

THE SUBVERSIVE UTOPIA:
LOUIS KAHN AND THE QUESTION OF THE NATIONAL
JEWISH STYLE IN JERUSALEM

YASIR SAKR

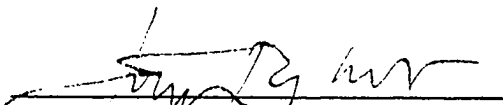
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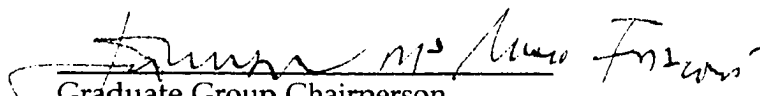
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ABSTRACT

THE SUBVERSIVE UTOPIA: LOUIS KAHN AND THE QUESTION OF THE
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YASIR SAKR

JOSEPH RYKWERT

This dissertation examines the critical role of modern architects in shaping and transforming national Israeli symbols with special regard to Jerusalem. According to customary views, Zionist symbols image the secular state of Israel as an emancipation of the Jewish nation from the oppressive Diaspora past. The first part of this study analyzes pre-1967 designs, by architects including Baehrwald, Geddes, Mendelsohn, "Bauhaus" practitioners, and Rau that attempted to construct a Jewish style relating these national symbols. Images of the Diaspora in their designs are shown to conceal areas of tension with official Zionist memory. Louis Kahn's later design of the Khurvah synagogue in the Old City of Jerusalem creatively exploited this tension to redefine the national style. As a case study, Kahn's design distinctly shows that the shaping of national symbols and memory is a process contested not only by competing state institutions, but by marginal elements, in this case individual architects. This challenges the predominant view that national symbols are forged, consolidated, and disseminated by cohesive state institutions, collective power-structures, and ruling elites. The present study scrutinizes and pieces together discrepant archival documents, drawings, and accounts of what were commonly regarded as unrelated intentions, interpretations, events, policies, and projects in the Jewish Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem, to reveal a crucial unrecognized aspect of Kahn's Khurvah design. I specifically analyze

the interplay of Kahn's double metaphor with the competing traditional and national symbols of Jerusalem, such as the old Khurvah, the western Wall, and most importantly, the mythical Temple and the Dome of the Rock. The analysis reconstructs the continued drastic impact of the transformation of Kahn's idiosyncratic metaphor into an authoritative symbol, even more into a subversive utopia, on shaping Jerusalem and national memory. The impact of Kahn's paradoxical metaphor is traced through analysis of subsequent archaeological excavation, planning and designs for the Jewish Quarter and its structures, including the western Wall plaza, the Cardo, and the Khurvah synagogue proposed by Safdie, Lasdun, Bugod and others.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract. iii

Acknowledgments. v

List of Illustrations. ix

Introduction. 1

Chapter 1: The National Jewish Style(s). 12

The Old Khurvah: The Diaspora Ottoman Style. 12

In Search of a Zionist Style. 15

The Romantic Jewish Style in Palestine. 18

The Oriental Diaspora Style in Germany. 19

The Jewish style of the British Mandate. 22

The Bauhaus Style. p. 26

Mendelsohn's National Jewish Style. 29

The Israeli Statist Style (mamlakhtiut). 35

The New Zionist Style (1956-Present). 40

Chapter 2: Louis Kahn's Khurvah Design. 44

The Design Scheme. 44

The Metaphorical Image. 48

The Metonymic Image. 51

The Subversive and Occulted Figuration. 55

Kahn's Temple: The Rites of Heresy. 59

Chapter 3: Kahn's Metaphor as a National Symbol. 68

Splitting the National Body. 72

Religious and Diaspora Perception of Kahn's Imagery. 73

Nationalist Perception of Kahn's Metaphor. 76

Chapter 4: Shaping the Jewish Quarter. 85

Planning the Quarter. 85

Urban Ruins. 89

The Cardo Museum. 93

Conclusion. 97

Chapter 5: Fashioning the Western Wall as National Symbol. 100

Isamu Noguchi. 103

The Scheme of Schoenberger's Team: 104

Moshe Safdie's Scheme. 106

David Fisher's Scheme. 112

Safdie, a Final Attempt. 115

Conclusion. 117

Chapter 6 : The Resurgence of the Khurvah's Utopia. 120

The Khurvah as a Symbol of Orthodoxy. 123

Lasdun's Khurvah Design. 127

The Khurvah as a Symbol of Messianic Judaism. 133

Chapter 7: Conclusion. 141

Bibliography. 150

Appendix. 167

Index. 274

List of Illustrations

Fig.1 Old Khurva Senagogue, elevations and cross sections, Old City, Jerusalem, 1856-1864.	168
Fig.2 Old Khurva Senagogue, floor plans, Old City Jerusalem, 1856-1864.	169
Fig.3 Bird's eye view of Old City of Jerusalem, with Old Khurva in the foreground, 1934.....	169
Fig.4 Gimnasia Herzliah, First Hebrew High School in Tel Aviv, Architect: Barski. 1906.....	169
Fig.5 Technion in Haifa. Architect: Alex Berwald, 1912.	170
Fig.6 Model of Senagogue, Architect: Gottfried Semper, Dresden, 1980.....	171
Fig.7 Floor plan and cross section, Architect: Gottfried Semper, Dresden, 1980.	
Fig.8 Rockefeller Museum in Jerusalem, Architect: A. Harrison, 1930s.	172
Fig.9 The 1918 Jerusalem Town Plan by Mclean.....	172
Fig.10 The 1922 Jerusalem Town Plan, by Ashbee-Geddes.....	173
Fig.11 Proposed Design for Hebrew University, by Patrick Geddes, 1919.....	173
Fig.12 Hebrew University, Geddes's 'Aula Acadamica', 1912.	174
Fig.13 Library for the Jewish University, Richard Neutra, Jerusalem, 1923.....	174
Fig.14 House of Cohen-Plaskovsky, Architect: Raphael and Jehuda Magidovich, 1935-1936.	175
Fig.15 View of Hayarkon Street from the sea in the 1930s.	176
Fig.16 Old Business Center, Architect: Mendelsohn and Neutra, 1923.....	176
Fig.17 Perspective looking towards the Old Business Center, Architect: Mendelsohn and Neutra, 1923.	176
Fig.18 Weizmann House, Architect: Mendelsohn, Rehovot, 1934-1936.	177
Fig.19 Floor Plans, Weizmann House, E. Mendelsohn, Rehovot, 1934-1936.	177
Fig.20 Floor Plans, Hebrew University and Hadassah Medical Center on Mount Scopus, Jerusalem, Architect: Mendelsohn, 1936-1938.	178

Fig.21 General view with the Arab village, E. Mendelsohn, 1936-1938.....	179
Fig.22 Corner view, Hadassah Center,E. Mendelsohn, 1936-1938.....	179
Fig.23 Concept sketches, Hadassah Center, E Mendelsohn, 1936-1938.....	179
Fig.24 Cantilevered projection of the semi-cylinder Balcony, Hadassah Center, Architect: Mendelsohn, 1936-1938.	180
Fig.25 View of the portico surmounted by the three cupolas, Hebrew University, Architect: Mendelsohn, 1936-1938.	180
Fig.26 The 1948 Jerusalem plan, by Heinz Rau.....	181
Fig.27 View of a neighbourhood unit in the new town of Yokna'am, 1948.	182
Fig.28 View of the reconstructed residential street, Old Jaffa, 1960.	183
Fig.29 View of a residential street before reconstruction, Old Jaffa,1960.....	183
Fig.30 View of the National Museum, Jerusalem, 1960.	184
Fig.31 View of the Western Wall shortly after demolishing the Morrocan quarter, Jerusalem 1967.	185
Fig.32 Ruins of the Khurvah.	186
Fig.33 Louis I. Kahn inspecting the Khurvah ruins.	186
Fig.34 View of the Old City before intervention.....	187
Fig.35 View of the Old City after Kahn's intervention.	188
Fig.36 Model of Khurva in context, Architect: Louis I. Kahn.	189
Fig.37 Model of Khurva , Architect: Louis I. Kahn.	190
Fig.38 Ground floor plan of Khurvah , Architect: Louis I. Kahn.	191
Fig.39 First floor plan of Khurva , Architect: Louis I. Kahn.	191
Fig.40 View of Khurvah in relation to the Dome of the Rock.	192
Fig.41 View of the Western Wall in relation to the Dome of the Rock.	192
Fig.42 Conceptual drawing.	193
Fig.43 Site cross section.	193
Fig.44 Sketches of Acropolis, Architect: Louis I. Kahn, 1951.	193
Fig.45 Study sketches, Memorial to six Million Jews, New York City,	194

(1967-1969), Architect: Louis I Kahn.

Fig.46 Study model, Memorial to six Million Jews, New York City, (1967-1969), Architect: Louis I Kahn.	194
Fig.47 View inside stone pylons, Khurva.....	195
Fig.48 - 51 Study sketches, Architect: Louis I. Kahn.	196
Fig.52 View of interior, Model of Khurva.	197
Fig.53 Study sketches, Khurva, Architect: Louis I. Kahn.....	197
Fig.54 Site plan showing the relation between the Government House and major sites in Jerusalem	198
Fig.55 View of Government Hill from the Dome of the Rock.	199
Fig.56 City skyline.	199
Fig.57 Cross section of Khurva.	200
Fig.58 Street level plan.	200
Fig.59 Upper level plan.....	200
Fig.60 Map of the Old city of Jerusalem.	201
Fig.61 View of the Old city of Jerusalem.	202
Fig.62 Site plan of the Jewish Quarter, Shlomo Gardi.....	203
Fig.63 Site plan showing zoning of the Jewish Quarter, Shlomo Gardi.	204
Fig.64 Site plan of Jewish quarter showing axis of main streets and..... public areas.	205
Fig.65 General plan of Jewish quarter.	206
Fig.66 Proposed design for Pilgrims' Route.	207
Fig.67 Isometric view of the Khurva, Architect: Louis I. Kahn.	208
Fig.68 Eastern elevation- Jewish Quarter.....	209
Fig.69 View of Eastern elevation- Jewish quarter.	210
Fig.70 Yeshivat Hakotel, Level I and Level II plans and legend.	211
Fig.71 Yeshivat Hakotel, Level IV plan and cross section.	211
Fig.72 Model of Yeshivat Hakotel, Old city, Jerusalem.	212

Fig.73 -74 Residential block (House of Vaults), Jewish quarter.	213
Fig.75 The Mosaic map of Jerusalem.....	214
Fig.76 Entrance level floor plan, Cardo.	215
Fig.77 Covered entrance level floor plan, Cardo.	215
Fig.78 Structural system, Cardo.	216
Fig.79 Cross section, Cardo.	216
Fig.80 View of Byzantine colonade, Cardo.	217
Fig.81 View of crusador hall, Cardo.	217
Fig.82 Cvlinaria Restaurant, Cardo.	218
Fig.83 Logo of Cvlinaria Restaurant, Cardo.	218
Fig.84 Khurva Synagogue, partial restoration and preservation--plan.... and cross sections.	219
Fig.85 View of Khurva Arch.	219
Fig.86 View of the restored gate of the Tifferet Israel	220
Fig.87 Plan of Wailing Wall and Adjacent areas, Jerusalem.	221
Fig.88 View of the Western Wall. Reprinted from Meir Ben-Dov.	222
Fig.89 View of Morocco quarter and the Old Western Wall,	222
Fig.90 The Western Wall Plaza shortly after the demolition of the Mughrabi Quarter.	223
Fig.91 Military scene at the Western Wall Plaza.....	224
Fig.92 Cross section of a design for the western Wall, Architect: Isamu Noguchi.	225
Fig.93 Top view of a study model for the western Wall, Architect: Isamu Noguchi.	226
Fig.94 Design of Western Wall Plaza, Architect: Joseph Shoenberger.....	226
Fig.95 Isometric view and cross section of the western Wall, Architect: Arthur Kutcher et al.	227
Fig.96 Visual studies of the Western Wall Plaza, Kutcher et al	228
Fig.97 Top view study, Arthur Kutcher and his colleagues (1971).	229

Fig.98 Present condition of the Western Wall plaza by David Fisher.	230
Fig.99 Cross section of the Western Wall Plaza, Moshe Safdie.....	231
Fig.100 Section-elevation of the Western Wall Plaza, Moshe Safdie.....	231
Fig.101 Conceptual plan of the Western Wall Plaza, Moshe Safdie.	232
Fig.102 Conceptual plan of the Western Wall Plaza, Moshe Safdie.	232
Fig.103 Model of the Western Wall, Moshe Safdie.	233
Fig.104 Axonometric view of the Western Wall Plaza, Moshe Safdie.	234
Fig.105 Roof plan of the Western Wall Plaza, Moshe Safdie.	235
Fig.106 Top view of the Western Wall plaza by David Fisher.	236
Fig.107 Upper level plan of the Western Wall plaza by David Fisher.	236
Fig.108 Lower level plan of the Western Wall plaza by David Fisher.	237
Fig.109 Temple area of the Western Wall plaza by David Fisher.	237
Fig.110 Cross section of the Western Wall plaza by David Fisher.	238
Fig.111 Cross section looking east, Architect: Denys Lasdun.	239
Fig.112 Gallery level plan, Architect: Denys Lasdun.	239
Fig.113 Roof plan, Architect: Denys Lasdun.	240
Fig.114 Main (ground) floor plan, Architect: Denys Lasdun.	240
Fig.115 Basement level floor plan.	241
Fig.116 View of building from the plaza.	241
Fig.117 Top view of building and the plaza.	242
Fig.118 Cross-section of building and the plaza.	242
Fig.119 Conceptual sketch for Khurva, Architect: David Lasdun.	242
Fig.120 General view of the building and plaza.	243
Fig.121 Model for the reconstruction of the Khurva by Yesh'ia Elon.	243
Fig.122 Khurvah square.	245
Fig.123 View of the Old City.	245

Introduction

This study examines the critical role of modern architecture and individual architects in shaping and transforming national Israeli symbols, with special regard to the Old City of Jerusalem. It is generally held that Israeli national symbols essentially image Zionism as a pioneering movement awakening the Jewish nation from a stagnant Diaspora tradition and restoring to it its biblical origin in Palestine in a sovereign progressive Jewish state.¹ The first part of the study analyses pre-1967 designs by architects including Baehrwahld, Geddes, Mendelsohn, "Bauhaus" figures, and Rau who attempted to construct a National Jewish style in Palestine.

The analysis reveals that the pursuit of this national Jewish style proved problematic if not elusive. The Diaspora memory was still too vivid to be discarded, especially with regard to the Old City of Jerusalem. The suppression of more than two thousand years of Jewish experience in the "official" Zionist memory was a problematic factor hindering the crystallization of national Jewish architectural style. In fact, some Israeli cultural historians recently pointed out that Zionist memory and symbols had to undergo subsequent transformation viz-a-vis traditional Judaism. Liebman and Don-Yehia delineated three phases of transformation.² In the first phase Zionist-Socialism negated Jewish tradition (i.e. the Diaspora) to

¹David Vita¹, The Origins of Zionism (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 246-266; Walter Laqueur, A History of Zionism (New York: Holt, Reinhart and Winston, 1972), 589-599. Yael Zerubavel, Recovered Roots: Collective Memory and the Making of Israeli Tradition (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), 13-39. See also Eliezer Schweid, "The Rejection of the Diaspora in Zionist Thought: Two Approaches," Studies in Zionism 5, no. 1 (1984): 43-70.

²Charles S. Liebman and Eliezer Don-Yehiya, Civil Religion in Israel: Traditional Judaism and Political Culture in the Jewish State (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 25-123.

invent its new symbols. The second was a “Statist Zionism” which, although still as negative toward Diaspora tradition, nevertheless selectively appropriated and secularized its symbols. The third phase is marked by the current ideological crisis of the secular Zionist project in the state of Israel, manifested in the increasing influence of traditional Judaism and reinterpretation of its symbols.

Useful as it is in correcting an oversimplified essentialist view of Zionist culture, this generalized periodization is, nevertheless, called into question by architectural projects documented in this dissertation, which do not readily conform to it. In fact, rather than merely following the phased transformation, these projects anticipated and even, as I will argue, instigated it in some cases. Highlighting moments of tension between official Zionist-state memory and its presumed architectural representations, the introductory chapter lays the groundwork for the analysis which occupies the subsequent chapters of the dissertation. This analysis calls into question a presupposition of existing scholarship on nations and national identity; that national symbols are forged, consolidated, and disseminated by cohesive state institutions, collective power-structures and ruling elites. Here precisely lies the significance of Louis Kahn’s design of the Khurvah synagogue and the Jewish Quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem (1967- present), as a primary case study. Louis Kahn’s design distinctly shows that the shaping of national symbols and memory is a process contested not only by competing state institutions, but also by marginal elements, in this particular case individual architects.

The present study scrutinizes and pieces together discrepant archival documents, drawings and accounts of what were commonly regarded as unrelated intentions, interpretations, events, policies, and projects in the

Jewish Quarter, to unearth a crucial, unrecognized aspect of Kahn's Khurvah design.³ It is a "secret" history of Kahn's double construction of metaphor, which progressively unfolded both during and after the official end of the design. I specifically analyze the interplay of Kahn's Khurvah metaphor with the competing traditional and national symbols of the old city of Jerusalem, such as the old Khurvah, the western Wall, and most importantly, the mythical Temple and the Dome of the Rock. The study reconstructs the drastic impact of the transformation of Kahn's heretical metaphor into an authoritative symbol, even more into a subversive utopia, on shaping the city of Jerusalem and national memory.

Indeed, correlating Kahn's complex design intention and metaphorical formulation with changing public perception and national self-image as represented by the conflicting power structures of the state will yield unexpected insights into the magnitude of its continued formative influence. The impact of Kahn's paradoxical metaphor will be fully discerned through analysis of the subsequent archaeological excavation, planning, and designs for the Jewish Quarter and its structures, including the Khurvah synagogue, the Cardo, and the western Wall. These designs were proposed by Denys Lasdun, Moshe Safdie, Bugod-Krendel, and others.

In the final analysis, Kahn's legacy in Jerusalem argues for the ability of a single architect's design configuration to encapsulate such a strong mythic-symbolic-formal charge that it modifies or even revolutionizes the construction of collective identity and memory in the modern nation state. This possibility is strangely slighted not only in contemporary social studies

³The primary sources of this study are documents collected from the Louis I. Kahn Collection at the University of Pennsylvania, the Company for the Development and Reconstruction of the Jewish Quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem, the Archives of the Municipality of Jerusalem and interviews with architects and planners of the Jewish Quarter.

but in architectural discourse, which underestimates the capacity of the individual architect to renew or transform social reality. This merits an account at some length.

This restriction of the revolutionary role of the architect is informed by the perceived magnificent failure of the “modernist avant-garde project” in the beginning of the century. The avant garde’s image of the architect portrays one who can single-handedly shape culture according to his creative free will, fusing social life with his art. For example, the influential figure Van de Velde affirmed the power of the individual architect to create a new national style dispensing with tradition and its past styles.⁴ Such a position was commonly associated with the Art Nouveau movement. The remarkably short life span of this movement and the eventual retreat of its architects to imagery evocative of 19th century historicist styles including the neo classical, however, seemed to belie the claim of the culture-free will of the architect. Similarly, shortly before and after the First World War, in their quest for a universal utopian community, modernist avant-garde groups such the Glass Chain proposed architectural images through a deliberate assault on the symbols of what they denounced as decadent bourgeois society.⁵ This “unilateral” assault was, however, repulsed, and by way of reaction contributed to unleashing reactionary nationalism and State totalitarianism, as in Nazi Germany and Franco’s Spain.⁶

⁴Henry Van de Velde, “Werkbund Anti-thesis,” reprinted in Ulrich Conrad’s Programs and Manifestos On 20th-Century Architecture, tr. Michael Bullock (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1993), 29-31.

⁵Manfredo Tafuri, “U.S.S.R.-Berlin 1922,” La Sferae il labirinto (Turin: Einaudi, 1980) reprinted in Architecture Criticism Ideology. Ed. Joan Ockman (Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 1985) p. 136, Also see See Kenneth Frampton, “Avant-Garde And Continuity” in Modern Architecture and the Critical Present (London: Architectural Design Profile, 1982), 21-27.

⁶Barbara Miller Lane, Architecture and Politics in Germany 1918-1945 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982). Lanne demonstrated how Naziism exploited the

The defeat of Modernist “avant gardism” was more pointedly manifest in the adoption by many of its key figures, such as Gropius, of the Neue-Sachlichkeit vision, which decidedly shunned any utopian pursuits in favor of an alleged unmediated realism and “functionalist” expression of economic, social, and technological infrastructures.⁷ This realism was a prelude to what became identified as an “International Style,” as corporate capitalism appropriated the machine-shaped and abstract forms of modernist avant-gardes into a standardized, mass-produced and circulated transnational formula.⁸ Later a widespread disillusion with the International Style was caused by its disregard of the multitude of local conditions and national memories.

In reaction to the perceived failure of the “avant-garde” utopia, an opposing tendency is increasingly dominating the current architectural discourse. This new vision variously poses tradition, social and economic structures, and their representative institutions (such as nation-state ideologies and religion) as an apriori hegemonic reality and language whose omnipresent authority can hardly be challenged by marginal groups, including the individual architect. Accordingly, architectural design, and metaphor in particular, are generally viewed as mere vehicles or instrument of collective communication often used to disseminate the social control of these institutions.⁹ Current architectural theory and historiography is thus

alienation of German society from the imposition of the Modernist-influenced cultural politics of Weimar's regime.

⁷Kenneth Frampton, Modern Architecture: A Critical History (London: Thames and Hudson, 1985), 130-142.

⁸Ibid, 248-262.

⁹One of the earlier proponents of such vision was Alan Colquhoun, “Typology and Design Method,” in Essays in Architectural Criticism: Modern Architecture and Historical Change. (Cambridge, Ma: MIT Press, 1986), 43-51. First published in Arena, 83 (June 1967). See also Charles Jencks and George Baird, eds. Meaning in Architecture, (New York: George Braziller, 1969).

increasingly preoccupied with the expectation, reception, and interpretation of the patron and to a lesser degree the user of the architectural project, and their respective collective ideologies or power structures, as opposed to the intentions and imagination of the individual architects. This tendency may be summed up by Barthe's oft-quoted declaration of 'the death of the author' in literature. Consequently, a number of responses have emerged in current architectural practice and theory.

A well-known alternative was offered by Robert Venturi's "Post-Modernism" which affirmed the architect's impotence before the hegemonic collective national and Capitalist economic structures of reality.¹⁰ The architect can only satirize this predicament through a parodic manipulation of architectural form, which Venturi treats as a mere instrument of collective communication. He does so by liberally dislocating, fragmenting and distorting symbols of the past in synthesis with those banal ones of the present commercial vernacular, flattening them all as an appliqué element applied to his normative "decorated shed," which virtually conforms to the open plan of the "International Style." It is thus not surprising that Venturi's "Post-Modern" historicism was criticized for trivializing and desacralizing the traditional or local symbol.¹¹ In the name of acknowledging the plurality and otherness of national communities, what 'Post-Modernism' really does is to defuse the emerging resistance of these communities to the advances of the homogenizing International Style and its western capitalistic master narrative.¹²

¹⁰Robert Venturi et al., Learning from Las Vegas, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1972), 87.

¹¹Mary Mcleod, "Architecture and Politics in the Reagan Era: From Postmodernism to Deconstructivism", Assemblage 8 (February 1989): 23-59.

¹²Ibid.

On the other hand, there is what I characterize as “Modernist Historicism,” the Deconstructionist architecture which is expounded by architects like Peter Eisenman and Bernard Tschumi. It appropriates the ideas of French philosophers like Derrida who, at variance with Western Humanism, assert that the subject (in this case the architect) is inherently fragmented, disfigured, and decentered, thus rendering thankless the task of construing his will not to mention his social responsibility.¹³ Architects like Eisenman thus celebrate formalist nihilism as an appropriate mode of design thinking. Eisenman achieves this by shunning metaphor in favor of metonymy, exclusively seizing on the means of the architectural representation, i.e. the elements of composition such as geometry and structure, as an end in themselves, only to fragment and destroy them.¹⁴ This purportedly problematizes the claim of conventional social reality to unity, stability, and finality, and its utilitarian or iconographic communication by architecture. Yet Deconstructionist architecture recycles early modernist architectural vocabulary and symbols, especially Russian elementarism and Dada rhetoric. In so doing it paradoxically vindicates the indispensable role of representation and metaphor in architectural thinking. There is, moreover, a mismatch between the anti-metaphor rhetoric of Deconstructionist architecture and the way its philosophical sources posits the omnipresence of metaphor, in its obliteration of the distinction between the signified and signifier.¹⁵

¹³Louis Martin, “Transpositions: On the Intellectual Origins of Tschumi’s Architectural Theory,” *Assemblage* 11 (1990). See also Peter Eisenman “Misreading Peter Eisenman,” in *Houses of Cards* (New York, Rizzoli International, 1987).

¹⁴Peter Eisenman, *Fin d’Ou T Hou S* (London: Architectural Association, 1985).

¹⁵Jacques Derrida, *La dissemination* (Paris: Minuit, 1972). English translation by Barbara Johnson, *Dissemination* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981). Similarly, in his influential essay “White Mythology,” Derrida showed how a discourse like philosophy is

In so polarizing and splitting off the formal and the social, subject and object, the maker and the national user, metaphor and metonymy, and excluding one in favor of the other, the above architectural trends miss another crucial and complex potential form of interaction between the architect and his design on the one hand, and social reality and its collectivist power-structures, especially the nation state, on the other.

Indeed, between the two poles of avant-gardism and conformist Post-Modernism or Formalist Nihilism, there were some other more complex visions of the social role of the architect in a national context, visions whose full significance have still not been tapped. Hassan Fathy proposed one of the earliest alternatives to both the Colonial Oriental and International styles, "vernacular or rural historicism." He fused ancient rural vaulting techniques with urban medieval vernacular forms of a city like Cairo. His synthesis, especially large urban projects, revealed also Beaux-Arts compositional methods. Fathy argued that his style lends itself to the impoverished economies of the developing societies and to representing their indigenous habits and memories. Despite the populist and socio-economic reformist vision which informed Fathy's mud architecture, it was conveniently criticized as an escapist elitist dream and retreat from urbanism. His critics cited against him the apparent failure of his earlier rural projects, and the subsequent use of his legacy to fashion the mansions of wealthy patrons.¹⁶

originally formed by metaphors appearing as real and factual through erasing the traces of their metaphoricity and attacking other realities as metaphorical. "White Mythology," translated by F.C.T. Moore, in New Literary History 6 (1974): 5-74. French original: "La mythologie blanche," in Rhétorique et Philosophie, Poétique 5 (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1971)

¹⁶Yasir Sakr, "Hassan Fathy," Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Muslim World, ed. John Esposito (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

Recently, however, thanks to his disciples' efforts, his vocabulary became an official style in countries such as Saudi Arabia which, undergoing a crisis of legitimacy, felt that Fathy's "traditional" imagery relates to the masses more than their earlier distribution of the abstract International Style. Ironically, this recent metamorphosis induced Fathy's critics to regard his approach as inherently susceptible to ideological manipulation by nationalist regimes. Yet, as I argue in this study, the transformation of a marginal metaphor of opposition into a national symbol, is not necessarily a negative sign but is on the contrary an undeniable achievement which speaks for the architect and his power to shape national identity. Louis Kahn's legacy exhibits this transformation more distinctly.

His primitive or archaic historicism was too one of the earlier notable alternatives to the International Style. Its significance is that it appropriated the neo-classical rules of the academic Beaux-Arts tradition, especially symmetry, in synthesis with an abstract archeological imagery, to offer a monumental form which proved more fitting than the 'International Style' for representing modern nation states, especially in the developing world. Nevertheless, many historians tend to overlook this social impact of Kahn's career. They characterize it instead as willful or active forgetfulness or withdrawal from the problematic present reality of the modern city and nation state. Kahn's architecture is, therefore, perceived, as an abandonment of utopian social pursuits for a microcosmic illusory world in a hermetically sealed symmetrical monument, turning its back to the city.¹⁷ Yet these critics fail to offer an adequate explanation as to how such an idiosyncratic private fantasy, indifferent as it is to national memory, can nevertheless be appealing

¹⁷Ignacio de Sola-Morales y Rubio, "A Lecture in San Sebastian," in Louis I. Kahn: L'uomo, il maestro, ed. Alessandra Latour (Roma: Edizioni Kappa, 1986), 205-223.

enough to a nation-state and community like Pakistan and then Bangladesh, to be adopted as a style to shape its most important symbol, the Capitol complex in Dacca. More bewildering is the fact that the construction cost of such a huge complex proved to be an undeniable burden on the economy of a poor country like Bangladesh, exhausting more than Twenty percent of the total electric energy of the capital city of Dacca. There is still no adequate explanation or study that links Kahn's design with the socio-political turmoil in that country, which is evident in the ferocious and violent succession of its post-colonial rival national regimes. Although each of these regimes had a different sense of nationhood and constructed memory, they seemed to cling equally to Kahn's design as an arbiter of self-image.

Pursuing a proper explanation of such a perplexing phenomenon and fathoming the social power of the marginal architect seems to be possible only through a merger of formal and social analysis of the architectural monument, correlating its design intentions and composition with its discrepant social perceptions, diachronic as well as synchronic. Indeed, by applying such interdisciplinary inquiry, this time to another more obscure project by Kahn, the Khurvah synagogue, the capacity of a single architect to create social symbols, if not utopia, will be illuminated. Furthermore, the study will point to a design process that may allow such achievement to be replicated in another national context. Dependent as the nation may be on the monument and its material joint for shaping its self-image and memory, it should not be impossible that the marginal architect, through his mastery and manipulation of the artifice and awareness of its social import, can have a discreet but decisive role in defining the nation itself.

Dissertation Outline

Chapter One provides an introductory historical survey of different architectural trends of national Jewish style in Palestine prior to 1967 with particular regard to the Old City of Jerusalem.

Chapter Two deconstructs the design process and metaphorical vision behind Louis Kahn's design of the new Khurvah synagogue, especially with regard to the national and traditional symbols of Jerusalem. The analysis will highlight the paradoxical figuration of the Double Metaphor underlying Kahn's design.

Chapter Three documents the public debate and conflicting perceptions of Kahn's design including those of the secular nation-state and the religious institutions.

Chapter Four traces the impact of Kahn's design on the planning and designs for the Jewish Quarter and its structures, including the restoration of the Cardo.

Chapter Five traces the influence of Kahn's Khurvah design on the subsequent design proposals for fashioning the western Wall as the national symbol of the state of Israel.

Chapter Six examines the renewed campaigns to design the Khurvah synagogue under new patronage. Denys Lasdun's design commission is the primary focus of analysis.

Chapter Seven offers a conclusion, wrapping up the previous the analysis of the chapters, about the formative social role of the individual architect.

Chapter 1: The National Jewish Style (s)

The Old Khurvah: The Diaspora Ottoman Style.

Perhaps there is no Jewish monument in the Old City whose history is as interwoven with that of the Jewish pre-Zionist and modern Jewish community in Jerusalem as the Khurvah Synagogue. Each of its successive constructions and designs, culminating in Louis Kahn's design (1968), reflects a changing interpretation of Judaism. The Khurvah was the first Ashkenazi synagogue, built in Jerusalem in 1701 by Hasidic Jews headed by Rabbi Yehuda hehassid, who had just arrived in Jerusalem. It was nevertheless destroyed shortly after the death of the Rabbi due to the frustration of Arab lenders upon the failure of the leaderless Ashkenazi community to pay back overdue debts incurred upon the purchase of the land and building of the synagogue.¹⁸

The Khurvah remained in ruin for most of its history, thus commonly acquiring the name "Khurst" which both in Hebrew and Arabic literally means "ruins." In the nineteenth century, an attempt to reconstruct the Khurvah was made by the newly immigrant community of followers of Rabbi Eliahu, the Gaon of Vilna, Lithuania. They were Prushim, a strictly orthodox legalistically oriented Jewish community opposed to Hasidim. They were a messianic community who believed that man could hasten God's timetable of redemption by Jewish resettlement and rebuilding of Jerusalem. They even believed that the nineteenth century (specifically 1840) would witness the coming of the Messiah and thus they prepared for the event by migrating and rebuilding the Khurvah.¹⁹

¹⁸Yehoshua Ben-Arieh, Jerusalem in the 19th Century: The Old City. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984), 301-303.

¹⁹Jeff Halper, Between Redemption and Revival: The Jewish Yishuv of Jerusalem in the Nineteenth Century (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1991), 37-48.

After repeated failed attempts to obtain a building permit from Ottoman authorities, as well as opposition by rival Ashkenazi groups and unsympathetic local Sephardi Jews who branded them as heretics, the head of the Prushim community, Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Zoref finally secured the necessary permission.²⁰ This achievement followed a nearly successful attempt to capitalize on the relatively relaxed but short reign of Mohammed Ali over Palestine and Syria, by seeking a building permit from his son, the governor Ibrahim Pasha.²¹ However, this effort foundered as the Ottoman empire was quick to regain its territories with the help of the European powers. Nevertheless, the Ashkenazi community in Jerusalem used to its advantage the opportunity presented by the ensuing weakness of the Ottoman Empire and its susceptibility to the influence of European powers. Consequently, through the effective influence of Baron Rothschild over the Austrian Emperor (who in collusion with British authorities persuaded the Ottoman Sultan) the Ashkenazi finally received the permission to rebuild the Khurvah in 1854.²² Sir Moses Montefiori brought the Imperial decree (firman) to Jerusalem in 1856.²³ More to the delight of the Ashkenazim, was the Ottoman Sultan's favorable response to their request for the services of his own royal architect Assad Efendi (who was present at the time in Jerusalem to oversee restoration works to the Haram precinct and the Dome of the Rock) in designing the Khurvah.²⁴ Following Assad Efendi's design,

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ben-Arieh, Jerusalem in the 19th Century, 299-301.

²²Ibid., 303.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid., 304.

the construction was finished in 1864, thanks to donations from the Rothschild family.²⁵

The design resembled the conventional Ottoman style for mosques of comparable scale, which followed the prototype of Mihrmah Mosque designed by the great architect Sinan in the sixteenth century. It had a centrally domed hall sheltered by a relatively shallow cupola rested on an octagonal drum, and in turn lifted by pendentives (**fig. 1, 2**). On the north and south the pendentives were relieved by two great blind arches perforated by two tiers of windows. On the west the domed hall is attached to a rectangular mass which houses the entrance lobby and on top the women's gallery. In conformity to Jewish liturgy²⁶, a bimah was placed in the middle of the hall, and the stylized two-story Ark of the Covenant was placed at the Eastern Wall (**fig. 3**). The internal surfaces of the walls were decorated by stylized motifs, medallions, and symbols such as David's star and the menorah, in addition to paintings of scenes from the holy land at the soffits of the pendentives. It was furnished by gifts from Diaspora communities around the world.

As the greatest modern Jewish monument in Jerusalem at the time, the building appropriately assumed its central role in the life of the Jewish community in Jerusalem (**fig. 3**).²⁶ The Khurva was the place where major cultural events such as ordination of the Ashkenazi chief rabbis took place.²⁷ In it were deposited the flags of the Jewish Legion which took part in the British conquest of Palestine under General Allenby in 1917.²⁸ In a memorable ceremony on the Sabbath of Comfort in 1920, Sir Herbert Samuel,

²⁵ibid.

²⁶ibid., 305.

²⁷Shimon Ben-Eliezer, Destruction and Renewal: The Synagogues of the Jewish Quarter, (Jerusalem: Rubin Mass, 1973), 26.

²⁸ibid., 26

the first British High Commissioner, joined the worshippers in the Khurvah to recite the weekly scriptural prophetic reading in this instance drawn from Isaiah.²⁹ However, the significance of the Khurvah was already in decline due to the migration of many members of the Jewish community in the Old City to new Jewish districts and Zionist sponsored Garden-suburbs.³⁰ Although the Khurvah Messianic community could be considered a forerunner of Zionism, it nevertheless stood for a traditional culture that the latter held in contempt.

In Search of a Zionist Style:

A development of the rising Romantic Nationalism of nineteenth century Europe, Zionism conceived itself as constituting an historical rupture, a creation of a new Jewish self and nation free from the exilic tradition, i.e. the Diaspora, a new secular religion which supersedes that of traditional Judaism.³¹ Instead of the transcendent God of traditional Judaism it positioned the Jewish nation (with its own territory), a concrete entity, at the core of its vision of Jewishness. Zionism justified its hostility to traditional Judaism on the ground that the latter marginalized the Jews' national and political aspirations and mobilization, while stressing instead a religious message directed to individual Jews that legitimated the conditions of Jews as a homeless and powerless people.³² Indeed, far from valuing political sovereignty or national unity, prophetic traditions were critical of the

²⁹Ibid. 27.

³⁰The Khurvah was destroyed along with other Jewish institutions in the Old City of Jerusalem during the hostilities of the 1948 war which followed the establishment of the state of Israel.

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid.

concept of worldly government.³³ The accommodation of the traditional Judaism of the Diaspora, as exemplified by Jerusalem's Jewish community as well as by the integrationist Enlightenment Jews of Europe, or maskilim, to various host cultures, was a major justification for Zionism to condemn it as culturally impure and corrupt. Traditional Judaism was thus incompatible with the Zionist secularist and (avant-garde) activist outlook and the task at hand of creating a sovereign national Jewish state in the ancestral land in which Jews would be fully emancipated.³⁴

Perhaps this early negative Zionist perception of the Diaspora was nowhere stronger than in its attitude towards the Old City of Jerusalem and its Diaspora symbols, especially the Western Wall. Theodor Herzl (1860-1904), the effective founder of Political Zionism, who preferred a Mediterranean site, i.e. Haifa, for the capital of the new Jewish homeland, had this to say after a visit to the Old City of Jerusalem in 1898:

When I remember thee in days to come, O Jerusalem, it will not be with pleasure... The musty deposits of two hundred years of inhumanity, intolerance, and uncleanness lie in the foul-smelling alleys.³⁵

Herzl tried hard to feel something at the Wailing Wall but "no deeper emotion" came.³⁶ Herzl declared in Hausmannian fashion:

If Jerusalem is ever ours, I would clear out every thing that is not sacred, set up worker' houses beyond the city, empty and tear down the filthy rat-holes, burn all the non-sacred ruins, and put the bazaars elsewhere. Then retaining as much of the old architectural style as possible, I would build an airy, comfortable, properly sewerred, brand new city.³⁷

³³Liebman and Don-Yehiya, 1-25.

³⁴*Ibid.* Despite the general Zionist negativity toward tradition, there were exceptions like a minority of religious Zionists.

³⁵Theodor Herzl, The Diaries of Theodor Herzl, ed. and tr. Marvin Lowenthal (New York: The Dial Press, 1956), 283-284.

³⁶*Ibid.*

³⁷*Ibid.*, 284. Herzl expressed a similar view of Jerusalem in his novel Old New Land (Altneuland), tr. Lotta Levensohn (New York: Bloch Publishing, 1960), 247-258.

Ahad Ha'am, the leading Zionist thinker of his time (the true founder of cultural Zionism) who preferred to settle in the newly established Mediterranean city of Tel Aviv, shared similar sentiments as he inspected what he called "the terrible Wall" where local Orthodox people were worshipping:³⁸

Those stones bear witness to the ruin of our land, and these men to the ruin of our people; which is the greater of the two ruins? which should we deplore more? A ruined country..... can be rebuilt: but who can help a ruined people?"³⁹

He "would not cry for Jerusalem," Ha'am declared, but for the Jewish people.

Indeed, negating traditional Judaism was a self-legitimizing principle for Zionism as it shaped its new symbols, rituals, and institutions. Instead of the metaphysical theology of Judaism and the exclusively urban outlook of Diaspora Jewry and its "indolent" ghetto culture, Zionism sacralized nature, land, and, as a redeeming ritual, agricultural labor.⁴⁰ Agricultural settlements proliferated in Palestine and were "speedily constructed with a central tower, stockade and prefabricated housing."⁴¹ This outlook was also reflected in the spread of garden-suburbs sponsored by and for the Zionist bourgeoisie.⁴²

The Hebrew language, until then a holy language exclusively restricted to specific ritualistic and literary purposes, was promoted and

³⁸Cited by Amos Elon, Jerusalem: Battlegrounds of Memory (New York, Kodansha America, Inc., 1995), 239.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Liebman and Don-Yehiya, 25-59.

⁴¹Arieh Sharon, Kibbutz + Bauhaus: An Architect's Way in a New Land (Stuttgart: Karl Kramer Verlag, 1976), 12-26, 60-88. Tamar Katriel and A. Shenhar, "Tower and Stockade: Dialogic Narration in Israeli Settlement Ethos," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 76, no.4 (1990): 359-80.

⁴²Gideon Biger, "Urban Planning and Garden Suburbs of Jerusalem, 1918-1925," Studies in Zionism 7, no.1 (1986): 1-9.

popularized to replace the Jewish Diaspora languages, especially Yiddish.⁴³ Indeed, the secularization of Hebrew and the reverence for the land were symbolic legitimations of Zionism's claim of a direct continuity from an ancient Judaism, indistinguishable from a sovereign state in Palestine and reconstructed through a collective memory which detours around almost two thousand years of the Diaspora past.⁴⁴ This collective memory informed the subsequent search for a new Jewish architectural style. A closer scrutiny will show modern Jewish architecture in Palestine loosely, if not precariously, echoing the Zionist "negational" agenda for shaping a National culture and memory.

The Romantic Jewish Style in Palestine:

In the beginning of the twentieth century, a predominantly Orientalist architectural style was commonplace in Palestine. Expressing a romanticist tendency, the Zionists identified the "Oriental," especially the Palestinian vernacular culture, as a repository of the authentic but lost Hebraic identity. "Architects seemed to be deliberately pursuing a Jewish style that would evoke biblical times. They looked at the local Arab and Islamic urban and traditional architecture to provide them with the secrets, as it were, for the architectural style the Jews themselves might conceivably have developed had they not been driven from Palestine two thousand years before."⁴⁵ Thus, ornamental surface motifs, domed roofs, arched openings, shuttered bay

⁴³Chaim Rabin, "The National Idea and the Revival of Hebrew," in Studies in Zionism 7 (Spring 1983): 31-43; Liebman and Don-Yehiya, 38-40.

⁴⁴Yael Zerubavel, 13-39.

⁴⁵Amiram Harlap, New Israeli Architecture (London: Associated University Presses, 1982), 41-68. Gilbert Herbert and Ita Heinze-Greenberg, "The Anatomy of a Profession: Architects in Palestine During the British Mandate," Architecture (Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Baukunst 1992) 22, no.2 (1992): 149-162

windows, and battlements, liberally quoted from diverse stylistic sources ranging from Moorish to Persian, were eclectically fitted to symmetrically, functionally arranged buildings. The Herzlia Gymnasia in Tel-Aviv (1906) by the Russian born architect Barski (fig. 4) and the Technion in Haifa (1910-24) by the German born architect Alex Baerwald (fig. 5) are among the notable and refined examples of an otherwise indulgent Jugendstil style which claimed the creation of a national style with no recourse to tradition, in this case that of the Diaspora.

This Romantic style was principally sponsored by the German -born and German- trained architect Alex Baerwald, who in 1924 became the first director of the architectural school of the Technion.⁴⁶ His formal language of “oriental-style domes, pointed and horseshoe arches, open arcades and flat roofs with crenelation and decorative tiles” became “the official style used above all for public buildings like schools, synagogues, hotels and leading Zionist personalities’ homes, retaining its validity until the 20s.”⁴⁷

The Oriental Diaspora Style in Germany:

Schooled like the majority of his Jewish fellow architects in the German Hochschule system, Baerwald “strove for a synthesis of local forms with contemporary functionalism.” One can argue that in this manner Baerwald and his colleagues represented a nineteenth century German approach to national style as first unleashed in the beginning of the century by Heinrich Hubsch in his then controversial book, In Which Style Should

⁴⁶Herbert and Heinze-Greenberg, 160; “Baerwald and the Search for an Indigenous Style,” in Gilbert Herbert and Silvina Sonovsky, Bauhaus On the Carmel And the Crossroads of Empire (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1993), 217-225.

⁴⁷Edina Meyer-Maril, “The Stylistic Development in Tel Aviv from its Foundation in 1909 to 1933,” in Tel Aviv; Modern Architecture 1930-1939, tr. Michael Robinson, (Berlin: Wasmuth, 1994), 24.

We Build?, and as concretized by Shinkel's own experiments, especially the Bauakademie.⁴⁸ This historicist vision of national style was conceived as a fusion of an internal skeleton representing a functional program (often in a neo-classical symmetrical plan) with a medieval facade (whether Rundbogenstile, i.e. Romanesque according to Hubsch or Gothic according to his opponents); both were alleged to have evolved historically in German soil.⁴⁹ The Romantic Jewish style in Palestine appropriated this historicist German formula by simply replacing in the facade one medieval style, the Romanesque, for another, the Islamic.

In so doing, the Romantic Jugendstil style in Palestine ironically affirmed itself more definitively as an extension of the nineteenth century Jewish style of the Diaspora in Europe. The Jewish style was commonly identified with a variety "Oriental" medieval styles such as the Byzantine, Ottoman, Mamluk, and in particular the Moorish-Islamic.⁵⁰ This style emerged in 1830's and was applied by German architects like Gartner and, most prominently, Gottfried Semper.⁵¹ Semper's 1838 design of a synagogue in Dresden, which he substantially replicated in Paris in 1850, was exemplary (fig. 6, 7).⁵² This pioneering building had a plain cubical exterior attached to a rectangular annex of two towers flanking the entrance, all in the Romanesque

⁴⁸Heinrich Hubsch, In What Style Should We Build? The German Debate On Architectural Style, translated by David Britt (Santa Monica, CA: Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1992), 63-101. See Wolfgang Herrmann's introduction, p.3.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Carol Herselle Krinsky, Synagogues of Europe: Architecture, History, Meaning (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1983) 78-88. Other non-Medieval styles such as the ancient Egyptian were also used in the architecture of Jewish institutions in Europe.

⁵¹Harold Hammer-Schenk, "Die Architektur der Synagoge von 1780 bis 1933," in Die Architektur der Synagoge (Frankfurt: Deutsches Architekturmuseum, 1989), 157-287.

⁵²Ibid.; Miles Danby, Moorish Style (London: Phaidon, 1995), 179. See Krinsky, 276-279. Semper's Dresden design was popularized upon its publication in the prominent periodical Allgemeine Bauzeitung in 1847.

style. The cubical exterior is surmounted by a huge octagonal gabled roof in the Moorish Style, the drum of which is pierced by a series of arched openings. Inside it, the gabled roof shelters a dome crowning a cruciform interior which is elaborately covered with polychromatic stucco, carved wood and ceramics after Moorish ornamental patterns.⁵³ By proposing a Spanish-Moorish style of architecture for Jewish religious institutions, Semper displayed his familiarity with the emerging scholarly recognition of the significant contribution of Judaic culture in the Muslim Caliphate.⁵⁴ His dualistic design combining a stylistically hybrid exterior with a Moorish interior became a popular formula since it combined a private Jewish environment with a public image free from the explicit Christian iconographic associations of the Gothic without displaying obvious Jewish iconography which might alienate the Christian host society. Semper's choice of the Medieval/Romanesque instead of his oft-used Renaissance style could also be taken to signify the desire of Haskala (Enlightenment) Jews to identify with German Nationalism, an attitude which Zionism would loathe.⁵⁵ In retrospect, however, one can conclude that, as much as the Romantic Jewish style in Palestine seemed to its German authors and historians expressive of the Zionist architectural zeal to emancipate its idiom from that of the Diaspora, its Medieval Islamic vocabulary expressed the opposite tendency.

⁵³*Ibid.*, 179.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*

⁵⁵Shortly afterwards, as the Jewish minority became economically and culturally more empowered, especially in Germany and Austria-Hungary, the Moorish style of the private interior completely took over the exterior to become a common public symbol of the architecture of Jewish institutions.

The Jewish style of the British Mandate:

Under British mandate (1917-1948), the German-influenced Romantic Jewish style in Palestine was paralleled by the English's own search for a regional style expressing a similar fascination with the Orient.⁵⁶ Based on the Balfour declaration of 1916 which committed Britain to the establishment of a national Jewish home in Palestine, the British mandate could be considered as sponsoring its own version of Jewish style. Simultaneous to the efforts of their colleagues elsewhere in the empire like Lutyens in New-Delhi, British architects like A. Harrison and Clifford Holliday in Palestine were crystallizing a historicist monumental style fusing neo-classical symmetrical plans with sculpted facades eclectically incorporating historical Islamic and biblical motifs. Notable examples of this trend are concentrated in the Jerusalem YMCA building, the Scottish Church, and the Rockefeller Archeological Museum (1927-35) (**fig.8**). Although both the Romantic Jewish style and the British Mandate style were eclectic in their use of the "Orient," the latter was more preservationist and archeological in tendency, especially with regard to the Old City of Jerusalem. This was particularly manifest in British town planning. William McLean's Jerusalem master-plan and the subsequent plans of C. R. Ashbee and Patrick Geddes (1922) enforced restrictive zoning and building codes aimed at maintaining and restoring the traditional medieval character of the Old City (**fig. 9, 10**).⁵⁷ The Old City was ringed by a green park system where buildings were prohibited, in order to

⁵⁶Michael Levin, "Jerusalem Architecture During the British Mandate" (Discussion Paper No.4), in *Modern Architecture in Jerusalem*, ed. Ora Ahimeir and Michael Levin (Jerusalem: The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 1984), iv-22.

⁵⁷Harry Kendall, *Jerusalem, The City Plan Preservation and Development During the British Mandate, 1918-1948* (London: His Majesty's Stationary Office, 1948); S. Shapiro, "Planning Jerusalem: The First Generation, 1917-1968," in *Urban Geography of Jerusalem* (A Companion Volume To The Atlas of Jerusalem), ed. David H. K. Amiram et al. (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 1973), 139-153.

preserve an uninterrupted vista of its picturesque fabric. Beyond the park, the density and character of new buildings were controlled by codes enforcing among other things Jerusalem stone as the only material allowed for cladding. Under Ashbee's direction, the Pro-Jerusalem Society restored several traditional structures such as the ramparts and old markets. This preservationist trend would register in the Jewish style only several decades later.

The British emphasis on the Old City was in fact deliberately conceived as a direct challenge to a Zionist memory exclusive of the Medieval and the Arab Palestinian tradition. C. R. Ashbee, who was critical of the Balfour Declaration and Zionism, was openly sympathetic to the cause of Palestinian nationalism.⁵⁸ He made no mistake about the political implications of the British Medievalizing style. Ashbee campaigned for restoration of the Dome of the Rock, a symbol which he described, through the words of a fictional friend in his diaries, as a nemesis of Zionism.⁵⁹

The challenge of the British style to Zionism was distinctly escalated by the design done by Ashbee's friend, Patrick Geddes, for the Hebrew University on Mount Scopus (1919-25). Chaim Weizmann, then the leader of the Zionist movement, specifically recruited Geddes for the task of planning what at the time was deemed to be Zionism's most important institution and symbol.⁶⁰ In his plan, the various departments of the university are organized as an interlocking series of cloisters radiating from a central hexagonal podium (fig. 11, 12). At the middle of this grand podium rises a

⁵⁸C.R. Ashbee, A Palestine Note Book 1918-1923 (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1923), 59.

⁵⁹C.R. Ashbee, 108.

⁶⁰For an extensive account of Geddes's design, see Daniel Bertrand Monk, An Aesthetic Occupation: Architecture, Politics and the Menace of Monuments in Mandate-Era Palestine 1917-1929 (Diss. Princeton University, 1995), 169-220.

gigantic hexagonal structure which Geddes identified as "Aula Academica." This exclusively ceremonial domed monument is more or less a replica of the Dome of the Rock, which is downhill in the Old City. The only major compositional difference between the two is that Geddes replaced the octagonal plan of the Dome of the Rock with a hexagonal one to represent the Jewish symbol of the star of David. Geddes thought of his Dome as a universal symbol unifying humanity, steering it away from sectarian and nationalist divisions. Such was his perception of Zionism and its university.⁶¹ Ashbee commented on his friend's work:

Geddes's chief work out here has been the plans, en ebouche, for the Zionists' University, a magnificent scheme and a wonderful report. But it has cleft Jewry in twain. The orthodox and the ritualists have no use for a Universitas in the real sense of the word, and as he desires, nor have the political propagandists for the scholar and the man of science... The Zionist university means that the Jews have the chance once again of rebuilding the Temple in their Holy City. Will they do it? Will it be a University or only a Zionist university? Geddes has thrown down the glove to Jewry. It is another challenge to the theocratic state and the old Devil of Sectarianism who stands between us and our search for Truth. Will the Challenge be taken up?⁶²

Although he tried hard to rally the different communities around his design, Geddes failed to win the final endorsement of his client. Ironically, the rector of the university, Judah Magnes, who was then a "universalist" Zionist, used Geddes's own logic to reject his design, arguing that the imagery of 'Aula

⁶¹In his interim report on the Hebrew University Geddes wrote, "Israel achieved something far greater than did Hellas. She discerned far higher truths--the Unity of the Cosmos, the Unity of the moral order and the interior Harmony of both... this temple of Unity, with its central dome of synthesis seeks to express anew the ancient message of Israel, Unity in nature and Art, Unity in Humanity, and in life," cited by Monk, 193.

⁶²Ashbee, 169.

Academica' would antagonize the Palestinian Arabs.⁶³ Chaim Weizmann did not support Geddes when it counted the most.⁶⁴ Instead, Geddes was asked to design some other individual buildings in the university, before he and his assistant Frank Mears were summarily fired by Magnes. That time Geddes was advised to pursue a stepped form evocative of the Assyrian architecture of the ancient Near East.⁶⁵ Obviously, the real reservation about the Aula Academica is that it represented a medieval Diaspora memory that interrupted the direct flow of the Zionist narrative from a biblical Jewish origin to a modern Jewish state. One of the alternative proposals that Magnes solicited for the university was for the Wolffsohn Library by Richard Neutra (1922).⁶⁶ Richard Neutra's terraced building was distinctly marked by a synthesis of abstract modernist vocabulary with images evocative of the Assyrian Ziggurats (**fig. 13**). Neutra's modernist design pointed to a new chapter in the narrative of Zionist style.

The Bauhaus Style:

It took a short time for Jewish architecture in Palestine to adopt a defiant abstract style which apparently fitted more closely the Zionist avant-garde memory. From the mid twenties until the early thirties, a new wave of Jewish immigrants arrived, including returning Yishuv architects from Eastern and Central Europe who were educated either in Germany or in the German educational system in countries like Austria-Hungary and Czechoslovakia, but this time influenced by the European modernist figures

⁶³Monk, 203-206.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 203.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, 208.

⁶⁶Thomas S. Hines, Richard Neutra and the Search for Modern Architecture (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 34.

such as Erich Mendelsohn and schools such as the Bauhaus.⁶⁷ Historians have commonly portrayed these architects as pursuing a tabula-rasa cut off from the past styles in a mission to establish a new progressive Zionist society. They dispensed with the Romantic Orientalist style and its traditional Palestinian masonry, craftsmanship and quarries, in favor of the modern reinforced concrete construction of flat-roofed, uniformly textured, abstract and cubic white stucco forms punctured by horizontal windows (fig.14).⁶⁸ That this blank modernist style was well received by the public is evidenced by its immediate public circulation and the ease with which a group of young architects, including Dov Karmi, Zeev Rechter and Arie Sharon, who founded the architectural Journal Habinyan Bamisrah Hakarov, convinced the Zionist municipal authorities in Tel-Aviv to apply its standardized formal, structural, functional, and highly economical idioms as official building codes (fig.15).⁶⁹

Nevertheless one must exercise caution in attaching the term avant-gardism, or for that matter the Bauhaus, to this undeniably Modernist tendency in Jewish architecture in Palestine. If the term avant-grade denotes an informed resentment, willful opposition and creation of metaphors negating the established conventional order and status-quo, then this so called Bauhaus style certainly falls short of meeting such criteria. First of all only seven out of over four hundred immigrant architects were actually

⁶⁷Herbert and Heinze-Greenberg, 149-162; Sam Barkay and Julius Posner, "Architecture au Palestine" L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui 7. no. 9 (September 1937): 2-34. Harlap, 41-68.

⁶⁸Sharon, Kibbutz + Bauhaus, 47-57; Winfried Nerdinger "Architecture of Hope: Modern Architecture in Tel Aviv," and Irmel Kamp-Bandau, "Tel Aviv, Modern Architecture in the Middle East," in Tel Aviv; Modern Architecture 1930-1939, tr. Michael Robinson, (Berlin: Wasmuth, 1994), 8-15, 32-35.

⁶⁹Ibid.

trained in the “Bauhaus.”⁷⁰ Those seven, particularly Arie Sharon, were more influenced by Hannes Meyer and his brand of the *Neue-Sachlichkeit* approach, in which architectural design shuns idealist metaphorical pursuits for a realist objective expression of prevailing social, economical and technological programs.

Secondly and most importantly, the overwhelming majority of Jewish architects, as Herbert Gilbert’s survey showed, were in that period young and inexperienced, lacking complete professional training and education. Moreover, they had just come for the first time to a place like Palestine, evidently with no prior knowledge of its environmental and social structure. These architects, who were either German or East European (Polish or Russian in particular) were overwhelmingly Germanic in training, if not in culture or in aspiration.⁷¹ Indeed, the lack of experience and training, and most importantly, the Germanic culture of these architects, who were prematurely rushed to architectural practice in a frontier society accounts for the uniform but inarticulate boxy Germanic character of the new style, which disregarded the regional and environmental attributes of the place.⁷² As Ita Heinze-Greenberg explains it:

The great 30s wave of immigration, the so called fifth Aliyah, was largely a response to an emergency: thus more like a refugee movement than a Zionistically motivated act. The myth of returning home to the land of the fathers was often greeted with a shrug of the shoulders as pure Zionist propaganda by the majority of immigrants, especially those from Germany. An overwhelming number came without Zionist illusions and exaggerated horizons of expectation... But strictly speaking, the buildings designed by these young architects in Tel Aviv and all over the country

⁷⁰Herbert and Heinze-Greenberg, 160.

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Ibid., 160.

were not the result of years of effort to find a new architecture appropriate to the country and its inhabitants, but a direct application of what they had learned in Europe.⁷³

Indeed the uniform and rigid, if not brash fashion in which the "Bauhaus" style was applied, points to the ironic fact that its metaphorical content did not derive from a "Zionist" negation of the Diaspora. Quite the contrary, the 'Bauhaus style' was a sentimental metaphor of Germany idealized as an icon of progress by architects from the unprivileged and less advanced countries of East Europe.⁷⁴ In other words, it was an image of an attachment to and nostalgia for Diaspora origins "as thousands of emigrants from Germany found the white-washed style of Modern architecture a piece of home that they could take with them, with which they could identify."⁷⁵ As such this Bauhaus style indirectly but semantically failed to fill the quest of the Zionist avant-gardist cultural agenda for National style and symbols. This symbolic shortcoming was not lost on Eric Mendelsohn, a genuine prominent German avant-grade who migrated to Palestine in 1934.

Mendelsohn's National Jewish Style:

Prior to his immigration, Mendelsohn was a leading member in the Expressionist movement which emphasized the creative will of the architect

⁷³Ita Heinze-Greenberg, "Immigration and Culture Shock: On the Question of Architectural Identity in 'Altneuland,'" in Tel Aviv; Modern Architecture 1930-1939 , tr. Michael Robinson, (Berlin: Wasmuth, 1994), 37.

⁷⁴Alienated from Tel Aviv and hankering for Germany, the Bauhaus student Arie Sharon said: "I remember, when I came back from the Bauhaus after six years of absence, I walked through Tel Aviv, and I was very depressed by its architecture. After Berlin, which, in late twenties was the liveliest city in the world, making its unique contribution to literature, the arts, theater and architecture, Tel Aviv was a shock. I walked along the main street, Allenby Road, and found it was the commercial center of a provincial Mediterranean town. Around it, two -to three-storey houses with little mediocre shops lined the streets." Sharon, Kibbutz + Bauhaus, 46.

⁷⁵Ita Heinze-Greenberg, 38.

as expressed in phantastical forms. The hallmark of his career in that period was his design of Einstein Tower (built between 1917-1921), a modernist masterpiece because of its fantastic curvilinear plasticity. Later, however, Mendelsohn's forms became more rectilinear and rational, as he attempted to reconcile his individualist style with a Functionalist approach.

An ardent Zionist, Mendelsohn perceived his task in Palestine to be the creation of an architectural style to represent an increasingly assertive Zionist *volksgeist*.⁷⁶ Unlike his recent fellow immigrant Jewish architects of the "Bauhaus," Mendelsohn had a prior experience in Palestine, developing a strong attachment to its landscape, vernacular and "oriental" culture when he visited in 1923 to participate in design competitions for the Carmel Garden city, Old Business Center and Power Station in Haifa. He expressed the tension between the modern Western present and that "oriental" past which remained unchanged for 2000 years, that informed his identity as a Zionist in Palestine (note how the memory of Diaspora is suppressed in this memory):

We, the descendants of the of the oriental Jewish people, identify in our most essential being, in greater or lesser measure, with the land of Palestine... The fate of being set within two cycles of emotion, that is the one oriental-atavistic and the other occidental-present (of today), we experience nowhere as vividly as in Palestine. No Jew, able to understand his emotions, tours Palestine without the tragic touch of his own past and without the humble hope of its rebirth.⁷⁷

Indeed, this duality was expressed in his winning entry to the competition for the Old Business Center in Haifa (designed in collaboration with Richard Neutra), which proposed an introverted modern shopping mall

⁷⁶Herbert and Sonovsky, 106; Bruno Zevi, Erich Mendelsohn (New York: Rizzoli, 1985), 142-169.

⁷⁷Herbert and Sonovsky, 106.

incorporating traditional indigenous typologies of covered bazaars, courtyards and arched arcades (fig.16,17).

After his immigration to Palestine, Mendelsohn's first design in Jerusalem, too, was a regionalization of the international categories of his earlier European practice and that of his European colleagues, such as Le-Corbusier, who were then exploring a Mediterranean style of architecture. The 1936 design was of a residence for Chaim Weizmann, a famous scientist and leader of the Zionist movement and later the first president of the State of Israel. The house was built in Rehovoth, a new suburb of Jerusalem designed by Richard Kaufman in imitation of the British model of the Garden City. This settlement, in fact, displayed the Zionist apathy to tradition, insofar as it was purposefully distanced both topologically and typologically from both the closely-knit urban vernacular of traditional Jerusalem and the nineteenth century Jewish neighborhoods outside the Old City walls.⁷⁸

Mendelsohn's house design was a synthesis of a modern abstract cubic form, as shown by its cylindrical staircase and reinforced concrete structure, with a classical symmetrical plan and Mediterranean features, such as whitewashed solid walls, small windows and a central courtyard (Fig.18, 19). In applying regional forms, this stately design could thus be considered a critique of the monotonous and inarticulate boxy Germanic architecture of Tel Aviv which disregarded the regional and environmental, that is, the Mediterranean, as well as the symbolic task representing of Zionism.⁷⁹ But

⁷⁸In his 1949 memoirs, Weizmann wrote about the western city of Jerusalem, "I remained prejudiced against the city for many years and even now I still feel ill at ease in it, preferring Rehovoth to the capital," cited in Jerusalem: Battlegrounds of Memory, 240.

⁷⁹Ibid.; Joseph Rykwert, "Architecture: Eric Mendelsohn—Pioneering the Modern Movement in Palestine: Chaim Weizman Residence, Rehoboth," Architectural Digest, 46 (October 1989): 82.

reflective as it was of the Mediterranean, Mendelsohn's own white plastered home form had little to do with Jerusalem's vernacular stone architecture.

However, his bolder manipulation of the regional in the subsequent design for Hebrew University concretized his critique of the Bauhaus style into a more powerful opposition to both the oriental style represented by the nearby National library as well as the traditional Arab vernacular. Mendelsohn felt that a Jewish style of architecture should be unmistakably aggressive in metaphorical and monumental expression to aid in establishing Jewish statehood, at a time when the British mandate restricted Jewish emigration to Palestine and thus appeared to abandon the earlier British patronage of a Jewish national homeland. Mendelsohn criticized the indifference of Zionist authorities as well as the irrelevance of the 'Bauhaus' architecture to the issue of National style:

Ever since my first visit to Palestine in 1923, I have said repeatedly that the indifference to architecture in this country is one of the causes of the unfriendly attitude of the non-Jewish community and of the British government towards our development as a nation. When we see the noble lines of this unique landscape disfigured with buildings lacking grandeur and coherence, we, as Jews, must feel a profound sense of depression. It is my mission to complete the University according to an organized program.⁸⁰

The last sentence refers to his upcoming design of the Hebrew University on mount Scopus in Jerusalem. Indeed, since Geddes's failed Aula Academica project the university was without a master plan. Yet Mendelsohn's dream, to shape the Jewish style through the whole design and master plan of the

⁸⁰Erich Mendelsohn, Letters of An Architect, p.145.

most important Zionist institution, did not materialize.⁸¹ He was commissioned to design the Hadassah Medical Center only after it was decided to build it on Mount Scopus instead of the Old City (1936-38). Nevertheless, in this single building, Mendelsohn tried his best to achieve what he had earlier hoped to do on the grand scale of the master plan. Built on the hill which dominates a nearby Arab villages, the design of the university buildings was indeed a conscious monumental opposition to, if not a negation of, the Arab vernacular (**fig.20**). Like his earlier Palestinian projects, this building does incorporate elements of the traditional typology, such as courtyards and cupolas. But the colossal horizontal volumetric expansion, and monotonous repetition of small windows is in direct contrast to the fabric of the Old City and the spontaneous agglomeration of the tiny cubic masses of the Arab villages scattered on the hilly terrain nearby (**fig.21**). "The chief building," Mendelsohn declared, "seems to stretch from Jerusalem to Saudi Arabia."⁸² Mendelsohn's unorthodox application of masonry in vertical courses on the facades of the university buildings, to emphasize their function as a mere cladding to the actual reinforced concrete structure behind, directly opposes the horizontal stone courses of stones of traditional buildings (**Fig. 22**). More to the point this unorthodox manipulation of material is a deliberate challenge by Mendelsohn to the codes of the British mandate which enforced stone on modern buildings in Jerusalem,

An equally dramatic image of opposition is the domed loggias defining the edge of the courtyard, which recall the profiles of the domed cubic volume of the village house. While the mass of the Arab house is solid and structured by heavy masonry bearing walls, Mendelsohn hollowed out the

⁸¹*ibid.*, 137-171.

⁸²*ibid.*, 144.

mass of the house, turning it into a tensile light frame structure supporting a concrete dome. Similarly, the cantilevered projection of semicircular (Wrightian) loggia, as Mendelsohn's sketches show, is an unmistakable negation of a context characterized by the hilly landscape and the heavy compressive structures of Arab houses (Fig.23, 24, 25).

All in all Mendelsohn proposed a national style by synthesizing his modernist aesthetics to the general Mediterranean form on the one hand and by opposing the vernacular Arab, Oriental Jewish, and British imperial styles, on the other. Mendelsohn had to manipulate the vernacular as an integral element of the style in order to insure the public perception, by the British and the local Palestinian population, of the Jewish national will to power.⁸³ Mendelsohn thus effectively reworked the general strategy of avant-gardism which formulates its metaphors through direct, willful and perceptual opposition to the symbols of the established conventional order.

Ironically, the formal elements of Mendelsohn's European vocabulary, rather than his Palestinian style were eclectically emulated in Palestine. These included long slit windows, projecting sun-shading hoods and round corners. Moreover, the buildings of Arab Palestinians also borrowed from his vocabulary. Mendelsohn could not fulfill his main objective of crystallizing and promoting a Jewish national style, not only due to the outbreak of the Second World War, which stalled the building industry in Palestine and thus led to his own migration to America, but most importantly due to the indifference of "Practical" Zionist authorities and the emergent State toward

⁸³*ibid.*, 145.

his project. His request to be the arbiter for shaping the national style was never granted. Mendelsohn justified to his client his decision to flee the country to the Diaspora:

I devoted my best efforts to the Palestinian buildings which, I think, are an abiding proof of my love for Zion. I was often asked by my clients and friends whether I would not consider remaining in Palestine permanently. My reply was always and is still the same: I will **on condition** that the Yishuv will provide for me an official position from which I could authoritatively influence visual expression of our people in its national renaissance.⁸⁴

The Statist Style (mamlakhtiut):

The establishment of the "Jewish" state of Israel in 1948, its unexpected swift victory over the Arab armies, and the mass immigration which followed virtually convinced the general Israeli public that the messianic prophecies of traditional Judaism has been fulfilled.⁸⁵ Ben Gurion, the first prime Minister of the newly established state, declared that "we are living in the days of the Messiah."⁸⁶ As Liebman and Don-Yehia observe, "Statism represented the State of Israel as the expression of the national Jewish spirit, the realization of the yearnings of the Jewish people for freedom and sovereignty in its own land, and the guarantor of national Jewish unity."⁸⁷

⁸⁴Quoted by Gilbert Herbert, "The Divided Heart: Erich Mendelsohn and the Zionist Dream," Erich Mendelsohn in Palestine: Catalogue of the Exhibition (Haifa: Faculty of Architecture and Town Planning, Technion - Israel Institute of Technology, 11.

⁸⁵Liebman and Don-Yehiya, 86.

⁸⁶David Ben Gurion, Vision and Way, 2nd ed. (Tel Aviv: Hotzaat Mapai, 1953), 3: 134, cited by Liebman and Don-Yehiya, 86.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*, 85. Another penetrating treatment of the subject, especially Ben-Gurion's statism, is S.N. Eisenstadt, The Transformation of Israeli Society (London: Weinfeld and Nicolson, 1985), 147-189.

The state therefore perceived itself as the ultimate object of national loyalty which extended to its values and institutions. Ben Gurion affirmed:

There is nothing more important, more precious and more sacred than the security of the state.⁸⁸

Zionist statism (*mamlakhtiut*), as represented by Ben-Gurion, adopted a selective attitude towards tradition, utilizing only the symbols that point to the centrality of the state while discarding the others. The Old City of Jerusalem was among those discarded symbols, despite the fierce but futile defense of the Jewish Quarter in the 1948 War. During these hostilities, the Khurvah synagogue was destroyed along with other Jewish institutions in the Old City. The 1948 war borders were accepted as final national borders of Israel and so was the status quo of the divided city of Jerusalem. "The loss of Jerusalem was inevitable," said Ben-Gurion, in justification "as a price we have to pay to obtain a Jewish state elsewhere in the country."⁸⁹

Heinz Rau's 1949 master plan of Jerusalem, which insightfully elaborated Mandate British planning codes, confirmed the division of the city. It conceived the city as a juxtaposition of autonomous nucleated communities distributed on Jerusalem hills; the configuration of each replicated that of the Old City, especially the Haram plateau "Temple Mount" (**fig.26**).⁹⁰ An agglomeration of representative public institutions occupies the top of each hill, whose slopes were carpeted by housing and trees, while the valleys were green parks. The most prominent of these hilltop sites was a new site Rau designated as the capitol hill, where the governing institutions,

⁸⁸Liebman and Don-Yehiya, 86.

⁸⁹Cited by Elon, 240. Ben-Gurion was in fact perpetuating the ambivalent feeling of Zionist pioneers towards the old city. Thus, when the first partition plan were discussed in 1937, Chaim Weizmann suggested that only parts of the modern city be included in the proposed Jewish state. As for the Old City, "I would not take the Old City [even] as a gift. There are too many complications and difficulties associated with it," *ibid*.

⁹⁰Art Kutcher, "The New Jerusalem," *AR* vol. CLIII, no. 916, (June, 1973) p.404.

both political and cultural, of the new state of Israel were to be located. On that site the government house, Knesset, the national museum and more recently the supreme court would be erected. In this manner, the master plan replaced the traditional emblem of the "Temple mount" which surmounts the Old City, with a new supreme symbol of the state imaged by the capitol hill and its official secular institutions.

The state institutionalization of its own cult as the sole and supreme value-system for which any other cultural loyalties or affinities had to be renounced, was critical considering the multiple ethnic backgrounds of the massive immigrant groups that came mostly from the Arab world to Israel after its foundation. Unwilling to acknowledge the plurality and unique cultural experience of these immigrants, the state adopted a singular modernizing and secularizing project that is purposely ethnicity and tradition free, to unify and homogenize those Diaspora communities and integrate them into one national culture. In Ben Gurion's view, the new immigrants were "from a Jewish point of view , dust of man, without language, without tradition, without roots, without an orientation to the life of statehood, without the customs of an independent society."⁹¹

Architecturally this modernizing, homogenizing and integrationist national project was demonstrated in the state's appropriation and circulation, through mass housing, of the ready made standardized "Bauhaus" formula. But the haste by which those housing projects were created to shelter hundreds of thousands of immigrants was at the expense of quality or variety in architectural character, even by the standards of the crude Bauhaus Germanic style. (fig.27) Thus the experimentation of individual

⁹¹David Ben Gurion, Uniqueness and Purpose (Jerusalem: Maarachot, 1971, in Hebrew), 193, cited by Liebman and Don-Yehiya , 91.

architects to develop a new national style was preempted, while those who tired, such as Rau, were completely marginalized. The state and its institutions in this period, principally the ministry of housing accounted for virtually all architectural commissions given to Israeli architects. In these, an exclusively functionalist criteria and speedy execution were invariably stressed.⁹² During this period the International Style established a firm grip on Israeli architecture, as the earlier Germanic style was now augmented by borrowings from Le-Curbsier, Niemeyer and others. Indeed, this style, with its standardized economical construction seems functionally in tune with the universalist modernist cultural policies of Statist Zionism. Probably it is, the state's self-idolizing conception of itself as an embodiment of messianic utopia, a towering monument and ultimate symbol of the Jewish people, which caused its failure to generate a new national symbol or architectural style.

Archaeology succeeded, however, where architecture failed in validating a national state symbol. Its rise in national status ironically reversed the earlier situation when archaeology in Palestine was mainly an Anglo-Saxon preoccupation neglected by Zionist authorities. Now a national, popular and exclusive obsession with biblical archeology was pursued in order to legitimate a direct symbolic continuity between the Zionist state and the period in which Judaism had been established as a nation and sovereign state in Palestine, thus bypassing two thousand years of Diaspora history. The labor or more precisely the kind of ritual associated with excavating and visiting archeological sites was in many ways the new nationalist alternative to both traditional religious ritual and the manual agricultural labor of

⁹²Sharon, Kibbutz + Bauhaus, 78-79. Harlap, 49.

Zionist socialism; it redeemed the self through direct connection with land, nature and history. The well-known Israeli archeologist Yigal Yadin (subsequently deputy prime minister) expressed the national significance of archaeology when he stated, "For young Israelis, a belief in history has come to be a substitute for religious faith. Through archaeology they discover their religious values. In archaeology they find their religion. They learn that their forefathers were in this country 3,000 years ago. This is a value. By this they fight and by this they live."⁹³

Nevertheless, as time passed, the existence of the state no longer evoked such wonder. The transparency of its self-serving metaphors and the lack of utopian depth hindered the state's ability to sustain the same passion and intensity of experiences engendered by traditional religious rituals, or, for that matter, by the secular rituals of Zionist socialism.⁹⁴ Indeed, this symbolic failure was compounded by the irony that the last wave of Arab Jewish immigrants (mizrahim) were increasingly alienated by the unevenly homogenizing modernist as well as secular cultural programs of the state, including International Style.⁹⁵ These programs were instituted by the European elite Ashkenazis who were perceived as disproportionately controlling the state machinery and whose vision shaped its cultural policies. This elite class was unwilling to relinquish its authority in order to fully integrate the eastern Jews into the political social system of the state. One

⁹³Liebman and Don-Yehiya, 11. A dense treatment of the topic is Nadia Abu El-Haj, "Excavating the Land, Creating the Homeland: Archaeology, the State, and Making of History in Modern Jewish Nationalism." Ph. D. Diss. (Duke University: Department of Cultural Anthropology, 1995). For a treatment of the relationship between waning institutional religion and rising archaeological and museum practices, see Philip L. Kohl and Clare Fawcett, Nationalism, Politics, and the Practice of Archaeology (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

⁹⁴Liebman and Don-Yehiya, 123-185.

⁹⁵Harlap, 69-70. See S.N. Eisenstadt, The Transformation of Israeli Society: An Essay in Interpretation (London:Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1985), 294-331.

must observe that the traditional, if not religious, orientation of these immigrant groups from Arab countries opposed the secular and modernized outlook of the earlier European immigrants.⁹⁶

Indeed, the ideological crisis of legitimacy resulting from the widening gap between the image of an ideal state and troublesome social and political reality, together with the failure of the state to shape a collective national culture and unifying value system, led to the subsequent transformation of Israeli civil religion. This is despite the fact that national belief in the principle of having the “Jewish” state in Palestine remained strong and even unquestioned.⁹⁷

The New Zionist Style (1956-Present):

A new phase of civil religion in Israel has been marked by an identification of the state with Diaspora and traditional religious symbols, even though this identification has been inconclusive and ambivalent, as I will show in the next chapters. An aspect of this trend is the use of symbols of the holocaust. The state redefined its role as the protector of Diaspora Jews, their identity, and their institutions, in a world that is increasingly perceived as hostile and anti-Semitic, in addition to its original *raison d'être* as a catalyst for the ingathering of world Jewry.⁹⁸ Indeed, the existence of the state of Israel became conceived as indispensable to the continued survival of the Jewish people and not simply their emancipation, as had been the case earlier. In opposition to the universalizing and internationalizing cultural politics of

⁹⁶Ibid.; Liebman and Don-Yehiya, 89-92.

⁹⁷Ibid., 123-185.

⁹⁸Ibid.; James E. Young, “Israel: Holocaust, Heroism and National Redemption” in James E. Young, ed., The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 219-62

statist Zionism (*mamlakhtiut*), a newer sense of distinctiveness coupled with isolationism vis a vis the “gentile” world began to emerge. This newly sharpened memory was concretized among other things in the marking of Holocaust Remembrance Day in 1960 as a yearly national holiday, and in the construction of Holocaust memorial *Yad va Shem* in Jerusalem.⁹⁹

On the architectural level, the new rapprochement with Diaspora culture, which took on a nostalgic association with what was for many decades nationally neglected, was evidenced in the emergent preservationist attitude towards old traditional Diaspora structures, such as restoring sections of the Old City of Jaffa, on the one hand, and re-emergence of an Orientalist style of architecture, on the other (**fig.28, 29**). The new orientalist style was considerably more abstract and devoid of the historicist iconographic preoccupation of the orientalist Jewish styles at the beginning of the century. It differed from them in its exclusive representation of the formal and abstract picturesque features of the indigenous Palestinian vernacular. An example is the Israeli National Museum (1965) which is an agglomeration of little cubical masses playfully terraced and distributed on the hilly terrain, hence invoking the image of a Palestinian village (**fig. 30**). The incorporation of typological spatial or iconographic elements of the traditional urban Palestinian architecture would gradually intensify over the following two decades.

However, the most important sign of the new association between Zionist nationalism (Israel as a Jewish state) and traditional Judaism was the way the neglected Jerusalem resurfaced and was reinvented as a utopia in the collective memory. The Old City, and in particular the Wailing Wall, became

⁹⁹Ibid.

a metaphor of the new civil religion, and as such a pole of mobilization and legitimation. For example, it was only around that time and not earlier that Ze'ev Vinai, a well known Israeli geographer and prolific writer who collected folk tales and legends of various holy places in the country, reestablishing them in the national collective memory, published a book about the Old City of Jerusalem.¹⁰⁰ The renewed national interest in the Wall was manifest among other things, in the Kennest building in Jerusalem, completed in 1966, "where Alfred Bernheim's photographs of the wall's stones were greatly enlarged and exhibited in one of the halls. The wall of hewn stones in the main hall designed by Dani Karavan can also be seen as a modern version of the Western Wall."¹⁰¹

Indeed, this association with Diaspora symbols proved very powerful in reintegrating Israeli society and mobilizing it toward the national goals set by the state. It is in 1967 that a government of National unity was formed which allied for the first time in the history of Israel the ruling Labor Zionist parties with religious parties and the rightist opposition movement of revisionist Zionism headed by Menahim Begin.¹⁰²

The power of the new/old and secular/religious symbol was dramatically captured in the images of soldiers weeping at the scene of the Wailing Wall which accompanied the capture of Jerusalem in June 1967. The old Moroccan Arab neighborhood which was adjacent to the western Wall was abruptly demolished to clear a huge plaza to accommodate the "involuntary" influx of tens of thousands of secular and religious Israelis

¹⁰⁰Zeev Vilnai, Jerusalem: The Old City, (Jerusalem: Ahiever, 1962).

¹⁰¹Meir Ben-Dov et al., The Western Wall, tr. Raphael Posner (Jerusalem: Ministry of Defense Publishing House, 1983), 203.

¹⁰²Revisionist Zionism is credited for single-handedly (often unsuccessfully) emphasizing in the previous decades the importance of assimilating religious symbols, particularly the Wall, in constructing National culture and memory.

(fig.31).¹⁰³ In the plaza, which was lined with the flag-poles of the state of Israel, many secular Israelis could for the first time “identify themselves with an idea that has its roots in the Jewish history without being caught within religion.”¹⁰⁴ It is in this charged context that Louis Kahn was invited to redesign a demolished Diaspora building in the Old City of Jerusalem, viz the Khurvah synagogue.

¹⁰³Elon, 88-90

¹⁰⁴- See Liebman and Don-Yehiya, 135, 158-61. Gabriel Kellner, “Proposed Project for The Area Surrounding The Wailing Wall,” Master’s Thesis (Columbia University, School of Architecture, 1971), 15.

CHAPTER 2: Louis Kahn's Khurvah Design.

Immediately after the Israeli capture of the Old City in June of 1967, an attorney from Haifa, Yakov Solomon, a great grandchild of the nineteenth century Ashkenazi community leader and founder of the Khurvah synagogue Zalman Tzoref, initiated a campaign to reconstruct the Khurvah synagogue.¹⁰⁵ Solomon contacted the Ministry of Religious Affairs who responded enthusiastically to his plans.¹⁰⁶ Solomon subsequently approached the well known Israeli Architect Ram Karmi. Karmi declined the commission, recommending instead the American architect Louis Kahn for the task of redesigning the Khurvah (based on the recommendation of his sister Ada Karmi who at the time was studying architecture at Columbia University).¹⁰⁷ Kahn wholeheartedly accepted the commission during a personal meeting with Solomon in Philadelphia in August 1967.¹⁰⁸ Upon his return to Israel Solomon set up an honorary committee for the Khurvah foundation with influential figures in Israel as acting members.¹⁰⁹

Although he ran into some troubles with religious authorities, Solomon managed to secure an area for building the Khurvah which included the ruined site of the old Khurvah.¹¹⁰ Kahn visited Israel to inspect the site for the first time in December 1967. When Kahn examined it, the site

¹⁰⁵Ya'akov Salomon, *In My Own Way* (Haifa: Gillie Salomon Foundation, 1980), 284-287. Salomon mistakenly attributed its 19th-century design to a Russian architect instead of the Ottoman architect.

¹⁰⁶*Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷Ada Karmi, interview by the author, Jerusalem, July 1994.

¹⁰⁸Letter, Salomon to Kahn, October 9, 1967, Box LIK 39, Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania and Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (hereafter cited as Kahn Collection).

¹⁰⁹Letter, Salomon to Kahn, October 9, 1967, Box LIK 39, Kahn Collection.

¹¹⁰*Ibid.*

was in an overwhelming condition of ruination. The site was still uncleared, with piles of debris(fig. 32, 33).

The design process was, however, slow. In Philadelphia, Kahn was waiting for Ram Karmi to provide him with detailed topographic maps, drawings and plans not only of the Khurvah site and the adjacent area but a larger area including the Wailing Wall and the Dome of the Rock.¹¹¹ Once he received the drawing (July of 1968) Kahn was able to finalize the design and present it to the client in Jerusalem in just three weeks.¹¹²

The Design Scheme:

By all accounts the design that Kahn finally presented ignored and defied whatever parameters the client had set for the commission. As strange as it may sound, Kahn did not reconstruct the ruined Khurvah. Instead he did many other things. This symbol of the Diaspora was musemised in Kahn's design. He left its ruins intact as a memorial commemorating "the destruction wrought by the Jordanians on this holy place."¹¹³ He selected an adjacent site as the focus of a design whose gigantic scope encompassed the Jewish quarter if not the whole city of Jerusalem. This site, nine times bigger than that of the original Khurvah, was already filled by the closely-knit residential vernacular fabric of the Old City. The chosen new site was not located at a major node of the city thoroughfares, nor was it associated with particular significant historical events. Other than adjacency to the ruined

¹¹¹Letter, Verman of Kahn's office to Sonnino of Ministry of Housing of Israel, March 27, 1968, Box LIK 39, Kahn Collection.

¹¹²Letter, Karmi to Kahn, July 1, 1968, Letter_Verman of Kahn's office to Teddy Kollek, July 25, 1968 and Kahn's travel itinerary, Box LIK 39, Kahn Collection.

¹¹³Louis Kahn, Lecture in National Museum of Israel in Jerusalem 1968 cited in Proposals and Criticisms for Reconstructing Khurvah Rabbi Yehuda ha Hasid (in Hebrew) (Ministry of Education and Culture, Jerusalem, 1968), 49.

Khurvah, this seemingly arbitrary site possessed a strategic topographic location on top of a hill overlooking the major historical monuments of the city downhill (fig.34, 35).

There Kahn designed a huge monument, a colossal half-cube 150 feet in width and 75 ft in height, which dwarfs the adjacent old Khurvah and vernacular fabric. With its massive scale, symmetrical cubical body, cluster of tapered monolithic stone pylons, together with a commanding site, the building unabashedly defies the other major symbols of the city located downhill, such the Dome of the Rock, the Holy Sepulcher or even the newly chosen symbol of Israeli Nationalism, the Western Wall (fig. 36, 37).

The recent selection of the Western Wall as a unifying national symbol of the state of Israel, as well as the historical urban morphology of the city centered on the Dome of the Rock, were challenged not only by the massive form of Kahn's design, but its implicit conception as the new spiritual center of a new quarter in the Old City. In this scheme the western Wall is represented as one end of a processional route of pilgrimage, which leads to the Khurvah. A cluster of new buildings dedicated to religious and other associated fields of knowledge, surrounds the new monument, reinforcing its status as the new spiritual center of the city.

The main sanctuary of this spiritual center is sheltered by four inverted pre-cast concrete pyramids resting on four huge hollow shafts. The sanctuary can accommodate up to 2000 worshipers (fig.38). The bimah occupies the middle of the hall while the two story-high Ark of the Covenant occupies its eastern side. Additional smaller semi-private areas are provided for male worshippers at four rooms at the corners of the main hall. Four staircases around the prayer hall give access to the women's gallery in the second floor (fig.39). Inside the tapered pylons, flanking the four sides of the ambulatory,

are display alcoves and niches for kindling candles. Kahn identified these alcoves as an "extension of the source of religion as well as an extension of the practice of Judaism in which the light of the candle plays an important role."¹¹⁴ Kahn, however, revised the function of the alcoves to display restored traditional Diaspora synagogues and artifacts collected from Jewish communities from around the world (fig.40,41).

Kahn's bold defiance of the city's symbols, especially the western Wall, cannot be blamed on his lack of knowledge of its urban or historical context. Prior to the design, he had an extensive first hand survey of the site. Upon his insistence, Kahn was provided with thorough topographic maps of the whole site extending to the Wall. More importantly, as I will show below, he undertook a quite serious research on the history of the city and in particular its Jewish religious institutions.

Kahn dispelled any illusion about the negational intention behind his monumental design when he later responded to his somewhat baffled client: I believe in the design and I am firm that the building be on a higher ground than the present ruined Hurva.¹¹⁵

A preliminary sketch by Kahn helps to identify intelligibly the intention, thinking, and metaphorical premise behind his striking monumental design as well as the exact vision of its relationship with the symbols of the city, especially the Wall. The remarkable sketch shows the Khurvah design in its most elemental form. It highlights a two-fold paradoxical vision of the interplay between the new monument and the symbols of the Old City of Jerusalem (fig.42).

¹¹⁴Architectural Forum, July/August 1972, 69.

¹¹⁵Letter, Kahn to Salomon, August 19, 1968, Box LIK 39, Kahn Collection.

The Metaphorical Image:

In its first conception the new Khurvah emerged as a huge pristine cube whose concentric geometrical order is distinguished from the "amorphous" undifferentiated surroundings urban fabric which is marked thick black lines. The cube is not, however, an abstract geometrical formulation. In the sketch one can discern traces of three constituting elements:

The **first** element is the peripheral strip marking the edges of the square. In the final design, this strip would be marked by the above mentioned pylons flanking the square. The height of these pylons is 25 meters which is exactly identical to that of the Western Wall in the sunken piazza that Kahn proposed to excavate at its base. Considering too Kahn's declared wish to apply on its surfaces large blocks of Jerusalem stones identical to those of the Western Wall it is most likely that this strip is a representation of the Wall of "Temple Mount."¹¹⁶

Encased by the Wall, the **second** element is located at the middle of the square where Kahn will design the central assembly hall. There, two figures are drawn on top of each other. One of them is a ruined artifact. Kahn specifically, referred to this figure as an image of the adjacent ruins of the old Khurvah. According to him, the final dimensions of the assembly hall correspond to those of the demolished Khurvah (16 meters * 16 meters).¹¹⁷

The **third** element is indicated at the center of the square underneath the figure of the ruined old Khurvah, where there is a drawing of something

¹¹⁶Kahn's Lecture in Israel Museum cited in Proposals and Criticisms , 30. In another presentation before the Jerusalem Committee, Kahn said, "The stones used for this inner wall will be very large, like the stones of the Western Wall, as monolithic as possible," cited in "The Hurvah Synagogue," The Jerusalem Committee: Proceeding of the First Meeting June30-July 4, 1969 (Jerusalem: Israeli Communication, 1969), 37.

¹¹⁷Ibid.

like a big rock or an altar. The identity of this element becomes apparent as one realizes that the side of the overall square plan of the new Khurvah is exactly equal to the diameter of the Dome of the Rock which is nearly fifty meters. One suddenly realizes that in addition to opposing the old Khurvah and the Wall, Kahn's design, namely its symbolic walled enclosure of the "rock" which fuses the three elements together, challenges the Dome of the Rock, but ultimately the mythical Jewish Temple which Jews associate with it.

That, in the above sketch, the visibility of three elemental symbols in the square enclosure, the Western Wall, the Dome of the Rock and the old Khurvah, is simultaneous to their graphic absence in their original historical locations is a further indication of the negational symbolic nature of the design configuration. The design literally presupposes the physical negation and absence of these traditional and National symbols. Indeed the actual design proceeds by marking or physically encasing the voids which represent the imaginary bodies of these symbols; whether the central void of the sanctuary corresponding to the ruined Khurvah's body or the peripheral ambulatory corresponding to the Wall's body.

The peculiar historical research which Kahn undertook while crystallizing the design underscores this negational vision and intentioned metaphor. He sought the assistance of the librarian of the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York in researching the religious history of Jerusalem, writing him a letter specifically requesting a copy of Louis Finkelstein's article on "The Origin of the Synagogue."¹¹⁸ So eager was he that he could not wait for the reply and dispatched two of his assistants to New York to obtain the article by hand.¹¹⁹ The crux of this essay is the author's argument that the

¹¹⁸Letter, Kahn to Mrs. Serata, July 2, 1968, Box LIK 93, Kahn Collection.

¹¹⁹Letter, Kahn to Serata, July 8, 1968, Box LIK 93, Kahn Collection.

synagogue historically emerged as a communal institution in replacement of the Temple. A secret prayer and meeting place, the synagogue sheltered the alienated pious Jews from the persecution of the apostate king Manasseh and his successors who during the seventh century profaned the temple by erecting "a graven image of Astarte, and in every way supported the worship of heathen and goddesses."¹²⁰

The fifty-five years of Manasseh's reign, added to the short rule of Amon, and the first years of Josiah, would readily make possible the development of a tradition of synagogue and prayer worship to replace that of the defiled Temple."¹²¹

This interpretation of the historical synagogue as an oppositional and even heretical institution seems to have provided Kahn with enough justification to conceive, likewise, of his own "Synagogue" as an alternative Temple. Whether he equated the current Muslim structures, like the Dome of the Rock with the profane ones of Manessah is hard to say and is, moreover irrelevant. Suffice it to state that, as Kahn's negational design shows and as he often expressed Kahn held little esteem for institutionalized religions be they Muslim, Christian and Jewish. This will become distinctly clear in the following section as I will specifically deal with the ritualistic structure of his alternative Temple and religion. Underscoring the intensity of his overarching spiritual experience, which transcended the historical symbols and religions of Jerusalem, Kahn wrote to his patron (note that he never used the term synagogue):

I have been honored to express the spirit of history and religion of Jerusalem through my design of the Churbat Rabbi Yehuda Hachasid and

¹²⁰L. Finkelstein, "The Origins of the Synagogue," Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research 1 (1928-30): 52.

¹²¹Finkelstein, 54.

its environs. The idea which motivated the design came from inspirations never before felt.¹²²

At another juncture, Kahn elaborated:

It is my feeling that the inner chamber should neither be of an Ashkenazi nor a Sephardi design, but rather should take us back to a sense which prevailed before these divergent religious philosophies developed. In this connection, even the Ark of the Torah will not be set at a given place within the chamber. It will be kept in one of the niches between the stones, ready to be taken out and placed in any position that the occasion demands.¹²³

Kahn's design is thus premised upon negating, fragmenting and even erasing the symbolic structure of these historical religions monumentalized in the Old City of Jerusalem. Instead, Kahn, strives to unearth their underlying "bedrock," re-configuring, "joining," and condensing their dissimilar elements or invisible ruins, in an unorthodox site, in an image of a new Temple and personal heretical religion. Kahn's Temple effectively negates these traditional and national religions by representing them as historical accretions to be scrubbed from the bedrock of the city and history. Yet Kahn's Temple design proceeds further in a final articulation, physically re-appropriating the ruins of these symbols to substantiate its claim that it predates and outdates them as well as to mask its own heresy.

The Metonymic Image:

If the design at the first stage is marked by a metaphor negating the religious, historical and urban fabric of the city, through condensing their dislocated and invisible ruins in a symmetrical enclosure framing a new center, the final design act is quite dramatically opposite in logic:

¹²²Letter, Kahn to Tamir with copies to Kollek, Salomon and Karmi, March 28, 1969, Box L1K 39, Kahn Collection.

¹²³Louis Kahn "The Hurvah Synagogue," The Jerusalem Committee, p.37.

Firstly, it physically re-presents the very symbols that the design voided in its initial articulation. In addition to the ruined old Khurvah which Kahn refused to assimilate, dismantle or restore, these symbols include a surviving segment of the recently demolished traditional Arab Moroccan Quarter on the artificial hill overlooking the north-eastern corner of the Wall plaza.

The Western Wall is, too, among those symbols physically emphasized in the final figuration of the design. Its monumentality was accentuated by excavating a sunken liturgical square plaza eight metres down to its Herodian base, marking it as a terminal destination of a processional pilgrimage passage. One can argue that the excavation of this square is a spatial representation of the Diaspora enclosure lost by the Israelis' clearing of the expansive piazza which was located at the same spot.¹²⁴ (I will deal with this important point in the next section).

In so excavating the plaza, the Western Wall was raised in height to that of the pylons framing Kahn's new Temple. The pylons that Kahn applied around the cubical body of the new enclosure could be taken, as mentioned above, as a metonymic representation of the Wall. Kahn pointed out that the Jerusalem stones of the pylons would be of the same size, color and texture of those of the Western Wall.¹²⁵ These pylons distinctly resemble the stone buttresses typical of the walls of Jerusalem, especially the one perpendicular to the Wall itself which prominently appears in Kahn's sectional drawings of the Old City (**fig.43**). Indeed, Kahn's earlier sketches of the Acropolis likewise underscore his fascination with buttresses (**fig.45**). Thus one can interpret the

¹²⁴For a description of the Diaspora enclosure see Chapter 5 of this study.

¹²⁵Louis Kahn, lecture in the Museum of Israel cited in Proposals and Criticisms, (in Hebrew), p.29.

freestanding pylons of the new Khurvah as the buttresses of the Wall encircling 'Temple Mount.'

Secondly, not only the physical metonymic re-presentation of these traditional symbols in the second movement but also the way in which they are figured completely reverses to the first negational movement and metaphorical articulation of design. While the initial act of figuration is marked by willful symmetry, ordering, and centering the second movement is marked by asymmetry, fragmentation, and a casual disposition of a grid. This exemplified by the infill of the asymmetrical fabric of ancillary institutions and the processional "Pilgrimage route." They are both shifted and rotated from the central axis of the Khurvah. From its beginning at the sunken plaza of the Wall to its conclusion at the new Khurvah, the route is formed by casually juxtaposing autonomous variegated spaces, objects, and vistas. Ironically, the absence of any frontal or other clear entrance to the huge building of the Khurvah, which is instead accessed obliquely from the corners, experientially highlights its autonomy from its immediate surroundings, even from the "Pilgrimage route" itself.

However, most representative of the fragmentary nature of the second design movement is the architectonic fragmentation of what was initially a centralized, cohesive and unified cubical body of the Khurvah enclosure into an aggregation of autonomous exteriorized structural elements which are regularized by a grid. The fragmentation of the monument's body brings it closer to the scale of the small masses constituting the traditional fabric of the city. These modulated masses are divided into two opposite groups; the peripheral pylons and the inverted pyramidal shafts sheltering the central

hall. They oppose each other in material (concrete vs stone), texture (smooth vs rough), structure (tensile vs compressive), color (gray vs. golden) and figure where the triangular section and shape of each group is generated literally by inversion of the other.

Thirdly, the historicist nature of representing the symbols of the city in the final design movement of design clearly opposes the tabula-rasa foundation of his degree-Zero enclosure. Here, Kahn represented the city and its symbols, including the new Khurvah as a collage of ruins and fragments of history (whether old and/or new, excavated and/or built). Excavating the base of the Wall, presumably down to a Herodian street, accentuates its status as a ruin of the classical period while declaring the whole city as an open field of archeological excavation. Indeed the loosely juxtaposed spaces and ramps of the processional route leading to the wall appear to be excavated archaeological structures. The old Khurvah is memorialized as a Diaspora ruin. The preserved cluster of buildings belonging to the demolished Arab Moroccan Quarter is a ruin either of an endangered preset or an extinct past. It specifically represents the medieval Mamluk past period. Furthermore, Kahn's own monument bears an unmistakable archeological character: as much as they invoke the traditional stone Wall buttresses of the Old City, the roughly textured, windowless, opaque, sculpted and fragmented masses of the freestanding pylons appear to be ruins of an enigmatic past, invoking a multitude of associations with the relics of old Egypt or Stonehenge among them.¹²⁶

¹²⁶Kahn's obsession with ruins is documented in the numerous sketches which he made during his travels to archaeological sites in Italy, Egypt and Greece. The general role of ruins in Kahn's design thinking is specifically treated in Vincent Scully, Louis I. Kahn (New York: Braziller, 1962), 16-18; "Introduction" in Louis I. Kahn: In the Realm of Architecture,

Indeed the second “metonymic” image of the design represented the city with its associated memories as an open archeological field, in effect a museum intermittently constructed upon an imaginary grid whose modules emanate from those of the pylons framing the new Khurvah.

The Subversive and Occulted Figuration

The striking paradox between the two movements of the design, the metaphorical and mytonomic, symmetrical and asymmetrical, abstract and historicist, may be taken as an indication of Kahn’s subversive intention. The contextualist, fragmentary and historicist manner in which the conventional symbols of the city are represented in the second metaphor highlights its reality as a conspiratorial mask. Such a mask diverts attention from the subversive effect of Kahn’s original heretical image of the “Temple” which completely annihilated these traditional and national symbols. For example, the eventual design of the processional “Pilgrimage route” between the new Khurvah and the Western Wall suggests a symbiosis and complementarity between the two, in this way overshadowing the actual negation of the old by the new. Kahn’s overemphasis on the fragmentary archeological character of the design would appeal to the national cult of biblical archeology in Israel. Kahn’s nationalist explanation of his memorialization of the old Khurvah likewise underscores his conspiratorial intentions.

The nationalist vocabulary Kahn enunciated in Jerusalem to explain his memorializing of the old Khurvah “to commemorate the destruction

prepared by David B. Brownlee and David G. De Long (New York: Rizzoli International, Inc, 1991); Alexandra Tyng, Beginnings: Louis I. Kahn's Philosophy of Architecture. (New York: John Wiley, 1984), 155-158. Vincent Scully, The Travel Sketches of Louis I. Kahn (an exhibition ... 1978-1979 organized by the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts). (Philadelphia : Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, 1978)

wrought by the Jordanian” is unmistakably alien to his well known liberal-humanist worldview. It specifically contradicts one of his contemporaneous projects, which compares in theme to the Khurvah memorial: the Memorial of the Six Million Jews in New York City. There he vehemently resisted the pressures of his Jewish patron to use nationalist accusatory or traditional Jewish symbols to represent the calamity of the Holocaust, an event, needless to say, more tragic and vicious than the Jordanian destruction of the Khurvah.¹²⁷ Kahn insisted on his right as an individual architect to invent symbols that are universal and humanitarian (fig. 45, 46). His design featured nine shafts of glazed blocks which cast transparent shadows. Such “universal” imagery drew the protest of one of his patrons, who wrote to Kahn:

I repeated what I had said at an earlier meeting... that to convey the monstrosity of the Holocaust through purely universalist symbolism would not center the attention of the visitor on the Jewish Catastrophe. Because of your choice of the abstract form, the monument's message must, by necessity, be conveyed through symbols that have a definite association with the tragic events. Having decided on the avoidance of specifically Jewish symbols (Menorah, Shield of David), you have found yourself without any Jewish symbols. The notion raised at the meeting that symbols can be created by the artist may be fully correct, but such symbols must have some association with the events with which they are related. In my opinion, neither number Nine nor number One, as such, can be identified as having such a relationship.¹²⁸

Thus, far from playing into the hands of his Nationalist patronage, the Khurvah rhetoric in which Kahn implicitly linked the two tragedies, the

¹²⁷Letter, Prof. A. Duker to Kahn, November 13, 1967, Box 39, Kahn Collection.

¹²⁸Ibid.

destruction of the Khurvah and the Holocaust, aims instead to co-opt his Nationalist audience with an essentially anti-nationalist project.

The anti-nationalist intention of the design is most apparent in its incorporation of a surviving segment of the demolished Moroccan Quarter near the western Wall. The Israeli authorities had summarily evicted its Arab residents, confiscated their property, and destroyed their homes in order to clear a plaza for staging national mass rituals around the Western Wall (the newly chosen symbol of the state). This hilly cluster of old buildings was probably spared for the moment because it was located on higher ground than the rest of the flat old quarter. Such a group of "Islamic" medieval buildings represented a tradition which had thus been suppressed in Israeli memory, especially in its archaeology. In Louis Kahn's project, this "memorialized" Palestinian fragment is an accusatory sign implicitly blaming the nationalist patron itself though shortly afterwards these buildings, too, were demolished by Israeli archaeologists searching for Biblical ruins.¹²⁹

On the other hand, Kahn's excavation of the square plaza in front of the Western Wall down to the Herodian street seems to validate the national narrative of Israeli memory emphasizing the classical Jewish roots of Jerusalem and the nation. A closer scrutiny will, however, show that such a nationalist image is equally a representation of the traditional Diaspora enclosure destroyed by the state along with the rest of the Moroccan quarter. Together with the sunken plaza, the memorialization of the hilly cluster of Mamluk buildings, running along the surviving southern edge of the old enclosure, underscores Kahn's objective of re-presenting its traditional

¹²⁹See Chapter 4 of this study.

introverted spatiality. Yet when one scrutinizes the contradictory scope of this intervention, the excavation of a Herodian street and of a Diaspora enclosure with a preserved medieval boundary, its paradoxical intention becomes apparent. Kahn wants to simultaneously enact rival memories: the Israeli nationalist, traditional Jewish, Medieval Islamic, and the Palestinian. Indeed, the mytonomic mask of Kahn's design discreetly represents the Old City and its present reality as a collage of rival fragments whose physical, historical, and symbolic heterogeneity lead to their mutual cancellation. Thus, Kahn ultimately authenticates his heretical metaphor as an alternative symbol and memory.

All in all, Kahn's design can be summed up as a self negating subversive metaphor. First it negates and fragments the preexisting competing memories and symbols of reality. It reconfigures and condenses their discrepant ruins in a symmetrical enclosure framing a new center for the city. In this manner it creates a unifying alternative myth and image of reality. Immediately, however, this metaphorical image negates itself (literally ruins itself) by a metonymic representation of the very memories it negated first. It does so through fragmentary, asymmetrical, and historicist representation of the present city, as an imaginary archaeological grid and museum. But this grid or mask demystified the claim of each of its traditional and national fragmentary elements to authenticity, finality, coherence, and historical continuity. In this way, Kahn's design ultimately pacifies any resistance to the transformation of his subjective fantasy into an objective social reality.

I think it is illuminating at this juncture to attempt to reconstruct out of Kahn's design drawings the structure of rituals underlying his Temple.

Kahn's Temple: The Rites of Heresy

Perhaps the most distinctive attribute of Kahn's verbal discourse is the tireless if not obsessive identification of the activities, behavior, and events that take place in his buildings as ritual phenomenon. Kahn's preoccupation with ritual established him as a solitary figure among modernist architects, who generally seem to be indifferent to this issue in their exclusive preoccupation with the formalist or functionalist aspects of their buildings. Kahn's thoughts on this issue, expressed both verbally and through his design, could indeed be taken as a valuable contribution to the ongoing anthropological debate about the interrelation between myth and ritual, both functionally and genetically.¹³⁰ This was an amazing accomplishment from someone who was not well read in scholarship on the subject.

To Kahn ritual is in effect a 'super' joint between the architect as a maker and the user as a receiver, a joint between the former's creative/subjective myth and fantasy (i.e. metaphor) and the latter's social consciousness, reality and identity (i.e. symbol). This ritual is however a unique kind of joint, for it does not merely uncover and automatically communicate a preexistent myth. Rather it is simultaneous with myth or metaphor, and creates it as well, simultaneously institutionalizing it as a social symbol and as a value. More precisely, Kahn seemed to conceive the ritual as a joint between metaphorical condensation with metonymic displacement.

Kahn delineates the ritual (i.e. the joint) in three movements which underlie the building's design process and its final form as an "institution."

¹³⁰H.S. Versnel, "Myth and Ritual," Approaches to Greek Myth (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 23-91.

First, individuation of the user, which Kahn symbolizes by the “room,” domain of “silence,” shadows and isolation.¹³¹ Second, (liminal) identity emerging in a “luminous” enclosure which Kahn symbolizes by the “assembly.”¹³² There, a new collective body and identity is forged between re-formed individuals. Third, Social institutionalization of the liminal community of the assembly in the “street” to promote what Kahn refers to as the “Green-Village,” a utopian egalitarian society which invokes association with the “Garden of Eden.”¹³³ These rituals, as I will show next, are intertwined with the type of schizophrenic (self negating) joint which informs both the design process and the formal/geometrical structure of an “institution” like the Khurvah.¹³⁴

In conception the Khurvah’s joint and image, to paraphrase, was formed by negating the symbolic structure of Jerusalem as represented by its major monuments and by its traditional vernacular typologies. Indeed, a scrutiny of Kahn’s preliminary design sketches reveals a dramatic negation of the courtyard building type characteristic of the vernacular fabric of the Old City. His first sketch shows the Khurvah’s composition to be likely generated by regularizing, blowing up, and inverting the courtyard model of Jerusalem (fig.42). The fabric of the Jerusalem type was inverted, turning what was a void into solid mass and vice versa. The plan was blown up in scale so that its

¹³¹-Louis Kahn, “Architecture: Silence and Light” (Lecture, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, December 3, 1968), cited in Guggenheim Museum, On the Future of the Art (New York: Viking Press, 1970), 25.

¹³²Ibid. See also Louis Kahn, “A Synagogue,” Perspecta, no. 3 (1955), 62; Robert Coombs, “Light and Silence in Louis Kahn’s Religious Architecture,” Architectural Association Quarterly 13, no.1 (October 1981) 26-37.

¹³³Romaldo Giurgola and Jaimini Mehta, Louis I. Kahn (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1975), 106-110

¹³⁴Arnold Van Gennep. The Rites of Passage (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1960).

inner elements would correspond in scale and space form to the physical bodies of the major symbolic elements of Jerusalem.

Thus one can discriminate in the plan diagram three distinct concentric areas. At the core is a thinly walled cubical enclosure. It encases the imaginary body of the nearby old Khurvah which fills the void of the original courtyard. This spot is marked by the sunken floor of the "sanctuary" where the rocky altar is located.¹³⁵ The enclosure is then flanked by an ambulatory. The ambulatory is located in the same place previously occupied by the peripheral solid mass of the wall. The void of the ambulatory corresponds in height, depth, and extension to the imaginary body of the Western Wall. Finally, the external boundaries of the whole cubical plan correspond to the diameter of the Dome of the Rock and by association Solomon's Temple.

In other words, the resultant spaces are voids which correspond on the one hand to the invisible ruins, and on the other hand to the fabric of the traditional infill Wall. In Jerusalem the Wall is a compact heap of ruins of successive structural historical accretions. Through this act of inversion and condensation Kahn stripped reality from the accretions of history, unearthing its original, sacred and uncluttered symmetrical enclosure. Kahn employs this void of history i.e. the "invisible ruins" of Jerusalem (and their subsequent interplay with the visible ruins) as the vessel of the three fold-ritual mentioned above.

The first phase of the initiation-ritual takes place in the threshold and the ambulatory of the building. In the threshold the beholder will experience

¹³⁵Since Kahn conceived the Khurvah as the "Temple," I will use terminologies which are related to the sacrificial liturgy of the Temple as opposed to the Synagogue. See also Krinsky, 7-12.

the real ruins of the old Khurvah, memorializing the death of his past Diaspora identity. Stepping into the semi-dark void of the ambulatory, the beholder is literally isolated from the city. The autonomy of space and isolation of the beholder from reality is insured by his indirect entrance to the ambulatory from the corners of the building. Moreover, once in this void the beholder can not directly access the core of the building (the sanctuary). He would have to go in a circumbulatory movement for at least 30 meters in the maze of the ambulatory before he turns at a right angle to the sanctuary (fig.47).

The linear void is thus an escapable trap. In fact it is sectionally shaped as an enormous wedge. The asymmetrical section of this void and the heterogeneity of texture, color and material between its defining surfaces destabilizes of the beholder's body. Indeed, hollowed from the wall's hard core infill of ruins, i.e. the physical joint, the dim void is now filled instead by the bodies of the beholders. The infill or the joint now is the body of the spectator. Entering from narrow slits 25 meters above, and refracted from the inclined roughly textured gold surfaces of the stone pylons and the opposite smooth concrete gray surfaces of the inverted pyramidal shafts, light pierces the dim void in a play of green and golden halos. These animate a kind of hologram of ruins, or rather virtual ruins flooding and dressing the spectators' bodies, thus insuring complete ruination, individuation, and disassociation of the initiate from his past identity. Indeed, these bodies physically and mentally transfigure the invisible ruins of Jerusalem.

The sense of isolation, loss, and mystery is accentuated by Kahn's fragmentation of the solid edges flanking the void of the ambulatory into structurally independent and separate rooms such as private chapels, niches with candles or museum cases displaying the ruins of the Diaspora. In other

projects like the assembly hall in Dacca, Kahn further intensifies the isolation and individuation of these rooms by frontally encasing their volumes with additional independent screens, frames and masks which effectively separate and mask the building from itself. The experience of fragmentation is accentuated by the intermittent shadows these elements cast.

Secondly, after secluding and individuating his body in the peripheral void of the ambulatory, the beholder is then introduced to the inner amphitheatrical void of the sanctuary. To Kahn, this void represents the assembly. There, after being cleansed from their past, the initiated individuals join together to re-witness the original contract that first established human community. This event is metaphorically represented by physical descent into and around the sunken grounds of a cubical void, at the middle of which is placed the altar, i.e. the hearth. Sheltered by a tabernacle-like roof of the inverted pyramidal concrete shell structure, the lower ground is thus a virtual bedrock of history and civilization. In a state of resignation following their initiation, the congregation in the amphitheater faces the altar which is a void representing the ruined Khurvah. The congregation helplessly witnesses right before its eyes the final sacrifice of its past and at the same time the birth of a new identity.

What is celebrated there is an identity with an 'origin' at the center of the space. According to Kahn, the assembly, i.e. the sanctuary void, is an image of the radiant sublime.¹³⁶ The sublime is invoked by reproducing experiences of perceiving an infinite and incomprehensible horizon. Here, Kahn follows Boullée's example to invoke the sublime through symmetry,

¹³⁶Louis Kahn, "Architecture: Silence and Light"

pure platonic forms such as triangles and squares (in a subsequent refinement he introduced circles, too), colossal dimensions, a lofty roof, uninterrupted vistas, unadorned uniform surfaces, and the absence of any figurative representation of the mundane present.

But in the very moment the beholder experiences unity, serenity, and emancipation from history and reality, which is to say with his own body, he inevitably senses an atmosphere of uncertainty and ambiguity which proves unsettling. Except for a single fleeting moment in the year, light is asymmetrically cast on the shaded assembly and its altar, unnervingly disrupting its unity and equanimity. Forced to look upward at the source of the light, the beholder suddenly notes the open and unglazed cruciform slits that break the roof open. There is no roof. What had appeared in the first glance as the unified continuous atectonic shape of the tabernacle now unravels as just an illusory impression produced by the juxtaposition of the giant archeological fragments, i.e. four inverted pyramidal capitals of columns of mysterious order. This is a consequence of a dramatic design decision Kahn made which is revealed in a sketch made after the initial crystallization of the symmetrical pure cubical form of the space-joint (fig. 48, 49, 50, 51).

Kahn negates the joint by seizing the four corners of the cubical enclosure and blowing them up, hollowed out as giant archaic shafts (fig. 52). With their huge inverted tapered capitals extending outside beyond the cubical enclosure to cover the whole building, these shafts totally dominate the space and nullify its unity and introversion. What appeared for a moment an introverted and centripetal symmetrical space, i.e. negative space, abruptly fades into a centrifugal exhibitionist grid of sculptural

archeological structures and fragments. The giant columns, the external pylons and the other elements of the archeological fragmentary grid extend throughout the city.

Indeed, what appeared for a moment as a concrete centered spatial identity, suddenly decentered, elusive, and fluid, flowing in and around giant hollow ruins. Negated by the exteriorized structure and ruins, the space becomes an enclosure which is by definition independent from structure and other elements of mundane reality. It becomes physically unidentifiable, a mythical reality, or more precisely a utopia.

In so doing Kahn reverses the earlier process by which he had represented the ruins through absence, invisibility, and mental images. He now represents them through physical presence and metonymy. Here, utopia is a joint vindicated by ruination, fragmentation and disjoining. In the guise of functioning as a joint between myth and reality, the ritual actually creates the myth and institutionalizes it as an alternative reality. Before the ecstatic community of beholders detect the artificiality of the ritual and its reality as a secular play staged by the architect, the building (i.e. metaphor) suddenly shifts into the ruin (i.e. metonymy). As a result of its self-ruination the new building appeared as old trailing a history behind it. In the grip of this phantasmagoria the building catches the disarmed initiates to permeate them as a collective memory. This is the final rite of social re-incorporation.

There is a further evidence that this peculiar manipulation of metaphors (cognitive and physical) was indeed a very conscious, ritualistic act by Kahn. In a remarkable sketch in which Kahn finally realized the configuration of the self-negating metaphor through the archaeological-structural detailing of the sanctuary, he drew at the center of the enclosure above the altar what appeared at first glance to be the figure of a lion (**fig. 53**).

In Jewish symbolism the lion is a symbol of the king of kings, that is of God himself.¹³⁷

The use of a Jewish symbol here is surprising in light of the idiosyncratic nature of Kahn's mysticism and his proven scant knowledge of the symbolism of traditional Judaism or Kabbalah mysticism.¹³⁸ In fact Kahn's spirituality has more affinity with Schopenhauerean and early Nietzschean notions of the "primal one" which was perhaps influenced by Eastern Illuminist mysticism.¹³⁹ The world is conceived as the radiation of an immanent will. This supreme being or light is not the metaphysical God of traditional Judaism. More dramatically, this supreme power unfolds in a process of self-annihilation, as light transforms into shadow, construction into destruction, matter into void and into ruin. In fact Kahn defines the ruin as spent light. That is why his ruins in Jerusalem are huge: they are God's shadows.

In fact the enigmatic figure in the sketch also resembles other common Jewish and non-Jewish symbols such as a ram or red heifer. Both are symbols of renewal. The figure also resembles a bull, a symbol of fertility. It even resembles a Golden calf, pointedly a symbol of heresy. Moreover, the "lion" is also the chosen symbol of the state of Israel. Drawn by a superb draftsman like Kahn, the figure cannot easily be dismissed as a scribble. Most probably, the figure seems to have been made inherently amorphous and enigmatic by Kahn, representing the above host of symbols combined i.e. heresy, God,

¹³⁷Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols (London: Jason Aronson, Inc, 1992), 98.

¹³⁸Letter, August 14, 1967, Box LIK 36, Kahn Collection. The letter refers to a meeting in which Kahn asked Moshe Davidowitz about references on the use of light in the Jewish tradition.

¹³⁹Graham Parkes, Composing the Soul : Reseaches of Nietzsche's Psychology (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

nation-state, and renewal. So intense was Kahn's experience that none of these common symbols could alone express it.

Chapter 3: Kahn's Metaphor as a National Symbol.

Kahn presented drawings and photographs of the model of the Design to an audience which included Solomon and the Mayor Teddy Kollek in Jerusalem in July 1968. The initial reaction was truly one of bewilderment and shock. The design surpassed by far their wildest expectations since they anticipated a reconstruction of a small synagogue for the Ashkinazi community in the Old City. The stunned Solomon wrote immediately to Kahn after his departure from Jerusalem:

It is quite clear that your conception of the new Hurva is tremendous. It is no longer a reconstruction, but it envisages a spiritual shrine for the whole Jewry. It is far greater than anything I had in mind. Indeed, it ceases to be a project which individuals, even with the support of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, can decide upon and try to realize. If accepted, it is a project of State responsibility and therefore requires consideration by the highest authority, namely the government headed by the Prime Minister.¹⁴⁰

One week after Kahn's return to Philadelphia, the National Museum of Israel requested of him that the model and drawings of the design be put on display in a special exhibition to solicit public responses and comments.¹⁴¹ Soon the design's national significance was confirmed and realized. It became the subject of a tremendous public debate which swept across Israel. Numerous articles, programs and interviews were devoted to it in the national mass media including a radio program produced by the Voice of Israel in August 1968 (which interviewed architects as well as lay people).¹⁴² Kollek wrote to Kahn:

¹⁴⁰Letter, Salomon to Kahn, August 25, 1968. Box LIK 39 Kahn Collection.

¹⁴¹Letter, Yakov to Kahn, August 2, 1968, Box LIK 39, Kahn Collection.

¹⁴²Like many others the national daily Ma'ariv regularly featured stories about the design as early as July 29, 1968, see ibid.

It has been a long time since a single subject such as your plans for the Hurva has aroused as wide a response, and this, of course, not only in Jerusalem but throughout the country. Certainly no architectural plans have created such a debate before, although once in the past there was a difference of opinion concerning the Knesset building.¹⁴³

Kollek precisely grasped the heretical metaphorical content of Kahn's design which instigated the national controversy and summed it up to Kahn:

The decision concerning your plans is essentially a political one. Should we in the Jewish Quarter have a building of major importance which "competes" with the Mosque and the Holy Sepulcher, and should we in general have any building which would compete in importance with the Western Wall of the temple?¹⁴⁴

It is no wonder then that the state authorities would be alarmed about the design when it was first discussed at the governmental level, specifically by the ministerial committee on Jerusalem in October 1968. Their uneasiness was apparent in a letter by the Prime Minister, Levi Eshkol, to Yakov Solomon about the government's stand towards Kahn's design:

The plans are indeed tremendous and beautiful to my liking. However, it seems to me that the carrying out of such a great project in the Old City should be put off for several years as we have to worry first about settlement of Jews in East Jerusalem. Several members of the Ministerial Committee dealing with Jerusalem have expressed their view that we should not put up such a tremendous undertaking in the Old city, and that there we should find a way to put up a more modest building.¹⁴⁵

The Prime Minister's letter highlighted the ongoing campaign for annexation of East Jerusalem, which was launched immediately after the capture of Arab Jerusalem, as the highest priority of the government at that time. Yet the

¹⁴³Letter, Kollek to Kahn, August 29, 1969, Box LIK 39, Kahn Collection.

¹⁴⁴*Ibid.*

¹⁴⁵Letter, Levi Eshkol to Salomon, September 19, 1968, copy attached with Salomon's letter to Kahn, October 30 1968. Box LIK 39, Kahn Collection.

letter also underscored the uncoordinated if not conflicting policies through which this goal was pursued.

On the one hand, the government undertook a purely functionalist policy of forced and swift demographic and infrastructural alteration of East Jerusalem and, especially the old City.¹⁴⁶ This was particularly apparent both in the abrupt demolition of the traditional Moroccan quarter to make a huge plaza before the Western Wall and in the initial intentions of Israeli planners to raze the old buildings of the Jewish Quarter and start construction anew.¹⁴⁷ This functionalist governmental policy was also evident in the much maligned Master Plan of Jerusalem, published in 1968, which proposed to unify Jerusalem physically and socially by making the Old City part of a central commercial business core serving the greater metropolitan area. The large scale highways, interchanges and high-rise development that this plan envisaged would have destroyed the traditional urban and social structure as well as the landscape of the city.¹⁴⁸

This policy was evidently a continuation of the State functionalist policies with their disregard for the issue of National symbols and style mentioned above. Most importantly it attests to the lingering modernist Zionist apathy towards the Diaspora tradition, especially that of the Old City. David Ben-Gurion, now retired, "scandalized urbanists and aesthetes by calling for the razing of the Old City walls to forge the two city halves into

146Uzi Benziman, Yerushalayim (Jerusalem).(Jerusalem: Hotsa'at Shoken, 1973); Meron Benvenisti, Jerusalem: The Torn City (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1976); Ian Lustick, Unsettled states, disputed lands : Britain and Ireland, France and Algeria, Israel and the West Bank-Gaza (Ithaca, N.Y. : Cornell University Press, 1993). 352-439; Terence Smith, "Israelis Are Rushing Resettlement Project in the Arab Area of Jerusalem," The New York Times, July 3, 1968.

147-Ehud Menzel (a chief planner of the Jewish Quarter) , The Jerusalem Post Magazine, July 18, 1969, p. 8. Interview.

148Kutcher, Arthur.The New Jerusalem; Planning and Politics. (London: Thames & Hudson, 1973).

one.”¹⁴⁹ In fact both Eshkol, the current Prime Minister, and Ben-Gurion called on tens of thousands of Jews to settle in East Jerusalem immediately, if necessary “in huts, helter skelter... to make it clear to the world that it would never be taken from us again.”¹⁵⁰

Clearly, Kahn’s exclusively symbolic monumental statement with its considerable financial costs did not suit the culturally indifferent, functionalist annexationist priorities of the state. Thus Eshkol’s statement “that it should be put off for several years.”

On the other hand the government contradicted itself as some ministries were simultaneously sponsoring preservationist plans and policies towards the Old City. The government, specifically the Ministry of Interior and Municipality of Jerusalem, commissioned a group of Israeli architects and city planners to prepare specific planning guidelines vis -a-vis the Old City of Jerusalem and its environs. The group, which was headed by the eminent modernist architects Arie Sharon, David Anal Brutzkus, and Eldar Sharon, subsequently formulated the “Mit’ar Plan” of the Old City. It designated the entire area of the Old City as a special museum, an archeological site to be preserved and restored.¹⁵¹ It reworked certain preservationist codes of the British Mandate, such as restricting building heights and enforcing stone as the only dressing material in the area outside the city walls.

This culturally minded, even Orientalist, policy underlied the concern of ministers, to which the above letter referred, for the threat that Kahn’s

¹⁴⁹Cited by Elon, 41.

¹⁵⁰*Ibid.*

¹⁵¹Out of Jerusalem (Jerusalem Committee News), Sept., 1970; Arie Sharon, Planning Jerusalem: The Master Plan for the Old City of Jerusalem and its Environs (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1973).

grand monument posed to the vernacular fabric and traditional character of the Old City. However, what seemed to most worry these ministers about Kahn's design was its challenge to the physical and symbolic supremacy of the Wall as the unifying national symbol, thus the preference "to put up a more modest building" for the Khurvah.

Nevertheless, the Prime Minister's letter revealed a peculiar fascination with the architectonic, monumental attributes of Kahn's Khurvah design. Indeed, support for Kahn's project continued to mount, thanks in part to the mass-media mobilization exemplified by Ram Karmi's publication of the design in Israel's Architectural Journal. Together with the lobbying of influential governmental figures, such as Yehuda Tamir, head of the Prime Minister's Jerusalem office, and Teddy Kollek, the mayor of Jerusalem, in addition to Salomon, the government decided to sponsor a national symposium on Kahn's design exploring its professional and public perception.

Splitting the National Body

This symposium was perhaps the earliest, most profound representative debate on National identity in Israel, although it has not been sufficiently studied in scholarship. The symposium was sponsored by the Ministry of Education and Culture in Jerusalem in 1968.¹⁵² Participants in the symposium represented different social sectors, institutions, occupations and orientations, including rabbis, architects, writers, policy makers, etc. The division of the discourse into two opposite ideological and cultural camps

¹⁵²Louis Kahn's Lecture in National Museum of Israel in Jerusalem 1968, cited in Proposals and Criticisms for Reconstructing Khurvat Rabbi Yehuda ha Hasid (in Hebrew)(Ministry of Education and Culture, Jerusalem, 1968) 49.

was unmistakable. One represented the Israeli religious and largely Jerusalemite-Diaspora culture while the other expressed a modernist, secular, and largely Tel-Aviv cosmopolitan outlook. Among others, Rami Karmi, a prominent Tel-Aviv architect, represented the second camp while the Chief Rabbi Shar-Yishuv Cohen, noted as one of the last heroic defenders of the Jewish Quarter against the Jordanian advance in 1948, was one of the most articulate representatives of the first group.

Religious and Diaspora Perception of Kahn's Imagery:

In their presentations, Rabbi Cohen and his colleagues in the religious-Diaspora camp affirmed that the only legitimate design vision for constructing the Khurvah is restoring it to its former "traditional glorious style and smaller scale, a style that was and is engrained with the cultural and religious experience of the still-thriving Diaspora."¹⁵³ They invariably spoke with reverence about its iconographic qualities and elements, especially its dome.¹⁵⁴ They cited the policy of restoration adopted in reconstructing the European historical monuments and cities after the Second World War to fend off the charge of anachronism leveled by their modernist opponents.¹⁵⁵

But most revealing is the case that Rabbi Shar-Yishuv Cohen made on behalf of traditional religious authority against Kahn's design. Cohen pointedly targeted his criticism to Kahn's peculiar approach to metaphor. His

¹⁵³Rabbi Shar-Yishuv Cohen, cited in Proposals and Criticisms for Reconstructing Khurvah Rabbi Yehuda ha Hasid (in Hebrew)(Ministry of Education and Culture, Jerusalem, 1968), 23.

¹⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 22.

¹⁵⁵Yehuda ha-Azrahi, "The Khurvah Is Not Ruined," cited in Proposals and Criticisms for Reconstructing Khurvah Rabbi Yehuda ha Hasid (in Hebrew)(Ministry of Education and Culture, Jerusalem, 1968), 52.

threefold argument is remarkable for its articulate unmasking of the negational vision of Kahn's metaphor. It merits citation at length:

First, he began by noting the absence of any connection between Kahn's metaphors and traditional Jewish symbolism, much of which is set forth in the Torah and Zohar. The Rabbi gave an example:

With regard to the Synagogue's windows and their number, there is a command in the Zohar which prescribes 12 beautiful windows. It is said that this is a symbol of the 12 tribes of Israel. I searched for those windows in the proposed design but I failed. In fact I failed to discover any window.¹⁵⁶

Rabbi Cohen intuitively and perhaps cynically hit on the key aspect of Kahn's design metaphor, i.e. its formulation as modern ruins. To represent ruins Kahn eliminated windows from its sculptured opaque exterior. In contradistinction, Rabbi Cohen seemed to refer to the Diaspora design of the old Khurvah which had two groups of 12 windows, 6 in each of the lateral northern and southern walls of the prayer hall, and 12 at the drum of the dome. "Kahn," Rabbi Cohen remarked, "arbitrarily negated this much revered traditional symbol of the dome."¹⁵⁷

Second, Rabbi Cohen, furthermore, maintained that Kahn's building "embodies an uncompromising tendency of negation not only to the old Khurvah but to the Old City of Jerusalem as a whole."¹⁵⁸ The essential attribute of the imagery of Jerusalem which "was fixed throughout the centuries and generations in the collective consciousness and memory" is centered on the Dome of the rock:

¹⁵⁶Rabbi Shar-Yishuv Cohen, 23 (my translation).

¹⁵⁷Ibid.

¹⁵⁸Ibid.

Today, the dominant building, which stands out to the eye whenever we look at Old City, whether from below or above Jerusalem, is without doubt the Dome of the Rock and its precinct which is placed on the bedrock of the Temple mount. This prominent building is understandably almost holy in the eyes of the Jews. Every one who looks at it knows that this is Jerusalem. This is a fixed mental image. Every time and at every feast and occasion, whenever Jewish communities drew an image for the holy Jerusalem it was always the image of the Dome of the Rock.¹⁵⁹

The Rabbi was implicitly referring to the old tradition of the Diaspora where the Dome of the Rock represented, and even was mistaken for, Solomon's Temple.¹⁶⁰ Indifferent to this tradition, Kahn's design "embodies a crude will to make a counter-weight to the Dome of the Rock on a hill opposite but higher than the Temple Mount which makes it unmistakable to the eye from afar"¹⁶¹ Consequently, declared Rabbi Cohen, Kahn was intentionally "transgressing on the very meaning and image of Jerusalem and memory of the Diaspora."¹⁶²

Third, most troubling to Rabbi Cohen, however, are the heretical implications of Kahn's metaphor vis-a-vis the traditional mythology of the Temple itself. He was most alarmed by the idea of Kahn's new synagogue as the central temple of world Jewry, that it conceives itself "as the embodiment of the millennium old utopia of the Jewish people, i.e. the reconstruction of the Temple."¹⁶³ To Rabbi Cohen "the only place for the

¹⁵⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁶⁰*Ibid.* For the history of the image of the Temple, see Helen Rosenau, Vision of Temple: The Image of the Temple of Jerusalem in Judaism and Christianity (London: Oresko Books, 1979); Joseph Rykwert, On Adam's House in Paradise: the Idea of the Primitive Hut in Architectural History (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, c. 1981).

¹⁶¹Rabbi Shar-Yishuv Cohen, 23.

¹⁶²*Ibid.*

¹⁶³*Ibid.*

Temple is on Temple mount and certainly not the one Kahn chose." Most importantly the Temple can only be "reconstructed with the help of God when the Messiah returns."¹⁶⁴ Tacitly acknowledging the fearsome power of Kahn's monument, the Rabbi affirmed:

Until this happens [the Messiah coming] I am not willing to see that the proposed new Khurvah becomes with the passing of time a tradition and the final word; the alternative to the Temple.¹⁶⁵

Nationalist Perception of Kahn's Metaphor:

In his presentation, Rami Karmi did not conceal his unqualified endorsement of Kahn's design (in fact he acted as a liaison for Kahn in Israel).¹⁶⁶ He argued that Kahn's design is in absolute harmony with the tradition of building in the Old City of Jerusalem. "The city," argued Karmi, "was constructed in historical stratification where each layer did not imitate the previous one but honestly reflected its own age, state of knowledge and technology." Kahn's degree-Zero design, as deemed by Karmi, perfectly lends itself to this historically stratified structure of the city.¹⁶⁷

Yet Karmi simultaneously attempted to mitigate this avant-garde view by highlighting what he considered the nationalist and traditional religious merits of the design. To appease national sentiments for the Western Wall, he referred to the kind of sympathetic dialogue that Kahn's design for the Khurvah established with the western Wall, whether architectonically in

¹⁶⁴Ibid.

¹⁶⁵Ibid.

¹⁶⁶Ram Karmi, cited in Proposals and Criticisms for Reconstructing Khurvat Rabbi Yehuda ha Hasid (in Hebrew)(Ministry of Education and Culture, Jerusalem, 1968), 25-32.

¹⁶⁷Ibid., 32.

form and material, or liturgically and urbanistically in the intermediary spatial system he established between both.¹⁶⁸

Appealing, too, to traditional/Diaspora sensibilities, Karmi drew the attention of his audience to the metaphorical connections between Kahn's design and the old Khurvah shown in the identical dimensions of the central prayer hall.¹⁶⁹ Karmi also informed his audience about a decision that Kahn made upon his recent visit to the restored medieval Italian synagogue in the Museum of Israel.¹⁷⁰ Kahn intended to replace the candles in the peripheral alcoves with displays of restored synagogues brought from Diaspora Jewish communities all over the world.¹⁷¹

However, inadvertently expressing his indifference to traditional religious sentiments, Karmi declared that Kahn's Khurva design superseded the old Khurvah in liturgical content:

While the old Khurvah only catered for collective congregational rituals, Kahn's Khurvah accommodates both public and private liturgical needs of the community and individuals, through varied and autonomous big and small rooms and chapels etc."¹⁷²

By virtue of its dualistic metaphorical structure "which successfully accommodates both the religious and the nationalist, the traditional and the modern, private and public, functional and symbolic needs," Kahn's building, Karmi declared, recommends itself as "a model (Qana midah) for crystallizing the missing Jewish National Architectural Style, a style which Modern Israeli architecture failed to develop because of its self imposed confinement to mere functionalism."¹⁷³

¹⁶⁸*Ibid.*, 25 (my translation).

¹⁶⁹*Ibid.*, 30.

¹⁷⁰*Ibid.*, 30.

¹⁷¹*Ibid.*, 30.

¹⁷²*Ibid.*.. (My translation).

¹⁷³*Ibid.*, 25.

Clearly, this inconclusive symposium again divided the body politic of Israel. Earlier in the decade the historical tension between the secular Zionists and religious Jewish community had been calmed by the emergence of the Western Wall as a unifying national symbol. However, this new division, did not deter the Israeli government from reconsidering Kahn's design. Less than a month after the debate, a meeting of the ministerial committee responsible for the Old City of Jerusalem, which was headed by the prime minister, took place on January 1st, 1969.¹⁷⁴ In addition to the Ministerial members of the committee, mayor Teddy Kollek, Yakov Solomon, and technical advisers Yehuda Tamir and Rami Karmi attended the meeting.

Participants in the meeting were divided with regard to visions for the Khurvah. One side preferred the modern monumental construction proposed by Kahn's design while the other advocated a restoration of the old Ottoman Khurvah. The strongest voice was that of the Minister of Interior, who is in charge of all planning in Israel. He expressed concerns about the potential impact of Kahn's design on the supremacy of the Wall as a National symbol.¹⁷⁵ Consequently the meeting deferred the final decision on Kahn's design plans until they have been "discussed by Yehuda Tamir with his colleagues who are responsible for the technical re-planning of the Old city of Jerusalem, with a view to reporting on the point mentioned by the Minister of Interior, as to whether the plans are acceptable from the point of view of their harmony with the overall re-planning of the Old City, approaches etc.

¹⁷⁴Letter, Salomon to Kahn, January 3, 1969, Box LIK 39, Kahn Collection.

¹⁷⁵Ibid.

and the harmonious balance between the Wailing Wall and the new Hurva.”¹⁷⁶

Nevertheless, this referral of Kahn’s design to technical assessment indicated that the State had already been lured to inadvertently play a game, so to speak, whose rules had been discreetly plotted by Kahn. This “game,” of course, was the mere thought of a possible coexistence of the Western Wall and Kahn’s design as complementary National Symbols of Israel.

Shortly afterwards, Kahn’s conspiratorial metaphor succeeded in completely co-opting the State, which suddenly became convinced of its merits as a new national symbol. In his report to the ministerial committee of Jerusalem, Tamir fully endorsed Kahn’s design, asserting its harmony with the rest of the Old City, and particularly the Western Wall. In February 1969 the Israeli government sent Kahn the following formal letter:

On behalf of the Ministerial Committee for Jerusalem, headed by the Prime Minister, I have pleasure in informing you of the Committee’s decision, reading as follows: “Resolved: to invite Prof. L.I.Kahn, architect, of the United States, to continue planning of the new Building for the synagogue of Churbat Rabbi Yehuda Hachassid.”¹⁷⁷

Indeed, whatever reluctance the state showed earlier towards Kahn’s design had clearly been reversed and replaced by complete fascination. The six months between Kahn’s first presentation of the design and its adoption by the government is a remarkably short period for transforming an idiosyncratic metaphor into a National Symbol. Tamir’s above-mentioned letter concludes:

I was requested by the [ministerial] Committee to congratulate you on your excellent and most interesting project.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁶ibid.

¹⁷⁷Letter, Tamir to Kahn, February 25, 1969, Box LIK 39, Kahn Collection.

¹⁷⁸ibid.

Yakov Solomon summed up this new recognition of Kahn's design as a national symbol, a metaphor of the new Zionist civil religion describing it as, "a structure symbolizing the spiritual unity of Jewry, a shrine of a conception befitting the reunification of Jerusalem and the ingathering of the exiles."¹⁷⁹

The State suddenly realized that Kahn's design offers the missing unifying symbolic center legitimates the contradiction inherent in the governmental policies towards Jerusalem and the symbols of Diaspora, in particular its Old City. On the one hand, there was the modernist functionalist approach, a residue of the early Zionist negativity toward tradition which prefers a tabula-rasa renewal. On the other, there was the nostalgic sentiment to restore a lost Diaspora heritage, i.e. the Jewish Quarter. The paradoxical figuration of Kahn's imposing monument as an enigmatic "Modern Ruins," with its effective museumization of the city, seemed to have reconciled these contradictory approaches of the state.

Simultaneously, shifting the center of the Old City from the Dome of the Rock up and southward to the dominant monumental Khurvah reconfigures the skyline of Jerusalem, reconstituting it as a unified city, as befitting the capital of the state of Israel. Evidently, the unassuming presence the Wailing Wall falls short of the state's vision for a center for the new expanding city form.¹⁸⁰

It is no coincidence that shortly after his official Khurvah commission, Kahn was commissioned by the government to plan the southern hilly outskirts of Jerusalem overlooking the Old City, where the dominant

¹⁷⁹Letter, Yaakov to Kahn, August 25 1968, Box LK 39, Kahn Collection.

¹⁸⁰See Chapter 6.

Government House of the British mandate is located (fig. 54, 55).¹⁸¹ When the Israeli government stalled the Khurvah design the commission for the other project was simultaneously suspended.

The decision to stall Kahn's design was indirectly caused by the protests of Jerusalemite architects and planners, Diaspora forces, and international experts of the advisory Jerusalem committee (of whose Jerusalem planning sub-committee Kahn was a chairman), against the government's arbitrary construction of several high-rise buildings which "violently altered forever the skyline of Jerusalem" and which Kahn himself condemned "as ominous as an invasion." (fig.56) ¹⁸² In fact, the ensuing controversy and the Committee's unusually harsh criticism of its plans, especially the 1968 Master Plan, were detrimental to the government's resolve to sponsor grand monumental designs like Kahn's own. Kollek brought to Kahn the sad news of Golda Meir's government's decision to put a freeze on the Khurvah design in July 1973:

We cannot proceed as yet on the Hurva project ... But we know that one day. If anyone can do it, you will.¹⁸³

Ironically, Kahn had already introduced a curved vaulted roof to the interior of the Khurvah, in part to solve the problem of glazing its split roof, but most probably to appease the pro Religious-Diaspora sentiments with

181 Letter, Kollek to Kahn, June 6, 1969, Box LIK 39, Kahn Collection; also a letter from Kollek to Kahn on March 4, 1971, Box LIK 39, Kahn Collection, Kollek briefing him about a meeting with the overall planning authority of Jerusalem which consists of the Ministry of Housing, the Government Land Administration and the Municipality of Jerusalem.

182 "The New Jerusalem," The New York Times, July 17, 1973 (hrs an interview with Kahn); "Jerusalem's Not So Golden Plan," Architectural Design, April 1971 no. 41-4; Art Kutcher, "New Jerusalem," Architectural Review, 153, no. 916 (June 1973): 399-406; Penny Maguire, "An Eye on Israel: A Great and Golden City" Architectural Review 165, no. 988 (June 1979); David Kroyanker, Conflicts Over the City's Physical and Visual Form (Jerusalem: The Jerusalem Institute for Israeli Studies, 1988) (in Hebrew); Eric Marsden, "Jerusalem Lowers Its Planning Sights," London Times, June 10, 1971.

183 Letter, Kollek to Kahn, July 9, 1973, Box LIK 39, Kahn Collection.

forms recalling, albeit remotely, the curvilinear iconographic forms of the Diaspora design of the Khurvah, especially its domed interior (fig. 57). However, he quickly abandoned what seemed like Orientalist flirtations in favor of alternative rectilinear interior virtually identical to his original design (fig. 58, 59).

Despite the official freeze, significant state figures like Tamir and Kollek remained hopeful that Kahn's design would eventually be built. Mayor Kollek conspired to find a way to get Kahn's design built. He thought that this could happen by adopting a gradual discreet approach. He arranged with Yehuda Tamir for the Company for the Reconstruction and Development of the Jewish Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem to formally invite Kahn to design a Memorial garden for the ruins of the Khurvah synagogue.¹⁸⁴ Kahn had already conceived this memorial as an autonomous fragment of the Khurvah's overall urban design. Kollek explained to Kahn the purpose of this new commission:

I am eager to start the Hurva during my term of office which will surely be my last. Time is really very pressing and thus I think it is particularly important that we begin the memorial garden now... I am perfectly convinced that the moment the memorial garden is finished, we can take a decision on the Hurva. Please trust my judgment and help me go ahead. I know I am pressing but we have to consider the moods and feelings in Israel and in Jerusalem on this project.¹⁸⁵

The uncertainty and confusion about Kahn's design which Kollek alluded to as "the moods and feelings in Israel and in Jerusalem on this project" seem to be related to the then emergent national sense of isolation and paranoia toward a world especially the Arab world perceived as hostile and prone like

¹⁸⁴Letter, Kollek to Kahn, September 6, 1973, with copies to Minister of Justice and Mayor Kollek, Box LIK 39, Kahn Collection, and a letter from Tamir to Kahn, September 6, 1973, Box LIK 39, Kahn Collection.

¹⁸⁵Letter, Kollek to Kahn, March 1, 1974, Box LIK 39, Kahn Collection.

the Nazis to destroy the Jews.¹⁸⁶ These feelings would be sharpened just two months later by the sudden outbreak of the traumatic 1973 war. Kollek seemed to have intuitively sensed an increased chance that distinct historicist elements in Kahn's design could effectively and paradoxically exploit and co-opt these national melancholic feelings and thus successfully capture the national imagination. Most specifically he was thinking of the "accusatory" ruins by which Kahn rhetorically masked his heretical anti-nationalist metaphor. Yakov Solomon reported that he and Kollek drafted with Kahn's approval a statement of the intended project:

The original site of the Hurva should be left as a garden or space open to the public in memory of the defenders of Jerusalem in the War of Independence, and the ruins of the Hurvah would commemorate the destruction "wrought by the gentiles in a holy place to Israel." (I [Solomon] added: "that the nations may see and learn the lesson."¹⁸⁷

Kahn was one of the first (if not the first) to draw the state's attention to the untapped symbolic value and resources of the Diaspora ruins, as opposed to Biblical archaeology, in Israel. The ramifications of this realization will be explicated in the following chapters. Suffice it to say that the memorialization of destroyed Jewish buildings in Jerusalem would compensate Israel for the lack of Holocaust sites and ruins, sites used for cathartic public rituals of passage from a destroyed Diaspora tradition to a redemption embodied in the State of Israel.

Unfortunately Kahn died suddenly in 1974 before completing his plans. Kollek sadly remarked to Kahn's widow, "the plans have not advanced far enough so that we can execute them."¹⁸⁸ The story of Kahn's design finally came to an end. Or so it seemed.

¹⁸⁶This mood was described by several authors like Liebman and Don-Yehiya, 123-167.

¹⁸⁷Ya'akov, *On My Own Way*, p. 286

¹⁸⁸Letter, Kollek to Mrs. Kahn, April 8, 1974, Box LIK 39, Kahn Collection.

Everyone assumed that Kahn's death, if not the official shelving the Khurvah, completely sealed the fate of his design. Yet the following chapters will show that the true story of Kahn's designed metaphor begins where it supposedly ended. Moreover, a closer scrutiny will also underscore crucial but undetected aspects of its legacy that unfolded during his life. The national impact of Kahn's design of the Khurvah can be assessed by correlating its elements not only with the vocabulary of the subsequent urban and architectural reconstruction of the Jewish Quarter, including the Western Wall and the Khurvah synagogue, but most importantly with the changing categories applied by the National authorities in rejecting or approving these designs, or in other words, in shaping its symbols and self image.

Chapter 4: Shaping the Jewish Quarter

Planning the Quarter

Despite the silence of Kahn's historians, planners, and architects of the Jewish quarter, one ought to wonder how it is possible that Kahn's design with its broad urban scope and which for five years had been enthusiastically embraced as a center of the unified city of Jerusalem, could leave no trace on the contemporaneous planning and reconstruction of the Old City and the Jewish Quarter in particular. The following inquiry is an attempt to address this question.

Immediately following its commission of Kahn to design the Khurvah (that is, its adoption as the symbol of unification of Jerusalem) in February 1969, the government founded in April 1969 the company for the reconstruction and development of the Jewish Quarter.¹⁸⁹ The mandate of the company, which was to be under direct supervision of the Prime Minister's office, was defined both so as to emphasize the Jewish character of the Old City and musemize:

To bring the Quarter back to life again, and to dignify and develop it as a national religious historical and cultural milieu; To plan works of restoration and development to that end, making the Quarter a lodestone for tourists and, at the same time, a residential area of study and scholarship, ensuring public services and safeguarding the unique aspects and atmosphere of the Quarter.¹⁹⁰

The demographic goal was to settle as many as 2600 Jewish inhabitants or 630 families in the Old City of Jerusalem as a fundamental part of the hurried policy of the Israeli government to affirm the irreversible annexation of East

189-"The Jewish Quarter," Booklet by the Company for the Reconstruction and Development of the Jewish Quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem, (nd) p.11

190Ibid., 12.

Jerusalem in a unified Israeli capital.¹⁹¹ Note how this functional demographic goal was paired in the charter of the company with a cultural objective, i.e. the construction of the quarter as a Museum.

Founded by the government less than a month after its official endorsement of Kahn's Khurvah design, the company, most likely, aimed to pursue these goals, i.e. the physical and symbolic reformulation of the Jewish Quarter, in the light of Kahn's design and its broad vision of the Quarter. First and foremost, Kahn's design simply endowed the Jewish Quarter with something it had always lacked historically: a well-defined urban territory, identity, and center (fig60).¹⁹² Indeed, the appointment of Yehuda Tamir, the head of the Prime-Minister's Jerusalem office and one of Kahn's strongest supporters in the Israeli government, would insure a faithful implementation of Kahn's vision.

Yet since Kahn's urban image for the city, compared to the detailed architectural design of the Khurvah building, was schematic, it gave the company's planners considerable room for interpretation, reflecting their particular dispositions and ideologies .

191Shlomo Gardi, The Restoration of the Jewish Quarter in Jerusalem (a pamphlet by the Company for the Reconstruction and Development of the Jewish Quarter), undated.

192Until 1948, the presence of the Jewish community in the Old City was marked only by a number of loosely dispersed monuments and properties which were mostly rented. Jewish properties were less than 12% of the area of what is designated now as the Jewish Quarter. They were mostly concentrated in the "Street of the Jews." Avistur, Shumuel, "The Jewish Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem," and Simon Azari and Moshe Yablovitch "The Jewish Quarter in the Old City: Site, Growth, and Expansion in the Nineteenth Century," both in M. Friedman, B.-Z. Yehshua, and Y. Tobi (eds.), Chapters in the History of the Jewish Community in Jerusalem, Vol. 2 (Hebrew) (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1976), vii (English Summary), 9-51; Yehoshua Ben-Arieh, Jerusalem in the 19th Century: The Old City (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984); Joshua Prawer "Jewish Quarters in Jerusalem," Israel Museum News, 12 (1977): 80-91. Prawer showed that historically there was not such a thing as the Jewish Quarter but Jewish quarters. Jewish settlement was a volatile phenomenon continuously shifting its place in the Old City.

Much larger than the original Jewish pre-1948 settlement in the Old City, the Jewish Quarter was expanded to the Western Wall, the Armenian Quarter to the east, the City walls to the south, and the extension of the King's David Road, i.e. the Documanus, to the north (**fig.61**).¹⁹³ The earliest temptation of Israeli planners to wipe out the whole traditional fabric and start new construction was ruled out.¹⁹⁴ The company's city planners decided, that "only one third of the existing buildings [in the Quarter] will be leveled since they are either of little architectural value or do not fit into the over-all plan which has been drawn up for the quarter. In their place, new buildings will be constructed to provide 40,000 sq. meters of floor space."¹⁹⁵ This new construction will be, according to one of the company's architects, "an interpretation of modern style."¹⁹⁶ The remaining old buildings of the quarter will be restored and improved to provide additional 30,000 square metres of floor area.¹⁹⁷ (At later stages the total floor area would be increased to 145,000 square meters with 55,000 for institutional buildings, 75,000 residential and 15,000 commercial).¹⁹⁸

It should not be surprising that in the new plans for the Quarter, most of the area to be demolished (i.e. one third of the Quarter) and the corresponding institutional infill zone happen to be located exactly where Kahn had envisioned the new Khurvah and associated religious institutions,

¹⁹³See Michael Dumper, "Israeli Settlement in the Old City of Jerusalem" Journal of Palestine Studies 21 : 32-53.

¹⁹⁴Interview with Ehud Menzel, a chief planner for the company, The Jerusalem Post Magazine, July 18, 1969, p. 8.

¹⁹⁵Ibid.

¹⁹⁶Ibid.

¹⁹⁷Ibid.

¹⁹⁸Shlomo Gardi, Outline Scheme for the Jewish Quarter: Programme and Principles of Planning (Jerusalem: Company for the Restoration and Development of the Jewish Quarter, Sept 1972).

i.e. the "Pilgrimage route" (fig.62, 63). Land appropriation, confiscation, demolition, archaeological excavation, and construction did indeed proceed accordingly. Furthermore, the "interpreted modern character" of the new buildings, referred to above, will in several aspects correspond to the formal historicist vocabulary of Kahn's design. Kahn's design vocabulary will also influence the approach to restoration applied on the other parts of the Quarter as well.¹⁹⁹

Among the planner-architects recruited by the company were Elizer Frenkel and Yakov Ya'ar, who had already earned national acclaim for their restoration work in the old Arab city of Jaffa. The new plan of the Jewish Quarter which they prepared is one of the earliest for the area, and most representative of the planning approach of the company. Its major elements remained unaltered in the subsequent plans of the company. Most importantly, these two architects were able to execute most of it.²⁰⁰

Frenkel and Yaar's plan stipulates two major principles for the urban structure of the Quarter's north-south commercial axis and east-west religious axis (fig, 64, 65). An extension of the main souq and Bazaar of the city, the first axis is a multi-level commercial strip at the western edge of the Quarter. In their plan, this axis seems minimally designed and is more of a restoration of existing structures which generally conform to Kahn's plan which leaves

¹⁹⁹The demographic planning of the quarter mirrored the aforementioned physical planning. The government persuaded the religious community, mostly Yeshiva students, as a spearhead in its campaign for establishing the Jewish character of the city, to populate the aforementioned "institutional" zone. The rest of the quarter would be populated by a secular community of varied professional backgrounds with almost none of the original Arab or Jewish residents of the quarter.

²⁰⁰Elezer Frenkel, Ora and Yaakov Yaar, Jerusalem-The Old City-Jewish Quarter: Proposed Urban Design (Undated folio); "Jerusalem: Project de restauration urbaine; quartier juif de la vieille ville," L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui, 153 (1970): 66-69. See also E. Frankel "Restoration and Architecture in the Old City," Modern Architecture in Jerusalem (Discussion Paper No.4) edited by Ora Ahimier and Michael Levin (Jerusalem: The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 1984), x-xii. A primary source.

this area completely unaltered. In fact this approach would persist even when the company later decided to sponsor a design competition for a new urban reconstruction of the area. It then mandated, under the advice of Nicholas Pevsner, that the new design should blend in character and space with the surrounding fabric.²⁰¹ The contextually sensitive design of Peter Bugod and Ester-Niv, better known as the Cardo, was awarded the first prize and eventually built. I will discuss this project shortly.

As opposed to the predominantly preserved fabric of the commercial axis, the religious axis is almost wholly a new construction. A meandering route cutting the quarter at the middle, the pedestrian religious axis is an agglomeration of the religious and educational institutions of the quarter. It corresponds to Kahn's "Pilgrimage passage." At one end is the Western Wall plaza, while on the other is the Quarter's main public space. Kahn's new Khurvah synagogue occupies the center of this plaza, surrounded by a cluster of religious institutions including the memorialized old ruined Khurvah (fig.66,67).

Urban Ruins:

The imprint of Kahn on the planners' physical image of the Quarter is, however, most revealed in the elevation and three-dimensional projection of their plan (fig.68). At the top of the drawing, one sees the new Khurvah surmounting as a landmark the quasi-pyramidic skyline of the Quarter (a new skyline reinforced by the distribution of the proposed institutional buildings) (fig.69). A juxtaposition of modulated vertical masses, the urban form of the Quarter i.e. its new constitutive buildings, appear to be cascading

²⁰¹Program of the Design Competition, (Jewish Quarter Company).

from and derivative of the fragmentary ruinate body of the Khurvah pylons. The elevation also shows a reinterpretation (an appropriation is a more appropriate term) of the traditional fabric according to the formal vocabulary of Kahn's Khurvah. This appropriation will shortly appear in the architects' restoration of the Quarter. In sum, these planners conceived the quarter, and indeed the city, after Kahn's own grided archaeological image of the city as a cluster of ruins old and new, that is to say, an archeological museum.

Frenkel and Ya'ar had the chance to translate these graphic images of ruins into reality in the new construction of the Religious axis of the quarter, especially Yeshivat ha-Kotel which is the largest building segment of the "Pilgrimage route" and indeed in the Jewish Quarter (14000 sq. meters) (**fig. 70, 71**).²⁰² Frenkel conceived his building as a cluster of fragmented parts represented externally by vertical stone towers. These forms unmistakably replicate the configuration of the new Khurvah's "modern ruins," i.e. its massive pylons.

On the other hand, Frenkel incorporated in his vocabulary a traditional Muslim symbol, the minaret, demarcating the corner of the building. Frenkel placed the Ark of Covenant inside the minaret which he rotated towards the "Temple Mount." In this manner, the architect fused Jewish Diaspora with Muslim traditional form. Simultaneously, he appropriated the Mashrabiyyah, a traditional cantilevered bay window, abstracting it as an applied opaque stone protrusion displaying a ruinous character (**fig.72**).

²⁰²Yeshivat Hakotel: The Wohl Torah Centre (Jerusalem: Ministry of Religious Affairs, undated) (Hebrew). See in particular the introduction, which describes the building as a segment of the "Pilgrimage route" culminating in the Khurvah synagogue.

In fact the whole building is a superstructure over an archaeological museum. Underneath it, Yeshivat Ha-Kotel shelters the biggest indoor archaeological museum in the Quarter, a whole Herodian residential complex of a noble Jewish family. Although it was substantially burned, most of the Herodian quarter's rooms, ornamental surfaces, furniture pieces, and daily objects were fully restored.²⁰³

The completed design thus amounts to an appropriation and application of symbols of the Arab city and the Diaspora, or more precisely fragments thereof, as an additive surface layer (or mask) on top of another image representing the Jewishness of the city through either foundational ancient Jewish archaeology or modern ruins imaging an enigmatic past.

Thus, the whole building reworks Kahn's own paradoxical imagery but within the surface structure of archaeology. The first image represents the Jewishness of the city and its origins through the excavated biblical ruins (Herodian Quarter) or the modern ruins (the massive opaque towers) which negate and devalue the traditional Arab and Jewish presence in the city. This image, however, is negated by a metonymic appropriation of the very reality negated in the first place, i.e. the traditional Arab and Diaspora symbols. In other words, paradoxical configuration could also be read as negating the traditional city by archaeological subtraction, which is in turn negated by an architectural addition of traditional fragments. This paradoxical imagery configuration is in fact representative of the urban reconstruction of the whole quarter as a Jewish museum, a style which will be clarified in the next section.

²⁰³Nadia Abu El-Haj, "Excavating the Land," 244-254.

Frenkel applied a mixed approach of restoration to the old buildings and streets in the Quarter which is markedly different from the literal preservationist approach he had applied, before the advent of Kahn, in the Arab city of Jaffa or elsewhere in the Jewish quarter. Frenkel did not literally restore the original surface and ornamental vocabulary of the traditional vernacular buildings. On them he superimposed a new massive stone structure with protruding sculpted volumes which appear to be abstract ruins. Unrestored parts of the old structures were deliberately made visible under the new additive sculptural overlay to suggest the historical depth and underlying ancient Jewish structures (fig.73, 74).

The resultant paradoxical urban form and experience is indeed distinct from that of the traditional public space in Jerusalem. The traditional urban space is configured as a figurative negative space, subtracted out of the city's closely knit fabric. It is cohesive in its flanking edges of continuous planar facades of introverted houses which are occasionally differentiated by ornamental surfaces. The newly restored space became a museum vessel for viewing both the new additive exteriorized structures of buildings as modern ruins and the excavated real ruins, an experience which clearly emphasizes the visual over other faculties of perception. Yet this remodeled space is not the autonomous flowing modernist space typified as a neutral backdrop for freestanding objects where the viewer is allowed a critical individualizing distance from the object of experience and from present reality. Nor is it the traditional figurative introverted space where the beholder is absorbed into the collectively of the city and the present. Yet it is both. It is a fractured image or a ruin of the urban space of the old Jewish Quarter as it exists in the national memory.

Responding to hostile comments from modernist critics in the advisory Jerusalem committee, such as Bruno Zevi, who attacked what they perceived as kitsch an “anachronistic” preservation and reconstruction of the Quarter “unjustifiably” shunning modern forms and materials, Frenkel and his colleagues proudly affirmed the schizophrenic nature of their intervention by describing it as “neither preservation nor new modern construction.”²⁰⁴ Indeed, the paradoxical reciprocity that Kahn sought between archaeology and architectural/urban form, where one becomes the projection and representation of the other, had been appropriated as a style for the State not only representing the Jewishness of Jerusalem but Israel’s own schizophrenic identity both as a “Jewish” state and as a “secular” state.

Archaeological excavation of the real ruins (of Jewish roots) proceeded hand in hand with the architectural reconstruction of new ruins in the Jewish Quarter. Each building site had to be archaeologically surveyed beforehand by Prof. N. Avigad of the Hebrew University and his team. As Yeshivat Hakotel shows, the buildings were essentially new constructions as much as they were archaeological excavations of old structures. Most times the latter preceded the former in execution, although sometimes, as in the case of the Cardo, it was the other way around.

The Cardo Museum:

In the design of the Cardo, the multi- functional commercial and residential “axis” of the Jewish Quarter, architecture anticipated and prefigured

²⁰⁴The Jerusalem Post Magazine, July 18, 1969, p. 8. Zevi criticized the architects’ discarding of new materials like concrete and new formal vocabulary in favor of restoring and copying the older vernacular forms, which are to him “architecturally lousy and not worthy of reverence or reconstruction.”

archeology in its making which allowed a simultaneous construction and excavation.²⁰⁵ The architects, Bugod, Krendel, and Aronson, based the design on the idea of renewing the Roman Cardo which, as depicted in the Byzantine Mosaic Map of the city, they thought to be located on the site designated by the company for construction (between the Street of the Jews and Habad Street) (fig.75).²⁰⁶ Once the work began, the Cardo was indeed discovered on the same site, although it was found to be Byzantine and not Roman, to the dismay of archeologists.²⁰⁷ The findings, which in addition to the colonnaded Cardo included segments of other epochs such as a whole Crusader Market, and remnants of a wall dating back to the Hasmonaeen period, were integrated in the design of a new street. This was made possible by a flexible structural system deliberately shaped after an archeological grid, to allow both excavation and construction to proceed simultaneously. Moreover, this system was also shaped with the intention to blend the new construction spatially and figuratively with the surrounding traditional vernacular context, especially the Medieval Bazaars of the Old City (fig.76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81).

Indeed, a process of double negation analogous to Kahn's own is at work in the new Cardo. As a metaphor, the structural/archaeological grid first negates the present city physically by demolition and symbolically by excavating older and more original layers of history underneath it. The grid further devalues the traditional symbols of reality, fragmenting them into

²⁰⁵Peter Bugod and Ester Niv Krendel interview by the author, July, 1994, tape recording, Jerusalem; Ester-Niv Krendel, "The Story of a Street: Restoration of the Cardo at Jerusalem," Bulletin of the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society (1985-1986): 48-35; the Design Competition Program, the Company for Reconstructing and Developing the Jewish Quarter, June 1971, Jerusalem.

²⁰⁶ Peter Bugod, interview by the author (recooded) August, 1994; Project-report by Peter Bugod.

²⁰⁷Peter Bugod, Cardo Design Project Report , Jerusalem, n.d..

particularized autonomous historical and symbolic segments. It then regroups and rejoins these particularized variegated historical fragments, i.e. halls, facades, colonnades, columns, and ditches, to display them as a collage in the neutral container of a museum, where each is contemplated independently from other fragments and from its original context as a complete object in itself.

But this negational modern metaphor, or grid, in the Cardo is rendered neutral and invisible by self negation, that is by subsequently representing what was negated in the first place. The grid was intermittently disposed as functional infill frames and shafts mediating between the discrepant historical urban fragments. Shifted laterally from one zone to another, these modulated frames and columns conformed to different preexistent historical paths and vistas in the site. In these places where the concrete surfaces of the structural grid were exposed, the shafts were sectionally trimmed and occasionally coated with neutral colors such as beige. Iconographically the grid was roofed in the museum level by a exposed concrete vaulting system which represented the crusader and traditional roofing of the Bazaars in the Old City. Yet the most representative statement of self-negation (i.e. the second image of the present city) is the superimposition of housing of religious residents over the archeological museum of tourists. This introverted building represents the traditional typologies of the city, courtyards, alleys, tiny windows, and stone facing. In fact its linear courtyards, which are surrounded by new and remodeled flats for religious Jewish families, recall those of nineteenth century Jewish buildings in West Jerusalem. The representation of Diaspora is in fact more evident in an actual existing Diaspora synagogue, Habad, integrated within the upper body of the building.

The upper building thus represents a fusion of traditional Arab and Diaspora symbols.

At first glance, one may say that the resultant paradoxical synthesis of images ultimately vindicates a nationalist State narrative representing the biblical Jewish foundation of the traditional city above. Yet thanks to the latent indiscriminating power of the implicit grid that the architects applied, this narrative appears to be unauthored, inconclusive, or teleological, for the ancient wall which represents the Jewish past is neutralized by parity with other competing fragments in its purview; in fact this last segment was imposed posterior on the architects.²⁰⁸ What is most apparent is an annihilation of the city's present reality and its museumization with other fragments of a 'general' history. Indeed, in this paradoxical shift of images in the Museum, architecture alternated its position with archeology, building and excavation, demolition and restoration, addition and subtraction, past and present, reality and fiction, to the point where the beholder loses the ability to distinguish where one begins and the other ends. The sensational experience in the Cardo in which beholders' consciousness of reality and memory is indefinitely suspended or even fragmented signifies and celebrates a loss of national ideology, memory and utopia thus fulfilling in a way the subversive objectives of Kahn's historicizing grid.

The beholder experiences the ruins once frontally from a street podium, once again when he descends underneath, and another time in the shops in the remodeled crusader arcades which sell him/her reproduced historical objects appropriated for daily mundane use, in this way extending

²⁰⁸Ibid.

the museum experience beyond the domain of the quarter. The beholder can even literally consume ruins and history as food in this museum. In collaboration with archeologists, the architects of the Cardo designed a "Roman restaurant" which serves authentic Roman recipes to customers who, like their waiters, will be dressed in Roman costumes and seated in a Roman setting (fig.82, 83). As one contemplates the Roman pastiche interior of the restaurant Museum, one realizes a cynical gesture of the architects permeating their whole Cardo design.

Conclusion:

In light of the foregoing analysis one can say that generally the elements of Kahn's schizophrenic style, especially his metonymic image of the city as an archeological museum, have been installed. Only the new Khurvah, the primary image, was not built. Its site was already cleared. This testifies to the Israeli architects, planners, and State's assimilation of his metaphor as a national symbol and language. One may say that the Jewish Quarter was shaped in the image of Kahn's schizophrenic design in anticipation of the construction of the new Temple.

Despite points of apparent congruence, the analysis reveals, areas of tension between Kahn's original vision of the city and its realized interpretation. Kahn represented the city as an archeological grid juxtaposing its constitutive national and traditional symbols as historicized, equal, competing and heterogeneous fragments, which consequently neutralize each other. The net effect of this metonymic image is affirming the supremacy and finality of the new symmetrical enclosure, that is his subversive personal image of the Temple.

Kahn's grid may have appeared in the beginning, to the State, a useful mask or face for a demographically gentrified Jewish Quarter whose construction was enabled only by massive eviction of Arab inhabitants and expropriation of their properties.²⁰⁹ Yet as early as 1970, but increasingly after Kahn's death, while implementing Kahn's disembodied urban grid independently of his image of the Temple, the State began to be alarmed at the way its negational, anti-hierarchical structure hindered the linear teleological flow and supremacy of the master memory narrating the Jewishness of the state and Jerusalem. The negative repercussions became more apparent after Kahn's death when for the moment it appeared that Kahn's Temple would not be built after all. The State then attempted to adapt and transform the grid. This was done by re-scaling and censoring certain problematic competing memory fragments from the grid while expanding the domain of those others that represent Jewishness to signal them as supreme. This the state did concurrently with inserting double-negation as a process unfolding from within the surface structure of the grid, whereby the post-classical becomes a mask for biblical archaeology. The latter fragment consists of biblical ruins which represent the Jewish foundation of the city.

The Cardo architects reported how archaeologists were dismayed to discover that the Cardo, the objective of the project, was Byzantine not Roman in accordance with the objective of the design. They, thus insisted upon further digging and further delaying construction until a segment of the old wall from the Hasmonaeon era was found. Viewing platforms were erected along the middle of the Cardo street, interrupting the pedestrian flow

²⁰⁹Gabriel Stern, "The Jewish Quarter-Good Neighborhood or Ghetto," *New Outlook* 20, no.1 (172) (Tel Aviv January/February 1977): 53-57. 'Al-Hamishmar, January 7, 1971, *Haaretz*, January 7, 1977.

in order to impel passersby to peek through them at the ruins at the ruins of the wall beneath. Likewise, excavation sites of biblical ruins spread all over the city, whether in the form of underground museums or outdoor squares, giving an open view to the new apartment buildings constructed around them. This excavated historical segment was enhanced not only by physical expansion but by highlighting an accusatory association with tragic destruction of past Jewish life, e.g. the burnt house. The upper mask of post-biblical history, on the other hand, was homogenized as much as possible to keep under control any perceptual heterogeneity that might hinder the experience of continuity between the Israeli present above and the Jewish past below. Whatever modern architectural forms and materials were used, such as concrete or steel, had to be rendered invisible by an overlay of neutral unifying colors, textures and materials like stone. The contrast of architectural imagery was kept in check in favor of a homogenous character, something that drew Kahn's explicit criticism.²¹⁰

Another manifestation of the State's appropriation of Kahn's grid occurred in 1969. The state obliterated the only surviving segment of the Moroccan quarter, i.e. the Mamluk buildings overlooking the Western Wall plaza which were prominently featured in Kahn's historicist grid. In contrast, the accusatory ruins of Diaspora structures were increasingly emphasized. The climax of the restoration work in the Quarter was the partial reconstruction of the Khurvah ruins more or less according to Kahn's vision (fig.84, 85). This particular vision inspired the trend toward restoring other Diaspora religious buildings destroyed during the 1948 War, such as Tifferet Israel (fig.86). Only the facade of this synagogue is partly restored, lying under

210Letter , Kahn to Kollek, July 4, 1969, Box LIK 39, Kahn Collection.

a heavy mass of exposed rough concrete to accentuate its image of destruction. Accusatory museums which highlight the Jordanian destruction of the quarter proliferated, especially under the government of the right-wing Likud party.

A pointed case of the proliferating accusatory Diaspora ruins is the museum dedicated to the “Last Day” of the Quarter’s resistance before its fall to the Jordanian siege in 1948. This museum was installed directly opposite the Cardo Roman restaurant.²¹¹ It seemed as if the State wanted to contrast the architect’s cynical gesture of the loss and fragmentation of national ideology and memory within the museum grid with a deadly serious, authored, and assertive narrative affirming the contrary. This was conveyed by the display of tragic and heroic images of the destruction and eventual reconstruction of the Jewish Quarter.

Nevertheless, by so actively and explicitly intervening and distorting the grid, the Zionist State entered the grid of history with a bang that was bound to arouse the resistance of other rival segments of the grid alarmed by their endangered and disproportionately small symbolic representation. The religious Orthodox Diaspora community ironically became the dominant majority of the Quarter’s population, as most secular residents chose to flee from what they perceived as a museum turned into a ghetto.²¹² Consequently the mismatch between the nationalistically appropriated archeological museum which historicized the Diaspora and a resurgent Diaspora community became unmistakable. A number of Diaspora museums emerged

211 “One Last Day: The Fall of the Jewish Quarter in 1948” (The Company for Reconstructing and Developing the Jewish Quarter, 1990), museum pamphlet.

212 *The Jerusalem Post*, March 18, 1988, p.6, and March 27, 1987, reports that only 80 secular families remained in the quarter as opposed to previously comprising 40% of the quarter’s population.

which were openly critical of the archeological style of reconstructing the quarter, in so far as it endangered the Diaspora way of life and continuity of its culture.²¹³ Their counter discourse will be fully discussed in chapter six. The centerpiece of the most prominent of these museums is a model of none other than the old Ottoman Khurvah synagogue.

In choosing the Museum as a medium of protest, the Diaspora resistance initially proceeded from within the grid as a self-acknowledged fragment according to the rules of the game prescribed by Kahn. As the last chapter will show, however, the religious community could ultimately come into terms with the nationalist Statist only outside the grid.

²¹³“The Museum of the Jewish Community” (Jerusalem: The Jerusalem Foundation, undated), museum pamphlet.

Chapter 5: Fashioning the Western Wall as National Symbol

Prior to 1967 the Wailing Wall was spatially framed by an adjoining narrow enclosure (**fig.87**).²¹⁴ This enclosure suited well the traditional individualist ritual that took place there. The Diaspora ritual was intertwined with spatial transitions of the undulating alleys of the Moroccan Quarter leading peripherally to the enclosure where the beholder suddenly finds himself face to face before the grand Wall (**fig.88**). The experience was accentuated by the narrow linear shape of the enclosure (3.8 m* 30m) which compelled the beholder to scan the roughly textured stones of the Wall incrementally from the bottom to its full height 14.5 metres upward, thus impressing its grandeur upon all his senses, so to speak. Indeed, the narrowness of the enclosure and the low height of its other wall perceptually exaggerated the height of the Wall. The architectonic attributes of the enclosure seemed to have informed the content of the Diaspora ritual which most probably emerged in Medieval times when Ottoman sultans specifically prepared the enclosure for Jews' worship.²¹⁵ The Divine Presence was deemed, by many Diaspora Jews praying there, to be immanent, behind the ruinant Wall. The Wall is itself believed, albeit not by all Orthodox Jews, to be a surviving ruin of the Temple precinct which is directly opposite to the gate of Heaven; thus prayers would readily ascend from there to the Lord.²¹⁶

²¹⁴Shlomo S. Gafni and Van der Heyden, A. "The Western Wall/ Synagogues and the Orthodox Quarters," in *The Glory of Jerusalem*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 28-35; R. Dorgeles, "The Wailing Wall," *The Menorah Journal*, 15 (1928): 362-368.

²¹⁵Meir Be-Dov et al., *The Western Wall*, tr. Raphael Posner (Jerusalem: Ministry of Defence-Publishing House, 1983), 115-125.

²¹⁶Rabbi Mordechai Ha'cohen "Sanctity. Law and Customs", *Ibid*, pp.81-97. For the difference among the religious authorities about the significance of the Wall, see "The Western Wall,"

There the ruinate worshipers mourned the destruction of the Temple caused by God's anger with Jews, asking His forgiveness and the redemption he promised through the coming of the Messiah.

This traditional enclosure, and its associated individualist ritual, vanished overnight after the Israeli capture of the Old City in June 1967 with the bulldozing of the Arab Moroccan quarter, the edges of which defined the enclosure of the Wall and the passage leading to it (**fig.89,90**). The creation of the vast Plaza was dictated by the State's recent selection of the Wall as its supreme national symbol.²¹⁷ A huge space was needed to accommodate tens of thousands of visitors and worshippers participating in the new spectacles and ceremonies of the state (**fig.91**). In his memoirs Kollek boasted about the swift clearance of the plaza: "in two days it was done, finished, clean."²¹⁸

Ironically, however, this nationalist undertaking of deleting an important segment of Diaspora tradition diminished the architectonic aura of the Western Wall itself. Now suddenly the Wall appeared dwarfed and lost in the vast Plaza. The state subsequently solicited several design solutions for the area of the western Wall:

Isamu Noguchi:

In 1970, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, which administers holy sites in Israel, invited the well known Japanese-American Sculptor to design the Plaza before the Western Wall.²¹⁹ In his design Noguchi followed the lead of

The Encyclopedia of Judaism, ed. Geoffery Wigoder (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1989), 727-29.

²¹⁷Uzi Beziman, Jerusalem, 40-41, Meir Be-Dov The Western Wall, 163.

²¹⁸Cited by Elon, 93; Benvenisti, 305-311.

²¹⁹Ben-Dov, The Western Wall, 170; Living in the City, no.2, (Jerusalem: Summer 1975), 27-33.

Kahn's design by proposing to excavate the plaza down to the Herodian foundation (fig. 92, 93). From there rises a sculpted Wall, piercing and towering over a slab which partly covers the archeological site below. According to Noguchi, this new ruin, a black basalt sculpture, which confronts the Wall face to face, represents the destruction of the Diaspora Jewry wrought by the Holocaust and the redemption achieved by the foundation of the state of Israel.²²⁰

The central placement of the sculpture was justified as an attempt to recreate the old liturgical enclosure of the Diaspora in separation from the rest of the plaza, which would be used for secular functions such as tourism. In so doing, the smoothly textured new Wall unabashedly emerged as an independent dominating pole of a circumbulatory movement and ritual which completely relegated the roughly textured old Wall to the background. No wonder the design drew the antagonism of the religious authorities. Whereas Kahn's design was denounced as heretic, Noguchi's design was condemned as paganist. Noguchi's apologists attributed the shortcoming of his design to his scant knowledge of the traditional symbolic context of the Wall. No one leveled this charge at Kahn.

The Scheme of Schoenberger's Team:

In 1971, Joseph Schoenberger, an architectural consultant of the Minister of Religions, headed a team of architects and town planners, including A. Kutcher, S. Aronson, and M. Turner, to formulate criteria guiding the design of the area of the Wall, in an apparent response to the controversy aroused by Noguchi's design. Schoenberger was responsible for

²²⁰Ibid.

the modest and temporary architectural intervention which had been undertaken three years earlier in the plaza and which survives to this day. At about the time Kahn first proposed his Khurvah design, which stipulated a sunken square before the wall, Shoenberger proposed to elevate the greater part of the piazza to the west, thereby providing a platform for visitors and tourists, as distinguished from a lower eastern area which would be dedicated to religious ritual.²²¹ The Sephardic Chief Rabbi, Yitzhaq Nessim, objected to what he saw as a terraced theatrical stage that clashed with the serene and meditative liturgical experience essential for this area (**fig.94**).²²² Yet what the Rabbi dreaded was the archaeological excavation implicit in Shoenberger's proposal with its possible devastating repercussions on the traditional mythology of the Temple. Meir Ben-Dov who at that time was, along with professor Mazar in charge of the archeological excavation in the area of the Wall, reported their encounter with the alienated Rabbi:

The Sephardi chief Rabbi, Rabbi Nissim, explained his refusal by the fact that the area of our proposed dig was a holy place. When asked to elucidate his answer further, he intimated that we might prove that the Wailing Wall is not in fact the western wall of the Temple Mount.²²³

A compromise was reached whereby the platform was lowered only by 20 centimeters, paved by stones, and provided with a sewage system. Norms of behavior, especially the territorial separation of genders for the area were also then fixed.

Now, two years after Kahn's design and its official endorsement, Schoenberger's team became similarly emphatic about the archeological scope

²²¹Ibid., 164.

²²²A New Chapter in the History of the Western Wall (Jerusalem: Ministry of Religion, ?), pp. 65-75, Ibid., p.164.

²²³Meir Ben-Dov In The Shadow Of The Temple (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1982), p.20.

of their scheme. They proposed to dig the entire plaza (7.7 meters below) until the Herodian street, to reveal the enlarged Western Wall in its full extent.²²⁴ A series of terraces would gradually rise from there in conformity with the hilly terrain, patterns of use, and most importantly appropriate vistas to the Dome of the Rock (fig.95). No specific final form was fixed for the proposed guidelines or even for that matter the exact location of the prayer area (fig.96, 97). This was to be determined by future archaeological and architectural undertakings. Soon, however, this largely diagrammatic scheme, which followed Kahn's own archaeological curiosity, would be appropriated in a finite metaphorical representation in Moshe Safdie's project.

Moshe Safdie's Scheme:

In 1973, the municipality of Jerusalem and Corporation for the Reconstruction of the Jewish Quarter, represented respectively by Teddy Kollek and Yehuda Tamir, jointly invited architect Moshe Safdie to design the Plaza of the Western Wall.²²⁵ Prior to his official commission, Safdie was already closely working with the Archaeological team, headed by Professor Mazar and Meir Ben-Dov, in charge of the archaeological excavation around the Western Wall area.²²⁶

Despite the objections of the Chief Rabbinate, the archaeologists proceeded to excavate the area around the southwestern corner of "Temple Mount." Astounded as they were by the unexpected excavation of a huge

²²⁴Arthur Kutcher, Shlomo Aronson, Joseph Schoenberger Planning Study for the Western Wall Area (Jerusalem: Ministry of Religion, 1971)

²²⁵Moshe Safdie, Jerusalem: The Future of the Past (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1989), p.105, 126, Meir-Ben Dov The Western Wall, p.171-174.

²²⁶Ibid.

Umayyad palatial complex, the archaeologists realized the urgency of developing an appropriate scheme for an archeological garden (**fig. 98**). The objective was to arrange the display of existing and future archaeological findings in the area which belong to different historical periods. Safdie prepared the design scheme for this garden.

Safdie's scheme, which benefited from the schematic idea of the terracing proposed earlier by Shoenberger's team, drew on Ben- Dove's interpretation of an image of the urban fabric surrounding Temple Mount during the time of Herod the Great. Dove's source was a quotation by Josephus Flavius which read "... the city lay before the Temple in the form of the theater...".²²⁷ Dove took the quotation literally to signify a graded configuration of the city as steps of buildings rising from a low spot near the Western Wall, uphill towards the eastern upper city.

In the official design proposal that Safdie now submitted to the Municipality, he reconstructed the entire Jewish Quarter, including the plaza, as a gigantic amphitheater of stepped traces and buildings rising from the base of the Wall towards the Jewish Quarter (**fig. 99**). Accommodating both secular and religious institutions and facilities, Safdie proposed that each of these steps would archaeologically express a given historical period (**fig.100**). The history to be represented would begin at the base of the Western Wall. There, Safdie proposed to excavate a Herodian street (constructed during the second temple) presumably buried at 8 meters below the floor level of the existing plaza.²²⁸ There the prayer area would be located. The excavated street would act as a stage from which the amphitheater ascends uphill in stepped platforms. One of these platforms would represent Byzantine remains,

²²⁷-Moshe Safdie, Design for the Western Wall Plaza , design Report, n.d. p.9, 13-4.

²²⁸.Ibid.

another ruins of an Umayyad palace, another Crusader remains, another Mamluk tribunal building, another the Ottoman walls, and finally, as the culmination, the newly reconstructed buildings of the Jewish Quarter (fig.101,102). What is remarkable about this sscheme is its incorporation of segments of history (i.e. non biblical) which until then were suppressed in the Israeli collective memory (fig.103).

The arrangement of these historical layers is, however, by no means a spontaneous or natural “organic” expression of the archeological layers as they are actually found at the site. They are in fact selectively represented according to an apriori conception of a museum. Safdie said:

Rehabilitating certain structures in order to display them more clearly to the public cannot be done if all periods are to be treated equally in all locations. It is therefore necessary to select particular areas for emphasis of certain periods. Furthermore, the design of the plaza itself would suggest that not all archaeological findings are to be restored but might be removed after due documentation.²²⁹

At another juncture Safdie further elaborated:

We knew that as we excavated down to the Herodian street level we would find some important archaeological remains. We made an agreement, with the mayor, the archaeologists ... that any thing found within meters of the wall (the width of the street) would be removed whatever it was.²³⁰

Safdie’s amphitheater represents a nationalist reconstruction of history. Starting with the Herodian street (the period of the second Temple) and culminating uphill with the new buildings Safdie designed in the Jewish Quarter (including Porat Yosef Yeshiva and Rabbinate building), the amphitheater thus explicitly reconstructs a myth of the city’s and state’s Jewishness through a teleological historical narrative with biblical “Jewish”

²²⁹-Safdie, Design for the Western Wall, p.9.

²³⁰-Safdie, Future of the Past, . p.125.

beginnings and Israeli ending, while other periods serve as transitional chapters sandwiched in between.

To further architecturally articulate the representation of this narrative, Safdie applied a modular geometry which conforms to an archeological grid, over the site. He adapted the grid to the above historical narrative by grouping modules in a linear base along the Herodian Street. Then he extended their diagonals towards the Jewish Quarter. Through this triangulation its modulated historical platforms diminish proportionally while the amphitheater ascends uphill (**fig.104,105**).

Safdie acknowledged the indebtedness of his design to his mentor. Kahn, whose “meaningful” scheme lent “the idea of powerful connections to the city giving architectural form to the ceremony and ritual.”²³¹ Indeed, together with its excavated Herodian base, Safdie’s representation of the Jewish Quarter as a gridded amphitheater are indebted to Kahn’s historicist imagery of the Quarter as an archeological grid in which the architectural, urban form are shaped after and in juxtaposition with its ruins.

But Safdie’s interpretation of Kahn’s design is seriously flawed. The unilateral, uncompromising, and unambiguous arrangement of Safdie’s grid is definitely at odds with the pluralist, fragmentary, and casual way by which Kahn’s imaginary grid represented the city. Safdie celebrated the grid as an end in itself as he exteriorized its modules volumetrically to uniformly shape and forcefully homogenize every single event in the city: terraces, paths, stairs, arches, domes, masses, ruins, etc. Consequently, Safdie’s grid diminished the possibility of allowing the subtle hierarchical spatial

231-Safdie, *Future of the Past*, p.134.

connections and transitional passages for ceremonial and liturgical events in Kahn's design. Ironically, these subtle linkages between the Wall and the new Khurvah in Kahn's design were worldly elements of a mask and grid disguising his monument's negation of national symbols. In other words, what was a mask to Kahn was for Safdie the content.

The infinitely expanding non-hierarchical geometry of Kahn's grid was a negation of the concentric introverted geometry of the new Khurvah's "eurithmic" enclosure. Unlike the uniform externalized grid applied by Safdie, Kahn's grid was variegated and intermittent in appearance. The grid is implicitly present in the quasi-excavated buildings and ramps comprising the Pilgrimage route, the excavated enclosure before the western Wall, in the flat open area that Kahn left for future excavation, and in the actual memorialized ruins of the old Khurvah. On the other hand, Kahn's grid is physically marked by free standing shafts of the modulated plaza north of the new Khurvah. Finally, the archeological grid is physically embodied in the external form of the new monument, which appears as archaic ruins. Framing the symmetrical enclosure, these modulated pylons or modern ruins give the impression that the monument is itself a climax of archeological excavation, where the grid ends and begins at the same time. Consequently, the primitive but modern monument appears thus as something that is paradoxically enigmatic. It appears to be outside history, that is to say a utopia predating the surrounding ruins and at the same time predating them.

On the other hand, Safdie physically represented Zionism as a dominant physical segment of the grid which, albeit triumphant, is squarely placed inside history. Nonetheless, Safdie's representation of Zionism as a

historical fragment conforms to Kahn's general historicist scheme. In fact Safdie unmasked the nationalist content of his metaphor, making obvious its narrative and similizing intent, to the point of embarrassing the State itself. When his design was finally presented to the Israeli Prime Minister, Golda Meir, in 1973, she praised the proposed excavation of the Herodian Street but at the same time expressed her concern and worries about the possible negative reaction of the "orthodoxy."²³² The controversy over Kahn's design and the uproar of the religious authority about it must have been fresh in her mind for around this time she shelved Kahn's project. Yet in no way was the government's whole hearted five-year endorsement of Kahn's design as the National Symbol compared with its continued reluctance toward Safdie's project. Less than a year after Safdie's meeting with Prime Minister Meir, his project received a blow when the state solicited the assessment of none other than Louis Kahn. In a special meeting of the Jerusalem Committee in October 1974 attended by Mayor Kollek, Noguchi, Bruno Zevi, and others, Kahn admonished Safdie after he reviewed the project:

You are too exuberant, Moshe. There is a nervous excitement about the forms. There are too many arches. You must seek calmness. You must understate. There is just too much going on.²³³

Further, Golda Meir's farsightedness and expressed worries about a possible backlash from the Diaspora and religious authority were realized in ways worse than Safdie and everyone else could have ever imagined. The decision of Yitzhaq Rabin, the new Prime Minister, to exclude the Nationalist Religious Party for the first time from the Labor Coalition government in 1974, meant that religious parties no longer held any official authority over the area of the Western Wall, which had been under the mandate of the

²³²-*Ibid.*

²³³-Safdie, *Future of the Past*, p.135

Ministry of Religious Affairs.²³⁴ Excluded from the actual decision making about the Western Wall, the alienated religious groups turned down the invitation to participate in a governmentally appointed committee to examine Safdie's design, which they came to perceive as sponsored by the Labor government.²³⁵ With the absence of opposition by the religious authority from within, the committee formally but conditionally endorsed Safdie's design.²³⁶ The secular Labor government failed to seize this opportunity of uncontested control over the Western Wall to execute Safdie's design during its reign. Worse was yet to befall Safdie's project.

David Fisher's Scheme:

In the 1977 election, the frustration of Diaspora and religious constituencies with the Labor government led to a stunning defeat of the Labor Party. Religious parties joined the victorious right-wing Likud party to form the government for the first time in the History of Israel. Immediately the religious party members promoted and lobbied in the Knesset (Parliament) for another design for the area of the Wailing Wall. The new design was prepared by David Fisher, a religiously oriented Israeli architect who had worked for Bruno Zevi during his studies in Florence.²³⁷

David Fisher had already published in the Italian periodical L'architettura an article on the design of the Western Wall plaza strongly

²³⁴Safdie, *Future of the Past*, p.184.

²³⁵Ibid, The committee members included Irvin Shimron (the new head of the Company of the Jewish Quarter) as chairman, Yaakov Rechter, Arie Sharon, Meron Benvenisti, Meir Ben-Dov, David Cassuto and Yehuda Tamir.

²³⁶Ibid, p.187. For a detailed report of the episode see Ben-Dov, pp.172-76.

²³⁷David Fisher, "Jerusalem; The Western Wall" L'architettura XXIV, pp.98-112; Safdie, *Future of the Past*, p.188-191.

criticizing Safdie's design.²³⁸ He highlighted what he considered the fallacy of the archeological reasoning behind the metaphorical configuration of Safdie's design as well as its liturgical drawbacks. Fisher faulted Ben-Dov's interpretation of Josephus's description of the urban fabric of the old Jewish city as an amphitheater. He argued that Josephus's figure of the amphitheater was a characterization only of the fabric of the upper city, which was located on top of the ridge overlooking the then flat vacant area before the wall. The city fabric could not have extended as an amphitheater downhill beyond the ridge to the wall. Otherwise, it would contradict another historical report about the success of the residents of the upper city in resisting a Roman siege for a month. Fisher concluded that the rocky ridge must have been a natural barrier whose upper edge was fortified, thereby enabling the repulse of Roman attacks.

By constructing the gigantic amphitheater over the whole area, Fisher argued, Safdie sacrificed the rocky edge, thus diminishing a historically natural feature of the place. Furthermore, Safdie's obsession with formal monumental and theatrical effects overrides the essential liturgical and spatial attributes of the enclosure which was historically located between the rocky ridge and the Wall. Fisher contested Safdie's biblical image of the city which focused on the western segment of the Wall with another biblical image emphasizing the enclosure and its ritualistic element:

We cannot fix our attention solely on the Wall itself and ignore its premise: the area around it which and the rocky valley which divided this area from the upper city. This area is a symbol of contraposition and unity: a territory between the sacred and the profane where the merchants mingled their steps with the pilgrims on their way to the mount. ... The

²³⁸David Fisher, "Jerusalem; The Western Wall," pp.98-112.

entire area all around the Mount should be valued by means of passage.²³⁹

The geometric harshness with which the squares of the amphitheater were drawn not only “prevailed over the wall architecture,” but awkwardly led Safdie to “conside[r] the western portion of the square as a separate entity not tied to the southern area:”

The Southern Wall is just as important as the more celebrated Western Wall. The Western Wall represents a section of the boundary walls. This element is not taken into consideration in [Safdie’s] plan.²⁴⁰

Fisher thus proposed to adapt the area to its “present function and needs but, as far as possible, to refrain from any basic change in the area by either building or creating a new element of monumental proportion or a final plan which will give it a fixed, arbitrary character and style.”²⁴¹ Fisher proposed, rather than one definite formal solution, a framework of planning, a series of raised, autonomous, and interchangeable platforms, flexibly placed over the area to be excavated in its entirety down to the Herodian level (**fig.106, 107, 108, 109, 110**).²⁴² These platforms would accommodate a variety of activities, sacred as well secular. Underneath, they would provide a shelter for prayer areas and archeological findings. These are linked with the series of Herodian tunnels and halls that have been excavated along the northern extension of the Western Wall.

²³⁹Ibid. 107. (Translation modified by this author).

²⁴⁰Ibid. p.108. Fisher also criticized the formal vocabulary of Safdie’s project “The architecture in the background, with its great porticos in diminishing size, reminds us of Safdie’s other works. But here, in an attempt to harmonize with the ancient city, it has lost character, resembles the waterfront of certain Mediterranean towns like Capri and does not complement Jerusalem’s austere demeanor.”

²⁴¹Ibid.

²⁴²David Fisher, Plan for the Western Wall Plaza and its Environs (Jerusalem: Koren Publishers)

Surprisingly, Fisher implicitly acknowledged Kahn's earlier unrealized design as a source of inspiration for his own. He commented:

Through a network of routes Kahn connected the Wall to the Synagogue [Khurvah], leaving a large part of the square empty and preserving some existing buildings (now demolished) near the Magharbah Gate... To the north, [a] more traditional [place] of worship, the area was excavated down to the Herodian road; the southern portion was left for extensive archaeological diggings and tourist itineraries. This solution would have created an area of a certain depth in front of the wall, while leaving sufficient space to the rest of the square.²⁴³

Safdie, a Final Attempt:

Safdie did not easily give up his design; rather, he fought back. Bypassing the religious backers of Fisher's design in the state establishment he directly approached the religious authority as a politically unaffiliated professional architect. Through the efforts of his acquaintances, the Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Shlomo Goren and Sephardi Chief Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, (who was like himself from Aleppo), a meeting was arranged for him with the General Rabbinat Council of Israel to present his design. Following Safdie's presentation, however, Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, on behalf of his fellow rabbis, categorically rejected the whole idea of excavating the Herodian street. The rabbis were distinctly alarmed by the potential destructive effect of the secular and historicist operation of archaeology on the authority of the traditional Jewish institution over sacred symbols. Referring to Mazar and Ben-Dov's excavation of Umayyad palaces, Rabbi Yosef explained:

You know we have no trust in the archaeologists.... they have prevented us from praying at the south side of the Western Wall itself. Who knows what shall come to pass? What if they find a mosque? What if they find an important church? What if they decide they've unearthed some important archaeological discovery that at all cost be preserved? What about our access to our Wall then?²⁴⁴

²⁴³-Fisher "The Western Wall," p.105.

²⁴⁴-Safdie, Future of the Past, p.190.

This statement implied, too, the religious authority's rejection of Fisher's design which despite his claim to religious orthodoxy, his design was ironically premised upon archaeological excavation of the area before the Wall.

The final comment of the Rabbinate, however, expressed an educated architectural insight which dispelled any illusion in Safdie's mind that the problem was inherent in his own design vision. The chief Rabbi of Jerusalem Jacob Zolti, who will play an important role in the next phase of the Khurvah design, told Safdie:

You know, the Wall is not the Temple. Do you find something almost appropriate about its temporary look? It is, after all, only the remnant of the Temple. We do believe in the rebuilding of the Third Temple, and we must not make the design feel and appear too complete and final.²⁴⁵

Although it seems to accord with the typical position of Jewish religious orthodoxy with regard to the Heavenly Jerusalem, the Rabbi's statement "we must not make the design feel and appear too complete and final" implies something discreet. It can be interpreted as an instruction to Safdie that a true heretical design of an alternative utopia can not proceed without self effacement and negation and without appropriating as a mask the worldliness and fragmentation of present reality. Indeed, this echoed Kahn's earlier comment on Safdie's design "You must understate."

It is only then, after the meeting with the Rabbis, that Safdie decided to heed Kahn's advice by downplaying the exteriorization of grid modules. Nevertheless, his design is currently shelved and unlikely to have a fate different from that of the other designs. The Western Wall Plaza has, more or less, remained in the same unfinished and depleted state since Kahn first

²⁴⁵Safdie, *Future of the Past*, p.191

introduced his design. True the cluster of Mamluk houses, the medieval 'Islamic' fragment in Kahn's city-Museum, has been deleted. But the unexpected excavation of the huge palatial Omayyad complex, more than made for it.

Conclusion:

All the design projects for the Western Wall discussed above bear testimony to the continued legacy of Kahn's design. A common premise of all these design proposals is the excavation of the area before the Wall eight meters down to the Herodian street level, something that had first been schematically proposed by Kahn in his vision of the area before the Wall as an archaeological field of excavation (especially as exemplified in the sunken plaza he excavated at its base). All architects invariably shared with Kahn this aspect of the general conception, namely that modern architecture can present an image of archaeology. They created new ruins constructing the city as an archaeological museum through superimposing a grid on its new and old fragments. What had been a metaphorical gesture in Kahn's design became axiomatic and literal.

Yet although these designs drew on vocabulary established by Kahn, they applied only one aspect of it. To remind the reader of the constituent elements of Kahn's design, they were 1) a "metaphorical" image of surrogate Temple, a central enclosure on top of a high hill, negating the historical monuments of the city, 2) a "metonymic" image of the city where architecture and urban form represent archaeology. The city becomes a gridded museum in which new buildings designed as ruins would be loosely juxtaposed with other competing historical ruins, whether excavated like the biblical ruins or

partly restored like Diaspora ruins, 3) a paradoxical (or schizophrenic) relationship between both of these two elements whereby the former metaphor uses the latter as a mask to negate and thus disguise itself.

Clearly, all of the above designs applied only the second element of Kahn's design, the archaeological-architectural mask. They neither displayed the sophisticated process of self-disguise nor an alternative utopia. They seemed either to take for granted the primacy of the State, the western Wall, and biblical archaeology as ends in themselves or, like Fisher who inadvertently completely subdued architecture to biblical archaeology, affirmed the preservation of the status quo.

There are, however, some indications that the absence of a metaphor of alternative reality in these projects (or masks) is due to the architects' subconscious presupposition of the virtual presence of Kahn's Khurvah building. For instance, in Safdie's design, the diminishing ascending steps of the amphitheater axially pull to the other direction, uphill to the site of the new Khurvah. Actually, the progressively fragmented and modulated massing of these steps seem to originate and cascade figuratively and topologically from the gridded fragmented masses of the pylons wrapping Kahn's Khurva Temple.

Even more revealing is the Zionist state's extreme lack of interest in designs which would seem to have unilaterally enshrined and monumentalized its power and symbol. This attitude is certainly a far cry from its imprudent and abrupt Hausmannean obliteration of an important Diaspora structure, the historical enclosure of the Wall, to inaugurate its new National cult. These failed projects did not seem to meet the sophisticated mental criteria for the national style that the Zionist state seemingly had

recently acquired in representing itself and shaping its symbols viz.-a-viz. the Diaspora. Such a multivalent style would co-opt the Diaspora without paradoxically diminishing the legitimacy of its own power structure and secularizing project. Perhaps the only style the state sought was one that could match in sophistication the self-negational style of Kahn's Khurvah.

It is extremely puzzling to note that despite the sense of urgency in the deterioration of the Labor State's legitimacy, the state was reluctant to finish the task it had already begun before the advent of Kahn's Temple, i.e. the design of the Wall plaza. The continued inability of the state to architecturally reinforce and consolidate its own self-image in the symbol of the Wall shows the lingering symptoms of five years of brooding over Kahn's Temple. The state adopted Kahn's subversive metaphor as a National symbol overshadowing the Western Wall. This bewildering failure of the state to consolidate its own symbols was arguably one major factor in the disastrous loss of Labor State to the coalition of the right wing, religious, and Diaspora groups. Kahn's metaphor proved to be an ominous prophesy.

Chapter 6 : The Resurgence of the Khurvah's Utopia.

1978 marked the fourth year since Kahn's death. It had been one year since a stunning resurgence of the power of the religious and traditional Diaspora community toppled the Labor secular coalition and brought the right wing Likud coalition into power. Nevertheless Teddy Kollek of the Labor party maintained his powerful position as a Mayor of Jerusalem. Oddly enough, despite all this conflictual situation, these two rivals, the nationalist and the Religious camps, would be brought together by the very thing that had driven them apart a few years ago. Kollek and the religious authority would find themselves in a new campaign to redesign the Khurvah synagogue. This new national "joint" emerged through an unlikely turn of events.

In July 1978 Mayor Teddy Kollek (with David Zifroni, the director of the Company for the Jewish Quarter) invited three celebrated international architects, along with five Israeli architects, to participate in a closed competition for designing the Khurvah Synagogue. Indeed, the new Jewish quarter was by then completely constructed except for the vacant central square of the Khurvah. Invitations were sent to Richard Meier, Aldo Van Eyck and Denys Lasdun (who were also members of the Jerusalem Committee).²⁴⁶ They immediately responded positively and visited Jerusalem.²⁴⁷ The enthusiastic response of these architects is in great part a testimony to the national aura Kahn had established for the Khurva.

246- Letters, Zifroni, the director of the Jewish Quarter Company, to Van Eyck, R. Meier and Lasdun, July 23, 1978 and cables from Lasdun, Van-Eyck and Meir to Kollek, July 3, 1978, Khurvah Folder 106, Archives of the Company for Reconstruction and Development of the Jewish Quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem (hereafter cited as Jewish Quarter Archives)

247- Ibid.

The program that the client sent to these architects highlighted the nationalist value of the architectural representation of ruins especially those of the Diaspora.²⁴⁸ Architects' attention was drawn to the new partial reconstruction of the Khurvah ruins (especially the southern arch). Reiterating a language established earlier by Kahn, these ruins were intended to "serve as an eternal memorial for the synagogue which was destroyed during the fighting over the Jewish Quarter in the war of independence."²⁴⁹ Architects were also provided with a concise statement on the history of the old Khurva, shedding light on its pre-Zionist Diaspora history.²⁵⁰ The program recommended that "the new synagogue and the ruins of the Hurvah must be integrated by emphasizing the symbolic link between them and integrating the ruins into the plans."²⁵¹ It is clear that in making this request the client had in mind Kahn's configuration of the Khurvah as a juxtaposition of the newly built ruins and Diaspora memorialized ruins. That the site plan which was sent to the architects stipulated that the new design must be located within the borders of the adjacent vacant square which conformed to Kahn's own Khurvah plans is further testimony to the client's aspiration to develop a design in its image.²⁵²

Unfortunately for Kollek and the invited architects, the competition had to be abruptly canceled in August 1978.²⁵³ The new chairman and the

248-The Khurvah Design Competition Program, Khurvah Folder 106, (Jewish Quarter Company Archives)

249-Ibid., p.6.

250-Ibid.

251-Ibid., p.3.

252-Competition Site-Plan, Khurvah Folder 106, (Jewish Quarter Company Archives).

253-Letters, Zifroni to Lasdun, Van-Eyck and Mier, August 15, 1978, with copies to Kollek, Khurvah Folder 106, (Jewish Quarter Company Archives)

competition's committee in the Association of Engineers and Architects in Israel refused to honor the commitment of the late chairman to a closed competition sponsored by the municipality. Instead, the Association demanded a competition open to all Israeli architects.²⁵⁴ Israeli architects apparently felt that they should not be denied the right to participate in the design of what was and still could be the most important national symbol of their country.

Kollek refused to budge on the Association's demand and canceled the competition.²⁵⁵ He, however, contrived a new tactic to sidestep this bureaucratic obstacle which would kill two birds with one stone, so to speak. Mayor Kollek convinced Joseph Schoenberger, a Jerusalemite architect well known for his connection with religious authorities, to join as a liaison architect in a venture with a foreign expatriate as a chief architect, advising him on "religious affairs and local conditions and legislation."²⁵⁶ It was Denys Lasdun who was chosen for the task of designing the new Khurvah.²⁵⁷

In one stroke, Kollek resolved the legal obstacle which had hindered the direct design commission of foreign architects in Israel, and at the same time worked to co-opt the religious authority so as to preempt a potential opposition like the one that stalled Kahn's project. Kollek's new interest in coordinating with the religious authority showed in his insistence upon involving the rabbi of the Jewish Quarter in various reviews of the design. Most importantly, however, is Kollek's request that the chief rabbi and Head of Religious Courts of Jerusalem, Jakob Zolti, write the religious guidelines to

254- Letters, Zifroni to Lasdun, Van-Eyck and Mier, September 13, 1978, with copies to Kollek, Khurvah Folder 106, (Jewish Quarter Company Archives)

255- Ibid.

256- Zifroni, handwritten note and letter, 3 October 1978, Khurvah Folder 106, (in Hebrew) (Jewish Quarter Company Archives)

257- Ibid.

help Lasdun in the design of the new Khurvah. The Rabbi promptly cooperated.²⁵⁸

The Khurvah as a Symbol of Orthodoxy:

Rabbi Zolti's document deserves special attention, for it underlines a considerable shift in the attitude of the religious authority, which was quite different from the one it had adopted earlier towards Kahn's project. Although not mentioning Kahn by name, Zolti's document opens with an explicit criticism of his Khurvah design in requesting Lasdun to observe the following rules:

The area of the synagogue must not be left in its destroyed state, since synagogues that have been ruined are still holy, and the synagogue must be rebuilt on its original site.²⁵⁹

Those prohibitive injunctions clearly refer to Kahn's shift of the site of the Khurvah but they specifically target his second (negational) metaphor, i.e. the 'metonymic' mask of ruins, especially the memorialized ruins of the old Khurvah (which Kahn kept apart from his new building) and the pylons with their interior exhibition alcoves which wrap the main sanctuary. The mask is once again singled out in a subsequent guideline:

The area surrounding the Synagogue and the neighboring buildings should be used for "holy" purposes only, such as study, instruction, a Biblical library, etc. These buildings should not be for exhibitions, memorials, etc.²⁶⁰

Indeed, these paragraphs express the extent of the religious authority's alienation from the proliferating archaeological excavation and memorialized ruins, especially of the Diaspora structures. Such ruins are

²⁵⁸-Rabbi Zolti, Religious Guidelines for the Khurvah Design (Document in Hebrew with a translation attached to Zifroni's letter to Lasdun), October 4, 1978, Khurvah Folder 106, (Jewish Quarter Company Archives).

²⁵⁹-Ibid, p.1.

²⁶⁰-Ibid, p.2.

abhorrent to the Religious authority because they symbolize a negation and eulogy affirming the extinction of the Diaspora Jewish tradition. These ruins are nationalistically appropriated as sites cathartic rites of passage for the Jewish nation from a dead Diaspora memory to a secular nation-state, i.e. Israel. By memorializing these ruins, the secular nation-state represents itself as a redeemer and inheritor of the Diaspora and at the same time an ultimate object of loyalty substituting for the transcendental God and Temple.²⁶¹

Yet notice how the Rabbi's above statement, as it rejects an "unholy" segment of Kahn's design, assimilates, perhaps unconsciously, another segment of the same design, namely the surrounding fabric of religious educational institutions which Kahn organized around an adjacent plaza and the linear spine leading to the Western Wall, Ha-Kotel. A scrutiny of the rest of the Rabbi's guidelines will in fact reveal a more dramatic and indeed totally unexpected association with Kahn's design, contradicting some of the previously mentioned injunctions. Consider for instance the third guideline:

It is not necessary that the new Synagogue be an exact reconstruction of the old synagogue, however, as much as possible, its beauty and glory should be increased.²⁶²

This recommendation is definitely a departure from the earlier firm insistence by the religious authority upon a literal restoration of the old Khurvah. More bewildering, however, is the Rabbi's demand for a monumental scale and character for a large modern edifice instead of the

²⁶¹-On the national use of the Diaspora Holocaust relics see "The Rhetoric of Ruins: The Memorial Camps at Majdanek and Auschwitz" and "Israel: Holocaust, Heroism and National Redemption" in James E. Young The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning ed. James E. Young (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), pp.125-28, 219-62, see also Jack Kugelmass, "Why We go to Poland: Holocaust Tourism as Secular Ritual," The Art of Memory: Holocaust Memorials in History ed. James E. Young (Munich: Prestel-Verlag, 1994), pp.175-183.

²⁶²-Rabbi Zolti, Ibid.

small scale and unassuming image which they highly praised earlier in the old Khurvah :

The outside height of the synagogue should be at least as high as the old synagogue before its destruction- and it would be preferable to raise it above the surrounding buildings.²⁶³

The document further encourages the architect to enlarge the new building, giving him a licensee to expand beyond the original domain of the old Khurvah even if it meant encroaching on the adjacent old Ramban Synagogue:

In order to expand the area of the Synagogue, the eastern wall can be broken through and sections of the old Synagogue can be eliminated. The roof of the neighboring Ramban Synagogue may be used to expand the new Hurva Synagogue.²⁶⁴

What makes these new criteria of the religious authority most remarkable is its endorsement and adoption of the same heretical metaphor that it had earlier condemned in Kahn's Khurvah design. At that time, they saw in its massive cubical enclosure with its dominating scale, archaic character , and arbitrary location (opposite to Temple Mount) a negation of the traditional skyline and Diaspora image of the city, which centered on the Dome of the Rock and its position on top of the "Temple Mount." More seriously, they saw in it a new subversive alternative temple negating the heavenly one to be built only by divine intervention on the "Temple mount. Hence the logic of their categorical demand to restore the provisional small building of the old Khurvah. After ail, it was Rabbi Zolti who had just censored Safdie's design of the Western Wall plaza on the ground of its imposing monumentality and thus its incompatibility with the finality of the traditional mythology of the Temple.

²⁶³- Ibid.

²⁶⁴- Ibid., p.2.

Clearly, the religious authority's overpowering fear from the state's institutionalization of Kahn's second metaphor, that is the monstrous proliferation of Diaspora and biblical ruins in the Quarter, inadvertently made the first metaphor which these profane ruins conspiratorially masked, i.e. the monumental, cubical, and symmetrical heretical Temple appear by juxtaposition suddenly authentic, traditional, "beautiful" and "glorious." As such it is a tribute to Kahn's metaphor which by its calculated double-negation managed to survive his own death and its initial censorship to become resurrected as a symbol and a utopia which would ultimately shape the social perception and self-image of the religious authority in the same way it had earlier rivaled the secular state. That the religious authority could now selectively cite a traditional scriptural injunction, which they never invoked in their earlier rejection of Kahn's project, to justify their new quest for a grand monumental construction of the Khurva further confirms the new social authority of Kahn's metaphor as a symbol through which the religious authority interpreted its own tradition. Perhaps the religious establishment in effect preferred heresy as a lesser evil than the total demise of its traditional mythology. Of course, the religious authority did not consciously abandon the traditional utopia of the heavenly temple; in a battle of survival with the nationalist secular state, they came to internalize the self-negation and contradiction inherent in Kahn's metaphor as a mental category. Kahn had earlier prophesied:

What is not built is not really lost. Once their value is established, their demand for presence is undeniable.²⁶⁵

265-Cited in Romaldo Giurgola, Jaimini Mehta Louis I. Kahn (Boulder, Colo: Westview Press, 1975), p.183.

Now a resurrected utopia, Kahn's metaphor, through Lasdun's interpretation, seems finally to consolidate a new national body, uniting the two rival groups it ironically had formerly split apart.²⁶⁶ Indeed, although slightly smaller in scale than Kahn's own but much greater than the Old Khurvah, Lasdun's Khurvah design reproduced major aspects of the former design (fig.111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118).

Lasdun's Khurvah Design:

Lasdun's design could be conceived as composed of two contrasting "geological" formal layers and elements, a symmetrical cubical enclosure of the assembly hall and a fragmentary mask of modern ruins representing ancillary functions. The resemblance of the cubical geometry of the assembly to Kahn's own design is revealed at the upper women's gallery but more prominently at roof level. There, surmounting the assembly hall (20 meters above), is a huge square concrete pre-cast roof-slab which was lifted at the four sides by four pairs of towers (which are used as staircases and ventilation). The refracted light, which is brought indirectly from above through the deep slits between the cantilevered roof and the walls, complement the sculpted stone protrusion of the inner surfaces of the walls, imbuing the interior hall with a mysterious archaic image which, as I will clarify next, like Kahn's Khurvah serves a crucial liturgical purpose.

The cubical enclosure of the assembly hall is wrapped by an external layer of varied spaces for ancillary functions. In addition to the aforementioned pairs of towers, this layer comprises the Western entrance

²⁶⁶- Lasdun solicited consultation from Robert Jan Van Pelt, a young Dutch historian of Judaism who inspired him with some basic features of the design AR 33/5.

foyer, which leads to the assembly hall through a monumental portal defined by two flanking towers. The accretionary layer also includes study rooms in the basement adjoining the Ramban synagogue to the south which are arranged around an L-shaped courtyard. The latter links three classrooms and a library on the east with a study hall on the opposite side. At the north, a row of study rooms which is dedicated to the neighboring Yeshiva helps to integrate the building into the surrounding educational fabric.

Although more contextualized, varied in scale and gradation with regard to the surrounding traditional fabric, the ruinous, opaque, and fragmented volumes of this accretionary layer of spaces bear a certain resemblance to the fragmentary grid of ruins, i.e. the pylons wrapping the main body, of Kahn's Khurvah synagogue. The resemblance between the two projects is conceptually noted in the self-negational structure of Lasdun's design, particularly in the way the fragmentary, vertical stone forms of the ancillary layer oppose the monolithic, horizontal, and modern pre-cast concrete slab.

In fact the composite formulation of Lasdun's design represents his attempt to reconcile two opposite tendencies, directional (axial) and concentric. The rectangular body of the assembly hall demonstrates on the one hand Lasdun's compliance with the demand of the religious authority that the new building be built on the original site of the Khurvah in order to devour its ruins, and on the other hand the desire to anchor itself to the adjacent square of Kahn's Khurvah site by enlarging, elongating, and expanding the building towards it. This spatial expansion likewise conforms to the religious institution's new desire for a big monument. It is, however, the superimposed square form of the upper level of the assembly and its

dominating roof-slab, incompatible with the longitudinal assembly hall and thus practically and compositionally superfluous, which most attests to Lasdun's eagerness to symbolically associate with Kahn's cubical enclosure of his "Temple." A conceptual sketch of the Khurvah shows a slab lifted by vertical towers which tops the surrounding fabric of the city to be the hallmark of Lasdun's design, and it indeed remained the most visible feature of the design (fig.119).²⁶⁷

In this reinterpretation of Kahn's Khurvah, Lasdun reworked the building vocabulary that had crystallized in his other projects, particularly the national theater in London (fig.120). The vocabulary is basically characterized by a hierarchical arrangement of raised stepped, horizontal platforms, plateaus, and terraces which culminate in vertical towers and masses, a hierarchical configuration intended to integrate the building with the surrounding context.²⁶⁸ Overridden by the pursuit of a cubical enclosure, this hierarchical configuration was reversed in Jerusalem. It is now the horizontal platform which dominates the vertical towers below rather than the other way around.

In so doing, Lasdun's form inadvertently appears more negational than Kahn's although it is smaller in scale than the latter. A highly visible slab with such overwhelming scale, horizontal proportion, and modern cantilevered concrete structure is in complete opposition to a context

²⁶⁷-Lasdun incorporated staircases in the towers leading to the roof so it can be publicly accessed as podium for viewing the city from top.

²⁶⁸-This imagery shares common grounds with the approaches of other architects in the Sixties and Seventies like Team Ten who introduced the plateau as a raised public space form. The plateau is literally an elevated street which is meant to bring to high rise urban projects of post Second World War the missing communal vitality and vibrancy of the traditional street. Lasdun's most refined application of this notion (partly inspired by the horizontal gradation of the Greek amphitheater) is arguably the National Theater.

composed of small scale cubical load-bearing stone masses topped by shallow domes. Whereas Kahn fragmented the cubical enclosure and its roof into four inverted concrete pyramidal shafts lurking behind the freestanding vertical broken pylons, Lasdun inversely lifted the roof slab, which is comparable to Kahn's pyramids in modern material and tensile structure, independently high above the walls of the sanctuary and the surrounding veil of ancillary spaces. The modern horizontal slab virtually appears as a segment of a highway fly-over overshadowing the tiny houses of the city and its narrow traditional streets below. As a result Lasdun hindered the contextual mediation he sought to establish with the surrounding traditional fabric through the peripheral layer of graded stone forms. In other words, and in contradistinction to Kahn, Lasdun rendered the mask obsolete and his negational metaphor of the cubical enclosure exposed and unmistakable.

In fact Lasdun does not attempt to conceal the most crucial negational aspect of metaphor that his design shares with Kahn. On the contrary the design celebrates its conception as an alternative Temple. Behind the Ark of Covenant at the eastern wall, there is a closed and inaccessible room, flooded with light drawn from above. According to Robert Jan Van Belt, the Dutch consultant to Lasdun on the history of Judaism, this empty room which has no liturgical or practical function is a metaphor of the empty enclosure of the Holy of Holies of the second Temple. Its sealed walls signify, too, the loss of the original Ark of the Covenant.²⁶⁹ It has a tilted cubical external form resembling horns which, according to Van Pelt, recalls early Israelite altars.²⁷⁰ All in all, the special tripartite configuration of the building is a metaphor of

269- Architectural Review Vol. CLXXIII, no 1035, May 1983, p.33.

270- Ibid.

the temple and tabernacle, with the square as the forecourt, the Assembly as the sanctuary, and the empty annex as the Holy of the Holies.

Despite these blatant negational images, including discarding the Diaspora symbol of the dome, the religious authority seemed to be more than willing to go along with Lasdun's project. This attitude was apparent when Lasdun first presented the design's drawings and model. In Lasdun's first public meeting with the steering committee of the Khurvah project, whose members represent an array of various specializations and institutions, the Jewish Quarter's Rabbi Avigdour Nevnzal, who also had a major role in drafting the building program, declared his firm belief in the new design of the Khurvah:²⁷¹

No one is interested in keeping the Khurvah as is or commemorating the ruins. The Khurvah building must be new and modern and the ruins can be dealt with in any other manner.²⁷²

Indeed, this endorsement underscores the extent of the willingness of the religious authority to tolerate the negational elements of Lasdun's design just for the sake of eradicating the ruins of the old Khurvah. More importantly, it shows its changing taste and internalization of the massive cubical form of Kahn's heretical Temple.

Mayor Kollek, who seemed to be the primary target of the Rabbi's statement above, was for the time being resigned to the suppression of Diaspora ruins in Lasdun's synagogue. Prior to this meeting, Kollek explicitly urged Lasdun to preserve and memorialize as much as possible the ruins of

²⁷¹ Minutes of the Meeting of the Khurvah Steering Committee (in Hebrew), October 13, 1980, Khurvah Folder 106, (Jewish Quarter Company Archives), p.3.

²⁷² Ibid. (My translation)

the old Khurvah, particularly the southern arch to “commemorate the event of its destruction.”²⁷³

In fact Lasdun was cautious in his presentation to appeal to the different sensibilities of the members of the steering committee, by highlighting the conciliatory approach of his design.²⁷⁴ On the one hand, he showed how the new building did indeed incorporate as a “reminder of its destruction” signs of the old Khurvah, such as the gates, southeastern corner, and the location of the eastern wall. On the other hand, he explained that his decision to remove the other physical segments, including the commemorative arch, to fulfill the desire of the different parties to expand the area and the scale of the synagogue so as to attain a monumental form. Consequently, despite architectural reservations voiced by some of its members about the clash between Lasdun’s design and the surrounding context, the steering-committee gave its general endorsement of the design and forwarded it to the Prime Minister, Menahim Begin, for final approval and ratification.²⁷⁵

Unfortunately the involvement of the new Revisionist Zionist regime at that stage in the Khurvah project did not turn out well for Lasdun’s design. Menahim Begin, the head of the governing coalition of right wing and religious parties, was reportedly alienated by aspects of the building, such as its massive scale and abstract rectilinear form and especially the flying flat

²⁷³-Minutes of a meeting at the Jerusalem Foundation, attended by Kollek, Lasdun, Argov, Niv, Larson, Schoenberger, Levi and Kuszal (in Hebrew), October 23, 1979, Khurvah Folder 106, (Jewish Quarter Company Archives).

²⁷⁴-Minutes of the Meeting of the Khurvah Steering Committee (in Hebrew), October 13, 1980, Khurvah Folder 106, (Jewish Quarter Company Archives), pp.1-2.

²⁷⁵-Ibid, pp.6.

roof.²⁷⁶ Instead, he expressed his preference for either restoring the old Ottoman building of the Khurvah or introducing major changes to the design to bring it closer to the small scale and domed traditional imagery of the former.²⁷⁷ Begin's negative position towards the new Khurvah could be attributed to the strong emphasis of the new regime on the centrality of the Western Wall as the supreme uncontested symbol and major point of assembly in the Jewish Quarter. In a rebuttal, Mayor Kollek instructed Lasdun not to make any changes, save minor ones, to cut the cost of the project. Accordingly, the architect dismissed any possibility for further compromise.²⁷⁸ Four years after its inception, Lasdun's commission was finally over.²⁷⁹

The Khurvah as a Symbol of Messianic Judaism:

The campaign for the Khurvah briefly lost momentum after abandoning Lasdun's design. The state patron, especially Mayor Kollek, seemed more and more inclined towards only one vision of the Khurvah, i.e. keeping it in ruins as a memorial. From now on the religious community, especially the Quarter's residents, would be the lone campaigners for the Khurvah.

The fourth year following the end of Lasdun's design commission signaled a new campaign to rebuild the Khurvah, spearheaded by the now

²⁷⁶- Minutes of a committee meeting at the Company of the Jewish Quarter reviewing the Khurvah design file (in Hebrew), December 2, 1991, Khurvah Folder 106, (Jewish Quarter Company Archives).

²⁷⁷- Ibid.

²⁷⁸- Minutes of a committee meeting at the Company of the Jewish Quarter reviewing the Khurvah design file (in Hebrew), December 2, 1991, Khurvah Folder 106, (Jewish Quarter Company Archives): PA September 1982, p.63.

²⁷⁹- Ibid. The fate of the project seemed to have been sealed when it was realized that there surprisingly was no serious fundraising done for the project either by the client or the private donors. A subsequent pledge from the minister of finance to help fund the project did not help avert the demise of the project.

dominantly religious population of the Jewish Quarter. In January 1986, the director of the company of the Jewish Quarter received a letter from residents of the Quarter purporting to represent the rabbis of the Jewish Quarter and the Chief Rabbinate of Israel, calling for an immediate reconstruction of the Khurvah because extant memorialization of its ruins subjects it "day and night to profanation by Arabs and nonobservant Jews."²⁸⁰

However, the religious campaign for rebuilding the Khurvah reached its climax in 1988 on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Khurvah's destruction. Recruiting for the cause the president of Israel, Haim Hertzog, former Prime Minister Menahim Begin, active (religious) and right-wing ministers, chief rabbis in Israel, and American millionaires (pledging to finance the Khurvah reconstruction), representatives of the Quarter handed a petition to Israeli Prime Minister Shamir and other concerned ministers, such as the Minister of Housing Ariel Sharon.²⁸¹ The petition strongly criticizes "21 years of the government's failure to rebuild the Khurvah." It specifically aimed at demystifying the Nationalist logic of the extant memorialization of the Khurvah ruins and indeed the Israeli national style. It begins by critically citing the nationalist argument that "keeping the ruins of the Khurvah as a memorial demonstrates to the world the destruction the Jordanians committed. This is a grave mistake" responded the letter, "because close to the entrance of the neighboring Yeshivat 'Menahen Zion' there is the 'Quarter's heart' museum which fully and sufficiently commemorates the

²⁸⁰-Letter, Aphraim Hultzburg to Amos Unger, January 20, 1986 with copies to the Jewish Quarter's Rabbi N. Shlita and the Chief Rabbinate (in Hebrew) (Jewish Quarter Company Archives) (My translation).

²⁸¹-Petitions, Aphraim Hultzburg and Amishar Segal to Prime Minister, ministers, Kennest members and director of the Jewish Quarter Company, June 8 and October 7, 1988 signed by Chief Rabbis of Israel and Jerusalem, Khurvah Folder 106, (in Hebrew) (Jewish Quarter Company Archives). (My translation)

Jordanians' destruction of the Jewish Quarter."²⁸² This statement alludes to the proliferation of several other accusatorial museums and Diaspora memorials in the quarter which render redundant the use of the Khurvah as a memorial of the destruction wrought by the Jordanians.

Yet the subsequent point of the argument in the petition is most crucial, for it daringly challenges the *raison d'être* of the new civil religion of Israel, which commemorates the ruins of Diaspora structures in Palestine, linking them with the ruins of the Holocaust in Europe, as symbols of anti-Semitic hostility to the Jews and thus legitimating the indispensable existence of Israel as protector of world Jewry:

After the Holocaust, out of a million of its survivors, the Jewish people were reborn anew in Israel. Here they settled and reestablished their families. They fulfilled then the need for commemorating the Holocaust by building the 'Yad va Shim' memorial. Now that they are saved and emancipated it is no longer necessary to continue forcing and confining the people of Israel in the deteriorating reality of destruction to which they were exposed and with which they were humiliated in the past. Now that this reality is reversed and the people of Israel have been liberated and rejuvenated it is no longer logical to continue commemorating the Khurvah in ruins. Instead it must be rebuilt immediately and gloriously, as it was in the recent past, as a central glorified synagogue.²⁸³

The letter underscores, however, a drastic transformation in the image of the Khurvah in the recent religious campaign that is strikingly nationalist and barely traditional. It justified the call for the government's urgent intervention in rebuilding the Khurvah as "a necessary element in the government's policies of combating the Intifada, reasserting the settlement of Jews in the land of Israel, and showing the world that we will never move from here and that Israel will remain one and united."²⁸⁴

282. Ibid.

283. (My translation) Ibid.

284. (my translation) Ibid.

Indeed, this statement shows the extent of the nationalist infiltration of the religious institution in the Seventies and Eighties.²⁸⁵ Parallel to a Statist resurgence of revisionist Zionism, this period witnessed the rise of new messianic movements like Gush Emonim, which emphasized the importance of reclaiming all the land of Israel as a decisive step towards Messianic redemption (i.e. the coming of the messiah).²⁸⁶ These movements argued that the defacto annexation of areas like the Old City as parts of greater Israel can not be naturalized without a "broad process of acculturation- an educational, cultural and psychological process" which would deter any possible governmental policy of swapping lands for peace, which would in turn interrupt the process of redemption and violate religious commandments. The process required creation of a new national symbol. Yoel Ben Nun, one of the prominent leaders of the movement, said:

There is no longer the possibility of evading the decisive stage of the process of redemption. Beyond establishing the infrastructure of the ingathering of the exiles, the blossoming of the desolated land and the construction of a strong state, what is now demanded is a clear concept of the state and its relationship to the people and the land, to Judaism, to Diaspora Jews, and also to the Arab minority. Thus has the long-delayed "Kuturkampf" erupted.²⁸⁷

The above petition by the Quarter's residents presented the reconstruction of the Khurvah as the symbol of the needed "Kulturkampf". Yet as ironic as this may seem, this presentation is nothing less than a

²⁸⁵-For a treatment of the rise of radical Jewish religious and settler groups in Israel and the Jewish Quarter see Ehud Sprinzak, The Ascendancy of Israel's Radical Right (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); Michael Dumper, "Israeli Settlement in the Old City of Jerusalem," Journal of Palestine Studies 21(4):32-53.

²⁸⁶-Ian Lustick, Unsettled states, disputed lands, p. 354, 355; Lilly Weisbored, "From Labor Zionism to New Zionism: Ideological Change in Israel," Theory and Society 10 (November 1981) pp.777-803; Eliezer Don-Yehiya, "Jewish Messianism, Religious Zionism and Israeli Politics: The Impact and Origins of Gush Emunim," Middle Eastern Studies 23 (April 1987)pp. 215-34; Liebman and Don-Yehiya "The Responses of Traditional Religious Jews to Israeli Civil Religion" pp.185-213.

²⁸⁷-Cited by Lustick, Unsettled States, Disputed lands, p.36.

resumption of the same process undertaken earlier by the Labor Zionist State in reshaping the Old City of Jerusalem through the selection of Kahn's Khurvah design as a national symbol, although this time it is seemingly more explicit and assertive. Indeed it has been noted that this recent messianism "returned vitality to some of the symbols and values that had been declining, especially Zionist-Socialist symbols," symbols which sacralized nature, land, and physical artifacts instead of God and pious practices, symbols that were condemned earlier by traditional Judaism as Avoda Zara, i.e. idolatry.²⁸⁸

It is of no surprise that the hawkish and "expansionist" Likud Minister of Housing, Ariel Sharon, suddenly took an active role in spearheading the latest religious-nationalist "hallowing" of the Khurvah. He met with Kollek in March 1991 and discussed with him the restoration of the Khurvah's old building, especially the dome.²⁸⁹ Under Sharon's pressures it was decided, in a subsequent meeting with the city engineer, that "the company of the Jewish Quarter invite Yesh'ia Elon, "a resident of the Quarter" and a zealous religious-nationalist to submit a model for a restoration scheme of the Khurvah."²⁹⁰ The model was presented in a meeting with Sharon from which Kollek was peculiarly absent (**fig.121**).²⁹¹ In fact Kollek's obstructionist

²⁸⁸-Liebman and Don-Yehiya, p.204.

²⁸⁹-Minutes of a committee meeting at the Company of the Jewish Quarter reviewing the Khurvah design file (L.39), December 2, 1991, Khurvah Folder 106, (Jewish Quarter Company Archives) (in Hebrew).

²⁹⁰-Letter from the minister of Housing Ariel Sharon to Robin Shalom the director of the Jewish Quarter company, April 6, 1992 (in Hebrew). Khurvah Folder 106, (Jewish Quarter Company Archives). Ibid.

²⁹¹-Ibid.

tactics and finally Likud's loss of the election in 1992 sealed the fate of Sharon's project.²⁹²

The noteworthy aspect of Elon's design (which purports to represent the religious community of the Quarter) was that it did not turn out to be the long sought restoration of the old Ottoman Diaspora building. More precisely, it is a striking reinterpretation, if not a recycling, albeit crude and simplistic, of Kahn's schizophrenic style of double metaphor. The first image is the square assembly hall surmounted by concrete pendentives carrying a lofty 'golden' dome which, conceived as peeling off the external veneer of the old Ottoman structure, rivals the Dome of the Rock, heralding the active execution of messianic prophecies²⁹³

This negational image is, however, negated by juxtaposition with the peripheral "ruined" stone wall of the old Khurvah which wraps it. The incoherent design thus re-presents Kahn's very iconoclastic image of the Diaspora as memorialized ruins which eulogized it.²⁹⁴ Equally revealing is the absence of Diaspora symbols, such as the long sought twelve windows, which is replaced by the modern glazed modulated screen. That this ill-fated design is but a structure of the language created originally by Kahn's metaphor is further testified by the way it confined itself to the boundaries established by Kahn's design, at the edge of the adjacent big square, which was

292- Letter, Moshe Safdie's Office to Robin Shalom (Director of the Jewish Quarter Company) October 31, 1991, Khurvah Folder 106, (Jewish Quarter Company Archives). In an exclusive meeting, countering Sharon's initiative, Kollek discussed with Moshe Safdie different alternatives for rebuilding the Khurvah. They decided to explore two alternatives, one restoring the old building of the Khurvah, the other a new memorial design for the ruins. Accordingly Safdie sent a memo with an estimate of the total as well as itemized design fees for both alternatives. Yet an apparent lack of municipal funds to cover Safdie's own high consulting fees not to mention the actual construction costs did not advance the issue beyond those exploratory discussion.

293-Shlommah Elon, the technical director of the Company for Reconstructing the Jewish Quarter, interview by the author, July 1994.

294

cleared 14 years ago as a prospective site for the construction of Kahn's Temple, and has now become the center and the only public garden of the Jewish Quarter.

Amidst the dust of the aforementioned war of metaphors (Metapherkampf), an event took place whose true significance was not apparent to its sponsors and participants. In a national ceremony, the big square facing the old Khurvah memorial was officially dedicated as the central square and public garden of the Jewish Quarter (**fig.122**).²⁹⁵ The event, which was attended by representatives of various state institutions, including the Prime Minister, fulfilled a demand by the Quarter's residents for such a recreational public outlet and for symbolic center of the Jewish Quarter, indeed a window for the Quarter residents out of this museum turned into a prison of ruins (**fig.123**).²⁹⁶ The event marked "Jerusalem day," a yearly national festival where people come from all over Israel to march in Jerusalem to celebrate the "unification of the city" in the 1967 War. Yet until then the scope and the structure of the occasion remained unclear and enigmatic to the government, and particularly to Mayor Kollek, who had sponsored it in the first place. In 1983 it was decided for the first time to change the route of the traditional march of Jerusalem Day so that it would pass through the Cardo Museum, then the Western Wall Plaza, and from there via the Pilgrimage Passage to conclude at the square of the Khurvah.²⁹⁷

295-Letter, Amos Unger (Director of the Jewish Quarter company) to the Prime Minister and Minister of Housing, March 25, 1983. Khurvah Folder 106, (in Hebrew) (Jewish Quarter Company Archives).

296-Letter, 'Amos Unger to the ministerial board of directors of the Jewish Quarter company , March 12, 1982, (about the Khurvah square and garden at the Center of the Quarter), Khurvah Folder 106, (Jewish Quarter Company Archives).

297-Itinerary of the March is detailed in a letter from Amos Unger to the Prime Minister, April 19, 1983. Khurvah Folder 106, (Jewish Quarter Company Archives) (in Hebrew)

(This change was in part contemplated to impress a potential donor for the construction of the Khurvah).²⁹⁸ It did not occur to the sponsors and participants in this annual ritual of national self-renewal that they were actually enacting and commemorating as a place and origin something in reality placeless, a locus and a ritual of the invisible surrogate Temple invented single handedly by a marginal individual architect. True, the author-apostate is now forgotten, but as a language and “genius loci” he is more strongly present than ever before. Today the only public green space in Jerusalem besides the “Temple Mount” is the Khurvah square. It is pointedly planted with Lebanese Cedar trees, the same tree that King Solomon imported from Lebanon to construct his “Temple.”²⁹⁹

²⁹⁸-Letter, Alan Freeman of the Jerusalem Foundation to Amos Unger (Director of the Jewish Quarter Company), January 31, 1983, Khurvah Folder 106, (Jewish Quarter Company Archives), (Charles Clore, an English philanthropist, was the prospective donor). (in Hebrew)

²⁹⁹-Letter, Shlomo Aronson, the landscape architect of the Khurvah square, to Professor A. Meir of the Dept. of Botany at Hebrew University regarding “Lebanese Cedar,” November 13, 1983, with a copy to Amos Unger ; letter from Prof. Meir to Amos Unger, January 12, 1983, Khurvah Folder 106, (Jewish Quarter Company Archives). (in Hebrew)

Chapter 7: Conclusion:

The story of Kahn's design relates the architectural construction of a heretical metaphor which envisages its own transformation not only into a hegemonic social symbol, but beyond this into something like religion itself, that is, into a utopia. It is a story of how a subjective and private metaphor and architectural fantasy emerges, and although briefly suppressed, ultimately transforms into a collective national symbol, language, and a "mental" style shaping the national perception of reality. As such, Kahn's design reveals the condensed life cycle of a symbol, in particular of a subversive utopia which constantly renews reality by building worlds only to shatter them. Considering that it remained a drawing and was never built, or perhaps because of that, this achievement becomes even more remarkable.

That his was originally a private metaphor, literally a utopia coming from nowhere, is attested by the obscure and marginal initiation of Kahn's commission, where the state was not yet actively involved, and no program was clearly articulated, and more importantly by the way everyone, including the individual patron, state institutions, and its religious rivals, were absolutely shocked at his redefinition of the Khurvah and the city. Kahn did it entirely on his own terms and on his own chosen unorthodox site in opposition to the sacred and national symbols of Jerusalem.

Kahn's heresy was emboldened by his perception that the competing symbols, whether nationalist or religious-traditional, are no less metaphorical and fictitious in origin than his own whether the Diaspora and State cult of the Western Wall, old Khurvah, Temple, and Dome of the Rock. The unique manner in which Kahn's negational "Temple" won a "war of metaphors", overcoming and co-opting these hegemonic symbols, and navigating its way

through the web of their scrutinizing institutions, is very telling. It speaks for the sophisticated and occult double construction of his metaphor which took full advantage of and in fact promoted the schizophrenia, heterogeneity, and fragmentary institutional structure of the state, the supreme agent for fostering national identity. The success of Kahn's metaphor and alternative symbol could also be in part attributed to his perfect timing, seizing the opportunity offered by the National ecstasy of the 1967 victory and the preoccupation of the state with the unification of Jerusalem as a capital and symbol which would coopt the Diaspora to its secular project.

To summarize, the initial reaction of the client to the design was one of bewilderment if not confusion. This was extremely brief, however, for the state seemed to have been completely coopted by the double imagery of the design as they became convinced of its feasibility as a major element, together with the Western Wall, of a new symbolic configuration of the national civil religion, more precisely as the center of the new unified city of Jerusalem. Initially, the state adopted the two imagery elements of Kahn's, design the cubical monumental enclosure and the fragmentary urban historicist grid. Eventually, the state exclusively adopted the second metonymic image, that is the archeological fragmentary grid. Within the surface structure of the grid, the state in effect reworked the general idea of double negation and schizophrenia as a process and a style whereby the national identity and an image of the state's Jewishness could be re-shaped.

The memorialization, contiguity, and opposition of ruins built (or restored) and excavated, old and new, provided the Zionist state with a chance to settle the crisis of legitimacy posed by the rising traditional religious

challenge to its secularist and modernist Diaspora-negational ideology. Accordingly, the city, especially Jewish Quarter, was reconstructed as a museum. This was done first by an urban, architectural, and archeological representation of biblical archaic ruins, signifying the direct continuity of the present nation state and city with a biblical Jewish origin and state (thus detouring around the intermediate past of the Diaspora). Yet the negational content of this metaphor was disguised by an overlay upon and juxtaposition to what was negated in the first place, viz. fragments and ruins of the Diaspora history and the Arab city. The latter metonymic mask projected an appearance of worldly relevance and traditionality on to state while in fact museumizing, historicizing, and eulogizing the Diaspora.

The State found in double negation a way, on the one hand, to disengage the public consciousness from the critical present of its censorship of the Diaspora and occupation of the Arab city, while on the other hand to suppress the dichotomy between its claims to be a Jewish and at the same time a secular state. As such, what was a mask for Kahn's metaphor became a content, indeed a prism through which the national self and reality are perceived and shaped. Yet Kahn's paradoxical style of imagination and memory proved to be disruptive and detrimental to the cause of the nation-state.

Precisely because of this perceived heresy and negation of the Diaspora and its Temple mythology, the religious authority rejected the state's selection of Kahn's metaphor as a national symbol. Hence, Kahn's metaphor fragmented the body politic consolidated in the mid Sixties out of Labor Statist Zionism, religious parties and Revisionist Zionism by the selection of the Diaspora Western Wall as a national symbol. The alienation of religious and Diaspora public in large part informs the nation state's eventual

relinquishment of Kahn's Khurvah design after its subversive impact on its own legitimacy and its unifying symbol of the Wall could no longer be ignored. It was, however, too late for the Labor State.

It was exactly at the time of its perceived demise that, the power and promises of Kahn's heresy were confirmed, surfacing as a utopia. Increasingly alienated among other things by the State appropriation of Kahn's second metaphor, i.e. his historicist grid and archaeological museum, in the construction of the city of Jerusalem, traditionalist forces fought back politically and culturally. In their resurgence they would most amazingly fall back on Kahn's first negational metaphor which they had previously condemned as a heretical Temple. But now in juxtaposition to the monstrous proliferating ruins, Kahn's subversive metaphor appeared homely, traditional, disowned, and indigenous. It was remarkable how the religious establishment internalized Kahn's apostate metaphor as a symbol through which it understood itself and interpreted the tradition in the same way the Nationalists had assimilated Kahn's other metaphor.

More remarkable, however, is the liminal concurrence between the two rivals, the secular Nationalists and the religious authority, on a new design of the Khurvah that reworks Kahn's negational metaphor, as if his design reunited, on its own terms, a national body that it had earlier dismembered. This unity unfolded in the consensus on Lasdun's design, which in many ways was even more negational than Kahn's.

However, this new national body was fractured once again, this time by a revisionist Zionist regime which intervened in the name of a literalist revival of tradition, i.e. restoring the old Diaspora building of the Khurvah. Yet when this regime had the chance to offer its interpretation of tradition,

what it presented was clearly trapped by the very language and style Kahn had already created. Here the subversive nature and scope of the utopia embodied in Kahn's design became fully manifest.

The assimilation of Kahn's self-negating metaphor as a language by three rival ruling regimes in Israel occurred at the cost of weakening and undercutting the foundation of their own symbols and their corresponding ideological immobilization of reality. Firstly, the Labor State neglected and negated the western Wall which it had already chosen as the ultimate state symbol unifying secular Zionism with the Diaspora traditional community. In so doing, the Labor State risked its own "Jewish" legitimacy. Secondly, the Diaspora and religious authority gave up the restoration of the traditional symbol, the Khurvah. They even contradicted the mythology of the Temple. Thirdly, messianic Judaism and the Likud State discarded their quest for a literal restoration of the traditional Khurvah. This restoration would have been the centerpiece of their campaign to hasten the fulfilment of the messianic prophecy. Ironically, they perpetuated the memorialization of its ruins.

In short, Kahn's multivalent metaphorical design challenges the current widespread notion in architectural theory that denies the ability of a single architect or project to create new symbols shaping the social perception of reality. Such a notion posits architecture, especially monuments, as fetishized superstructures and instruments passively perpetuating the hegemony of the preexisting languages and ideological agendas of social institutions, especially those of the nation state. In this way, monuments freeze national memory and imagination according to the interests of ruling institutions.

Far from this, Kahn shows that the marginal yet mindful architect can create, through a multivalent architectural design, an alternative world view which continuously reconfigures reality, ruining and rebuilding it, according to his own subversive agenda. It does so by a schizophrenic or paradoxical construction of imagery, which synchronizes the metonymic displacement and fragmentation of the existing reality with metaphorical condensation of its shattered images and ruins in a new utopia or "Temple." This schizophrenic design strategically negates itself and relinquishes its subversive metaphor in the guise of neutral, worldly, and functional representation of the agendas of these coercive traditional and national institutions. Consequently, this visionary 'plot' not only eluded the surveillance of these institutions but infiltrated and undermined their authority to advance an alternative symbol, thus establishing a continuity between the private 'imaginary' of the architect and the collective 'real' of the nation.

Kahn finally succeeded in creating a new national style, something which eluded many ambitious Zionist architects, including Baehrwald, Geddes, Mendelsohn, and Safdie. He freed himself from the self-imposed restrictions of their images of a Zionist style. These images operated according to a language and a concept of memory invented by Zionism in a manner typical of any other modern national movement and state. The modern nation, and its memory, according to some scholars such as Benedict Anderson, is essentially "imagined," in other words, metaphorical.³⁰⁰ Its collective memory is based on the historicization and territorialization of

300-See Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflection on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (London: Verso, 1995), 6.

time to establish a sense of similarity over time and territory between dissimilar individuals and groups. This collective memory of the nation is constructed as a linear narrative with well-defined historical boundaries, beginning with a selected segment of the past, teleologically ending in a present or a future embodied in the modern nation. This narrative involves as much forgetting as remembering of a history that is now objectified and segmented.

Legitimizing itself as an awakening of the Jewish nation from the “stagnant” Diaspora tradition, Zionism emplotted its memory by fixing its beginning in a biblical origin, detouring around the Diaspora to directly and ultimately conclude in modern Zionism within the secular Hebrew state of Israel. Among the other architects, Mendelsohn conformed precisely to this narrative in his conception of the Zionist architectural style as a juxtaposition of images of the Palestinian ‘biblical’ vernacular, on the one hand, and modernist abstract forms and functions on the other. Nevertheless, the condensed manner in which Mendelsohn presented his imagery seemed supercilious even to the very institutions which fostered Zionist identity. On the other hand, Patrick Geddes conceived his Aula Academica monument, like Kahn’s Khurvah, as a new transnational temple. He confronted Zionism with an iconoclastic image of the medieval Islamic and Diaspora tradition through his hexagonal reproduction of the Dome of the Rock. However, unlike Kahn his imagery was one dimensional, a mere metonymic displacement from within the historicist language underlying the narrative of Zionist memory. In representing an intermediary segment of history, Aula Academica presupposed the historical boundaries of Zionist narrative, the biblical past and the modern Zionist present. Because his design

inadvertently challenged Zionism on its own historicist grounds, Geddes was bound to lose.

Confronting a crisis of Zionist memory, Safdie reinforced the legitimacy of its narrative and boundaries by appropriating the Islamic and Diaspora tradition as a transient intermediary chapter linking the biblical origins of the nation with its conclusion in the Israeli state. Yet because the similizing intent behind his theater of memory was so obvious, Safdie inadvertently scandalized the Israeli state at the same time that he alienated the Religious and Diaspora community. As I showed earlier, this demythization was an effect of Kahn's subversive legacy. Ironically, the two styles that their authors or historians conveniently identified as revolutionary Zionist, i.e. the Romantic Jewish or the "Bauhaus" were, as I show, images of a surviving Diaspora memory.

One can thus conclude that all of these styles accepted as natural the historicist fiction of Zionist memory and proceeded accordingly, thus their fantasy of creating a new style and symbol according to an independent individualistic frame of reference was doomed to failure.

In sharp contrast to this, the schizophrenic structure of Kahn's imagery both demythized the claim of the Zionist fiction of memory (and its underlying language) to natural reality at the same time that it coopted its discrepant communit(ies) to his alternative memory. He did so realizing that the modern nation is a simulacrum of the monument, so to speak.³⁰¹ The nation relies on the material joint of the monument to bridge a gap in its memory resulting from selective representation of history.

³⁰¹.See Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire," *Representations* special Issue on Memory and Counter-Memory. Eds. Natalie Zemon Davis and Randolph Starn. Spring 1989. No. 26. (University of California Press), 7-26.

Kahn displaced the historical elements of the nation-state narrative along with those of other excluded rival memories (traditional Jewish and Palestinian), to recombine and condense them in an unfamiliar monumental image framing a new center for the city and the nation at large. Immediately, however, the monument negates and ruins itself, by metonymic representation of the very national memories that it previously negated. Within an anti-hierarchical archaeological grid, Kahn asymmetrically and freely disposes the elements of these rival memories and symbols as contiguous, heterogeneous, but equal fragments. Such displacement, parity, and contiguity defuses the claim of each of these symbols to completeness, finality, historical continuity, and thus absoluteness. More importantly, the multiple shift of imagery between archaeology and modern architecture, in Kahn's paradoxical enigmatic "modern/primitive ruin" of the Khurvah and the contiguous but discrepant historical ruins of Diaspora, Medieval, and Classical monuments, confuses ends with beginnings, past, present, and future. It collapses the boundaries of historical time. Indeed, such apocalyptic image of history disrupts any linear progressional narration of time and thus Zionism as well as the language that underlies the 'modern' nation state in general. The outcome is that his enigmatic monumental center and enclosure towers supreme over the ruins of the nation as a fuzzy yet unifying memory of a utopia.

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APPENDIX

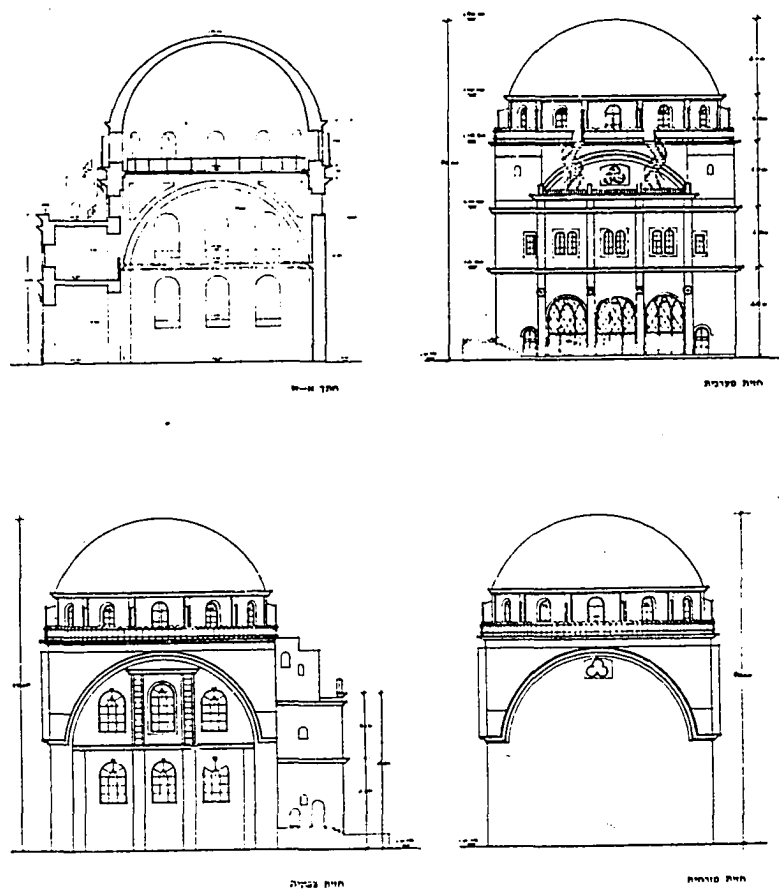


Fig.1 Old Khurvah Synagogue, elevations and cross sections, Old City Jerusalem, 1856-1864. Reprinted from Proposals and Criticisms for Reconstructing Khurvah Rabbi Yehuda ha Hassid. Ministry of Education and Culture, Jerusalem, 1968.

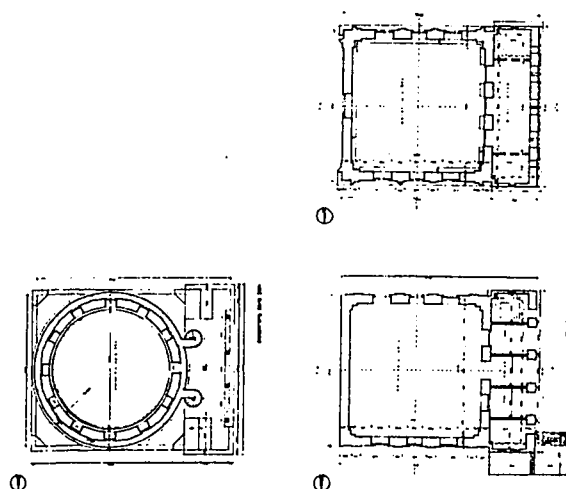


Fig.2 (Right) Old Khurvah Synagogue, floor plans, Old City Jerusalem, 1856-1864.
Reprinted from *Proposals and Criticisms for Reconstructing Khurvah Rabbi Yehuda Ha Hassid*. (Jerusalem: Ministry of Education and Culture, 1968).

Fig.3 Birds eye view of Old City of Jerusalem with Old Khurva in the foreground.
Reprinted from, Khurva folder 106, *Archives of the Company for the Reconstruction and Development of the Jewish Quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem*.

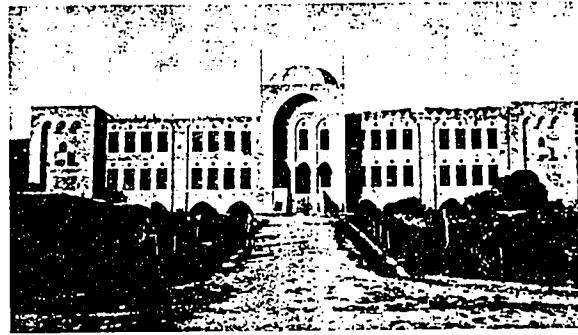


Fig.4 Gimnasia Herzliah, First Hebrew High School in Tel Aviv, Architect: Barski. 1906. Reprinted from Harlap, Amiram. New Israeli Architecture, (London: 1982), p. 44

Fig.5 Technion in Haifa. Architect: Alex Berwald, 1912. Reprinted from Harlap, Amiram. New Israeli Architecture, (London: 1982), p. 44.

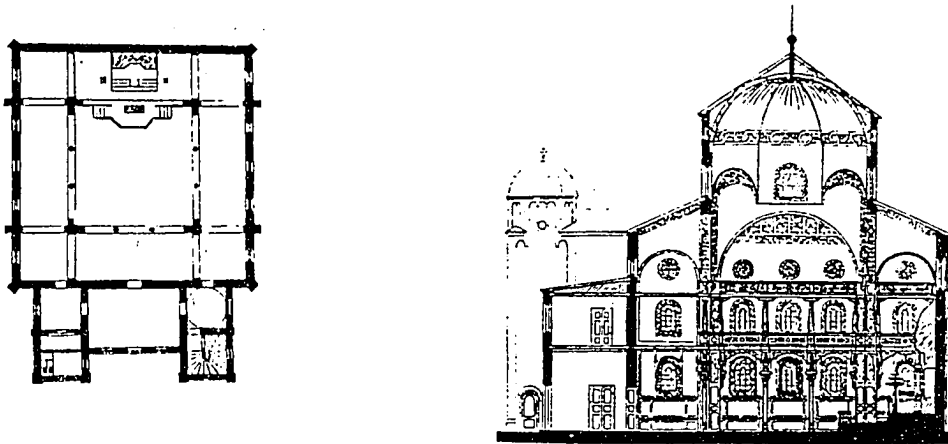
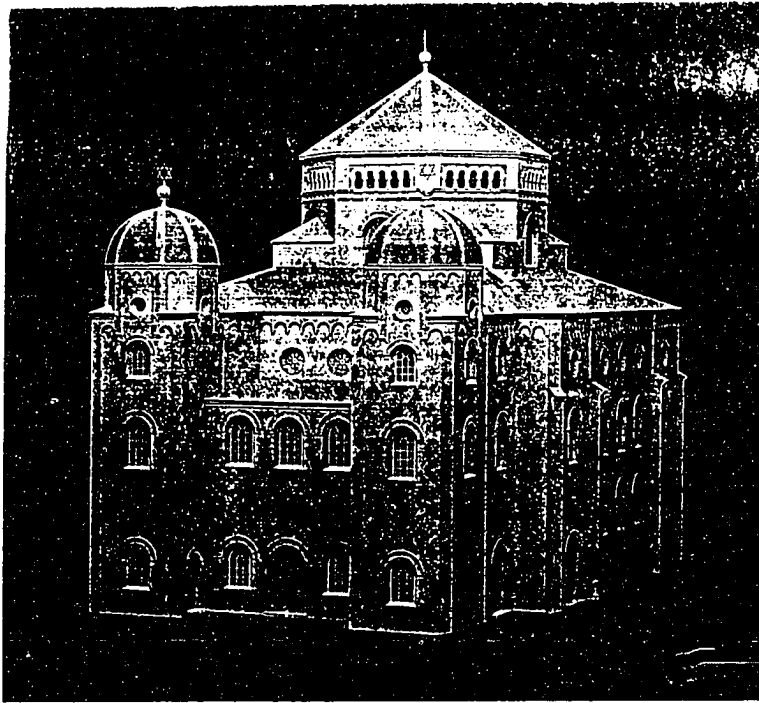


Fig.6 Model of Synagogue, Architect: Gottfried Semper, Dresden, 1838. Reprinted from Hans-Peter Schwarz (ed.), Die Architektur der Synagoge, (Nov-Dec 1989), p.286.

Fig.7 Floor plan and cross section of Dresden Synagogue, Architect: Gottfried Semper,, 1838. Reprinted from Hans-Peter Schwarz (ed.), Die Architektur der Synagoge, (Nov-Dec 1989), p.286..

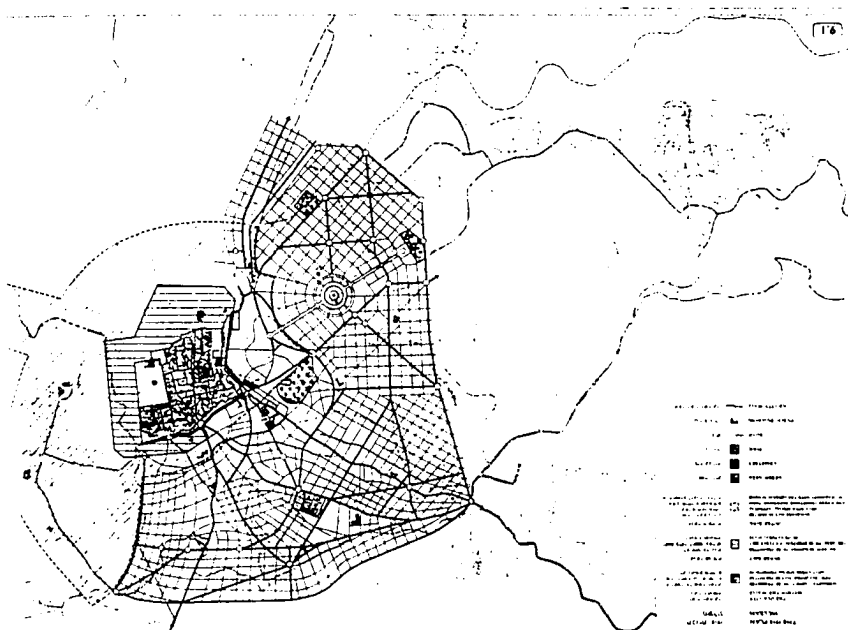


Fig.8 Rockefeller Museum in Jerusalem, Architect: A. Harrison, 1930s. Reprinted from Harlap, Amiram. *New Israeli Architecture*, (London: 1982), p. 51.

Fig.9 The 1918 Town Plan by Mclean. Reprinted from Urban Geography of Jerusalem: The Atlas of Jerusalem. Published by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Department of Geography. (1973).

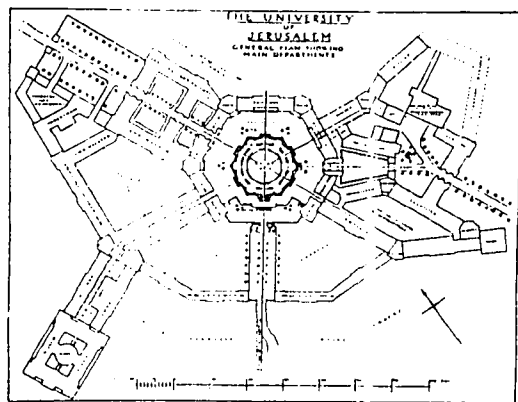
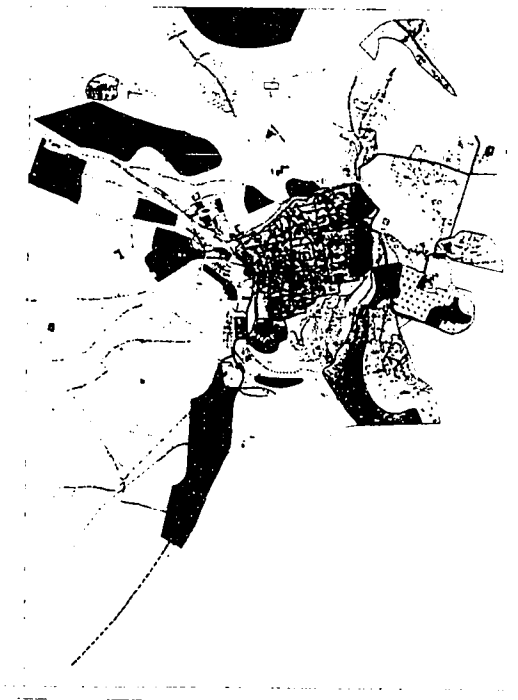


Fig.10 The 1922 Town Plan, by Ashdōe-Geddes.Reprinted from Urban Geography of Jerusalem: The Atlas of Jerusalem. Published by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Department of Geography. (1973).

Fig.11 Proposed design for Hebrew University, Jerusalem. Patrick Geddes and F. Mears, 1919. Reprinted from Philip Boardman, Patrick Geddes, Maker of the Future, (Chapel Hill: 1944), p.246.

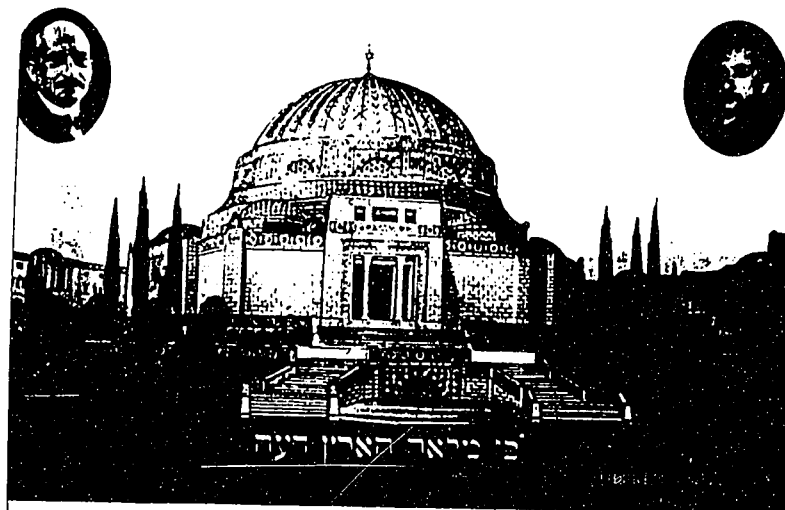


Fig.12 Hebrew University, Postcard showing the 'Aula Acadamia', Patrick Goeddes, 1912. Reprinted from David Kroyanker, curator, Yerushalaim ha Lo B'nuyah, Exhibition Catalogue. (Jerusalem: 1992), p.93.

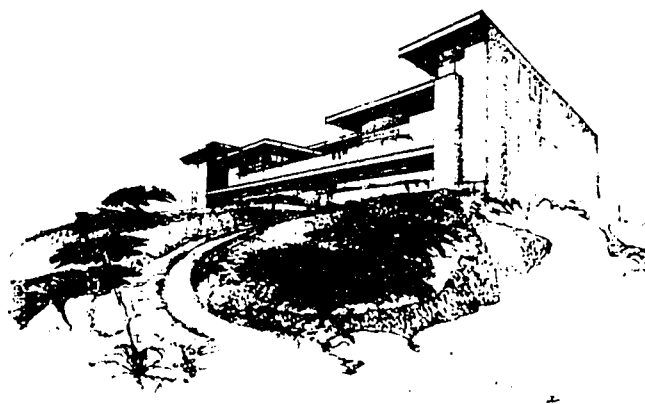


Fig.13 Library for the Jewish University by Richard Neutra, Jerusalem, 1923. Reprinted from Arthur Drexler and Thomas S. Hines. The Architecture of Richard Neutra: From International Style to California Modern. (New York:1982), p.34.

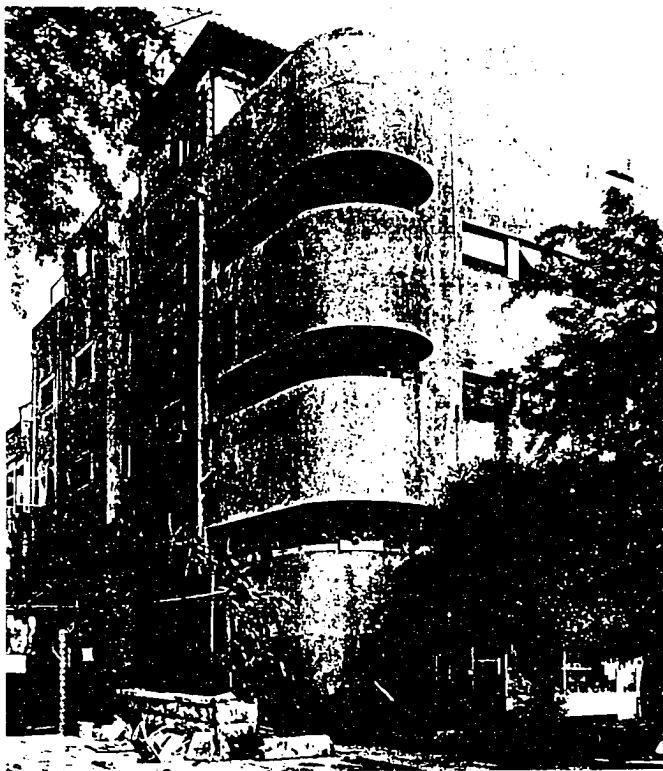


Fig.14 House of Cohen-Plaskovsky, Architect: Raphael and Jehuda Magidovich, 1935-1936. Reprinted from Winfried Nerdinger (ed.), Tel Aviv, Modern Architecture, 1930-1939. (Berlin: 1994), p.165.



Fig.15 View of Hayarkon Street from the sea in the 1930s. Reprinted from Winfried Nerdinger (ed.), Tel Aviv, Modern Architecture, 1930-1939. (Berlin: 1994), p.9.

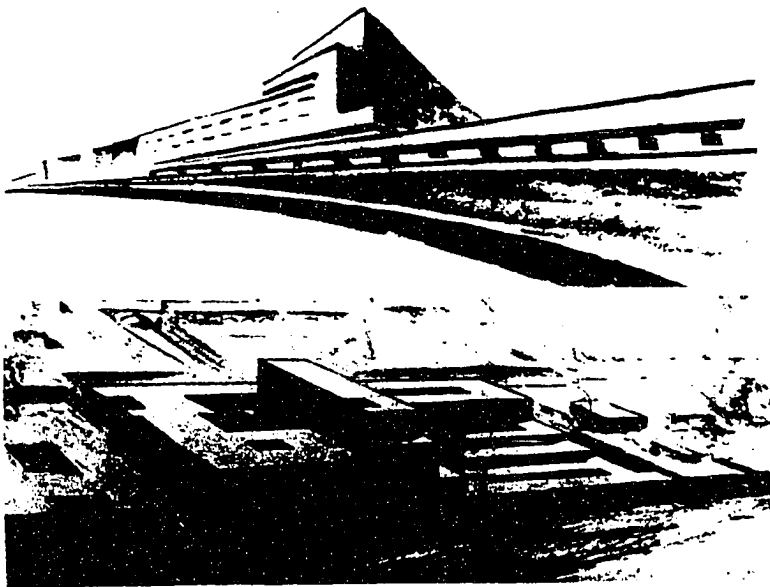
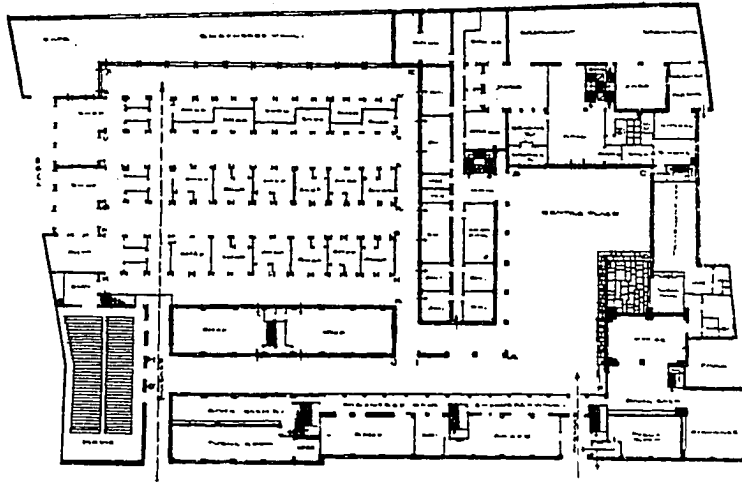


Fig.16 Old Business Center, Architect: Mendelsohn and Neutra, 1923.
Reprinted from Winfried Nerdinger (ed.), Tel Aviv, Modern
Architecture, 1930-1939. (Berlin: 1994), p.9.

Fig.17 Perspective looking towards the Old Business Center, Architect:
Mendelsohn and Neutra, 1923. Reprinted from Winfried Nerdinger
(ed.), Tel Aviv, Modern Architecture, 1930-1939. (Berlin: 1994), p.9.

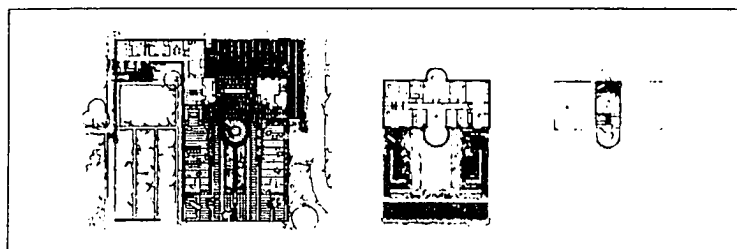
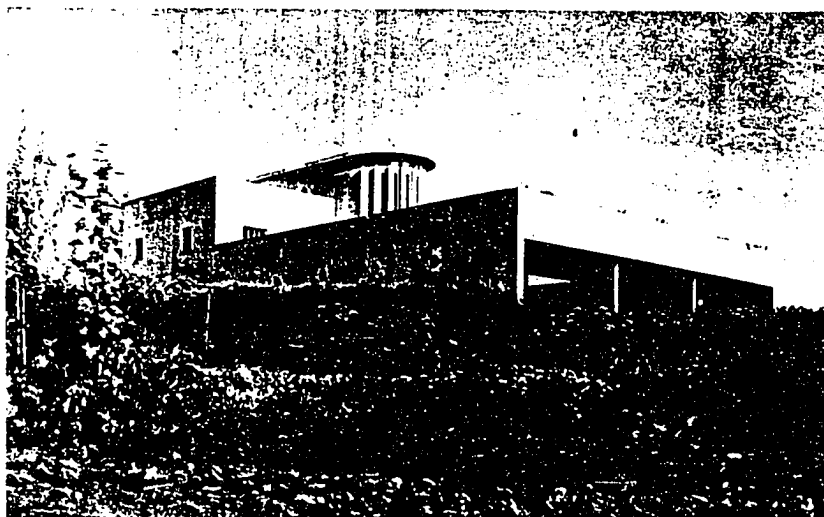


Fig.18 Weizmann House, Architect: Mendelsohn . . Rehovot, 1934-1936.
Reprinted from Winfried Nerdinger (ed.), Tel Aviv, Modern
Architecture, 1930-1939. (Berlin: 1994), p.11.

Fig.19 Floor Plans, Weizmann House, Architect: Mendelsohn . . Rehovot,
1934-1936. Reprinted from Bruno Zevi, Erich Mendelsohn. (Rizzoli,
New York: 1985), p.142.

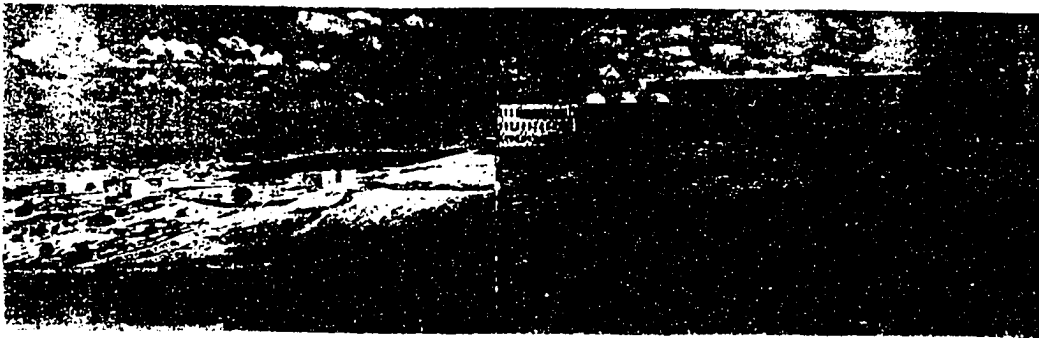
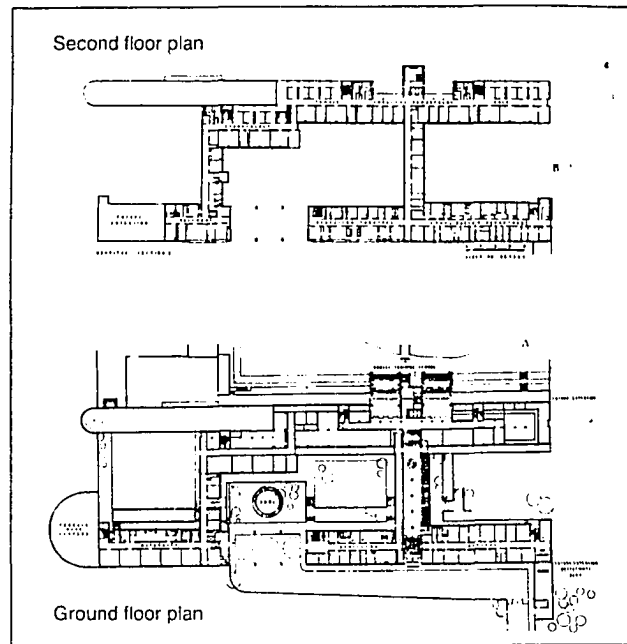


Fig.20 Floor Plans, Hadassah Medical Center on Mount Scopus, Jerusalem, Architect: Mendelsohn, 1936-1938. Reprinted from Bruno Zevi, Erich Mendelsohn. (Rizzoli, New York: 1985), p.146.

Fig.21 General view of Hadassah Medical Center with the adjacent Arab village, Architect: Mendelsohn, 1936-1938. Reprinted from Bruno Zevi, Erich Mendelsohn (Rizzoli, New York: 1985), p.150.

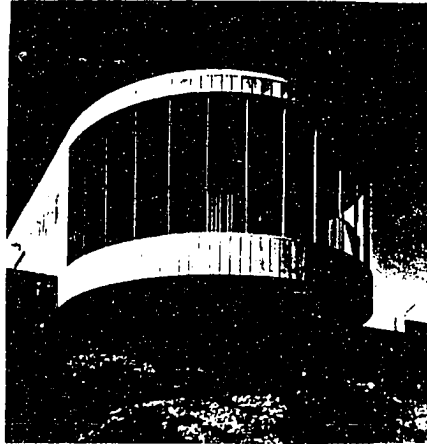


Fig.24 Cantilevered semi-cylinder Loggia, Hadassah Medical Center Architect: Mendelsohn, 1936-1938. Reprinted from Bruno Zevi, Erich Mendelsohn. (Rizzoli, New York: 1985), p.153.

Fig.25 View of the portico surmounted by the three cupolas, Hadassah Medical Center, Architect: Mendelsohn, 1936-1938. Reprinted from Bruno Zevi, Erich Mendelsohn (Rizzoli, New York: 1985), p.149.



Fig.26 The 1948 plan of Jerusalem by Heinz Rau. Reprinted from Urban Geography of Jerusalem: The Atlas of Jerusalem. Published by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Department of Geography, (1973).

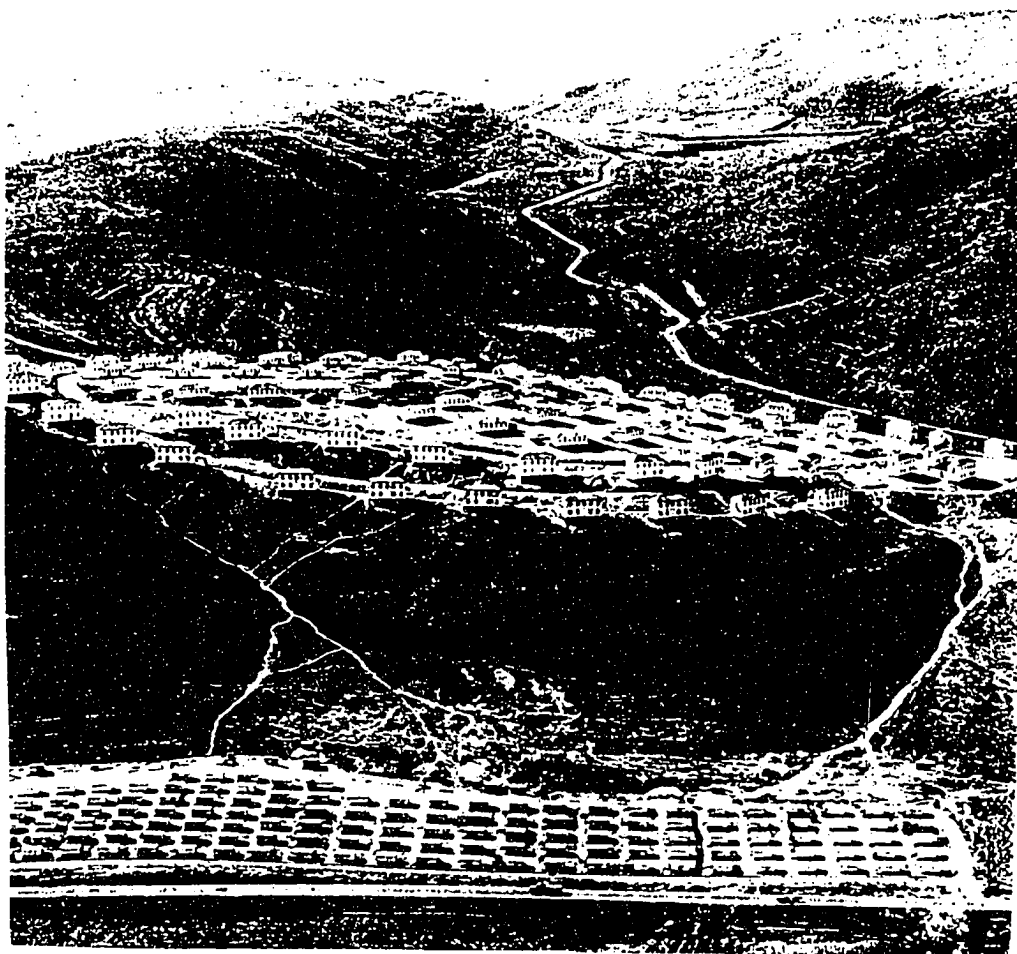


Fig.27 View of a neighbourhood unit in the new town of Yokna'am, 1948.
Reprinted from Arie Sharon, Kibbutz + Bauhaus . (Israel: 1976), p.83.

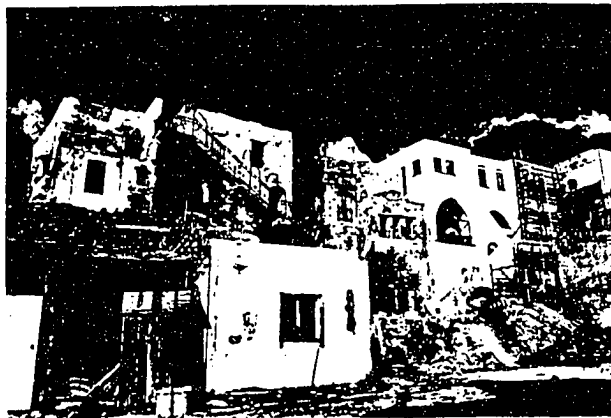
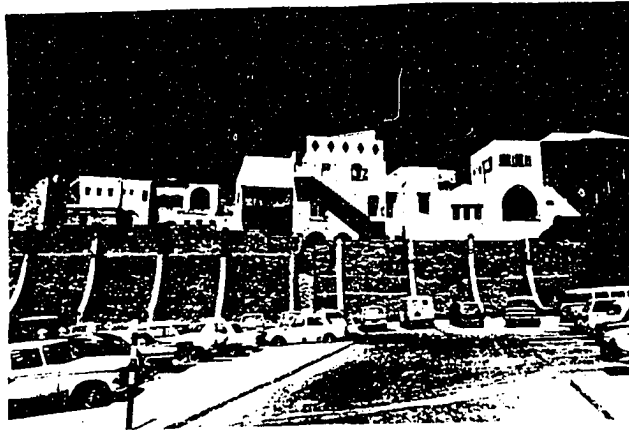


Fig.28 View of the reconstructed residential street, Old Jaffa, 1960. Reprinted from Harlap, Amiram. New Israeli Architecture, (London: 1982), p. 320.

Fig.29 View of a residential street before reconstruction, Old Jaffa, 1960. Reprinted from Harlap, Amiram. New Israeli Architecture, (London: 1982), p. 320.

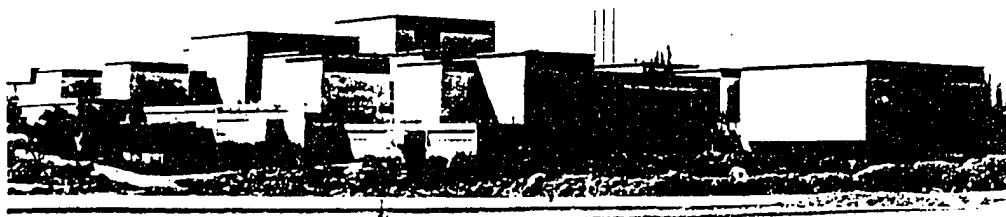


Fig.30 View of the National Museum, Jerusalem, 1960. Reprinted from Harlap, Amiram. New Israeli Architecture, (London: 1982), p. 242.

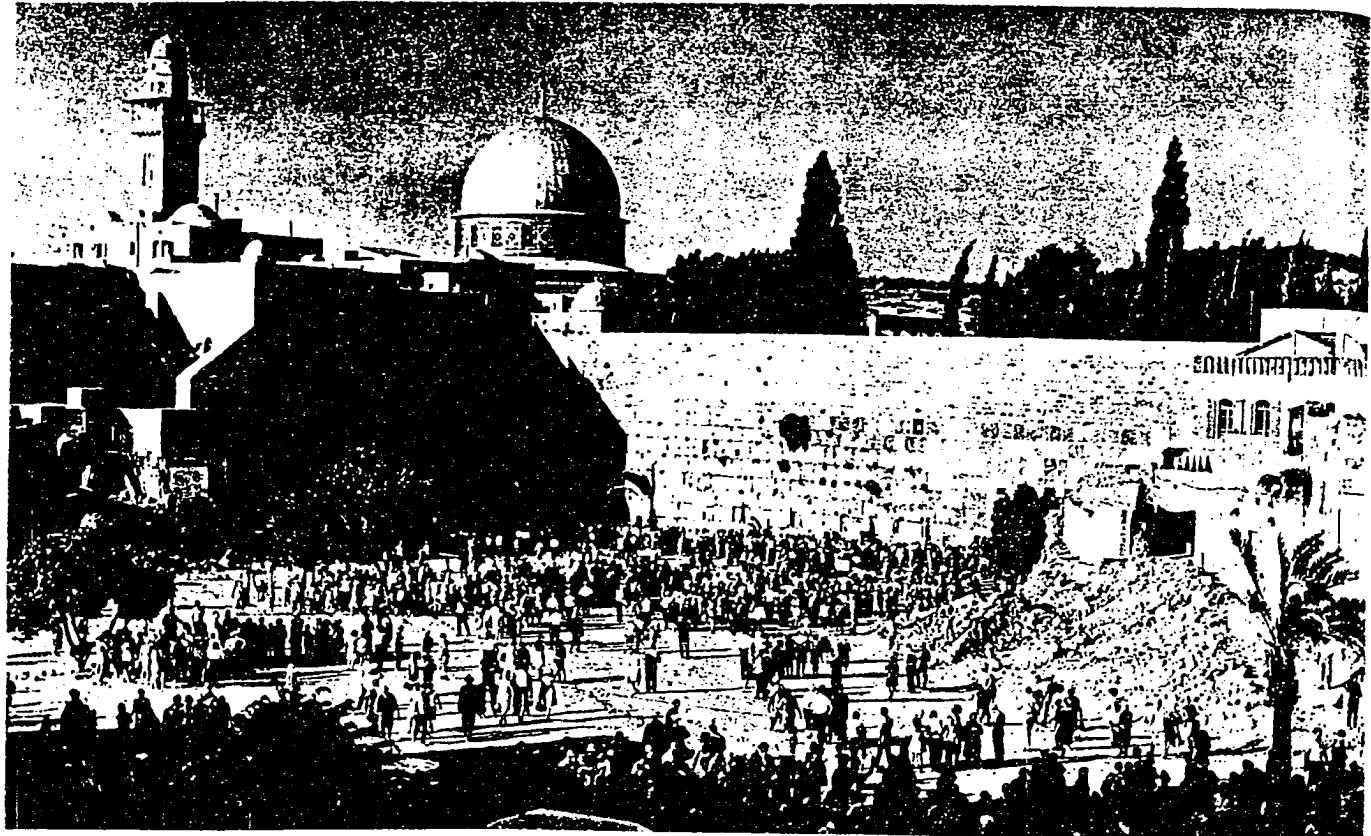


Fig.31 View of the Western Wall, Jerusalem. Reprinted from a report by Ministry of Religion, A new chapter in the History of Western Wall. (Jerusalem: No date).

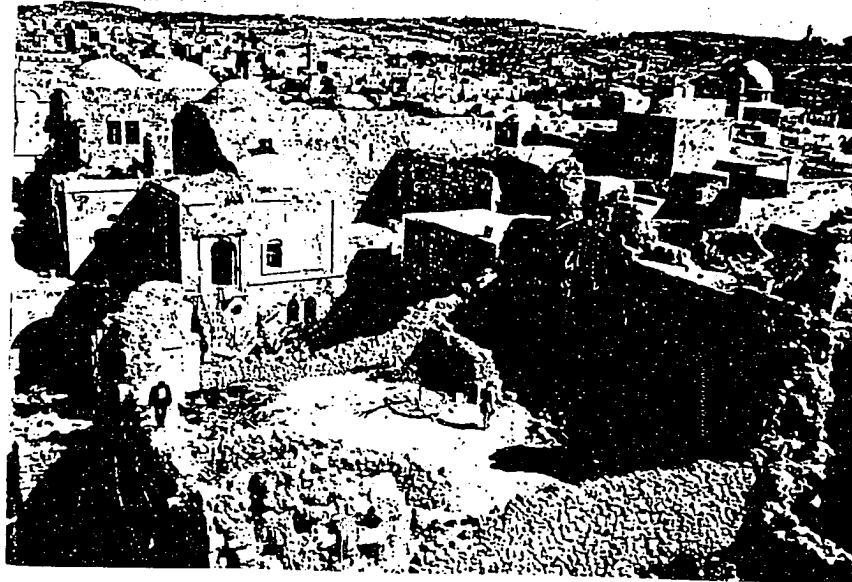


Fig.32 Ruin of the Khurva. Reprented from *Proposals and criticisms for reconstructing Khurva Rabbi Yehuda ha Hasid*. Minstry of Education and Culture, Jerusalem, 1968.

Fig.33 Louis I. Kahn inspecting the ruin. Reprented from *Proposals and criticisms for reconstructing Khurva Rabbi Yehuda ha Hasid*. Minstry of Education and Culture, Jerusalem, 1968.

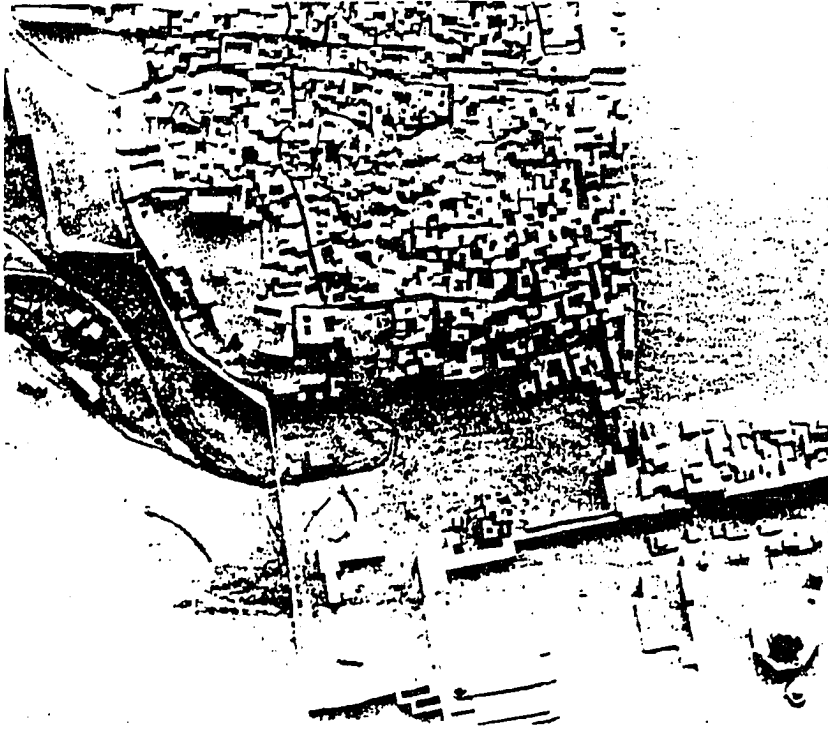


Fig.34 View of Louis Kahn's Model of the Old City before his intervention. Reprinted from Proposals and Criticisms for Reconstructing Khurvat Rabbi Yehuda Ha Hassid. (Jerusalem: Ministry of Education and Culture, 1968).

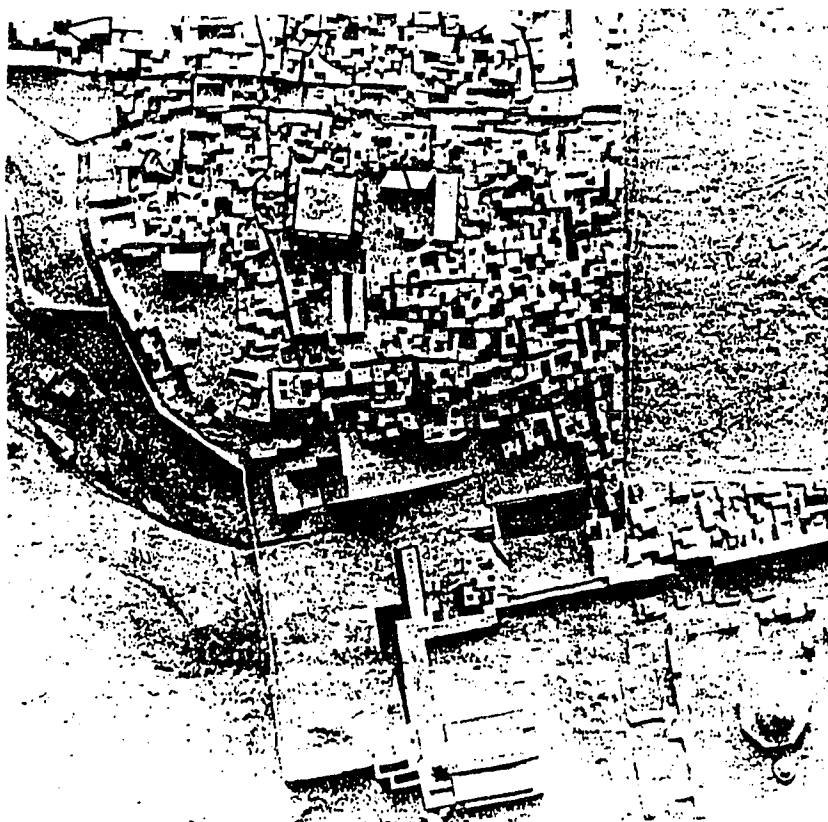


Fig.35 View of the Old City after Kahn's intervention. Reprinted from Proposals and Criticisms for Reconstructing Khurvat Rabbi Yehuda Ha Hassid. (Jerusalem: Ministry of Education and Culture, 1968).

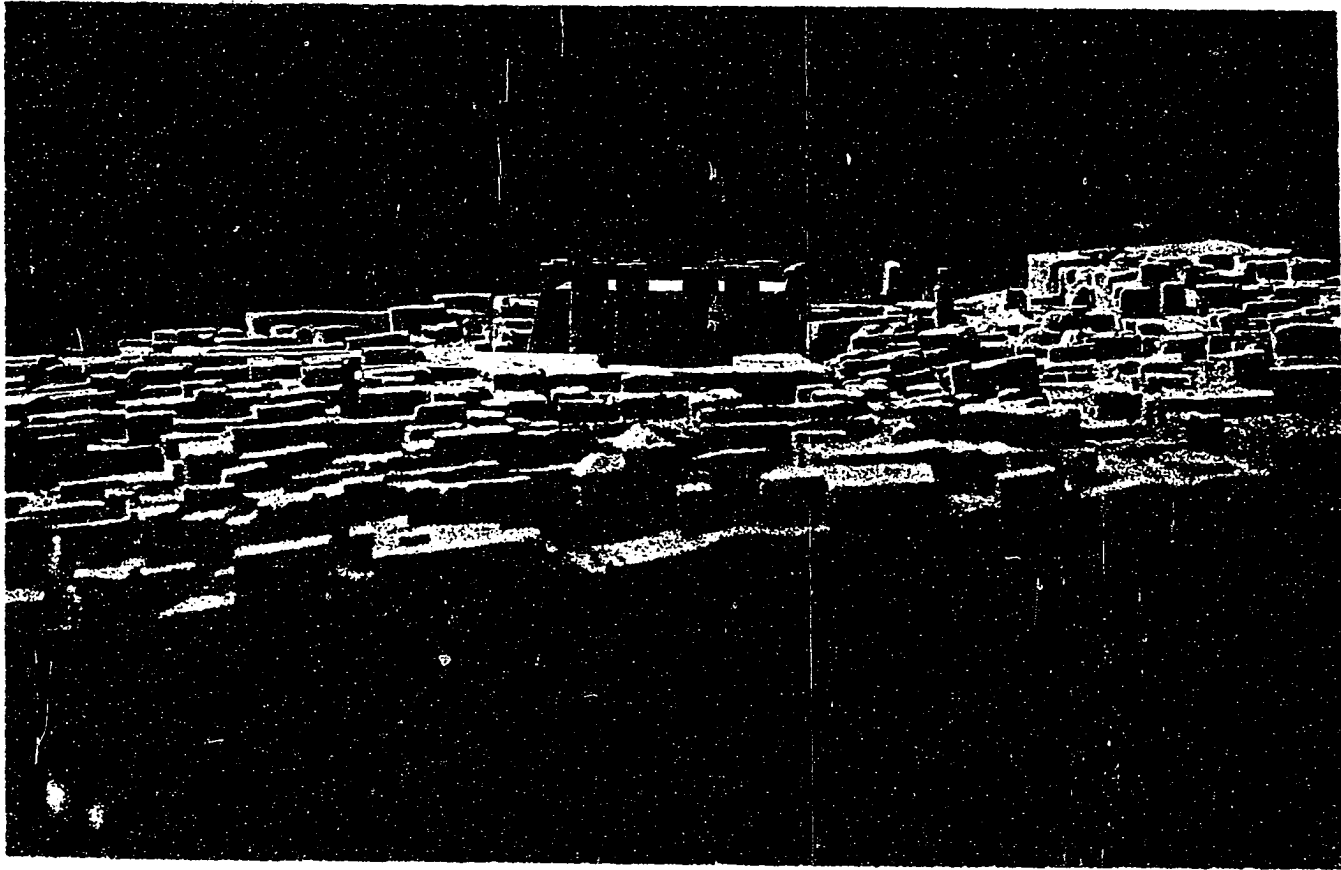


Fig.36 Model of Khurva in context, Architect: Louis I. Kahn. Reprinted from *Hurva Synagogue*, in Architecture and Urbanism, vol.3-no.1. (Special edition: 1973).

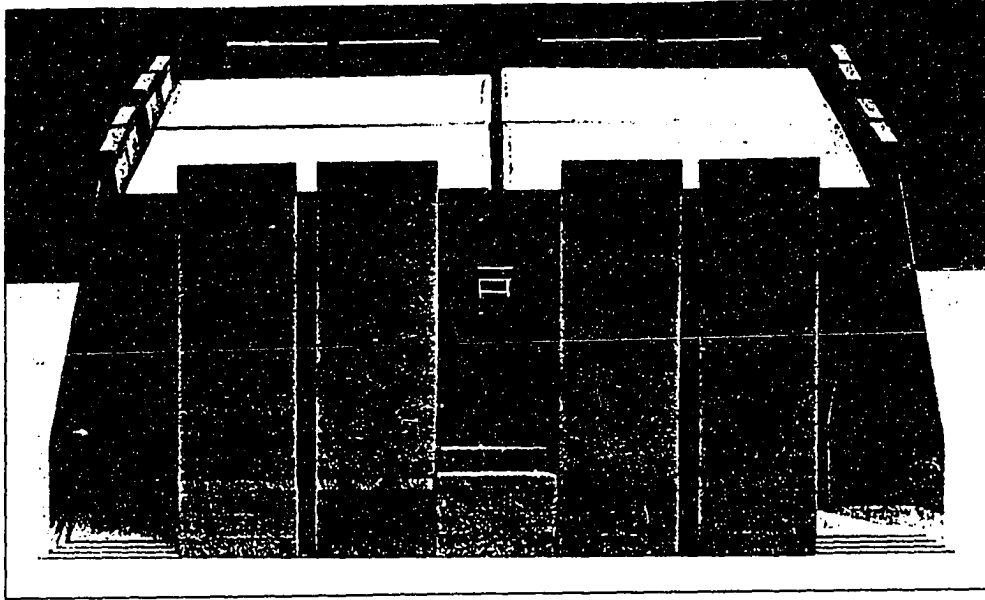
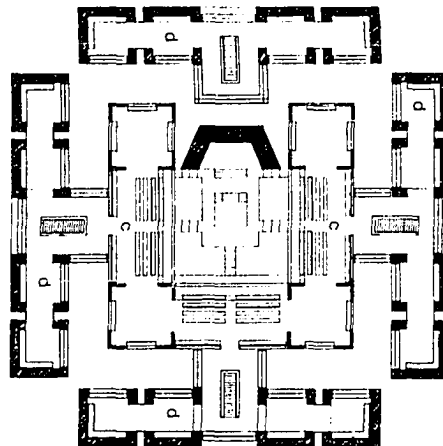
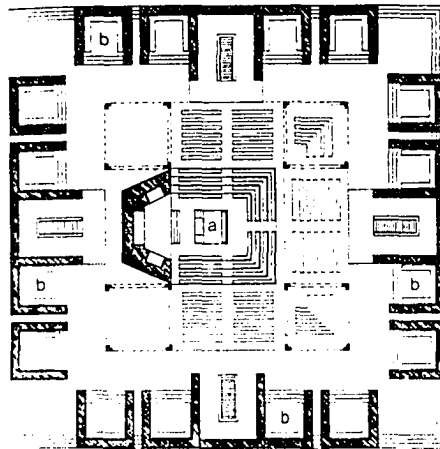


Fig.37 Model of Khurva , Architect: Louis I. Kahn. Reprinted from Kent Larson, *A Virtual Land Mark*, in Progressive Architecture, (September 93), p. 84.



- a Sanctuary
- b Candle niches
- c Upper gallery
- d Upper part of candle niches

Fig.38 Ground floor plan of Khurva , Architect: Louis I. Kahn. Reprinted from *Hurva Synagogue*, in Architecture and Urbanism, vol.3-no.1. (Special edition: 1973).

Fig.39 First floor plan of Khurva , Architect: Louis I. Kahn. Reprinted from *Hurva Synagogue*, in Architecture and Urbanism, vol.3-no.1. (Special edition: 1973).

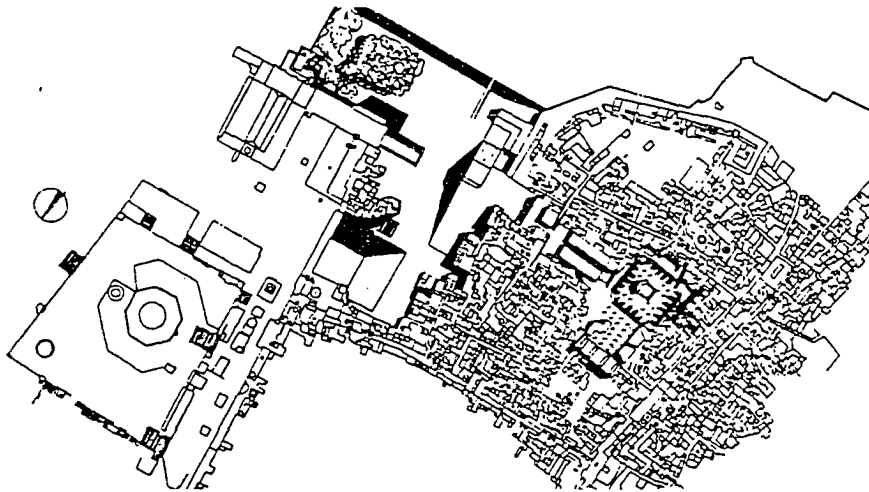


Fig.40 Site-plan of the new Khurvah and the Pilgrimage Route. Arch: Louis Kahn. Reprinted from Proposals and Criticisms for Reconstructing Khurvah Rabbi Yehuda Ha Hassid, (Jerusalem: Ministry of Education and Culture, 1968).

Fig.41 View of the cleared Western Wall Plaza and the cluster of Mamluk buildings to the right. Reprinted from A new chapter in the History of Western Wall. (Jerusalem: Ministry of Religion. n.d).

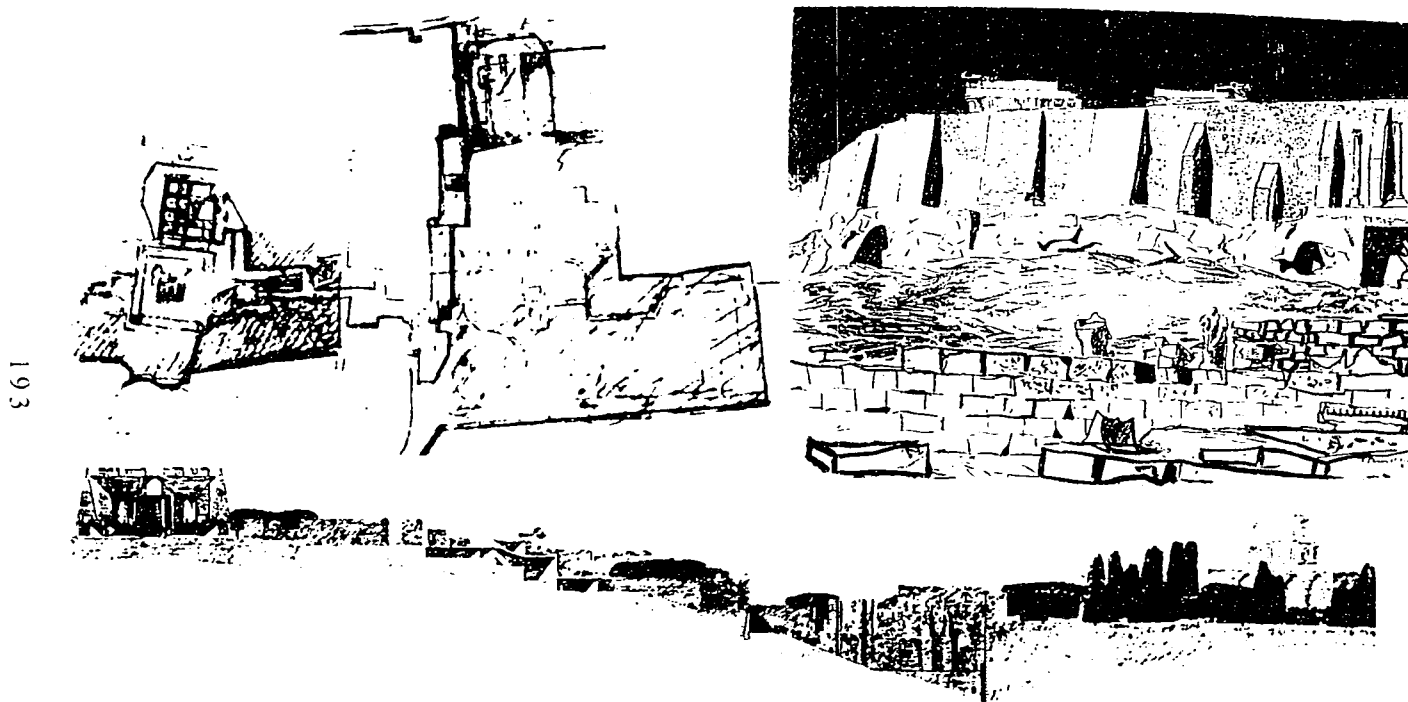


Fig.42 Concept drawing. Reprinted from Alexander Tzonis (ed.), The Louis I. Kahn Archive: Personal Drawings. (New York and London: 1987), p.2.

Fig.43 Site cross section. Reprinted from Kent Larson, *A Virtual Land Mark*, in Progressive Architecture, (September 93), p. 80.

Fig.44 Sketches of Acropolis, Architect: Louis I. Kahn, 1951. Reprinted from Vincent Scully, Louis I. Kahn, (New York: 1962).

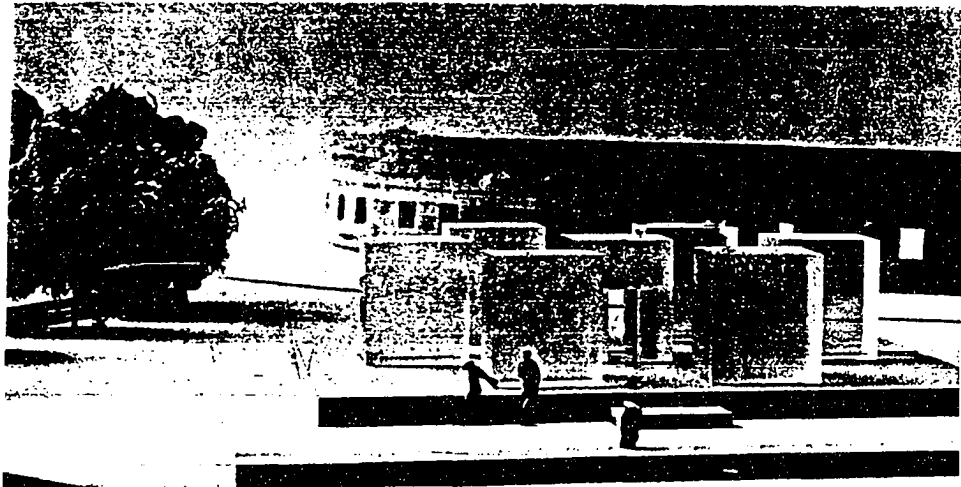


Fig.45 Study sketches, Memorial to six Million Jews, New York City (1967-1969), Architect: Louis I Kahn. Reprinted from Romaldo Giurgola and Jaimini Mehta, Louis I. Kahn. (Boulder Colorado: 1975), p.158.

Fig.46 Study model, Memorial to six Million Jews, New York City (1967-1969), Architect: Louis I Kahn. Reprinted from Romaldo Giurgola and Jaimini Mehta, Louis I. Kahn. (Boulder, Colorado: 1975), p.159..



Fig.47 A Computer reconstruction of the ambulatory of the New Khurvah. Reprinted from Kent Larson, "A Virtual Land Mark," in Progressive Architecture, (September 93), p. 80.

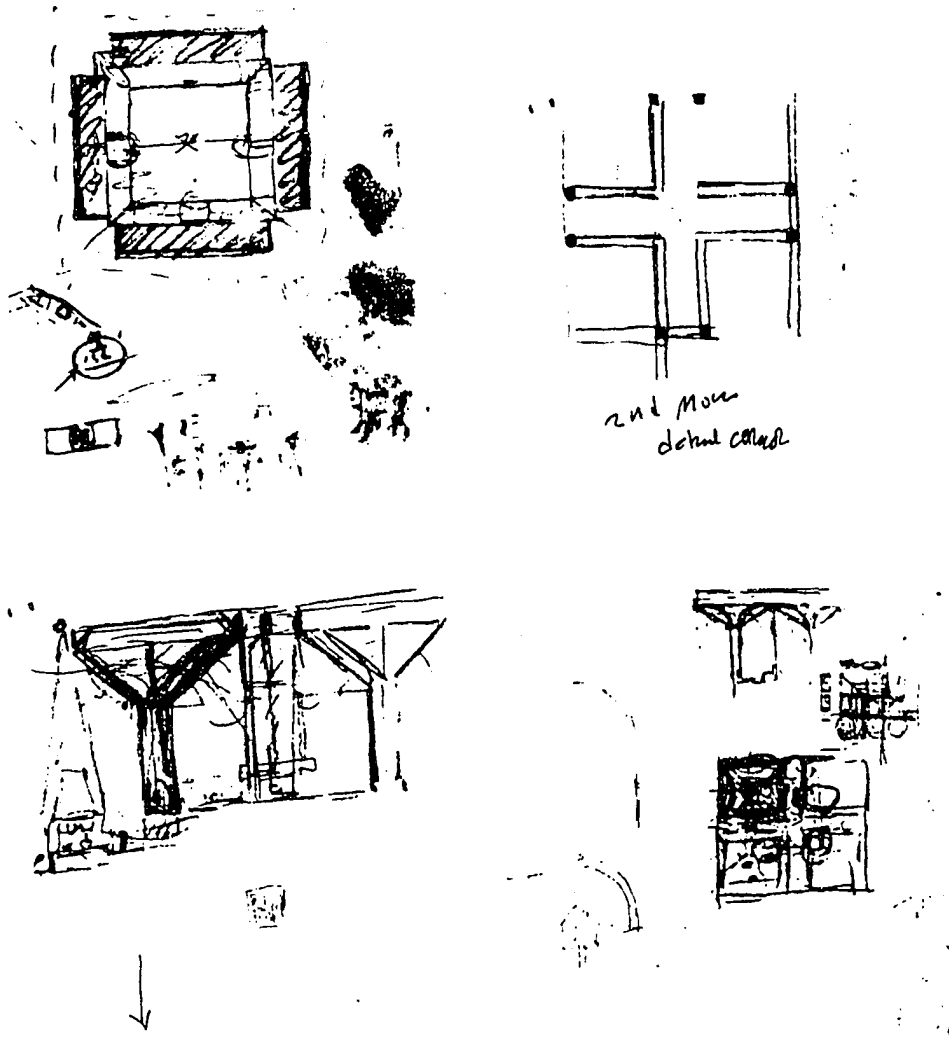


Fig.48 - 51 Study sketches, Architect: Louis I. Kahn. Reprinted from Alexander Tzonis (ed.), The Louis I. Kahn Archive: Personal Drawings. (New York and London: 1987).

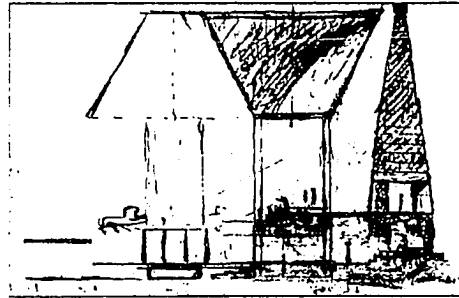
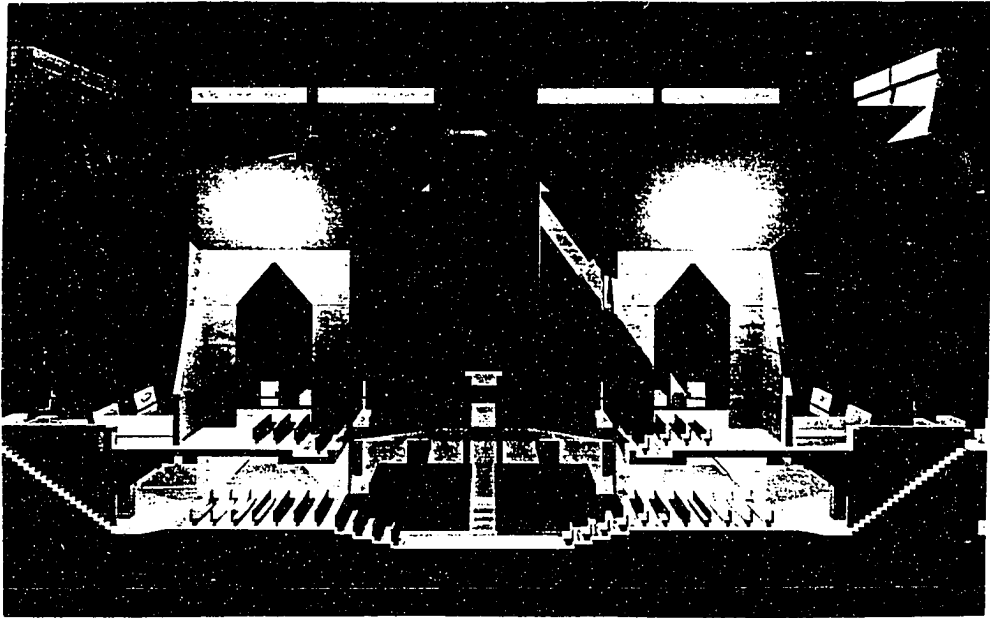


Fig.52 Computer reconstruction of the interior of the New Khurvah. Reprinted from Kent Larson, "A Virtual Land Mark," in Progressive Architecture, (September 93), p. 82.

Fig.53 Study sketch of the New Khurvah, Architect: Louis I. Kahn. Reprinted from Alexander Tzonis (ed.), The Louis I. Kahn Archive: Personal Drawings. (New York and London: 1987).

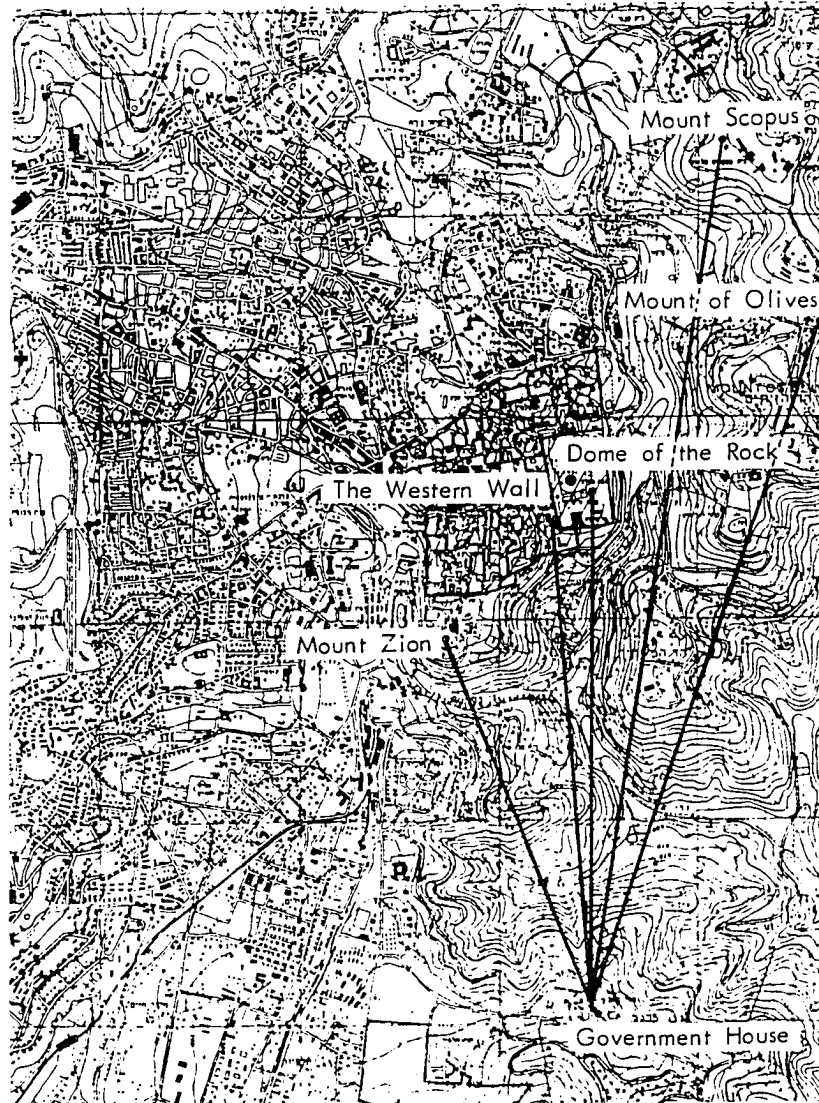


Fig.54 Site plan showing the relation between the Government House and other important sites. Reprinted from Israel 1989: Studio Arie Rahamimoff, (Germany: 1989), p.76.

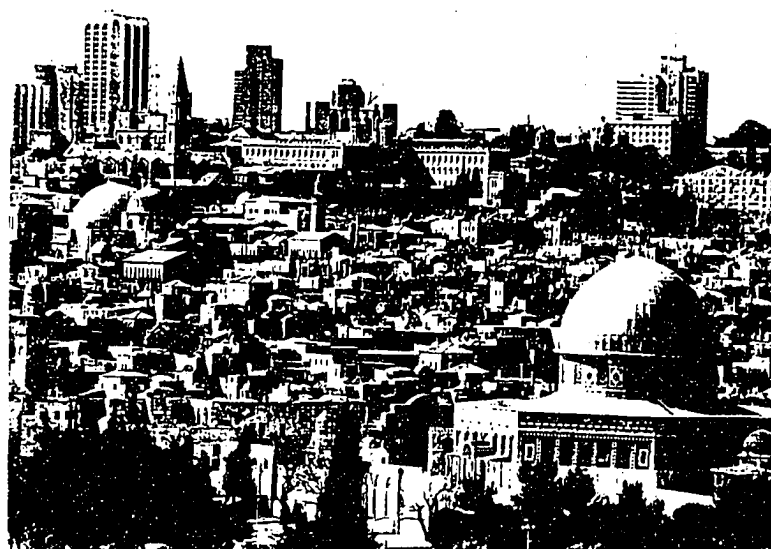
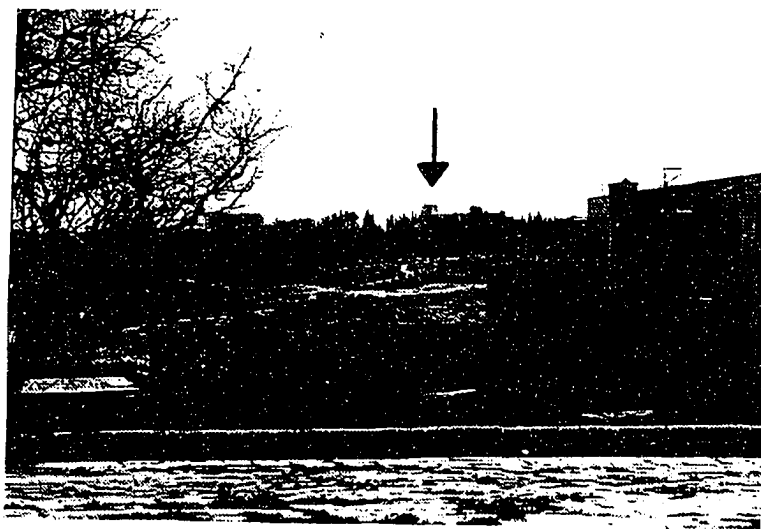


Fig.55 View of Government Hill from the Dome of the Rock. Reprinted from Israel 1989: Studio Arie Rahamimoff, (Germany: 1989), p.77.

Fig.56 City skyline. Reprinted from Kroyanker David. Yerushalayim: ha-meavak al ha-ir ve-hazutah. (Jerusalem:1988), pp.55-56.

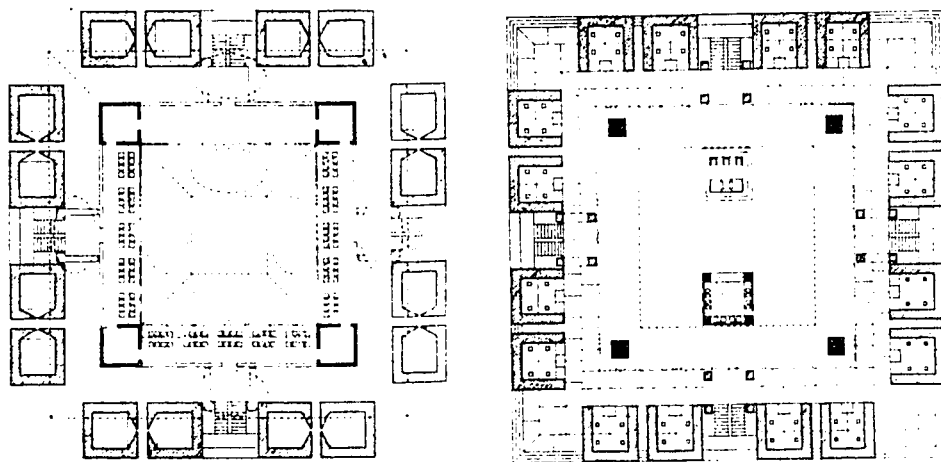
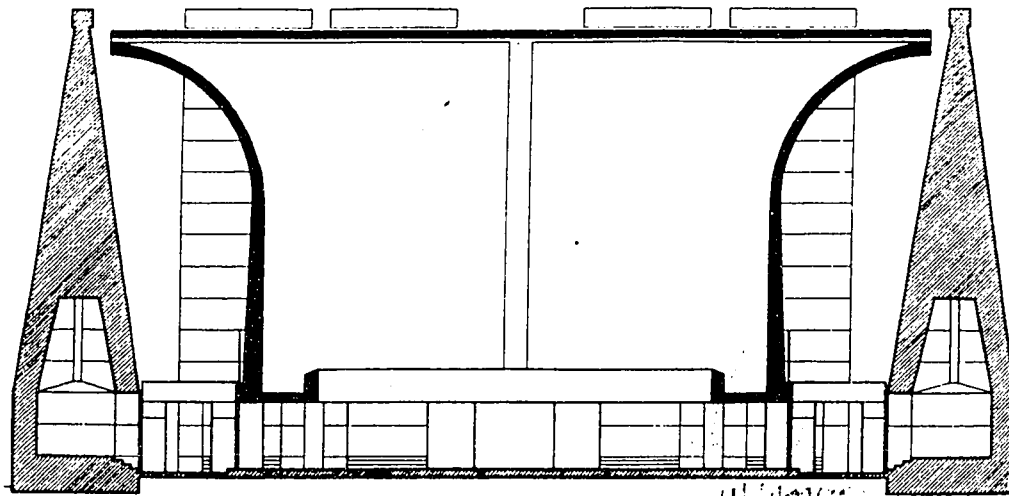


Fig.57 Cross section of Khurva. Reprinted from Alexander Tyng. Beginnings: Louis L. Kahn's Philosophy of Architecture. (New York:1984), p.156.

Fig.58 Street level plan. Reprinted from *Hurva Synagogue* in Architecture and Urbanism, vol.3-no.1 (1973).

Fig.59 Upper level plan. Reprinted from *Hurva Synagogue* in Architecture and Urbanism, vol.3-no.1 (1973).

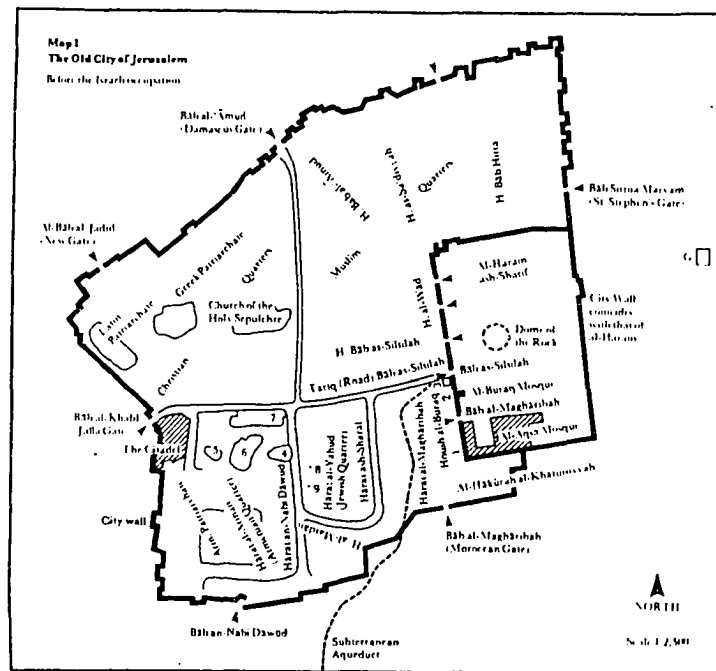


Fig.60 Map of the pre-1967 Old city of Jerusalem. Reprinted from Michael Dumper, *Israeli Settlement in the Old city of Jerusalem*, in the Journal of Palestine Studies, issue 84, (Summer, 1992), p.34.



Fig.61 View of the Old city of Jerusalem and the excavation for the Pilgrimage Route of the Jewish Quarter, facing west. (The Archives of the Company for the Reconstruction and Development of the Jewish Quartet.).

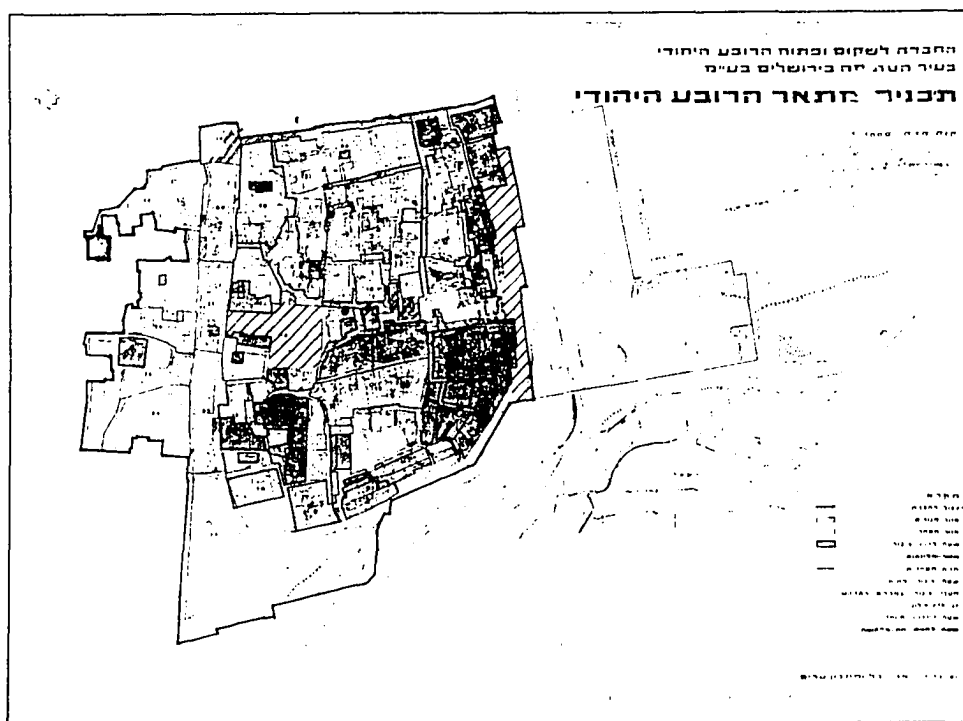


Fig.62 Master Plan of the Jewish Quarter, Shlomo Gardi, (The Archives of the Company for the Reconstruction and Development of the Jewish Quarter).

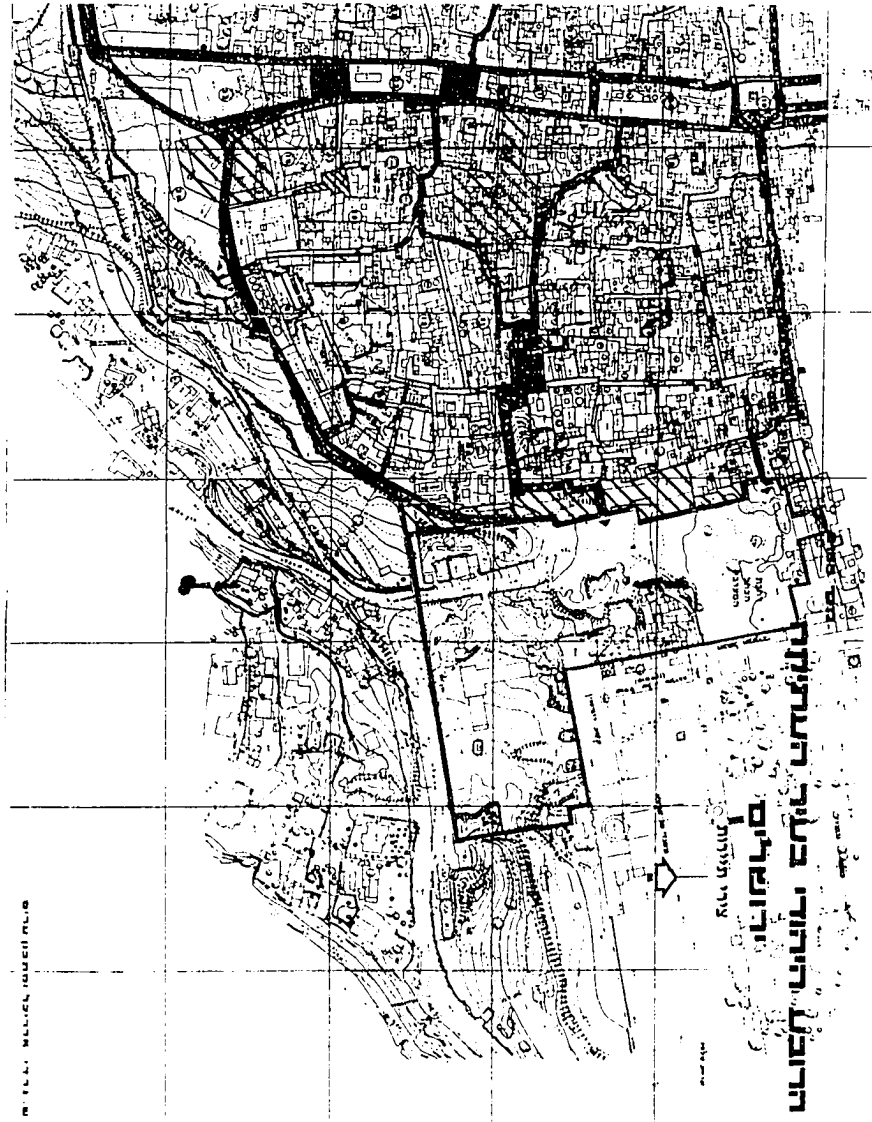


Fig. 63 Site-Plan showing the zoning in the Jewish Quarter, Shlomo Gardi, (The Archives of the Company for the Reconstruction and Development of the Jewish Quarter).

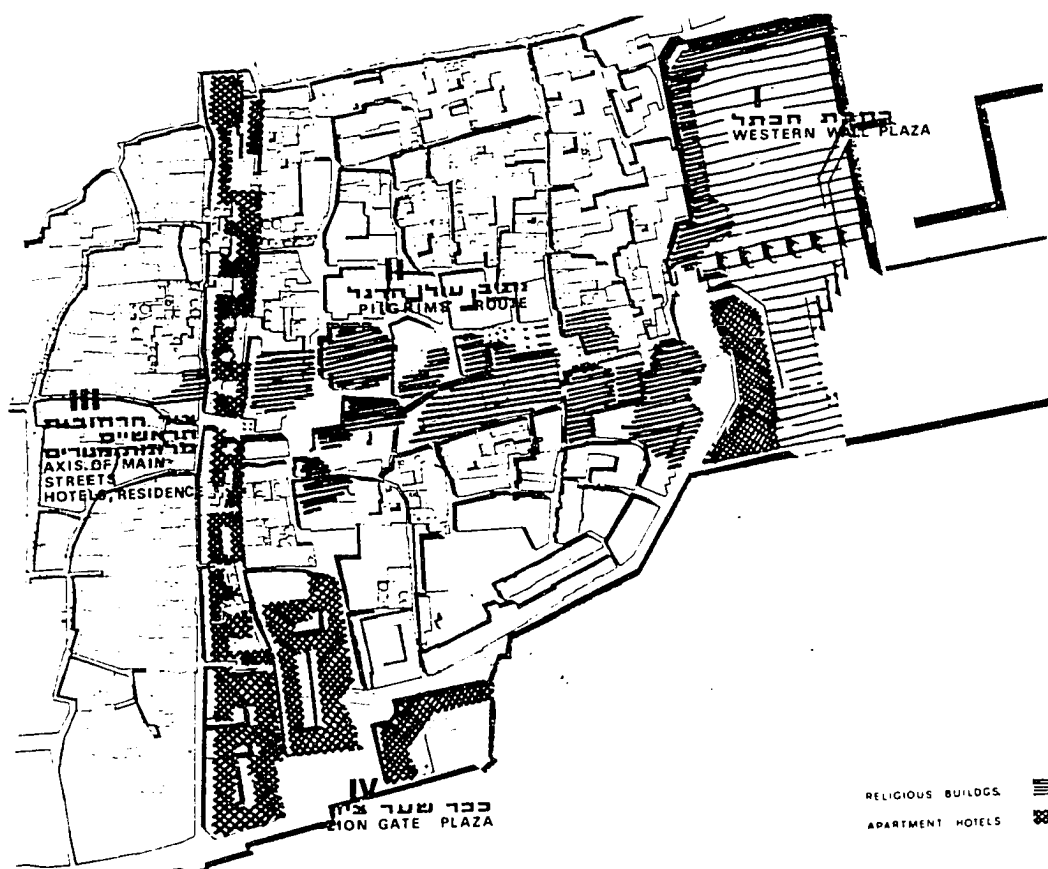


Fig.64 Site plan of Jewish quarter showing axis of main streets and public areas.
 Reprinted from Eliezer Frenkel, Ora and Yaakov Yarr, Architects.
Jerusalem-Old city Jewish quarter: Proposed Urban Design.



Fig.65 General plan of Jewish quarter. Reprinted from Eliezer Frenkel, Ora and Yaakov Yarr, Architects. Jerusalem-Old city Jewish quarter: Proposed Urban Design.

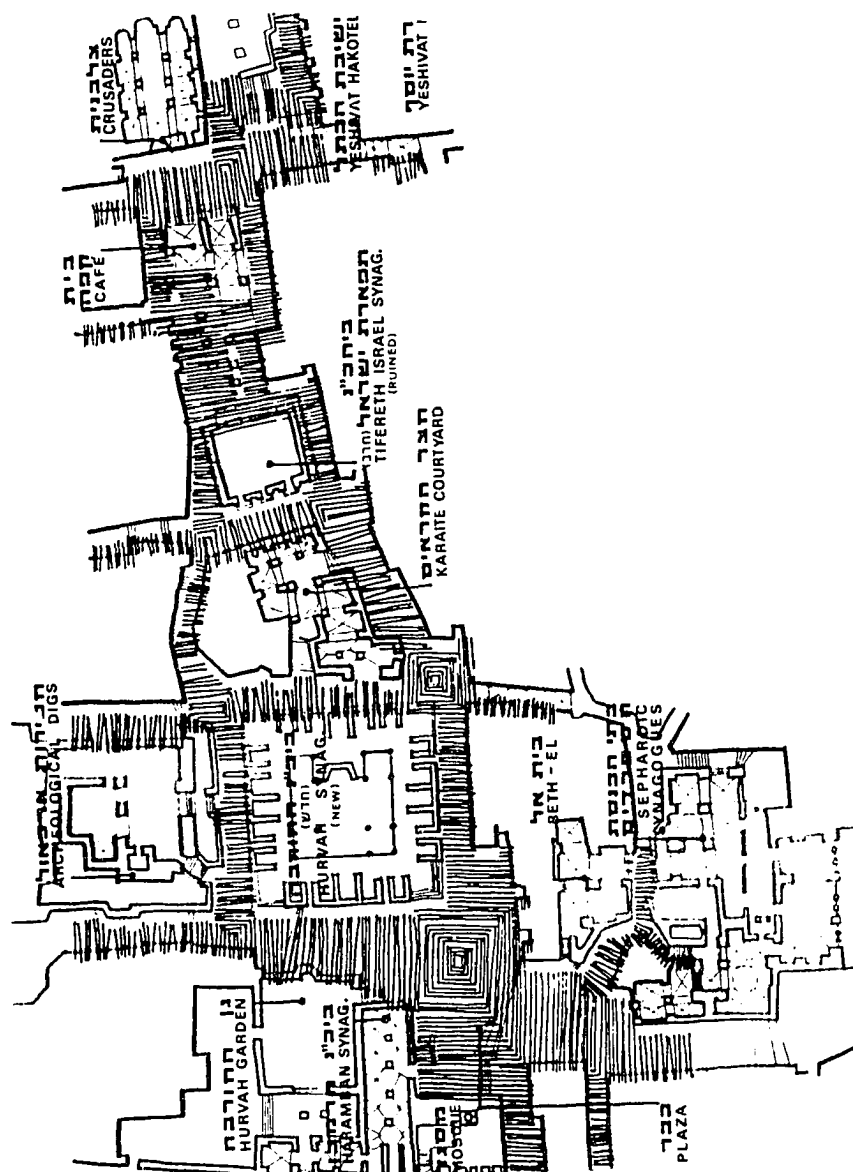


Fig.66 Proposed design for Pilgrims' Route. Reprinted from Eliezer Frenkel, Ora and Yaakov Yarr, Architects. Jerusalem-Old city Jewish quarter: Proposed Urban Design..

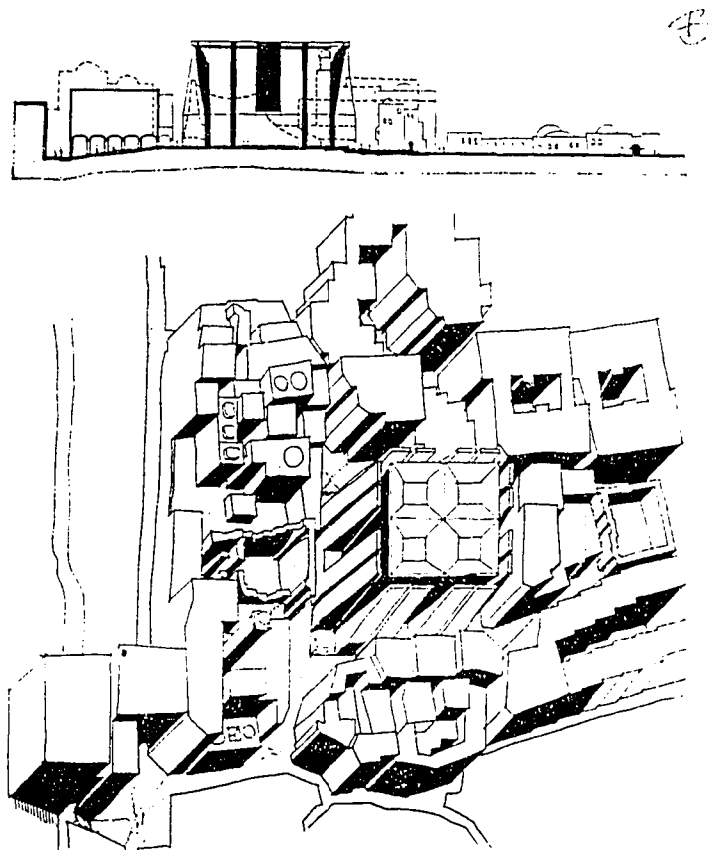


Fig.67 Isometric view of the new urban fabric around Louis Kahn's Khurvah., Architect: Eliezer Frenkel, Ora and Yaakov Ya'ar, Architects. Reprinted from A&A, no. 153, (December,1970).

EASTERN ELEVATION	-	JEWISH QUARTER
1		1
2		2
3		3
4		4
5		5
6		6
7		7
8		8
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99		99
100		100

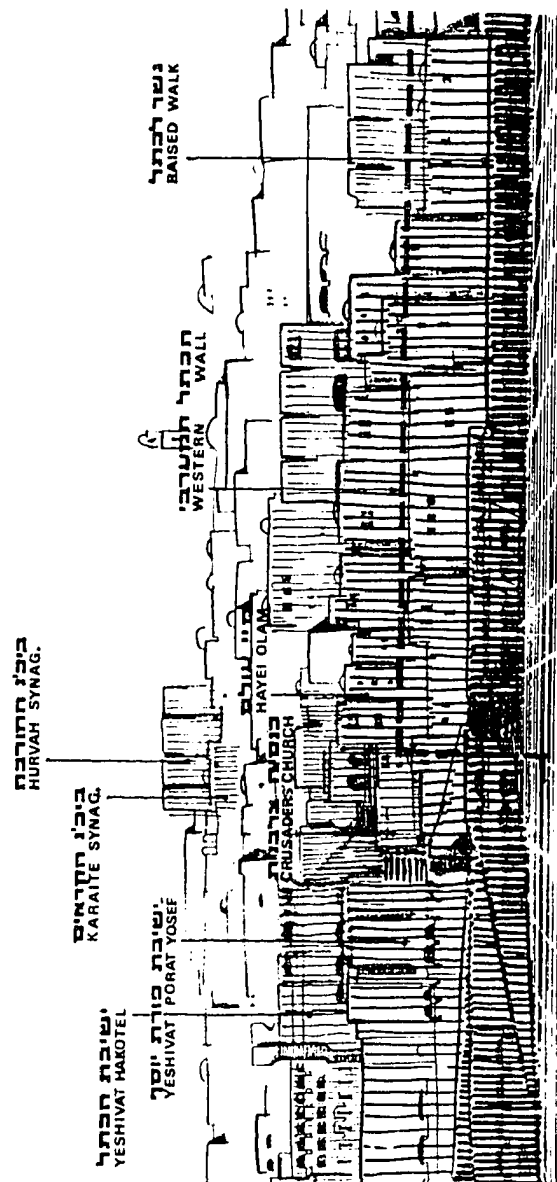


Fig.68 Eastern elevation- Jewish Quarter
Reprinted from Eliezer Frenkel, Ora and Yaakov Yarr, Architects.
Jerusalem-Old city Jewish quarter: Proposed Urban Design.

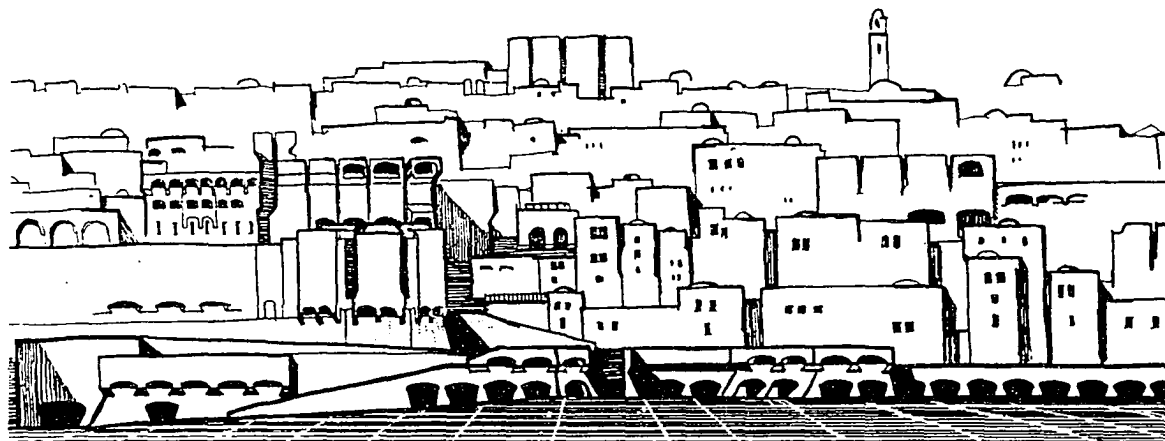


Fig.69 View of Eastern elevation- Jewish quarter. Reprinted from Eliezer Frenkel, Ora and Yaakov Yarr, Architects. Jerusalem-Old city Jewish quarter: Proposed Urban Design.

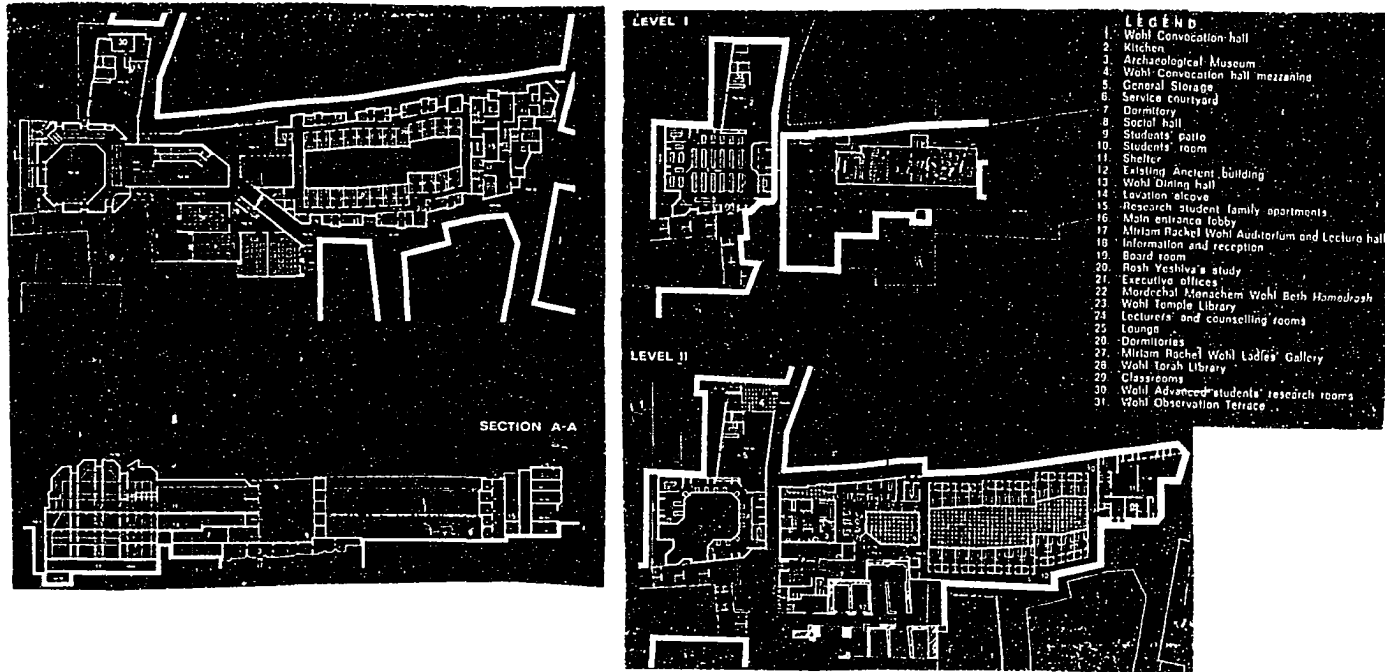


Fig.70 Yeshivat Hakotel, Level I and Level II plans and legend. Reprinted from Eliezer Frenkel, Yeshivat Hakotel, Published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the State of Israel.

Fig.71 Yeshivat Hakotel, Level IV plan and cross section. Reprinted from Eliezer Frenkel, Yeshivat Hakotel, Published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the State of Israel.

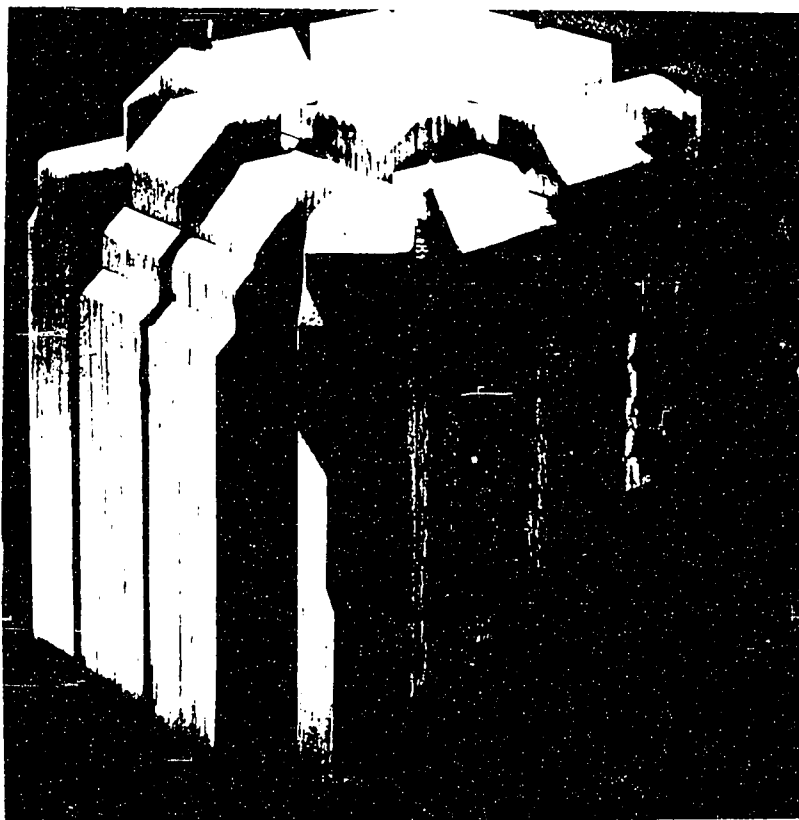


Fig.72 Model of Yeshivat Hakotel, Old city, Jerusalem. Reprinted from Eliezer Frenkel, Yeshivat Hakotel, (Jerusalem: Ministry of Religious Affairs, n.d)

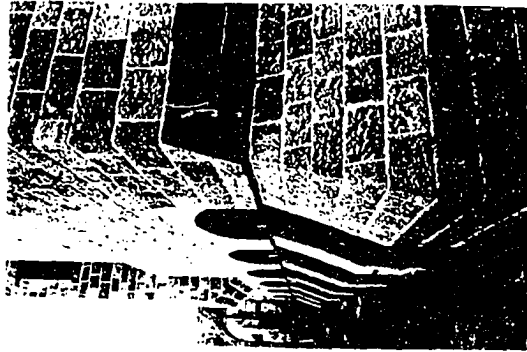
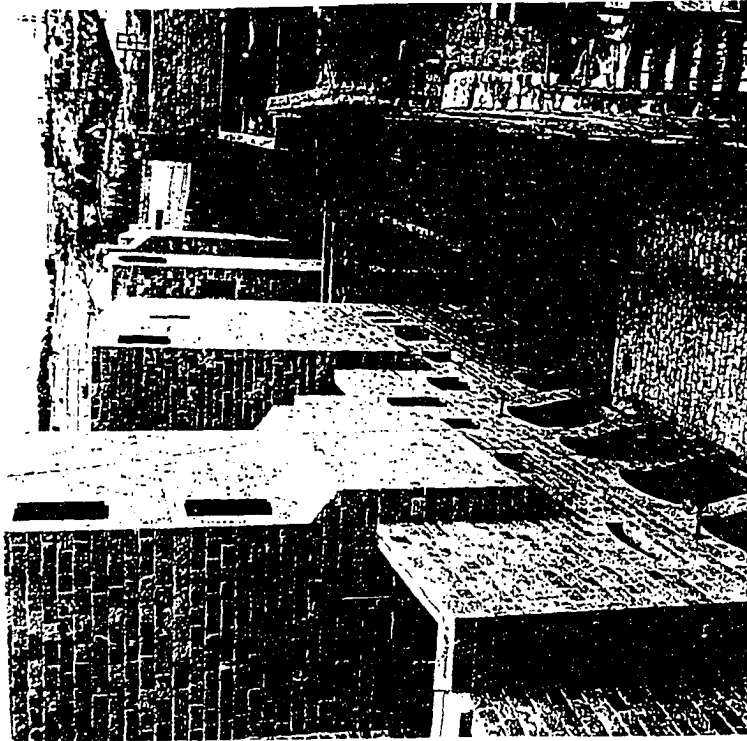
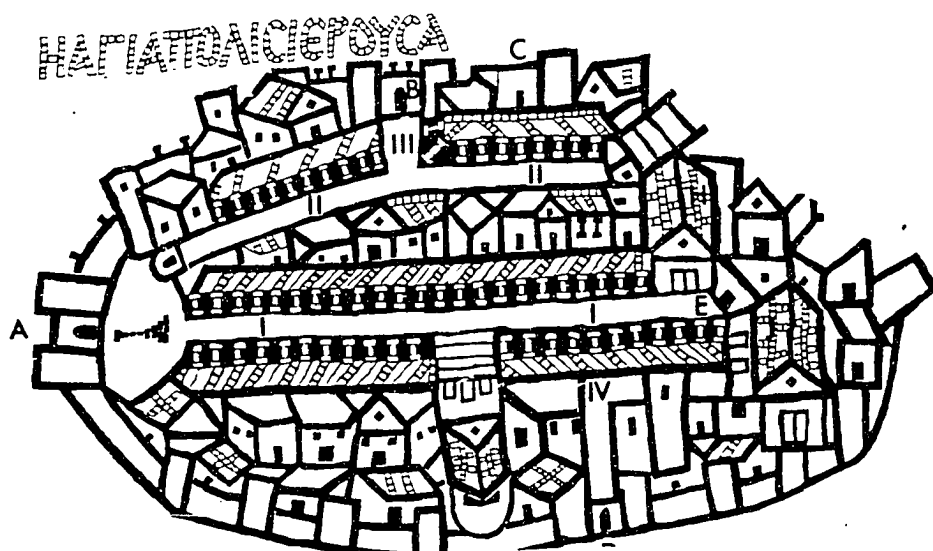


Fig.73 -74 Residential block (House of Vaults), Jewish quarter, Old city, Jerusalem. Reprinted from Harlap, Amiram. New Israeli Architecture, (London: 1982), p. 325.



The mosaic map of Jerusalem from Madaba, Jordan.

Fig.75 The Mosaic map of Jerusalem. Reprinted from Ester Niv krendel, *The story of a street: The restoration of the Cardo at Jerusalem.*, in Bullitten of Anglo-Isreal Archeological Society. (1985-1986).

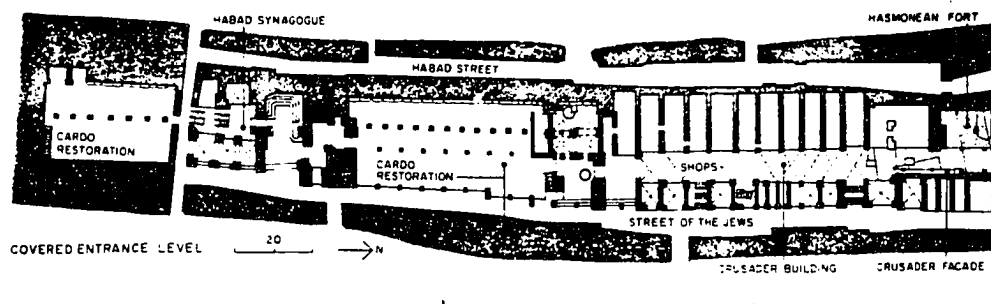
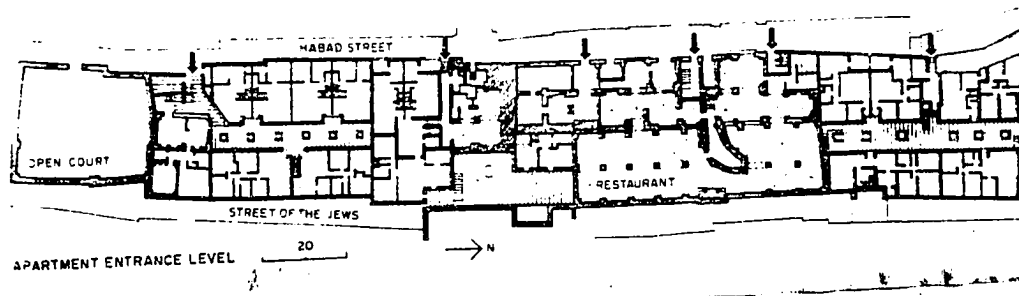


Fig.76 (Top) Upper Residential floor plan, Cardo. Reprinted from Architectural Record. (May 1985).

Fig.77 (Bottom) Commercial and Museum floor plan, Cardo. Reprinted from Architectural Record. (May 1985).

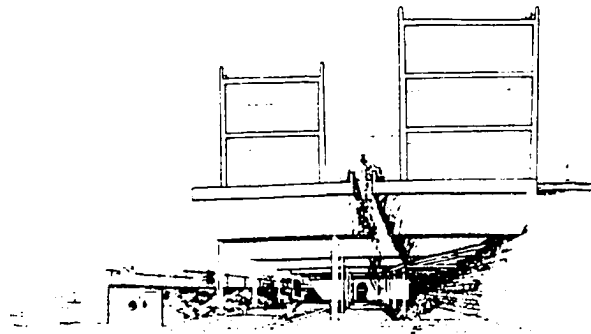
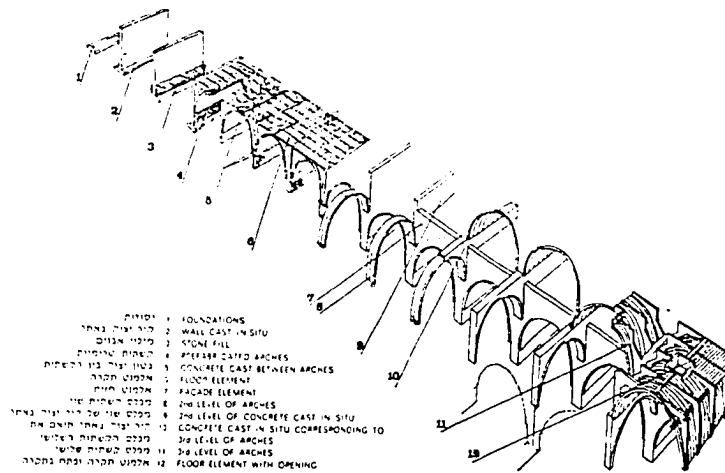


Fig.78 Structural system, Cardo. Reprinted from Architectural Record. (May 1985).

Fig.79 Cross section, Cardo. Reprinted from Architectural Record. (May 1985).

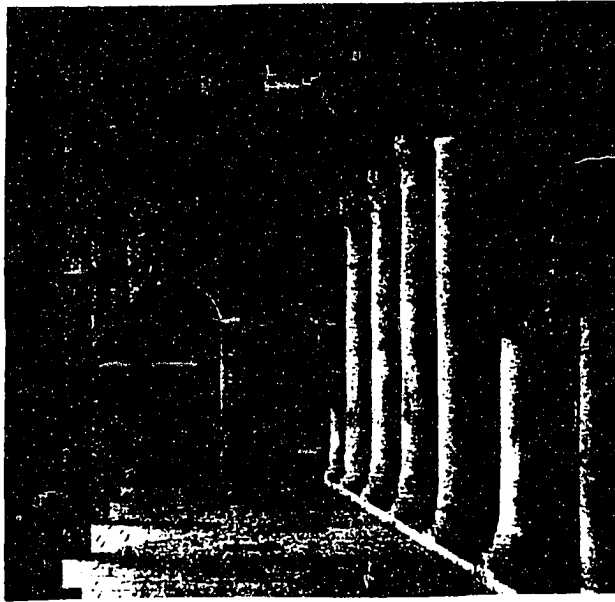


Fig.80 (Top) View of restored Byzantine colonnade, Cardo. Reprinted from David Kroyanker. Yerushalayim: Ha-Meavak al Ha-ir ve-Hazutah. (Jerusalem:1988).

Fig.81 View of the Crusader hall, Cardo. Reprinted from David Kroyanker. Yerushalayim: Ha-meavak al Ha-ir ve-Hazutah. (Jerusalem:1988).

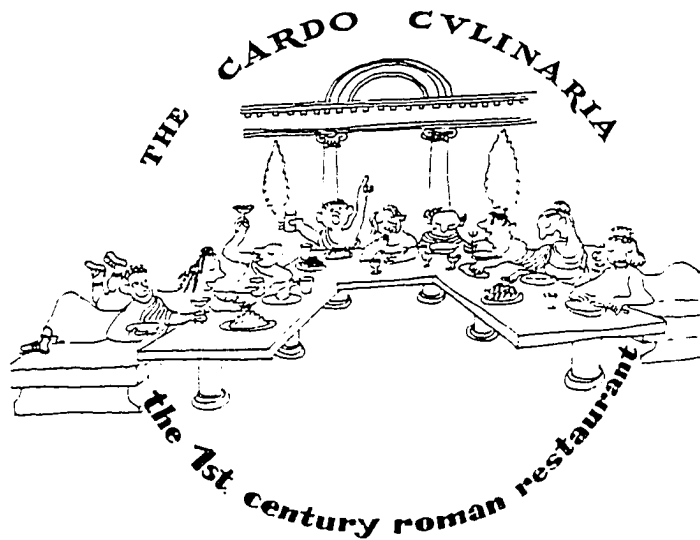


Fig.82 Cvlitaria Restaurant, Cardo. Reprinted from personal postcard.

Fig.83 Logo of Cvlitaria Restaurant, Cardo. Reprinted from a gift given to the author by Peter Bugod, Architect, Jerusalem.

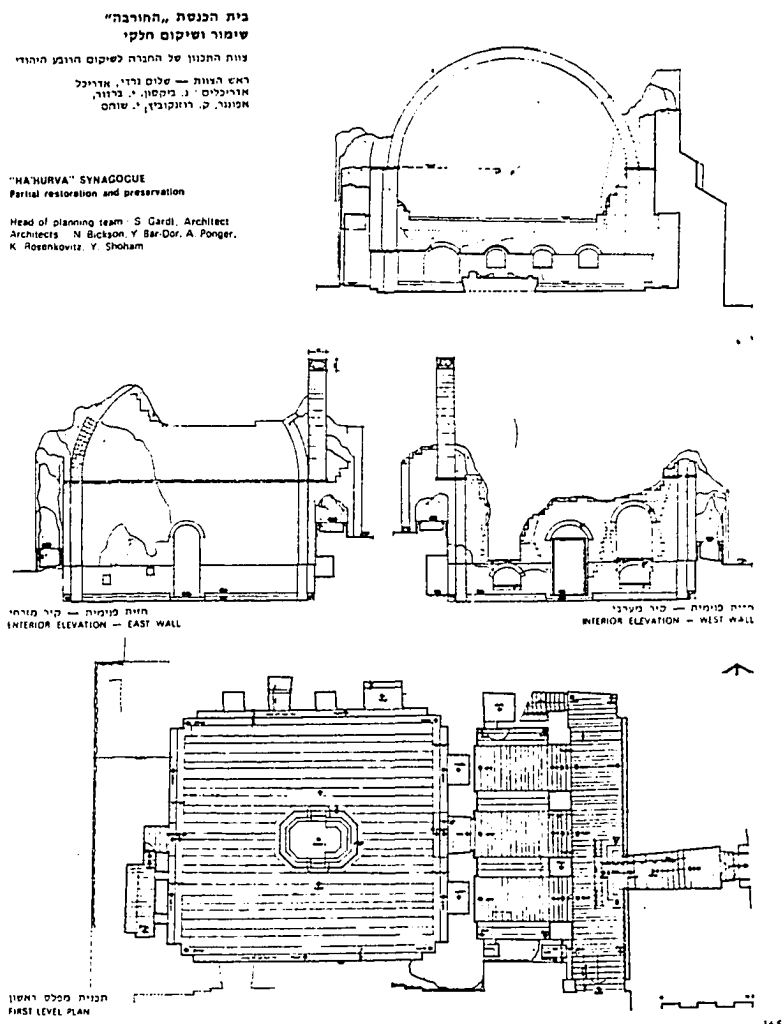


Fig.84 Ha'Hurva Synagogue, partial restoration and preservation--plan and cross sections. Reprint from Amiram Harlap (ed.). *Isreal Builds-1977*. Published by Ministry of Housing (Isreal: 1977).

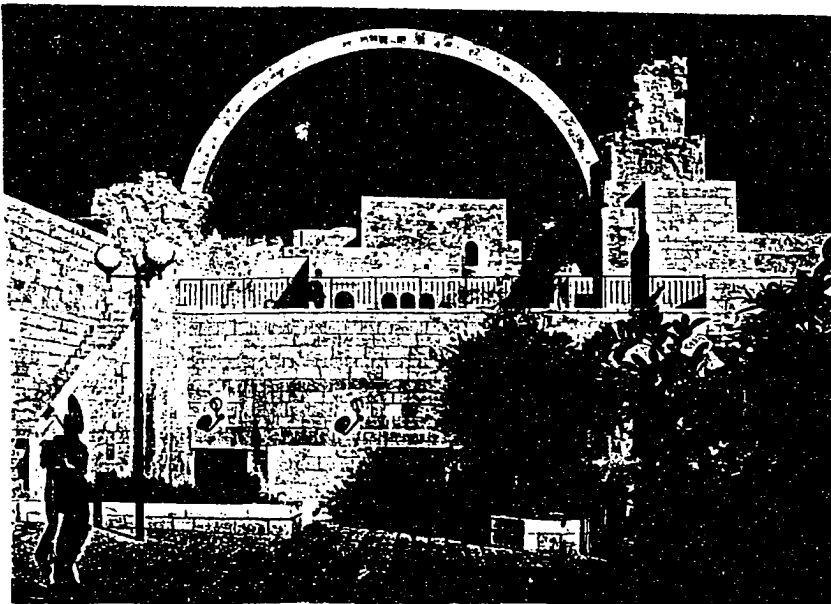


Fig.85 View of the restored Arch of the old Khurvah. Reprinted from David Kroyanker. Yerushalayim: ha-Meavak al ha-ir ve-hazutah. (Jerusalem:1988).

Fig.86 View of the restored gate of the Tifferet Israel synagouge. Reprinted from Kroyanker David. Yerushalayim: ha-meavak al ha-ir ve-hazutah. (Jerusalem:1988).

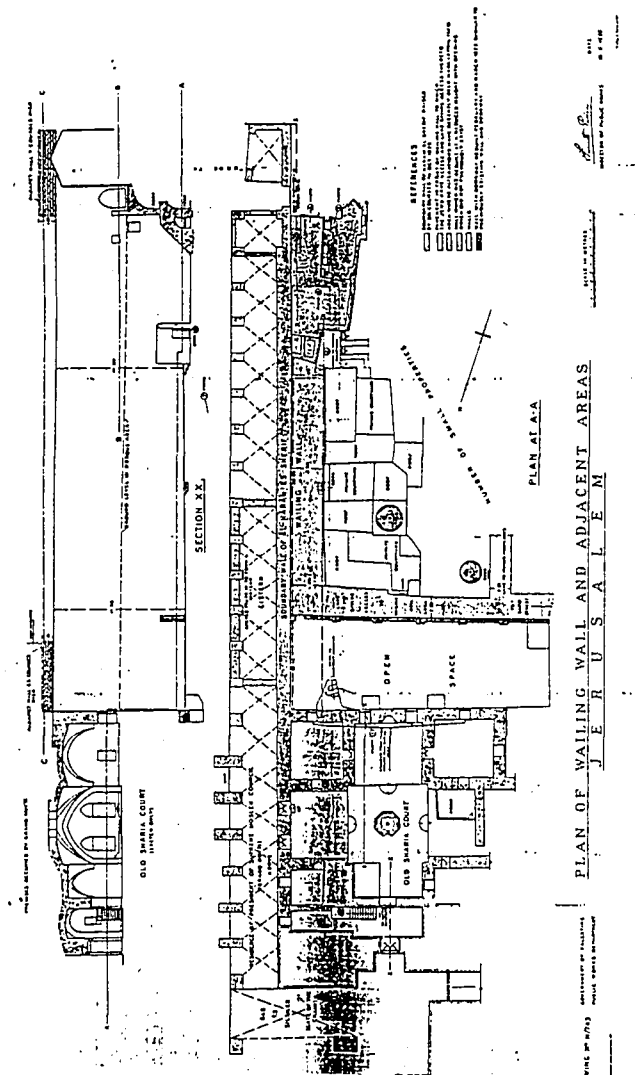


Fig.87 Plan of Wailing Wall and Adjacent areas, Jerusalem. Reprinted from International Commission for the Wailing Wall. (London: 1931).

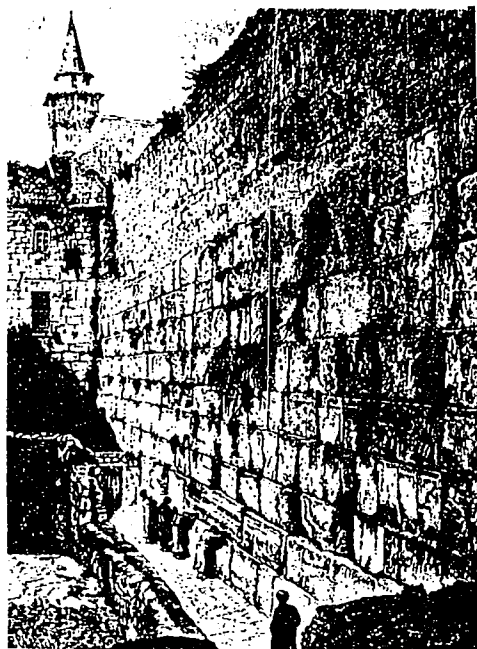


Fig.88 View of the Western Wall. Reprinted from Meir Ben-Dov. The Western Wall, Ministry of Defence. (Israel: 1983).

Fig.89 View of Morocco quarter and the Old Western Wall, 1912.



Fig.90 The Western Wall Plaza shortly after the demolition of the Mugrabi Quarter. Reprinted from Meron Benvenisti. Jerusalem. (Jerusalem:1976), p.312.

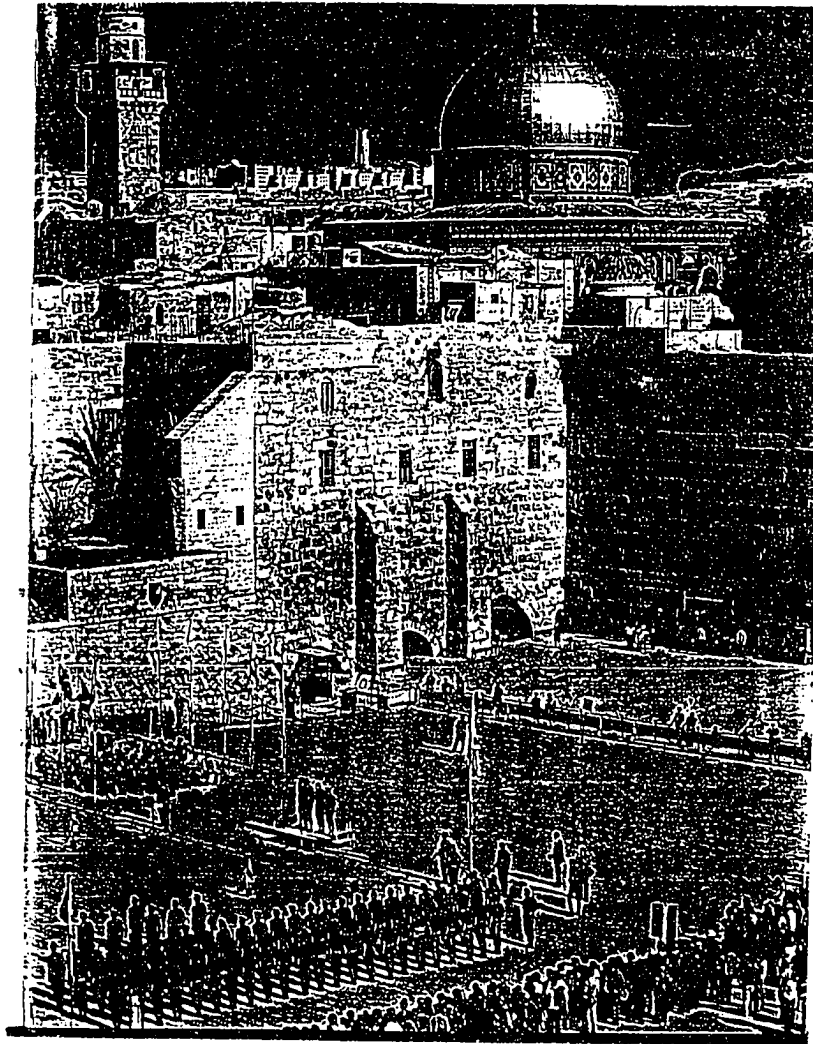


Fig.91 Military scene at the Western Wall Plaza. Reprinted from Meir Ben-Dov. The Western Wall, Ministry of Defence. (Israel: 1983), p.129.

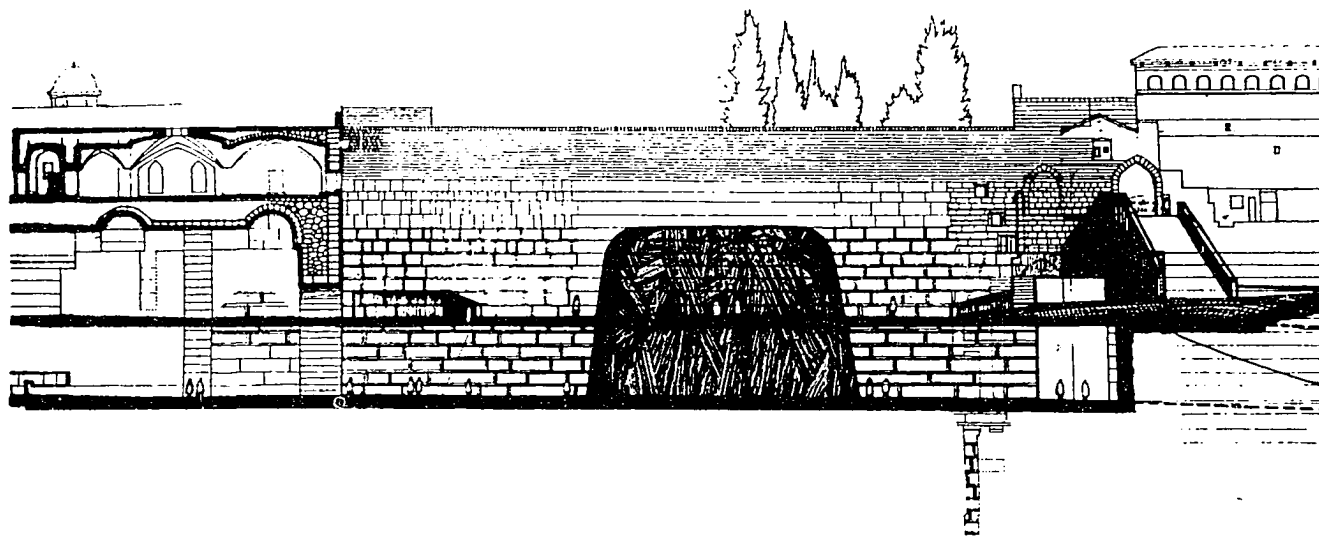


Fig.92 Cross section of a design for the western Wall, Architect: Isamu Noguchi..
Reprinted from Arthur Kutcher et al. Planning Study for the Western Wall Area.
(Jerusalem: Minstry of Religion,1971)

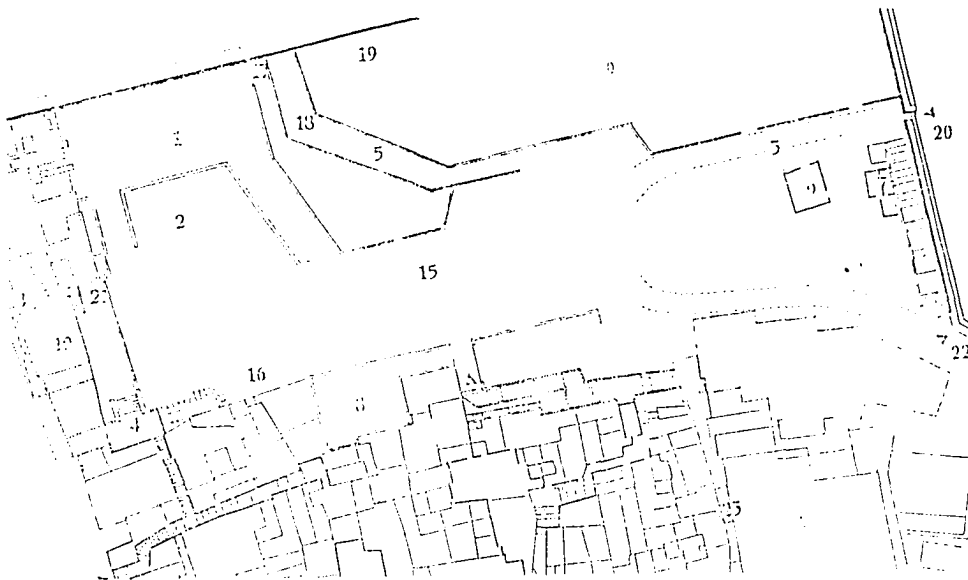


Fig.93 Top view of a study model for the western Wall Area, Architect: Isamu Noguchi. Reprinted from Arthur Kutcher et al. Planning Study for the Western Wall Area. (Jerusalem: Ministry of Religion, 1971)

Fig.94 Design of Western Wall Plaza, Architect: Joseph Shoenberger. Reprinted from A New Chapter in the History of Western Wall. (Jerusalem: Ministry of Religion, n.d).

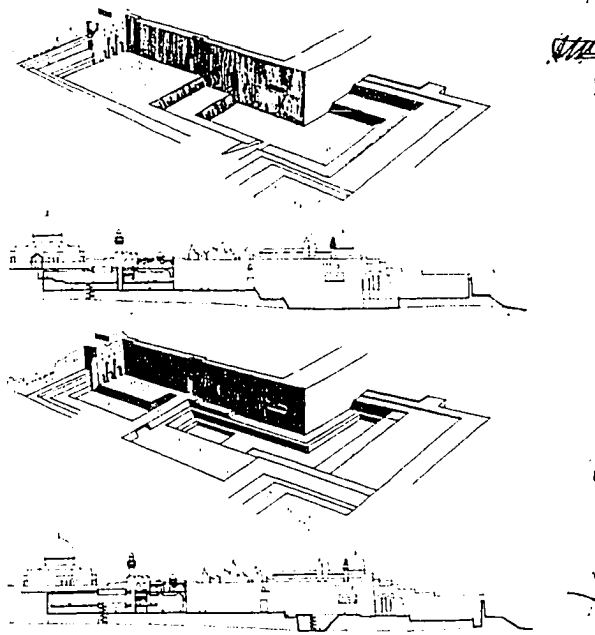


Fig.95 Alternative designs for the western Wall plaza, Reprinted from Arthur Kutcher et al. Planning Study for the Western Wall Area. (Jerusalem: Ministry of Religion,1971).

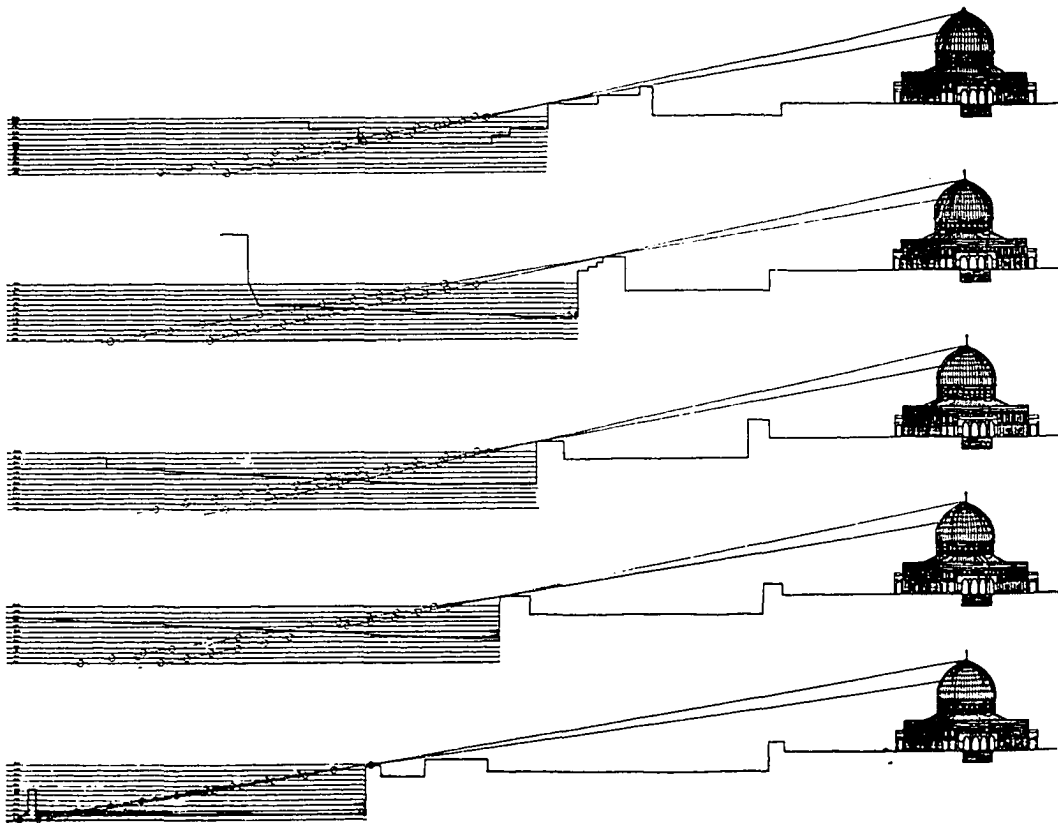


Fig.96 Visual studies of the Western Wall Plaza. Reprinted from Arthur Kutcher et al. Planning Study for the Western Wall Area. (Jerusalem: Ministry of Religion, 1971)

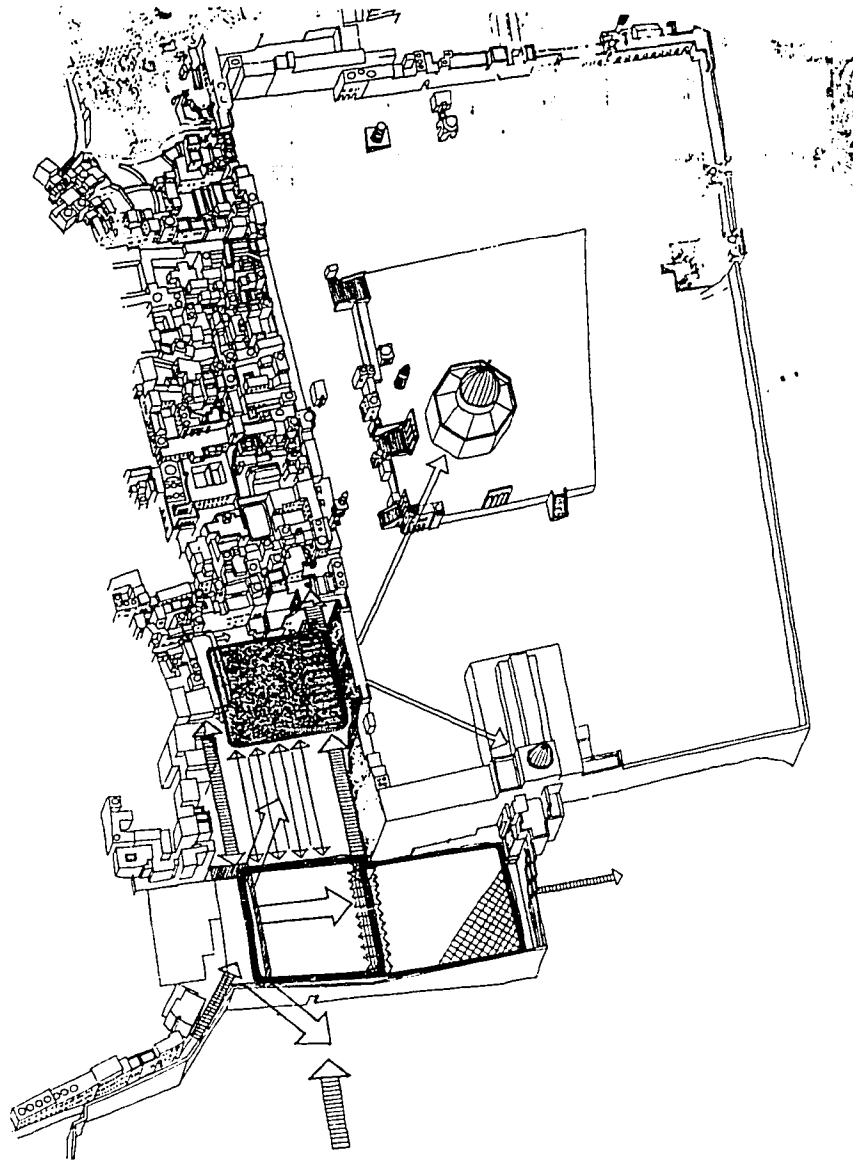


Fig.97 Top view study. Reprinted from Arthur Kutcher et al. Planning Study for the Western Wall Area. (Jerusalem: Minstry of Religion,1971).

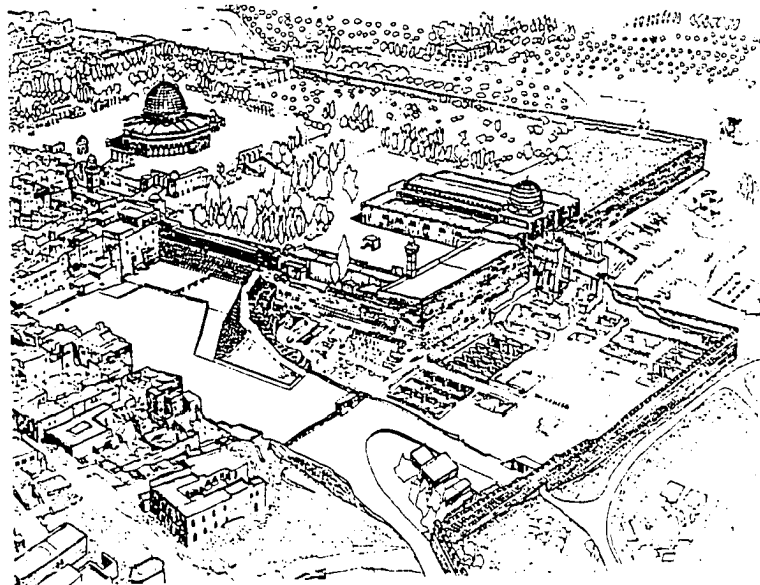


Fig.98 Present condition of the Western Wall plaza by David Fisher. Reprinted from Dr. David Fisher. Plan for the Western Wall Plaza and its Environs. (Jerusalem: 1979).

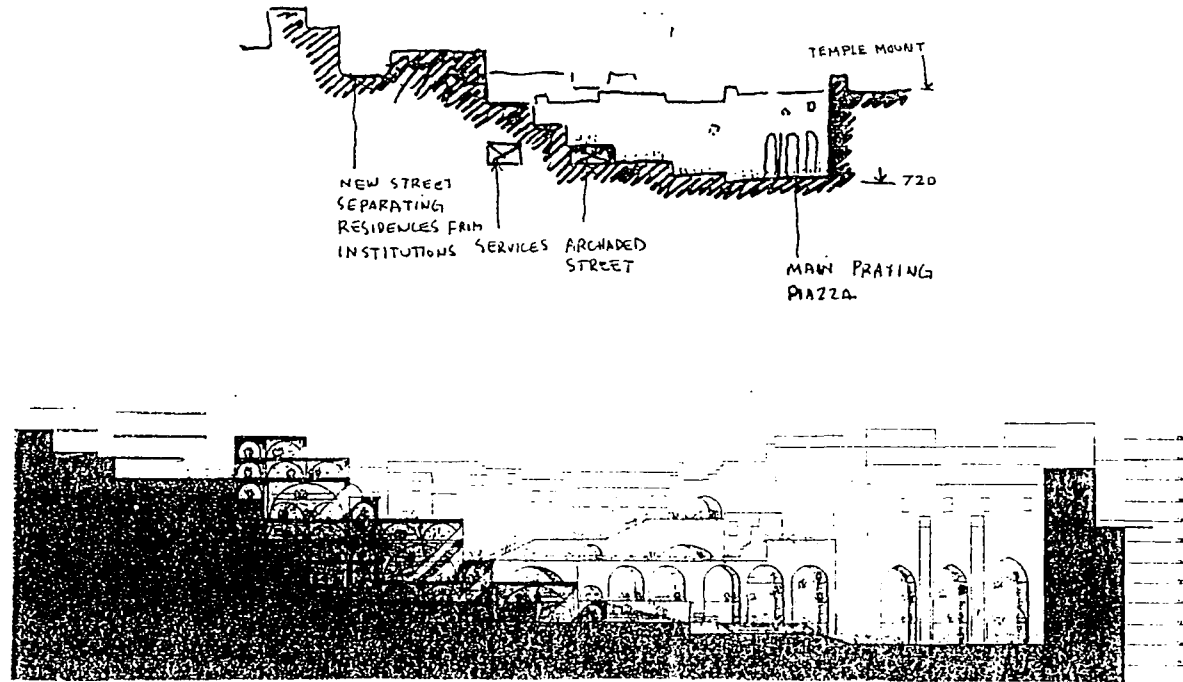


Fig.99 Cross section of the Western Wall Plaza, Architect: Moshe Safdie.
Reprinted from Moshe Safdie. Design report for the Western Wall Plaza.

Fig.100 Section-elevation of the Western Wall Plaza, Architect: Moshe Safdie.
Reprinted from Moshe Safdie. Design report for the Western Wall Plaza.

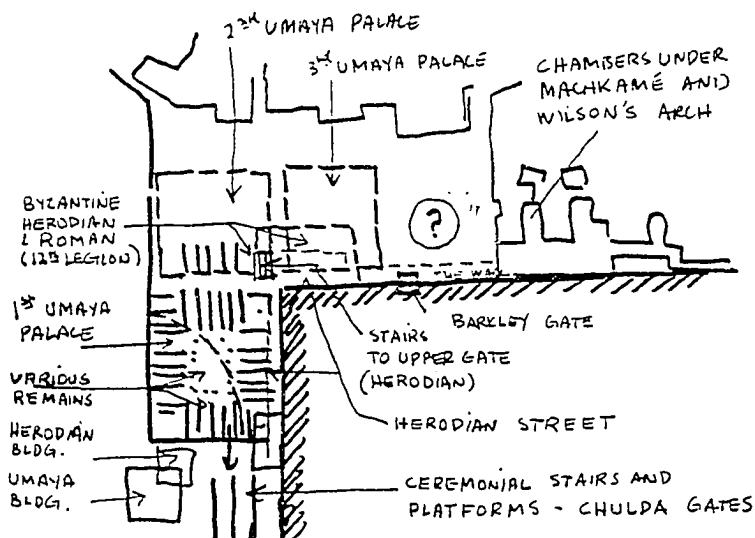
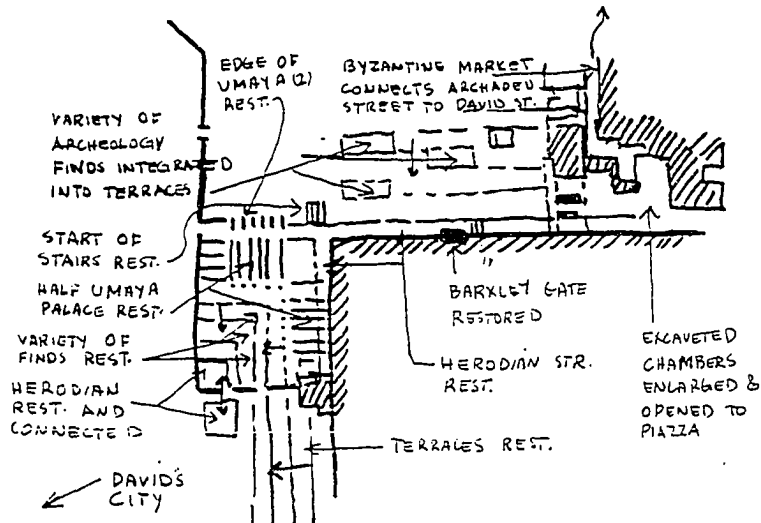


Fig.101 Conceptual plan of the Western Wall Plaza, Architect: Moshe Safdie.
Reprinted from Moshe Safdie. Design report for the Western Wall Plaza.

Fig.102 Conceptual plan of the Western Wall Plaza, Architect: Moshe Safdie.
Reprinted from Moshe Safdie. Design report for the Western Wall Plaza.



Fig.103 Model of the Western Wall, Architect: Moshe Safdie. Reprinted from Moshe Safdie. Jerusalem: The Future of the Past. (Boston: 1989), p.132.

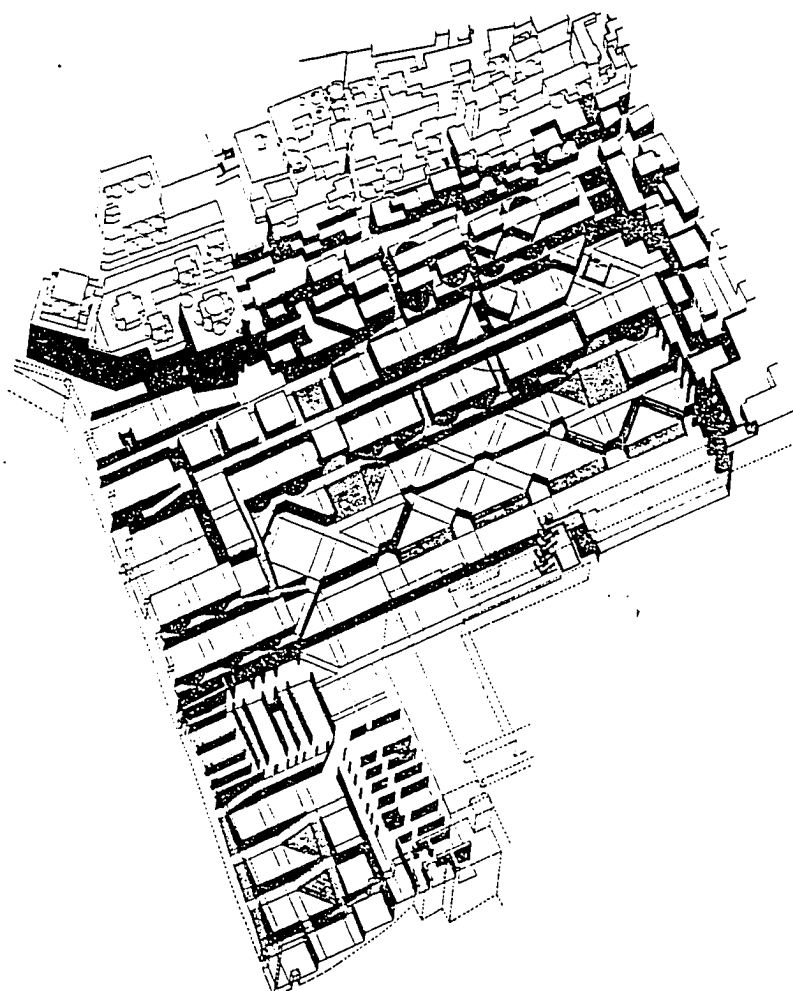


Fig.104 Axonometric view of the Western Wall Plaza, Architect: Moshe Safdie.
Reprinted from Moshe Safdie. Design report for the Western Wall Plaza.

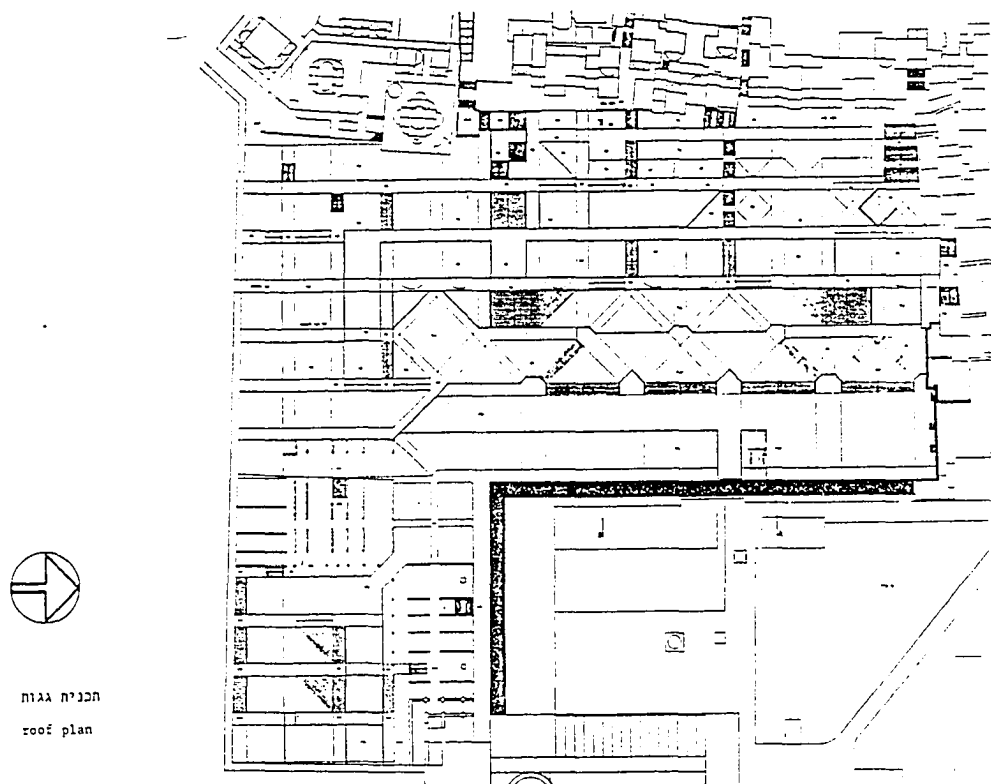


Fig.105 Roof plan of the Western Wall Plaza, Architect: Moshe Safdie.
Reprinted from Moshe Safdie. Design report for the Western Wall Plaza.

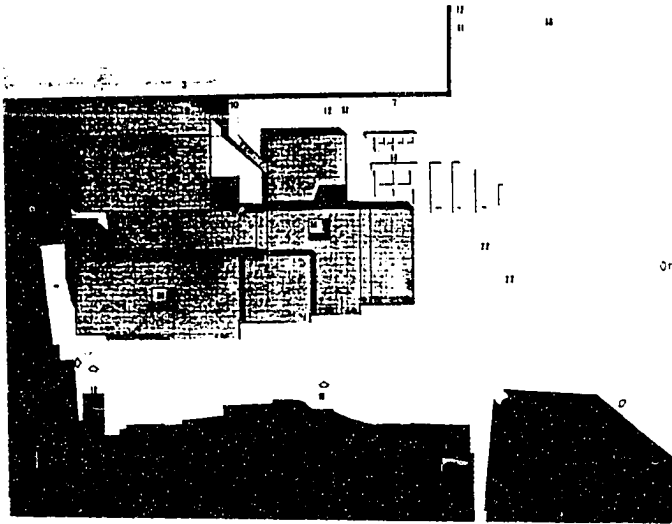
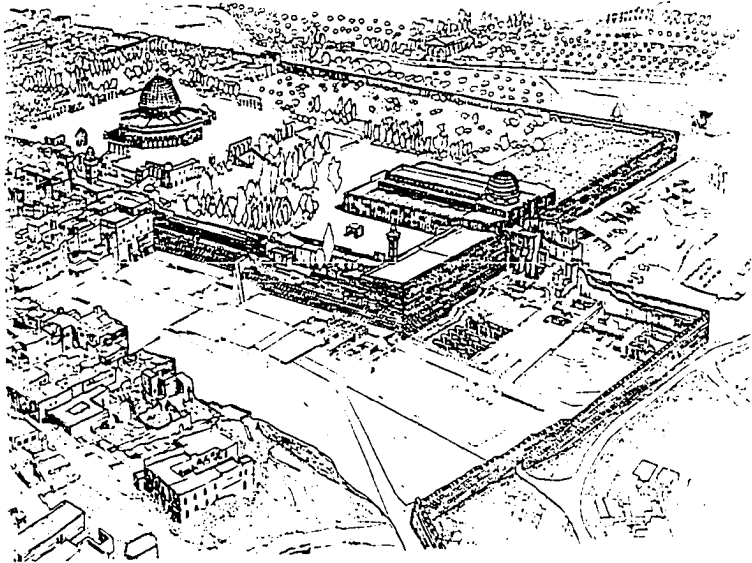


Fig.106 Top view of the Western Wall plaza by David Fisher. Reprinted from Dr. David Fisher. Plan for the Western Wall Plaza and its Environs. (Jerusalem: 1979).

Fig.107 Upper level plan of the Western Wall plaza by David Fisher. Reprinted from Dr. David Fisher. Plan for the Western Wall Plaza and its Environs. (Jerusalem: 1979).

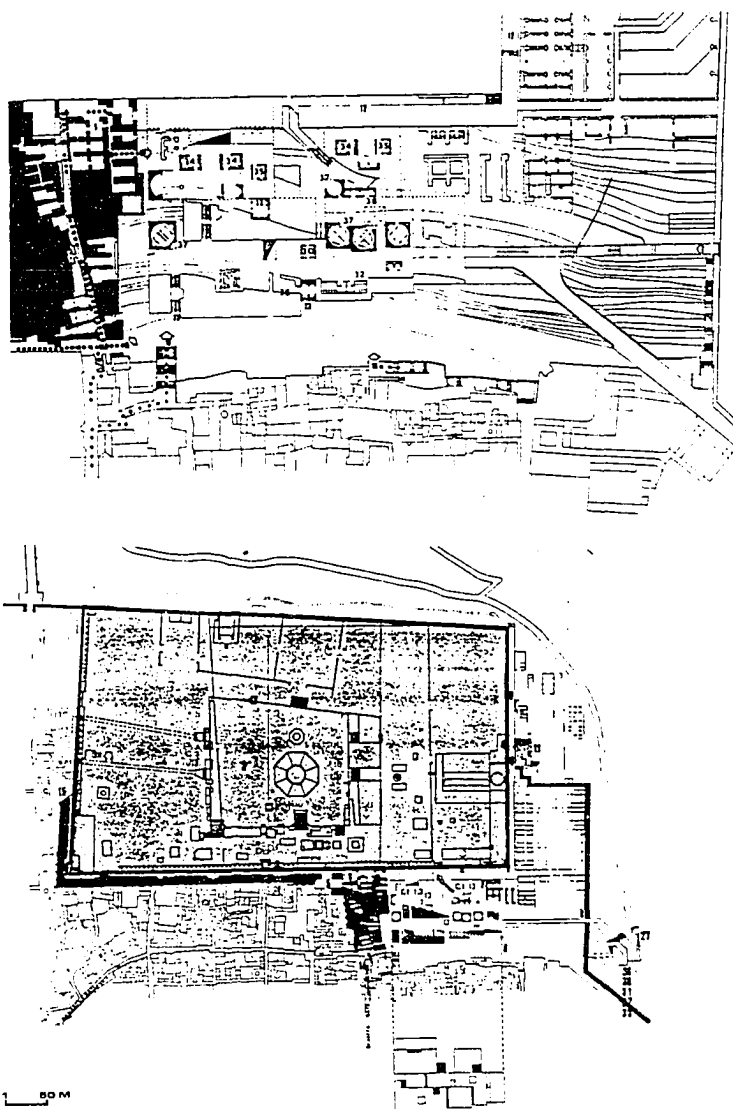


Fig.108 Lower level plan of the Western Wall plaza by David Fisher. Reprinted from Dr. David Fisher. Plan for the Western Wall Plaza and its Environs. (Jerusalem: 1979).

Fig.109 Temple area of the Western Wall plaza by David Fisher. Reprinted from Dr. David Fisher. Plan for the Western Wall Plaza and its Environs. (Jerusalem: 1979).

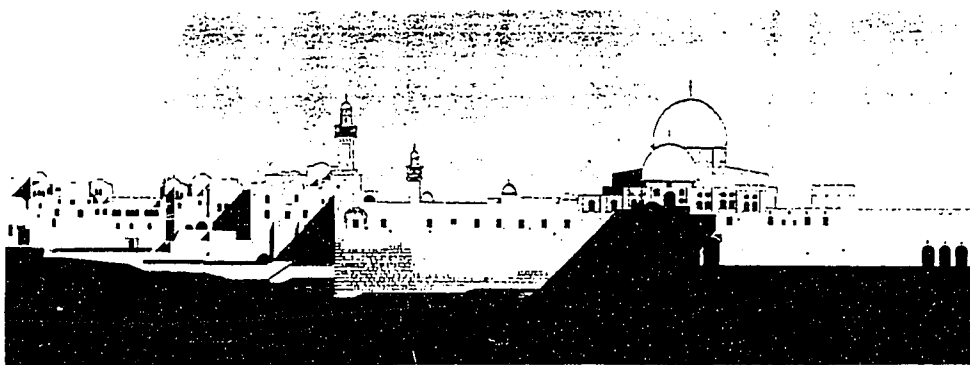


Fig.110 Cross section of the Western Wall plaza by David Fisher. Reprinted from Dr. David Fisher. Plan for the Western Wall Plaza and its Environs. (Jerusalem: 1979).

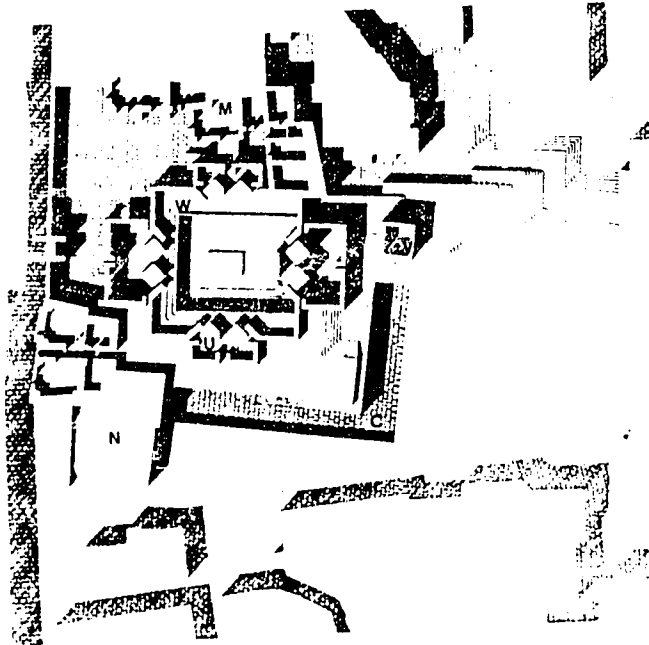
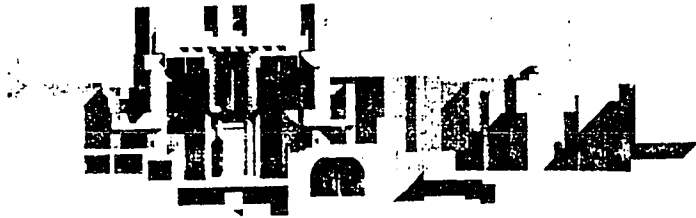


Fig.111 Cross section looking east, Architect: Denys Lasdun. Reprinted from Architectural Review, no.1035 (May, 1983), pp.33-35.

Fig.112 Gallery level plan, Architect: Denys Lasdun. Reprinted from Architectural Review, no.1035 (May, 1983), pp.33-35.

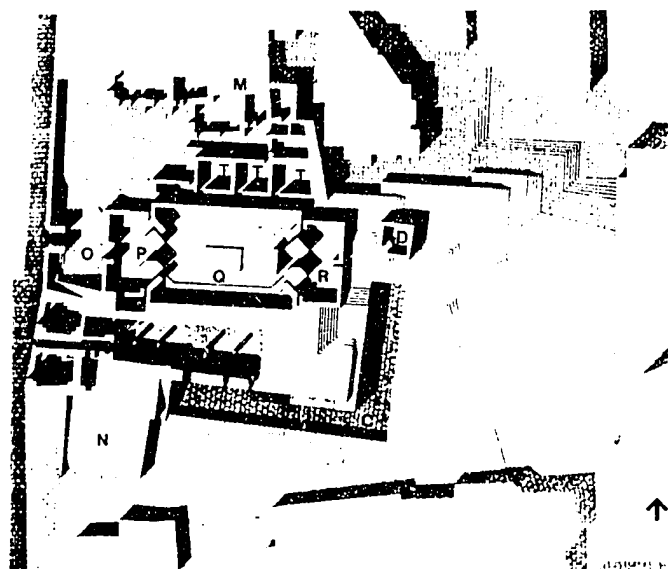


Fig.113 Roof plan, Architect: Denys Lasdun. Reprinted from Architectural Review, no.1035 (May, 1983), pp.33-35.

Fig.114 Main (ground) floor plan, Architect: Denys Lasdun. Reprinted from Architectural Review, no.1035 (May, 1983), pp.33-35.

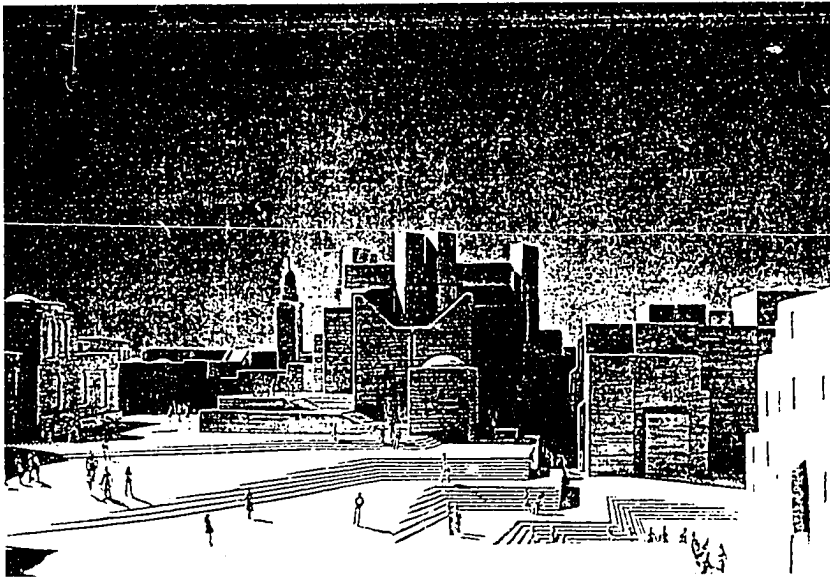
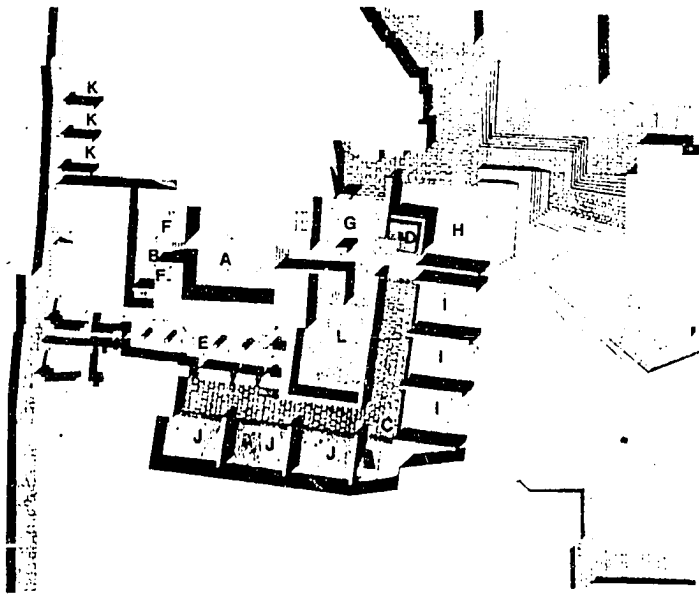


Fig.115 Basement level floor plan, Architect: Denys Lasdun. Reprinted from Architectural Review, no.1035 (May, 1983), pp.33-35.

Fig.116 View of building from the plaza, Architect: David Lasdun. Reprinted from *Denys Lasdun and his place in the Modern Tradition*, in World Architecture, vol.14, p.38.

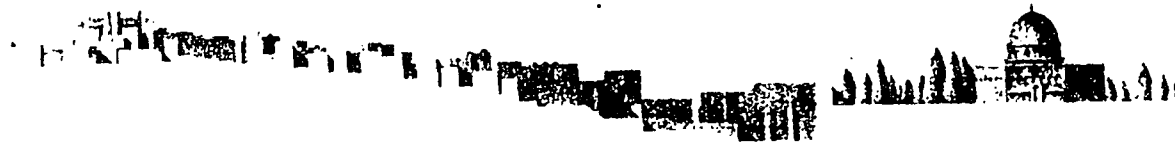
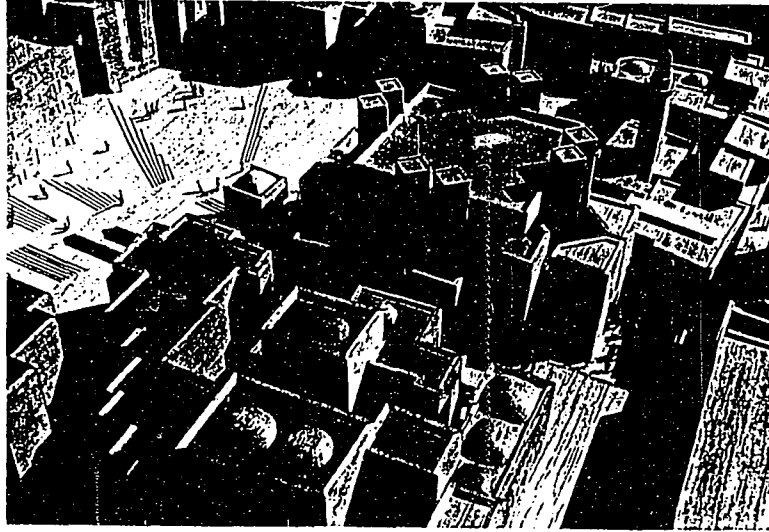


Fig.117 Top view of new Khurvah and its plaza, Architect: Denys Lasdun. Reprinted from "Denys Lasdun and his place in the Modern Tradition," in World Architecture, vol.14.

Fig.118 Cross section of the new Khurvah and the Jewish Quarter, Architect: Denys Lasdun. Reprinted from "Denys Lasdun and his place in the Modern Tradition," in World Architecture, vol.14.

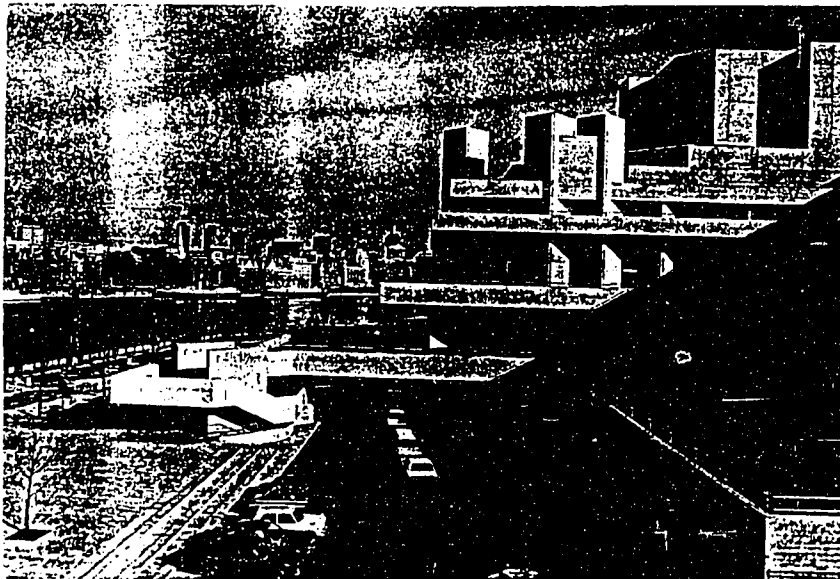
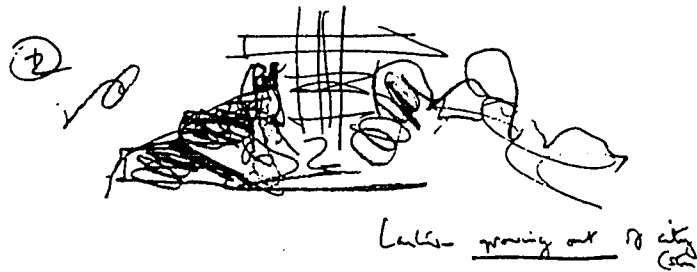


Fig.119 Conceptual sketch for the new Khurvah, Architect: Denys Lasdun. Reprinted from "Denys Lasdun and his place in the Modern Tradition," in World Architecture, vol.14.

Fig.120 General view of the National Theater, London. Architect: Denys Lasdun. Reprinted from "Denys Lasdun and his place in the Modern Tradition," in World Architecture, vol.14.

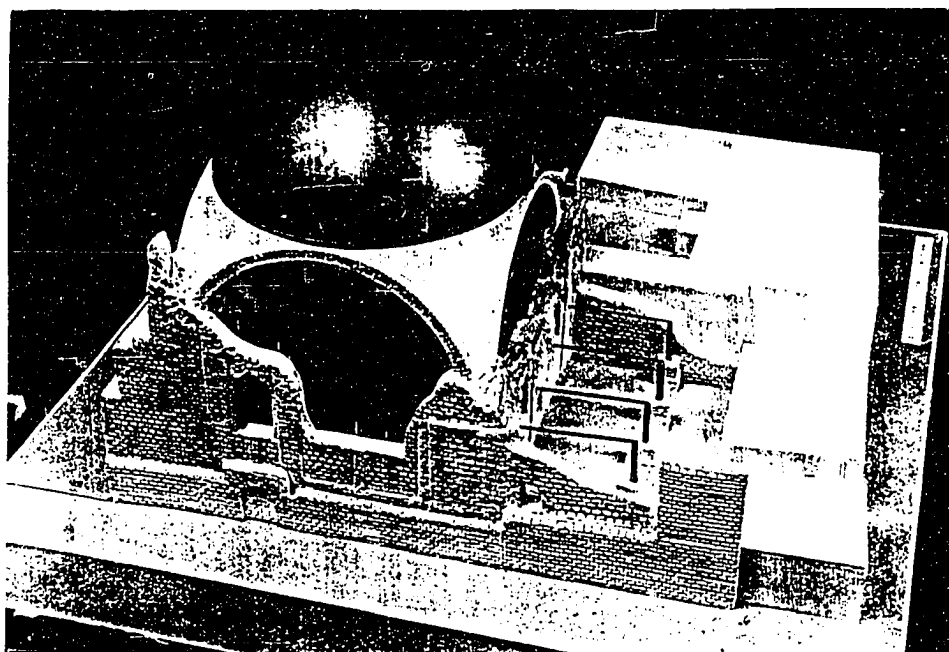
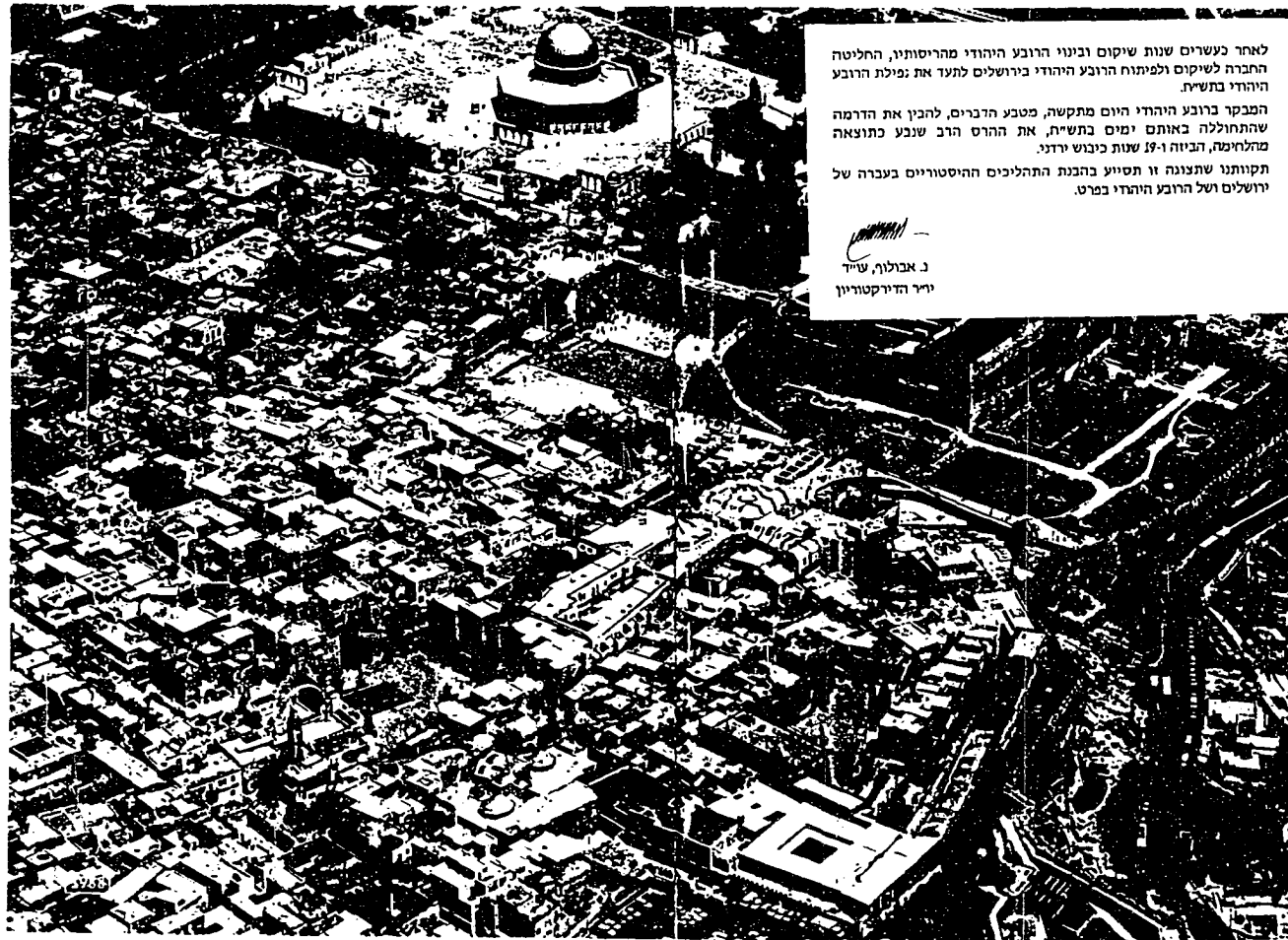


Fig.121 Model for the reconstruction of the Khurva by Yesh'ia Elon. Reprinted from, Khurva folder 106, *Archives of the company for the reconstruction and development of the Jewish quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem..*



Fig.122 Khurva square. Reprinted from Kroyanker David. Yerushalayim: ha-meavak al ha-ir ve-hazutah. (Jerusalem:1988).



לאחר כעשרים שנות שיקום ובנינו הרובע היהודי מהריסותיו, החליטה
החברה לשיקום ולפיתוח הרובע היהודי בירושלים לתעד את: נפילת הרובע
היהודי בתשי"ח.

המבקר ברובע היהודי היום מתקשה, מטבע הדברים, להבין את הדרמה
שהתחוללה באותם ימים בתשי"ח, את ההרס הרב שנבע כתוצאה
מהלחימה, הבזיה ו-19 שנות כיבוש ירדני.

תקוותנו שתצוגה זו תסייע בהבנת התהליכים ההיסטוריים בעברה של
ירושלים ושל הרובע היהודי במרט.

נ. אבולוף, עייד
יורד הדירקטוריון

Fig.123 View of the present fabric of the Jewish Quarter (note the Khurvah square in the middle and the adjacent Yeshivat Ha-Kotel and the Peligrimage route). Reprinted from the cover of the booklet of the The Meusum of the Last Day.

Index

Baehrwald, A. 19, 145

Ben Dov, M. 105, 114

Ben Gurion, D. 34, 36

Bugod, Peter. 3, 88, 93, 150, 152

Cardo, 3, 11, 88, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 99, 138, 150, 164

Cohen, Rabbi. 72, 73, 74

—D—

Dome of the Rock, 3, 13, 23, 44, 45, 48, 49, 60, 74, 79, 105, 124, 137, 140, 146, 157

Double Metaphor, 11, 137

—E—

Eshkol, Levi. 68, 70

—F—

Fisher, D. 111, 112, 113, 114, 117

Frenkel, E. 87, 89, 91, 92, 150

—G—

Geddes, P. 1, 22, 23, 24, 31, 145, 146

Golda Meir, 80, 110

—H—

Haskala, 21

Herzl, Theodor. 16, 158

Hubsch, H. 19, 20

Hurva, 46, 67, 68, 78, 80, 81, 82, 124, 154, 158, 164

—J—

Jerusalem, 1, 2, 3, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 22, 29, 30, 31, 35, 36, 40, 41, 43, 44, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51,

54, 56, 59, 60, 61, 65, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 84, 85, 86, 87, 89, 91, 92,

93, 94, 97, 99, 100, 101, 102, 104, 105, 110, 111, 113, 115, 119, 121, 128, 131, 133, 135, 136, 138, 139,

140, 141, 143, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166

Jewish Quarter, 2, 3, 11, 14, 35, 68, 69, 72, 79, 81, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 91, 92, 93, 96, 97, 99, 105,

106, 107, 108, 111, 119, 120, 121, 122, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 142, 150, 151,

152, 153, 156, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165

Jewish style, 1, 11, 12, 18, 20, 21, 28, 31, 40

—K—

Kahn, Louis. 2, 3, 9, 10, 11, 12, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61,

62, 63, 64, 65, 67, 68, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 87, 88, 90, 91, 92, 93,

95, 96, 97, 98, 100, 103, 104, 108, 109, 113, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126,

127, 128, 129, 130, 136, 137, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 150, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158,

159, 162, 163, 165

Khurvah Synagogue, 2, 3, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 35, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 59, 60, 61,

62, 71, 72, 73, 75, 76, 77, 79, 80, 81, 83, 84, 85, 87, 88, 89, 96, 98, 100, 104, 109, 113, 115, 117, 118,

119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 126, 127, 128, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 143, 144,

146, 148, 150

Kollek, Teddy. 44, 50, 67, 68, 71, 77, 80, 81, 82, 98, 102, 105, 110, 119, 120, 121, 131, 132, 136, 137,

138, 160

Kutcher, A. 35, 69, 80, 103, 105, 151, 160

—L—

Lasdun, Denis. 3, 11, 119, 120, 121, 122, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 143, 155

—M—

Meier, R. 119

Mendelsohn, Erich. 1, 25, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 145, 146, 154, 163

Metaphor, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 28, 40, 48, 50, 54, 57, 58, 64, 67, 73, 74, 75, 78, 79, 82, 83, 93, 94, 96, 109,
116, 117, 118, 122, 124, 125, 126, 129, 137, 138, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 154, 156, 162, 165

Moroccan Quarter, 51, 53, 56, 101

—O—

Old City of Jerusalem, 1, 2, 3, 11, 12, 15, 16, 22, 23, 30, 31, 35, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 50, 51, 53, 57,
59, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 73, 74, 75, 77, 78, 79, 81, 84, 85, 86, 87, 93, 94, 102, 119, 135, 136, 150, 151,
152, 153, 155, 156, 160, 161, 163, 164

—S—

Safdie, Moshe. 3, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 117, 124, 137, 145, 147, 150,
163

Schoenberger, J. 103, 104, 105, 121, 131, 151

Semper, G. 20, 164

—T—

Temple, 3, 24, 35, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 54, 58, 60, 74, 75, 89, 96, 97, 101, 104, 105, 106, 107, 115, 116, 117,
118, 123, 124, 125, 128, 129, 138, 139, 140, 142, 143, 144, 145, 157, 162

—U—

Utopia, 3, 5, 10, 37, 40, 64, 74, 95, 109, 115, 117, 125, 126, 140, 143, 144, 145, 148

—W—

Weizmann, Ch. 23, 24, 30, 35

Western Wall, 3, 11, 16, 41, 45, 46, 47, 48, 51, 54, 56, 60, 68, 69, 75, 77, 78, 83, 86, 88, 98, 101, 102,
104, 105, 106, 107, 109, 110, 111, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 123, 124, 132, 140, 141, 142, 144, 150,
151, 153, 156, 163

—Z—

Zionism,, 15, 16, 23, 135, 142, 154, 162

Zolti, Rabbi. 115, 121, 122, 123, 124