

THE TOWN OF SABHA IN THE NORTHERN DESERT OF JORDAN. PAST AND HERITAGE OF COEXISTENCE WITH THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

Abdel-Aziz Mahmoud Abdel-Aziz, Mohannad Tarrad

Al al-Bayt University, Mafraq, Jordan

Abstract

This field, architectural and ethnographic study deals with Sabha town in the Northern Badia of Jordan, which is rich in its civilizational cultural Inheritance. This town was chosen for the study because it contains various heritages, cultural sources and embodied by its traditional dwellings, Collectibles and tools founded and owned by bucolic Bedouin community settled with the early twenties of the last century that adopted pastoral mode of production, cultivation of dry grain in his daily life style. The Community has built its fixed stone dwelling to establish lasting stability in the site that helped him to satisfy his basic needs as shelter, saving holders and work equipment.

The study documents, describes and analyzes the traditional architecture, the elements of physical culture and attempt to reveal cultural heritage to employ it in the development of local community.

Keywords: culture and the Jordanian society, traditional housing, Physical Culture, traditional Collectibles

ГОРОД САБХА В СЕВЕРНОЙ ПУСТЫНЕ ИОРДАНИИ. ЕГО ПРОШЛОЕ И КУЛЬТУРНОЕ НАСЛЕДИЕ В СОСУЩЕСТВОВАНИИ С МЕСТНОЙ ОКРУЖАЮЩЕЙ СРЕДОЙ

Abdel-Aziz Mahmoud Abdel-Aziz, Mohannad Tarrad

Университет Аль аль-Бейт, Мафрак, Иордания

Аннотация

Статья посвящена архитектурным и этнографическим исследованиям города Сабха, расположенном в Северной Бадии Иордании. Этот город был выбран для изучения потому, что в нем сконцентрирована традиционная архитектура исторического жилища бедуинов начала прошлого века. В это время распространился оседлый образ жизни и земледелие, поэтому люди нуждались в каменных домах для жизни и хранения зерна и оборудования.

Данное исследование описывает и анализирует традиционную архитектуру, культурное наследие и возможность использования его в развитии современного иорданского общества.

Ключевые слова: культура и иорданское общество, традиционная архитектура, коллекционирование

Introduction

The study helps to understand the natural, social, cultural and architectural environment of the town and its surroundings, especially the Bedouin region .It also considered as a filed experience aims to documenting the ecological, social and architectural system. And viewing

the human settlement experience, and to find out the social, cultural configuration and the production activity at the early twenties of the last century.

The study helps the detection of architectural heritage, a cultural and physical embodied traditional dwelling, which is under emergency transformations, making it at risk of being forgotten. The study also contribute the knowledge and understanding of the characteristics of pastoral groups and find out the patterns and phases of Settlement, whether it's a collective Settlement (town and the village) or family Settlement (traditional dwellings), through the describing and analyzing the architect of the dwellings clarifying the life of the local community before about five decades.

Methodology: Analytical descriptive methodology, surveys and field studies of the cultural heritage sources and the use of field observation method, conducting personal interviews, photography and implementation of plans and architectural drawings.

Research Hypothesis

After the disclosure of cultural and heritage sources and Documenting them, Is it possible to reformulate and employ them in the town's community development

Terms of study:

Physical Culture: the tools and techniques used or produced by human and works to develop them, to satisfy his basic needs. **Society:** residence of the town, stages of settlement, social and constructional configuration and the stages of the emergence and development of the town.

Ethnography: Ethnography, the term consist of two Greek words (Ethnos = People) and (Graph =Description)

1. Location and natural environment

The town of Sabha is located to the east of Al Mafrag city 45km in the northern Badia, rises 825 km above sea level and the village of Sabha is located 2km to the west of the town of Sabah and considered as an extension to the town of sabha in the natural and architectural sides [1]. From the geological side, surface consists of basaltic rocks and basaltic soil particles. Land subject to processing for agriculture (dry cereal cultivation of wheat and barley) and bulldozed it and digging artesian wells and tapped in irrigated agriculture [2].Sabhas borders Syria from the north, Aldafyane village from the east, sabee seir and amra and amera from the west, and Sahrawi road (Mafrag-Baghdad) [3] as shown in Figure 1.

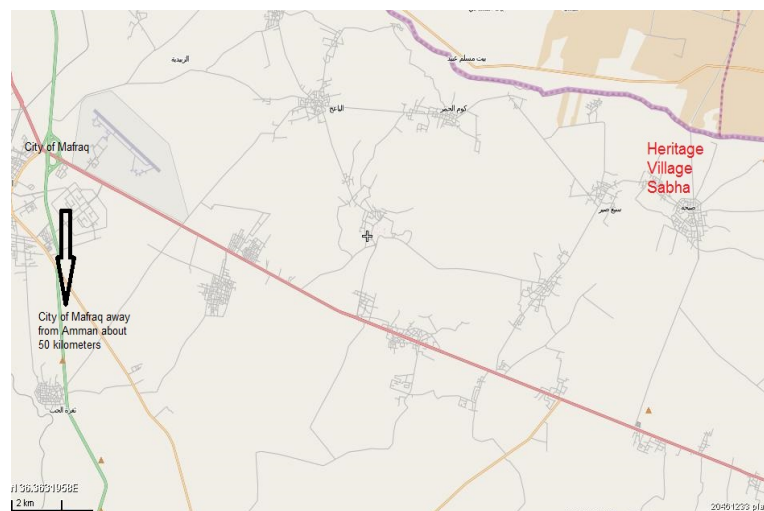


Figure 1 show the site Sabha village, which lies on the city of Mafrag about 45 km

2. Historical environment

Traditional Urban assembly in Sabha is located within the basin of Aqub valley, which is characterized by the spread of cultural landmarks and remnants of human settlements, the fact that the valleys throughout the ages have been places of attraction for Settlement of the pastoral communities. According to historical data that the roots of human settlement in the area returns to ancient historical ages, and the most prominent features of human settlements is the stony architectural configurations [4], the remains of tombs and water harvesting equipment which returned to the era of Nabataean and Romans Ages [5]. Site contains traces of ancient archaeological buildings, built of basalt stones and the trace of Byzantine churches.

3. The social and urban environment

Origins of Sabha residents are refer to the clan (Sardeieh) which is return to al-Tai tribe, and attributed to Prince Mofaraj bin Jarrah, According to some sources, they came within 850 AD in areas of Aloula in Najd and settled in the Hauran [6] and some historical sources Bani Sakhr tribe bound together [7]. So they called in the past (Mufarjah). With the beginning of the twentieth century Sardeyeh clan tended to settle in the ancient village of sabha. According to surveys the vanguards first settled repaired ancient water ponds and water channels, beside the exploitation of arable land to reach self-sufficiency.

The sources said that the historical narrative was influential clan in the southern Hauran plain[8], since the beginning of the nineteenth century has extended its authority over southern Hauran Plain and the Northern Badia of Jordan, and has been supplying convoy pilgrimage beauty, and provide protection for the convoy and some nomadic tribes scattered in the area [9].

4. Development environment

Nomadic Lifestyle continued until 1970, but after this date lifestyle changed gradually as a response to the official guidelines seeking to settle and develop Bedouin community and provide them with the necessary services. In 1975 Qdaa Sabha was established the same year of establishing the municipality. The municipal regulation area is 5 km²; the agricultural area is 64 km².

5. Traditional dwellings in terms of architectural design and heritage collections

The concept of traditional architecture in the town of Sabha is consistent with the definition Brunskill as buildings designed by local architects without training in the field of engineering design guided by frameworks generally accepted in the places where the buildings are completed using local materials and expresses the result from the construction of a locally agreed modular [10]. Oliver points to the concept of folk architecture constructed by a group embodied in the traditional housing that can satisfy the needs of the family, and accommodate cultural economical and local values [11].

At the beginning of construction in Sabha the remnants of historic buildings on the site formed in the traditional housing the, which was built by its users in a traditional style and a way of experimentation and gaining experience through practice and repetition. That emerge housing from the same space of the building both in terms of building materials or architectural design, interior design and the appropriate distribution of the architecture elements to achieve the goals and required functions of house. Also organize the vital area of the house and provide him with water from ponds scattered around and Corrals building to shelter livestock. See Figure 2.

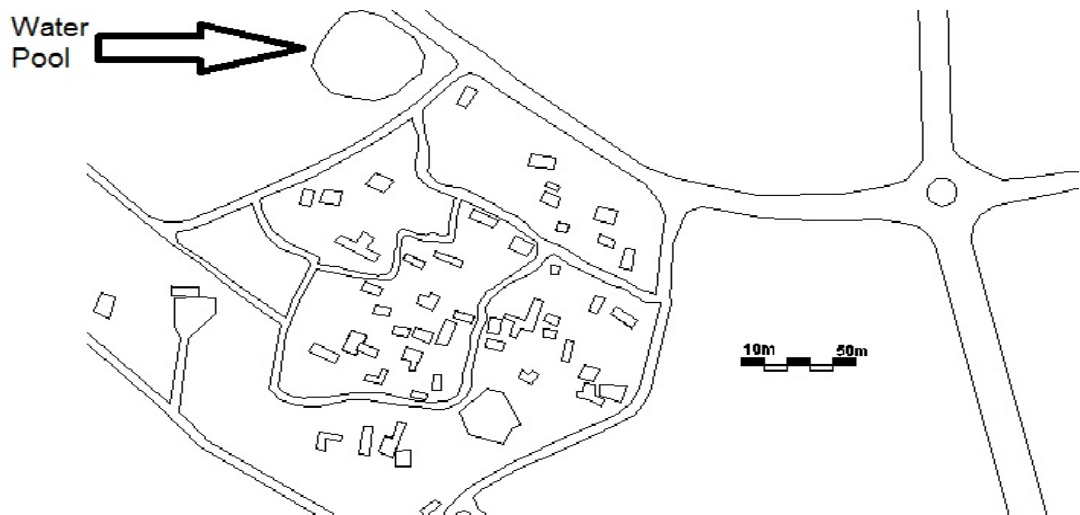


Figure 2 show the ancient Sabha scheme

6. The natural environment

Main construction material is basalt stones, mud, tree branches and straw. The housing responded with conditions of dry climate, by suitable distribution for the openings in terms of their position and size, and in terms of the thickness of the walls and fireplaces locating and treatment of ventilation. And housing in terms of the design and distribution of architectural elements also matches the lifestyle of the population, and carried out in a manner that can to fulfill the basic functions needed by the family See Figure 3.



Figure 3 represents one of the Sabha houses, which still exists up to now

7. Architectural Design

The housing is made of a row of spacious rooms ranging from room to three rooms, square or rectangular shape opens onto an exposed patio [12]. Construction process: field studies to test the right place and then prepare the appropriate stones and then paints scheme with soil on a patch of land, and begin the process of digging the foundations of appropriate depth, raising the walls, and upon completion of the process raising the walls to the required level to start the process building the ceiling, two methods are used in the construction of the ceiling.

The first way: the roof is based on of half circular stone arches mediated rooms and parallel to the side walls, The roof is made up of a long row of stones, which is based on the cornices

emanate from the walls of the housing above the row of stones layer of mud and straw [13]. See Figure 4.

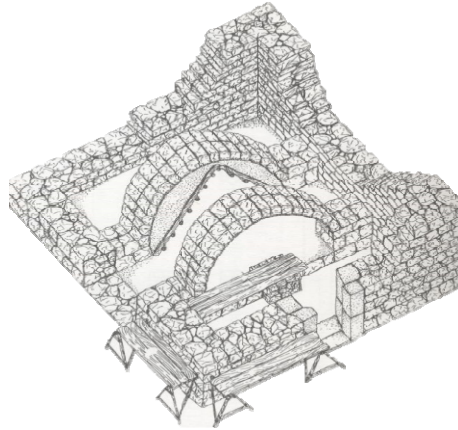


Figure 4 illustrates some of the stages of the establishment of the walls of the structures with the effect of the systems used in the creation of roofs used in construction

The second way: roof system based on the walls, within which the ceiling based directly on the edges of the walls by extending number of pillars of wood from tree branches and sometimes uses the iron beams, above the compact branches there is with a layer of straw and mud. See Figure 5.

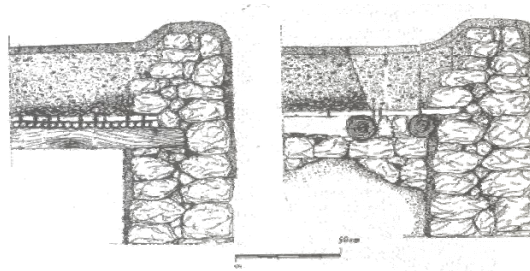


Figure 5 illustrates the roof system based on the walls built of stones and mud

It was observed that the ceiling was sloped to facilitate the flow of rainwater. Covering the walls of the housing from the inside with a layer of clay and a pure white mud. There is a specific function of each room so the interior design is implemented based on their function. It was observed that furniture and equipment commensurate with the function of the room. One of the main rooms in the house which is used as reception is ALMDAFE and it's usually located at the outside entrance to of the house to achieve privacy. House is opened to a courtyard that is called Baha Figure 6 Baha is a vital facility in the design of housing.

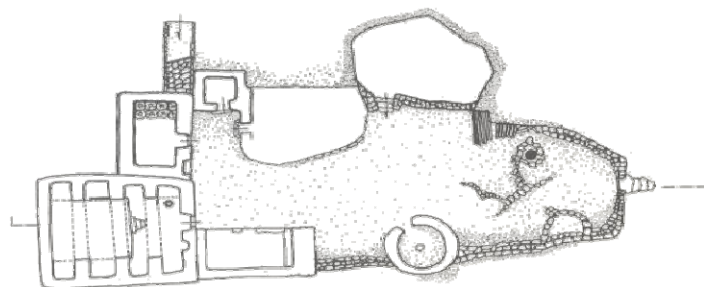


Figure 6 illustrates the idea of the traditional Jordanian house surrounded by a yard to make a home privacy

8. The traditional dwellings

The first model: Stone house built in the early thirties of the past century .Consisting four rooms forms a cluster architectural built of basalt. The first housing: is a spacious rectangular room 4*6m a height of 5m Followed by a 5*5m room with a 4.5m height supplement with a barn from the back, then the third housing a larger rectangular housing contains three spacious rooms 5*15m with 4.5m height. Permeates the assembly pathways that lead to the open courtyard See Figure 7, roofing system is based on the half-circular stone arches.

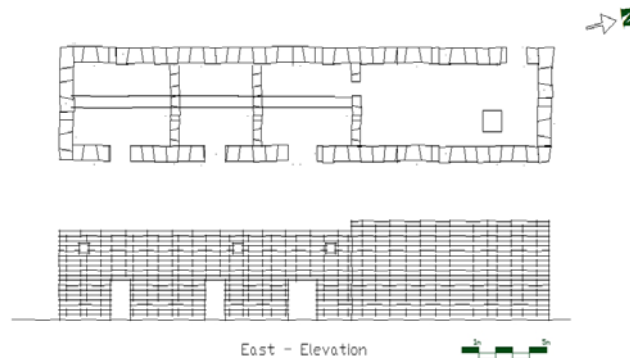


Figure 7 the repeated sample in the village Sabha

The second model consist a rectangular architectural cluster 5*12m with a height of 4.5m, containing two rooms mediated by arched stone semi-circular underlying the ceiling.

The third model consist a rectangular architecture cluster 5*16m, with a height of 4.5m. A row of three rooms opens to the east preceded by a courtyard, rooms are mediate by a repeat of three semicircular stone arches which the roof is based on them, and roof is covered by mud and straw. Rooms are being separated by walls Figure 8.

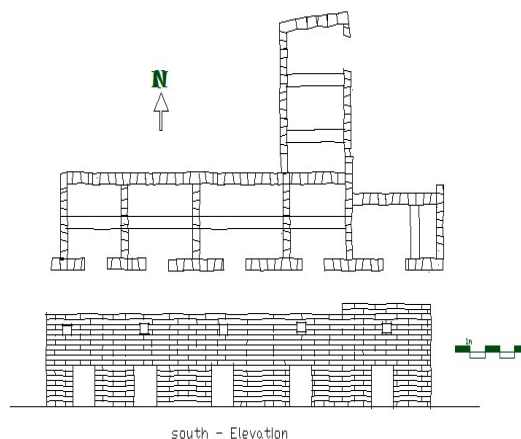


Figure 8 show a unique model in the village of Sabha

The fourth model: a rectangular architecture cluster 6*12m with a height of 4.5m, it has two adjacent rooms separated by wall mediate by tow semicircular stone arches that carries the roof.

9. Collectibles and work equipment

They have used what is available from local materials and natural resources. The hair and the wool extracted from cattle were used to make tents, mattresses, rugs, and clothing. And leather was used to make manufactures tools that is used to prepare milk, butter and ghee. Tree

branches were used in construction, agricultural tools, and work equipment. Pots and water jars were made of clay. Metal materials were acquired from purchase or swap from markets.

10. Collectibles of traditional dwellings

- Kwayer: shaped as bowls, made of clay, Opened from the top, covered with a wooden or muddy lid, from the bottom it has a round slot closes with a piece of cloth, open when needed, used to save and store grain and flour.
- Mattresses and rugs: One of the oldest traditional crafts in the town, are spinning yarns sheep wool and goat hair by a small wooden spindles. Also Aladoul from goat hair, which is in the form of a large bag used to store and transport wheat, also Alshqaeq that is used to build tents See Figure 9.



Figure 9 show the house of hair and some rugs and collectibles handmade, one of the heritage Badia

- Stone mill: Consists of two parts, the upper and lower see Figure 10, mediated by circular aperture through which grain is poured, with a metal column fixed at the bottom, used to grind grain.



Figure 10 show the forms of homemade windmills of basalt stone

- Clay pots: They are two kinds of Clay pots one is made by natural clay dried sunshine see Figure 11.



Figure 11 show the handmade pottery jar which is dried naturally

- Metal pots: are made of copper or iron, most of which is used in cooking.
- Metal Sheet: Piece of round convex iron, used in baking, as you can see in Figure 12.



Figure 12 show the sheet metal and Tabun

- Tabun: Built of soft clay in the form of Half Dome circular opening from the top, with a piece of a flat iron in the middle, is also used for home baking.
- Wooden wares: Albateia which is about pot poured the food, milk and yogurt, as well as the Mehbash, a tool to grind Arabic coffee and Souat a wood spoon used in stirring food, Alngro is a tool used in the cooling coffee after roasting.
- A tool is also Altabaq that is used to put food containers on it, as well as to spread the bread after ripening on the sheet or in Tabun.
- Leather tools: Dbayeh used to save the coffee and spices, and Almarow to save and transfer water.

11. Work and production equipment

According to field studies the region knew two modes of production.

The pastoral mode of production: based on pastoralism and animal husbandry. And the agricultural production method: based on cultivation of grain, wheat and barley.

Pastorals' craft Equipment:

1. Meelaf: which is a rectangular wooden bowls used for animal Fodders or water, some of which is made of iron.
2. Alkerkaa: large metal bell hanging in the neck of the ram.
3. Shepherd bag: made of woven wool in which a number of metal shears that are used in shearing sheep wool and goat hair.
4. As well as the Rabag: which is a rope of braided wool interspersed with slots (buttonholes) used when milking sheep's due to stay stable [14].

Agriculture craft Equipment: plow (mehrath) was used in tilling the soil which is made from oak trees branches see Figure 13, ends with a tapered tip with a sharp piece of iron about 30 cm length, drawn by one of the animals.

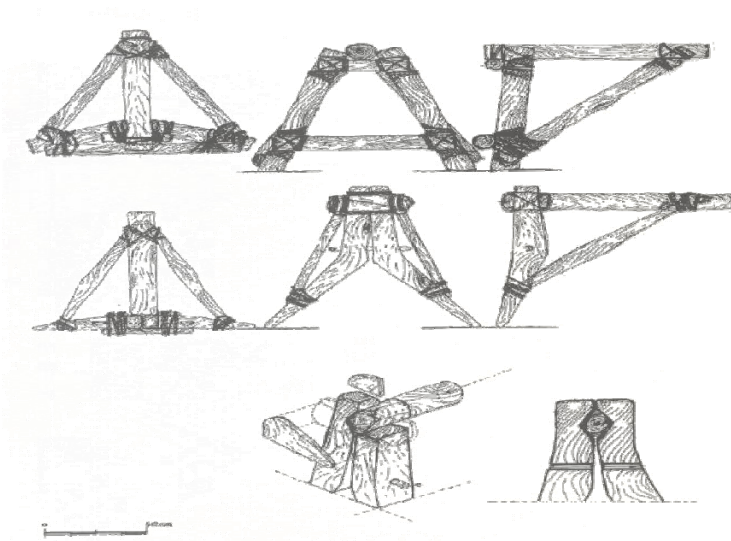


Figure 13 show some types of plows made of natural wood

Shaub: a long stick of wood with long pointed tip fingers is used to move the straw see Figure 14.



Figure 14 show the Shaub handmade from natural wood and teeth of iron

AlQadem: is a tool that is made up of several wooden parts connected together in parallel way, placed on the back of an animal used to transport straw and wood.

Sieve (alghorbal): a wooden frame with perforated mesh at the bottom made of goatskin, used to purify the grain.

Conclusions

1. The study emphasized on the importance and the necessity of documenting the architectural and the heritage features in the town of Sabha. The town rich in historical and cultural Inherited, its settlement experience, and the establishment of a traditional urban area incarnate by the traditional housing which built of basalt stones and mud, also the study showed that this architectural heritage is under isolation, neglecting and the risk of extinction.

Recommendations

2. The need to conduct studies of the civilization and cultural features of in the traditional villages and countries of Jordan.
3. To preserve the physical and the non-physical cultural heritage of the local communities.
4. Employ cultural and heritage sources in community development projects.
5. Preserving heritage must be part of the national policy and the sustainable development process in accordance with the historical and cultural traditions of Jordan in particular.
6. Urban Heritage Conservation in Jordan and the Arab region and making it a part of people's lives, is an important component culturally because it is a milestone for the region is the cradle of great civilizations and a source of inspiration for future generations.
7. Create real projects contribute to maintaining the integrity of what is left from the climatic environmental, heritage and urban components, to create a new motivation for the local residence to preserve heritage.
8. Emphasize on the importance of the studying areas characterized by urban heritage, as areas of special nature, to be rehabilitated, taking into account the requirements of originality and integration.
9. Take advantage of the old construction methods and analysis of the construction and climate.

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DATA ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Abdel-Aziz Mahmoud Abdel-Aziz

Professor of Anthropology, Al al-Bayt University, Mafrq, Jordan

Mohannad Tarrad

Department of Architecture Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, Al al-Bayt University, Mafrq, Jordan

e-mail: mc_tarrad@yahoo.com