

EUROMED IV: Mutual Heritage

**Re-Walk Heritage:
Ramallah Highlands Trail
A HERITAGE GUIDE**

RIWAQ



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Re-Walk Heritage Guidebook Series 1

Re-Walk Heritage: Ramallah Highlands Trail

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Farhat Muhawi and Sahar Qawasmi

A Note on Site Names

Site names for cities, villages, archaeological sites, and natural sites (mountains, valleys, springs) were designated during the British Mandate Period in Palestine. As is the case when writing Arabic names in English, many spelling variations could be considered, and there is so one standard spelling of most site names in English. We use the British spelling, except for in the case organizations that use an alternate spelling in their official name, such as Birzeit University (rather than the British Bir Zeit) and Taybeh brewery (rather than et-Taibiya).

The symbol ‘ represents the Arabic letter Ein, a guttural vowel sound that does not exist in English.

RE-WALK HERITAGE: RAMALLAH HIGHLANDS TRAIL



INTRODUCTION

This guide is produced as part of the Mutual Heritage project, a 3-year initiative (March 2009-February 2012) that examines and promotes recent heritage in the Euro-Mediterranean region. The project is implemented in partnership between several Mediterranean countries: France, Italy, Morocco, Palestine, and Tunisia, and is part of the Euromed Heritage IV program funded by the EU. The project aspires to consolidate the understanding of recent mutual heritage spread in Europe and the Mediterranean region and to foster the integration of cultural heritage into current active life both socially and economically.

The main objective of the project's component in Palestine, under the management of Riwaq, is to set up a number of tourist walking trails highlighting 19th and 20th century architectural heritage, surrounding cultural landscape, archaeological sites and cultural activities. The selected trail is known as the Ramallah Highlands Trail, which connects 10 towns, villages, and refugee camps spread over an area of approximately 100 square kilometres. The trail passes through Qalandiya, Ramallah and el-Bira, Ras Karkar, Bir Zeit, Jifna, Jalazone Refugee Camp, 'Ein Siniya, Dura el-Qar', Silwad, and et-Taiyiba. The trail represents the mutual heritage of the 10 sites within a wider scheme of the 50 most architecturally significant villages selected by Riwaq.¹

This heritage guide appeals to both local and international tourists by providing alternative cultural and natural tourist trails with the goal of promoting global awareness of rural Palestine and improving

1. Completed between 1994 and 2003, Riwaq Register of Historic Buildings in Palestine includes data on 50,320 historic buildings located inside and outside the historic centres of 422 towns and villages. A list of the most significant 50 villages has been identified by Riwaq as a national priority. Rehabilitating those historic centres will ultimately lead to the protection of almost 50% of the historic buildings in rural Palestine.

tourism to support the rehabilitation of historic centres within the trail area and the 50 villages. This trail can be utilized thematically to focus on issues such as historic village centres and buildings, watchtowers, refugee camps, cultural and natural landscapes, and archaeology.

The architecture of the 19th and 20th centuries highlighted in this guide reflects elements from different historical periods and are presented within the context of the following historical landscape:

1. Late Ottoman: historic buildings, village centres and watchtowers.
2. British Mandate: single historic buildings and monuments.
3. Creation of the State of Israel in 1948 and the expulsion of Palestinian communities: establishment of refugee camps.
4. Jordanian rule over the West Bank 1948-1967: architecture of the 50s and 60s.
5. Israeli occupation since 1967: military watch towers, the wall, Israeli settlements and new building patterns in Palestinian towns.

RIWAQ: 20 YEARS (1991-2011)

Suad Amiry

Re-Walk Heritage: Ramallah Highlands Trail, A Heritage Guide, marks an important contribution towards the protection and the development of cultural and natural heritage in Palestine. Including cultural and natural sites in an alternative tourism guide not only contributes towards developing the tourism sector in Palestine but also helps in making the cultural and natural heritage an important tool for economic and social development.

The first few years in Riwaq (1991-1996) were characterized by the documentation of the architectural heritage in Palestine. This brought about an important resource centre: Riwaq Register of Historic Buildings in Palestine, Photo Archive, and publication series.

The second phase of Riwaq (1997-2005) was characterized by conservation projects, along with “job creation through conservation,” which succeeded in creating more than 100 community and cultural centers as well as providing thousands of job opportunities.

The third phase at Riwaq (2005 to present), the revitalization of historic centers, concentrated on bringing life back into historic centers and the encouraging re-use of restored buildings. Revitalizing deserted village centers requires the concerted efforts of all sectors of the society, and entails improving the living conditions and standards in the dilapidated historic centres.

Last but certainly not least, Riwaq has contributed towards creating the appropriate legal framework—the cultural and natural heritage law, statement of importance and classification of buildings, protection plans and zoning regulation without which the protection of heritage becomes impossible.

Riwaq 2012-2032

Riwaq’s dream for coming 20 years is to integrate the cultural and natural heritage in the economic cycle in such a way that the cultural heritage becomes a main resource for economic, social and cultural development in Palestine. Riwaq has set the goal of rehabilitating 50 villages. By designating those 50 historic centers in rural Palestine, half of the historic building in the area will be protected.

WALKING IN PALESTINE

Raja Shehadeh *Author of [Palestinian Walks: Notes on a Vanishing Landscape](#)*

It is no exaggeration to say that Palestine is a walker’s paradise. It is especially pleasurable to walk around the hills of Ramallah where the trail described in this book is located. There is no doubt that the best way to get to know a place is to walk it. The pleasant weather helps. In the West Bank, it tends to be temperate most of the year and the landscape has much to offer.

Every season provides its own special pleasures. Autumn, with its moderate weather when the clouds shield the sun, provides ideal conditions for taking a walk. Winter is the time when the dust of summer has been washed away and the air has become fresh and clear, and the time when the almond trees blossom and the grass begins to cover the hills. Spring is lush and green, the time when the hills are covered by a great variety of wildflowers and flowering shrubs. Summer provides the opportunity to enjoy the starkness of the arid landscape with its large variety of limestone rocks with their contrasting hues.

Not too long ago, Palestinian villagers moved from village to village using dirt tracks along the hills and in the wadis. Some of these ancient trails go back many hundreds of years, marked on old British Mandate-era ordnance maps. With the changes that have occurred in the region, few of these have survived. Most of what remains are tracks created by shepherds. The evocative sight of flocks of goats and sheep grazing on West Bank hills is not uncommon. It is often accompanied by another encounter with the beautiful sound of the *ney* (flute) music played by the shepherds, reverberating in the hills.

Ramallah was established some five hundred years ago by seven clans. Its inhabitants depended for their livelihood mainly on the cultivation of the surrounding hills. The hilly land surrounding it is varied but without large open areas. It is part of the Central Highlands that dominate most of the center of the West Bank. The valleys closer to town are narrow. The hills are steep, sometime precipitous. There are no mountains anywhere in sight, only hills.

The further west you walk, the lower and rounder the hills become as the land descends gently down to the coastal plain. Standing in the midst of this land, all you would see are hills and more hills, like being in a choppy sea with high waves, the unbroken swells only becoming in evidence as the land descends westward. These structures, we are told, were formed due to the force of tremendous pressure exerted by the tectonic forces pushing the land towards

the east. It was as though the land had been scooped by a mighty hand and crunched, the pressure eventually resulting in the great fault that created the Jordan Rift Valley through which runs the River Jordan. The land seems never to have relaxed into plains and glens with easy flowing rivers but has been constantly twisted and pressured to the point of cracking. Its surface is not unlike that of a walnut with deeper crevices.

It was on the fertile plain of Marj Ibn Amr (Jezreel Valley), which stretches below the Carmel Mountains to Jenin in the West Bank and the breathtaking hills of the Galilee, that most of the historical battles were fought and where the ruins of the fortifications and castles of the various invaders can still be seen. This was also the route of traders and pilgrims. No invaders or pilgrims passed through the hills close to Ramallah. The prized holy city of Jerusalem, 10 miles to the south of the Ramallah, could be reached from the narrow coastal plain through a corridor between the hills that bypass Ramallah by a few miles going past the high village of Beit Ur to the south east. The people in Ramallah lived protected by their hills. No heavy armament could be sent over the cracked terrain surrounding them. Nor was there much to entice conquerors. Only in 1901 was the first asphalted road opened between Ramallah and Jerusalem.

The land had a strong effect on the character of the original inhabitants of Ramallah. The narrow slithers of land on the slopes of the hills were fertile but difficult to cultivate. They had to depend on the unpredictable rains and springs. They were hardy, taciturn, closed-natured, suspicious and provincial.

The reclaiming of this hilly land was the work of generations of Palestinians over many centuries. It took hard work to clear a small plot from stones, which were then used to build the terrace walls to protect the soil from eroding and the hills from being denuded. These were built in the traditional way, from interlocking stones, which were carefully selected in terms of shape, texture and weight to stay securely in place within a self-supporting structure. The hill

people of Palestine were experts at building these retaining walls that stood the test of time, strong wind, and flooding. They were able to turn the steep hills and valleys around Ramallah into terraced slopes where cultivation became possible.

Amongst Palestinians there is no tradition of hill walking as a form of leisure. There was, however, the practice of going on a *sarha*. When I was growing up in Ramallah I used to hear about these ventures, mainly undertaken by young men. They would take a few provisions and go to the open hills, disappear for the whole day, sometimes for weeks and months. They didn't seem to have a particular destination. To go on a *sarha* was to roam freely, at will, without restraint, in order to feed own's soul and rejuvenate oneself. But not any excursion would qualify as a *sarha*. Going on a *sarha* implies letting go.

Much of the landscape in the West Bank is rapidly being destroyed by road works, expansion of existing cities and the unprecedented increase in the Jewish Israeli settlements being established there in violation of international law. As a result, many areas of outstanding beauty have been destroyed by the hastily built Jewish Israeli settlements that stand out as artificial impositions on the delicate features and contours of this ancient land.

Yet despite the massive devastation that has blighted this land, there still remain areas that have been untouched by the effect of recent developments. Some of these possess a unique beauty that cannot be found anywhere else in the world. They can be visited by following the trail described in this book. Walking along these hiking tracks will surely be an inspiring and rewarding experience.

ALTERNATIVE TOURISM IN PALESTINE

Raed Sa'adeh

Palestine is cradle and place of heritage to many religions and faiths. The sanctity of Palestine has attracted a large number of people throughout history. Locals and visitors have been inspired by the land's connection to pilgrimage, spirituality and prayer. Today, tourism in Palestine has depended to a great extent only on Christian heritage without very much creativity or diversity of tourist program.

Little effort has been exerted to investigate the wealth of Palestine and the diversity it has to offer to research, or to create and design new tourism products that take into consideration the available resources and capacities of the country and of its people. This potential is enormous, as Palestine possesses many layers of history, a mosaic of culture and cultural heritage, a diverse climate and landscape, and a natural museum of antiquities, flora and fauna.

In recent years, research and development initiatives have been taking place in order to produce a diverse and differentiated tourism product. The goal is to help paint the Palestinian tourism industry with a distinct Palestinian identity that stems from and is rooted in the land, the history, the culture, and the landscape. The most important element by far in this endeavour would be the involvement of the local population particularly in the design and development of the new programs.

These initiatives create an “added value,” as a basis for differentiation and uniqueness of the product and the packages that can be created as a result. This opens the way for employment opportunities and income generation for the rural communities and the villages that become part of the developed tours and paths.

The generated demand to visit the sites and villages is simultaneously accompanied by an interest in the local products, local culture and heritage. This forms the platform for innovation and creativity in producing and promoting Palestinian local handicrafts that gradually

grow stronger in penetrating the Palestinian markets and beyond. Culture and cultural heritage should be adopted as integral elements in rural development in general and incorporated in development programs and tour packages. This is an opportunity for a more balanced and holistic development and a wider share of tourism benefits to rural Palestine.

A particular outcome of this initiative would be to train and produce a new generation of Palestinian leaders who are aware of the county's resources and are creative and innovative enough to utilize its current and future potential, to understand its challenges and threats, and to lead the country towards its deserving position. The local community should be able to feel ownership of the initiatives and the opportunities they bring. This pride and belonging of the community provides for the sustainability and continuity of this endeavour.





FLORA AND FAUNA OF THE RAMALLAH HIGHLANDS

Sami Bachleh

While many sites along this trail are considered to be important crossroads, urban centres, and historical towns, for naturalists this area is considered a gold mine of biological diversity and an important spot containing various elements that enrich our valuable natural heritage. Throughout a relatively small area, one can encounter four topographic features through this trail. The mountain crests, the eastern slopes, the western slopes, and the lower valleys. This alone allows the abundance of different types of habitat hosting various forms of flora and fauna.

The trail goes through areas that remind walkers of historical interaction between humans, culture, and natural resources, such as agricultural systems (terraces, irrigation canals, many archaeological and historical places, and the acquired legend beyond these places).

In addition to the human-nature interaction, this area is scenic in regards to topography, location, and the ascetic value of the landscape. The agricultural use of the soil has strong historical value and carries significance in the Palestinian economy.

Apart from historical importance of the village of et-Taiyiba, its location within the boundary of the eastern slopes has given this area a natural importance as well. The eastern part of this area is classified as essentially a treeless, thin-soil, arid and dramatically eroding limestone plateau dissected by wadis draining toward the Dead Sea. This region lies in the rain shadow of the central highlands, classified as a hot area that receives very low annual rainfall. Given the fact that the eastern slopes have a unique geological formation, a biogeographic location and quite an abundance of water from flash floods and permanent springs, these issues help create a natural diversity of the semi-desert habitat in this region.

This area is also known to be one of the main migratory



• palestine bulbul © anton khailieh



• highlands flora © anton khailieh



routes for many bird species worldwide. Birds concentrate here in considerable numbers during breeding time and in winter. However, during the migration period, you can see flocks of soaring birds flying over that area, and sometimes many of them use the fields throughout this region to roost and feed.

A hike from et-Taiyiba westward introduces a series of substantial natural variations in plant, species, soil and landform. Passing from Silwad, through Yabrud and 'Ein Siniya towards the hilly side of Bir Zeit, one can encounter the true highland features of the West Bank. Some remarkable features of the Palestinian landscape are the mountain ranges with their hilly terrain, rock formations, and wadis that meander through the hills in both directions-west towards the Mediterranean Sea and east towards the Dead Sea. The wadis are dotted with freshwater springs. It was often here that people built their villages and fought their battles to ward off invaders who have always been attracted to this remarkable land, known as “the land of milk and honey.”

A very important feature of these highlands is the cultivated terraces of olive trees, highly representative of the Palestinian landscape throughout history. They are a good example of adapting to nature to overcome steep and uneven terrain. Landscapes of such features often reflect a particular technique of sustainable land use, considering the natural environment they are established in. Moreover, they form an important part of people's lives, giving individuals and communities a sense of identity and belonging. Terraced landscapes are an important habitat for various flora and fauna species, some of which are of high conservation value. Their geographical locations along with abundant springs have been favourable to high wildlife diversity within the mountainous region. This area is famous for its many diverse plants such as oak trees, pistachio, Palestinian chamomile and thyme.

The woodlands along such areas are considered a reservoir of plant diversity, mainly comprising the original wild species of barley and wheat, in addition to most of the original wild species of the fruiting trees in the area. Hence it is considered of high importance for wild



• palestine chukar © anton khalilieh



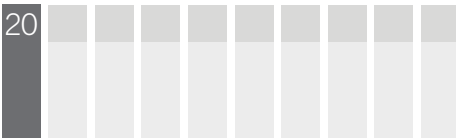
- palestine moth © anton khailieh

genetic resources in Palestine. Birds that breed, which are called resident birds, such as the Palestine Sunbird, blackbird and the Chukar Partridge, inhabit the region all year round.

Hiking through the countryside, one cannot help but notice the beauty and attractiveness of the landscape. Some areas along this trail have been noted for their great ecological significance according to national and international criteria. 'Ein Qiniya, Wadi Matar, and Wadi el-Dilb are



- crab in 'ein qiniya



areas that have been recognized for having ecological significance due to their geological and geomorphological formations in addition to the various endemic species of plants this area hosts.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF CULTURAL HERITAGE IN PALESTINE

Nazmi Ju'beh

Despite its small geographical location, Palestine was both blessed and cursed to be one of the key places in the ancient map of the Near East, labelled as the “cradle of civilization.” Palestine took its place in the complex history of the area alongside the two other major civilizations, the Egyptian and Mesopotamian civilizations. Rich evidence of man’s history and existence in this area can be traced back to the Palaeolithic Period through the Ottoman Period to contemporary Palestine.

This historical overview outlines issues related to cultural and architectural heritage in Palestine since 1850, when Palestine began being integrated into the global free market economy.

1.1. The Late Ottoman Period (1850-1917)

After the end of the Egyptian invasion of Palestine in 1840, the Ottoman Empire implemented a string of major changes to rebuild the state institution, later known as the Ottoman Reforms. This coincided with the commencement of European consular and religious missions to Palestine and the introduction of foreign working groups in the fields of geographical, archaeological and historic research studies. The movement of foreign working groups in the field of historic archaeology adopted an Orientalist approach, a conservative school of thought derived from fundamental Christian religious beliefs in Old Testament texts, which were used to interpret the cultural past of Palestine without interaction with the local intellectual elite.

During this period, many research institutions laid their foundations in Palestine, such as the Palestine Exploration Fund, the Dominican School (École Biblique), and the American School of Archaeology (The Albright Institute). They explored Palestine's topography, including the main cultural and archaeological sites and came up with detailed maps, often in harmony with the Hebrew Bible interpretations. Many of the finds from these archaeological excavations and digs of that period have largely been dispersed or exported to international museums, mainly to European academic establishments and "Oriental" research institutes.

1.2. The British Mandate Period until 1948

The end of the First World War caused the collapse of Ottoman rule in Palestine and the onset of the British Mandate Period. The British Mandate sent British specialists² to Palestine to establish a department of antiquities. They implemented various excavations and archaeological surveys, thus continuing the work started by the foreign institutions in the previous period. Specific events of interest during this period include the establishment of the Department of Antiquities in the 1920s in Palestine. The effort continued to propose legislations concluding in 1929 in the Antiquities/Archaeological Law, which focused on the protection of archaeological sites with little mention of other cultural assets.³

On another level, the Muslim Waqf (foundation) Administration established the Islamic Museum (al-Aqsa Mosque) in the early 1920s, but this museum did not play a central role at the time. The establishment of the Rockefeller Museum in Jerusalem in 1930 followed.⁴ This museum was set up to house some of the Palestinian archaeological findings from excavations run by

2. The British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem was particularly active in that period.

3. The Israeli Authority later applied this same law, with small amendments by the Jordanians after 1967.

4. Renamed the Palestinian Antiquities Museum in 1966 under the Jordanian regime, and again renamed as Rockefeller Museum by Israel after the occupation of East Jerusalem 1967.

foreign archaeological teams. The high interest in cultural heritage in Palestine was also reflected in the establishment of the Pro-Jerusalem Society in 1918s. The Pro-Jerusalem Society was a group of foreign nationals living in Jerusalem and some local residents who formed a society for the protection of Palestinian cultural heritage and for the promotion and encouragement of local crafts. A substantial collection of Palestinian costumes and ethnographic artefacts were gathered by the society with the idea of exhibiting them in the Rockefeller Museum. The 1948 war prevented the implementation of this project. The collection was safely kept until the 1970s when members of the Society in London decided to give the collection to Dar at-Tifl Society in Jerusalem, and is now exhibited in an ethnographic museum.

There were few Palestinians who were working then in the Palestinian Department of Antiquities, most worked there as clerics since they did not have the education and experience to perform research and publish. The exception was Dimitri Baramki, who worked as an inspector at the Department of Antiquities, and published numerous articles in the Department's Quarterly Journal.⁵

It was during this period between 1905 and 1946 that Dr. Tawfiq Canaan gathered his unique collection (1400 items) of Palestinian amulets, talismans, and other objects related to healing and superstitious beliefs.⁶ His library and icon collections, which were of great value, were ransacked and stolen from his house in the Musrara neighbourhood (West Jerusalem) in 1948. The amulet collection is considered one of the rarest of its kind in the region and was thoroughly documented by Canaan himself. Canaan also published numerous articles on cultural heritage, documenting social customs and beliefs.⁷

5. Dimitri Baramki became a professor of Archeology at the American University of Beirut, and his publication report on *Khirbet al Mafjar* (Hisham's Palace) is a main reference on the subject.

6. Now owned by Birzeit University since 1996, as a gift from Canaan's family. 2002 had witnessed the inauguration of the collection in form of an exhibition and catalogue.

7. "Aberglaube und Volksmedizin in Lande der Bibel" (1914), "Tasit

1.3. Palestine after the establishment of the State of Israel and under the Jordanian Rule (1948 - 1967)

In the aftermath of the collapse of Palestinian society, following the 1948 war (called the *Nakbah*, or catastrophe in Arabic) and the establishment of the State of Israel, sovereignty over Mandatory Palestine was divided among a group of countries: Jordan, Egypt and Israel. The recent history of Palestine, as marked by the 1948 and 1967 political events, triggered the destruction and dispersal of many aspects of Palestinian cultural heritage.

The expulsion of Palestinians in 1948 from their homeland resulted in the expropriation of hundreds of towns and villages. These events resulted in the exploitation, destruction, and manipulation of the existing Palestinian cultural heritage. Hundreds of villages with their typical Palestinian architectural character were demolished or eradicated, serving to minimize memory of the history and existence of Palestinians on the land. The Palestinian Department of Antiquities was annexed to the Jordanian Archaeological Department, which took the task of managing surveys and issuing licenses for foreign archaeological missions working in the West Bank and Jerusalem.

1.4. Israeli Occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (1967 - present)

During this period, Israelis dominated the archaeological activities in Palestine and discouraged the development of local expertise. Restrictions were imposed on Palestinians preventing them from carrying out local excavations, while the Israeli archaeologists had a free hand in exploring historical sites that asserted the biblical history of the Jews in Palestine.⁸ Jewish history was emphasized, often at

er Radjfe" - Fear Cups (1923) Journal of Palestine Oriental Studies (JPOS) 3:122- 131, "Arabic Magic Bowls"(1936) JPOS 16: 79-127, "The Palestine Arab House: its Architecture and Folklore" (1932) JPOS 12: 223-247.

8. Even Israeli government ministers and officials were involved in illegally excavating archeological sites, most known was Moshe Dayan.

the expense of other historical periods. Furthermore, archaeological findings of West Bank and Jerusalem digs were confiscated and handed over to the Israeli Department of Antiquities or to museums and academic institutions.

After the 1967 occupation, national interest in preserving material culture rekindled in Palestine, as a way to affirm national identity and attachment to the land. This “awakening” arose in the 1970s to safeguard what remained of local heritage, historical buildings, monuments, archaeological sites and remains of ethnography, personal belongings, art objects, etc.

Initially started by Palestinian individuals,⁹ this interest in salvaging, promoting and collecting all sorts of “heritage” objects, mainly embroidered costumes, later developed into a more structured framework.¹⁰ In the absence of a governmental body, it was NGOs, mainly women’s charitable societies and other national establishments, that initiated this drive.¹¹ In the plastic arts, symbols of Palestinian cultural heritage, pottery, embroidery, architecture, designs and landscape became intrinsic to the themes chosen by the artists. These symbols emphasized issues of national identity, pride, belonging and deep rootedness to one’s own history and traditions.

A few specialized academic programs were developed and departments established in the field of archaeology and architecture. Birzeit University in particular was a pioneer having established in 1975 the Palestinian Archaeological Institute, the

Shapira, Ran. “Digging up the dirt on Dayan.” Haaretz. 10 June 2004. Web. 10 December 2011. <http://www.haaretz.com/digging-up-the-dirt-on-dayan-1.136613>

9. Asia and Sophie Halaby in Jerusalem, Mrs. Mansour in Ramallah, Wadad Qawar in Amman.

10. It was often very difficult to trace objects and their present locations. Sometimes very significant objects were hidden with families or individuals and thus kept from being recognized as important moveable heritage.

11. Ina’ash al Usrah, Women’s Unions, in Ramallah, Bethlehem, etc.

first specialized Palestinian academic institution to take on this task. Al-Najah and Al-Quds Universities also developed teaching and degree programs in archaeology.

1.5. The Palestinian National Authority PNA (1994 - present)

With the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority, many attempts were made to organize and contain the cultural heritage situation, which was in need of urgent and structured action. Both the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and the Ministry of Culture (Directorate of Cultural Heritage and Museum Department) made plans to invigorate research and find strategies for the promotion and the safeguarding of cultural property under the jurisdiction of the PNA.

Inventories and lists and other data were collected as a way of starting a national inventory, however, the political situation delayed the completion of this inventory. Several museums were established in the West Bank, rather than one main national museum. In addition, many archaeological sites were rehabilitated. In spite of tens of archaeological excavations conducted by the PNA and Palestinian academic institutions, this field is still in need of further development and more social engagement.

In architecture, the establishment of the PNA meant that Palestinians gained control over their own towns and villages built on 17% of the total land (referred to as area A) while the remaining areas (B and C), constituting 83% of the land, were left under Israeli control.¹² This automatically meant a major danger for the cultural heritage located in area A.

In the first stage, the PNA gave the deprived Palestinian communities complete freedom to build within area A, accompanied by the flow of considerable private capital from abroad, resulting in an unprecedented rate of construction. The land available for new construction was limited to PNA areas, leading to land speculation. Historic old towns and villages were suddenly sitting on extremely

12. <http://www.prb.org/Articles/2002/TheWestBankandGazaAPopulationProfile.aspx>

valuable lots, which were potential sites for new developments. As old historic buildings were being destroyed, there was a dramatic change in the physical fabric of most Palestinian towns and villages.

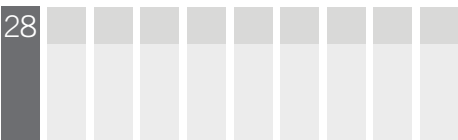
This was an irreversible loss but fortunately the euphoria for new construction ended in the late 1990s as the political scene deteriorated and the economic situation changed. Public sector funds seemed to be considerably controlled and the euphoria of political and economic transformation settled. As people became more concerned with survival and less driven by the construction craze, some local authorities developed more awareness of the issues of heritage conservation and the situation began to gain more balance and control. Cultural preservation has not achieved full momentum in Palestine, but the PNA, the private sector, and the community will hopefully activate their efforts after having been through turbulent times in the last few years.

Palestine offers many opportunities for investment in cultural heritage resources. This investment should form part of mainstream development. The Palestinian people are shouldered with the difficult task of preserving the heritage of Palestine, which is of great value not only to the Palestinians but also to the world community at large.

2. Archaeological Sites in Palestine

In spite of the problems that face Palestinians in understanding the archaeological exploration history, methodologies, intentions and tasks, Palestine is still exceptional in containing thousands of archaeological sites, some of which are internationally known. Some of these sites have changed historical assumptions and theories and added new dimensions to international cultural history. Most of the Palestinian cities, towns and villages have beneath their historic centres, or very close to them, archaeological sites reflecting their cultural continuity, very few of which have been fully excavated. Hundreds of sites are still awaiting further exploration, which could dramatically change the cultural history of Palestine.

Archaeological sites in Palestine contributed in different forms to developing an international scholarly approach in archaeological research and methodology. Human history and metaphysical and religious beliefs have unfolded in Palestine and this has proven an important ground for research. Palestine has the potential, due to this long experience, to lead the field in archaeological exploration. The number of archaeological and historical sites, in relation to the size of the area, is tremendous. On the one hand, it is a heavy task to manage this heritage, but on the other, Palestinians are fortunate to live in a country with has such cultural depth. This heritage has to be considered as an opportunity for socioeconomic development and intellectual discourse.



TRAIL ROUTES AND DESCRIPTIONS



Re-Walk Heritage: Ramallah Highlands Trail offers a walking route and a driving route with diverse scenery, architectural components, and cultural exposure and activities catering to diverse interests and levels of physical ability. Below are suggested uses of this trails.

HIKING TRAILS

Long hike (30 km):

Begins in Silwad and ends in Ras Karkar, or vice versa

Stay overnight in Ramallah if starting in Ras Karkar or in et-Taiyiba if starting in Silwad. Suggested overnight Jifna or Bir Zeit if hiking the trail over two days.

From Silwad to Ras Karkar

Difficulty rating: ■■■■■

The Ramallah Highlands Trail is a 30 km hiking trail, appropriate to be hiked over two days. The trail passes through pristine valleys with stunning views of ancient terraced landscapes, impressive archaeological ruins, and interesting flora and fauna. As the walking trail is not yet marked, GPS is recommended, along with a good sense of direction.

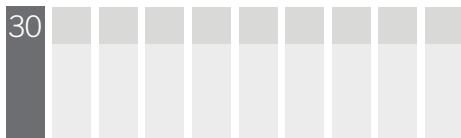
Primarily wide dirt paths with secure footing. Moderate elevation change. Recommended especially in the spring and fall seasons, March-June and September-November.

Day 1: Silwad to Birzeit (15 km)

The path begins in the eastern



• wadi qeis





outskirts of Silwad and winds through Wadi Qeis among ancient olive groves and Qusur (peasants' watchtowers). After 1.7 km, a small footpath to the right leads to an ancient wine press (optional detour).

Emerging from the valley after 2.7 km, the trail passes under highway 60, an Israeli bypass road. Fifteen meters after the underpass, the trail turns left on a dirt 4X4 trail which ascends Jabal (Mount) Faqqara overlooking the historic caravan route ('Oyun al-Haramiyye –the Thieves' Springs area). After 1 km, the trail switches back to the left near a grove of huge olive trees.

Continue through olive groves up to Burj el-Bardawil, a Crusader structure with Ottoman additions. Walk down the southwest side of the hill past a well-preserved Qasr. Descend the hill, walking toward the town of Yabrud. Before the town, at a round cement cistern, turn right and continue through the wadi (optional detour: visit the town of Yabrud).

On the other side of the wadi, when you reach a paved road near



a Bedouin community, cross the road and walk across the stream of water on a small bridge. Cut up the hill ahead to the electric line where you will find a dirt road. Turn right on the dirt road and continue along the power lines until you reach a T in the road.

Turn right, following the power line, then take a quick left to walk between buildings. Continue until you come across an abandoned housing project. Turn right before the empty houses, then a quick left between the rows of houses. Continue through Wadi el-Hammam on a dirt road. When you reach a paved road, turn left and then right on al-Bayader Rd. Arrive Bir Zeit historic centre.

Day 2: Bir Zeit to Ras Karkar (15 km)

Follow roads or take a taxi through Bir Zeit to the university. Begin Birzeit University West Gate parking lot. Climb down rocky field to main road below. At paved road, turn right then turn left onto dirt road and walk down through olive groves and Bedouin community into Wadi Matar.



When the wadi path comes to a T with a fence at another small Bedouin community, turn right and continue down Wadi Qiniya, where water seasonally flows. Follow the water (or dry streambed) and do not turn off onto any of the dirt roads that climb out of the wadi.

Follow the water through the wadi until you arrive to an old mill and greenhouse. At the greenhouse, leave the water and take the dirt path upward to the right. Stay straight on this dirt road, which is briefly marked with blue paint markers. When the blue markers turn left, continue straight. When you reach a fence, turn left and continue uphill.

Leave the dirt road and take the footpath upward to meet a paved road. Turn right and walk toward the Palestinian village of el-Janiya. Turn left at the sign to el-Janiya (road blocked for cars). Follow the road through el-Janiya to its historic centre. Follow road straight up and over el-Janiya and into the town of Ras Karkar. Continue uphill to visit Al Samhan Castle, a restored palace from the Ottoman period.



Average hikes:

Start in Silwad and end in Bir Zeit or Jifna (staying the night) (14 km).
Start in Bir Zeit and end in Ras Karkar (16 km).

Short hikes:

Start in Silwad and end in 'Ein Siniya (7 km).
Start in Ras Karkar and end in Ramallah (9 km).

2. DRIVING ROUTE

A customized driving itinerary including sites in Ramallah and el-Bira, Birzeit, Jifna, and et-Taiyiba. Visits to Jalazone Refugee Camp, Dura el-Qar', 'Ein Siniya, and Silwad.

From Ras Karkar to et-Taiyiba

The driving version of the trail is 40 km long and can be driven in one day. It connects four highlighted sites: Ras Karkar, Bir Zeit, Jalazone Refugee Camp and et-Taiyiba, with a number of optional detours. The drive to Ras Karkar from Ramallah takes 15 to 20



minutes (barring traffic or checkpoints), and then to et-Taiyiba is 25 minutes. Et-Taiyiba is also easily linked to Jericho and the Jordan Valley (a 25-minute drive).

There are accommodation options in Jericho, et-Taiyiba, Bir Zeit, Jifna, and Ramallah.

The trail passes through diverse landscapes, attraction points, and picnicking sites.

The trail starts in Ras Karkar where visitors can enjoy Al Samhan Castle and surrounding historic centre. Buses would have to stop close to the entrance of the village, while cars can drive up to the castle entrance and park in the small plaza there. From Ras Karkar it is recommended to drive north on road 450 and then southeast on road 465, and then turn right off the road before the 'Atara Bridge to Bir Zeit.

The trail offers several detour and stop locations. Directly after Ras Karkar one can visit the Maqamat (tombs/shrines, singular:

Maqam) of en-Nabi Aiyub and en-Nabi ‘Annir. This can be followed by a possible detour through Deir ‘Ammar village and refugee camp as well as Maqam en-Nabi Gheith. After Deir ‘Ammar, the street winds through an unpopulated area with many plants. Follow the street past the Wadi ez-Zarqa spring and valley (a branch of Wadi en-Nattouf), and by Maqam en-Nabi Salih, Umm Safa and Jibiya woodlands and Maqam esh-Sheikh Qatrawani in ‘Atara (all sites are possible detours fit for hiking and picnicking).

In Bir Zeit, visiting the historic centre (restaurants available) is best done on foot, parking vehicles just outside. From the historic centre, walk west up the main road that passes by the Latin Patriarchate Church and visit the old Birzeit University Campus, or drive this road and visit architecturally significant houses built at the turn and throughout the middle of the 20th century. The street turns south to the main entrance of Bir Zeit where the road to Jifna turns west (optional visit to the historic centre and lunch in one of the many restaurants). An optional detour before turning to Jifna is to follow the main street (southeast) that goes to Ramallah and to take a right

• old mill stairs at wadi el-dilb



• looking back at wadi el-dilb



turn up the hill to Khirbat Bir Zeit then go back to main street and continue to the new Birzeit University Campus.

From Jifna, drive up the hill (a right turn) to Jalazone Refugee Camp where you can park in or around the central plaza (near the Martyrs' Memorial) and walk around the camp (notice the original shelters built by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency UNRWA in 1953 and the camp's spatial organization based on military camp layouts. Visit the popular committee and the central plaza coffee houses).

From Jalazone, drive to Dura el-Qar' through a junction that leads also to 'Ein Siniya (optional detours: Dura el-Qar' historic centre, agricultural landscape, ancient water cisterns and old irrigation systems, al-Husseini Mansion in 'Ein Siniya). The road goes up the hill to Yabrud, and then continues to Silwad. In Yabrud, visit the historic centre, pass by the village's Holy Tree and walk around Maqam esh-Sheikh Yousef. Silwad is famous for its historic centre and also for the high concentration of agricultural watchtowers



• looking back from al-janiya

(Qusur) in its landscape. While along the road to et-Taiyiba from Silwad, take a look to the left where you cannot miss Tell 'Asur with a radar station on its summit. This hill of 1,016 m above sea level is one of the highest in the central regions of the West Bank. Do not walk up Tell 'Asur as it is currently used as an Israeli military base.

The driving trail ends in et-Taiyiba, which you will be entering from its eastern entrance (via Deir Jarir). On your right you can see an abandoned military station built during the British Mandate (same period as al-Muqata'a in Ramallah- although much smaller in scale following the same style that has become known as the Tegart Fort named after British police officer and engineer Sir Charles Tegart, who designed them in 1938.

Drive up to the historic centre, park the vehicle at the outskirts of the centre and walk around (streets are inaccessible by cars). You can then hop back into the vehicle and visit the ancient Saint George Church, the Taybeh beer brewery, and a pottery factory.

TRAIL SITES





Qalandiya

قَلَنْدِيَا

Location: 10 km north of Jerusalem.

Altitude: 760 meters above sea level.

Area: 3940 dunums.

Population: 1,445 inhabitants in 2010 in the village, 11,000 inhabitants in 2010 in the refugee camp. ¹³

Neighbouring towns and villages: Rafat, Kafr 'Aqab, er-Ram, Dahiyat el-Bareed, Beit Hanina, Judaira, Bir Nabala.

The Palestinian village of Qalandiya is located on the main road connecting the cities of Jerusalem and Ramallah. Qalandiya has a small historic centre with 20 buildings, half of which are abandoned. ¹³

The name Qalandiya refers not only to the village, but also to a former airport, a nearby refugee camp, and one of the main Israeli checkpoints into Jerusalem. Qalandiya is the starting point of this heritage trail, especially for international tourists coming from Jerusalem who must cross through Qalandiya checkpoint in order to join the trail.

13. Riwaq Register of Historic Buildings in Palestine: www.riwaqregister.org



Jerusalem Airport:

Jerusalem Airport, also known as Qalandiya Airport, was established in the 1920s by the British Mandate as a small military base known as “Kolundia Airfield.” By the end of the British Mandate in 1948, the airport came under the control of Jordan. In the early 1950s, the Jordanian government turned the airfield into a civil airport, erected the airport building and gave it the name Jerusalem Airport. In 1967, the airport fell under Israeli control and then

was reopened in 1969 for Israeli domestic use only. The airport is currently an Israeli military compound and has not been used for aviation since 2000.

The Qalandiya Airport terminal bears the distinction of being the only existing airport terminal designed and built in Palestine. It was therefore socially and architecturally significant and unique, and a gateway to the outside world until 1967. Many famous actors, singers, religious figures, and politicians landed in the Jerusalem Airport, such as Egyptian actor Omar esh-Sharif, Syrian-Egyptian musician Farid el-Atrash, American actress Katherine Hepburn, and King Hussein of Jordan.

The building is composed of a central cylindrical section with a control tower on top and two wings. The central section was comprised of an entrance, a souvenir shop, a money exchange office, and a coffee shop (on the first floor) with vertical architectural elements and large openings. The left wing hosted airline counters as well as the royal room used mainly by the late King Hussein of



Jordan. The right wing included the customs office, the departure and transit area, passport control, tourist police, a post office and the health and fire departments.¹⁴

Currently, there is no Palestinian airport in Palestine, aside from the Yasser Arafat International Airport in Gaza, which was largely destroyed by Israeli air strikes in 2001- 2002. The only way to travel abroad without a permit into Israel is through Jordan's Queen Alia International Airport in Amman. What could be a one-hour taxi ride to the airport can take up to two days of travel to cross the border to and from Jordan.

Qalandiya Refugee Camp:

Qalandiya refugee camp, like the other 19 refugee camps in the West Bank, came about as a result of the displacement of 850,000 Palestinian refugees in 1948-1949. Qalandiya camp was established on 0.35 km² of land leased from the Jordanian government by UNRWA.¹⁵ The camp has a total population of 11,000 registered

14. Awwad, N. "In Search of Jerusalem Airport." *Jerusalem Quarterly*, Autumn 2008: 51-63.

15. <http://www.unrwa.org/etemplate.php?id=119>



refugees. The camp is an extremely dense area that lacks basic infrastructure, which fosters many social problems among its residents. The camp's original residents came from 52 villages in the areas of Lydd, Ramleh, Haifa, Jerusalem and Hebron.¹⁶

Qalandiya Checkpoint and Separation Wall:

To enter Ramallah coming from Jerusalem, visitors must pass through Qalandiya checkpoint,

one of the largest Israeli military checkpoints in the occupied West Bank.

The separation wall, checkpoints, concrete roadblocks and barriers, military camps zones, Israeli settlements and bypass roads are material evidence of the Israeli occupation. These structures demonstrate architecture and infrastructure used as a tool of military and political control. This system of restrictions impedes Palestinian freedom of movement, forcing people to spend more time commuting between cities, towns and villages. Palestinians are disconnected from neighbouring towns and the larger world, creating islands of detached lands or cantons. When closed, checkpoints can physically isolate and disconnect Palestinian built-up areas from each other.¹⁷

In the case of Qalandiya, the checkpoint has gradually become a border crossing that resembles an airport terminal. Getting to the other side of the border crossing, the scene changes dramatically from the newly

16. OCHA: Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, UN.

17. Weizman, Eyal. *The Hollow Land: Israel's Architecture of Occupation*. London and New York: Verso, 2007.

paved and planted roads of Israeli neighbourhoods, to the uncertain areas of Qalandiya and Kafr 'Aqab. The areas on both sides of the checkpoint have lost spatial and social connections to each other.

Clogged traffic languishes, while pedestrians walk through chicken-coop-like passages to get to the soldier checking ID cards and luggage from behind fortified walls and small bulletproof glass windows. The checkpoint prevents Palestinians from commuting to Jerusalem and Israel unless they have an Israeli permit, which is extremely difficult to acquire. The checkpoint blocks the main road to Jerusalem, creating one of the most congested areas in the West Bank. This is because the road, although diverted, is also the main road that connects the northern and middle parts of the West Bank to the south. The former airport terminal has changed position and has become a ground border rather than an aerial one.

The construction of Israel's separation wall began on June 16, 2002. The wall zone consists of a series of 8-meter-high prefabricated concrete slabs, trenches, electrified fences, watchtowers, surveillance cameras, and military access roads. Currently, approximately two-thirds of the planned route has been constructed as of 2010. When completed, the wall's total length will be 723 km, twice the length of the 1949 Armistice Line (also known as the Green Line) between Israel and the West Bank. Approximately 84% of the wall has been constructed inside the West Bank. In addition to the 250,000 Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem, approximately 35,000 Palestinians will be entrapped between the wall and the Green Line, and therefore need special permits to cross through checkpoints and gates.

Although the huge and imposing wall creates visual and physical blockage, the wall has also been used as a platform for graffiti artists to express their opposition through art and written messages. The wall and checkpoints are material representations of Israeli occupation and therefore are part of the Palestinian people's recent heritage and memory.



• qalandiya checkpoint, the wall. idioms film © riwaq archive



Ramallah & el-Bira رَامَ اللّٰهَ وَالْبِيرَةَ

Location: 15 km north of Jerusalem.

Altitude: 860 meters above sea level.

Area: 38,750 dunums (16,344 dunums in Ramallah and 22,406 dunums in el-Bira)

Population: 66,000 inhabitants in 2010 (27,000 in Ramallah and 39,000 in el-Bira)

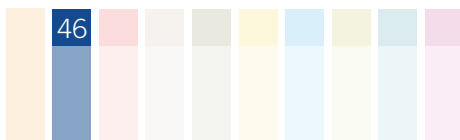
Neighbouring towns and villages: Rafat, Kafr 'Aqab, Surda, Beitunia, 'Ein Qiniya.

The Historic Centre of Ramallah:

The historic centre of Ramallah is located on a hilltop to the west of the new city centre (located on a higher hill). The compact groups of historic buildings built in grey limestone blend naturally with the surrounding landscape and form the traditional fabric of the historic centre.

The historic centre includes 208 historic buildings, 67% of which are composed of one storey and 80% are in use mainly for residential and commercial purposes. All buildings inside the historic centre date back to the late Ottoman Period.

As in other historic centres in Palestine, kinship and gender relations influenced the organization of the historic centre. There were five



Ramallah and el-Bira

Historic Centres in the central highlands of Palestine are usually located on a high ground overlooking valleys and agricultural fields. The compact groups of historic buildings built with grey limestone blend naturally with the surrounding rocky landscape and stone terraces planted with olive and fruit trees. Traditionally, historic centres were surrounded by private gardens (*hawakir*), which connected them with the surrounding fields. Currently, many of these gardens are used for new buildings or are neglected. This settlement pattern was determined by the fear from outside raids and reflected the scarcity of fertile land in the hilly areas since building was not allowed on valuable agricultural lands in the plains and valleys. Buildings were constructed according to individual needs rather than organized town planning.

The physical and spatial organization of historic centres, including its division into private and public domains, was influenced by kinship and gender relations. The *hamayel* (patrilineal descent groups) were grouped into separate quarters bearing their names. Historic centres were divided into three main domains: public, semi-private, and private. While alleys, guest houses and water springs were considered public, courtyards were considered semi-private, and houses were the most private spaces of all. Public areas accommodated the communal needs of the villagers and were dominated by men. Guesthouses (*madafat*), usually situated in central locations, were centres for male gatherings, entertainment, and a place to welcome visitors. Natural springs (*'oyun*, singular *'ein*), on the other hand, were spaces for women's gatherings. Women used to fetch water for domestic use. Another women's gathering place was the bread oven (*tabun*). Other communal spaces in historic centres include the oil press (*al-badd*) and mill, the central plaza (*saha*) as well as churches and mosques.

The courtyard (*al-housh*) was a semi-private family space defined by a group of surrounding buildings connected with an alley by a path or an arched doorway. This was the space where women performed their daily work and mixed with other male relatives and neighbours without restrictions. The courtyard was also the most common location for rainwater cisterns. The most private space was the interior of the house. With one small high window, a ventilation hole, and a low entrance, the house interior remained relatively dark. The walls of the house were

more than one meter thick creating an efficient system for heat and sound insulation. The internal composition of the one-roomed peasant house reflects the social and practical needs of peasant life. The cross vaulted room, with an average internal areas of 40 meters square, was divided into three major areas: the family living space (*mastabeh*) and the food storage space (*rawiyeh*), separated from the *mastabeh* by a series of grain storage bins made of mud and straw (*khawabi*), both occupying the upper level. The lower level of the house (*qa' al-bayt*) was used for livestock and farming equipment.

main hamayel (patrilineal descent groups) in Ramallah that were grouped into separate quarters bearing their names: Ibrahim, Jerias, Shaqara, Hassan, and Haddad.

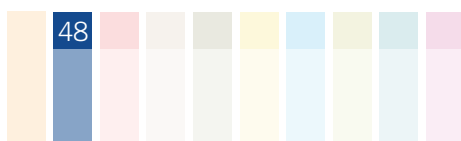
Ramallah has 163 single historic buildings built between the early to mid 20th century scattered throughout the historic centre, which demonstrate typical aspects of recent Palestinian architecture detailed below.

Al-Manara:

Ramallah and el-Bira's central plaza and commercial district is known as al-Manara. It has been a space for political demonstrations and representation since the Israeli occupation of the West Bank in 1967. In her article "Al-Manara Square: Monumental Architecture and Power", Adania Shibli provides an excellent overview of the history of al-Manara illustrating its political role and the dramatic waves of change it has witnessed over the past 100 years.¹⁸

At the end of the 18th century, the road connecting the two villages of Ramallah and el-Bira was a 1.5 km dirt road mostly used by shepherds. In 1902, the Ottoman governor of Jerusalem decreed that Ramallah would become an administrative centre comprised of more than 30 neighbouring villages. An Ottoman administrator, assisted by a large staff of judges, officers, and policemen, was appointed to turn the area into a central destination. This

18. Shibli, Adania. "Al-Manara Square: Monumental Architecture and Power." *Jerusalem Quarterly*, Vol. 7, no. 1, p.52.





• al-manara square

development contributed to a sense of stability that resulted in the growth and expansion of construction and commerce. In 1905, a road connecting the cities of Nablus and Jerusalem, which passed through the current site of al-Manara Square, was expanded and paved. In 1908, Ramallah was designated as a city and a municipal council was appointed.

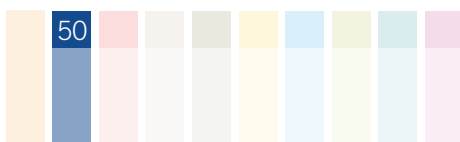
The British authorities kept Ramallah as an administrative centre even after the fall of the Ottoman Empire. The name al-Manara (meaning “the light post”) was born in 1935 when Ramallah and el-Bira were connected to an electricity grid and their streetlights subsequently operated from a switchboard placed on a pole planted on the dirt road that separated them. The Ramallah Municipality commissioned a monument from a Ramallah artist in 1946, which replaced the pole in 1951. The artist carved the heads of five lions and placed them on a stone pillar, around which were set fountains and flower beds, all encircled by a metal railing. The five lions represented the five Ramallah families, seen as the city’s ‘original’ inhabitants.

Single Historic Buildings (early to mid 20th century)

Traditional architecture and settlement patterns were tremendously transformed in Palestine at the turn of the 20th century. This change was determined by many socioeconomic factors. Migration, mainly to the USA and South American countries, brought an influx of money from relatives who emigrated and sent some of their earnings back to relatives in Palestine. Christian missionaries provided villages with services (schools, clinics, etc.) and thus created more jobs and financial opportunities for locals. Moreover, the British rule provided security and job opportunities under its administration. As a result, local people started to leave the historic core to live in larger unattached buildings surrounded by a relatively large plot of land planted with vegetables and trees which overlooked the surrounding fields.

Basic services such as bathrooms and kitchens were integrated within buildings. New building technologies, mainly reinforced concrete and steel I-beams, were lighter materials which made it easier to build houses with multiple storeys. Houses were built mainly with two storeys and high ceilings with an internal or external staircase that was integrated in the original house design. Despite this, the availability of new building technologies did not eliminate the use of traditional techniques in building, mainly the cross vault. In most cases, the lower floor was built with cross vaults whereas the upper floor's ceilings were built with concrete and steel I-beams. Openings increased in number and size, reflecting a more secure environment, offering better surveillance of surrounding fields, and enhancing the aesthetics of the house. Doors with a protruding stone frame became taller, topped with a one-piece lintel (*saqouf*) and an arched window (*hilala*). Written and/or ornamental inscriptions also became common in lintels, often identifying the date of construction.

The monument stood until 1982 when the Israeli military governor of Ramallah, who replaced the Ramallah Municipal Council in 1967, issued a decree to demolish al-Manara. Despite its physical destruction, the area of al-Manara retained its name and importance among local residents. Demonstrations against the Israeli occupation continued to commence from al-Manara, and many confrontations with the Israeli army occurred there.



In 1997, the Palestinian National Authority took over the control of Ramallah and el-Bira as stipulated in the Oslo Accords of 1993. Ramallah experienced a large wave of construction and was treated as the de facto capital of the PNA. Governmental as well as non-governmental organizations took home in Ramallah. Residential neighbourhoods started to expand as many people from West Bank and Gaza cities and villages as well as a number of Palestinian returnees settled in Ramallah for work and to attend the renowned Birzeit University. Commercial activities were revived, especially in the city centre, and a large number of vehicles and people continuously clogged the site of al-Manara.

Over three years, the area was subject to different experiments to control the extensive traffic until a monument inspired by the original monument was constructed in 2000. The new design consisted of a stone pillar placed at the centre of the monument, topped by a lamp. At the pillar's base were eight fountains, currently not in operation, that meant to represent the eight Ramallah families, again those considering themselves the original inhabitants of the city. The number of families was increased to incorporate three more families that had arrived in the nineteenth century: the families of al-'Ajlouni, Hishmah, and al-'Araj. Placed around the pillar and fountains, were four lions in various poses: sitting, sleeping, standing, and with cubs. The element of the lions was intended to represent pride and power.

Al-Muqata'a:

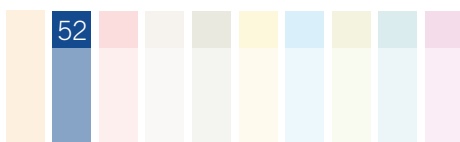
Following the start of the 1936-1939 Palestinian uprising, the British authorities decided to construct al-Muqata'a, an independent compound housing all of the administrative offices of the British authorities as well as a prison, standing approximately 800 meters from al-Manara. Consequently, all roads leading to and from the compound were widened to facilitate easy movement for military vehicles. Al-Muqata'a is built in the Tegar Fort style of militarized police "fortress" constructed throughout Palestine during the British Mandatory period. The forts are named after British police officer



and engineer Sir Charles Tegart, who designed them in 1938. Tens of the reinforced concrete block structures were built to the same basic plan, both along the so-called “Tegart’s wall” of the northern border with Lebanon and Syria and at strategic intersections in Palestine.

Since 1997, al-Muqata’a has been used as headquarters to the high PNA leadership. During Israeli military operation Defensive Shield in April 2002, the Israelis raided al-Muqata’a and besieged Yasser Arafat, then-President of the PNA, and as a result, large parts of the Muqata’a were demolished. Yasser Arafat died in Paris in 2004, but his body was returned to Ramallah to be buried at al-Muqata’a, a temporary burial place until he could be moved to Jerusalem where he wanted to be buried.

In 2006, a Yasser Arafat mausoleum was built along with an adjacent mosque, designed by renowned Jordanian architect of Palestinian origin Ja’far Tuqan. Since then, al-Muqata’a has undergone intensive renovations and construction of new buildings where large parts of





the British buildings were demolished or covered with additions. Today, al-Muqata'a houses the Yasser Arafat Museum, also designed by Architect Ja'far Tuqan.

Ramallah Urban Walking Tour:

This architectural urban tour showcases modern buildings mostly from the late Ottoman, British Mandate, and Jordanian Periods that represent important stages of the social and political history of Ramallah throughout the 20th century. The construction boom after the Oslo Accords changed the Palestinian urban and rural spaces dramatically. The increasingly expanding construction industry left little of the recent architectural heritage of the city untouched. Many historic buildings are taken down to make way for new multiple-storey developments. The following are highlights of the historical buildings which remain.

- 1. The first Ramallah Municipality building (1935):** in the historic centre of Ramallah, one of the first buildings to be built using reinforced concrete skeleton system. Hosted a produce

market (*hisbeh*) at the bottom floor and the municipality offices on the upper floor. The first building to respond to urban planning considerations with the curvature in plan that follows the pavement.

2. **Ed-Dirbas house, Beit ed-Dirbas (1902):** The first single historic house to be built outside of the old city fabric and using the Liwan (central hall) house model rather than the traditional peasant house. Modern features include interior stairs, I-beams, modern kitchen and bathroom, red tiled roof.
3. **The Archaeological Department at the Ministry of Antiquities' Museum, Dar ez-Zaru (1910):** a hybrid between the traditional peasant house and the Liwan house.
4. **Shoemakers' market, Suq el-Kundarjieh (1901-1910):** a series of shops that represent of the growing commercial activities during that time.
5. **Salah Building (1926):** one of the earliest examples of the commercial/apartment building complexes. A prototype that was copied in the years to follow in and around Al-Manara with shops on the lower floor and a staircase serving multiple apartments on the two upper floors. Modern features: balconies, the absence of the red tiled roofs.
6. **The Grand Hotel (1931):** The Grand Hotel was the first licensed hotel in Ramallah in 1931. The Grand Hotel started as the Odeh family house in 1906 and was built over several stages. The hotel's history reflects the complexity of the modern political history of Palestine. The golden days of the hotel were during Jordanian rule (1951-1967) when meetings, seminars, performances, and concerts were held, and Arab and international celebrities and public figures stayed at the hotel.
7. **Al-Muntaza St. (expanded in the mid 20th century):** the Ramallah Post Office, as-Salti house, and Attallah building.

- 8. Ramallah Municipality and Park and Tourist Information Centre.**
- 9. Khalil Sakakini Cultural Centre, Dar Salah (1926):** a 2.5 story house (2 stories and an attic). Liwan house plan. Modern features: veranda with large 3-point arches, cropped octagon shaped room, red tiles roof, and wooden ceilings in the attic.
- 10. Jerusalem Water Undertaking, Beit es-Sarafandi (1922):** used as the Jordanian military guards' headquarters after 1967.
- 11. Yasser Arafat Square (2011) (formerly the Clock Square) and the Central building.**
- 12. Al-Manara (the light house) (1935):** surrounded by mostly early-to mid-20th century buildings. Today it's the twin cities' centre and main shopping district.
- 13. Hanania and Kharraz building (1971):** International style showcasing the first elevator in Ramallah.
- 14. Al-Hambra Palace Hotel, Dar el-Bateh (1926):** a four-storey building, the only one built with more than 2.5 storeys before 1940. Modern features: cropped octagonal verandas, stair case, and red tiled roof.
- 15. Al-Muqata'a (British Mandate compound and prison 1936):** Yasser Arafat's Mausoleum and Mosque (2006), and the Yasser Arafat Museum (2011).





9



10



11



12



13



14



15



1

Optional visits to archaeological sites (by taxi):

1. **Tell en-Nasbeh:** ruins from the Iron Age (1200-332 BCE) and Mamluk Khan (1291-1516): at the southern entrance of the city.
2. **Khirbat el-Bira:** remains of a Byzantine (325-638) and Crusader Church (1099-1187): in el-Bira's old town.
3. **Khan el-Bira:** a Crusader caravanserai (1099-1187).



2



3

Ramallah and el-Bira

RAMALLAH'S MODERN ARCHITECTURE IN THE MID 20TH CENTURY

Iyad Issa

New Socio-Economic and Political Dynamics

As in other Palestinian cities, the huge influx of refugees from the 1948 expulsion of Palestinians dramatically changed the sociopolitical and economic order of urban life and reoriented Palestinian cities' in the West Bank away from coastal cities towards Jordan, and to a lesser extent Syria and Lebanon.

Refugees sparked political, social and economic activities where they settled. Between 1948-1967, new socioeconomic dynamics emerged in Ramallah and were reflected in urban space, building typologies, and styles. Most refugees who fled to Ramallah resided in refugee camps built at the city's outskirts, while many came from urban areas such as Jaffa, Ludd and Ramleh and settled in the city itself. The loss of coastal cities put more pressure on Ramallah to provide alternatives.

During that period, Ramallah transformed from quaint small town to vibrant urban centre. Several new city centre blocks and neighbourhoods developed organically, especially in the area surrounding al-Manara.

Architecturally, the new building technologies, primarily introduced during the British Mandate Period, allowed for new and creative possibilities in architectural forms. The use of reinforced concrete, flat roofs, and large openings became more prominent. Led by pioneering professionals, architects, and engineers who studied abroad, new architectural styles influenced by modern Western architecture were developed away from traditional vernacular architecture. According to Bsharah and Jubeh¹⁹, façades became simpler and symmetric due to economic urgencies and a quicker

19 Jubeh, Nazmi & Bshara, Khaldun. Ramallah: Architecture and History: Riwaq & Institute for Palestine Studies, 1999.



construction process, which was an international trend instigated by World War II. New typologies were introduced such as multi-storey mixed-use buildings, public buildings, and cinemas.

Urban Expansion and a New Commercial Centre

During the 1950s and 1960s, commercial growth around the historic centre of Ramallah originally continued to expand and intensify. Several multi-storey mixed-use buildings were built around al-Manara, defining a new city centre and forming a high street layout with shops on the lower level with rented apartments and offices on the upper levels.

A central entrance and stairwell for each building served all of the upper floors. Façades were simple, functional, and moved away from the traditional architectural language and the more articulate hand craftsmanship of wood, iron, and stone details, and were dominated by balconies and glazed verandas. Al-Manara and the streets radiating from it, as well as al-Sa'ah square (today Yasser Arafat Square), al-Ma'rad St., al-Muntaza St. (or Post Office St.), and

al-Sahel St. close to the Old City, are some of the most prominent streets and provide the finest examples of the architecture of that period. Moreover, Jaffa St. was urbanized with the introduction of a number of restaurants, hotels, and residential buildings.

Public Buildings

The expansion of Ramallah and el-Bira and the development of Ramallah as an administrative and commercial centre for the surrounding villages demanded the construction of new public buildings. During that period a new hospital, a post office, and a new vegetable market were built near al-Manara, in addition to the first public library built in 1957. Several elementary and secondary schools were built along with two high schools for girls and boys.

During the early 1960s, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) built several vocational institutes that offered training to high school graduates to become teachers. These buildings represent the influence of international styles on the architecture of that period. The facades were simple, functional, dominated by wide and narrow verandas, and reflected the structural elements (columns and slabs) and material (concrete and stone). Openings were rectangular and fitted between the structural elements with no ornamentation. Horizontal cantilevers used as sun breakers were introduced in the facades.



• municipality building & public park



Ramallah as a Summer Resort: Cinemas, Parks, and Restaurants

The 1950s and 1960s are considered the golden era of Ramallah as a summer resort. Many people from the West Bank and Jordan came to Ramallah to enjoy the attractive landscape and the mild weather during the springs and summers. Several entertainment facilities such as cinemas, hotels, and restaurants were built. Two of the three cinemas of that period, Cinema Dunya was demolished 15 years ago, and Cinema al-Walid was demolished one year ago to make way for more profitable commercial development. Cinema al-Jamil was refurbished as al-Kasaba Cinemateque and Theatre but with major changes losing its original architectural style.

Parks and restaurants with outdoor gardens thrived, including Municipality Park (Muntaza) functioning during spring, summer, and autumn months, especially along Jaffa St. where restaurants served Palestinian and Mediterranean fusion cuisine. Gardens were shady with trees and simple outdoor structures of metal poles and concrete slabs. The restaurants and gardens were modern in style and atmosphere.



Apartment Buildings and Villas

The most distinguished buildings of that period are the private houses or villas and multi-storey apartment buildings, comprised of several apartments on two to four storeys gathered around a central staircase. These buildings were influenced by the Bauhaus aesthetics and principles of simplicity and functionality evident in the simple rectangular horizontal openings, clean façades with minimal ornaments, the absence of pitched roofs, and the rounded corners and rooms pushing out the envelope of the buildings. Yet the interior layout of the apartment was mostly derived from the Liwan house, where rooms were organized around a central space, with some amendments like the introduction of the glazed veranda and a bathroom close to the bedrooms.

The other form of residential buildings is the private house or villa, mostly designed by local or international architects who were strongly influenced by modern Western architecture, especially the Bauhaus and the organic movement. Most of the villas represented a new typology of a two- or three-storey house where the lower level contained

• apartment buildings al-ma'rad street. idioms film © riwaq archive

a kitchen, living spaces, and a salon, while the upper level contained bedrooms and balconies and their services. An interior staircase connected the different levels. Some villas also contained basements and car garages. Modern elements and facilities were used reflecting the new lifestyle such as central heating systems and modern kitchens.

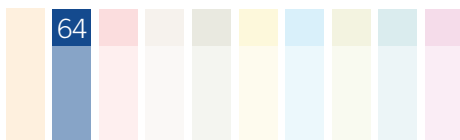
The architectural style of these villas was developed away from traditional architecture where no arches, vertical windows, or traditional ornaments were used. Façades were light, simple, and mostly consisted of sharp vertical and horizontal elements such as sun breakers, large horizontal openings, cantilevered terraces, and free standing walls. Yet many villas had dominant features and meticulous details that set them apart including striking angled horizontal elements that jutted out like wings, coloured stone of red, yellow, and black, and large iron and glass doors. Other building features were also introduced such as iron frames and aluminium profiles for windows, roll down shutters, ornamental concrete blocks, and glass blocks.

One of the most prominent local architects who developed a unique modern style in apartment buildings and villas is Razuq Khouri who studied architecture at the American University in Beirut and graduated in 1951. Khouri was influenced by modern Western architecture that was adopted in Beirut. He designed and built several villas in Ramallah such as Daoud Michael villa, Rabah villa, and Talab el-Barghouti villa among many others.

RAMALLAH'S CULTURAL LIFE

Fatin Farhat

Ramallah has become the cultural hub of Palestine. For simple indicators, pick up This Week in Palestine or al-Ayyam, or Filsteen Ashabab, or any Palestinian newspaper on any given day. Usually, most of the cultural and artistic advertisements announce special events (art exhibitions, theatrical productions, dance performances, music concerts, workshops, symposia, seminars, etc.) scheduled





to take place in Ramallah. Visual arts exhibitions and music concerts are held in the most fashionable cafés and bars in town, and the city welcomes the public festival *Wein a Ramallah!* to its parks and streets each summer.

This prominent status that Ramallah possesses may be attributed to its relative youth, diversity, and connection to other vibrant cities. Unlike ancient Palestinian cities such as Nablus, Hebron, and Jerusalem, Ramallah is a relatively young city, established only a few hundred years ago.

Whereas the ancient cities mentioned above exhibited clear and defined urban features and were characterised by long historical, social, and cultural traditions and images, Ramallah being a youthful city, remained largely free to develop more spontaneously. This fact made Ramallah more hospitable and open to newcomers and new ideas, especially as the overwhelming majority of the city's original inhabitants have emigrated from Palestine, allowing for a huge margin of internal Palestinian migration. The openness of the city has also allured thousands of Palestinian returnees, including the intellectual, to take Ramallah as their new dwelling upon homecoming. And one must not underestimate the unique religious diversity of the city and the role that this diversity has played in boosting levels of tolerance that are conducive to the promotion of an active and open cultural life.

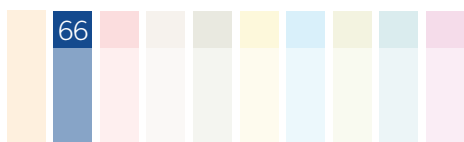
The richness of cultural and artistic life in Ramallah stems from the availability of a kaleidoscope of events and institutions that are



open to the public all year round. The town is full of active civic society organizations that specialize in almost all disciplines in the arts and culture (music, dance, theatre, visual arts, performing arts, urban development, literature and architecture). Ramallah's cultural centres also propose a unique summer program of events that invite cultural tourists from other Palestinian cities including the 1948 Palestinian territories and the Golan Heights to Ramallah thus adding to its openness and boosting the city's tourism sector.

In recent years, arts operators have made a priority of placing Ramallah in the broader context of vibrant and culturally-active Arab and European cities, linking Ramallah with cities such as Cairo, Beirut, Amman, Brussels, London, and New York through dialogue and exchange programs, festivals, and art exhibits.

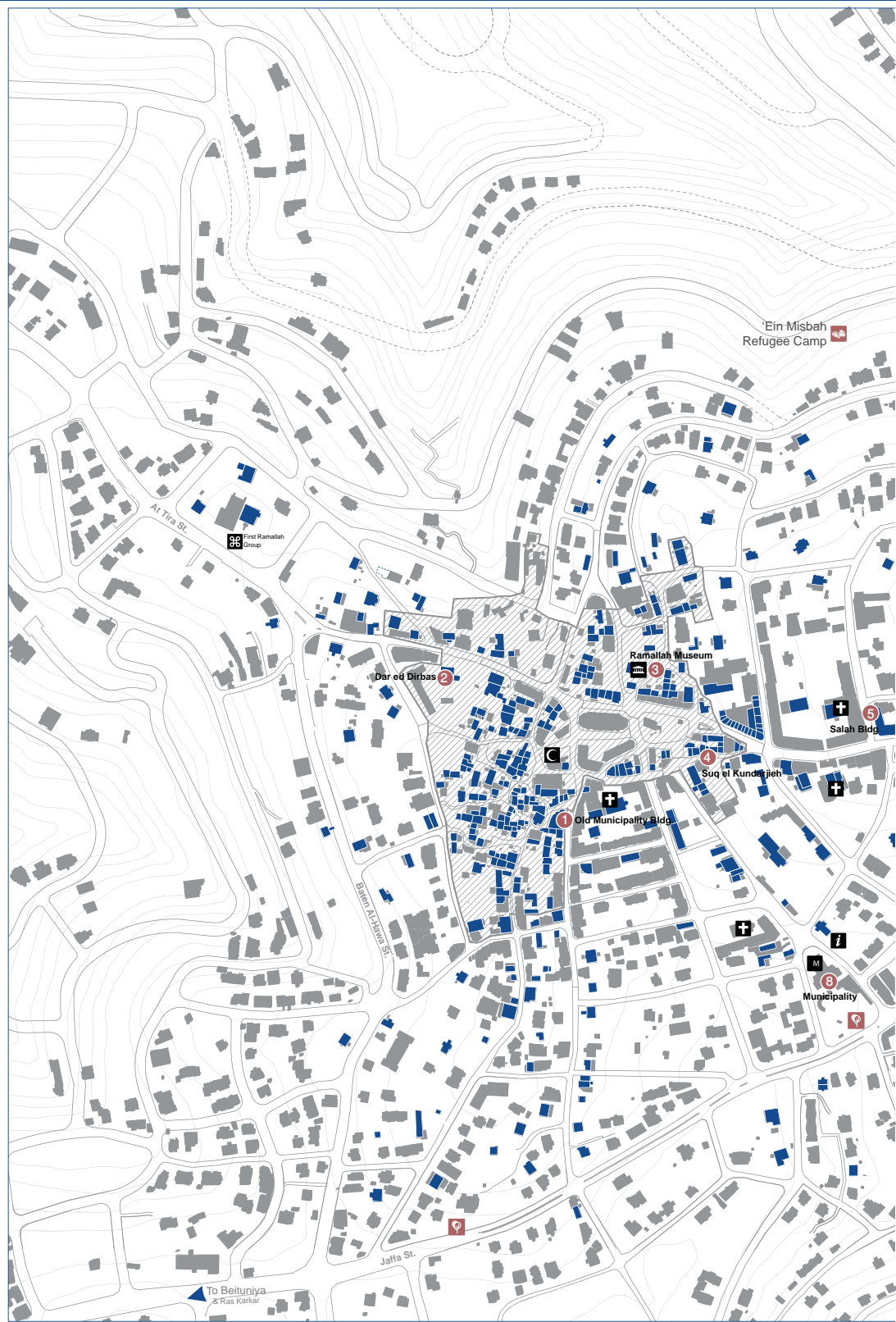
Cultural and artistic activity is not exclusive to Palestinian institutes.





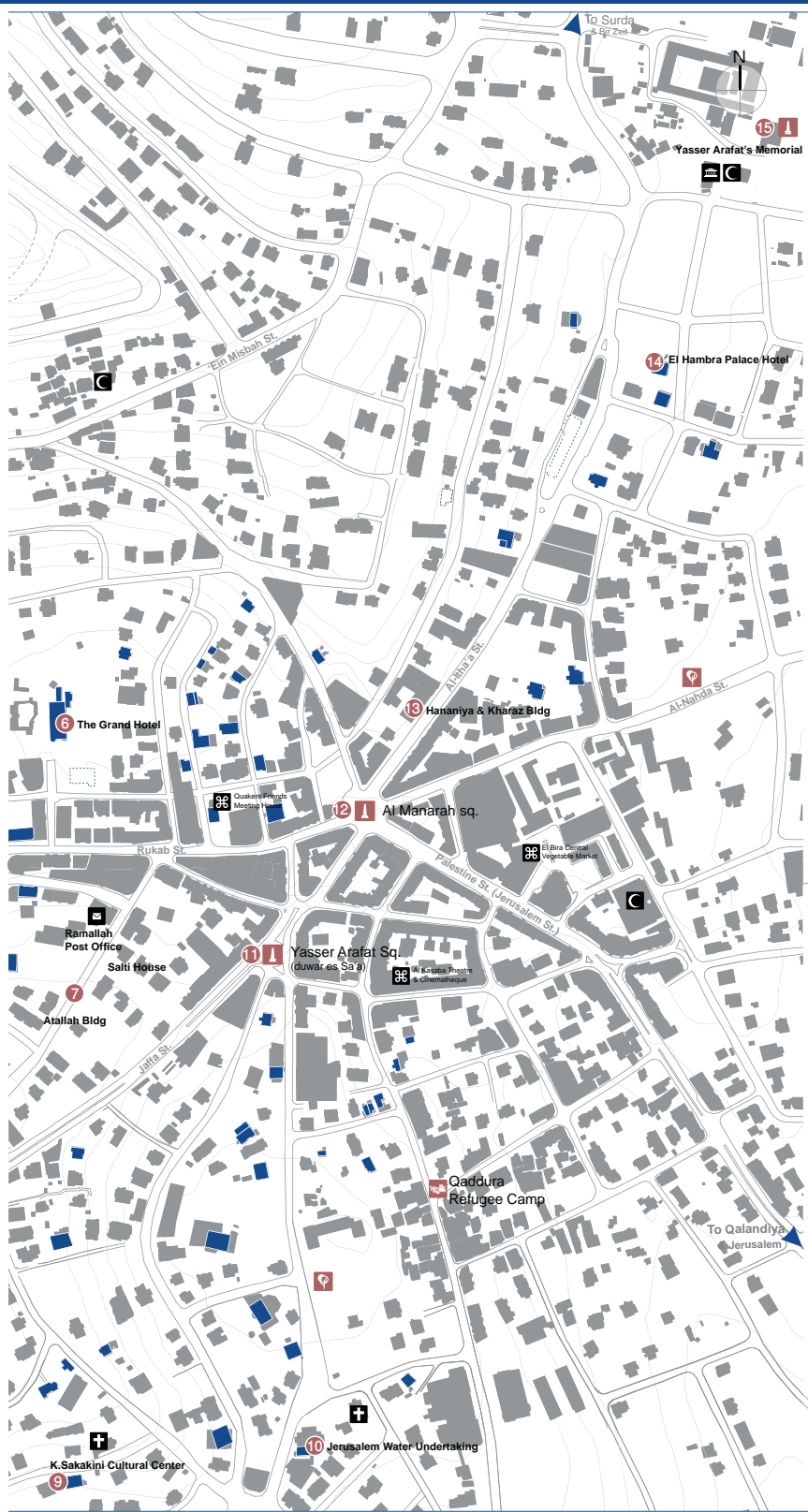
Foreign cultural offices in Ramallah offer various services to the community, including language classes, scholarship opportunities, organization of artistic and cultural projects, and the support of local artistic and cultural initiatives. In Ramallah, the City Hall has also introduced a more intervening role in the cultural development of the city. Through its programs, activities, and initiatives, the Ramallah Municipality has clearly proposed a unique model of cultural development and utilization of a public local fund for art and culture in a city that still lives under occupation.

Having recognized the cultural and artistic vitality of the city does not negate the challenges that the sector is facing today. The mobility of artists, art operators, and art production is extremely difficult and at times impossible because of restrictions imposed on the Palestinian population. It is important to note that public funding for art and cultural remains minimal and even in Ramallah (an affluent city), there is no real economic market for artistic events and productions.



M1

Ramallah & el-Bira



- Historic centre
- Historic building
- Refugee camp
- Monument
- Public garden
- Mosque
- Church
- Information centre
- Post office
- Museum
- Municipality
- Place of interest
- Road
- Dirt road
- Contour line

0 50 100 meter



Ras Karkar

رأس كركر

Location: 12 km northwest of Ramallah, 27 km northwest of Jerusalem.

Altitude: 650 meters above sea level.

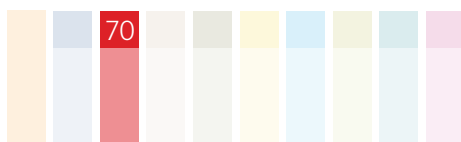
Area: Total land area of 5,900 dunums and a built up area of 205 dunums.

Population: 2,420 inhabitants in 2010.

Neighbouring towns and villages: Deir 'Ammar, Al-Mazra'a Al-Qibliya, Al-Janiya, Deir Ibzi', Kafr Ni'ma, Kharbatha Bani Harith.

Al Samhan Castle Representing the Throne Village of Ras Karkar:

Ras Karkar, or Ras Ibn Samhan as it was called before the British Mandate, is home of Al Samhan Palace. The rural feudal lords of Al Samhan family, known as the Al Samhan Sheikhs, controlled the northern Jerusalem district during the late Ottoman Period. They played a more prominent role during the second part of the 18th century and the 19th century when the Ottoman Empire's grip over rural Palestine was in decline. Ras Karkar is one of about 26 "throne villages"—central villages dominated by a semi-feudal family that controlled tens of villages around it in Palestine's central highlands during the Ottoman rule.



Ras Karkar

Throne villages, or *Qura al-Karasi* in Arabic, were the “county seats” of local semi-feudal leaders during the late Ottoman Period. During the 18th and 19th centuries, the throne villages acted as administrative centres for districts, also known as *nawahi* (singular: *nahiyah*) ruled by rural district sheikhs. Each *nahiyah* was considered an independent administrative and tax unit that offered their sheikhs tremendous power and wealth, which were reflected in the different Throne Villages and their castles. Most Throne Villages enjoyed prime fortified locations supported by a strong army. Each district contained numerous villages ranging from six, as in Bani Salem and Bani Murra, to 45 villages as in Jamma’in. The different districts belonged to the three main regions of the central highlands of Palestine as it was divided in the 18th and 19th centuries: Nablus, Jerusalem, and Hebron. On the other hand, the coastal cities and villages were under the rule of the walis of Acre and Gaza, and the Negev Desert and the Jordan Valley were under Bedouin control.

Al Samhan Castle is situated on top of a rocky hill 650 meters above sea level. Construction on the castle took 14 years and was finished in 1799. The castle was built in a high, secure, and prominent location that had natural rocks jutting out of the ground like walls, and caves underneath that provided secret passages for escape during war times. Al Samhan family came from the neighbouring village of el-Janiya, which is located on a lower hill that was easier to be reached and therefore more vulnerable to attack. After being attacked by Al Abu Goush, another feudal family of the Jerusalem district, Al Samhan family decided to move their centre to the current location and started by first building their Diwan, the men’s gathering space, and later building the castle to house their families.

The oral history of many Palestinian villages from that Ottoman period concentrated mainly on local disputes, or *toshat*, between the different clans in the same village or disputes between clans belonging to different villages. They are often narrated as a series of heroic local fights, or fights pertaining to Qais and Yaman, the two main factions dividing the central highlands of Palestine until the beginning of the 20th century. Also of note is the obsession of many

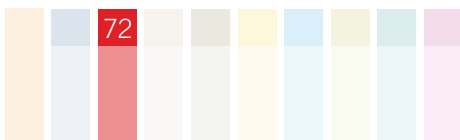


• ras karkar looking west

villagers toward claiming noble and sacred religious origins. Most villagers claimed that their clan originally came to Palestine during the early periods of Islam (i.e. with the Caliph Omar ibn al-Khattab in the 7th century), or at a later period with the famed Salah Eddin al-Ayyubi (Saladin) at the end of the 11th century, as in the case with Al Samhan who moved to Hejaz from Egypt and then came to Palestine.

Ras Karkar is strongly associated with Sheikh Isma'il Samhan, the most prominent of Al Samhan family feudal rulers, who ruled from 1818-1834. Until this day, the people of Ras Karkar tell stories about Sheikh Isma'il Samhan and his generous and heroic deeds. At the main gate of the castle, a poem engraved in stone over the door celebrates Isma'il Samhan, who built the castle, as well as the year of the beginning of the building, 1214 Hijri (1785 CE).

The main gate of the castle leads to a large courtyard through an L-shaped entrance lobby with two cross vaults to provide maximum privacy and security. Historically, the castle was open in the mornings



Ras Karkar

and closed by sunset after the residents came back from their fields. The rooms in the ground level, which included peasant houses, kitchens, and service rooms, open into the main courtyard, which was used for family gatherings and celebrations. The upper levels are reached by a staircase located in the courtyard. The rooms of the first floor have double windows, decorated ceilings known as fans, and rifle slits. The highest room in the castle, located on the second floor and opening to the roof, is called *al-Illyeh*, the attic, and was used for administrative purposes and as the Sheikh's private refuge. The roof has panoramic views all around, to the west to the mountains and the Mediterranean, and to the south to Jerusalem.

The architecture of the castle shares many attributes with other castles built in other throne villages. It is a hybrid between urban and rural architectural qualities and features. For example, unlike peasant women who worked in the fields, women of the feudal Sheikhs were restricted to the confines of their palaces. There is a clear distinction between the male and female spaces in the castle more like in urban mansions than peasant houses.

The castle was not abandoned until five years ago when the last of the families inhabiting it left to a newer building. Riwaq restored the castle over three phases from 2007-2009 to protect it from deterioration. Today, the castle is used for cultural activities.

The phenomenon of building *maqamat* (square domed shrines. Singular: *maqam*) was developed during the time of the Crusades. The Ayyubids encouraged the creation of these shrines for religious and defence reasons, and they continued to be built during the Mamluk and Ottoman periods. The shrines were mostly built on high grounds overlooking the surrounding hills and valleys in strategic locations and on major trade routes to communicate news about the movements of the Crusaders who were mainly located in coastal areas. Many Sufis retreated to these maqams to worship in solitude, and many were buried near maqams when they died. People visited these maqams to communicate special vows and prayers and practiced special Sufi rituals. These traditions started to decline gradually during the mid 20th century.



Archaeological Sites:

1. En-Nabi Ayyub Maqam

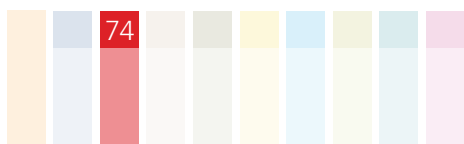
Location: at the bottom of the hill, 1 km northwest of Ras Karkar.

Historical periods: Ayyubid (1187-1250)

Description: En-Nabi Ayyub Maqam is a square room with one door and a dome on top. Until recently, the people of Ras Karkar and neighbouring villages would visit the maqam, especially during the spring when more water was flowing, because they believed its water had healing powers. This maqam had a special festival that was celebrated by religious songs and ritual dances and took place in April every year until the 1980s.

2. En-Nabi 'Annir Maqam

Location: 1.5 km north of Ras Karkar, turn right after en-Nabbi Ayyub Maqam.





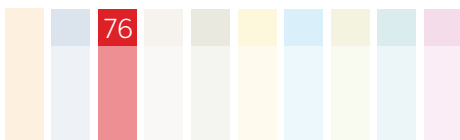
- an-nabi 'annir maqam



Historical periods: Crusader (1099-1187), Ayyubid (1187-1250), early Ottoman period (1516-1850).

Description: En-Nabi 'Annir's area contains a maqam as well as other archaeological ruins in a woodland with several natural springs and beautiful views of the surrounding valleys and hills. The main archaeological structure consists of two rooms and a large Iwan. One of the rooms has a *mihrab* (rounded niche in the southern wall) indicating that it was used as a mosque. To the west of the building is a cave with a dome built on top of it. The cave contains drawings and symbols in henna (a reddish-orange dye made from the leaves of the henna plant) that are usually found in maqams. These henna paintings show symbols like palm leaves and hands, which relate to special vows, rituals, or superstitions.

A local seasonal festival, or *mawsem*, was traditionally celebrated at En-Nabi 'Annir, which involved singing, dancing, horse racing, and other religious and cultural activities. Mawasem (singular: mawsem) were celebrated mainly by Muslims and mostly took place in the

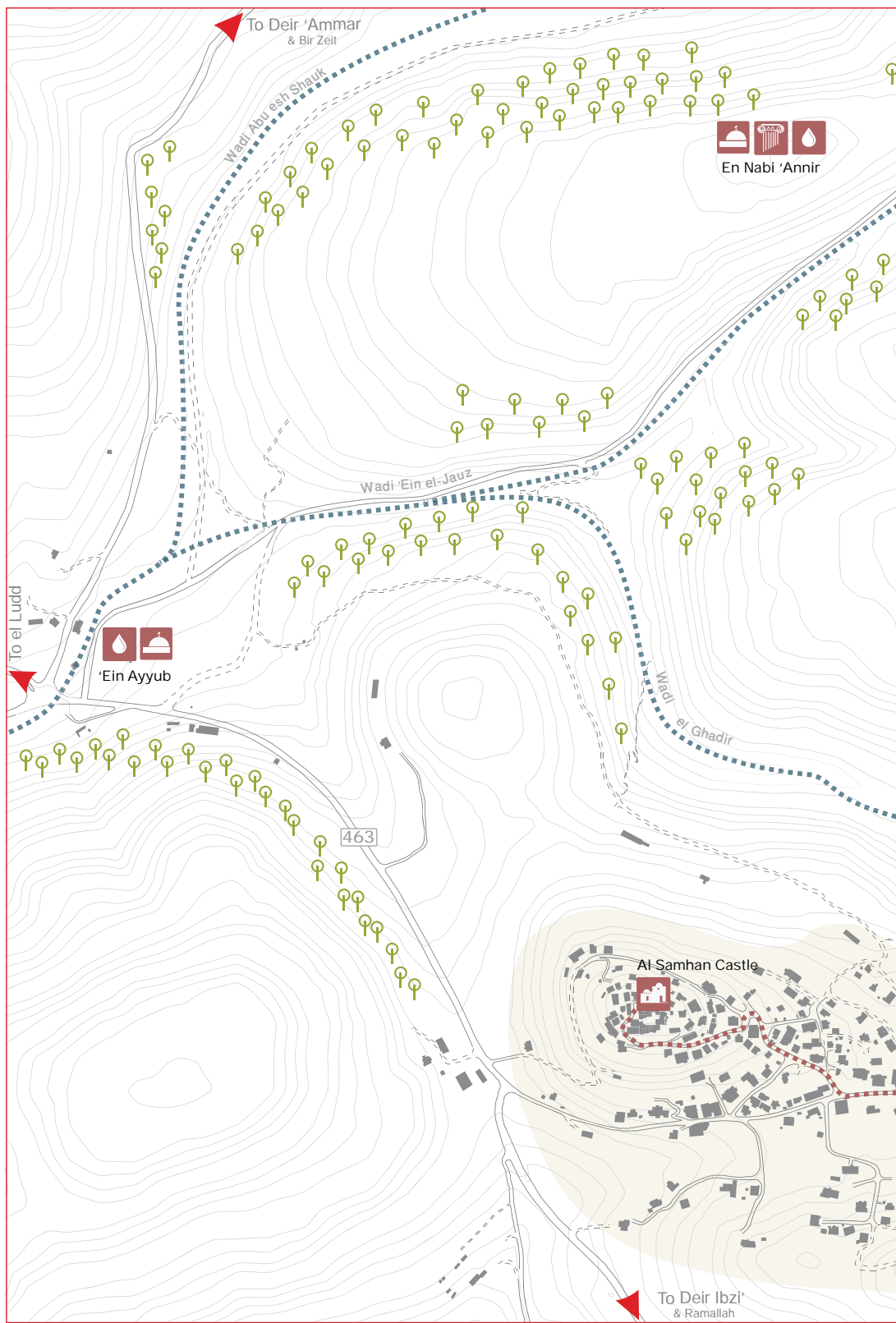


spring coinciding with the Easter celebrations for Christians. The most famous of the mawasem are Mawsem en-Nabi Saleh in Ludd and Mawsem en-Nabi Mousa between Jericho and Jerusalem.

The Ayyubids started these celebrations in the 13th century after driving out the Crusaders from the central highlands of Palestine to the coastal lines. The rituals around mawasem continued on until the end of the Ottoman period and were brought to an end by the British Mandate, who saw them as a threat since large numbers of people gathered together and sometimes used the gathering to share political concerns related to the British rule.



• deir ammar from en-nabi 'annir maqam



M2

Ras Karkar





Bir Zeit

بیرZeit

Location: 10 km north of Ramallah, 25 km north of Jerusalem.

Altitude: 780 -818 meters above sea level.

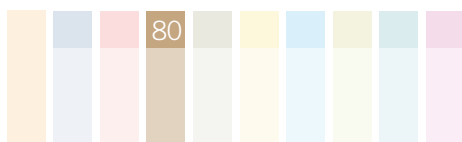
Area: total land area of 14,088 dunums and a built up area of 861 dunums, one of the largest in Ramallah district.

Population: 4,625 inhabitants in 2010

Neighbouring towns and villages: Abu Qashsh, 'Atara, Jifna, 'Ein Siniya, Kaubar, el-Mazra'a el-Qibliya, Abu Shukheidim.

The town of Bir Zeit is significant for its history, modern university, and reputation as a place of progressive learning. In addition to the historic centre with its well-preserved traditional fabric, there are many significant archaeological sites, such as Khirbet Bir Zeit, which dates back to the early Iron Age (1200-1000 BCE), and other historic buildings. Bir Zeit is well known for olive trees planted in fertile soil that has been protected from erosion for generations by dry stone terraces. It is also known for lush vine groves, fig and plum trees and water springs. Fruit from Bir Zeit was exported to Jaffa during the Ottoman and British periods.

The present name of Bir Zeit means “well of oil,” fitting for an area so well known for its extensive production of olive oil, which was historically kept in wells.



Bir Zeit

Bir Zeit was located along the Roman road network connecting hilly areas with the shoreline, particularly the Jifna to Ras el-‘Ein route. The road passed through both Khirbet Bir Zeit and the historic centre. Bir Zeit was also mentioned in the Ottoman book “Daftaree Mufasssal” of the late 16th century, which states that Bir Zeit was a village of 130 inhabitants belonging to the district of Jerusalem and comprised of 26 families.

The first Palestinian university was established in Bir Zeit in 1975, an important milestone in the town’s modern history. Bir Zeit was a vital revolutionary base for Palestinians during the uprising against the British Mandate between 1936 and 1939 under the command of Muhammad Omar an-Nubani. It was also an important base for Palestinian resistance between 1947-1949, and a safe refuge for its chief commander Abdul-Qader al-Huseini who used one of its houses as a headquarter base.²⁰



• bir zeit historic centre



commercial road in bir zeit historic centre

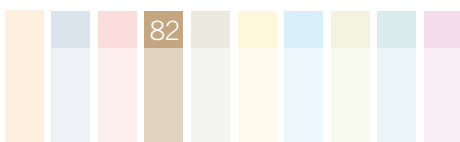
Bir Zeit Historic Centre:

The historic centre is located on one of the eastern hilltops of Bir Zeit northeast of the new centre. As in most of the villages in the central highlands of Palestine, the historic centre overlooks the valleys and plains below and is built of grey limestone. The historic centre has 108 historic buildings,²¹ 63% of which are only one storey. Most of these buildings date to the Ottoman Period, with the exception of a Mamluk (1291-1516) caravanserai located on the northern side of the historic centre. Victor Guérin, a French traveller who visited Bir Zeit in 1863, noted a Byzantine church within the historic centre, but did not specify the exact location. In addition, many local testimonies speak of ruins and old tombs that were uncovered and destroyed while constructing the Catholic church, municipality building, and the Bir Zeit Women Association, all of which are located inside the historic centre.²²

21. Riwaq Register of Historic Buildings, 2006.

22. The History of the City of Bir Zeit, Musa Alloush, the Heritage of Bir Zeit book Series, May 1987.

idioms film © riwaq archive



Bir Zeit



As other historic centres in Palestine, kinship and gender relations influenced town organization. There were six main hamayel (patrilineal descent groups) that were grouped into separate quarters bearing their names. These were Dar Abu Awwad, Dar Em Eid, Dar Shaheen, Dar Abdullah, Dar Musallam, and al-Washaha.

Single Historic Buildings (early to mid 20th century):

Bir Zeit currently has 85 single historic building that were built in the period between the beginning and mid 20th century.

Three of the most important buildings are recommended to visit:

1. Old Birzeit University Campus: Dar Nasser

*"I remember the day of the first graduation in 1976, a historic event not only for the university but for Palestine, because it was the first university graduation on Palestinian soil"*²³

Samia Khoury was a member of the administration staff of Birzeit

23. Audeh, Ida, ed. Birzeit University: The Story of a National Institution, Birzeit University, 2010.



College, 1954-60 and 1974-79, and a founding member of the Board of Trustees).

The old Birzeit University campus is considered one of the most significant historic buildings in Bir Zeit as a symbol of the development of the university from a small family-owned girls' school in 1924 to a four-year college in 1972 to Birzeit University in 1975.

The building complex hosted several teaching classrooms, administrative offices, a girls' dormitory, teachers' living quarters, a library, a kitchen, and a dining room. It was also a living place for the Nasser family, who established the school and owned the house. Many members of the Nasser family taught there along with others from Palestine and neighbouring Arab countries. Ratibeh Shqair and Nabiha Nasser established Birzeit School and became the first and second headmistresses.

The school's atmosphere was that of a secular national institution. The school hosted students and teachers from

old birzeit university building



• dar harb jacer in new centre

all parts of Palestine, Transjordan, Syria, and Lebanon until 1967 when the West Bank came under Israeli occupation and Palestine became disconnected from the rest of the Arab world.²⁴

The old campus was located at the western entrance of the historic centre, positioned on a large plot of land with open spaces, gardens and playgrounds. The old campus buildings provide a good example of the different architectural styles and typologies from different periods in Palestine. The complex includes buildings from the late Ottoman Period and the British Mandate Period, and architecture from the second part of the 20th century.

2. Dar Harb Jacer

Considered one of the most significant single historic buildings in Bir Zeit, Dar Harb Jacer is located at the centre of the new commercial town along the main road connecting Bir Zeit with Ramallah and neighbouring towns and villages. The house was built in 1925 as a residence for Harb Suleiman Jacer who returned to Bir Zeit from the

24. Ibid.

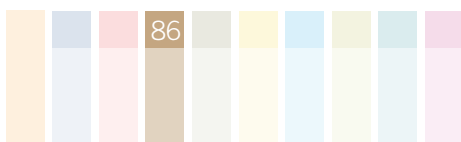
USA. The ground floor was originally used as a horse stable. From 1936 to 1948, the building became the centre for armed resistance against Zionism under the chief commander of the Palestinian forces, Abdul-Qader al-Huseini. Between 1949 and 1967, it was used as a police station under Jordanian rule, as a café after 1967, and later as a sweater shop. In 1971 the building became a refugee centre for the Orthodox Club, and in 1985 the ground floor was turned into commercial shops.

The building is large with relatively high ceilings. It was originally composed of two stories connected with a staircase. The ground floor was roofed using iron I-beams, whereas the first floor was roofed with reinforced concrete slab and beams (which was rare to see in Bir Zeit during the 1920s.) To allow for more space for the Orthodox Club, an additional storey was added using concrete blocks for walls and temporary corrugated metal sheets to cover the roof.

The ground floor façade is composed of big rectangular openings, built with rough chiselled stone (*tubza*) and ends with a protruding stone frieze of the same stone. The second floor is composed of a mixture of rectangular, square, and two groups of three big rectangular windows ending with an arch. The first group is located in the eastern façade and is divided by stone columns with ornamented crowns, whereas the second group is located at the southeast corner of the building. What makes this corner even more special it is not a 90-degree angle, but rather it goes with the curvature of the street allowing for easier movement of people and cars. The stone of the first floor is made of a fine chiselled stone (*msamsam*) and ends with a protruding stone frieze. Two doors lead to two small balconies, each supported by a corbel stone (*zafer*).

3. Dar Sayej

Dar Sayej is located at the western side of the main street connecting Bir Zeit with Ramallah. The house was built in 1926 for Suleiman and his brothers Jacob and Salim Sayyej. It is considered one of the most significant buildings in Bir Zeit as it was used in 1947





as a base for the Palestinian freedom fighters against the British Mandate. It was then used as a house for the owners of the building until the 1970s and then was rented until it was abandoned.

The large building contains traditional floor tiles with beautiful patterns and stone carving details. It is located on a high ground with a steep slope and is reached by a series of stairs. A beautiful stone arch carries the upper parts of those stairs without covering the façade of the ground floor.

The building is composed of two storeys. The ground floor is almost half the size of the first floor and was used by one of the three brothers of the Sayej family. The first floor is composed of two parts with separate entrances for the two other brothers. The ground floor is composed of four cross-vaulted rooms with rectangular windows and doors with segmental lenti. Divided into two sections, the first floor has bigger spaces, openings and is richer in detail than the ground floor. Each section of the first floor is composed of five rooms with I-beam and concrete ceilings. Windows are rectangular in



shape ending with segmental arches while doors have stone lintels topped with semicircular arches.

The entrance of the southern section of the first floor is the most significant of all. It is composed of a door topped by a semicircular arch and two rectangular windows, one on each side, also topped with segmental arches each made up of three stones. The middle stone (keystone) is taller than the other two. Two beautiful free-standing columns with ornamented crowns are located at the top of each window.

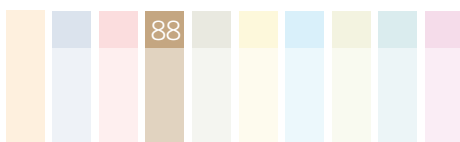
Archaeological Sites:

Bir Zeit has 34 known archaeological sites and features. These range from major sites or *Khirbat* (ruins) to minor sites or archaeological features. Sites include 16 natural springs, 11 limekilns (*lattoun*), one seasonal Bedouin site, and a Roman graveyard of tombs carved in stones.

1. The Mamluk Khan (Caravanserai):

Location: In the north eastern part of the historic centre.

Area: 46.77 dunums.





Historic period: Mamluk (1291-1516), Ottoman (1516-1850).

Description: The only apparent Mamluk structure is a wall built with relatively large stones. This wall is attached to an Ottoman building with a four-meter-high cross-vaulted ceiling. The main building is also attached to another smaller cross-vaulted historic building. The existing structures were most likely residential houses that were built on top of the khan's foundations.

2. Khirbat Bir Zeit:

Location: Top of a hill about 2 km southwest of the historic centre.

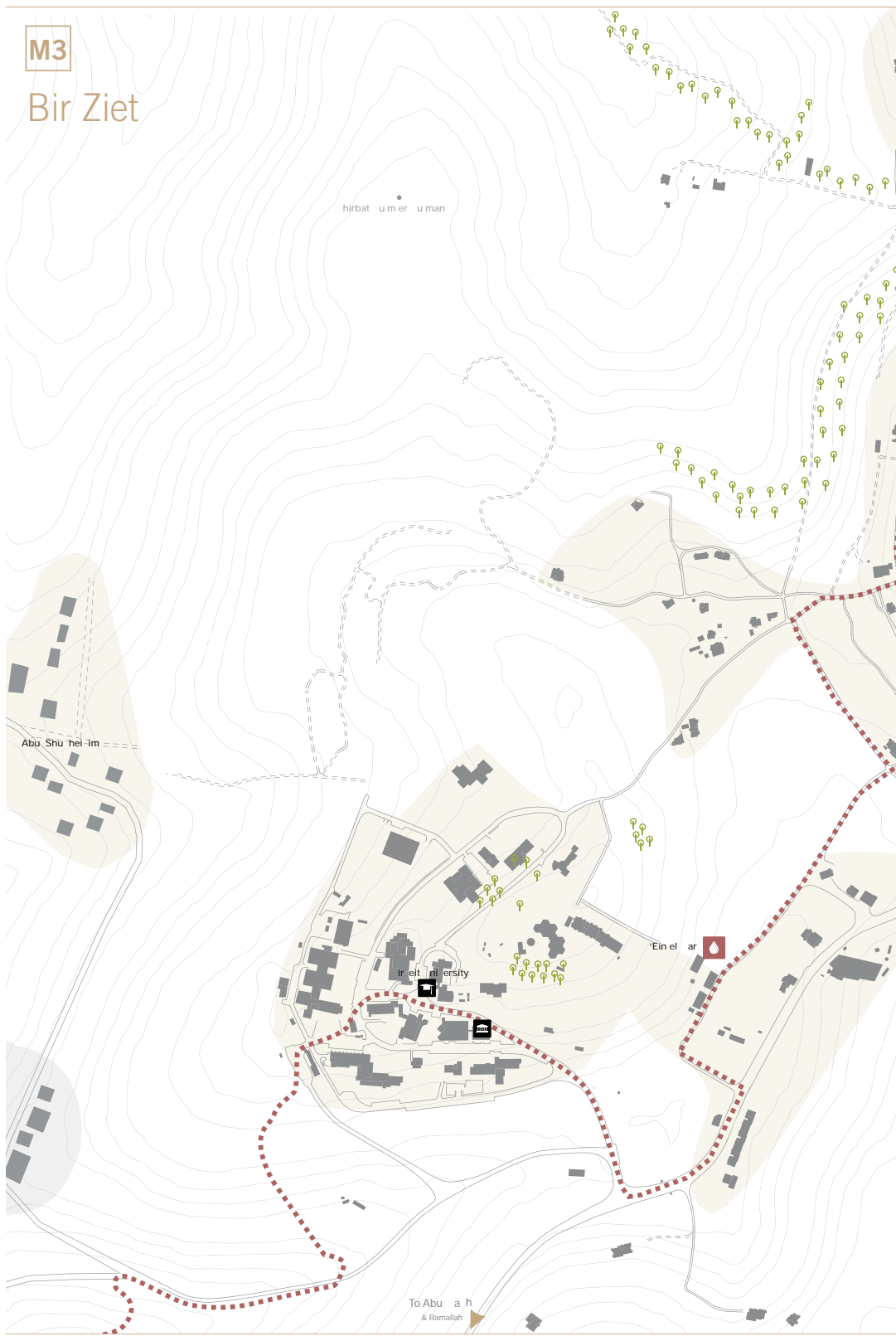
Area: 41.8 dunums.

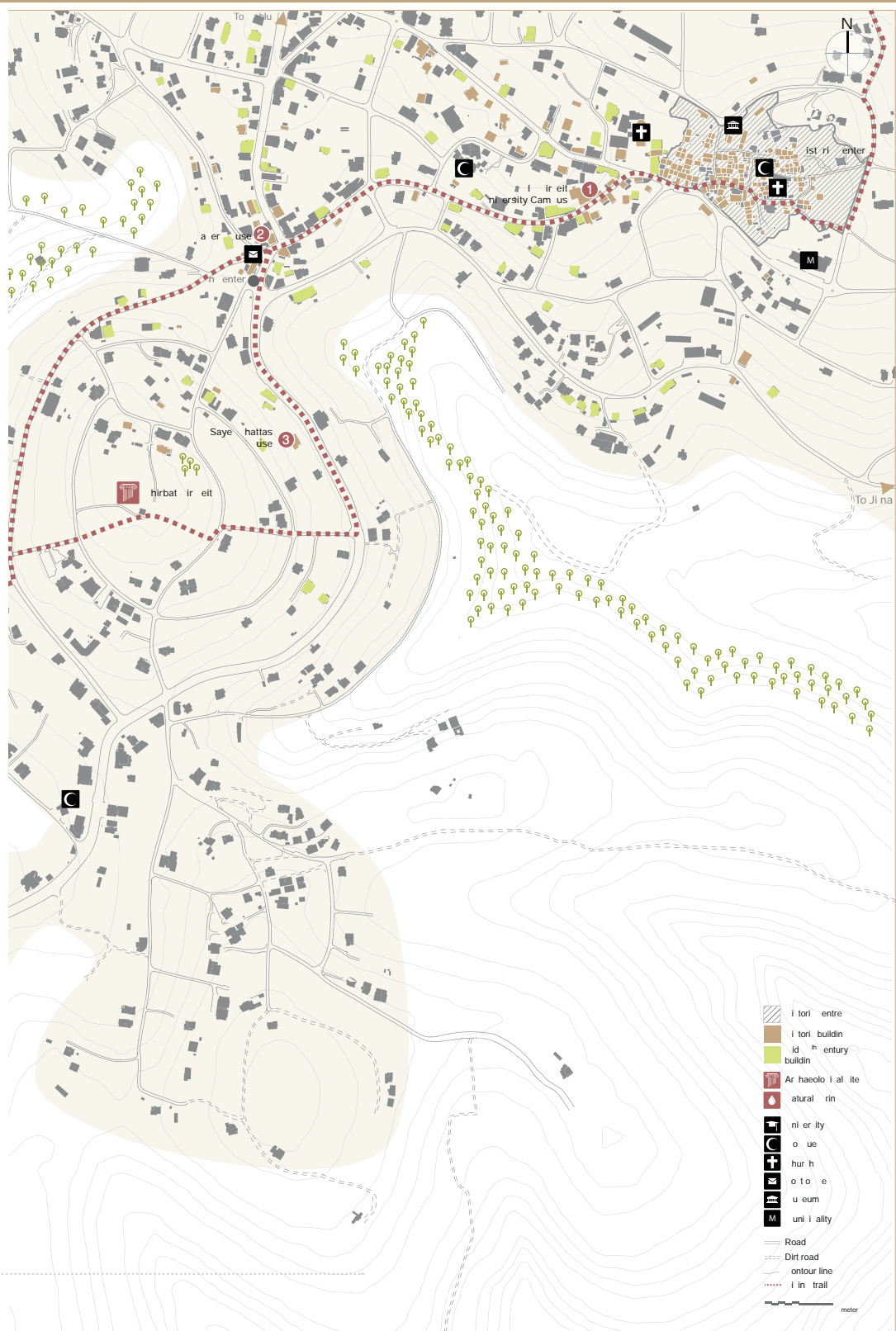
Historic period: Early Iron Age (1200-1000 BCE), Late Iron Age (1000-586 BCE), Greek (332-37 BCE), Roman (37 BCE-325 CE), Crusaders (1099-1187), Mamluk (1291-1516), and early Ottoman (1516-1850).

Description: It includes obvious ancient remains of what used to be a large building on the top of the hill known as el-Bobariyeh. There are also remains of a wine press, tombs carved in stone, and mosaic floors.

M3

Bir Ziet







Jifna

جفنا

Location: 8 km north of Ramallah, 23 km north of Jerusalem.

Altitude: 650 meters above sea level.

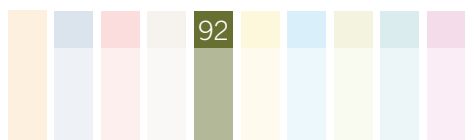
Area: total land area of 6,015 dunums and a built up area of 163 dunums.

Population: 1,731 inhabitants in 2010.²⁴

Neighbouring towns, villages and refugee camps: Bir Zeit, 'Ein Siniya, Dura el-Qar', Surda, Abu Qashsh and Jalazone refugee camp.

In addition to the historic centre with its intact traditional fabric, Jifna is home to significant archaeological sites, such as St. George Church, which dates back to the early Byzantine period. Believed to be built in 356 CE, St. George Church is shown on the famous Madaba mosaic map of 564 CE in Jordan, the oldest surviving original cartographic depiction for the region, indicating that the church was very significant at the time. Jifna was also located along the Roman road network at a point from which the road branched off westwards through the hills to Antipatris (Ras el-'Ein) and eastward to et-Taiyiba and Jericho.

25. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistic; Population of Palestinian Areas 1997-2010, December 1999. And The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics; Guide for Populated Areas, August 2000.



Jifna

Jifna was historically well known for its vine groves and grape production, which is reflected in its name Jifna, which means “vineyard”. Jifna is currently well known for its apricots, celebrated in a yearly festival in July.

Jifna may have originally been the Canaanite town of Ophni, meaning “rotten.” Ophni is mentioned in the Hebrew Bible in Joshua 18:21-25 which notes the towns distributed to the tribe of Benjamin, including Jericho, Bethel (now Beitin), Beeroth (now el-Bira), and Jerusalem.

Josephus mentioned Jifna during the Roman time by the name “Gophna”. According to legend, the Roman Emperor Titus (39-81 A.C.) slept one night in Gophna on his way to conquer Jerusalem. The town was called “Jafenia” during the Crusader Period, so Raimundus de Jafenia, who witnessed a royal charter at Acre in 1182, may also has some possible connections with Jifna. Jifna might also be related to “Al-Ghassasina,” an Arab tribe who came from Yemen to Palestine in the late late 4th century CE and whose first leader was called Jifna Ben Amro. Al-Ghassasina was called Bani Jifna, meaning the “sons of Jifna.”²⁶

One of the most noteworthy and unconventional matters in comparison to other villages and towns in Palestine is the establishment in Jifna of four schools in the 18th and 19th century. The Ottoman Ministry of Knowledge record from 1903 mentions the following schools in Jifna: the Roman Orthodox elementary school (established in 1776), two Latin elementary schools (established in 1858), and the Protestant elementary school (established in 1875). So many schools existed because of Christian churches and missionaries that

26. Palestine, Our Land, Mustafa Murad Al Dabbagh, the eighth volume, page 324-328. Dar Al-Huda, new edition 2002-2003, and in Jifna: A Tourist Guide, the Palestinian Association for Cultural Exchange (Pace), 2003, and in Jifna; History and Culture, Salama Jalil Shqer, 2005, and in The Churches of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem; A Corpus, Denys Pringle with drawing by Peter E. Leach, Cambridge University Press 1993.



provided services to the town and neighbouring towns.

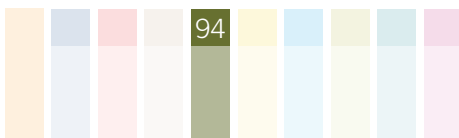
Jifna is well known for its restaurants, services, and festivals. It has six restaurants of which three have swimming pools. Jifna also hosts two yearly festivals. Those are the Jifna Days Festival, which takes place in June and is organized by Jifna Club (www.jifna.ps), and Jifna Nights, which is a summer festival organized by the Palestine Village Club. Jifna has two guesthouses—the Reef House Pension and Khouriya Family Guesthouse. For more information contact Jifna Village Council: Tel. +972 2 2811073.

The Historic Centre:

The historic centre is located on the northern side of what is historically known as Wadi Ashkol (vine valley) that divides the town into two parts. With many natural springs, the opposite southern side of the valley was probably left as agricultural fields for cultivation. The Jalazone Refugee Camp is also located at the far southern end of Jifna's land. Contrary to the majority of villages and

jifna historic centre central plaza

-



towns in the central highlands of Palestine, the historic centre is located along one side of the valley, rather than on top of a hill overlooking the surrounding terrain. This might be due to the existence of natural springs alongside the valley, of which the most significant is the centre of town spring ('Ein Jifna) that is located at the heart of the historic centre.

The historic centre includes almost all of the town's 122 historic buildings, which form the historic traditional fabric of the town. Almost 61% of those historic buildings were built with one storey and 89% are in good structural condition.²⁷

Except for the Crusader castle, almost all of those buildings belong to the Ottoman period. Despite that, there are many indications that underneath the historic centre exist many layers of history from different periods. It has been said that Jifna was demolished seven times through history. Traces of underground historic structures, underground tunnels, and caves were found

27. Riwaq Register of Historic Buildings in Palestine, 2006.





jifna historic centre looking northwest

in and around the historic centre. There are seven main *hamayel* (patrilineal descent groups) in Jifna that were grouped into separate quarters named after them: Makhalfa, Qatma, Mobayed, Kamel, Awad, Qawas, and Masharqa.

Archaeological Sites:

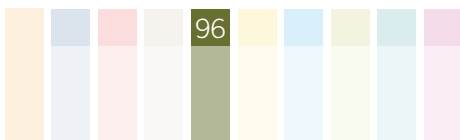
Jifna has eight known archaeological sites and features. Those vary from major sites such as St. George Church and the historic centre, to minor sites or archaeological features; a cave, one lime-kiln (*lattoun*), one natural spring ('Ein Jifna), a cemetery and some scattered archaeological remains. The 3 main archaeological sites in Jifna are located in the historic centre. Those are:

1. Khirbat Jifna (St. George Church):

Location: In the north side of the historic centre.

Historic periods: Byzantine (325-638), Crusader (1099-1187).

Description: The church consists of a three-aisled basilica (13



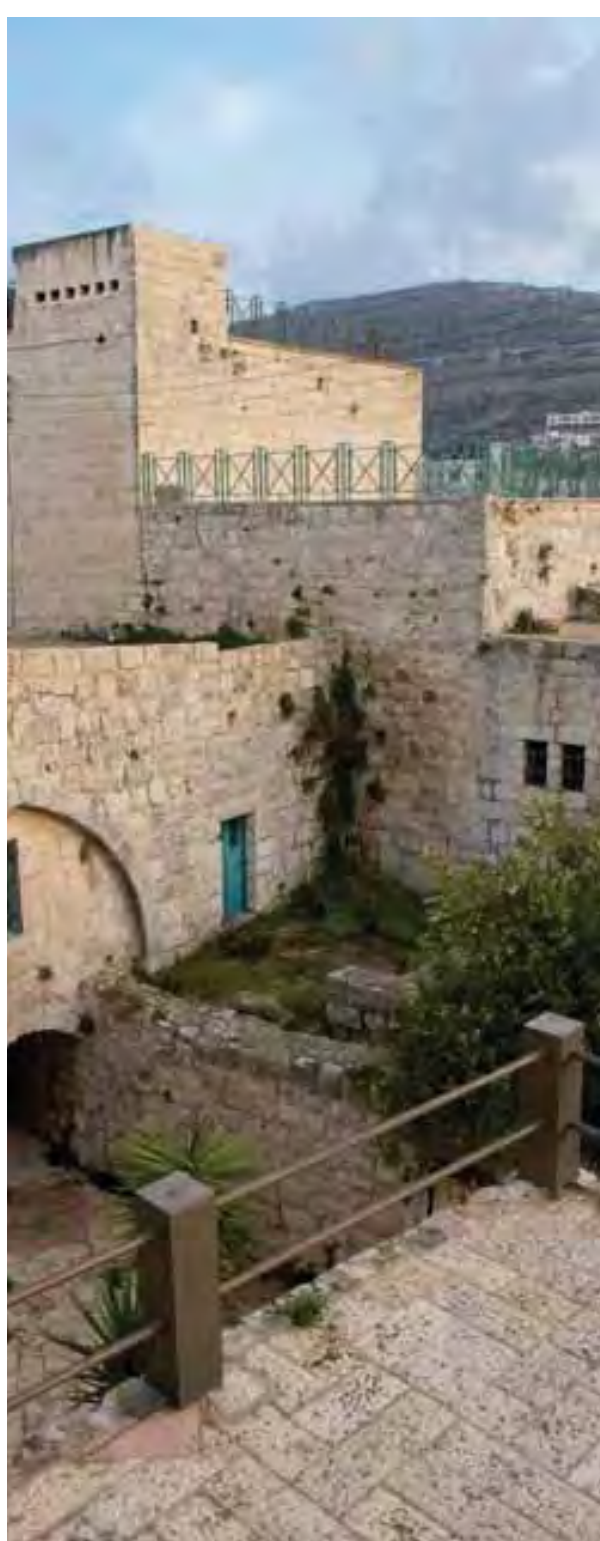


meters east-west by 11.4 meters north-south) with a semicircular apse, a colonnaded nave, and a mosaic pavement. Believed to be built in 356 CE, St. George Church is shown on the famous Madaba Mosaic map in Jordan from 564 CE.

2. El-Burj (Crusader Agricultural Fort/Castle)

Location: Inside the historic centre on the western side.

Historic periods: believed to have Roman origins (37 BCE - 325 CE), Crusader (1099-1187), and Ottoman (1516-1850).



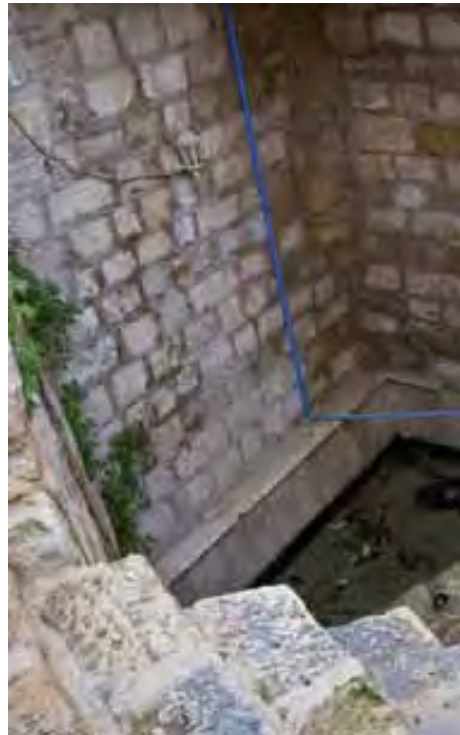


Description: An eastern entrance leads to a courtyard surrounded by many buildings, which include an olive oil press, a jail, and observation rooms.

3. 'Ein Jifna (Jifna spring):

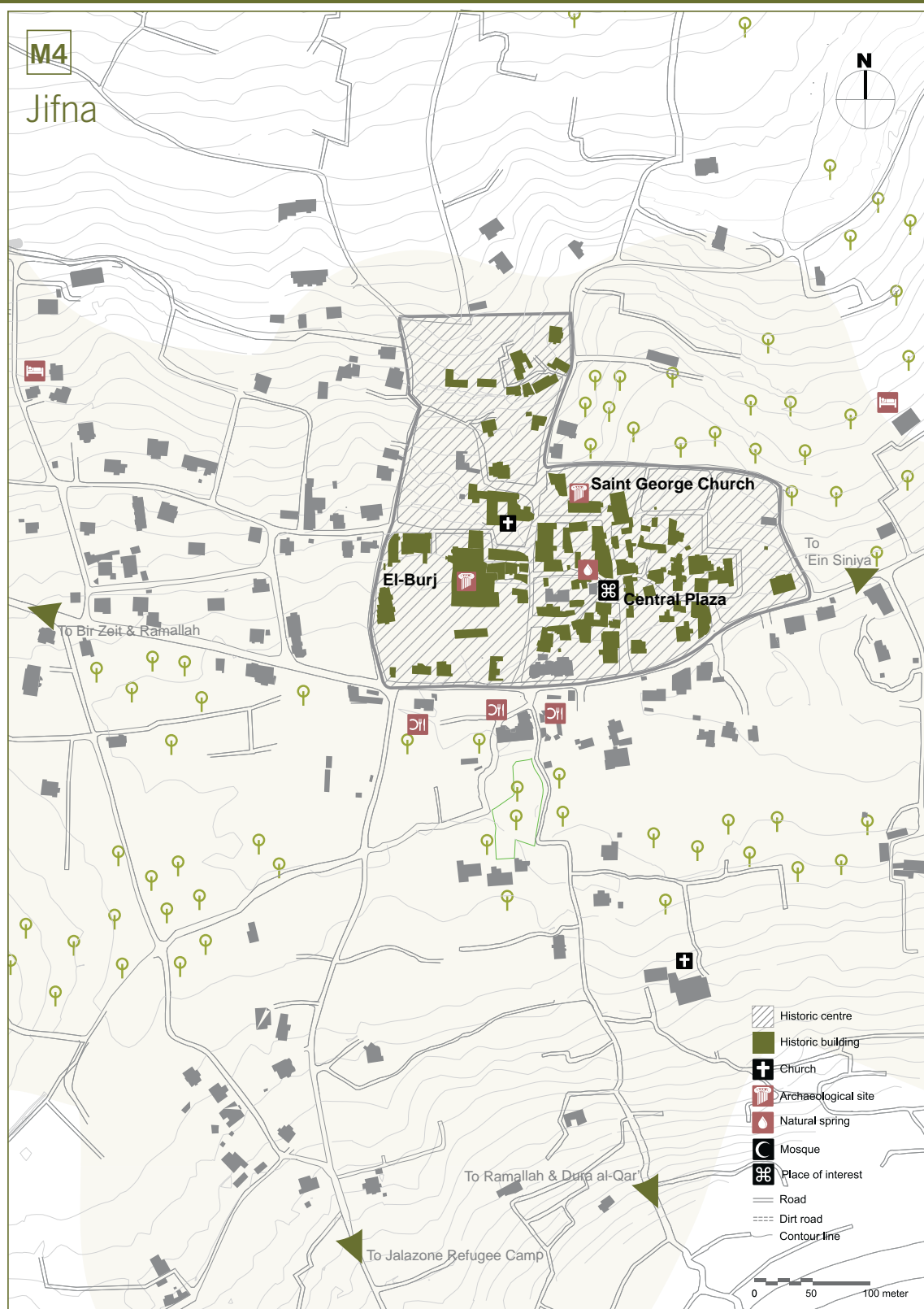
Location: In the heart of the historic centre at the western side of main town plaza.

Description: A set of 24 stairs leads down to the spring, which is partially covered by an I-beam and concrete structure.



M4

Jifna





Jalazone Refugee Camp

by Khaldun Bshara

مَخِيْمَ الْجَلَزُون

Location: 7 km north of Ramallah

Altitude: 780 meter above sea level

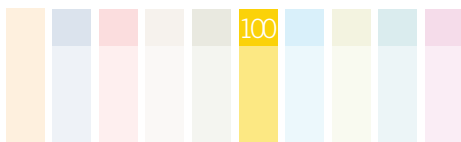
Area: 250 dunums

Population: 11,070 inhabitants in 2010

Neighbouring towns and villages: Jifna, Surda, Dura el-Qar', el-Bira.

Today, approximately five million Palestinian refugees are into their seventh decade of exile, according to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Around 1.4 million refugees are still living in tens of densely populated refugee camps, under difficult conditions. These camps have acquired a national significance and play a central role in the Palestinian identity because they document a devastating era in the Palestinian history and memory that is still ongoing. The architecture and planning of the concrete structures in the refugee camps constitute a mode of construction that is very peculiar to its era, which provides us with important sociopolitical and economical data. Jalazone is one of 19 West Bank refugee camps.

Established in 1949, today Jalazone refugee camp has more than 11,000 inhabitants living together on less than 250 dunums.



Jalazone RC

Residents come from more than 36 different villages, mainly from the central coastal area. The Israeli settlement of Beit El borders the camp from the east. According to the Oslo Accords, Jalazone is in Area B, meaning that Palestinians are in control of civil administration, but the area is still under Israeli security control. A popular committee, which is formed by consent, manages the camp and represents the refugees in local and international bodies. The UNRWA maintains the camp by providing the basic services such as education, medical care, and sanitation.

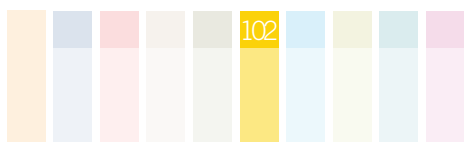
The Red Cross constructed the first refugee camps from simple tents made of cloth and wooden posts. By May 1950, under UN General Assembly Resolution 302 (IV) of 8 December 1949, UNRWA started a systematic aid program for the Palestinian refugees in the five areas of operation (West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon). The UNRWA humanitarian program included the provision of shelter, food, medical aid, and education.

Early camps, which survive in elders' memory and UNRWA photo archives, made up a perfect military camp layout (grid) even in hilly sites like Jalazone. UNRWA tents were made from light colour textile with one or three wooden posts depending on the number of family members. A family of up to three members was accommodated in a one-post circular tent, whereas a family of more than three members was located in a three-post tent. The tents were arranged back-to-back opening directly to a six-meter alley marked by whitewashed pieces of rocks. For Jalazone, a refugee camp of 1,000-1,200 tents with around 4,000-5,000 refugees, UNRWA provided a milk centre, a nutrition centre, public toilets, a medical centre, and a tent to serve as a mosque. The UNRWA also provided eight reasonably large tents as a school to accommodate the refugees' children (both girls and boys) up to the fourth grade. The UNRWA employed the refugees to construct the tents. They paid the tent builders in a Food for Work Program; each worker earned three kilograms of wheat for a twelve-hour working day.



In 1951-1952, after a few years of cold winters in collapsing cloth tents, some refugees started to build shelters from rubble and stones mixed with earthen mortar. The UNRWA provided early building attempts with wooden boards for roofing, and later on with corrugated asbestos. It was not until several years of residence in the camp, with diminishing hope for immediate return, when the UNRWA started replacing the tents with more durable shelters.

In 1953, the UNRWA started replacing refugee tents with concrete structures. There were three types of units: the small room model (9 m²) to host up to three persons, the medium size model (12 m²) to host up to six persons, and the two-room model (18 m²) to accommodate families of more than six members. These prototypes were set in rows between two streets, some six meters wide. A family of more than six members was given a plot of 7 by 14 meters (98 m²), with a two-room prototype built on one side. Smaller families were given plots of 7 by 14 meters on one side of which the one room prototype was built. After more than six decades of construction, the spatial configuration of the camp is still organized following the





• early UNRWA buildings from 1953

original military scheme. Today, the 7-meter wide plots overlooking the main alleys of the camp are still distinguishable.

The housing units were built of concrete block walls that were 5 cm thick, concrete flooring that was 5 cm thick, and slightly inclined concrete slabs that were 8 cm thick. The 2.5-metre-high structures were provided with a 60 by 80 cm window and 80 cm by 190 cm door; both were made of wooden boards with simple hinges.

Presently Jalazone, like most Palestinian refugee camps, is the result of long and ongoing spatial transformation processes. Because the camp was built on limited rented private land of the nearby village of Jifna and could not expand beyond this dedicated zone, the early structures were replaced with more permanent vertically developed buildings. While today visitors encounter up to five-storey buildings in the refugee camp, few structures from those built in 1950s survived the processes of structuring and restructuring the camp. With the fourth generation of refugees born in the camp, shelters and the surrounding plots (and sometimes the public space and streets) have become fully utilized as living space. The camp has



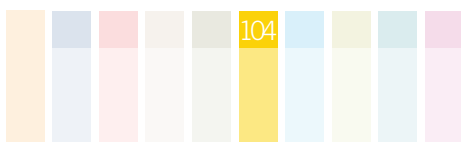
become highly congested and overcrowded, and the streets are ever more narrowing. Still, despite all of these constructions, the camp retains its original plan with intersecting streets leading to the main plaza.

One can distinguish two main construction booms in the refugee camps in the late 1970s and early 1990s. By the late 1970s, UNRWA abolished the distribution of food rations and limited rations to especially needy families in a program known as “Special Hardship Cases” (SHC). These rations were used to govern the camps’ space and population. Refugees needed to comply with the UNRWA’s orders to keep his or her rations and other services. When UNRWA abolished the

food distribution program altogether in 1982, the refugees were no longer bound to these limits and started building new structures. Under the terms of the Oslo Accords (1993), most of the refugee camps have since been under the PNA civil administration. This was accompanied with the emerging of Palestinian government jobs (especially security and police) and the substantial withdrawal of UNRWA’s humanitarian programs with a shift towards Microfinance and Micro enterprises Programs (MMPs) as early as 1993.

These new political and economic conditions triggered new dynamics and opportunities that accelerated the construction and the reworking of the refugee camp space. The ‘restfulness’

• street following original military layout





• jalazone refugee camp central plaza

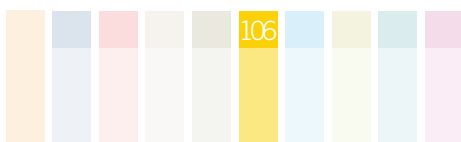
of the early Oslo era not only was manifested in the arrangement of public space and the investment in infrastructure and housing in Jalazone, but also in the construction of a new sport club, two new mosques, a martyrs' memorial, and the refurbishment of the camp's entrance with metallic arches resembling the Arc de Triomphe in Paris, France.

Jalazone challenges the very definition of a refugee camp both spatially and socially. First, the vulnerable shelter has become a highly populated and densely built environment. Second, rather than being solely a place for temporary international aid programs, Jalazone has become a place of production replete with microenterprises, artisans, and labour. Third, rather than a collection of bare lives, Jalazone refugees emerge as a group identity with individual and collective biographies. This group identity manifests itself in space and social practices. For example, refugees gathered into neighbourhoods and gave them the names of their villages of origin that they fled in 1948. In Jalazone, neighbourhoods, streets, shops, and associations are named after villages of origin,

guesthouses after lineages and houses are constructed to keep male relatives within the same cluster after marriage.

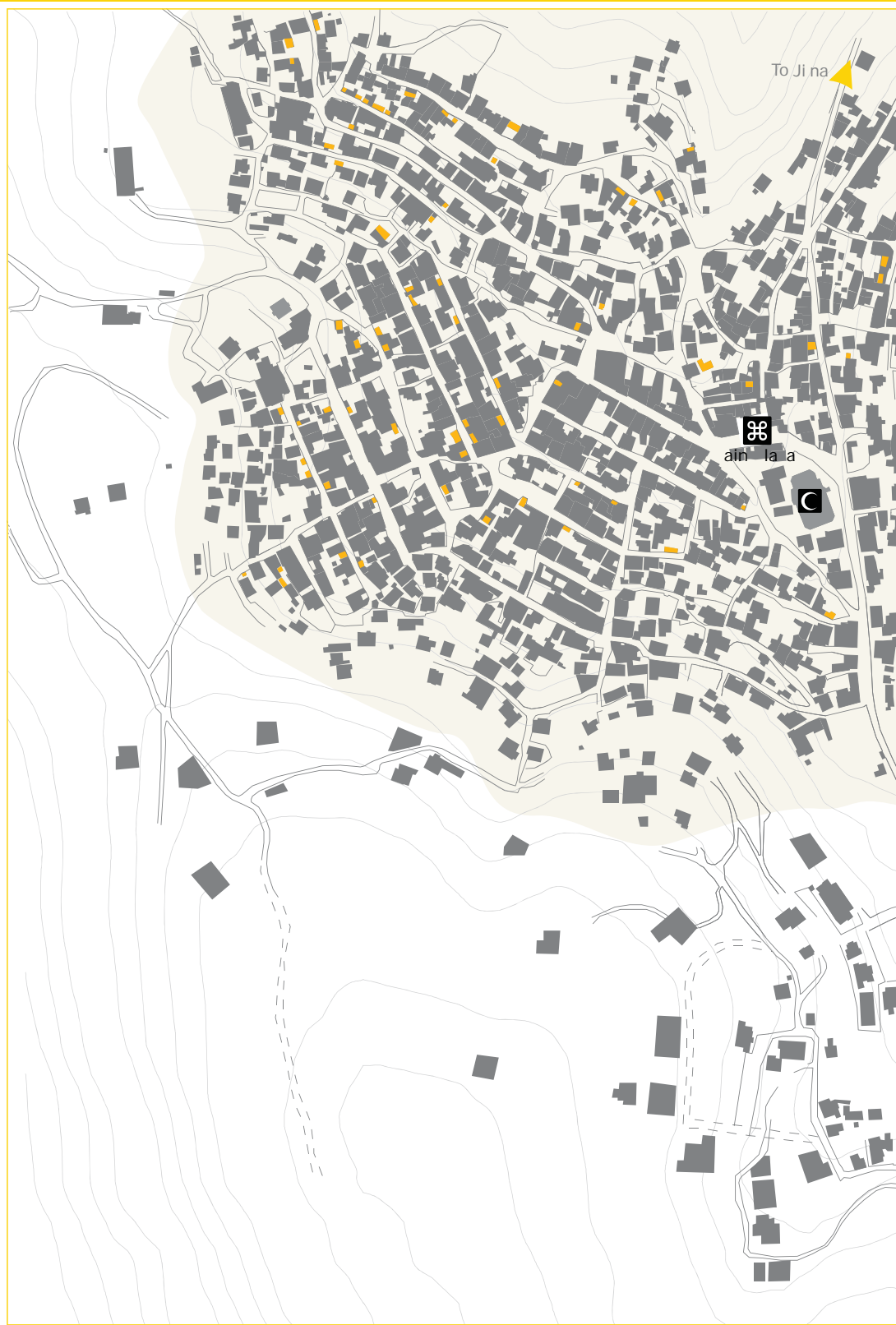
From the main alley, smaller corridors transect the refugee camp dividing it into neighbourhoods. To the east, Umm az-Zenat neighbourhood is named after a destroyed village near Haifa. At the centre of the camp, al-Ludd neighbourhood is named after a depopulated city near present-day Tel Aviv. To the west, An-nabaliyyah neighbourhoods are named after Innabah and Bayt Nabala of ar-Ramlah governorate. To the south, ad-Dawaymah neighbourhood is named after its inhabitants' village of origin, west of Hebron. In a sense, Jalazone residents are located according to their extended family name or their village/town of origin.

The camp is a site of structured chaos, in which the social, political, and economic environment shape the life in the camp, and by extension, the refugees' practices. Social relations are manifested in concrete practices in space and time and they directly and indirectly aim at preserving the refugees' links to their place of origin. Apart from the high density, life in the camp has come to resemble Palestinian village life. Because of the geographical proximity of houses and the densely built environment, the camp space is social and collective in character. Everything a resident does in the camp impacts a large segment of other residents. Building a room might block a main alley for a long period. Cafés and businesses voluntarily close for three days to mourn a death in the camp. Marriage within the camp implies the invitation of an extended number of refugees to the wedding party. Almost every male refugee present in the camp participates in any funeral, and every refugee is supposed to pay condolences to the family of the dead at least once at the camp's Popular Committee hall near the main plaza. At the main plaza, several hundreds of men socialize, spend leisure time, enthusiastically watch heroic Arab soap operas and Spanish Champions league, negotiate business, communicate with each other, and prepare for the coming days.



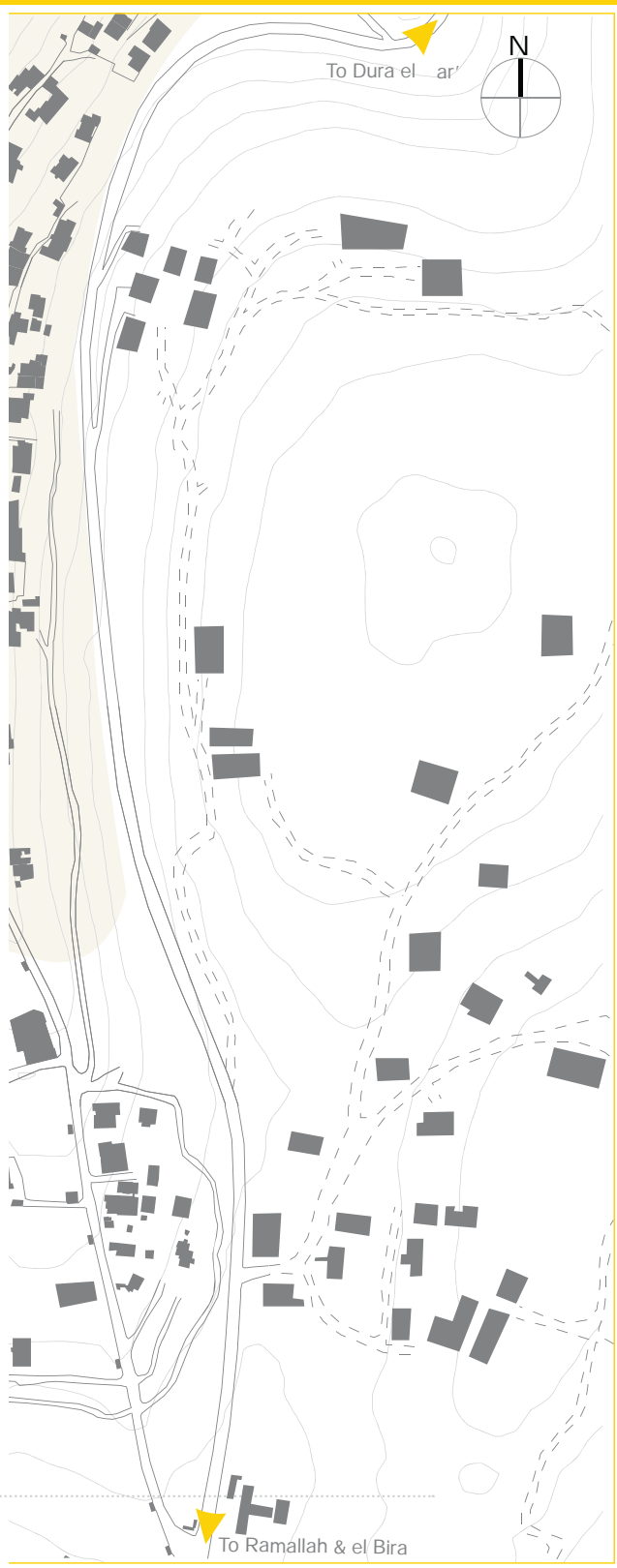
A busy morning in Jalazone is characterized by workers, artisans, officials, employees, and students taking off for their destinations in and outside the camp. Elders head to cafés at the main plaza. Later in the morning, women attend the UNRWA clinic. Elders pray in the new or old mosque at noon, shop, and return home. Women prepare the meals for those who work or study. The afternoon turns busy with those returning home from morning chores. While elders stay mostly home or gather at one another's house, the younger generations start occupying hundreds of colourful plastic chairs at the main plaza cafés, where they play cards, drink tea or coffee, or mingle until late in the night.

Palestinian refugee camps are a unique phenomenon; a refuge that has become a habitat, a temporary shelter that has become a permanent living space. This phenomenon documents an era of Palestinian history and ongoing changes in the Palestinian community. As a result, the camps gain value that surpasses its simple concrete structures. Social, anthropological, spatial, and geographical values elevate the status of the camps to heritage. As history and aesthetics are not the only values that determine the importance of material heritage, so refugee camps are both tangible and intangible heritage for Palestinians searching for identity and for material reminders in their displacement.



M5

Jalazone Refugee Camp



- UNRWA Shelter 1953
- Refugee camp built-up area
- Mosque
- Place of interest
- Road
- Dirt road
- Contour line

0 50 100 meter



Dura al-Qar'

دُورَا الْقَرْع

Location: 8 km north of Ramallah.

Altitude: 730 meters above sea level

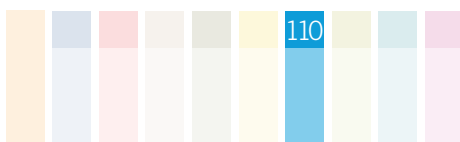
Area: Total land area of 4,166 dunums and a built up area of 118 dunums.

Population: 3,492 inhabitants in 2010

Neighbouring towns and villages: Yabrud, 'Ein Siniya, 'Ein Yabrud, Jalazone Refugee Camp, Jifna.

Dura al-Qar' is one of the smaller villages connected with this trail located on the main old Jerusalem-Nablus Road and is known for its scenic setting, fertile land, and abundant produce.

The village has a compact historic centre with 64 historic buildings and a well intact traditional olive press or *badd*. Most of the buildings consist of one floor and represent traditional cross-vaulted peasant houses. Almost half of the historic buildings are used and are in good physical condition. The village expanded northward towards the main road that connects the village to the Jerusalem-Nablus road. The main road is highlighted with several shops and produce kiosks selling fresh produce year-round, a special feature of Dura al-Qar' reflecting its vibrant agricultural activity.



Dura al-Qar'



- dura al-qar' looking south

Fertile lands and seven springs located in the valley just south of the historic centre make agriculture possible. Traditional water canals provide the lands with water. Dura al-Qar' is known for growing olives, grapes, plums, peaches, and figs as well as a wide variety of vegetables, especially pumpkin. People from the nearby villages visit Dura al-Qar' to get fresh spring water and to buy produce. The area around the springs had been paved with stone and stone terraces had been reconstructed providing a good place for picnics and social gathering. The area is known for its scenic views of the surrounding hills.



- agricultural farmlands



The name Dura comes from the name of a prominent village south of Hebron where villagers originated, and al-Qar' comes from the Arabic word for pumpkin, which grow there in abundance.

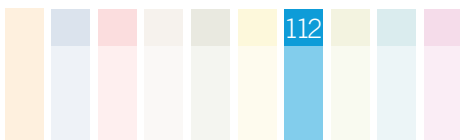
Archaeological Site:

Khirbat Arnutie or Arnutia:

Location: 1.5 km southwest of the historic centre.

Historic periods: Roman (37 BCE - 325 CE).

Description: Excavations found remains of pools, canals, and burial tombs.



M6

To 'In / Iniya

Dura al-Qar'

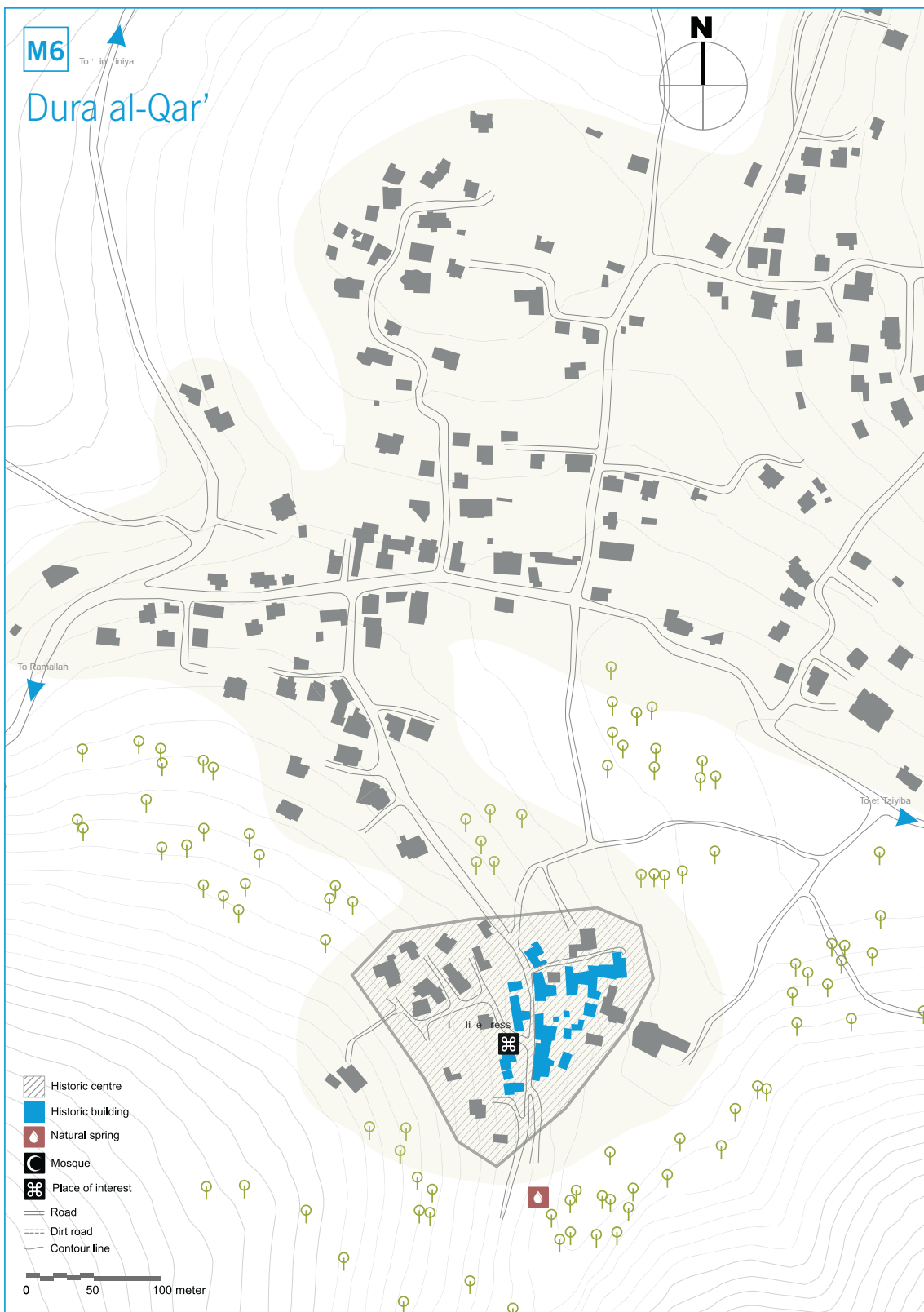


To Ramallah

To 'et Kalyiba

- Historic centre
- Historic building
- Natural spring
- Mosque
- Place of interest
- Road
- Dirt road
- Contour line

0 50 100 meter





‘Ein Siniya

عَيْن سِينِيَا

Location: 10 km north of Ramallah, 30 km north of Jerusalem.

Altitude: 759 meters above sea level

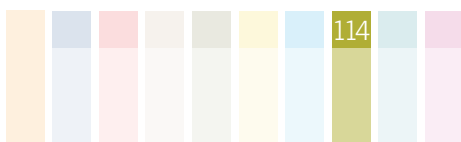
Area: Total land area of 2,791 dunums and a built up area of 94 dunums.

Population: 960 inhabitants in 2010

Neighbouring towns and villages: Silwad, Yabrud, Dura el-Qar’, ‘Ein Yabrud, Bir Zeit, Jifna.

‘Ein Siniya is located on the historic trade and pilgrims’ route connecting Jerusalem with Nablus. The historic centre of ‘Ein Siniya is a compact and well-preserved area with 40 historic buildings that date back to late 19th and early 20th century, including an olive press, a mill, and al-Husseini house, an urban mansion in this small agricultural village. ‘Ein Siniya is rich in natural landscapes of springs and fertile land, olive groves, fruit trees, and abundant produce, in addition to natural caves and ancient tombs carved in the surrounding rocky hills.

The historic centre of ‘Ein Siniya is similar to other historic centres where the fabric of traditional society was formed of clusters of peasant houses around open courtyards. More than half of the buildings consist of one storey, and while most of the houses are



‘Ein Siniya



abandoned, they are in good structural and physical conditions.

Al-Husseini house has a distinctive location within the historic centre. It was built as a single house in an independent plot with its main entrance on the west façade, away from the historic centre. Roads on all four sides surround the house. It demonstrates characteristics of urban mansions of the early 20th century that dramatically differed from peasant house architecture and so gives 'Ein Siniya a distinctive spatial quality.

Al-Husseini house was partially renovated to be used as a museum. It has a red-tiled roof and wooden verandas overlooking a large courtyard in an L shape. The main façade of the house has five large arches and a patio. The house consists of two storeys – the ground level provides storage rooms around the courtyard, while the upper level consists of family bedrooms. The house was built over different stages, which started in the end of the 19th century with part of the ground floor, and included additions in the 1920s, 40s, and 60s. Hence, the house is a testimony to different architectural and social transformations during the early 20th century.

Walls surround al-Husseini house which separate it from the rest of the town, a common trait of urban houses. Al-Husseini family came from a more affluent social group than the rest of the village known for their wealth and education. They were a well-known and wealthy Jerusalem family who owned a lot of properties in the village and neighbouring villages. They lived in the house only during the warm seasons. Consequently, the architecture of the house reflected these social differences as well. Whereas the average house in the village is about 89 square meters, al-Husseini house is 417 square meters (4.6 times larger than any other house in the village).

Archaeological Sites:

1. Khirbat Shatta:

Location: Northeast of 'Ein Siniya.

Historic periods: Roman (63 BCE - 325 CE) and Byzantine (325 - 638).

Description: To the Northeast of 'Ein Siniya, the site is believed to be the site of the original village. Khirbat Shatta is located on the higher ground in a more secure location, but the residents of the village moved to the current location in the 19th century to be closer to the natural springs and the trade route. There are remains of walls.

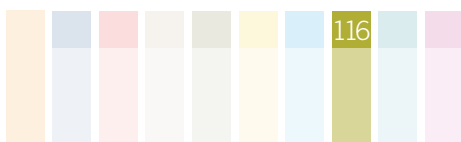
2. Freedom Fighter Caves:

Location: 500 meters southeast of the village.

Description: These caves were used by Palestinian freedom fighters during Jordanian rule. There are five caves carved in the rocks on the main road between Ramallah and Nablus. They were small natural caves that were expanded in the years 1964-1965 to store fuel and ammunition. The caves have a natural rock column in the middle, openings for light and ventilation, and a spring. Continue up the rocky hill to reach another four natural caves with stunning views.

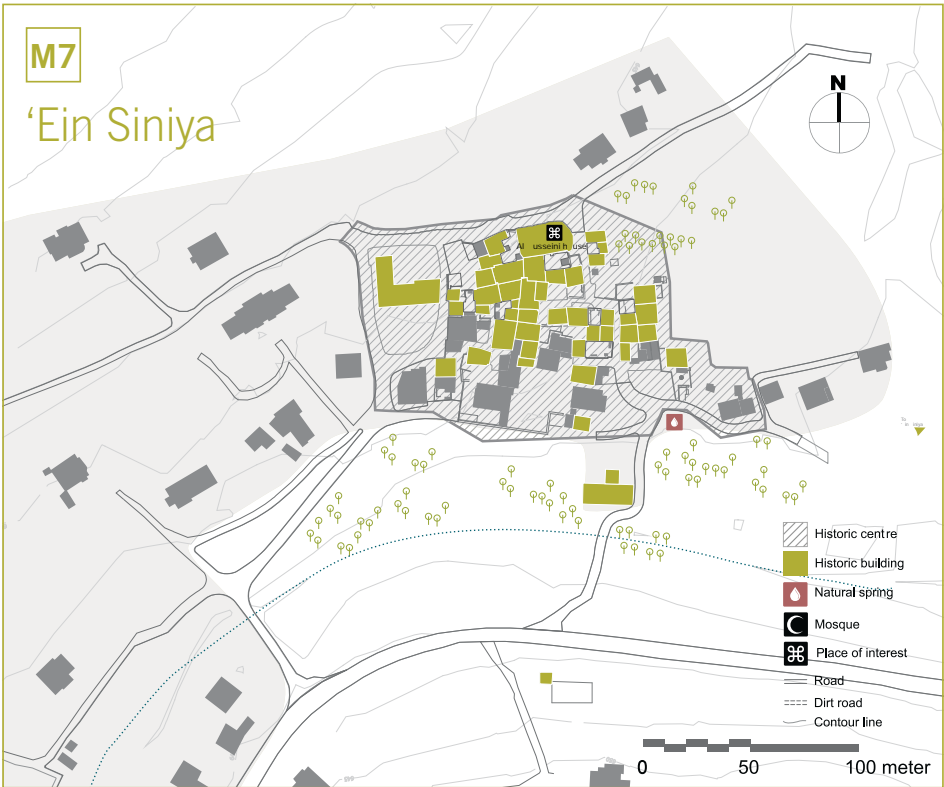
3. 'Ein Siniya Spring:

Location: in the historic centre. Water available all year round.





• 'ein siniya spring. idioms film © riwaq archive





Silwad

سلواد

Location: 12 km northeast of Ramallah and 5 km west of the Nablus-Jerusalem highway.

Altitude: 900 metres above sea level, 1,016 metres at Tell 'Asur (the highest point in the West Bank).

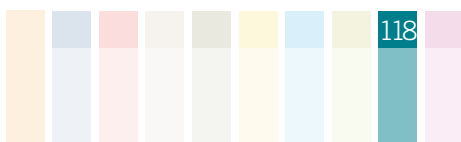
Area: Total land area of 18,880 dunums and a built up area of 72 dunums.

Population: 10,000 inhabitants in 2010.

Neighbouring towns and villages: el-Mazra'a esh-Sharqiya, Jiljiliya, 'Abwein, 'Atara, Bir Zeit, Yabrud, 'Ein Yabrud, at-Taiyiba, Deir Jarir, 'Ein Siniya.

Silwad is best known for its large distribution of *qusur*. Silwad was traditionally known for its fig trees planted in fertile soil, kept from erosion by stone terraces, and the production of substantial amounts of *quttain* (dried figs), thus earning the name "Silwad Al-Quttain." It is also known for its vineyards, olive trees and water springs.

Silwad is located on the ancient road connecting Jerusalem with Damascus. The road passed through Silwad at an area of natural springs called Wadi el-Haramiya ("the valley of thieves"), which was considered one of the most dangerous sections of this ancient road.



The road was guarded in ancient times by several watchtowers on high grounds overlooking the valley. Burj el-Bardawil and Khirbat el-Burj (or Burj Lisana) are very important Crusader watchtowers located to the west and east of the ancient road. A Mamluk khan (caravanserai) named Khirbat el-Khan can be seen in the valley, though partially demolished by modern road construction.

Tell 'Asur (1,016 m), located in Silwad, is considered one of the highest mountains in the West Bank and was traditionally planted with apple trees. It contains an archaeological site but is currently not accessible because it is used for an Israeli military base and radar station.

Silwad is considered a service hub for the surrounding towns and villages. It offers varied services such as medical centres, farmers associations, and a post office.

Qusur: Stone Peasant Watchtowers

Visitors to the central highlands of Palestine can easily observe *qusur* scattered in the mountains and valleys. These small one-room buildings of square or circular plans are made of neatly aligned stones collected from surrounding fields and were used to store summer crops and house peasants and their families during the summer months until the end of 20th century.

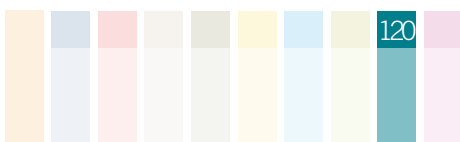
Qusur as well as *maqamat* (holy shrines) are the only structures built in the landscape between stone terraces. Stone terraces are considered one of the most important and ancient products of human interaction with nature and are typical to western and eastern slopes of the central highlands. Almost a metre thick and with varying heights that depend on the slope of the land, the stone terraces were built to claim the maximum area of flat land. They were built to help prevent soil erosion, keep livestock away from cultivated areas, and define the boundaries of land under different ownerships. In order to understand the role these *qusur* played in the life of Palestinians, it is crucial to understand the role of agriculture



in the social and economic life of Palestinian rural communities.

Until the end of the British Mandate, the Palestinian economy was considered an agricultural economy, where almost two-thirds of the population's livelihood was dependent on agriculture. The cultivation cycle in the central highlands of Palestine can be divided into three consecutive seasons, the wheat and barley harvest season in May and June, the fig and vine season in July, August and September, and the olive season in October and November. Therefore villagers needed to go out to distant fields to take care of their harvest; protect it from thieves, wild animals, and birds; and to collect, store and sometimes dry their harvest from the beginning of the summer until mid-fall. That created the necessity for constructing temporary peasant houses. Qusur were also associated with a set of traditions, folkloric songs, and products such as dried figs, dried tomatoes, wine, and raisins.

Cultivating the land and building terraces with dry stone walls and *qusur* had played an important role in Palestine. The role of



The construction of *qusur* in the landscape can only be seen in areas famous for fig and vine plantation and production – the area from north of Ramallah to south of Hebron. *Qusur* were usually positioned on a high place to overlook the surrounding fields and in a rocky area in order to obtain a solid ground to hold the structure and preserve agricultural land for planting. Each *qasr* (singular of *qusur*) was constructed with irregular stones collected from the surrounding fields stacked without using any kind of mortar. They were composed of two storeys connected from the inside or outside with a stone staircase.

The ground floor was usually a one-room structure with a cone-shaped vault constructed by rectangular stones called *roos* (meaning heads). This room is accessed by a short and narrow door and has no windows. The small size of the ground floor was not enough to accommodate all family members. Men usually slept under a trellis on the upper floor or outside in the fields.

The upper floor was typically an open room surrounded by low stone walls with a wooden structure holding up branches, leaves, or fabric for shade to allow for watching the surrounding fields. Each *qasr* was connected with services such as a traditional oven (*tabun*), a well, water channels, and a wine press. *Qusur* in the different regions were built in different styles and were given different names.

In the Ramallah and Bethlehem governorates, the most common type was built with a square or circular plan. They were called *qusur* in Ramallah and *manateer* in Bethlehem, a term sometimes also used in Ramallah. In Hebron, the rooms with square or circular plans were not roofed and used temporary roofs of wooden branches and leaves or fabric, and was called *syreh* or *beit el-jidar* (house of walls). Temporary wooden structures with wood or fabric roofing, which were used as resting areas and for watching the vegetable fields, were called *erzal*, *areesha*, *khos*, or *karboosh*.

agriculture is declining as a result of continuous migration from villages to cities and abroad, the opening of job opportunities within the PNA and other local institutions, as well as the continuous construction of Israeli settlements and bypass roads confiscating and dividing Palestinian land. Today, *qusur* and dry stone terraces



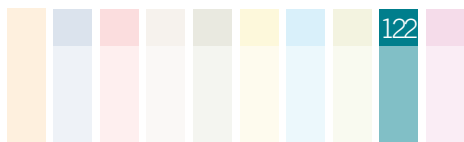
are mostly abandoned and left to deteriorate and collapse, thus leading to a great loss of an important element of the Palestinian cultural landscape.

Silwad and the surrounding landscape are famous for a high density of *qusur* scattered on the hills, demonstrating different shapes and configurations of this agricultural/architectural phenomenon. About 100 *qusur* were found in the Silwad area, making it one of the areas containing the highest number of *qusur* in the West Bank.²⁸

The Historic Centre:

The historic centre of Silwad is located on one of the hilltops to the north of the new town centre, with 218 historic buildings forming the traditional fabric of the village. Almost 83% of those historic buildings were built with only one storey.

28. Manateer: *Qusur al-mazare'* in Rural Palestine: Suad Amiry and Firas Rahal, *Riwaq's Series in the History of Architecture in Palestine #6*, Riwaq - Centre for Architectural Conservation, 2003).



As most of villages in the central highlands of Palestine, the historic centre overlooks the valleys and plains below. Almost all of the buildings belong to the Ottoman Period, yet there are indications that underneath the historic centre many layers of history from earlier periods are buried. Traces of Canaanite caves carved in rocks, of Roman and Byzantine tombs, tunnels and remains of a church as well as other sites, were found in the historic centre.²⁹ There are three main *hamayel* (patrilineal descent groups) in Silwad that were grouped into separate quarters named after them: Hammad, Hamed, and Ayyad.

The historic centre also includes an important natural monument in the form of a huge rock formation called *Eraq el-Kharoof* (the Rock of the Sheep). This site is sacred to locals and is associated with many superstitious stories. It is said that this stone was carved by Canaanites in the form of sheep to track planets and stars

29. The Municipality Between Past and Present: Research done by Silwad Municipality, 2010





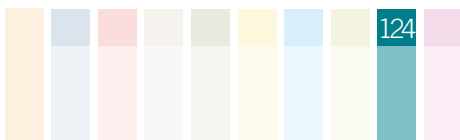
in order to identify the different directions. Other stories mention a woman from the Ghaneem family who went inside the rock through a door that opened in front of her and found a sword hanging at the cave ceiling. She took it and left hastily, but the door quickly closed, trapping part of her clothes in the rock.

Another story speaks of a Moroccan Sheikh who found a treasure inside the rock with the help of a genie that appeared to him in the form of a sheep on a full moon night. Archaeological remains were found east of Eraq Al-Kharoof (buildings, wells, pottery, and mosaics), which were unfortunately destroyed by the owner of the land.³⁰

Archaeological Sites:

Silwad has 30 known archaeological sites and features. These features include five water springs, a water well, a water cistern, nine caves, a bridge, and a natural rock monument inside the historic centre. The four main archaeological sites in Silwad are:

30. Ibid





1. Burj el-Bardawil:

Location: On top of a hill overlooking Wadi 'Oyoun el-Haramiya from the south and almost 1,850m west of the historic centre, on the west side of the bypass road that connect the cities of Nablus and Ramallah.

Historic period: Crusader (1099-1187), Ayyubid (1187-1291), Mamluk (1291-1516) and Ottoman (1516-1850).

Description: Burj el-Bardawil is a Crusader castle, part of which still exists today. It was built by Baldwin, the King of Latin Jerusalem, to protect the trade route connecting Jerusalem with Damascus. The site also includes adjacent buildings, stone walls, and a water well.

2. Khirbat Kafr 'Ana:

Location: On top of a hill overlooking the main road connecting Jerusalem and Nablus to the west of it, 2,600m to the south west of the historic centre.

• burj el-bardawil



Area: 100-120 dunums.

Historic periods: Byzantine (325-638), Omayyad (638-750), Crusaders (1099-1187), Ayyubid (1187-1291), Mamluk (1291-1516) and Ottoman (1516-1850).

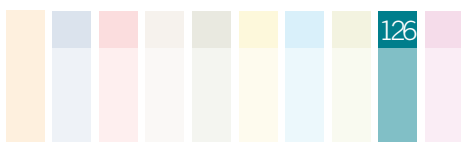
Description: The site includes a whole abandoned village,³¹ a small destroyed mosque, an ancient watchtower, an olive press, storage holes, water wells, tombs engraved in rocks, ancient columns, and a colourful mosaic floor for what may be a Byzantine church.

2. Khirbat Burj Lisana (Tongue Tower):

Location: On top of a hill overlooking Wadi el-Haramiya from the east and 1,650 m to the north of Silwad historic centre.

Historic periods: The tower is Crusader (1099-1187), but other components of the site are probably Roman (37 BCE-325 CE) and Byzantine (325-638).

31. The inhabitant of the village left two hundred years ago as a result of the political disputes between Qais and Yemen typical to Palestine during the 18th and 19th century.



Description: The site includes a watchtower as well as the remains of demolished buildings, a wall, storage holes, a wine press carved into the rock, and many columns. The rock formations look like tongues and therefore were named the “tongue tower.”

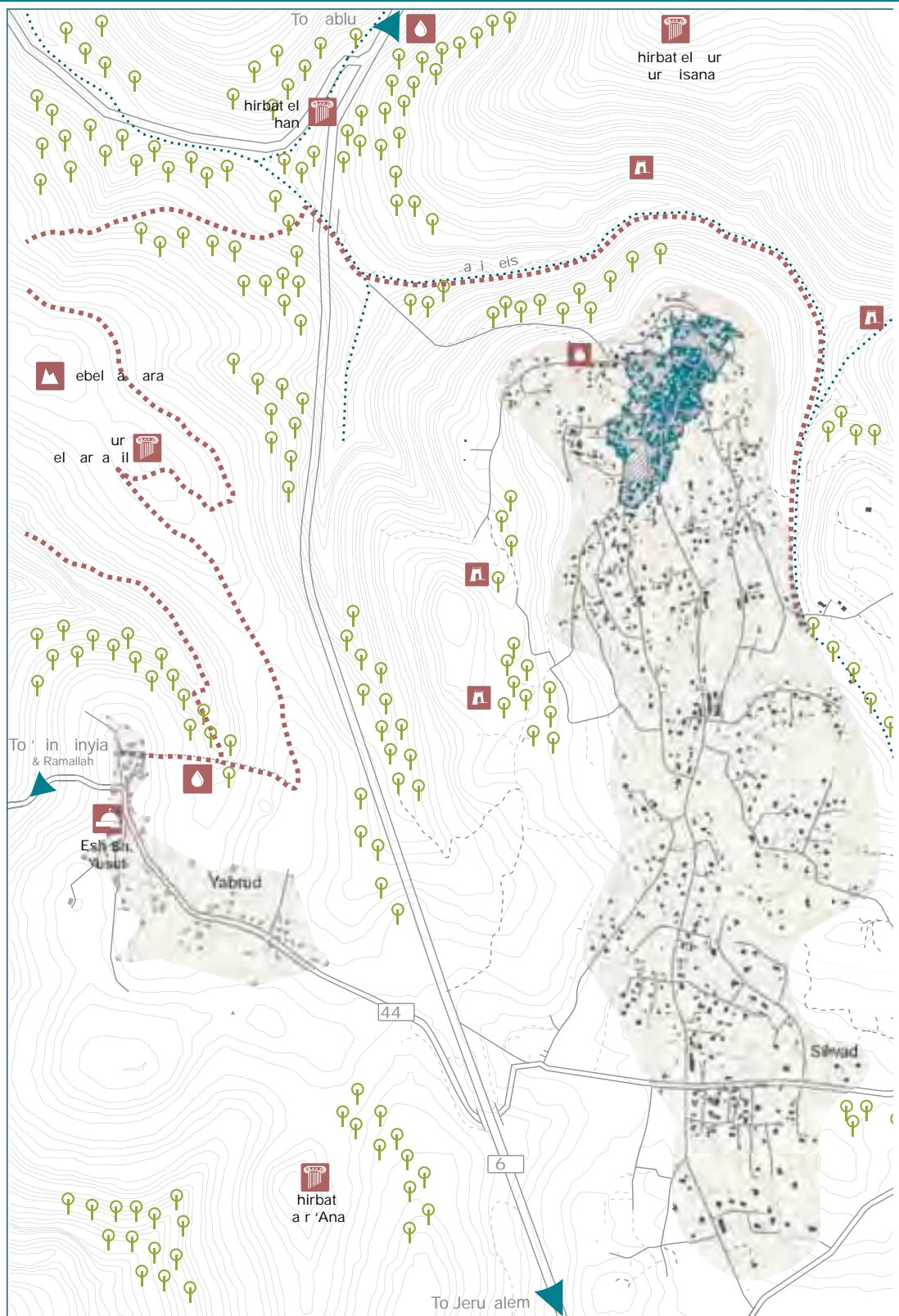
3. Khirbat Al-Khan (Dar Faris):

Location: In the heart of ‘Oyoun Al-Haramiya along the ancient road connecting Jerusalem to Damascus and 1,350 m to the west of the historic centre.

Historic periods: Mamluk (1291-1516) and Ottoman (1516-1850).

Description: The site is also called Dar Faris referring to the family name of those who owned the land. The site includes a partially demolished Mamluk khan. The site also includes several caves, a spring, and a well.







Et-Taiyiba (Taybeh)

الطَّيْبَة

Location: 14 km north east of Ramallah.

Altitude: 930 metres above sea level.

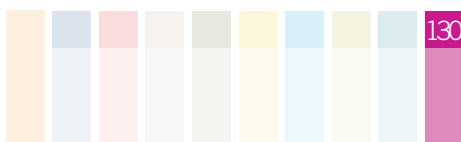
Area: total land area of 24,000 dunums and a master plan are of 3456 dunums.

Population: 1,504 inhabitant in 1997, 2,710 inhabitants in 2010

Neighbouring towns and villages: Deir Jarir from the north, Silwad and 'Ein Yabrud to the northwest, Rammun to the south, Jericho and the Jordan valley to the southeast.

The cultural landscape of et-Taiyiba is very rich and diverse as the land stretches between one of the highest hills in the West Bank (Tell 'Asur to the north, 1,012 m above sea level) and the lowest spot on earth (Jericho and the Dead Sea area to the southeast, more than 350 meters below sea level).

The land of et-Taiyiba combines two very distinctive types of landscape typical to Palestine, the central mountain area and the semi-arid landscape of the eastern slopes. The eastern slopes are full of diverse flora and fauna and are home to Bedouin settlements, whereas the mountain area is rich with dry stone terraces planted with olive trees. Located to the southeast of the town, a small



woodland planted with citrus trees is used as a recreational area by locals.

Et-Taiyiba was established by the Canaanites (early Bronze Age 3500-2350 BCE) and was called “Ofra”, meaning “the dear”, a name that is also mentioned in the Hebrew Bible. During the Roman and Byzantine Periods, the town was called Ephraim, mentioned in the New Testament as a place that Jesus and his disciples hid to escape a plot to kill Jesus (John 11:54). The current name et-Taiyiba, meaning “good” or “fertile,” was given to this place by Saladin on his way to conquer Jerusalem by the end of the 12th century.

Evidence of this long and rich history can be seen at archaeological sites located in et-Taiyiba.

The Historic Centre:

The historic centre is located on the southeast side of one of the hilltops of et-Taiyiba. The main road connecting et-Taiyiba with other cities and towns divided the town into two parts, east and west. This road lead to the demolition of many

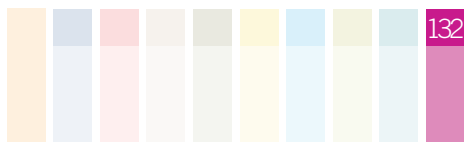




historic buildings and the creation of a new town centre where new buildings were built on both sides. The historic centre has 194 historic buildings, forming the historic traditional fabric.³² As most of villages in the central highlands of Palestine, the historic centre location overlooks the valleys and plains below.

One of the most distinguished features of the historic centre of et-Taiyiba is the stairs used to overcome the sloped terrain and connect the different pathways and alleys together. Found also in the Old City of Bethlehem, this style is rarely seen in rural Palestinian areas. Another significant architectural feature in the historic centre is a semicircular arched pathway that passes under residential buildings and acts as a shortcut connecting the historic centre with its north-side peripheries.

32. Riwaq Register of Historic Buildings in Palestine, 2006.



Almost all of those buildings belong to the Ottoman Period, though there are indications that underneath the historic centre many layers of history from different periods exist. Traces of caves carved in rocks, underground tunnels, and church remains have been found in and around the historic centre.

There are two main *hamayel* (patrilineal descent groups) in et-Taiyiba that were grouped into separate quarters named after them: al-Kawana and el-Diyuk. Two main attics are named after those *hamayel* and were used as a male gathering place for the extended family and a guesthouse for travellers.

Single Historic Buildings:

Similar to other places in Palestine, traditional architecture and settlement patterns have tremendously been transformed in et-Taiyiba at the turn of the twentieth century. Locals started to leave the historic core to live in larger unattached buildings that were built on a relatively large land plot as private gardens. Et-Taiyiba currently has 52 single historic buildings that were built in this period, scattered outside of the historic centre along the main streets of the town.

1. British Army Building

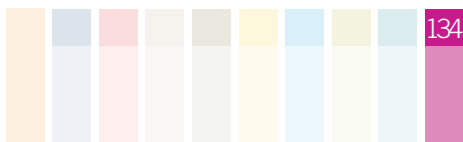
The British Army Building is located at the northern end of et-Taiyiba alongside the street that connects et-Taiyiba with its neighbouring town Deir Jarir. Called Al-Maghfar by locals, the building is considered one of the most significant in Palestine as it represents one of the few remaining that were built and used by the British army during the British Mandate Period in Palestine. The building was used as a centre for the Jordanian army between 1948 and 1967, and was then abandoned until the year 2000 where it was utilized by the Palestinian security forces until today.

The building is composed of a one-storey U-shaped layout surrounding a rectangular courtyard. The courtyard is closed from the north side by a stone wall with a door, marking the main and



only entrance to the building. The entrance leads to the courtyard, which give access to 10 different rooms surrounding the courtyard. Used as a stable for horses, the two rooms on the western side are larger in size than the rest of the rooms and are at the same level of the courtyard.

The eight remaining rooms were used as offices and bedrooms for the British and later the Jordanian army. The entrances to those





rooms are 70 cm higher than courtyard level and therefore are reached by two sets of 3-4 stairs, which leads to a 1.2-metre L-shaped path covering the whole southern and eastern sides of the courtyard. This small difference in levels was probably necessary in order to overcome the gentle slope westwards, to separate the space used by humans from that used by horses, and to allow for larger height for stable rooms.

The openings (doors and windows) of the building are rectangular in shape. Those openings are smaller in size at outside façades and larger at courtyard façades, probably for security reasons. The stone is a rough chiselled stone locally called *tobza* and was used in most of public buildings in Palestine during the British Mandate Period.

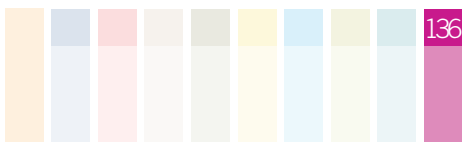
Two rectangular towers are located at the southwest and northeast corners of the buildings with the main aim of protecting the building. To allow for better surveillance from all sides, the two-storey towers were built one to two meters outside the main layout of the building from two sides. The towers have little openings at 0.8-1.2 meters intervals including at the corners of the tower to allow for protected rifle shooting.



2. Dar Farah An-Nimir Massis:

Located to the southwest of the historic centre alongside the street that connects et-Taiyiba with its neighbouring village Rammun, Dar Massis represents the rich architecture of the British Mandate Period. It consists of two storeys with a rectangular symmetrical layout (14x17 metres), surrounded by a big plot of land planted with trees. It is covered with a pitched red-tiled roof supported by a wooden structure.

What add to the significance and beauty of the building are the original details in stone, iron, and wooden works. The back and side facades are built with rough chiselled stones (*tubza*), ending with a frieze made of light chiselled stone (*matabba*) that surrounds the whole building. The openings of the building are rectangular in shape and are surrounded by a stone frame of soft chiselled stones. The windows are made from wood and glass while iron protection bars are ornamented with S-shape decorations. The doors are made of solid iron and iron decorations.



The main façade is the most ornamented and beautiful of all. The ground floor is built with rough chiselled stones, whereas the upper floor is built with soft chiselled stone. In contrast with current trends, soft chiselled stones were considered a sign of wealth because they required more labour. The openings are rectangular in shape, surrounded by a stone soft-chiselled frame except for the saloon front façade (eastern façade).

Three semi-circular arched doors and two windows on both sides ornament this part of the façade. Those arches are made of white and red stones covered by a white stone protruding frieze. The arches are supported by the stone facades at their far ends and by two columns on both sides of the door. The columns have ornamented capitals and simple bases. Similar to other buildings from that period the height of the ceiling is almost four meters, which is much higher than that of today's buildings. The first floor house interior still preserves the original ornamented wooden cupboards as well as part of the original furniture. Beautiful patterns of colourful traditional concrete tiles cover the floor.

3. Dar Suleiman Abu Mizher:

Located to the southwest of the historic centre along the street connecting the historic centre with the southern parts of the town, Dar Abu Mizher combines architectural styles from different historical periods, using a rare combination between building materials (stone and concrete walls), with special emphasis on concrete building details.

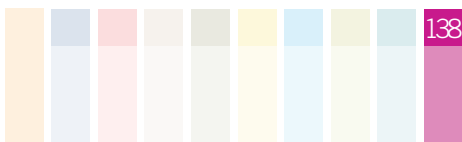
Dar Abu Mizher is composed of three storeys, with a rectangular layout (almost five by ten meters) and is surrounded by a big plot of land with a beautiful palm tree. The ground floor, consisting of two cross-vaulted rooms, is the oldest section and was built with rough chiselled stones. A pointed stone arch on the eastern side of the ground floor facade supports a small balcony encircled by an iron handrail.



The first floor is divided into two parts; one built with stones (northern section) while the other with concrete (southern section), reached through an outer stone stairs on the eastern facade. The northern room is roofed with a typical cross vault, while the southern one is roofed by iron I-beams and concrete. Another entrance to the building at the main street is located at the western side of the stone room.

A stair located on the southeastern corner of the building leads to the second floor. The stairs lead to a big terrace, which leads to an upper room on the northern side and a small balcony on the southern end. This small balcony overhangs on I-beams and concrete. Both the room and the terrace are roofed with wooden beams and lime plaster. A pitched red-tiled roof supported by a wooden structure covers the wooden roof. Another balcony at the western side of the second floor hangs over the street on I-beams and concrete slabs.

In addition to the combination of concrete and stone in construction, what makes the building special and rare among others in et-Taiyiba





is the use of concrete decorations at the columns holding the terrace roof. Six columns with a square crown and segmental arches in between all consist of concrete. Whether stone or concrete, the openings of the buildings are simple rectangular doors and windows.

Archaeological Sites:

Et-Taiyiba has 16 known archaeological sites and features. Those vary from major sites such as the ruins of two churches, a castle, the historic centre, and two historic monuments, to minor sites such as caves and one lime-kiln (*lattoun*). The four main archaeological sites in et-Taiyiba are:

1. Saint George Greek Orthodox Church “el-Khadr” (historic ruins):

Location: Located 300 meters to the south east of historic centre and to the north of the town graveyard and city hall.

Area: 1.5 dunums.



Historic periods: Byzantine (325-638), Crusaders (1099-1187), Mamluk (1291-1516) and Ottoman (1516-1850).

Description: The site includes the remains of a Byzantine church, stairs leading to the church, mosaic floors, water channels, wells carved in rocks, and a burial place underneath the church. Locals still offer sacrifices at the entrance of the church and light candles inside of the church as a religious cultural tradition.

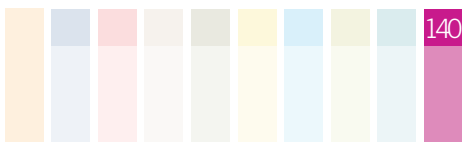
2. Saint George Greek Orthodox Church (modern):

Location: Located in the southern part of the historic centre.

Area: 1 dunum including the existing church of 1931.

Historic periods: Byzantine (325-638), British Mandate (1917-1948).

Description: The site includes a church built in 1931, mosaic floors, the remaining of columns and column capitals from the Byzantine period, and a floor tiled with stones.



3. El-Bobariyeh (Crusader Castle):

Location: In the western part of the historic centre.

Area: 2 dunums including adjacent buildings.

Historic periods: Crusader (1099-1187), Mamluk (1291-1516), early Ottoman (1516-1850).

Description: The site includes the remains of a Crusader castle of which the northern and western walls still exist until today and includes several barrel and a cross-vaulted halls, an open courtyard and several large water wells.

4. Khirbat al-Chillia or al-Kilya

Location: Located on the top of a hill 5 km to the southeast of the historic centre.

Area: 3 dunums.

Historic periods: Roman (37 BCE - 325 CE), Byzantine (325-638), Omayyad (638-750), Mamluk (1291-1516) and early Ottoman (1516-1850).

Description: The site includes the remains of a Roman castle, Byzantine monastery, caves, and a stone inscription of a synagogue.



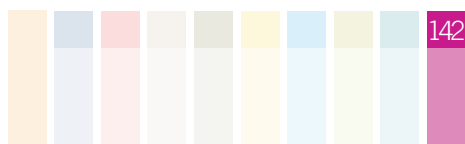


TAYBEH OKTOBERFEST AS HIGHLIGHT OF PALESTINE

Maria Khoury

I am obsessed with inviting people to visit one of the most ancient places in Palestine, where we enjoy a deep rich history of Palestinian culture and faith in my husband's village. These last few years the amazing rehabilitation work of Riwaq in et-Taiyiba, also known as biblical Ephraim, with fourth-century Byzantine ruins and a Crusaders castle, has inspired visitors to walk the beautiful paths of the historic centre of et-Taiyiba and enjoy the public spaces, alleys, plazas, and terraces, finding pleasure in the beauty of Palestinian architecture where we have 248 historic buildings and 30,000 olive trees.

When you arrive in et-Taiyiba, you will be in the highest mountain region in Palestine, 930 meters above sea level with a brilliant view of the Dead Sea and the splendour of the ancient

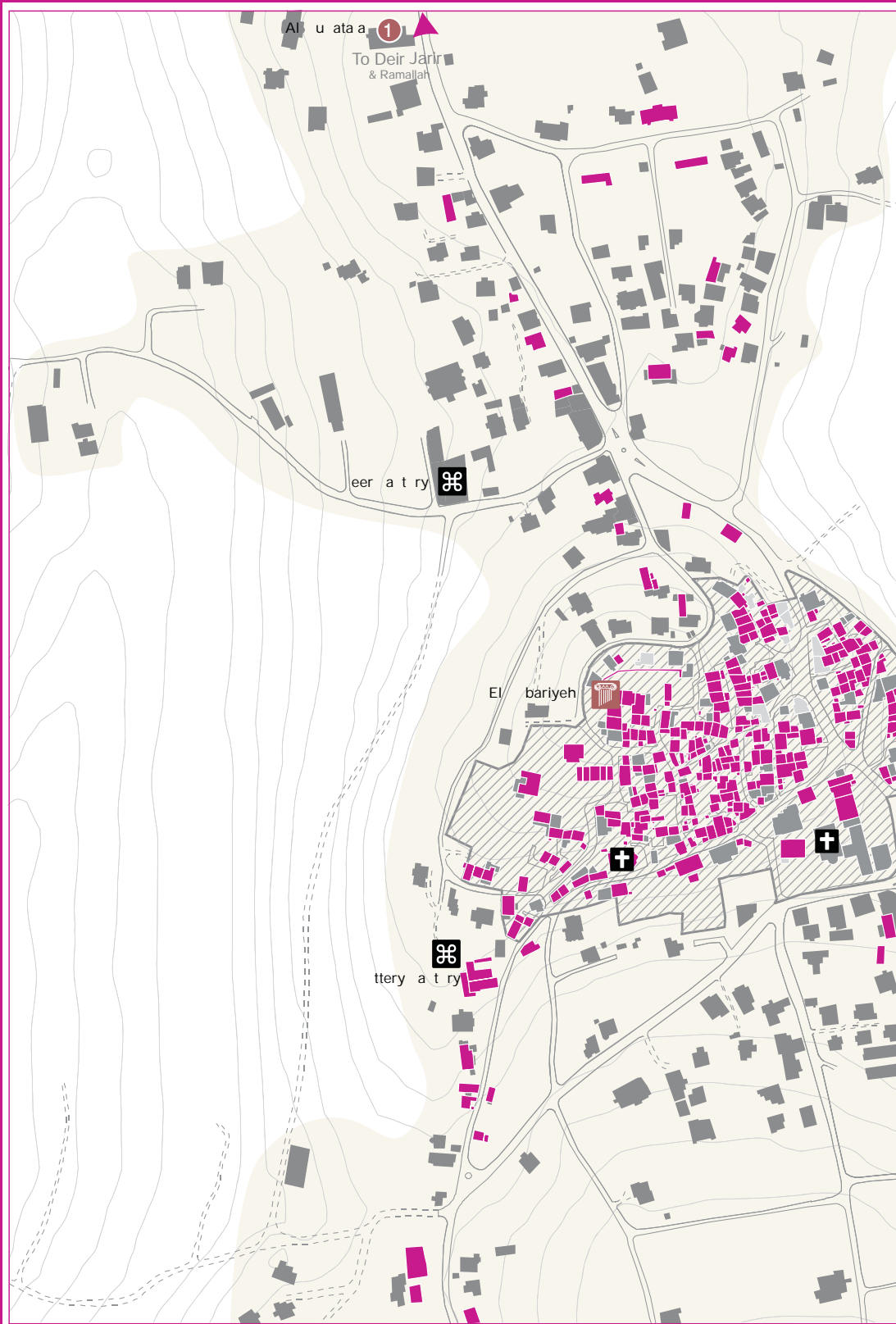


Judean valleys and hills. In the New Testament, Ephraim is known as the village of retreat by receiving Jesus Christ before his crucifixion, John 11:54; and mentioned in the Old Testament over eight times reflecting profound cultural heritage from before 5,000 BCE.

Visitors to et-Taiyiba can tour our local magnificent archaeological treasure, the ruins of St. George Church, “el-Khader,” where many inhabitants still celebrate some of their feasts, the Olive Branch Workshop producing the popular peace lamp with the word “peace” written in different languages, and the modern olive press open during the olive picking season. A must-see is the House of Parables next to the Latin Church, which is a traditional Palestinian home with cultural artefacts explaining biblical parables and traditional Palestinian life. The Stone School, created in 2007, reflects the preservation of cultural heritage of our small Palestinian village.

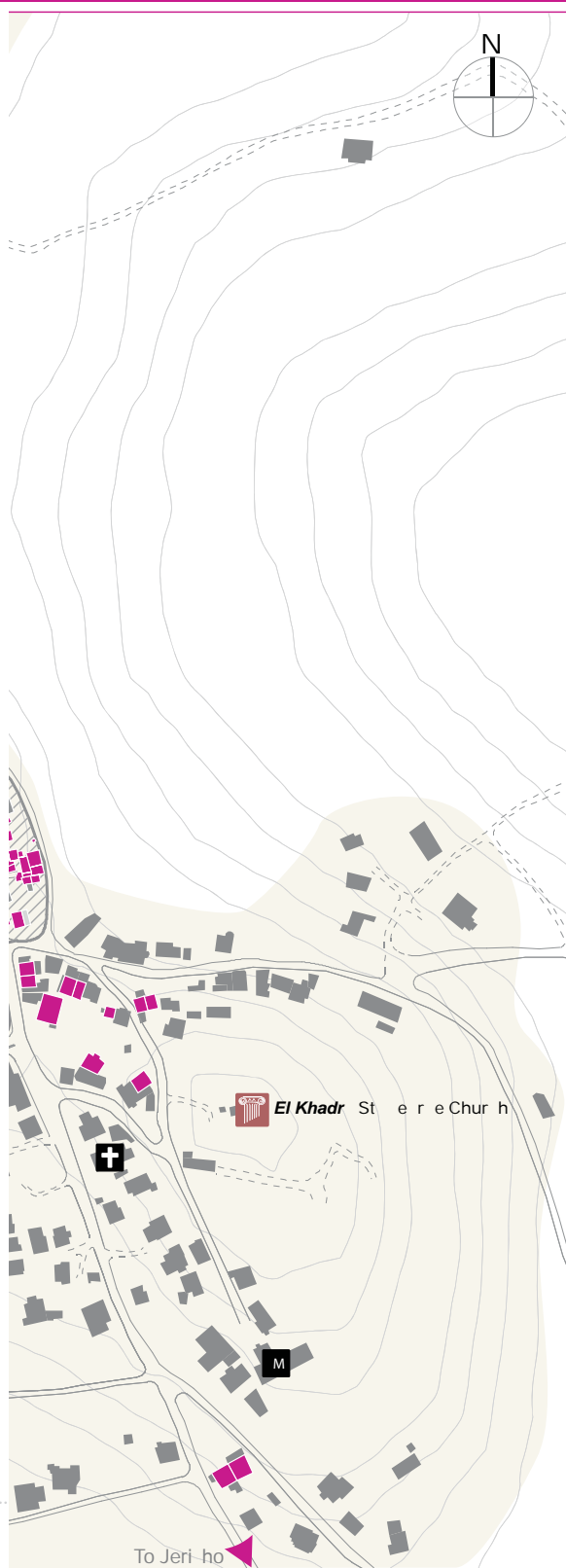
Making et-Taiyiba famous since 1995 is the Taybeh Brewing Company, which produces the “finest beer in the Middle East,” and is the only Palestinian brew house. This peaceful village expresses their craving to have a normal life with the celebration of the Taybeh Oktoberfest, a two-day annual village festival, which has become a distinctive event in Palestine promoting support for all local products. The Oktoberfest has become a unique cultural exchange by giving venue to local performers while welcoming bands from Brazil, Japan, Germany, Greece, and England.

People can overnight in et-Taiyiba with the two guesthouses offering 16 rooms each, and can eat at Taybet Zamaan Restaurant, which offers a panoramic view of et-Taiyiba and surrounding villages. By appointment, one can also view the antique floor tile workshop next door to Taybet Zamaan Public Park. A new and upcoming restaurant in the historic centre of et-Taiyiba is Peter’s Place, also featuring et-Taiyiba heritage as exhibited by the Holy Landers Association for Preservation of Christian Heritage.



M9

Et-Taiyiba (Taybeh)



- Historic centre
- Historic building
- Archaeological site
- Place of interest
- Church
- Municipality
- Road
- Dirt road
- Contour line

0 50 100 meter

Summary

Re-Walk Heritage: Ramallah Highlands Trail is a part of the project Mutual Heritage: from historical integration to contemporary active participation, a project on the recent architectural and urban heritage in the Mediterranean area funded by the European Union within the Euromed Heritage IV programme. Mutual Heritage aims to identify, document, and promote the recent heritage of the 19th and 20th centuries fostering the integration of cultural heritage into present-day life, both on social and economical fields.

Mutual and recent heritage needs to be recognized and preserved as a main feature of the multi-faceted Mediterranean identity. Due to its recent — and often imported and imposed — origin, this heritage is neglected and suffers from a lack of interest. The potential value of the last two centuries' architectural and urban heritage needs to be enhanced and requires a better valorization to play a proactive role in the development strategies.

The Mutual Heritage consortium (www.mutualheritage.net) is coordinated by Romeo Carabelli (carabelli@univ-tours.fr) and it is composed by Citeres (UMR 6173 Université François Rabelais et CNRS – Tours, France), Casamémoire and the École Nationale d'Architecture (Casablanca and Rabat, Morocco), the Association pour la Sauvegarde de la Medina (Tunis, Tunisia) and Riwaq (Ramallah, Palestine). It associates the Universities of Ferrara and Florence, Tizi-Ouzou and Vienna (Italy, Algeria and Austria), the Instituto de Cultura Mediterránea (Spain) and the associations Heriscape and Patrimoines Partagés (Italy and France).

Glossary:

Bronze Age: 3200-1200 BCE

Iron Age: 1200-332 BCE

Greek: 332- 63 BCE

Roman: 63 BCE - 325 CE

Byzantine: 325-638

Umayyad: 638-750

Crusader: 1099-1187

Ayyubid: 1187-1250

Mamluk: 1291-1516

Early Ottoman: 1516-1850

Late Ottoman: 1850-1917

Badd: an olive mill and press which were built from stone in the Roman times and until the late Ottoman times. Later mechanical olive mills and presses made with iron were introduced during the British Mandate period.

Burj: tower.

Caravansarai/khan: a roadside inn, usually square or rectangular, with an open courtyard for animals surrounded by rooms for sleeping and shops.

Diwan: an extended family (*hamula*) meeting space and guesthouse for the family visitors. Mostly used by men.

Dunum: 1000 square metres.

Qa' el-Bayt: the lower part of a peasant house used for livestock and storing farming equipment.

Qantara: arched passageway.

Qusur (sing. Qasr): literally means palace. In the text, it refers to agricultural peasant watchtowers.

Quttain: sun-dried figs.

Habalat (Habala): a plot of land outlined by dry stacked stone walls in the mountains creating stone terraces.

Hamayat (sing. Hamula): an extended family.

Hijri: lunar Muslim calendar.

Hilala: a small window.

Hoash: a courtyard; an enclosed area, a space enclosed by a building or a number of buildings. In the towns it refers to a house complex of an extended family.

'Illiyeh: attic, or the higher room in a historic building usually reserved to the most important person in a family or clan.

Iwan: originally Persian, it refers to arched space open from one side to the courtyard of a house.

Khawabi: grain storage bins in a peasant house.

Khirbat (or Khirba): a ruin. In modern Arabic, it also refers to a secondary or satellite village where villagers stay intermittently.

Lattoun: a pit in the ground used for cooking limestone to produce lime.

Liwan: a central part of a house that other rooms in the house open to.

Madafat (sing. Madafah): guesthouses. Traditionally a guesthouse

is where the men of one village or one family gathered and received visitors.

Maqamat (sing. Maqam): a domed shrine with various typologies and sizes, bearing mostly names of holy men and women. Most of the maqams are connected with supernatural power and connected with mawsem (religious festivals).

Manateer (sing. Mintar): watchtowers in the agricultural fields.

Mastabeh: the upper level of a peasant house where the family lived and slept.

Matabba: Spalling-hammer.

Mawasem (sing. Mawsem): seasons, could refer to agricultural seasons or religious holidays and mostly it refers to both.

Mihrab: a semicircular praying niche in the wall of a mosque that indicates the qibla; that is, the direction of the Ka'aba in Mecca and hence the direction that Muslims should face when praying.

Msamsam: well-dressed stone.

Nabi: prophet or holy man.

'Oyun (sing. 'Ein): natural water springs.

Tabun: usually refers to a tabun oven which is a clay oven, shaped like a truncated cone, with an opening at the bottom from which to stoke the fire. Built and used in all through history as the family, neighbourhood, or village oven.

Tell: an archaeological mound containing artefacts from different time periods in layers.

Tubza: dressed stone from all the sides except the face, which is left undressed.

Rawiyeh: a food storage space in the upper part of a peasant house.

Rujman (sing. Rujum): huge quantities of field rough stones collected by farmers from their fields.

Saqouf: the horizontal stone on top of a door.

Sarha: to wander aimlessly in the landscape.

Sufi: a practitioner of the Sufism tradition (Sufism is defined as the inner mystical dimension of Islam founded during the Umayyad period 661-750).

Syrah: a small unroofed room built of rough stone. Mostly roofed with tree branches.

Wadi: valley.

Wali: an administrative title that means magistrate.

Zafer: extruding stone.



MutualHeritage

from historical integration to
contemporary active participation

This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of Riwaq, partner of UMR Citeres (Université François-Rabelais and CNRS, Tours) in Mutual Heritage project and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union.

