intervened in the settlement project.

Yet, time and again, architects saw how their plans resulted in unexpected outcomes. Kiryat Arba's modernist housing blocs only radicalized the settlers. They discouraged presumably moderate settlers, who returned to their homes in Israel, and in their place far more radical ones moved in. Mandel and Packer's introverted housing complex, on the other hand, encouraged the creation of a highly exclusionary space. It allowed settlers to separate themselves from their neighboring Palestinians, and later made it easier for military officials to seal the complex.[27] The history of settlement design is characterized by this dissonance between intentional and actual uses of space.

Settlements remind us with force that architecture can serve political purposes only to the degree that the intentions of the architects coincide with those of the users. As Michel Foucault has argued, architecture on its own cannot promote a political program. It is always dependent on the actual practices of the users. The social and the spatial are enmeshed. "Each can only be understood through the other."[28] The paradoxes that characterized the architectural history of settlements were inevitable given the gap between the designs provided by architects and the plans of the settlers.

Economic forces have also undermined the autonomy of architecture in the West Bank. Few Israeli architects were in a position to decline commissions in the West Bank. Even Yaacov Yaar, one of Israel's most successful architects, found himself working in settlements. "In the 1980s, to plan or not to plan beyond the Green Line [pre-1967 border] was a question of to be or not to be," he later recalled. Government policy also

[26] For this reason, Rotbard has stopped accepting building commissions altogether. Sharon Rotbard, interview with the author, July 31, 2016.
[27] I thank Alona Nitzan-Shiftan for this observation.
[28] Michel Foucault, "Space, Knowledge, and Power," interview by Paul Rabinow, in *Architecture Theory since 1968*, ed. K. Michael Hays (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2000). Also see Gwendolyn Wright, "Cultural History: Europeans, Americans, and the Meanings of Space," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 64, no. 4 (December 2005): 436–40.

impacted architectural styles. Generous government loans and funding packages geared towards the lower classes had mandated new housing schemes in the 1980s. The lack of monetary resources, in contrast, has encouraged light construction in unauthorized outposts.

Architects, then, were not overtly empowered agents in the West Bank as Weizman assumes. Nor were they transparent carriers of state power as Rotbard concluded. By tracing the history of five decades of settlement design, this study has shown that they have been entangled in a web of forces and actors. Architecture was affected by changing government policies and negotiated with a multitude of actors, ranging from state officials and real estate developers, to religious radicals, ultra-Orthodox wives, and amateur archeologists. None of these actors formed a cohesive voice. Instead, they have continually fluctuated over the course of the last five decades, posing unexpected demands on the shaping of the built environment.

Architects who were able to have a political effect were those who focused on specific sites and were able to locate them in their unique social context. Architects like Cassuto or Leah knew their clients, the legal constraints, the construction workers, and even some of the neighboring Palestinians. They also accepted uncertainty and contradiction. They knew that architectural agency is not an abstract or uninterrupted ideal.[29] Architects wishing to intervene in the predicament of the Israeli occupation might learn from past experiences and search for agency on the ground.

[29] One may argue that Leah and Cassuto enjoyed the support of state officials because they were associated with the right, especially when considering the current Israeli government. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that Cassuto drew his initial plans for "Jewish Hebron" when a left-leaning government ruled the country, and Ilana has worked in Peni Kedem at times when right- and left-leaning governments were in power.

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