Possession and Dispossession

Possession and Dispossession
Performing Jewish Ethnography in Jerusalem

Edited by Lea Mauas, Michelle MacQueen, Diego Rotman

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Articles and Texts

An Introduction / Lea Mauas, Michelle MacQueen, Diego Rotman 9

The Museum of the Contemporary and the Ethnographic Department / Sala-Manca 25

The Tawfiq Canaan Amulet Collection / Sala-Manca 35

Heim: An Archival Film of the Moravian Church / Sala-Manca 43

The Fragile Boundaries of Paradise / Diego Rotman 47

Toward an Updated Ethnographic Questionnaire on Israeli Time / Sala-Manca 65

Between Worlds: Dybbuks, Spirit Possessions and Demons, Angels and Maggidim / Rachel Elior, Yoram Bilu 73

The Many Worlds of The Dybbuk / Freddie Rokem 109

Dancing with the Dead: Possession and Nationalism in the Old-new Film Der Dybbuk, 1937-2017 / Diego Rotman 122

Tisch / Sala-Manca 159

"The Eternal Sabbath" – Electric Sabbath Candles: The History of a Folk Tradition from a Modernist Perspective / Shalom Sabar 163

The Wandering Jew's Home and a Temple Everywhere / Galit Hasan-Rokem 195

Diary for a Portable Landscape - Part I / Sala-Manca 218

Civic Bi-longing: Politicization of the Domestic Site in Eternal Sukkah / Daphna Ben-Shaul 232

Diary for a Portable Landscape - Part II / Sala-Manca 269

About China / Sala-Manca 283

Activities for Children / Anat Vaknin Appelbaum 293

List of art works

Hannan Abu Hussein / Amulet 9

Yeshaiahu Rabinowitz / The Tawfiq Canaan Amulet Collection 38, 39

Adi Kaplan and Shahar Carmel / Heim 42, 45

Sala-Manca, Nir Yahalom, Itamar Mendes-Flohr / Paradise Inn 46, 50

Itamar Mendes-Flohr / Snake from Paradise 60, 61

Chen Cohen / Silent Room I 54

Pessi Komar / Room Kit 54

Sala-Manca / Israeli Time 64, 67-71

Carmel Bar, Ya'ara Bar / Tants 72

Shira Borer / Foreing Root 76, 94-95

Li Lorian, Adam Yodfat / Between Two Worlds 80

Josef Sprinzak / The Shining - radio play for talking lights 84

Victoria Hanna, Noam Enbar / Dayn Kol Iz Mir Zis 88

Sala-Manca, Adi Kaplan and Shahar Carmel /
Der Dybbuk 1937-2017 ..... 124, 125, 145, 146, 153, 156

Sala-Manca, Nir Yahalom / Shabbes Tish 160-161

Samuel Rotman / Eternal Shabbes 162

Anonymous / Aron Haesh 190-193

Ester Bires and Amitai Arnon / Masks 286, 288, 289, 290, 291

Ktura Manor, Sala-Manca / Model of the Eternal Sukkah,
Kingston Sukkah 248, 280

Sala-Manca, Yeshaiahu Rabinowitz, Itamar Mendes-Flohr /
Eternal Sukkah 226-231

Sala-Manca, Nir Yahalom, Ktura Manor, Adi Kaplan and Shahar Carmel /
Deller Sukkah (1840 ~ - 2017) 268, 276-277

Adi Kaplan and Shahar Carmel / Fischach Postcards 272
Sala-Manca, Brian Hoad / Kingston Sukkah 278-279
Reuven Zehavi / China 282, 285

An Introduction

Michelle MacQueen, Lea Mauas, Diego Rotman

When different types of knowledge and practice meet, they enrich each other. *Possession and Dispossession* reflects on this meeting of divergent processes in Jerusalem. Through this collection of essays, documents, and artworks, we summarize the work of the Ethnographic Department of the Museum of the Contemporary since its founding on December 31, 2014, in the spaces of the Mamuta Art and Research Center located at Hansen House in west Jerusalem, at the initiative and under the curatorship of the Sala-Manca Group.

The Ethnographic Department of the Museum of the Contemporary led an art-research project on the relationship between Jewish ethnography and Israeli contemporary art, between academic research and art research. This collection is a result of this project and it serves as a record of a particular way of working and as a catalogue of these projects, where the book is another creative phase.

This collection was originally published in Hebrew in 2017. In the English edition of this book, we want to share these art-research projects and our process of research and creation with a wider audience. *Possession and Dispossession* is not a traditional catalogue, though it does document the exhibitions; it is also not a traditional academic book, though it does contain in-depth research articles. Instead, we see this collection as an invitation—to continue the dialogue created by these projects, to reflect on and interpret these works, and to continue blurring the lines between research and creation.

In the pages that follow, we present fragments from conversations between

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the editors of this collection[1] to introduce where these projects took place, how this experimental method of research and creation works, and how the Ethnographic Department's approach to contemporary ethnography came to be.

Lea First, it's important as a reminder, that at Mamuta, we host the Underground Academy. It's a group of people meeting and working together. In this Academy are not only artists, but also philosophers, architects, writers, designers, etc. We would meet together once a week. We were both developing projects together and individually. That year, in 2014, we were working with ethnography. The Underground Academy is both a residential program and also Mamuta Art Center's research institute.

The Ethnographic Department was inspired by the João Delgado's Underground Academy – a process that champions the development of experimental methods of learning, research, writing, and creation.[2]

[1] The editors are Lea Mauas and Diego Rotman (the Sala-Manca Group), and Michelle MacQueen (who assisted with the preparation of the English-language edition).

[2] In 1963, the Portuguese-Argentinean poet João Delgado wrote a never-published manifesto in which he said that all museums, universities, and sports clubs should be closed and reopened only a year later. After locking two municipal museums with his own locks, Delgado was arrested and imprisoned. During his sentence, he wrote the basic guidelines for the Underground Academy. Later, the poet Delgado, the painter Rodriguez, the theater critic Arturo Maure, Tilsa Tilsovna, a character from a play, and some prominent figures in Delgado's books and in real life became the first staff of the Underground Academy. It is not known if any student applied to study at the Academy, or if the project interested anyone except for the members who used to meet twice a week for night courses at Rodriguez's home. Later, the Academy functioned in the basement of the local leprosarium. The spaces hosted groundbreaking art exhibitions, and operated a publishing house that issued thirty-five titles and manuscripts, all of which have been lost. The last book it published dealt with the history of the Underground Academy.

Diego The Underground Academy should be read in relation to the Bezalel Academy for Art and Design based on the second floor of the same building, where they run different graduate programs. Our Academy was established in the basement, so in a way we are going underground... In Hebrew actually, the residency is called "The Academy of the Contemporary."

Lea I don't know if this is relevant but the name 'The Underground Academy' was also a kind of reaction to the way the academy is grasped. The Hebrew University is based on a top of a mountain, on Mount Scopus, so in a way we are referring to the idea of bringing the Academy back to the ground, to grassroots.

Diego I think we were trying to combine our specific way of working in the art field in connection to our academic practice. We invited scholars to meet artists and artists to meet scholars in order to affect both worlds.

To date, The Ethnographic Department has hosted encounters[3] and day-long seminars; sent ethnographic delegations to the urban spaces of Jerusalem and the nearby desert; produced projects in visual and performance art; exhibited in other venues in Israel and abroad; begun various research projects; and edited this volume, which reflects, expands, and interprets the processes we have undergone.

Michelle In this way, it seems like the aim is to create a process that works in the middle of two approaches. On the one hand, you're taking a grassroots approach: working with artists at

[3] We held encounters and day-long seminars with Rachel Elior, Yoram Bilu, Galit Hasan-Rokem, Ruthie Abeliovich, Yair Lifschitz, Danny Schrire, Haim Yacobi, Rabbi Jeremy Milgrom, Chaim Noy, Freddie Rokem, Alon Cohen-Lifschitz, and Elad Orian.

the Art Center, working at the "Underground," bringing in various communities—taking everyday experiences that allow for learning and creating knowledge. But on the other hand, you're also approaching it from a conceptual space: working in an academic place, working with scholars, engaging with and creating theory and methodologies—learning and creating knowledge from perhaps more "traditional" modes of inquiry.

It seems like both approaches are in dialogue, but it creates a new, different approach.

Lea Absolutely. We attempt to create a kind of interchange where both the artists and the scholars can learn from another kind of research or knowledge creation or even just new ways to approach matters in art or scholarship.

Diego The Museum of the Contemporary attempts to approach history through art, ethnography through art, art through ethnography. We look for other ways to understand how art can influence the way that scholarship can be approached or can be practiced and vice versa. I think in those meetings—blurring those more stable definitions—that's where we were working.

Lea In some ways, I think our approach is something that if it would happen at the University, could have been called 're-search-creation.'

Michelle Lea and I were classmates in the Cultural Studies program at Queen's University in Kingston ON, Canada. There, we learned about research-creation as an approach to research that combines creative/arts-based practices and academic research. In the Canadian context, the creation process of research-creation is defined as "situated within the research

activity and produces critically informed work in a variety of media (art forms)."[4] Research-creation projects often focus on process, tentative explorations, and experimentation. It obfuscates certainty, in that it does not give us tangible, clear "results." I think research-creation works well in areas that are fuzzy—when delineations are imprecise and there are only vague contours. By working consistently in the "in-between," these projects can bring a new dimension of knowledge to these fuzzy areas. In this way, research-creation can be a means to challenge traditional modes of knowledge. In Natalie Loveless's words, "Research-creation, at its best, has the capacity to impact our social and material conditions, not by offering more facts, differently figured, but by finding ways, through aesthetic encounters and events, to persuade us to care and to care differently."[5]

Diego Some of the scholars we worked with are artists themselves. But research-creation is something that is being developed at the university to include the arts. We were, in a way, trying to include academic scholarship and research methodologies into the art practice being generated at the Mamuta Art Center.

Lea We wanted to give to the artists another kind of way of working that is more research-based, but as Diego said, also influencing the ways that knowledge is created in the academy, both for him as an academic and for other academics that were

[4] The full definition according to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada is available at: https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/programs-programmes/definitions-eng.aspx. Accessed August 2020.

[5] Natalie Loveless, *How to Make Art at the End of the World: A Manifesto for Research-Creation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019), 107.

part of these meetings. And also, many of the scholars who came to talk with the artists felt that it was indeed a possibility for them to do so. It is an amazing and on-going process.

Michelle It sounds like you brought this all to a middle ground. It wasn't just inclusion: you were not aiming to include artistic practice at the university and it seems like you were not trying to just include academic research at the Art Center. It appears to be more than that– creating a process that was not incorporating one into the other, but rather taking the best parts of each world to meet in this new space in the middle. How did this process start?

Diego The process actually started some years before when we worked together with Ofira Henig, the director of The Lab, a theatre space in Jerusalem. She asked us to curate an exhibition related to the Golem project. Instead of curating an exhibition on the topic, we decided to develop a research project together, by bringing some models from the academy – like a symposium, open calls, long-term research. We started with a symposium with scholars and artists, open to artists and the public in general. And with a similar symposium, we started our project on contemporary ethnography, focusing on the Dybbuk. That was actually the starting point for those projects

Lea We had many different events where we were trying to blur or combine or make other kinds of situations where the art world and the academy get to be in touch.

Michelle These events were another invitation? A chance to meet and talk?

Lea It was never just an invitation to do a talk or to listen to a talk. It was more deep, something more intense.

Diego We were looking for long-term research, for long processes. The events were invitations to relate, to create another stage in this long-term research that combines different practices and approaches to specific topics. I think that artists and scholars might want to be part of something different than what they are used to. Like this book—it's not a typical academic book and it's not a typical catalogue with some articles. It's trying to find other ways of communicating practice and knowledge.

Lea Also in these events, we get to break those hierarchies in terms of who's producing knowledge or who has the right to do what.

Diego Also those tensions that are sometimes in both worlds regarding the other, the biases about art, about the academy. For us to relate it to the academy and us being together as part of our natural, everyday life—I think that those lines just don't really exist, so we play with them.

Michelle Right, and if we can play with these tensions, we can reach areas that you wouldn't find otherwise. If you have to work within a particular discipline or tradition, you are confined by the boundaries of that discipline/tradition. But if those boundaries become arbitrary (or at least not of the utmost importance), you can work to break them down and find out what lies in-between. When the lines are less distinct, when the borders are blurred, you can make a new space that would have been otherwise hidden by the boundaries of these traditions in art, research, ethnography, etc.

Lea Scholars are artists, everyone is participating and observing. We wanted engaged scholarship, collaboration, and creation.

Diego But it's also in terms of content—we are never working from nowhere. We are working within Jewish ethnography in the Israeli/Jewish/Palestinian context. We relate to our cultural baggage to connect in these instances.

Michelle Yes, and I think the Eternal Sukkah project is a good example of that. It deals with the political context directly, in addressing significant issues about land and borders between Bedouin communities, Israel, and Jewish settlements, as well as the longer histories of conflict in the region. But it also brings up questions of boundaries and lines in terms of culture and traditions, in the transformation of a tin shack belonging to a Bedouin family into a Jewish Sukkah that ended up at the national museum. Does the shack/sukkah belong to one group or the other? Whose culture is it? What tradition does it belong to? These questions are obviously in response to that socio-political context. But even asking these questions raises important political implications. It allows us to question the status quo. But the aim of this process isn't only implicating the political and the cultural, right?

Diego We also wanted to blur ethnography in terms of its divisions in folk art and contemporary art. Our ways of doing research and creation allowed for more possible paths to do this work.

Lea A starting point for us was to propose other ways of "ethnographic research."

Diego We were being critical of "traditional ethnography" but we

were using those tools to make inquiries into new topics about possession and dispossession, about the role of the academy, the artist, the ethnographer—we don't have any clear answers about what is good or not. But we ask questions about these entities. We were also dealing with auto-ethnography. We put ourselves inside. The research was put forward through this exploration of these relations to the context.

Lea We are always rooted in the context, in the socio-political, dealing with our immediate surroundings, the representation of space.

Diego We're approaching all of these projects, about tourism, gentrification, land, social media, it's from a critical point of view. We're trying to break open and give new ways, new perspectives of thinking on these issues.

Michelle In dealing with the immediate surroundings, there are always new questions to explore. The context always changes, and then new questions arise. Since this process invites long-term research, and there are so many points of reference, there is also a lineage and conceptual resources to draw on. So, there's constant invitations to explore and a host of tools to draw from while experimenting.

In creating all of these opportunities for questions, I think this process brings attention to the importance of blurring these lines between traditions, ethnography, art, the academy, etc. By blurring the lines, there's creation of this new space where we can maybe find reasons for how and why these distinctions become so solid.

Diego The projects also kept developing through the writing about

them, and talking about them in the artist talks, in the symposiums, etc. – these were always instances of sharing brought back and provoked new approaches and re-framing of the projects. It's naturally never-ending.

Lea Yes, always adding new layers. Every movement brings another movement into the art projects. The research and art always come together, they overlap. It's a new layer upon a new layer, new movement again and again.

Michelle In that way, the process becomes self-creating and self-sustaining. It becomes a new space where we can challenge all of these borders, boundaries, and distinctions. And it's also a new space where we can move with uncertainty, but we can grow greater political, cultural, and creative imaginations.

The first part of the book relates to historical aspects of two sites. The first site is where the Museum of the Contemporary was first established in Ein Karem (after some independent research, we discovered that the actual house was built on the base of Issa Manoun's former house, which was under construction in 1948, declared "abandoned property," and later became the home of the Jewish Polish artist Daniela Passal). The second site is where the wandering museum moved to next, and where the Ethnographic Department was introduced – the former Leprosarium Jesus Hilfe and currently the home of the Hansen House of Art, Design, and Technology. The majority of this section of the book documents works dealing with Hansen House's historiography. This includes the film *Heim*, refashioned by Adi Kaplan and Shahar Carmel, and the series of amulets created by Yeshayahu Rabinowitz and Hanan abu-Hussein, which correspond with the amulet collection that belonged to Palestinian folklore scholar and physician Dr. Tawfiq Canaan, the

medical director of the leprosarium from 1919 until 1948. Also in this section is documentation of *Paradise Inn: A One-Person Hotel*, a project that operated in the summer of 2015 in the courtyard of Hansen House. This project dealt with the mythology of paradise, its connection with leprosaria in general, and the Jerusalem leprosarium in particular. The projects, whose participants were artists Nir Yahalom, Itamar Mendes-Flohr, Shaul Tzemah, Oz Maloul, Chen Cohen, Shiri Singer, Pessy Komar, and the Sala-Manca Group, corresponded with Boris Schatz's book *The Rebuilt Jerusalem: The Rebuilt Reality* (1924).[6] The text "On the Borders of Paradise" by Diego Rotman offers a reflexive reading of the project and ends this section of the book.

The second part of the book deals with the figure of Jewish folklorist Sh. An-sky (born Shloyme Zanvl Rappoport) and the ethnographic expedition he organized and led in 1912-1914 through the Pale of Settlement, almost concurrently with Canaan's ethnographic research. Here, you will find an update of the questionnaire An-sky composed following his historical ethnographic expedition in Volhyn and Podolia, consisting of some two thousand questions about the way of life of the intended Jewish respondents. Sala-Manca's updated questionnaire consists of twenty-five new questions dealing with "Israeli time," and comes complete with a machine that sounds Israeli national sirens (the siren signaling the beginning of the Sabbath, the Holocaust Remembrance Day and Memorial Day sirens, and a true air-raid siren) available for a symbolic fee.

Rachel Elior and Yoram Bilu's essay "Between Worlds: Dybbuks, Spirit Possessions and Demons, Angels and Maggidim" begins the inquiry into the Dybbuk phenomenon and Ansky's play *Der Dybbuk: Tzevishen Tzvei Velten* (*The Dybbuk: Between Two Worlds*). Freddie Rokem, in his essay "The Many Worlds of the Dybbuk", deals with the stage design of the production of *The Dybbuk* put on by the Habima Hebrew Theater in 1922 and the role

[6] Boris Schatz is the founder of the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design.

of the text in the stage design. In his essay "My Homeland, Der Dybbuk: About Possession and Nationalism in the Old-New Film *Der Dybbuk (1937-2017)*," Rotman presents a fragment of a research project dealing with Adi Kaplan and Shahar Carmel's film *The Dybbuk (1937-2014)*, which is in some ways a re-editing of the Yiddish movie by Michał Waszyński, and in some ways a subversion of it, in part by the integration of *The Moldau* by Bedřich Smetana into the film's soundtrack. The next piece is the documentation of the installation *Tisch* by Sala-Manca and Nir Yahalom, which also includes the work *The Eternal Sabbath* by Samuel Rotman and *Cover for Ark of Fire*, an anonymous work. In his essay "Always Sabbath: Electric Sabbath Candles," Shalom Sabar embarks on a journey to discover the history of electric candlesticks and deals with the applicable questions of Jewish ritual law, the history of their design, and the custom of lighting Sabbath candles.

The third part of the book deals with the holidays of Purim and Sukkot. It begins with a series of photographs from the video art piece *Masks* by Esther Bires and Amitai Arnon, who for 12 years documented their nieces and nephews' Purim celebrations in the city of Ramle and reveal the structuring of social roles among Israeli children through their costumes. The extensive treatment of the festival of Sukkot begins with the essay "The Wandering Jew's Home and a Temple Everywhere" by Galit Hasan-Rokem, a key figure in conversations about ethnography at the Underground Academy. Daphna Ben-Shaul's essay, "Civic Bi-longing: Politicization of the Domestic Site in *Eternal Sukkah*," deals with the project *The Eternal Sukkah* by Sala-Manca in conjunction with Itamar Mendes-Flohr and Yeshayahu Rabinowitz and its performative aspects, and analyzes the politicization of the domestic sphere. Also in this section are documentation of the project and the model *The Eternal Sukkah* created by Ktura Manor at the request of the Ethnographic Department.

"Absentee Landscapes," a project of the Sala-Manca Group in conjunction

with Nir Yahalom, Ktura Manor, Max Epstein, Adi Kaplan, and Shahar Carmel, includes an original copy of the Deller family's painted sukkah (Fischach, 1850? / Jerusalem, 2017) at The Israel Museum. The project is accompanied by a documentary film about the process, a model of the sukkah, and a copy of the lithograph by Yehosef Schwarz, which was the inspiration for the sukkah's depiction of Jerusalem.

The fourth and final part of the book deals with China, a temporary exhibition presented at the Ethnographic Department by Reuven Zehavi. The book concludes with activity pages for children created subsequent to conversations we had with Anat Vaknin-Appelbaum, the designer of this book and an artist who did a residency at Mamuta. Vaknin-Appelbaum invites us to relate to the didactic aspect of shaping the Israeli citizen and Museums' pedagogy.

The projects detailed in this collection are collaborative and ongoing, in dialogue with different artists, researchers, families, and communities. Throughout these projects, we attempt to challenge the apparent division between contemporary art and ethnography, between tradition, preservation and representation, in an approach we call "contemporary ethnography," where the borders between ethnography and contemporary art are blurred. This volume aims to reflect, expand, and interpret the Ethnographic Department's process that develops experimental methods of research and creation.

Diego In the process of being written, the book becomes the museum.

Lea Everything is temporary, but they're all starting points for conversations that go beyond conventional frames. We're adding new layers.

Michelle And now this is a new layer. Taking these projects, the

process, all of these conversations, and bringing them into a new language, into different contexts, and with new viewpoints.

Diego These meetings that happen between the art projects, between the works of scholarship, between these works and viewer and reader—this moment, where through the book, we are confronting the reader with these pieces of art-research—that's it. The book is not done to remember the exhibition. It's another invitation.

THE MUSEUM OF THE CONTEMPORARY

The Museum of the Contemporary and the Ethnographic Department

Lea Mauas, Diego Rotman (Sala-manca Group)

> *"During my visit to the modest Buenos Aires home of the Oxter family, a lower-middle class family, I discovered, on a wall of the living room, Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa. It was my first visit to the Museum of the Contemporary." (João Delgado)*

The Museum of the Contemporary (MofC) was founded by the Sala-Manca Group in December 2009 at the first location of the Mamuta Art and Reseach Center in Ein Kerem, at the home of the late Polish-Jewish artist Daniela Passal.[1] The house had previously been declared an abandoned Arab property,[2] but prior to that, as the artists discovered in the course of their research, it had been the home of the Palestinian scholar Issa Manoun. The first exhibition

[1] Daniela Pesal (b.1931, Poland – d.2005, Israel) immigrated to Israel in 1950 and studied art at the New Bezalel in Jerusalem. In 1989, she established the "Al-Dan Forum for Creation" at her home. After her death, her home was left to the Jerusalem Foundation to serve as a creative center for artists. In 2012-2009, the building, which is owned by the Jerusalem Foundation and the estate of the artist, served as the home of the Sala-Manca Group, which operated it as the "Mamuta Art and Media Center at Daniela Passal's house."

[2] Absentee's Property Law 5710-1950 was enacted in Israel in 1950. "The primary purpose of this law", as Nir Hason put it, "was to enable use of lands belonging to Arabs who left Israel voluntarily or forcedly during the War of Independence." After the Six-Day War in 1967, which saw the extension of Jerusalem's municipal boundaries, Palestinians with assets in Jerusalem suddenly found themselves considered "absentee" owners, even though they had not gone anywhere. Sometimes they were living only a few hundred meters away, but this was now considered outside the new Jerusalem city limits and officially in the West Bank. They found their property confiscated only because Israel drew the new municipal border between them and their property, making them no longer residents of Jerusalem—though they never left their homes. Read more: https://bit.ly/34vxhLE. Accessed February 2020.

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▲ "The Skin I Live In", Sala-manca, gouche on existing walls, 2012.

dealt with the Museum as an institution, the local historiography of the village of Ein Kerem, and the history of the museum space. The MofC also developed a digital storage room of exhibitions that cannot be viewed on the web but are offered as downloads.[3] Each exhibition is available as a "package for printing, presentation, or re-exhibition," depending on the physical and economic limitations of the institution acquiring the download.[3]

The MofC not only related and responded to the structure in which it was housed, but it also corresponded with the Israel Museum that also dealt with or responded to the space in which it resided, albeit in a different way. In his essay "On Remembrances and Forgettings at Museums in the Holy City and of the Holy City in Museums" – an essay that was never published though it was partially cited in the catalog for the opening of the Museum of the Contemporary – Arturo Maure (one of João Delgado's heteronyms) wrote:

> "If, according to the plans of architect [Alfred] Mansfeld, The Israel Museum's design was inspired by the Arab village and was constructed on top of the ruins of the village of Sheikh Bader, and the Museum of the Contemporary is itself an Arab house located in the village [of Ein Kerem], which became a memorial to the Arab village, then The Israel Museum is a souvenir of the Museum of the Contemporary."

Architect Zvi Efrat, a member of the group charged with renovating The

[3] The Storage room features complete exhibitions that are available for download, which underwent a process of digitization so as to preserve the full quality after they have been downloaded in their respective formats (video, sound, photography, text, etc.). After they have been downloaded, the exhibitions could be displayed in the venues available to the secondary curators (those who chose to download the exhibitions) and the conditions they have at their disposal. In this way, the same exhibition could be displayed simultaneously by agents of completely dissimilar nature and financial means. Since the exhibition will be displayed differently, it will also convey cultural and curatorial perceptions that reflect not only the perception of the exhibition's curators, but also those of the secondary curators displaying it.

Israel Museum in 2013, asserted that the perception of the Palestinian village of Malha, the source of Alfred Mansfeld's inspiration in designing the museum, became an origin myth that provided The Israel Museum with a dimension of authenticity.[4] The materialization of the Palestinian village's image in the architectural design of The Israel Museum reflects the paradox in the process of structuring a local, indigenous national identity, which is one subject of interest to the Museum of the Contemporary and the Ethnographic Department operating in it.

The native Hebrew identity – a sort of hybrid consisting of Jewish-Bedouin and Jewish-Palestinian components – was, according to Yael Zerubavel, one of the most common identity options available to the Jewish settlers during the time of the yishuv, the pre-state Jewish presence. Arabs and Bedouins expressed the connection to nature and the land and were therefore seen as the embodiment of the Biblical Jew, the antithesis of the image of the weak, passive, wandering exilic Jew.[5] Performing the native by wearing the kufiyah head-covering and the so-called Biblical sandals and riding horses, and by extension by constructing a museum of a national status with meta-Palestinian architecture, were ways to shape and portray the native Hebrew identity.

In its first location, the MofC dealt with the concepts of home, temporariness, the museum's space, and their own ability or inability to express and inhabit a local hybrid identity. These topics continue to be central in different projects developed by the MofC (as seen in the Eternal Sukkah, the Paradise Inn Hotel, the Deller Sukkah).

[4] See Zvi Efrat "Land Marks: The Emblematic Architecture of the Israel Museum and the Shrine of the Book (draft)": http://efrat-kowalsky.co.il/files/the-architecture-of-the-israel-museum.pdf. Accessed December 2014.

[5] Yael Zerubavel, "Memory, the Rebirth of the Native, and the 'Hebrew Bedouin' Identity" Social Research 75/1 (2008): 315–352.

The Ethnographic Department of the Museum of the Contemporary opened on December 31, 2014, in the basement of the former leprosarium in the Talbiyeh quarter of Jerusalem, now known as Hansen House. The Ethnographic Department of the MofC deals with the seam between an art museum and an ethnographic museum and between visual art and popular art, and with the tensions among originals, recreations, copies, and reimaginings, the key aspects of the curatorial thinking that has informed the Museum of the Contemporary since its inception.

From the Leprosarium Jesus Hilfe to Hansen's House

The Leprosarium Jesus Hilfe ("Jesus' Help"), founded as an isolated refuge for lepers, was established in 1867 by the German Protestant Moravian community in Jerusalem. For twenty years, it was housed in a building located on what is now Agron Street. In 1887, the leprosarium moved to a new building designed by Conrad Schick in the Talbiyeh neighborhood.

"High walls enclose and hide the structure built in a secluded locale, far from the walls of the Old City. The public's fascination with the place generated countless stories about the goings-on inside," reads the informational page about the historical exhibition presented in the former hospital. Until 1948, most of the patients were Arab Muslims, while the nurses were Christian. Tawfiq Canaan, a Palestinian Christian, was the chief physician from 1919 until 1948. In charge of all medical and research issues as well as external relations, Dr. Canaan would visit the leprosarium once a week.

Once the State of Israel was established, Dr. Canaan either left Jerusalem of his own volition or was expelled from the city. According to Salim Tamri, Dr. Canaan took the Arab patients out of the hospital and moved with them to Silwan, where they remained until he eventually set up a leper hospital north of Ramallah. According to the records of the Moravian nurses Johanna Larsen and Ida Ressel, they led fifteen patients to Silwan in 1953 and stayed

of the local committee were present, with numerous guests from the English, German, and Arab Protestant congregations. Among those from the Temple Colony, situated about a quarter of a mile nearer to the city than our Home, was Architect Sandel, who had superintended its erection. At the close of the religious service we were favoured with the presence of His Excellency Raouf Pasha, the Governor of Jerusalem.

"The Dedicatory Service, held in the hall where the patients now gather for worship, was commenced with a hymn and the reading of Luke v. 12-14, and Matthew xxv. 31-46. As President of the committee, Pastor Schlicht gave the opening address from Psalm cxxiv. 8: 'Our help is in the Name of the Lord, Who made heaven and earth.' 'Jesus' Help': that is the name of the house and the motto of all who dwell therein.

"In fervent prayer he besought the Lord to take the 'Home' into His especial care, to endow those in charge of it with wisdom, love, courage, and perseverance, to solace and alleviate the misery of the patients with the balm of Divine consolations, and to bless all kind supporters of this work of mercy.

"After the opening ceremony opportunity was given to the guests to walk round the Home and inspect its roomy, cheerful, and airy apartments and comfortable arrangements. The building, which is two storeys high, encloses a yard, in which there is a huge cistern for collecting and storing water for the use of the numerous inmates. The south end of the Home contains the apartments for the officials, i.e., the 'House-father' and his family, and the nurses. Next to these, but separated by covered corridors, are the wards for the female patients. In the part of the building facing the west are the kitchen, the store-rooms, etc. The male patients occupy the northern portion of the block, and in the eastern there are one or two sick wards. The dwelling-rooms for male and female patients are separated by the chapel. The bathrooms and wash-kitchen are on the ground floor. The wash-kitchen and bakehouse for the officials are in an out-house. All through the establishment there is convenient communication by means of covered corridors and stairs. A beautiful flight of steps leads up to the front door on the south side. A large garden in front of the house, though not yet in good order, promises to prove a desirable recreation ground for our patients, as well as to provide such light tasks as they can perform."

THE STAFF OF THE LEPER HOME.
Standing—Sister Gertrude Goerner, Pastor Nielsen, Dr. Canaan, Sister Margarete Rubbeck.
Seated—Sister Ida Reuel, Sister Oggelitte Norgaard (Matron), Sister Johanna Larsen.

SETTLING IN.

After six months the Superintendent writes:

"Settling in our new house has found so much work for me that it has been almost impossible to get to letter-writing. The garden, for instance, has demanded more time and trouble than might be imagined. Yet you will have no difficulty in conceiving what a wilderness of rocks and stones it presented, when you remember that building has been going on here for three years, and that the stones have been quarried in the immediate neighbourhood. This had left holes and pits here and there, which had to be filled up if the patients, lame, blind, and crippled as so many of them are, shall walk there with any safety. Now, thank God, the garden, which is so important a part of our institution, has been levelled to a great extent. It is also planted in some degree, but there is a lack of trees to give shade. I brought some of the smaller ones from our old garden, but it will be years before these afford sufficient protection from the fierce rays of our summer sun. This winter I will plant some fig and mulberry trees which flourish here and give a good shade."

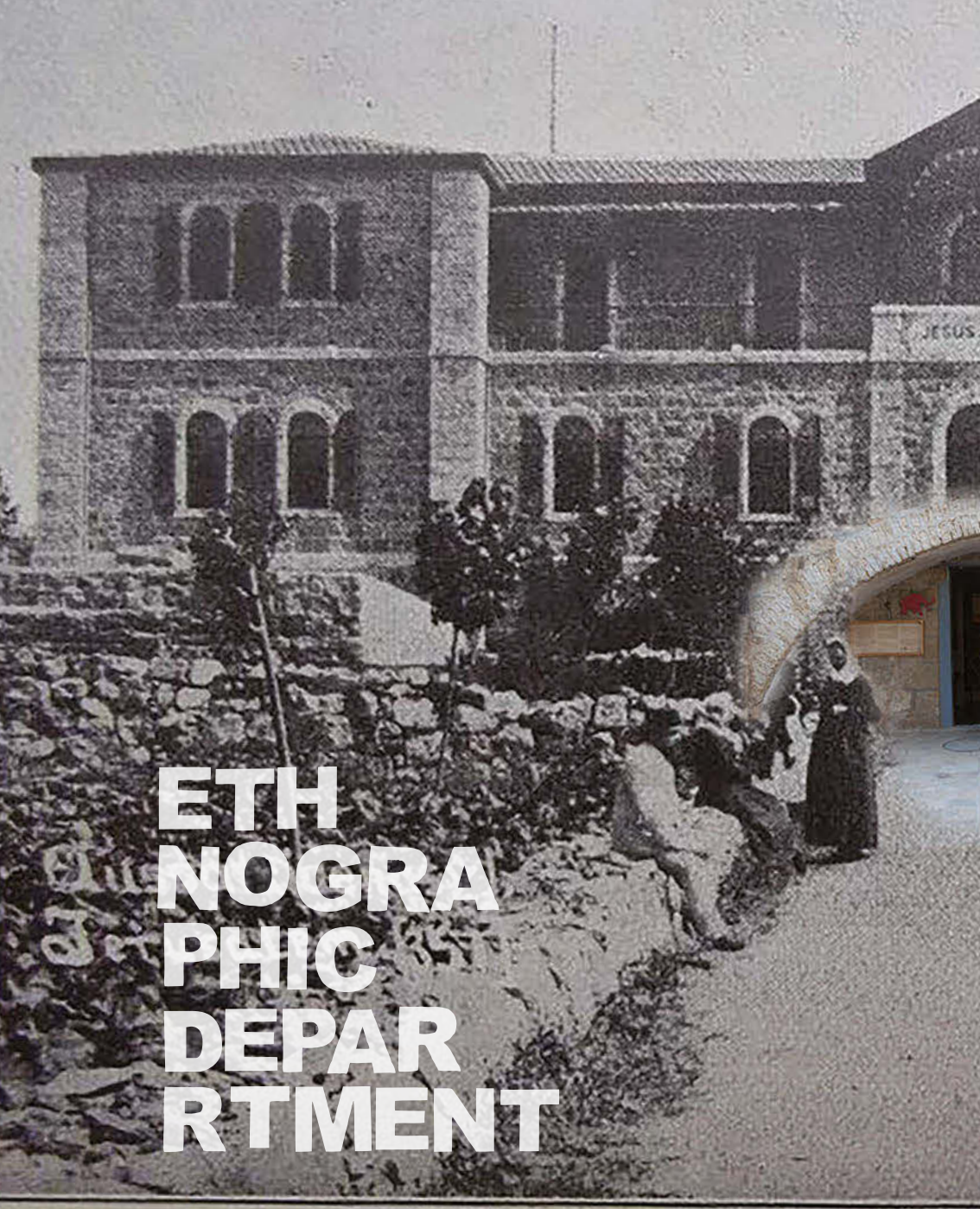
THE HOME TO-DAY.

The promise of fifty years ago has been fulfilled: the garden has been levelled and terraced and planted. The lepers bask in the sunny courtyard or on the grass in their garden; they sit and talk beneath

with them until the leprosarium north of Ramallah opened on June 12, 1960. Either way, the fact that the leper population in the hospital switched from Muslim majority to Jewish majority was a political phenomenon, packing a metaphoric punch in terms of the politics of segregation.[6]

In 1950, the Jewish National Fund bought the leprosarium and transferred its administration to the Israeli Health Ministry. Its name, Leprosarium Jesus Hilfe, was changed to Hansen Government Hospital, in honour of the Norwegian physician who identified the leprosy-causing bacterium. Once antibiotic treatment became available and its success rate increased in the second half of the twentieth century, most of the patients were gradually released. The in-patient wing closed in 2000; the hospital continued to operate as an out-patient clinic until the hospital's final closure in 2009, the year that the Israeli government decided to transfer the building's ownership to the Jerusalem municipality for renovations in preparation for turning it into a cultural center. When the site opened at the end of 2013, it again changed its name to be known simply as Hansen House, as if the spirit of science replaced that of Jesus. Today, Hansen House is an art, design, and technology campus, revealing to visitors one of the most beautiful buildings in the city as well as its mysterious past. The campus houses the Master's program of the Bezalel School for Art and Design, exhibition spaces, screening rooms, the offices of the online cultural journal *Erev Rav*, Mamuta Art and Research Center, and the Museum of the Contemporary.

[6] "The separation of Arab and Jewish lepers in the Talbieh Leprosarium, during the war of 1948, marked those defining moments in the annals of Jerusalem and the Arab-Israeli conflict. In its absurdity, the event encapsulated the depth of the process of ethnic exclusion and demonization after decades of conflict between Jews and Arabs, settlers and natives." Salim Tamari, "Lepers, Lunatics, and Saints: The Nativist Ethnography of Tawfiq Canaan and His Circle, in Mountain Against the Sea: Essays on Palestinian Society and Culture (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 93-112.



ETHNOGRAPHIC DEPARTMENT

THE LEPER H