Bridget L. Guarasci

THE ARCHITECTURE OF ENVIRONMENT: BUILDING HOUSES ALONG THE GREAT RIFT VALLEY IN JORDAN

Abstract
This article analyzes the restoration of Jordan's UN Dana Biosphere Reserve cottages for ecotourism and home building in the neighboring village of Qadisiyya as competing land projects. Whereas a multimillion-dollar endowment from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) restores Dana's houses as a "heritage" village for a tourist economy, families in Qadisiyya build houses with income from provisional labor to shore up a familial future. Each act of home building articulates a political claim to land. This article argues for attention to the architecture of the environment in the comparison of two, once-related villages. A comparative analysis of Dana and Qadisiyya reveals the competing socio-political objectives of home building for the future of Jordan and the implications of environment in that struggle.

Keywords: aesthetics; architecture; development; environment; house; Jordan; NGO

In the spring of 2012, on the heels of regional revolution and amid national political protests against the government, residents in the southern village of Qadisiyya, Jordan were building homes. Two kilometers away, in Dana village, environmentalists at the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), a Jordanian royal NGO, broke ground on the renovation of Ottoman-era stone houses (*buyūt hajar*).[1] The RSCN would transform these once-residential houses into bed and breakfast businesses for a "living heritage" ecotourist destination at Dana's UN Biosphere along the Great Rift Valley. This article investigates adjacent yet distinct projects of home building in Dana and Qadisiyya as parallel projects to institute competing visions of land and polity in Jordan.

Scholars have long argued that environments are made, that there is nothing "natural" about nature.[2] Environments are, thus, designed; they are cultural inventions.[3] Understanding how home building relates to the making of environments requires attention to this design process. I assert that the architectural choices of international investors and community members indicate how these aesthetic choices harness land to imagined future polities of state and nation. I define aesthetics as a set of artistic discriminations designed to bring into being particular political realities through architectural design.

Bridget L. Guarasci is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology, Franklin & Marshall College, Lancaster, Pa.; e-mail: bguarasc@fandm.edu

At Dana the RSCN rebuilds the villages *buyūt hajar* for ecotourism and in so doing attempts to enshrine the political ideals of international development within the governing scheme of the village itself. Next door in Qadisiyya families build homes to protect themselves from the fallout they experience as a result of the very economic policies undergirding such development schemas. Aesthetic choices do not exist outside of politics; they are wholly political.[4] Scholarship of the environment in the Middle East has largely taken shape around the scarcity or abundance of natural resources and the systems that manage them, including forests; watersheds, rivers, and dams; animal domestication and migration; and energy sources from natural gas to petroleum.[5] In addition, scholars studying biodiversity conservation in the Middle East have documented the ways in which national parks and conservation areas have criminalized indigenous populations while bolstering imperial control over their lands.[6] However, scholars of the region have yet to centrally analyze environment within domestic space, nor have they principally considered aesthetics as germane to environmentalism.

There is a critical need to remedy this gap in the literature on environments of the Middle East because biodiversity conservation sites such as the Dana UN Biosphere are design initiatives. International donors and global conservationists design these sites to convey the look and feel of "nature" according to a set of criteria standardized by the UN and its global partners. Diana Davis has shown that environmental imaginaries of the Middle East played a key role in defining orientalist representations of the region, but cautions scholars that relatively little work considers how the environment has contributed to orientalist discourse.[7] To remedy the problem Timothy Mitchell urges against limiting inquiry to the environment as cultural construction and calls instead for scholars to study the process by which environments are made: the expertise, the technical skill, the natural forces, the human and nonhuman efforts that produce nature as a social world.[8] Nature is a political project; it is produced within the infrastructure of the economy, a field of relations shaped by the actions of individuals and the agencies they represent.[9] By focusing on home building in Dana and Qadisiyya, I seek to demonstrate how aesthetic choices for home construction are designed to express competing economic goals in proximate, rural villages within the state of Jordan.

Scholars of the Middle East have done considerable work on infrastructure. The overall effect of this research is that, while we know much about the infrastructures of large-scale urban projects, we know comparatively little about infrastructure projects in rural areas and in domestic spaces such as Dana and Qadisiyya. Scholarship of the region has focused primarily on infrastructures that manage environments including public works projects such as dams and irrigation systems;[10] the resource extraction of petroleum, among other natural resources, and its impact on the state and economy;[11] technological innovations that anticipate climate change;[12] civic infrastructure;[13] and surveillance architecture to regulate and emplace populations in settler colonies and refugee camps and during wartime.[14] Understanding the architectural campaigns to build Dana and Qadisiyya requires attending to the environment itself as infrastructure—as human and nonhuman actions that produce and sustain ecologies—and the politically agentive force of aesthetics within broader systems of governance and economy.[15] Biodiversity conservation in Jordan is about more than the social control of population; it is about emplacing future ideals of state in the country's hinterlands. The ideals of nature built into the Dana biosphere communicate international development goals for the kingdom

to be a state and economy open to foreign investment just as the ideals of the home expressed in domestic architecture at Qadisiyya are a charge for the kingdom to recognize a genealogical model of state and country.

Dana demonstrates that unlike the American settler colonial parks of wide-open vistas, the RSCN imagined a peopled biosphere. Though the RSCN argued that they were merely restoring nature, their architectural interventions at Dana identified the environment as a cultural space that needed to be cared for and inhabited according to particular methods they defined and imposed under the auspices of protecting the ecology of the biosphere. This is why grasping the full implications of economic development in the Dana project requires examining both the architecture of environment as it connects to the interior, domestic spaces of homes, as well as home construction at Qadisiyya as a movement to make claims on land. At both Dana and Qadisiyya, the architecture of the house makes a political claim about the Jordanian nation. It was Claude Lévi-Strauss who famously established that the house is a foundational social institution.[16] Janet Carsten and Stephen Hugh-Jones build on his work to demonstrate the intimate connection between the body and the house. They have argued that the house is an extension of the person in a deeply phenomenological sense.[17] House scholarship tends to study material culture as technologies of self and kin, but I draw upon this literature to evaluate how relations of house and body extend to the body of the nation. Homes, I argue, animate national imaginaries and future goals.[18]

In Jordan as elsewhere in the Middle East, the home (*bayt*) is the locus where individuals and families connect to the nation through everyday praxis. In Jordan the Hashemites rule as a family.[19] As Andrew Shryock and Sally Howell demonstrate, it was Shayk Majid al-ʿAdwan whose legendary hospitality (*karam*) at his home to a great degree established the political power of Emir ʿAbd Allah as king, and today it is households and their influential heads who are of far greater significance to the monarchy than electoral constituencies.[20] The *bayt* in Jordan, then, signifies an individual family's social status and moral stature within the village and in the political imaginary of the monarchy and nation.[21] In both Dana and Qadisiyya, political claims to the nation are cultivated in architectural practice, in the aesthetic discriminations of home construction.

At Dana, the RSCN also pursues home building as a way of connecting village to nation, but does so to renovate homes as tourist commodities and commercial space. The RSCN's plan for Dana would enfold the village economy into the neoliberal standards of global capital that include ways of appropriately managing the natural world. The efficacy of this project depends on marketing the houses as Jordanian heritage, by defining tradition that seems as natural to Jordan as the environs of the Dana biosphere reserve. The RSCN cultivates Dana village as this kind of ecological space by renovating the *bayt* as heritage commodity in an attempt to seamlessly link the village to the ancient past of pure nature. By marketing the village as tradition, the RSCN seeks to build a tourist market that will strengthen the presence of cosmopolitan capitalist institutions—such as development agencies, foreign donors, and international tourists—in Jordan's tribal south.

Though Dana and Qadisiyya were once related villages that residents moved between seasonally, today little connects them. By attending to the aesthetics of community design, it is possible to trace how the Jordanian state and international development

capitalists re-engineered the relationship of these villages through the pursuit of environmentalism at Dana.

To understand the full scope of international development capitalist plans for Jordan's environment, a comparative approach is needed. For one thing, it is the former residents of Dana now living in Qadisiyya whom the RSCN imagines as the intended economic beneficiaries of their Dana village plans. For another, most upwardly mobile Qadisiyya residents do not see Dana as a financial resource, but seek economic prosperity through their own home-building initiative in Qadisiyya village. In Qadisiyya, residents build homes to safeguard future generations of their families at a moment of personal economic vulnerability. In fact, the economic instability many Qadisiyya residents experience is the direct result of Jordan's failed neoliberal economic policies encouraged by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the World Bank, the very same global institutions financing environmental policies at Dana.[22] At the same time it is important to recognize that home building in Qadisiyya is not a protest of Dana or the development capitalist policies that created it, but the recognition that a secure future will be made by their design. It is the comparison between Dana and Qadisiyya that exposes the dual aesthetic acts of home construction as politically agentive and at odds.[23] Each architectural endeavor manifests transnational economies to build futures of the Jordanian state that are fundamentally in tension.[24] The architecture of competing dreams, I assert, is evident in the furnished rooms and decorated home exteriors of these distinct villages.

I developed a comparative ethnographic approach to study environmental design at Dana and Qadisiyya. When I arrived in Qadisiyya in April 2012 for three months of ethnographic fieldwork, I lived in a newly constructed pink house on a small stretch of land full of elaborately decorated, freshly built homes in various stages of construction. Shortly after completing the house, its owners and their children departed Qadisiyya to live in Amman where they hoped to find greater economic opportunity. It was this family's parents, siblings, and cousins who participated most actively in my research. Living in Qadisiyya from April to July 2012 I conducted more than thirty-five interviews in Arabic with families building homes and community organizers and public school teachers whose work aimed to address economic grievances, mentor youth, and strengthen the community overall. I principally investigated the question: how do you build a house? I studied the process of home construction including how families acquired land, funded building, sourced building materials and labor, and rendered architectural plans. I worked in depth with four families, making repeated visits to their homes to track their efforts and photograph the sites. I sought to broaden my understanding of home construction by visiting the municipality office (*baladiyya*) to learn about land registration and Jordan's Department of Land and Survey in Amman. I also interviewed an administrator at the Lafarge cement factory in Qadisiyya where families sourced cement and where many had been laid off following the privatization of the factory in the early 2000s. As one might expect, government officials and corporate executives prevented my access to land records and, as a result, I concentrated instead on my oral history interviews with Qadisiyya families.

From January to March 2012 I conducted research with the RSCN in Amman to learn about their efforts to build the Dana heritage village in the biosphere. I interviewed

the RSCN staff members implementing design plans at Dana and those overseeing the process from Amman; USAID employees, who as principle project donors were responsible for overseeing the RSCN's efforts; the US Ambassador to learn about US governmental interests in the biodiversity conservation of Jordan and how this initiative fit into the government's overall investment in the kingdom; and Walid Munif, the RSCN's principle architect for the Dana project, and his staff to learn about their rationale for design choices and the process by which they sought to build Dana. In addition to this early research, I made three follow-up visits of two days each in January 2013, May 2016, and March 2017. During these trips, I evaluated the trajectory of construction projects at Dana and Qadisiyya by reinterviewing select Qadisiyya families and the RSCN Dana project manager and by taking photographs of individual buildings and the construction progress, or lack thereof.

AESTHETICS AND THE FUTURE OF LAND

In April 2012, the same month the excavator crawled into Qadisiyya to break ground on home infrastructure, the US Ambassador to Jordan, USAID, and the RSCN arrived in convoys of white SUVs at Dana's UN Biosphere Reserve. The US diplomatic convoy visited Dana to meet tribal shaykhs and other local stakeholders who would retain their ownership rights to these houses under the terms of the ecotourism project and thus, the RSCN argued, benefit financially from the ecorenovations. US funds ensured the houses would become boutique hotels and suq shops designed by prize-winning Jordanian architect, Walid Munif.[25] The RSCN envisioned the initiative as a step in their "nature-based development" campaign to use biodiversity conservation as an economic stimulus for local communities.

Environmentalists faced an unforeseen challenge: Jordanian owners of these houses did not want to operate the resulting businesses. Instead, they contemplated hiring Filipina or Sri Lankan workers, the labor force of Jordan's domestic economy. Without "native" employees running the businesses, environmentalists would be hard pressed to market the area as "living heritage." Dana homeowners were keen to benefit from ecotourism, but they did not want to cut hair in the rehabbed village's barbershops, peddle Wi-Fi in its net cafe, or tidy its bathrooms for paying customers.[26] US dignitaries were perplexed: why would Jordanians, who prided themselves on hospitality and yearned for steady employment, not want to work in this service economy? I ask instead: why did environmentalists presume Dana homeowners would want to participate in their living heritage plan?

For living heritage to sell, the RSCN and their donors depended on tribal shaykhs and representatives to act "traditional." In other words, the NGO expected representatives of tribes to perform tradition by welcoming their tourist guests to Dana wearing customary robes (*thawb*) and red and white checkered head coverings (*shimāgh*). In commercializing what had been an honorable status, the NGO relegated tribal representatives to the sidelines of the renovation project. The RSCN identified being "traditional" as inconsistent with the modern know-how required to make the ecotourist venture a success. King 'Abd Allah also expressed these disparaging views in a 2013 interview for *The Atlantic* when he referred to Jordan's southern tribal leadership as "dinosaurs" of the kingdom.[27]

In spring 2012, development professionals used the exact term, "dinosaur," to refer to tribal elders and shaykhs in Dana. The RSCN sought to implement environmentalism at Dana in ways that required local residents to participate in their own subjugation in the process. Qadisiyya residents did not want to perform the affective labor of hospitality for the ecotourist market.

By analyzing space and place as a social process, I aim to disrupt the international development reduction of Dana to a distinctively cosmopolitan site and Qadisiyya to a wholly traditional one. The creation of modernity often involves producing representations of the past to fulfill present political objectives.[28] Both Dana and Qadisiyya villages are places made through praxis, through the cultivation of aesthetics that visually project and materially enact affective and political relationships with land.[29] Both Dana and Qadisiyya constitute transnational economies that are in every way modern. In fact, part of what makes them so is their claims on the authenticity of the past to implement appropriate forms of living in the future. In Qadisiyya cosmopolitanism is a resource for local construction. At Dana, the RSCN anticipates that local communities who do not move will serve global interests. Migrant, urban labor in Amman and abroad enables home construction in Qadisiyya.[30] While families in Qadisiyya build houses over years with income from contractual labor, USAID's multimillion-dollar endowment aims to restore the houses of Dana village in three successive stages meant to transform the village quickly. Distinctive home-building projects in Dana and Qadisiyya represent emergent political and economic imaginaries in tension: both based on heritage ideals of the house, but one ecotourist and the other genealogical.

QADISIYYA AND DANA IN RELATION

In the mid-20th century, Dana and Qadisiyya were related villages. Dana residents grew vegetable gardens in family plots of tiny houses standing a meter apart and Qadisiyya's vast lands gave rise to working farms. For this community of nomadic pastoralists there was a necessary cooperation between Dana village and Qadisiyya's open lands; people moved seasonally across the Sharra highlands to support the grazing needs of their flock.[31] Shaykh Fulan al-Akh Sabah, one of the few who grew up in Dana village, told me that forty years ago there was nothing in Qadisiyya: there were no houses, only extended vistas of land and sky.[32]

Current Qadisiyya residents relocated permanently in the latter decades of the 20th century with the formalization of the UN biosphere reserve. Environmentalist policies governing land use at the nature reserve placed restrictions on practices such as grazing that partially incentivized the relocation to Qadisiyya and the transition of families from seminomadic pastoralism to settlement. Despite their past cooperation, in the last forty years Dana and Qadisiyya have become ever more structurally distant. Today the two kilometers between these villages might as well be twenty or one hundred; there are no busses to connect them and only meager economic or social ties to encourage infrastructure linking the villages. Though it is technically possible for people to walk the two kilometers, the white-hot sun, the mountainous terrain, and the fact that there are no longer strong family ties binding Dana and Qadisiyya de-incentivize the trek. Today's Qadisiyya residents see Dana as a destination for foreign tourists and the Ammani elite.

They have stronger ties in Amman, a city more than four hours away, and Tafileh, the governorate's capital city an hour away.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the Jordanian government incentivized permanent settlement by extending national hydraulic infrastructure to Qadisiyya. In the same period, the government erected basic housing in Qadisiyya to further encourage the relocation of Dana residents. Like many others, Shaykh Fulan al-Akh Sabah, who grew up in Dana, seized the chance for extra space and moved his family to the new village. The opening of the local Jordan Cement Corporation factory in the early 1980s provided thousands of these new villagers with jobs in a wage economy.[33]

At the end of the 1980s and in the early 1990s, the RSCN formally demarcated Dana as a nature reserve. Community activist Rashid al-Akh Sabah recalled that Dana's conservation management plans created greater restrictions on grazing livestock and introduced park rangers to enforce these new land regulations, encouraging more residents to abandon Dana for Qadisiyya.

It was a 3 million–dollar grant from the UN and the World Bank in 1993 and 1994 that created the Dana biosphere as a test case for the implementation of the UN Rio Convention of Biological Diversity in the Middle East.[34] A major component of this grant was the transformation of the RSCN from a society of compatriots to a viable, nongovernmental organization. From that point forward, conservation institutionalized environmentalism as a royal form of governance, subjecting Jordanian territory to new land regulations.

Dana's conservation area is Jordan's largest nature reserve. It covers 320 square kilometers, including both the village plateau and expanses of the valley below, and its perimeter extends almost to the Jordanian–Israeli border. In 1994, Jordan and Israel negotiated a cold peace under the terms of the post-Oslo Wadi Araba treaty. That year the US government directed foreign aid to Jordan in quantity.[35] The US–Jordan Free Trade Agreement six years later confirmed the relationship of foreign aid and environmentalism with specific regulatory measures to safeguard ecology. In the last decade of the 20th century, parallel movements for peace, profit, and preservation intersecting at Dana catalyzed environmentalism in Jordan.

The combined pressures of overcrowding in Dana where there was no civic infrastructure or employment, growing environmental restrictions on land use, and government incentives for relocation encouraged the nearly complete abandonment of Dana for Qadisiyya. By 2012 only a handful of families made their home in Dana, where tourists already outnumbered them. Families had abandoned seminomadic residence in various forms of temporary refuge in open, outdoor space for concrete homes in Qadisiyya.

In Qadisiyya I investigated how families built homes while living under economic duress. What seemed like a paradox to me was a practical solution for families who found that in a toxic economy of uncertain futures and just scraping by, building a house was a secure investment. Parents might not be able to guarantee that their kids could find work, but they would have a place to live. Homes, as Arjun Appadurai asserts, "never cease to carry a trace of the need to expand the meaning of humanity."[36] Members of the al-Akh Sabah family involved in building houses in Qadisiyya spoke about their houses as a familial refuge, where investing in the aesthetics of home exteriors was their argument for the dignity of the family and its durable future.

BUILDING HOUSES IN QADISIYYA

One thousand Jordanians in the Qadisiyya community of 10,000 lost their jobs in 2001 when the Jordanian government sold its controlling shares in a cement factory to the French multinational, Lafarge. It cost between 30,000 and 40,000 US dollars to build a modest, one-story home, so most homes went up in stages over long periods of time. As the kingdom increasingly privatizes national industry, the government and its foreign aid donors formally discuss environmentalism—with its lucrative global contracts and ecotourism promise—as a possible asset for growing Jordan's rural economy. At Dana, the RSCN created fifty-nine jobs. Though the RSCN idealized growing a green economy, the program has not yet and will not likely deliver the amount of jobs necessary to get Qadisiyya working again.

Despite the dearth of jobs after Jordan's privatization of the Lafarge cement factory—which marked Qadisiyya as within Jordan's "poverty pocket"—families in the village's most prosperous neighborhood, where several members of the al-Akh Sabah tribe lived, initiated construction of half of its twenty-five houses in the last five years. With savings scraped together from odd jobs in a patchy labor market, families built houses on inherited land slowly. Families building houses faced periods, sometimes years, when construction stalled due to a shortage of funds or competing priorities.

Families earn an average monthly income of 300 JD (roughly $450). The state has been the largest game in town: men commonly worked as teachers or, more often, collected pensions as retired army employees; women who worked outside the home taught or ran community associations. Without local opportunity, many men migrated to Amman to serve as temporary labor for odd construction or security jobs. Qadisiyya does have a small private sector economy comprised of local small businesses like its one-room grocers, its beauty salons, and its thriving minibus operations, but for several residents of the al-Akh Sabah familial residential area it was the initial income from the army coupled with earnings from migrant labor odd jobs as security guards that funded construction in fits and starts. To counteract the insecurities of the labor market, saving clubs (*jamʿiyya*) run by Qadisiyya women helped move construction forward.

Undeniably, it is employment by the state—in public schools, community associations, and, primarily, the army—that fuels the current construction boom. Men who served in the army overseas for six months earned a bonus. For his service in Haiti with the Jordanian army, Haitham al-Tafili earned a bonus of 4,000 JD (roughly $5,650), enough padding to turn a bank loan into a down payment on a house. In the absence of such opportunities several families I spoke with turned to the bank. For Muhammad al-Akh Sabah, who earns an army pension as a retired soldier of 290 JD per month, a bank loan was necessary for his down payment of 18,000 JD.[37] Almost half of his income each month is devoted to the payment of that loan. Individual families use bank loans and government salaries to raise a new, middle-class Qadisiyya. The aesthetics of the Qadisiyya home—which were anathema to the government-supported, spare ecomodernist design of Dana's rehabbed orientalist village—were underwritten by families with private capital and Jordanian government cash.

Each of these steps in home building represents an incremental movement toward expanding Qadisiyya village; each specifies a relationship between residents and governmental, corporate, and transnational entities. On meager income, building a house required commitment. However, as fathers passed into death, sons converted inherited land into familial dwelling. After registering the property with the *baladiyya* (municipality), families hired an architect to draw up plans; they purchased building materials, hired Egyptian laborers, and got to work.

At the outset, home building involved converting landed property into other forms of value expressed in home construction and design. The first step in the process—registering the land with the *baladiyya*—primed land for construction by inscribing ownership in the local cadastre. The process of registration funneled land ownership through the legal mechanisms of state, reinserting the power of the government as the arbiter of land rights. After registering his property, Muhammad al-Akh Sabah paid an architect from Amman, whom he privately commissioned, 160 JD ($226) to draft plans for his modest home. This next step in the process of home building required landowners to make the bus trek from Qadisiyya to Amman to hire experts who could formulate home construction plans. Qadisiyya homebuilders identified private sector expertise as a necessary qualification in the process of converting land into propertied homes. With architectural plans in hand, families purchased building materials. Houses were built with cement purchased from the LaFarge cement factory. Thus, Qadisiyya homes, from the foundation to the walls to the roof, raised and enveloped the residence in the substance of its economic decline.

With the land registered, plans drafted, and materials purchased, the final step toward building involved commissioning construction workers. The strong preference in Qadisiyya was to hire Egyptian laborers to build these homes. Egyptian guest workers in Jordan were relatively inexpensive to hire and dominated the construction business across the country. In Qadisiyya, landowning residents identified construction with transnational labor. Hiring Egyptian workers signified the dignity, honor, and class position families sought to represent by building these very homes. Between periods of major construction, landowners and their sons would sometimes oversee particular construction projects—such as digging trenches for plumbing—or undertake discrete projects—including laying and leveling gravel within the unfinished home interior. However, when it came to major construction, families relied upon contractual Egyptian labor. For families in Qadisiyya the ability to hire workers was the first step in demonstrating social status. The ability of Qadisiyya landowners to employ transnational contractual labor elevated the value of their own provisional, contracted labors that funded these homes.

Each one of these steps in home construction represents ties that bind economies between Qadisiyya and capital, provincial Jordan and transnational labor markets. These houses, built in Jordan's rural "poverty pocket," in the seemingly tucked away places of the monarchy, were in every way cosmopolitan. Qadisiyya home design referenced Gulf cosmopolitan aesthetics and the petro dollars that support this architectural style.[38] Government, corporate, and transnational networks of capital moved through the land and out into the aesthetic expression of these homes. Local residents converted government-earned wages and privately acquired loans into resources for a future they built.

QADISIYYA EXTERIORS

Immediately after laying the foundation and erecting the walls of the home, families began to embellish the home exterior. Before there were rooms, electricity, and running water, homes featured columns spiraling up verandahs, grand staircases rising to the entrance, and filigree-embellished, hand-forged wrought-iron doors protecting the threshold. Exteriors were meant to be grand. These design elements were not treated as decoration, but prioritized as primary features of the construction process. As in nearby Yemen, Qadisiyya's new Jordanian homes are emblematic of a material and ideological shift in appropriate dwelling indicative of middle-class yearnings.[39]

This transition in housing at Qadisiyya is particularly notable when examining the house structures families once used at Dana. Dana residents built houses with few, if any, windows. These houses were dark, one-room stone shelters that served the functionalist purpose of providing temporary shelter at night or in rough weather. Families spent most of their time outside sheltered by thick wool tents that offered space to lounge, fresh air, and portability. These structures were sometimes used to store perishables and at other times used as refuge from punishing summer sun or to escape frigid, snowy winters. The houses were built with the chief goal of keeping the weather out, and their lack of windows indicates an orientation to life outside, beyond the closed-off house interior.

Shaykh Fulan al-Akh Sabah recalled that at Dana all ten members of his family, his parents and his brothers and sisters, shared one room. He remembered life there was cramped and uncomfortable. His family washed up, cooked, and carried on with everyday living in that single-room shelter. His adult daughter, Nur al-Akh Sabah, recalled buying a kilo of sugar for one qirsh.[40] Now, she said, you can't buy anything for one qirsh. Families counted wealth by sheep and ample gardens of pomegranates, olives, and figs.[41] Though the village was not hooked into the national water and electric grid in the mid-20th century, the area was then, as it is today, a vital military resource. Shaykh Fulan al-Akh Sabah boasted that, like other men on the highlands, his father fought against the Ottoman Empire in the 1916 Great Arab Revolt. The village, he attested, has been integral to political processes of state and nation.

The idea of home represented by the new Qadisiyya house of the early 21st century is one cultivated in aesthetic detail. The elaboration of home exteriors specified individual familial prosperity within a community of relations. The performative value of the aesthetic discriminations in homecraft differentiated nuclear from extended kin within this Qadisiyya neighborhood. Building families recognized their aesthetic choices as signs of devotion and care to the future of the family, an act that both honored and preserved familial life by turning land into a new kind of refuge. Like most everyone I knew building houses, Muhammad al-Akh Sabah identified that his motivation for construction was the future of his family.

When I commented that Najla al-Akh Sabah's house was one of the most extravagant I'd seen, she replied, beaming: "Oh, no. Others have larger homes, probably." Najla's husband, who earned a plentiful income by working in the Emirates and as a Saudi boarder guard, has been building a two-story home on top of her current humble abode. In 2012, she picked out ceramic bathroom and kitchen tiles, stainless steel faucets packaged in protective flannel bags, and pink porcelain sinks, all of it stashed just inside

the entryway door of her new home for months waiting to be installed. She was excited about her kitchen backsplash, which read "breakfast" in English. Najla doesn't read English. These interior furnishings were clear markers of her financial success in a village without great opportunity.

Families who lived and worked elsewhere owned Qadisiyya's handful of richly embellished homes. The grand stature of home design was visual confirmation of their class elevation and mobility.[42] These elaborate houses visually expressed a rural cosmopolitanism whereby an emerging class of residents with urban opportunity and cash reserves earned from social mobility could build a family home in Qadisiyya, whether or not they lived there full time.

For most Qadisiyya families, building a house was a costly venture that required years of accumulated savings from temporary employment in the Jordanian capital, teaching contracts in the village, or coveted bonuses for army service abroad. These were houses built primarily with the salaries of government jobs, but which indicated a desire for upward class mobility that public employment typically could not provide. Qadisiyya families told me that it often took a decade or more to finish their houses.[43]

For years on end, homes stood like decorated skeletons at various stages of construction. Inside gravel-filled rooms overturned wheelbarrows, abandoned tools, and partially installed plumbing emphasized that work was economically contingent, but in process. Open windows waited for glass that would someday come. As with provisional housing in India or South America, poles of steel rebar protruding from rooftops were important signposts of unfinished business, placeholders for future generations to expand up into the sky as families filled out successively. Even with completed homes, the unfinished look was precisely the point. The metal poles guaranteed the possibility of adding cement floors to accommodate a growing family.

These new homes were monuments of a still unrealized future. As families waited to move in, their children, for whom they said they were building, grew up in small apartments across the street, watching the house of their intended childhood lay in various incomplete stages of construction. These kids would graduate and go to college or the army. Many I talked to had no plans to return. These homes were materials of ambition in a political void of opportunity. The Qadisiyya landscapes of provisional homecraft were constrained by a politics of inequality resulting from a lack of steady employment. The construction of these homes was a refusal to be hemmed in by these constraints, but the length of the construction indicated that the pursuit of the family home took place under duress.

QADISIYYA INTERIORS

Behind the rich exterior elaboration, Qadisiyya's interiors demonstrate the prioritization of the house as a familial refuge. Interiors in Qadisiyya were both inhabited and imagined. In 2012 when I arrived in Qadisiyya only one of the newly constructed homes was inhabited, by me, a renter for a family that had relocated to Amman. By 2017 families were living in about a third of the new homes in the al-Akh Sabah community. Families mostly made their homes in cramped apartments across the street or next to their future, unfinished homes. Families who owned finished houses did not necessarily

inhabit them, but channeled their resources—the very ones that enabled home completion—to establish a life in Jordan's capital. In this way Qadisiyya's finished house was a counterpart to the provisional house: because of financial resources, on the one hand, or a parity of capital, on the other, both the finished and unfinished house stayed empty.

Interiors in the newly completed home and the temporary apartments alike reinforced commitment to family life. *Farsha*s (futon-like sofa mattresses) lined the perimeters of family rooms with extra seating for anticipated guests. Delicate paneled curtains overlaid with heavier draping screened off windows for privacy. Carpets blanketed polished concrete floors. Interior furnishings softened and warmed the cold, hard surfaces of the Lafarge cement-rendered chambers. As in the home of Muhammad and Nur al-Akh Sabah, families extended that warmth through the house by choosing fabrics in the jewel-tone hues of ruby, amethyst, and emerald. Competing patterns in royal tones saturated interior lives.

The warmth that dressed Qadisiyya interiors in plush fabrics and deep colors extended into activities of the house. When familiar guests arrived, they were immediately extended a hand-sized glass of hot, sweet tea. Tea was the ritualized signature of Jordanian hospitality. While guests sipped refilled glasses, families watched Turkish soap operas such as *Fatima and Wadi al-Dhi'ab* (Valley of the Wolves). As they watched, women like Nur al-Akh Sabah would tell me: "these shows are very bad. They don't tell the truth about families. We don't watch them." These tantalizing TV serials and everyday gossip enlivened spaces of formalized hospitality; these negotiated controversies animated the interior space.[44]

Of all the rooms in the Qadisiyya house, the formal reception room was the most elaborate—furnished with the finest *farsha*s, carpets, and curtains a family could afford—and reserved exclusively for unfamiliar company or formal meetings. Unlike the comforts of an interior family room space, reception rooms were often separated from common areas of the house by exterior doors accessed by a separate threshold. These rooms were spaces of formalized hospitality that drew upon iconography of a monarchal ideal—like the bird-beak brass coffee pot—that tied a morality of hospitality to king and country. Shryock writes: "sovereignty is manifest in the ability to act as host, and this is why it makes sense to most Jordanians when the Hashemites describe Jordan as a house, and Jordanians as a family."[45] In this way, the formalized reception rooms were like portals that, through practices of hospitality that honored host and guest, linked individual families in a set of relations extending all the way up a social hierarchy concluding with the king. In Qadisiyya, families deliberate whether shaykhs today truly exist and whether tribes are socially effective, but the honor accorded by hospitality—commonly associated in Jordan with tribes and heritage—retains value even as other forms of heritage are questioned.

The architectural style of the new Qadisiyya house exhibits the value of hospitality in its very design. It is the thresholds of exteriors, with their grand staircases, columns, and doors, that initially welcome the guest into the embrace of the familial interior. The most richly elaborated features of the new Qadisiyya home were all directed at the guest in a way that boldly proclaimed an individual family's status to arriving company (and passing neighbors) while also welcoming the guest with aesthetic detail. Inside the home, paint immediately marked affluence. Glass

chandeliers in entryways illuminated and guided visitors into the comforts of the reception area.

The aesthetics of the new Qadisiyya home design—from the transnational processes underwriting its construction to the aesthetic deliberations of its furnished interior—created an ideal for the future of a family deeply engaged with processes and practices of global citizenship. Further into the interior living space of the family, American iconography decorated the children's rooms. The once-inhabited, now empty chambers of my landlord's daughters' room, like the rooms of other village girls, were decorated with Hannah Montana, SpongeBob, Strawberry Shortcake, and Minnie Mouse. On an adjacent wall, a hand-painted mural in candy-striped colors read *ma shāʾ allāh* in Arabic characters.[46] Tensions between the values of Islam and American consumerism were recognized, but, as with Turkish serials, the continual negotiations of these frameworks were the entertainment of everyday life.[47] Aesthetic choices imagined a family future as one engaged with the visual iconography of global media and committed to the idealized village values of hospitality and religious virtue. These were not isolated village cottages, but houses whose very construction forged a rural cosmopolitanism via participation in labor markets and the consumption of international media that intimately framed aesthetic discriminations.

The same devotion to hospitality that governed the aesthetic commitments of families to home construction also made the idea of servicing Dana's heritage village seem disgraceful. Paid hospitality was viewed as "dirty work akin to prostitution"[48] and thus, to return to a question raised at the beginning of this article, Jordanian homeowners did not want to operate the businesses of Dana's ecoheritage village. Instead, they recognized guest workers from the Philippines and Sri Lanka—who typically cleaned bathrooms and served food in Jordanian hotels as part of the country's transnational underclass—as the most appropriate employees for ecotourism.

BUILDING HOUSES IN DANA

The major act of environmental cultivation at Dana was the creation and expansion of the biosphere itself. Qadisiyya families too cultivated nature in their gardens, which was the true measure of household wealth. However, global environmental organizations such as the RSCN did not recognize Qadisiyya's horticultural acts as an expression of environmentalism. At Qadisiyya, the cultivated garden featured peaches, apricots, lemons, loquat (*iskadunya*), grape arbors, cacti, and—if resources allowed—walnut and pistachio trees. These gardens were more than beautiful; they represented familial autonomy from fluctuating markets. It was the gardens that formed a link to Dana for Qadisiyya families who like Shaykh al-Akh Sabah fondly recalled Dana's verdant terraced landscape. Like the adjacent home-building projects in the once-connected villages, the broken horticultural link between Dana and Qadisiyya raises questions about how projects of land reform get coded as environmentalism and demonstrates that environmentalism is a project of global capitalism.

Unlike Qadisiyya, the RSCN plans for Dana aimed to re-engineer an entire village as one holistic biosphere. Whereas excavators, overturned wheelbarrows, and deflated Lafarge cement bags marked Qadisiyya village as a work in progress, in Dana it was the half-story USAID billboard that announced the provisional nature of the

future village. The restoration of Dana as a representative Ottoman village was part of an $8 million USAID grant that would rehabilitate the village and build corridors connecting Dana with Petra and Wadi Rum, sites that were at the heart of Jordanian tourism.[49] The project would blanket Jordan's south in ecotourism, thereby amplifying the role of the private sector to forge new commercial relations between villages and towns. It would also generate economic links between villages that would be governed by international aid and the RSCN's model of "nature-based development" that promoted biodiversity by using ecology as a basis for private sector growth in tourism.

The RSCN's master plan imagined shuttles, or even camels, run by tribes that would transport people on a craft tour of local villages where artisans would showcase rustic honeypots and other "traditional" objects for buying customers as tourists moved north from Neolithic villages near Petra to arrive for a night in Dana's Ottoman heritage village. The likeness of the overall design to the Egypt exhibit at the 1889 World Exhibition in Paris is unmistakable.[50] In Jordan as in 19th-century Paris, heritage was defined by large architectural structures as much as in miniaturized, reductive items for sale. The vision of Jordan promoted in this model of heritage was one primarily defined by international administrators and the cosmopolitan elite for a savvy market of affluent niche tourists looking for an unconventional experience in the Hashemite Kingdom.[51] The RSCN's reimagining of Dana as an orientalist village expressed the imperial logics of the Parisian display, but it was King ʿAbd Allah who authorized this act of international aid on Jordanian soil, indicating the internalization of international priorities within the architecture of the Jordanian state.

As far as the RSCN was concerned, tourism was a win-win: the conservation of environment was a development project that would benefit local communities with the creation of jobs that would grow the private sector and enable the RSCN to raise the $4.5 million per year that it needed to meet the cost of its annual budget by generating funds from tourism and its subsidiary sales of affiliated crafts.[52] Dana was the RSCN's ace in the hole. It was their most internationally known, globally lauded, and financially lucrative site. It was also the place where the organization pioneered the concept of using tourism for environmental conservation, according to Edward Taylor, USAID Liaison at the RSCN, who originally conceived the nature-based development model. Taylor told me that Dana village was crumbling to ruin, that it was dying on its feet. He worried that the village was subject to local renovation in a way that destroyed its tourism potential. Taylor believed the heritage model to be implemented at Dana had the potential to produce much higher revenue for tourism. With the RSCN's efforts, he was convinced that the new Dana would become a southern tourist center.

With no hydraulic infrastructure and no system of waste management, Dana presented a substantial construction challenge for the RSCN. Before they could restore the village's houses, the RSCN had to commission engineers to design, dig, and install water and sewage services. In so doing, the environmental organization used foreign aid funds to create what is typically municipal infrastructure, thereby overstepping its mandate.[53] Dana village, Taylor acknowledged, was the organization's most ambitious project to date: "[We] never ever change the design scheme of a community . . . Dana will change the design of the community." As Taylor notes, the RSCN's plans to make Dana a heritage village involved a complete redesign of its infrastructure and economy.

One of the most contested and controversial aspects of the RSCN's work was the settlement objective inherent to the design that transitioned pastoralists to other forms of economic opportunity. The RSCN saw Dana's 9,000 goats as a grave environmental threat because their grazing practices degraded the landscape. As at other conservation sites, the RSCN gradually worked to settle nomadic pastoralists in villages through biodiversity conservation. Taylor told me: "Our main tool is to develop alternative livelihoods. Feynan is an example: settlement from grazing. It will take a long time but it's happening." Villagers in several RSCN sites earmarked for conservation have routinely challenged the environmental organization's right to land. The Director of USAID in Jordan, Kristen Jones, identified land rights as among the RSCN's greatest challenges. Indeed, in 2012 various communities identified as potential conservation sites protested the RSCN's biodiversity efforts on their lands.

Beyond the contested settlement objective, RSCN plans for Dana would also change its economic structure. While most families had moved to Qadisiyya, a few still lived at Dana and were not necessarily included in the conservation plan. There were fifty-five cottages at Dana, and the RSCN planned to renovate them in stages, including about twenty-five in the first restoration effort. Owners of Dana cottages included in the RSCN's plan could buy into the program at 5 percent of the total renovation cost, estimated at about 10,000 JD ($14,122). Dana homeowners would retain their ownership rights to the property and keep all profits generated from tourism. In an act of social engineering, the RSCN was effectively creating new economic inequalities in Qadisiyya: Dana homeowners turned business patrons of international tourism were projected to earn profits beyond typical village salaries. Even as the RSCN attempted to remake Dana, homeowners and community associations routinely protested their efforts, objecting that they had not been meaningfully consulted at management levels in the RSCN's plans despite the NGO's policy of integrated community management.

DANA INTERIORS

The realism of Dana's architectural preservation could only be partial. The dark, often-windowless one-room cottages needed rehabilitation to capture enough of the old-world charm while still catering to the needs of luxury adventure travelers. To attract eco-minded tourists, architect Munif and the RSCN liaison to USAID Taylor knew the details of heritage marketing had to be precise yet "modern." No level of detail was overlooked. Taylor's minute aesthetic discriminations over color exemplify his rigor in cultivating an environmental aesthetic. In keeping with their efforts to restore the buildings to a prior form, Taylor had originally wanted to limewash interiors of the houses, as Dana residents once did, likely as a way of protecting against insects. After testing the wash in one of the houses, Taylor realized that the stark white would be too jarring for relaxation. The shiny finish sealing the limestone was equally unappealing. Taylor directed construction teams to abandon limewashing in favor of painting the chambers a regular light brown matte complementing the sandy color of exterior stone. In Dana's workshop where female RSCN employees were experimenting with candles, color was also an issue. As Taylor toured the facility with USAID Jordan's new director, Kristen Jones, he revealed a table of soft pink, fire engine red, vibrant blue, lime green, and robust orange square pillars and molded wax cast into blossoming roses. Jones exclaimed

that the candles were "not ecocolors." Yes, Taylor replied, they had a few details to work out.

Munif's designs were meant to bring Dana's "natural environment" into interiors as much as possible. He incorporated trees into buildings, built with locally quarried stone, and directed light in quantity through undressed windows. To prepare the dark, mostly windowless chambers of houses for a tourist market that favored illuminated interiors and housing with a view, Munif devised a "courtyard." In this way Munif said he would "corrupt" rooms that were originally designed not as primary living chambers but as dark storehouses for perishable goods or shelter from punishing weather. The "courtyard" was a meter and a half square, roof-to-floor glass shaft that pierced the living quarters. The courtyard would allow light, wind, and even rain and snow to penetrate the interior of each remodeled Dana house. With the courtyard, Munif created an experience whereby the visitor to Dana would feel as if she "were part of the atmosphere." Each of Munif's design elements were intended to create the feel of being close to nature by removing boundaries between human tourists and the "natural" world. The dismantling of barriers was a carefully planned architectural act, which was ironic since the buildings had been originally designed to keep nature at bay.

Inside, Munif furnished sparely. His beds were simple, purposefully unremarkable iron units built to disappear into the room. His spare interiors were a direct contrast with Qadisiyya's rich, embellished chambers where the thickness of *farsha*s and the plush, embroidered fabrics were a way families demonstrated their status by valuing and honoring the guest. Whereas draped Qadisiyya interiors were designed for maximal comfort, Munif's Dana guesthouses were ascetic vestibules designed to highlight the textures of stone and the view outside. Munif said, "It's a word I hate, 'decoration.' I mean I think decoration is finished in the Wadi Dana. That's the decoration." He added that for him good design was "in the fields in the Wadi Dana: the passing clouds, the shadow on the rock cliff, the branches of the trees of the canyon below them. That's the decoration to me. Or the alleys and gaps between the houses, that's the decoration." In general, Munif told me, "Jordanians don't have good taste," they decorated tourist accommodations as if recreating a scene from *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*. For him tourist kitsch ruined the beauty of places like Dana.

Instead, Munif's vision for Dana emphasized transparency and light, creating a permeable membrane between humans and their environment. Unlike the homes at Qadisiyya which were meant to enclose the family—protecting the modesty of women with curtains and preserving familial health with a shelter from harsh environs—the interiors of Dana brought the guest into direct contact with the raw materials of exterior walls, floors, and courtyards, design features that served as conduits guiding the visitor back to "nature." It was almost a complete reversal: Qadisiyya families had become "city folk" to members of older generations such as Layla al-Akh Sabah who spent most of her childhood, adolescence, and early married life at Dana. Like others of her generation, Layla recalled life at Dana as one lived primarily outside. In the early 21st century, as Qadisiyya families expressed class desires in home interiors cultivated with manufactured items like glass chandeliers, which had been purchased with contracted labor in roughhewn economies, Dana environmentalists built structures that evoked a feeling of a life lived outside by concealing the labors of design and management that governed this new environmental communion.

One of the RSCN's major goals was to create an "authentic" experience at Dana. Every feature of Munif's restored house was planned to expose guests to the discovery of Dana's natural world; it was a world Munif so artfully crafted that any evidence of architectural planning was concealed by its very design. Key to Munif's architectural style was the act of making design seem effortless, as if an element arising naturally from the environment of the site itself.

DANA EXTERIORS

In contrast to Qadisiyya's construction of the longue durée, environmentalist restoration of Dana intended to renovate an entire village at once using methods and materials meant to be authentic. The restoration emphasized the simplicity of stone houses, rebuilding the fallen stone walls and caved roofs of houses such that their 21st-century adaptations would capture the feeling of what foreign visitors imagined it might have been like to live in this village one hundred years ago.[54] Munif believed that buildings should be "a little bit shy." The house, he believed, should be humble, designed in deference to the awesome beauty of the natural surroundings.

For Munif, Dana was like a found object. The real architect of the house, Munif relayed, was "Abu Muhammad who lived one hundred years ago." He told me that he didn't want to be an architect in the case of Dana, but rather a problem solver: "I can add my methodology, but I have no style." Munif saw himself as more of a "midwife" whose job was to listen to the site and develop a plan that would address both its ecological properties, such as the sunset and the wind, and its social dimensions, such as Jordan, unemployment, and values of space. These two layers of the site, Munif told me, should govern its architectural composition. His design ethos further erased the expertise that went into building the site: the extensive engineering studies of existing structures; the computer modeling that addressed each house as part of a holistic village ecosystem; the mathematical calculations required to erect a stable wall; and the historical knowledge Munif's team used to adapt principles of stone masonry.

When Taylor and Munif openly worried that local design would destroy the site's tourism potential, they were talking about the Tower Hotel, whose design they likened to the orientalist aesthetics of *Arabian Nights.* The Tower Hotel was not in the RSCN plan for the village and it was prominently located. The hotel perched at cliffs' edge, at the base of the village's spine, and the valley sprawled for miles below it. In an act widely perceived as defiance, the hotel owner, Muhammad Qasir, circumvented building restrictions and added a second floor to his property, punctuating the vista with its rise. Qasir enticed tourists with a string of decorative lights that fed around the perimeter and crawled up its side, twisting into an electrified *dilla* (ceremonial coffee pot) that was a common Jordanian icon of hospitality.[55]

Whereas Qasir cultivated an aesthetic drawn from popular iconography of the Orient, Munif's major architectural efforts planned a site to highlight and augment "found" features of the environment. It was a power conflict waged in aesthetics. In spring 2012, the RSCN continued to pursue negotiations with Qasir. If Muhammad Qasir agreed to sign onto Dana's master ecotourist plan, he would be required to remove the second floor.

For Munif and the RSCN, the environment formed the basis of a new Jordanian aesthetic that showcased the country's natural beauty and recuperated architectural

ruins to promote tourism as a conservation incentive. The aesthetic was a new kind of Orientalism whereby the principles of environment reimagined a village as a natural- ized Ottoman heritage that had not been. This new aesthetic derived from the spare simplicity of Munif's designs that rejected embellishment, but masterfully conducted light in and through the village, directed the individual gaze, and studiously employed knowledge of stone and local geology to craft single-room cottages that looked much like they had risen, effortlessly, from the bedrock of the earth.

Since the RSCN identified conservation as a community-development project, NGO employees organized home construction as a local training opportunity whereby local residents would gain new job skills through their contractual labor at the biosphere. Every morning, a Qadisiyya minibus owner would collect this team of male recruits and drive them over to Dana. Every evening, he would drive them home. The RSCN hired expert construction teams to train their local employees to build with stone. The training imperative meant that progress on the village restoration was slow, frustrating Dana homeowners involved in the village revival plan. During his spring 2012 visit to Dana, the US ambassador explained the decision:

We could have brought in contractors from Amman, but we wanted to build capacity here. Frankly, they are learning on the job on your house. We wanted to create the jobs and the ex- perience. When I met with King ʿAbd Allah he said please go to Tafileh and create jobs in that area. This is the region that he is most concerned with.

In June 2011, Tafileh residents stoned King ʿAbd Allah's motorcade during his visit to the city. In the year since, members of the Tafileh community mobilized the longest, most vocal protest against the monarchy, calling for an end to monarchal rule. Job cre- ation was the monarchy's prime strategy to quell the protests and reestablish allegiance in the rural south.

It was unclear how the skills local construction employees gained at Dana would be- come resources of employment locally. The expertise that previous generations had used to build these Ottoman-era cottages at Dana had been lost as cement replaced stone in Qadisiyya. For one thing, stone was expensive. Only one of the new houses in Qadisiyya used the material, the house cost 40,000 JD ($56,500), and, despite their relative afflu- ence, the homeowners couldn't afford to complete it. For another, stone masonry had limited applicability. Jordanian limestone was favored in Munif's celebrated architec- ture, but could be afforded only by international development agencies or by Amman's elite. Considering the limited applicability of the skill, the training offered by the RSCN uniquely served the interests of the NGO and development capitalists.

As one might expect, the RSCN's efforts at Dana created tensions in the community. Villagers protested their lack of input in the design of the site, their limited control over their labor power, and the RSCN's policies by routinely sabotaging village construc- tion. Dana residents spilled out the contractor's sand and opened water taps to destroy a freshly laid foundation. During one of my visits to Dana, a homeowner, Karim Qasid, arrived unexpectedly to talk to the RSCN site manager, Sharif ʿAwad. He was con- cerned about the boundary of his property, which, like other properties, could not be clearly defined due to a shared wall. ʿAwad tried to reassure him that the complication would not pose revenue problems for his anticipated business at the site. Qasid repeated quietly again and again, "I don't know how." ʿAwad offered to bring in a surveyor from

Amman, but Qasid declined and left, reluctantly, without resolution. ʿAwad told me that his job required constant attention to problems for which there were no easy solutions. As he saw it, his challenge was converting a village, whose houses were built with a schema that defied separating family units into discrete properties, into an organized system of individuated businesses. Awad was charged with fitting a village built to emphasize familial collaboration into an international development blueprint for a heritage economy.

CONCLUSION: AESTHETIC COMPARISONS, POLITICAL FUTURES

Home building in Qadisiyya and Dana brings into being sociopolitical futures through aesthetic design. When I first began research on home construction, common to new homes in both villages was the fact that no one lived in them. In Dana, this was obvious: finished homes would be commercial lodging for tourists. But by 2016, disputes between the RSCN and homeowners at Dana and problems with the water and sewage infrastructure arrested further construction. During a 2016 visit to Dana I learned that the local community cooperative was suing the RSCN for damages. The cooperative alleged that failures with the water and sewage infrastructure installed by the RSCN created property damage to the foundations and walls of renovated houses. A meeting I had with RSCN administrators in Amman confirmed the lawsuit. Despite the suit, RSCN administrators championed their work at Dana. One administrator told me that the RSCN "delivered" the completed houses to Dana homeowners, successfully meeting USAID goals for the project. It was up to Dana homeowners, he said, to operate the businesses. In other words, according to this RSCN administrator, responsibility for any observable failure rested squarely with the community. Yet at Dana it was difficult to identify the homes the RSCN had renovated. Those that had been rebuilt were not yet furnished, courtyards and thresholds filled with trash, rubble, and animal waste, the latter indicating a repurposing of the stone structures for pastoralism once again. By 2017 internationals' fears of regional instability crippled the tourist market in Jordan and meant that few tourists visited Dana. Those who came stayed at the RSCN-operated guesthouse. Dana shop owners complained about the lack of business. Much of the village had fallen into ruin.

Qadisiyya, on the other hand, was thriving. By 2013 Najla al-Akh Sabah had moved with her children into her finished house. Around the same time, Muhammad al-Akh Sabah moved his family into their new home. Homes already standing had been painted or embellished, signs of intentional labor demonstrating the continued care for and cultivation of the still empty houses. Foundations were going up on broken ground for new homes. In spring 2016 Muhammad al-Akh Sabah gave me a tour of his garden. Among the seventy-five trees he planted around his house, his garden included cherries, berries, apricots, figs, apples, olives, peaches, almonds, pomegranates, canopies of grape arbors, and roses. Nur al-Akh Sabah, his wife, was raising five chickens, a rooster, and three chicks. The garden had a working fountain. Inside was no less grand, with rich carpets throughout and painted gold fleur-de-lis climbing the family room wall. In 2016, they added a car. That summer their eldest daughter graduated from college and married. Their two eldest sons worked for the army. The parents and all of the elder children had smart phones. Facebook was a household activity.

I have argued that home building at Dana and Qadisiyya supported the construction of economies in tension. Tracing the home-building projects in each village over the last six years, it is possible to glean the relative success of those economies. Whereas it seemed at the outset that the force of global capital at Dana would outpace new construction at Qadisiyya, the reverse turned out to be true. Qadisiyya's economy may be patched together with migrant, contractual labor, but the durability and effectiveness of the transnational economy it mobilizes has been noticeably more successful at reaching its goal than the RSCN's Dana village initiative. The comparison of these villages demonstrates the vital need for researchers to consider individual development projects, such as biodiversity conservation and heritage restoration, in regional context. It is by looking beyond the immediate development project at Dana to Qadisiyya that we can observe how these same tribes stigmatized by the RSCN's plans raised a vibrant transnational economy next door that safeguarded their priorities for the future.

The comparison between Dana and Qadisiyya also raises important questions about what counts as "environment." Qadisiyya boasts lush gardens, but these acts of cultivation were not recognized as environmentalism. The contrast between cultivation at Dana and Qadisiyya highlights the ways in which "environment" functions as an economic term that refers to specific global institutions, capital flows, and the materialities of "nature" they prioritize. The fact that Qadisiyya thrives while Dana fails to operate indicates critical limitations of global economic projects such as environmentalism when they are so narrowly defined. The RSCN's intention to build a "green economy" by creating at Dana a peopled biosphere according to the ideals of heritage defined by international development agencies failed to register with Dana homeowners. If design acts claim land to carve out political futures, it is the future of Qadisiyya that has the longer trajectory. The comparison between Dana and Qadisiyya demonstrates the failures of international development policies to take root and flourish in southern Jordan. These failures register architecturally, in the very design aesthetics of the family home.

NOTES

[1]The RSCN is a Royal NGO; it operates at the pleasure of the kingdom.

[2]William Cronon, *Uncommon Ground: Toward Reinventing Nature* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1995); Diana K. Davis and Edmund Burke, eds., *Environmental Imaginaries of the Middle East and North Africa* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2011); Richard H. Grove, *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism, 1600–1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

[3]Cronon, *Uncommon Ground*, 70.

[4]Lori Allen, "Martyr Bodies in the Media: Human Rights, Aesthetics, and the Politics of Immediation in the Palestinian Intifada," *American Ethnologist* 36 (2009): 161–80; Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1968); Jacques Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics* (New York: Continuum, 2004); Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).

[5]Jessica Barnes, *Cultivating the Nile: The Everyday Politics of Water in Egypt* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2014); Davis and Burke, *Environmental Imaginaries*; Toby C. Jones, *Desert Kingdom: How Oil and Water Forged Modern Saudi Arabia* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2010); Jones, *Running Dry: Essays on Energy, Water and Environmental Crisis* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2015); Mandana E. Limbert, *In the Time of Oil: Piety, Memory & Social Life in an Omani Town* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2010); Alan Mikhail, ed., *Water on Sand: Environmental Histories of the Middle East and North Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2002); Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil* (New York: Verso, 2011).

[6]Laurie A. Brand, "Development in Wadi Rum? State Bureaucracy, External Funders, and Civil Society," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 33 (2001): 571–90; Géraldine Chatelard, "Conflicts of Interest over the Wadi Rum Reserve: Were They Avoidable? A Socio-Political Critique," *Nomadic Peoples* 7 (2003): 138–58; Diana K. Davis, *Resurrecting the Granary of Rome: Environmental History and French Colonial Expansion in North Africa* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2007); Davis, "Enclosing Nature in North Africa: National Parks and the Politics of Environmental History," in *Water on Sand: Enviornmental Histories of the Middle East and North Africa*, ed. Alan Mikhail (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013). See also Paige West, *Conservation Is Our Government Now: The Politics of Ecology in Papua New Guinea* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2006); and Paige West, James Igoe, and Dan Brockington, "Parks and Peoples: The Social Impact of Protected Areas," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 35 (2006): 251–77.

[7]Davis and Burke, *Environmental Imaginaries*, 4.

[8]Timothy Mitchell, "Are Environmental Imaginaries Culturally Constructed?," in *Environmental Imaginaries*, 273.

[9]Fernando Coronil, *The Magical State: Nature, Money, and Modernity in Venezuela* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

[10]Barnes, *Cultivating the Nile*; Tessa Farmer, "Willing to Pay: Competing Paradigms about Resistance to Paying for Water Services in Cairo, Egypt," *Middle East Law and Governance* 9 (2017): 3–19; Jones, *Running Dry*; Mikhail, *Water on Sand*.

[11]Jones, *Desert Kingdom*; Limbert, *In the Time of Oil*; Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy*.

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[19]Andrew Shryock and Sally Howell, "'Ever a Guest in Our House': The Emir Abdullah, Shaykh Majid al-ʿAdwan, and the Practice of Jordanian House Politics, as Remembered by Umm Sultan, The Widow of Majid," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 33 (2001): 247.

[20]Ibid.

[21]Pierre Bourdieu, "Appendix: The Kabyle House or a World Reversed," in *The Logic of Practice* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1990 [1980]); Geoffrey Fitzgibbon Hughes, "The Proliferation of Men: Markets, Property, and Seizure in Jordan," *Anthropological Quarterly* 89 (2016): 1081–108; Anne Meneley, *Tournaments of Value: Sociability and Hierarchy in a Yemeni Town* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996).

[22]Brand, "Development in Wadi Rum?"; Chatelard, "Conflicts of Interest."

[23]Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics*.

[24]Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1991).

[25]All names in the manuscript have been changed to protect the confidentiality of my research participants.

[26]Andrew Shryock "The New Jordanian Hospitality: House, Host, and Guest in the Culture of Public Display," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 46 (2004): 35–62.

[27]Jeffrey Goldberg, "The Modern King in the Arab Spring," *The Atlantic*, 18 March 2013, accessed 5 August 2013, http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2013/04/monarch-in-the-middle/309270/2/.

[28]Miriam Cooke, *Tribal Modern: Branding New Nations in the Arab Gulf* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2014); Limbert, *In the Time of Oil*; Christa Salamandra, *A New Old Damascus: Authenticity and Distinction in Urban Syria* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 2004); Shryock, "The New Jordanian Hospitality."

[29]Hugh Raffles, "'Local Theory': Nature and the Making of an Amazonian Place," *Cultural Anthropology* 14 (1999): 323–60; Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973).

[30]That familial homes are built with migrant labor is a global phenomenon; Melly, "Inside-Out Houses."

[31] The Sharra highlands are part of the Mountain Heights Plateau abutting Jordan's Wadi Araba, which is a part of the Jordan Valley and comprises a section of the Great Rift Valley extending from Turkey down through East Africa along the Jordanian–Israeli border.

[32] Al-Akh Sabah is the name of one of the three major tribes in Qadisiyya, representing 20 percent of the village. It designates geography, but is not used as a surname. I use al-Akh Sabah as a surname here to provide both context for the village and anonymity for individual members of this tribe.

[33] United Nations Development Programme, "Arid Region Nature and Natural Resources Conservation and Rehabilitation—Azraq Component" (project document for UNDP, Amman, Jordan, 1993).

[34] Biosphere reserves are "sites of excellence" recognized by UNESCO for their efforts to implement the 1992 Rio Convention on Biological Diversity by promoting sustainable development through local community efforts and biodiversity conservation science; UNESCO, "Biosphere Reserves—Learning Sites for Sustainable Development," 2013, accessed 21 October 2013, http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/biosphere-reserves/.

[35] Jordan is a semirentier state, with foreign assistance constituting 20 to 50 percent of its overall budget; Anne Mariel Peters and Pete W. Moore, "Beyond Boom and Bust: External Rents, Durable Authoritarianism, and Institutional Adaptation in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan," *Studies in Comparative International Development* 44 (2009): 256–85; Zaina Steityeh, "First Aid," *Jordan Business,* July 2011, accessed 8 December 2011, http://www.jordanbusinessmagazine.com/sites/default/files/Cover%20Storyjult.pdf.

[36] Appadurai, "Housing and Hope."

[37] 290 JD is roughly equivalent to $410 and 18,000 JD is roughly equivalent to $25,425 based on the 1.41 exchange rate on 30 October 2013.

[38] Diane Singerman and Paul Amar, eds., *Cairo Cosmopolitan: Politics, Culture, and Urban Space in the New Globalized Middle East* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2006).

[39] Meneley, *Tournaments of Value*, 61.

[40] One Jordanian dinar is divided into one hundred qirsh.

[41] Shaykh Fulan al-Akh Sabah told me that his family had twenty sheep. Today each sheep is valued at 200 JD, or about $282 at the exchange rate of 1.41 on 20 July 2017.

[42] Fehérváry, "The Materiality of the New Family House in Hungary," 18; Meneley, *Tournaments of Value*, 62.

[43] See Melly, "Inside-Out Houses."

[44] Lila Abu-Lughod, *Dramas of Nationhood: The Politics of Television in Egypt* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

[45] Andrew Shryock, "Breaking Hospitality Apart: Bad Hosts, Bad Guests, and the Problem of Sovereignty," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 18 (2012): 25.

[46] Roughly *mā shāʾ allāh* translates "as Allah has willed it" and is said in praise of someone or to denote something beautiful.

[47] Fida Adely, *Gendered Paradoxes: Educating Jordanian Women in Nation, Faith, and Progress* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012); Lara Deeb and Mona Harb, "Choosing Both Faith and Fun: Youth Negotiations of Moral Norms in South Beirut," *Ethnos: Journal of Anthropology* 78 (2013): 1–22.

[48] Meneley, *Tournaments of Value*, 15; Shryock, "The New Jordanian Hospitality," 41.

[49] The plan also envisioned creating a protected area at Shobak, where the ruins of a Crusader castle were well preserved. Shobak was about forty-five minutes drive from Dana village. While the master plan linked Dana with Petra and Wadi Rum, it linked Shobak with Feynan, an award-winning ecolodge designed by Walid Munif in the valley below Dana's cliffs.

[50] Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1991), 1.

[51] Shryock, "The New Jordanian Hospitality."

[52] Though the RSCN is a Royal NGO, it receives only about 9 percent of its annual operating budget from the government. Almost half of its annual income derives from ecotourism and the accompanying socio-economic projects of its reserves; Annual Report (Amman, Jordan: Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature, 2011), 30. Under the Wild Jordan socio-economic plan—which features a green café just off of Amman's thriving Rainbow Street where agents of the British empire once made their home and where the British embassy is housed today—each of the reserves specializes in a particular trade, such as the profitable biscuit house at the Ajloun reserve which manufactures tasty "traditional" cookies packaged for sale both at the reserve and at the Wild Jordan center in Amman. USAID identified tourism as Jordan's fastest-growing and most promising economic sector.

[53]The RSCN also exceeded its environmental mandate at Wadi Rum when it was tasked with implementing a comprehensive tourism plan for the site; Brand, "Development in Wadi Rum?"; Chatelard, "Conflicts of Interest."

[54]In this way Dana was quite similar to the Kan Zaman restaurant and heritage center Shryock describes outside of Amman. Shryock, "The New Jordanian Hospitality."

[55]Ibid.