DISCOURSES ON THE PRE-1948 PALESTINIAN VILLAGE: THE CASE OF EIN HOD/EIN HOUD

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The village of Ein Houd, located on the Carmel Mountain near Haifa, is one of the approximately four hundred Palestinian Arab villages that were evacuated during the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. Renaming the village Ein Hod, Marcel Janco, a Romanian Jewish refugee artist who was one of the founders of the Dada movement, established an Israeli Jewish artists' colony that architecturally preserved and renovated the pre-1948 Palestinian Arab village. This paper inquires into the expressive function of vernacular architectural space and its relationship to political discourse, the social meaning of Israeli Jewish renovation and preservation as an exercise of governmental power, and the contested architectural identity of the pre-1948 Palestinian Arab village.

IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY THE UPROOTING AND DISPERsal of entire populations by war, systematic persecution or the redrawing of national frontiers have given rise to a genre of popular or folk literature which I propose to call the "memorial book." The custom of creating books to memorialize a village, town or district and to document its destruction is to be found among East European Jewish survivors of the Holocaust, Armenians after the 1922 massacres, German-speaking communities in Eastern Europe uprooted after World War II, and Palestinians after the establishment of the State of Israel.

In the Palestinian case, the conventions governing the recording of historical memory sanctify the lost land not only as it was in the past but also, most emphatically, in its present reality. Jewish memorial book writing, on the other hand,
hallows a pre-World War II territory while cursing it as it has been since the Holocaust. In their nostalgic yet anguished backward glances, these two groups maintain diametrically opposed attitudes towards the possibility — or impossibility — of an eventual return.

The texts of memorial books not only describe a particular reality but also serve to create knowledge about a place and time. These writings, therefore, produce a tradition, what Michel Foucault calls a discourse, with material presence and weight. Memorial books express in complex exchanges their relationship to landscape, architecture, and sociological description. At the same time, they elaborate the various kinds of power (political, cultural and architectural) that underlie the ways in which images of a past village home are maintained. What is written, thought, said and done about the pre-1948 Palestinian Arab village in Israel governs my study.

DISCOURSE AND THE PALESTINIAN “MEMORIAL BOOK”

The processes of collecting materials, writing and editing the memorial books reflect the concerns of a shared authorship and a communal readership of survivors. Jewish memorial books, currently numbering over one thousand volumes, chronicle the history and daily life of a village, town or district. So does the series of published volumes entitled “Destroyed Palestinian Villages,” published by the BirZeit University Documentation Center and authored, compiled and edited by Sharif Kanaana (FIG. 1). The latter series focuses on the approximately four hundred Palestinian Arab villages which were either evacuated (temporarily at the time) during the 1948 Arab-Israeli War or destroyed in the five subsequent years. Like their Jewish counterparts, former residents of these villages currently residing in the West Bank and in Gaza Strip refugee camps provided ethnographic data, folk history, and cartographic drawings for inclusion in the memorial books.

Active remembrance is seen as a guarantee of cultural survival; narrative codes have been developed to transform individual memory into public history. Is there a set image of a Palestinian village (qarya) that predetermines the representations found in the memorial books compiled by the community? Though memorial books make no claim to objectivity, my investigation might show how recourse to particular archetypes can conflict with individual memories of specific details. Can collective authorship produce historically accurate yet reverent accounts of the destroyed communities? How do memorial books account for political diversity, social discord, poverty, and class distinctions in a past that is discontinuous with the present?

In an introduction to the Palestinian series, Kanaana describes his motivation:

Each study will attempt, to the extent possible, to describe the life of the people in that village such that the reader is able to picture it as living, inhabited and cultivated as it was in 1948 before it was destroyed. This portrayal will allow Palestinians, especially those who had left these villages at an early age or were born outside of them after 1948, to feel tied and connected to the villages, society and real country as if they had lived in it, rather than it just being a name on a map.

By looking at the literary production of memorial books, I ask what it is that motivates nationalist identity construction, and how it is allied to and compromised by complex compulsions to re-create, to represent, and to preserve a record of destroyed communities in texts and photographs. To study the processes of folk history and folk ethnography by which memorial books are created and assembled is to uncover how this act of writing a memorial book reveals narrative discontinuity brought about by war, dispersion, and traumatic loss. In particular, “the spirit of place”—Christian Norberg-Schulz’s genius loci — linking experience and architecture, history and
environmental memory, is evoked in every page of each memorial book.4

EIN HOUD IN MEMORY AND IN HISTORY

I began with and I have remained at the beginning of the “Destroyed Palestinian Villages” series; volume one is a memorial book dedicated to the Palestinian Arab village of Ein Houd. The authors, Sharif Kanaana and Bassam Al-Ka’bi, point out in their introduction that the choice for the first volume is an anomalous one: Ein Houd remains a rare example, not only in the Palestinian ethnographic series but also in Arab-Israeli history, of an Arab village that was not physically destroyed during the five years after 1948. Its inhabitants, all belonging to the same hamula, or clan, of Abu Al-Hayja, were dispersed, exiled, or went into hiding in the nearby hills.5 But the village was transformed into a Jewish artists’ colony (Einar umanim in Hebrew) to which I have paid many visits.

My own study generates more narrative activity about Ein Houd. By engaging in an ethnographic dialogue with writing that works backwards from what is written and recounted in the present in order to reconstruct the past, I deploy one set of narratives to create another. Once there was a single Ein Houd; now there are many versions of it. My fieldwork has suggested at least three, each sharing territory and history on the western slopes of Mount Carmel: the pre-1948 Arab Ein Houd, the post-1953 Jewish Ein Hod, and the rebuilt Arab Ein Houd. I have also been led to related villages: Kawkab Abu Al-Hayja in the Upper Galilee, and the madafah (guest-house) reconstituted by Ein Houd refugees currently living in Jordan. The first group was never dispossessed, and they remain guardians at the shrine of Ein Houd’s ancestors; the second dispossessed group in Jordan maintain and update the Abu Al-Hayja genealogy.

In 1950, following the provisions of the Absenees Property Law, 5710—1950, the State of Israel categorized the Abu Al-Hayja clan as absenteees and appropriated their land and village.6 Between the end of the 1948 war and the early fifties, Israeli authorities attempted several times to resettle the village with new Jewish immigrants (olim kha’dashim). A group of North African Jews, claiming the soil was terrible, left to establish the moshav (smallholders’ cooperative settlement) of Tsofah five kilometers to the south. Jewish survivors of Arab attacks on the Etzion Bloc kibbutzem in the Hebron Hills stayed briefly in Ein Houd until their moshav, Nir Etzion, further up the mountain, was completed, and they were allotted much of the farmland that had belonged to Ein Houd. For a time the Israeli army used the village homes to train soldiers in doorto-door and house-to-house combat.

ISRAELI JEWISH DISCOURSE OF DISCOVERY

In 1953 Marcel Janco, a Romanian Jewish refugee artist who also happened to be one of the founders of the Dada movement, received permission from the State of Israel to establish an artists’ cooperative village in the now-empty village of Ein Houd. Janco’s account of how an Israeli artists’ colony was installed in the formerly Arab village is a narrative of discovery and salvage.

The story of how the village was finally inhabited and settled, how Janco “went through its ruins and conceived a dream” (FIG. 2), and how “the dream became a reality,” as it is told in numerous Ein Hod catalogues introducing artists’ exhibitions, is an archetypal founding legend; the legendary founder of Jewish Ein Hod is described as a latter-day hero and prophet. While the rhetoric of Ein Hod’s beginnings, as they are described in the colony’s printed literature, evokes Moses coming upon the biblical Promised Land, it is noteworthy that Janco prefers to call his founding of Ein Hod “his last Dada activity.”9

Janco’s preface to the catalogue of the 1919 “Das Neue Leben” (The New Life) exhibition in Zurich sends forth an artistic cry of the heart. In it he privileges certain folk-art forms, such as handicrafts, in terms which may be construed as a philosophical foundation to his act of settlement at Ein Hod. A return to the native land includes a return to the native arts of the land:
Janco remained a committed believer in the artist as craftsman, in collective art making, and in cooperative principles of a collective art during his early Dada years and throughout his long career.

Though his act of founding an artists' colony was based on hopes of creating an indigenous Jewish art on Jewish territory, Janco departed in significant ways from a prevailing national Israeli founding myth, one that Israeli anthropologists Tamar Katriel and Aliza Shenhar have identified as "Tower and Stockade (boma umigdaf)." They describe a collective gesture that refers to the type of settlements that heroically established a Jewish presence in Palestine from 1936 to 1947: large tracts of land were acquired by the Jewish National Fund, and approximately 118 settlements were speedily constructed with an identifying central tower, a stockade, and prefabricated housing. By extension, "Tower and Stockade" can be seen as a set of collective images of social action that symbolically interpret and legitimate the Israeli settlement ethos. More importantly for understanding Janco, as a narrative, it brings out the intimate link between rhetorics of place and rhetorics of action in Zionist discourse:

Indeed rhetorics of place and action are so intimately intertwined in the discourse of Zionism that being active agents and establishing new settlements have become almost equivalent concepts. . . .

Originally the act of conquest in relation to the land had very positive connotations: it referred to the labor of agricultural cultivation of legally purchased lands, not to the military act of appropriation by force. In a similar spirit one also spoke of the conquest of labor. . . . The struggle entailed in these conquests was one against Jewish history, the quite abrupt and drastic change in age old patterns of Diaspora living which by and large excluded agricultural work and its attendant attachment to the land and rootedness in place."

Janco may have drawn upon such a familiar connection between geographic place (the specific notion of the Land of Israel, or Eretz-Yisraef) and a discourse (albeit about art) that was rooted in Zionist ideology. What is strikingly different about Janco the architect was how powerfully moved he was by the beautiful Arab stone houses; he did not need to destroy in order to build anew. He acknowledged a mystical presence to the Arab stone houses, perhaps an aura prohibiting demolition — "forbidden to touch here" (FIG. 3). Indeed it was the village's three-dimensional physical existence that provoked him to consider diverse solutions that took into account architectural conservation: a monument, a park, a tourist preserve. Janco's reactions of wonder are reminiscent of the wonder and marvel of Europeans such as Columbus when discovering the "new world," which Stephen Greenblatt has considered the hallmark emotion of colonialism bent on apprehending and appropriating."

However, a Jewish artists' colony is not a Zionist agricultural cooperative settlement with its attendant goals of working the land and Jewish labor productivity. Instead of claiming to renew the land — it was already allocated to the religious kibbutz of Nir Erzion — Janco proposed to renew by repopulating Arab stone houses with Jewish artists. In order to do so he made a less obvious connection between a Palestinian-Arab built environment and his own intuitive sense that "this place had historical content that bound it to the history of our country." Janco's theoretical innovation was to appropriate an entire self-contained, agrarian Arab village in which traditional modes of architecture survived, and to give a new meaning to the spatial configurations which had given structure to the life of the village — mosque and plaza, communal guest-houses and oil-presses (FIG. 4). To create a place amidst spatial configurations whose "historical content" contradicted Janco's history yet were closely associated with the history of Janco's adopted country was a novel way to actualize the heroism of the Zionist foundation myth.

The debate over Janco's decision to preserve an Arab village as a home for Jewish artists and the ways in which the resulting indeterminate nature of ownership has been inscribed into Ein Hod's specific characteristics since its birth are central issues for this project. One example concerns the etiological narrative of how Ein Hod got its name, an instance that serves as a metaphor for the contradictory impulses towards preservation and renewal. According to Sofia Hillel, the former Arab village of Ein Houd owes its new Hebraicized name, Ein Hod, to her mother Sarah Rakhel, the wife of the artist Isaiah Hillel (1896—1978):

"My mother knew Arabic and so did my father. The original name of the village was Ein Houd which means "spring of trough." Some members said we have to pick a name. So some suggested..."
Chagall; some suggested Picasso. I remember my mother’s words: “Let’s change one letter only. Instead of Houd (houd) — “hod” which means “glory, beauty,” or “the spring of glory or the spring of beauty.” Let’s change one name, so that the name suits the place and the place the name (she-ha-shem yitim la-makom ve-ha-makom yitim la-shem).”

The fact that the Arab farming village of “Trough Springs” became the Jewish artist colony of “Glory Springs,” at the same time as a semantic and linguistic shift transformed the mundane agricultural animal trough of houd (houd) to the artistic glory of hod is much commented upon by both Jew and Arab.” The Hebrew words Ein Hod retain and build upon the original Arabic sounds.

During the immediate post-1948 era, although the external enemy was unambiguously the Arab, many Jewish artists, Janco among them, romanticized some aspects of Arab culture and clung to a romantic view of the Arabs. For example, in 1954, a year after the official establishment of Ein Hod, Janco painted a landscape that attempts to fix the wonder of his first moment of contact. The prominent center of the painting depicts the village
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of Ein Hod emerging from the folds of the sloping V-shaped hills. The stone houses are outlined in strong black squares colored yellow and blue, but primarily white, to bring the eyes to the center where Arabo-Mediterranean architecture is in harmony, both architecturally and in a painterly fashion, with the surrounding hills. A caravan of Arabs moving from right to left along the bottom of the picture forms the lower frame: women in headdresses carrying trays and bundles, donkeys laden with wheat and supplies, men in traditional headcloths and black robes walking alongside the animals. The question is whether Janco saw them as local inhabitants forming part of a landscape or as refugees fleeing from a picture painted in a pastiche of European styles beginning with early Cubism.

While Jewish Ein Hod wrote its history linearly in time as it developed from a weekend retreat for a small core of artists to a place with a world-renowned artists’ exhibition center, a national museum, art schools, and training workshops, Arab Ein Houd was slowly and painstakingly rebuilding itself (Fig. 6): of the two villages, Arab Ein Houd is the more populous. The history of Jewish Ein Hod was easy to study: it produced a full archive of museum catalogues and exhibitions, fiction and newspaper articles, a 16mm film made in 1960, personal and professional photography, and videotapes recording memorable occasions. In contrast, I found that my knowledge of Arab Ein Houd’s early years was entirely dependent on interviews with Jews and Arabs who provided me with anecdotes, oral histories, folk tales, and legends.

Discourse on Ein Houd/Ein Hod: Writing versus Orality

After 1948 the Palestinian Arab villagers were forced to retreat up the Carmel Mountain to the area called Khirbet Hajali, and from their higher vantage point they watched the populating of a Jewish Ein Hod. In interviews with the inhabitants of Arab Ein Houd conducted by Dror Yekutiel in the 1980s they recall the early settlement:

*The first attempt to resettle the stone houses of Ein Haud [sic] in the 50's is clouded in mystery. They say that the mountain vomited the new settlers out from within it. . . . They remember how, in the dark, thousands of eyes watched from the mountain ridges all around. Stones rained down on the village and funeral processions sang dirges underground, from inside the mountain. They fled from the place in fear, leaving the stone houses deserted behind them.*

Nonetheless, both Jews and Arabs agree that at the beginning of Arab Ein Houd there was a forceful, charismatic leader named Shaykh Muhammad Mahmud ‘Abd Al-Ghani, known throughout the region, according to the custom of taking one’s name from one’s eldest son, as father of Hilmi, or Abu Hilmi (Fig. 5). ”We cannot talk about the village without talking about Abu Hilmi,” his grandson Assem, 40, says, “The history of the new village is linked to him.”

The pre-1948 Arab Ein Houd had consisted of the Abu Al-Hayja hamula, or clan, further divided into five large sub-clans. Each sub-clan traced its descent from an earlier generation of four brothers and a sister, all five of whom claimed Husam al-Din Abu Al-Hayja as their eponymous ancestor. (Husam al-Din was one of Saladin’s generals, who had been
granted the territory of Ein Houd as a reward for his martial prowess at the Battle of Hittin against the Crusaders. The families of two cousins, Abu Hilmi (Muhammad Mahmud 'Abd Al-Ghani 'Abd Al-Rahim) and Muhammad ('Abd al-Hadi Husayn 'Abd Al-Rahim), of the *dar* of 'Abd Al-Rahim (one of the five sub-clans), were the originators and progenitors who repopulated the new Ein Houd higher up the mountain.

In the early years of this new settlement (the 1950s), they lived in mud-brick huts covered with roofs of mud mixed with branches. According to Ruqayya Abu Al-Hayja, one of Abu Hilmi's daughters, life was difficult, and shacks and tents sheltered animals and humans alike. Houses were huddled together, and the winter rains frequently washed away houses and walls. As they pooled their resources to convert to cheap cement-block houses, because traditional stone construction is four times more expensive, Abu Hilmi conceived a new village layout inspired by the mountainous terrain and not by traditional Palestinian social structures for housing placement.

Most Palestinian Arab villages have densely built centers, houses with shared walls, and narrow alleyways, as opposed to Abu Hilmi's concept of houses widely spaced and defensively circled as if to ward off attack. Taking the highest point of one of the central Carmel Hills (called *Jabal Al-Wustani* in Arabic), Abu Hilmi chose the four cardinal points as his frame of reference. Homes were built to form a large circle. Houses were spaced far apart, serving as a perimeter of security. Buildings on the north, south and west sides precariously hugged the inaccessible mountain slopes. Each cardinal point was allocated to the one of the four main male household heads: 'Abd Al-Ra'uf guarded the west, 'Abd Al-Ghani the north, and 'Abd al-Halim the south. A single dirt track approaching from the east provided the sole means of access to the village, either on foot or, later, by vehicle. The important
eastern entrance to the village was watched over by Abu Hilmi’s son, Hilmi (FIG. 7). Initially, building material as well as all supplies were brought up the mountain on donkeys. More recently, these have been replaced by trucks, although there are no paved roads to this day.

Another grandson, Muhammad Mubarak 'Abd Al-Ra'uf, said that Abu Hilmi always assumed he would return to his land and house, which had become the property of the artist Isaiah Hillel, his wife Sarah (who named Ein Hod), and their only daughter Sophia who now lives there alone. Hillel tried to pay for the house, according to the architect Giora Ben-Dov, who himself lives in what was once the home of Muhammad 'Abd Al-Hadi and his wife Ruqayya, (now residing in new Ein Houd). Ben-Dov’s is the only known Ein Hod anecdote recounting such a gesture: after Hillel received ownership title he walked up the mountain to visit Abu Hilmi to offer financial recompense. Hillel, a fluent Arabic speaker, was graciously received and thanked, but with these much-quoted words Abu Hilmi refused: “Because it is a house and you cannot sell a house.”

Abu Hilmi’s children say he believed that just as the Turks and the English had come and gone, so too would the Jewish newcomers. Between 1932 and 1939 Abu Hilmi fought the Absentee Law ruling which had dispossessed him of old Ein Houd and also threatened the newer settlement. Although he lost the court case, the authorities never executed the court order, and negotiations continued until 1962, when he was offered three options: to purchase the land he lived on, to rent the land he lived on, or to cede all claims to Ein Hod in return for the land he lived on. Again he is said to have replied: “How can I buy or rent my own land?” When the offer was repeated in 1964, Abu Hilmi decided to buy his land, but when he tried to do so, he was informed that the State of Israel did not sell land. Within a few weeks of his attempted buyback the Israel Land Administration constructed the first of many fences that would enclose the twelve-dunam area of new Ein Houd. The religious mukhtar of Nit Einzion, atwarrant the mountain path to Ein Houd, now bars access to the village on the Jewish Sabbath. The residents of Arab Ein Houd describe their boundaries as such:

I've defined the location of the village thus: We are in an open prison. Surrounding the village is the first fence. . . . Above the village and beyond the fence is the park. That's the second wall. The third wall around the village and part of the park is the military firing zone. And the last gate: The Sabbath gate of Nit Einzion . . . . For this gate the Nit Einzion gate, anyone from the village — anyone — can get a key — no problem — just take a key. I don't take one. . . . I make a detour of thirty kilometers in order not to pass that gate and be in need of a key. I'm prepared to walk but not to use a key. On principle. That's the third prison. That in a way is the fourth wall. The Sabbath Wall . . . .

Throughout the fifties and sixties Abu Hilmi regularly descended from Arab Ein Houd to Jewish Ein Hod. Ein Hod artist Arik Brauer remembers how he first met Abu Hilmi. After watching Brauer add to what was formerly the house of the last mukhtar (or mayor), Rashad Rashid (now of Jenin camp in the West Bank), Abu Hilmi thanked Brauer and said: “I see you are building me a second story” (FIG. 8). Ovadiah Alkara, originally from nearby Daliat Al-Karmil, and the only Druze artist living in Ein Hod, claims that these words were actually uttered by a Jewish artist whose Ein Hod home was visited by its former Arab owner. The new Jewish owner conducted a tour for the previous Arab owner pointing out: “Here is the new kitchen I added for you, here is another bedroom I built for you . . . .”

Another return visitor is Mu'in Zaydan Abu Al-Hayja who was born in Ein Houd in 1942. He is the son of Zaydan, mukhtar of Ein Houd from 1917–36 until the British removed his father from office for supporting the 1936–39 Arab Revolt. His former home at the entrance to Ein Hod was renovated in the 1970s by artist Zeva Kainer who specializes in exotic kitsch pastels and water colors of local pastoral scenes that sell to tourists. Mu'in returns to the area often from his current home in the village of Tamra, the Galilee, and he too paints landscapes. His 1964 black and white charcoal study of Ein Hod bears a curious resemblance to Janco’s earlier 1954 oil painting (FIG. 9). It is possible both are based on a widely reproduced black and white 1953 photograph (photographer unknown), or that Mu'in saw Janco’s study, or perhaps each of the three independently chose the most obvious and spectacular panorama. Mu'in’s dichromatic sketch commemorates the moments of emptiness just before the transition from Arab to Jew. Houses are small, dark and smudged, and there are no figures inside the frame, only an overwhelming sense of watchers from a distance looking down at the village, whereas in Janco’s painting the perspective is one of looking up to the village. Mu'in told me that, unlike Abu Hilmi who was the most visible of former residents who continued to visit Ein Hod and maintain relations with Janco and other artists, he preferred to visit from the surrounding hills, rarely walking through the village.

There has always been a steady stream of former inhabitants passing through Ein Hod, beginning with those who became citizens of the State of Israel, and then continuing, after 1967, with additional visitors primarily from the Jenin-Yam'un area in the West Bank. Others are Palestinian travelers on Jord-
nian, Kuwaiti and Western passports with no immediate ties to the Abu Al-Hayja clan. The development of this second type of Palestinian tourism to sites in Israel, in particular, has deep cultural sources presupposing a mythology of place in terms of images and descriptions. This kind of tourism, together with literature, poetry and art, has played a powerful role in the invention of a pre-1948 Palestinian village, which functions as a locus for Palestinian nostalgia, memory and identity. In tracing the post-1948 relationship to the lost land and its stone houses, I now investigate how the idiom of Palestinian nationalism draws its significant affective power from notions of the village and the peasant — which then become, as Ted Swedenburg has put it, “national signifiers” in the Palestinian confrontation with Israel.

COMPETING ARAB AND JEWISH DISCOURSES

Jewish Ein Hod’s enterprise — an artist and tourist village based upon beautifully renovated Arab houses — does not cease to arouse passionate controversy.

The Palestinian poet Hanna Abu Hanna sees Ein Hod as an abomination that condemns Jewish-Israeli society. He includes in his indictment another former Arab estate, Achziv or Havivaland, which now houses a “hippie hotel” as well as museum rooms full of ethnographic and archaeological curiosities from the Arab past.31

Abu Omar Abu Al-Hayja fled Ein Houd in 1948 at the age of eighteen and is now a retired bank manager in Nazareth. To him Ein Hod is like the beautiful beloved woman one can only visit rarely. But even as a tourist he is delighted that she still exists (FIG. 10).

The sculptor Shoshana Heimann who resides in Jewish Ein Hod voiced misgivings about moving into an Arab village: “Trying to retain the atmosphere is basically something alien,
because it's not really yours, even if you identify with it, you still have to change it, because you cannot take it over, because it kind of takes over."

Most other artist-residents point to Ein Hod's many artistic accomplishments: the new Janco-Dada museum as an international center for Dada art and research, workshops educating Jewish students about art, and the art exchange programs with Germany.

Janco and Abu Hilmi were born and died within a year of each other — Janco's dates are 1895-1983, and Abu Hilmi's are 1896-1982. A formal portrait photograph taken in Jenin in 1976 shows Abu Hilmi to be a tall, imposing man with strikingly beautiful blue eyes and a long white beard (refer to Fig. 5). By the seventies his beard had reached mid-chest because he had vowed never to shave until he returned home to his village of Ein Houd. According to his grandson, Abu Hilmi died with his full beard uncut pessimistically convinced he had failed, and that the Ein Houd he helped to create was nothing more than a prison for his descendants. One of Janco's daughter's mentioned in a telephone interview that at the end of his life Janco had come to have misgivings about taking over Arab Ein Houd.

CONTEXTUAL DISCOURSES

My long-term study asks how we experience and memorize space, structures and details of our environment, and how, in turn, an "environmental memory" frames our relationships to physical objects surrounding us in terrestrial space, to the forms they impart to that space, and to the way existence is shaped by those objects and forms. Does environmental memory arise naturally, or is it honed by an education in visual memory? Does a child dream of stone houses because these are the images of his beginning consciousness, or because they may once have been his (or even his parent's) first room and first window?

Our relationship to the physical environment is a direct, existential experience of light and shade or movement through perceptions of solid and transparent shapes. Does a house merely fulfill cultural functions by serving as a memory system to record a group's origins, or is the house of one's ancestry or the house of one's actual birth necessary to understanding the very role of memory in consciousness? According to Gaston Bachelard:

... thanks to the house, a great many of our memories are housed, and if the house is a bit elaborate, if it has a cellar and garret,

Bachelard calls for a "topoanalysis," paying attention to "the localization of our memories," in which the topologist, like a psychoanalyst, poses questions to uncover links between consciousness and place: "Was the room a large one? Was the garret cluttered up? Was the nook warm? How was it lighted? How too in these fragments of space, did the human being achieve silence?"

If the buildings of Ein Hod are used as frameworks for environmental memory, obviously Jews and Arabs comprehend the complex role of architecture in radically different ways, for specific forms and details of each contested stone house are not only objects of memory but intrinsically memorable as mnemonic devices.

In conclusion, my final questions constitute the focus of my book in progress. What is the architectural history and ethnography of a place in which the same house has been built, rebuilt, renovated and repaired over time by two antagonistic groups for opposing motives — one standing above the other on a mountainside? And what are the further implications when this is a place where Arabs invest, deal, collect and sell Jewish art, and where Arab artists study and are "discovered" by Jewish artists — who in turn are in search of their own authentic artistic roots which so many locate in Arab artifacts?"
REFERENCE NOTES

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15. Phonologically, both Hebrew and Arabic share the word “ein” (‘ayn) to mean a “spring, a fountainhead of water.” However, modern Israeli Hebrew, as it is pronounced by Ashkenazi, or Israelis of European origin, neither distinguishes the voiceless stop from the pharyngeal voiced fricative of ‘ayin, nor the uvular voiceless fricative (Arabic and Hebrew b) from the pharyngeal voiceless fricative b. In contrast, Arabic, and Hebrew pronounced by Jews from Arab countries, preserves these consonantal distinctions.


25. After a struggle of many years, in late 1992 the status of Arab Ein Houd as an illegal “gray village” with no municipal amenities was overturned. Currently, both Arab Ein Houd and Jewish Ein Hod have retained the services of architect and planner Mike Turner.

All photos by author except where otherwise noted.