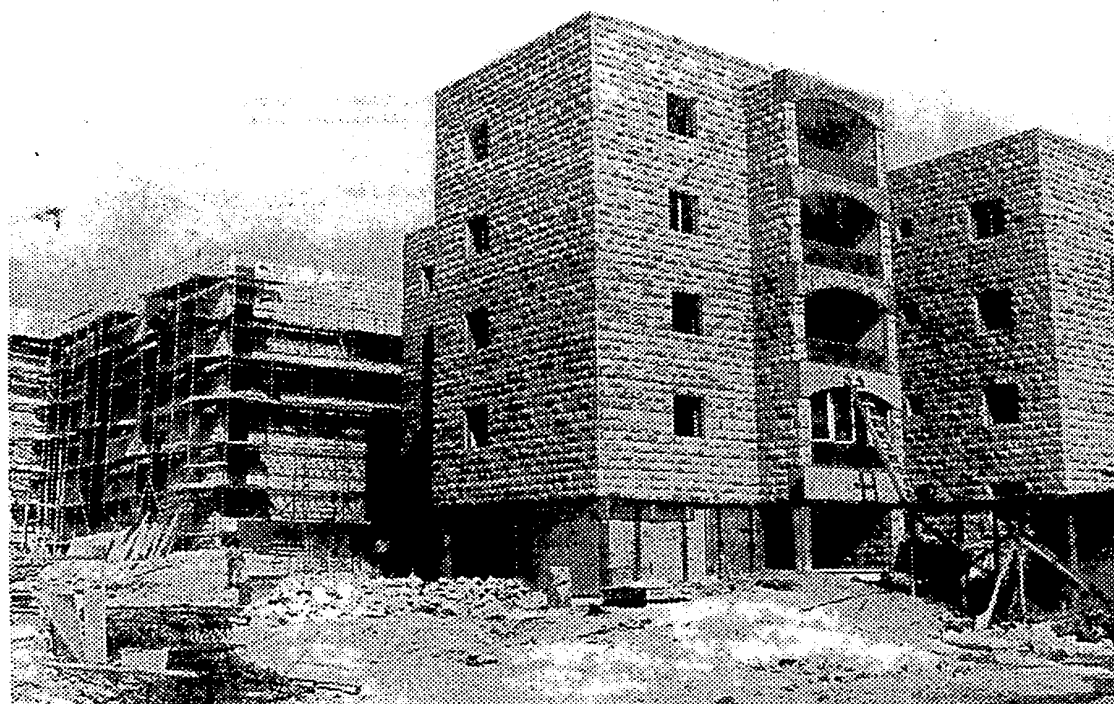


Jerusalem: Vista of Two Worlds



Garth Huxtable for The New York Times

Housing under construction in no man's land, 100 yards from Ammunition Hill, where some of worst fighting occurred. It is some of best housing municipality has produced.

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Special to The New York Times

JERUSALEM, May 7—In the two years since the six-day war that made this one city again, the Israelis have been consolidating their territorial gains by one of the most permanent of means—the erection of buildings. The reunification of Jerusalem has been as much a physical as a political process.

This might be called political construction. It achieves the short-term aim of moving Israelis into the occupied areas in the most lasting fashion. It also has the broader objective of placing new construction within the framework of a master plan that is the long-term tool for the unification of land and services.

Jerusalem's master plan, drawn up in 1964, was meant to outline development for 50 years. According to the City Engineer, Amikan Yaffe, the planning team had clear instructions to take into account the possibility of ultimate reunification and to make provisions for "interconnection and integration" of the two sectors. The plan was in the last stages of preparation at the time of the six-day war.

The Mayor of Jerusalem, Teddy Kollek, comments: "We always knew the city would be reunited eventually, but we did not expect it this way. We thought it would be by peaceful means."

Two Cultures Remain

Nonetheless, as the Mayor says, full integration is not the goal, and the Arab and Israeli settlements still stand on opposite sides of the no-longer-existent dividing line: two cultures, two landscapes and two worlds.

"We have no intention of mixing or unifying," Mr. Kollek explains. "We do not want to create a melting pot or a monoculture. There will be two cultures. But we will live better together."

There are 68,000 Arabs in East Jerusalem and 210,000 Jews in West Jerusalem, with only negligible numbers of Jews in East Jerusalem and correspondingly few Arabs in West Jerusalem.

The Arab world is a Biblical landscape. The war scars on the stony hills studded with cypress and olive trees are covered with green and sprinkled with poppies.

The Arab houses are small, clustered cubes and rectangles of rough, hand-dressed cream and ochre Jerusalem stone blocks, cut as they have been for thousands of years. They sit in stepped patterns against the hills without disturbing a contour or disrupting the scale of one of the most remarkable landscapes of nature and history.

Living conditions are often Biblical as well. But the quality of the landscape and the construction that is a part of it—the sweep of the entire eastern valley below the Mount of Olives, for example—is a demonstration in the marriage of architecture and topography.

On the Israeli side, an iden-

A Biblical Landscape Adjoins Blocks of Horizontal Flats

tical valley has an entirely different aspect. Slopes and cypresses are dwarfed by rows and blocks of horizontal flats that ring the edges or fill the hollows of the steeply terraced land.

They range from hastily erected, increasingly shabby two-story and three-story row housing, built under the pressure of extreme need at the time of the heavy early immigration, to the newest five-story blocks and eight-story towers of better quality and more sophisticated style.

The building pattern imposes a rigid geometry on the gentle profiles of the site. The houses are not Biblical in scale or style. They accommodate a galloping population on the basis of modern living standards. Their style is European because they were planned and designed by European immigrants whose models were the row housing of the nineteen-thirties.

Gardens Soften Dwellings

The dwellings sit insensitively on the Promised Land. Long, flat-walled, balconied blocks cut into and rise against the hills, partly obliterating them, creating the repetitive scalelessness that has brought a counterrevolution in housing in most cities of the world.

Close up, they are softened by gardens and incomparable views. The landscape is kind. Its fine-grained magnificence accommodates all but the most blatant violations.

The color of the hills is the color of the city. The great unifier is the Jerusalem stone, limestone from a variety of quarries and periods that grades from porous to marble-like and from beige to rose. On modern buildings or adaptations of antiquity, this stone is now used as a thin facing on concrete to cover a multitude of unoriginal sins. It has united the two cities as effectively as the Israeli Army.

The physical aspects of unification began immediately after the fighting stopped in June, 1967. Concrete walls, wire fences and tank obstacles were demolished and the paving of connecting roads began. Seven old roads were widened and

planted with trees, and two new ones started. In addition, the water supplies of the two sectors were united and city services were amalgamated.

The old buildings that had attached themselves like barnacles to the outside of the Old City wall from the Jaffa Gate to the Damascus Gate were destroyed. Designs are being prepared for circling the wall with a national park.

Mayor Kollek looks at the peaceful green stretch that has been cleared between the Old City wall and the municipal offices and says: "This was the end of the world. Nobody moved here."

Housing had been built on the frontier earlier for security reasons. Now high priority has been given to the construction of 13 acres of housing in no man's land, about 100 yards from Ammunition Hill, where some of the worst fighting occurred.

Hotel Crowning Summit

There were violations of the landscape in the formerly Jordanian-held sector, too. The Israelis point to the Mount of Olives, now crowned by the recently built Intercontinental Hotel, and with a large hospital filling the saddle of its summit.

As for the Israelis, they have added two stories to the King David Hotel, which make that stolid building an increasingly obtrusive blockbuster in the city's panorama.

No one seems very disturbed by the most serious skyline violation of all. The two Moslem domes that dominate and virtually symbolize the Old City—the Dome of the Rock and the Mosque of Al Aksa—once had lead roofs covered with gold leaf; these were replaced by anodized aluminum in a restoration project about five years ago. They look exactly like anodized aluminum, and nothing could sabotage the ancient panorama more insistently.

On the other hand, there are many signs of increasing sensitivity to topography and local style on the part of the Israelis. The impressive Israeli Museum, come upon suddenly in one of those revelatory Jerusalem vistas of valleys and hills, is broken down into a series of units that rise and fall with the land. And there is the new housing, with clusters that have a "village" look and calculated irregularities of line and shape.

It has taken a while, but the Israelis are learning the lesson of the land.