

Hotel design in British Mandate Palestine: Modernism and the Zionist vision

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From the early 1920s through the 1930s, an important yet forgotten avant-garde architectural phenomenon developed in the Zionist community of British Mandate Palestine. In cities and resort regions across the country, several dozen modernist hotels were built for a new type of visitor: the Zionist tourist. Often the most architecturally significant structures in their locales and designed by leading local architects educated in some of Europe's most progressive schools, these hotels were conceived along ideological lines and represented a synthesis of social requirements, cutting-edge aesthetics, and utopian national ideals. They responded to a complex mixture of sentiments, including European standards of modern comfort and the longing to remake Palestine, the historical homeland of the Jewish people, for a newly liberated, progressive nation. This article focuses on Jerusalem's most ambitious modernist hotel, the Eden Hotel, to evaluate how the architecture of tourism became a political and aesthetic tool in the promotion of Zionist Palestine.

Keywords: Zionist national style; Palestine tourism; Eden Hotel; King David Hotel; Palace Hotel; Alexander Baerwald; Julius Berger; Josef Frank; Gustave-Adolphe Hufschmid; Alexander Koch; Leopold Krakauer; Abraham Lifschitz; Julius Posener; Yohanan Ratner; Emil Vogt; Werner Joseph Wittkower

Modernism in hotel design – at least on a large and popular scale – has been credited as the postwar accomplishment of Conrad Hilton (1887–1979), father of the eponymous hotel chain, whose mass-produced formula evolved in the 1950s and 1960s. For the practical-minded Hilton, modern architecture was “oriented to the human scale [without any] attempt to impress with grandiose effects or to awe with ostentatious display; there is luxury without pretentiousness.”¹ However, the late 1920s through the 1930s, decades before Hilton's surge of activity, witnessed an important but forgotten avant-garde architectural phenomenon: several dozen modernist hotels sprouted in the cities and resort regions of British Mandate Palestine (1917–48). Designed by leading progressive local architects trained in Europe, these structures – often the most ambitious architecture of the region's modern built fabric – embodied social ideals and ideological principles that synthesized a real need for modern infrastructure, futurist aesthetics, and utopian national aspirations. Their interiors, too, were important for their interpretation of a modernism adapted from the typical Jewish bourgeois home of Central Europe to the new homeland in Palestine.

A close relationship between hotel design and political and national aspirations has marked many cultures.² This was certainly true for Zionist Palestine. There, hotel culture and modern design emerged particularly in the late 1920s but assumed greater visibility with the so-called Fifth *Aliyah*, the wave of immigration to Palestine of the 1930s.

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When Jews fleeing Central and East Central Europe arrived in Palestine, they sought temporary accommodations before settling in their own homes. The hotels developed to serve them boasted a modernist design agenda inspired by the so-called *Neue Sachlichkeit*, the modernist movement that arose in interwar Germany in reaction to the emotional excesses of Expressionism. In architecture, the *Neue Sachlichkeit* was characterized by an absence of historical references, minimal ornament, flat roofs, glass curtain walls, reinforced concrete structures, stark geometric rigor, and often an asymmetrical distribution of mass. These hotels offered a utopian vision, uniting in their architecture an appeal to a new kind of tourism, progressive design, and an image of Jewish national identity. As documented in postcards, photographs, promotional materials, and other ephemera, the modernist Zionist hotels, now generally destroyed or converted to other uses, bear witness to a golden age of interwar Zionist tourism (Figure 1). To be measured fully, this achievement must be placed within the context of early-twentieth-century tourism in Palestine and in relation to the design of the conventional hotels that were developed to serve it.

Palestine tourism in the Mandatory era

The study of nationalist Zionist tourism, and modern tourism in general, is still in its infancy relative to the study of the traditional pilgrimage to Palestine, which has been the subject of extensive scholarship. Michael Berkowitz's investigation of the ideology of Zionist travel and the control over tourism exerted by national organizations during the British Mandatory era and Kobi Cohen-Hattab's comprehensive work on tourism in Jerusalem during that same period constitute the two substantial studies of the topic, for which the significant primary sources include catalogues, advertisements, and other archival material of such organizations as Hadassah and the Jewish National Fund.³ To that



Figure 1. Modernist hotels of the 1930s: from upper left, clockwise: Yarden Hotel, Tel Aviv, 1930; The Teltsch House, Haifa, 1936; Gat Rimon Hotel, Tel Aviv, 1936; San Remo Hotel, Tel Aviv, 1935; in the center: Central Hotel, Safed, 1936. Postcards, author's collection.

existing body of work, this article contributes a different outlook on that agenda by focusing on hotel design as a material culture in order to examine the use of a unique language in the efforts made by the Zionist organizations to develop a national tourist movement.

In the first decade of the twentieth century, a new type of tourist began visiting Palestine: the Zionist traveler. Over the course of the next three decades, European and American Jews attuned to the Zionist message were encouraged to journey to Palestine in order to cultivate a sense of national identity and to support the growing local community. They came to view first-hand the new creations of the nascent state. By the 1920s these tourist sites were concentrated in agricultural settlements and the urban centers of Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, the Jezreel Valley, Haifa, Tiberias, and Safed. This national tourism movement, which gradually became institutionalized, radically transformed the traditional pilgrimage, which had focused on attractions of religious and historical significance.

The Zionist tourist, chiefly inspired by nationalist sentiment, was cultivated by a tourist industry that gradually developed a sophisticated network of patriotic propaganda. The new standard itinerary of Zionist tourism deliberately avoided the typical pilgrimage sites in favor of agricultural settlements, industrial plants, educational and medical institutions, cultural and trade events, and the newly developed regions associated with the national project.⁴ As Erik Cohen has suggested in his landmark work on the tourist experience, tourists of the modern age, in their quest for meaning and pleasure, sought a dramatic experience that would elevate them above their daily lives.⁵ Zionist travelers were no exception. For them, tourism was an experience of nationhood: visiting the sites of the Zionist project elevated them from the ordinary to the extraordinary.

Zionist tourists were only one of several distinct communities of tourists drawn to Jerusalem, and each was served by new specialized hotels. Although Jerusalem had been a tourist destination for centuries, well into the 1920s it suffered from a lack of hotels equipped with modern conveniences. According to a 1924 tourist guide for Palestine, Jerusalem's three leading hotels were the Fast Hotel, the Grand New Hotel, and the Mediterranean Hotel.⁶ Built in the late nineteenth century, all three had become outdated and infamous for their poor services, lacking the conveniences and comfort that had come to be expected of modern hotels throughout the world. In the late 1920s and particularly throughout the 1930s, new hotels were built to accommodate the growing flood of tourists of all three monotheistic religions. Built within walking distance of one another, Jerusalem's grand hotels – the Palace Hotel, the St. Julian, and the King David Hotel – met the requirements for luxury residences respectively for Muslim, Christian, and Jewish travelers visiting Palestine's holy sites. Along with those grand hotels, several Zionist hotels were constructed in Jerusalem in a modernist style that signified the increasingly secular, forward-thinking nature of Zionist tourism itself.

Modern Christian pilgrims, characterized by Doron Bar and Kobi Cohen-Hattab as visitors who added “a wide variety of [secular] experiences” to their pilgrimages to the traditional holy sites, could finally find modern hotels to replace the outdated, unhygienic, and rustic lodgings offered in church compounds, monasteries, and convents. Although “considered authentic, [and] known for their excellent wines,” those institutions maintained separate sleeping quarters for men and women and could not provide the amenities necessary for modern comfort.⁷ Another type of accommodation popular in the nineteenth century, tents and the small, homey hotels established by the Templers in the tourist centers of Haifa, Nazareth, Tiberias, Jaffa, and Jerusalem, were equally outdated by the Mandatory era. Chief among the new hotels directed toward modern pilgrims was the St. Julian Hotel. An imposing Beaux-Arts building in a neoclassical style,

it was built in the early 1930s by the Huga family at the corner of Hess and King David Streets and was directed toward Christian visitors.⁸

Muslim national tourism was advanced and developed in the 1920s by the Supreme Muslim Council under Al-Hājj Amīn al-Husayni, leader of the Palestinian national movement, and promoted through guidebooks for Muslim tourists and Muslim pilgrimage programs.⁹ Encouraged by nationalist movements in neighboring Arab countries, Muslim tourism in Palestine played a role in conferring a Palestinian identity upon a territory that prior to the British Mandate era had not been a united political or cultural entity. The short-lived Muslim tourism movement designed to serve this process of national and territorial definition accelerated following the 1929 riots. Not surprisingly, Muslim tours boycotted regions associated with Jewish settlement and avoided such Zionist sites as Tel Aviv, focusing instead on the Islamic heritage of Palestine and particularly on symbolic sites of the new *falastin*, the country they claimed. Recommended were, in addition to the Mosque of Al-Aqsa and the Dome of the Rock, also Nebi Musa, one of the most important sites of Muslim pilgrimage, situated on the road between Jerusalem and Jericho, and considered to be the grave of the Prophet Moses.¹⁰

Construction of the Palace Hotel marked the height of Muslim Palestinians' efforts to establish their own national tourism. The most ambitious touristic and architectural enterprise of the formative years of the Palestinian nation, it immediately became a symbol of Arab Palestinian identity, for its grand opening coincided with the Pan-Islamic International Congress in 1931. It was crafted as a response to the Zionist hotels developed to accommodate the growing numbers of Jewish tourists in Palestine since the early 1920s. Targeting wealthy tourists from the Arabian Peninsula, the Palace became the most significant Muslim response to the flourishing Zionist tourism movement. The hotel was developed by the Supreme Muslim Council and designed by two prominent Turkish architects experimenting with a style that would signify a newly formed Palestinian identity, manifesting the relationship between nation building, architecture, memory, and tourism. Their choice was a style known as the First National Style, which had emerged in interwar Turkey as an expression of the ideological aspirations of the late Ottoman Empire.¹¹ Its adaptation in Palestine was both a protest against British Mandate rule on behalf of the local Arab population, who believed that the British were responsible for facilitating the Zionist settlements of a new Jewish state, and an expression of nationhood colored by longing for the old Ottoman identity. With its distinctive style, the Palace Hotel asserted the presence of the local Arab Palestinian community in its cultural clash with Western Jews; yet its functional modernity demonstrated that Arab Palestinians too were up-to-date in matters of technology and service.¹²

The King David Hotel: A modern biblical palace in New Jerusalem

The modernist Zionist hotels of the 1930s can be most usefully compared not to the Palace Hotel, however, but to their most important counterpart in the arena of accommodations aimed specifically at Jewish visitors to Palestine: the King David Hotel. An example of palazzo-inspired grand hotel architecture built of local stone, the King David is rooted in Jerusalem's natural ecoscape. Previously unpublished drawings of its interior schemes evince the passion with which its developers created Palestine's most spectacular and luxurious lodging, a local incarnation of the conventional grand hotel.¹³

The King David Hotel, which opened its doors in January 1931, had a strong commercial agenda of serving tourists of all religions seeking luxury and comfort on a level previously unknown in Palestine. Situated on four and a half acres acquired from the

Greek Orthodox Church, the hotel was developed by Palestine Hotels Limited, a powerful corporation with substantial financial resources.¹⁴ A palatial grand hotel, it was styled according to the European conventions of eclectic historicism, offering a biblical staging for cosmopolitan travelers seeking luxury, escape, and leisure while touring the holy city (Figure 2). The most theatrical, splendid, and publicized of all Palestine hotels, the King David was described as “certainly the most beautiful in the Orient, realizing in a modern form the image of the palace of Solomon,” consolidating “the charm of the Orient with the luxury of the Occident.”¹⁵ It was designed and managed by architects and hoteliers from Switzerland at a time when the Swiss were widely considered the world’s leaders and foremost innovators in the modern hospitality industry, and it was constructed by Egyptian builders and craftsmen.¹⁶

The King David’s designers also were Swiss: a team of highly experienced hotel designers consisting of Lucerne-based architect Emil Vogt (1863–1936) and Geneva-based *ensemblier* Gustave-Adolphe Hufschmid (1890–1974).¹⁷ A graduate of the Technische Hochschule in Zurich, Vogt established his architectural practice in 1891 and within a decade was renowned as Lucerne’s most prominent architect, designing several of Switzerland’s most ambitious hotels. The King David would be his last commission, the crowning achievement of a distinguished career. By the time he was commissioned to design the King David, Vogt had designed some thirty hotels and other projects in Switzerland, Italy, Lebanon, and Egypt and his work was synonymous with innovation, progressive technology, and theatrical design, the touchstones of the grand hotel type.¹⁸

As with many palatial hotels of its generation, the King David’s design scheme reveals an ambivalent approach to modernity, combining a stylistic historicism rooted



Figure 2. The King David Hotel, 1931. Postcard, author’s collection.

in nineteenth-century Central European architectural theory with the most up-to-date service the era could offer. As a pupil of Gottfried Semper (1803–79) at the Zürich Polytechnikum, Vogt had undergone training premised on a theory of modern design as the eclectic assimilation of styles drawn from a variety of historical sources. Accordingly, to “evoke the memory of the ancient Semitic style and the atmosphere of the glorious period of King David,” as Vogt himself put it, the 67-year-old architect and his partner, Adolf Vallaster (dates unknown), looked to the Beaux-Arts Renaissance-style palazzo, a universally popular model for the grand hotel.¹⁹ The massive complex was to be a city within a city, with shops, a bar, a smoking room, lobbies, a reading room, restaurants, and even a small museum.²⁰ It was planned from the first as a cosmopolitan enterprise, “a meeting place for English, Arabs, and Jews who could afford its prices and cared to participate in the lively society of its celebrated bar and dining rooms.”²¹

Constructed of local yellow sandstone, the castle-like four-story building featured a solid cubic mass that further evoked the Jerusalem of the Bible, history, and imagination through an extensive decorative program of local historical references. The interior designs were the work of Hufschmid, a member of the Swiss Werkbund who worked in a dramatic eclectic historicism that was the trademark of the grand hotel, on the one hand, and an experimental modernist mode typically applied in his private interiors, on the other.²² Hufschmid is known today mainly for the sleek, modernist interiors he created in the Immeuble Clarté, the apartment building in Geneva designed by Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret for the industrialist Edmond Wanner, completed in 1932.²³

In the public interior spaces of the King David, however, Hufschmid created theatrical effects using traditional idioms.²⁴ His consolidation of indigenous imagery with stylized Art Deco motifs and an eclectic European historicist vocabulary that included Renaissance revival features evidences an experienced designer conversant with the stylistic conventions that had by then become internationally identified with the grand hotel type and that served the formality and imposing scale of the building. Incorporating ancient materials and iconography, he developed a program evidently based on careful study of biblical descriptions of such monuments of royal architecture as the palaces of King David and King Solomon and the legendary temple that Hiram, Phoenician king of ancient Tyre and the region’s most powerful monarch, constructed as a gesture of friendship for the Hebrew leaders. The hotel’s high ceilings, spacious public spaces, white shimmering marble floors, rich cedar paneling, and gilt surfaces all conveyed royalty and magnificence, merging biblical imagery with the ideal of the grand hotel as a palace for all. The dark-stained cedar had its own symbolic significance: imported from Lebanon during biblical times, cedar was the principal material used for building and furnishing the Temple of Solomon, in accordance with King Solomon’s request that Hiram command his men to “hew me cedar trees out of Lebanon” (1 Kings 5: 6).

The main lobby, the hotel’s grandest space, set the stage for a fantasy of ancient Jerusalem. The bright immensity of this space was accented by richly colorful wall decoration including such motifs as the shield of Solomon and a relief of the “seven species” (the seven fruits and grains cultivated in biblical Israel) – the whole suggesting an enormous jewelry box. White marble floors, delicately veined in muted green and beige, provided a neutral background for the vivid ornamentation. Whitewashed pilasters, topped by Ionic capitals, bore colorful motifs derived from biblical descriptions of the Temple and the royal palaces, such as the Twelve Tribes and the menorah (the seven-branched candelabrum). The lobby’s overall decorative scheme was an Egyptian Revival idiom emphasized in a frieze of stylized geometric interlacing ornament and distinctive Egyptian Revival seating furniture crafted of ebonized wood fitted with gilt-metal mounts.

Scattered throughout the lobby, Etruscan-style curule armchairs set on cross-frames pointedly evoked the Roman presence in Jerusalem in the centuries following the reign of King David.

Hufschmid's inscription on his drawing for the interior elevation of the reading and writing room refers appropriately to a Phoenician style, and the design included columns topped by unique capitals that he described as Phoenician. Throughout the space, his aim was to recall the ancient culture of gifted artisans, architects, craftsmen, scribes, builders, master carpenters, and precious metalworkers who populated Jerusalem at the time of King David's conquest of the city from the Jebusites. Massive paneling of dark-stained cedar wood evoked the Temple, whose whole interior was covered with cedar so that the stones of the walls could not be seen (1 Kings 6: 18). The cedar floor, dark wood furniture and door frames, and stylized pillars topped by refined gilt foliage capitals provided a rich backdrop for the pink marble fireplace, the colorful medallions on the frieze, and the extensive gilt surfaces – further references to the Temple, the inside of which was entirely “overlaid with gold” (1 Kings 6: 22). The Temple's ancient menorah was echoed in the wall sconces and decorative objects that completed the scheme.

The Arab Salon – the smoking room – was the most intimate of the public spaces and conformed to nineteenth-century Western conventions for decorating such spaces with Islamic, Moorish, or Near Eastern styles (Figure 3). The furniture inlaid with ivory, pewter, and mother-of-pearl, traditional in Syria and in other regions of the Middle East, the oriental rugs, and brass lanterns were much like the fine crafts one might find in the local market. The walls were stenciled in green, blue, and yellow designs echoing Islamic and Moorish tiles. Materially rich and deeply tied to the region's indigenous cultures, the décor of the Arab Salon reflected the British program of preserving traditional historical Jerusalem.

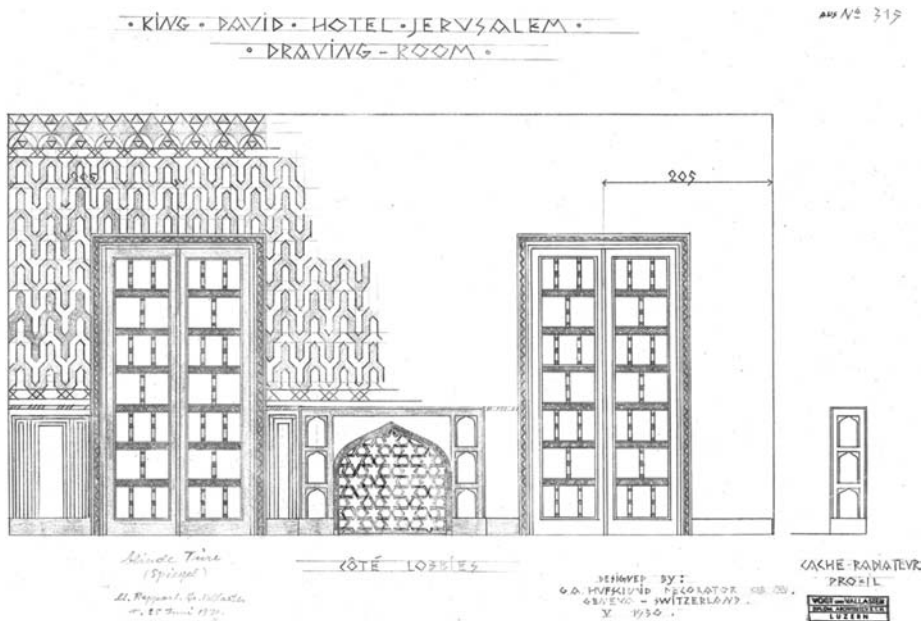


Figure 3. The King David Hotel, Smoking Room, drawing by Gustave A. Hufschmid, collection of Ado Vallaster, Zurich.

Hufschmid's archaeologically informed historicism extended to the sober stylized elegance of the neoclassical restaurant, accessed through enormous cedar-wood doors fitted with Etruscan Revival pediments that conferred a palatial formality on the room within (Figure 4). Five enormous stylized geometric plaster medallions decorating the ceiling established a rhythm taken up by the plain pilasters around the room. Neo-Byzantine glass lamps hanging from the ceiling on slender chains provided a local reference for the otherwise entirely European décor of this space. The room's historicist motifs were a local interpretation of the current Art Deco style, which drew on decorative motifs of ancient Egypt, Greece, Rome, and Africa. The drama and magnificence of the hotel's decorative program were fully experienced when the visitor moved from one space to the next, and panoramic views of the old city, with its richly varied layers of history, further enhanced the effect of Vogt and Hufschmid's eclectic historicism by creating a dialogue between the rich architectural fabric of the historical city glimpsed outside and the sophisticated fantasy within.

The themes of the King David's decor presented the diverse cultures of historical Jerusalem for a mostly European clientele. Zionist hotels, in contrast, were designed exclusively by Jewish progressive architects, assumed a particular national style, and offered personal, intimate hospitality. Their designers utilized an architecture that turned its back on the past, tradition, and conventions as they cultivated a forward-oriented Jewish national identity.

Zionist hotels and the new national style

From the very beginning of organized Zionist travel to Palestine, in the first decade of the twentieth century, it was recognized that "the good Jew wants Jewish accommodations" and that building Jewish-owned hotels was a "national deed."²⁵ Two decades before the realization of the Zionist hotel, national tourism was defined as a "type" by the founder of the modern Zionist movement, Theodor Herzl. In his novel *Altneuland*, published in 1902, Herzl presented the future Jewish state as a cooperative utopia and proclaimed tourism and architecture as central factors in the Zionist project.²⁶ Herzl could not have dreamed that three decades later his "old new land" would boast dozens of cubic modernist hotels – white, pristine, hygienic, restrained, sleek structures attracting Zionists eager to visit the emerging Jewish state. These hotels were considered sources of an "invaluable contribution to the elevating of Palestine's potentialities as a center of tourism."²⁷ The first establishments to provide separate accommodations for Zionist travelers, they had their

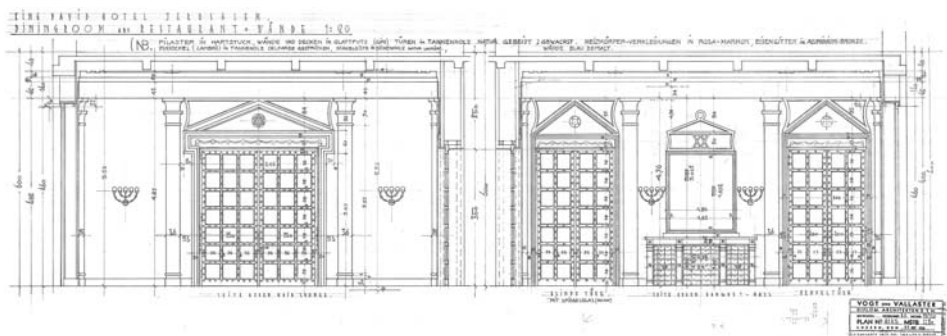


Figure 4. The King David Hotel, Restaurant, drawing by Gustave A. Hufschmid. Collection of Ado Vallaster, Zurich.

roots in the private homes and small boardinghouses that in the first years of the twentieth century served the many early Zionist tourists who preferred to be hosted by Jewish families in their homes rather than stay in hotels or other facilities catering for pilgrims.

The earliest hotels built expressly for Zionist travelers, in the early 1920s, were erected in Tel Aviv when that city was transformed into a major site of Zionist tourism, offering a combination of leisure and wellness activity, European high culture, and Jewish nationalist energy. Tel Aviv had been founded in 1909 as a suburb of Jaffa; it was meant to embody Herzl's ideal of a "Jewish urban center in a healthy spot, logically arranged and ordered according to all the rules of hygiene."²⁸ Tel Aviv thus began its existence as the showpiece urban-industrial center of the Zionist project and, as such, a laboratory for new architecture and for experimentation in devising a national style that would announce the Zionist presence in Palestine.²⁹

The first Tel Aviv hotels were designed not in the modernist mode that became the more or less official style of Zionist tourism in the 1930s, but in an experimental national style called by its proponents the "Hebrew Eretz-Yisrael [Land of Israel] Style" or "Eretz Yisre'eli" style.³⁰ Growing from and representing the search for a local Hebrew visual expression, it blended indigenous motifs and those drawn from an eclectic blend of European historicist vocabularies. In contrast to the King David's combination of archaeologically informed accuracy and romantic historicism based on European Orientalist conventions, the Eretz Yisre'eli style evoked the region's extant indigenous architectural fabric. The style was best defined in the work of architects Alexander Levy (1883–1942) and Alexander Baerwald (1877–1930), who belonged to a new generation of Zionist architects: immigrants from Eastern Europe looking to Palestine's existing built fabric for inspiration in their efforts to forge a genuine Zionist national style. Levy, a founding member of the Berlin association of Zionist engineers and architects known as the Palästina Baugesellschaft, wrote that "the exterior design of the building should reflect the spirit of construction, the nature of the local material, the land, and its inhabitants."³¹ As Baerwald noted, "Jewish immigrants have no architectural tradition."³² Surveying critically the early architectural products of Jewish immigration to Palestine, he observed that "Each builds his own home in the style of his country of origin, creating a chaos of buildings that lack aesthetics, hygiene, and suitability to the local climate."³³ Baerwald's Palatin Hotel of 1925 and the hotels of Yehudah Megidovitz (1886–1961), the Nordau Hotel and the Ben-Nahum Hotel (known also as the Hotel Ginossar) of 1926 and 1921 respectively, as well as New York Hotel of 1925 designed by Zelig Exelrod (1897–1947), are just a few of the early Zionist hotels designed in this idiom.

In the late 1920s, however, the short-lived Eretz Yisre'eli style suddenly yielded to a new and more exciting expression of Zionist nationalism, one based on avant-garde European modernism. That shift from the Eretz Yisre'eli eclectic idiom to International Modernism has been recently attributed to the 1929 riots and the revulsion against the Oriental character of Palestine, associated with the Arab Palestinian community. This view has grown from the discourse that perceives the depiction of architecture as constitutive of a political and social understanding of the Jew's place in the Middle East.³⁴

As journalist Julius Berger remarked in 1932, "Europeanization and the revolution in taste spread to all aspects of everyday life in Jewish Palestine."³⁵ Modernism's streamlined surfaces, technological efficiency, inexpensive processes, and the use of progressive materials seemed to better reflect the core principles of socialist Zionism: its youthfulness, modesty, and pioneering spirit; the national ideology of progress, advancement, renewal; and its project to Westernize the ancient homeland. More practically, these features facilitated fast and inexpensive construction for the rapidly

growing Jewish settlements. When Jewish Viennese designer Josef Frank (1885–1967) visited Palestine as a juror in the competition for the National Institutions Building in Jerusalem in 1932, he approved of promoting new directions in design as appropriate for Palestine, for “it would be undesirable to see the style of the mosques imitated again and again.”³⁶ Instead of drawing on the past and on the vernacular, Frank suggested, a true local style for Palestine should have an international orientation and be a manifestation of “the modern international style.” The interiors of Palestine’s *Neue Sachlichkeit* buildings typically reflected the stylistic theory of Vienna’s *Wohnkultur* and its German counterpart, which was an approach to domestic design, but not a movement, promoted in the publications of Alexander Koch (1860–1939), notably *Fachblatt für Innen-Dekoration*, the leading German-language journal for progressive interior design.³⁷ The thrust of this aesthetic was relaxed, informal, and eclectic, with an emphasis on comfort, devised for urban bourgeois family life.³⁸

This new style for Zionist Palestine was formulated by a younger generation of architects who emerged in the late 1920s and 1930s. They departed from the eclectic historicist mode that had characterized the early building of the *Yishuv*, the pre-1948 Jewish community in Palestine, in their search for a style more appropriate to the Zionist project. Between 1929 and the end of the 1930s, Zionist hotels designed in a variety of modernist idioms were built all over the country, encouraging Zionists from Europe and the United States to experience modern tourism in the Holy Land. In Europe, many leading architects were already rejecting the convention of the traditional grand hotel as socially and aesthetically irrelevant, believing that modern tourism deserved its own visual expression. Yet although numerous innovative hotels were designed on paper, few were realized outside of Palestine, making the Zionist hotels virtually unique as a body of modernist hotels built in the interwar era.³⁹

The significant exception is a group of European sanatoriums, health and spa resorts, and private clinics built between the turn of the century and the 1930s in a modernist mode that was widely recognized as the appropriate architectural approach specifically for such establishments. Typically, these sanatoriums were located in rural settings, offering rest, dietary programs, massage, therapeutic baths, and exercise. It was in these establishments that the most radical manifesto of the *Neue Sachlichkeit* was created in hospitality architecture. In a 1945 survey of hotel design, Peter Meyer pointed to the Swiss sanatoriums as the products of “an exclusive circle of modern architects” who designed buildings that the majority of the public found unattractive for their stripped-down functionality and lack of the decorative ornament and dramatic magnificence expected in tourism architecture.⁴⁰ Recognizing a complementary modernism in hotel design, Meyer noted that “whoever spends their days in an office or factory made according to technical rationality has no desire to spend their vacation in such an atmosphere.”⁴¹ Since the turn of the century, sanatoriums typically had been constructed of reinforced concrete, featuring whitewashed interiors and functional chrome-plated tubular and bentwood furniture; not surprisingly, they became models for modernist architecture in Europe. The best-known such building is Purkersdorf Sanatorium for Nervous Ailments, designed by Josef Hoffmann (1870–1956) and built in 1903: a rational white, geometrical building, it came to represent the legacy of its architect, who believed that a modernist design aesthetic could contribute to a happy and healthy society. As Leslie Topp has noted, Hoffmann sought to effect cures for diseases through his modernist aesthetic.⁴² Topp demonstrates how the use of such a term as hygiene supported claims of a scientific basis for the modernist architecture of the Purkersdorf Sanatorium. Advertisements and promotional

materials for Zionist hotels in Palestine indicate a similar obsession with hygiene as each projected its individual but distinctly Zionist identity within the hotel community.

In its attention to hygiene and in other respects, the *Neue Sachlichkeit* was widely recognized as the foundation of Zionist hotel design in Palestine. In defining these hotels' standard of comfort, Werner Bloch, head of the Zionist Information Bureau for Tourists in Palestine, compared them with hotels in Europe.⁴³ Although hardly comparable to major hotels in Europe or even in Egypt or Lebanon in scale, amenities, or influence, Zionist hotels nevertheless met the discerning standards of the increasing numbers of Jewish tourists to Palestine. Such ambitious modernist hotels as the Gat Rimon and the Kaethe Dan in Tel Aviv, the Central Hotel in Safed, the Elizabetha Haven of Earth in Tiberias, and the Eden in Jerusalem were built by pioneers of the hospitality industry who were also Zionist patriots inspired by the belief that building hotels to accommodate Zionist tourists was a significant contribution to the national project. In 1934, the pioneer hoteliers founded a national association to establish standards in hotel accommodations and advance awareness of Jewish-owned hotels through the press.

The Teltsch House on Mount Carmel, designed by Leopold Krakauer (1890–1954) in 1936 and one of the most ambitious hotels of its time, was a “national mission” and a “showcase of Zionism,” a place whose “restful harmony,” came to symbolize “healthy living” in the new homeland, according to the son of its founder.⁴⁴ Another modernist German-style health resort, the Kallia Resort on the wild western shore of the Dead Sea, designed in 1936 by another leading modernist, Zeev Rechter (1899–1960), was seen by its founder Harry Levy as “a true Zionist project of remarkable quality in the line of European resorts.”⁴⁵ The Kallia owed its popularity to the trend for health travel, a blend of progressive leisure with hygiene. This concept, which in Europe and America was closely associated with modernism and modernity, came to inform the design agenda of the Zionist hotel.

Hygiene was an ideal that Zionists in Palestine used to define their identity in a region long infamous for its unhygienic conditions. The frequent use of hygiene as a tool of promotion reflects Zionism's wish to distance itself from identification with aspects of the local setting. It played a central symbolic role in the discourse of Zionism as a tool in the creation of its own culture, in nation building, in identifying the movement as “modern,” “civilized,” and “progressive,” and in crafting the Jewish state as a utopia of health for Jews from all over the world. The Zionists' desire to distinguish themselves from the “unhygienic” local character of a region associated with neglect and backwardness has been extensively studied.⁴⁶ In her investigation of hygiene in Zionist ideology, Anat Helman notes the influence of the British: pioneers and leaders in the field of sanitation since the nineteenth century, they had established policies to raise Palestine's standard of hygiene and improve public health.⁴⁷ As Zionists constructed an image of the national project that emphasized hygiene and architectural modernism, the two were joined in the Zionist hotel. Both avant-garde design culture and hygiene were tools for Zionist self-identification as “Western” – a modern society distinguished by language, culture, and political ambitions as much as by religious heritage.

The concept of hygiene was also central to identifying the Zionist pioneer settler as a Nietzschean “New Man” of high morals and modern ethics who sought a revolution in culture and society.⁴⁸ Hygiene was central to the “revolutionary” Zionist project in Palestine for, as Dafna Hirsch has argued, in focusing on hygiene the Zionists “were to bring the West to the entire backward Orient,” as well as to themselves.⁴⁹ The notion of the “New Man” was as important in the discourse of modernist architecture as in the construction of contemporary utopian Zionism. Expressionist architects such as Bruno

Taut (1880–1938) and Hans Poelzig (1869–1936), for example, advocated utopian glass buildings as the setting in which the New Man would live a pure life of spirituality and rationality. Thus formulated, the modernist environment was implicitly hygienic, a setting for healthy, clean, simple living, in contrast to traditional living and working spaces, which the modernists considered not only unhygienic and stuffy but a positive barrier to personal freedom. Believing that the physical renewal of environment through architecture was necessary for cultural regeneration, they sought to reform the unhealthy, chaotic, and harmful effects of traditional design by creating functional, clean, white, open spaces appropriate to a lifestyle of simplicity and rationality. The full synthesis of these ideas was realized in the Zionist hotel, of which the fullest example is the 1938 Eden Hotel.

The Eden Hotel: Modern style for a modern state

The Eden Hotel was the most ambitious of all Jerusalem's modernist hotels. First opened in the 1920s by Abraham Lifschitz, a fervent Zionist, as a modest boardinghouse in an apartment building in the central city, it unveiled new modernist premises in 1938 (Figure 5).⁵⁰ A true modern Zionist hotel, the Eden was an exemplum of modernism in hotel design. Its building was notable for the majestic presence of its simple cubic form. To accommodate Jewish travelers visiting Jerusalem, the Eden was situated in the heart of the new city, an area filled with new shops, restaurants, cinemas, and coffeehouses.



Figure 5. The Eden Hotel. Postcard, author's collection.

Lifschitz called his hotel “a Zionist entity,” and its new modernist building “the height of the Jewish establishment in Jerusalem.”⁵¹ The Eden Hotel was promoted as a simple, hygienic “good domestic hotel,”⁵² a harmonious and restful lodging where the Jewish traveler could find “nice and comfortable rooms, healthy food, a beautiful view of the city and its surroundings, and good service.”⁵³

Lifschitz commissioned Russian-born Zionist architect Yohanan Ratner (1891–1965), one of the leading modernists active in Palestine and Baerwald’s successor as head of the Technion School of Architecture, to design the new Eden.⁵⁴ Ratner had designed the winning entry in a public competition for Jerusalem’s National Institutions Building (1928–32), headquarters of the Jewish Agency and other Zionist organizations active during the pre-state period. The pure cubic volumes of Ratner’s design for this ambitious project made it the most celebrated manifestation of Zionist architecture yet constructed and was the basis for his signature style, which he applied several years later to the Eden.

Architect, thinker, and educator, Ratner was active in the emergence of the most current phase of the modernist national style. He viewed modernism as a tool for greater economy and rationality in mass construction. Equally important, stylistic modernism reflected the Zionist principles of utopianism and freedom from convention that also shaped the ideology of the Zionist Labor Movement, with which Ratner was affiliated. For Ratner, modernism’s value was not as a mere style, but as a foundation for developing local and national architectural agendas worldwide and as a means of replacing confusion with order by putting “an end to the chaos of mixed architectural visions and styles.”⁵⁵ Ratner’s agenda took a regional orientation, for he believed that in Palestine modernism should respond to the needs and character of the locale.⁵⁶ The Eden, designed at the pinnacle of his career, exemplifies the mitigated modernism of which Ratner was a chief advocate.

The hotel’s exterior manifested a starkly dramatic geometric architecture that conformed to the principles of the *Neue Sachlichkeit*. Its form embodied the Zionists’ progressive image of Palestine while giving vital expression to the new tourism movement and its national agenda. In contextualizing his sleek, abstract, cubic design for the Eden within Jerusalem’s historical and holy architectural fabric, Ratner faced a challenge common to modernists working in Jerusalem, ancient Palestine’s holiest city, whose visual tradition imposed demands unknown in raw Tel Aviv, built from scratch on the sands north of Jaffa, or such new Zionist settlements as Afula, then being rapidly developed in a modernist idiom.⁵⁷

Architects working in Jerusalem also had to adapt to an ongoing program for restoring and preserving the city’s unique architectural character initiated by the first governor of the Mandate, Ronald Storrs.⁵⁸ Beginning in 1918, builders were required to use local stone, while the use of stucco and red tile within city walls was prohibited.⁵⁹ Storrs sought to aestheticize Jerusalem’s “authentic” character, preserving the city according to its ancient and medieval image in the minds of arriving pilgrims. The tension between the British desire to recreate old Jerusalem as a site for religious pilgrimage and the Zionist program of modernization through an architectural style that had come to embody national identity is demonstrated in the contrast between the strikingly modernist Eden Hotel and the King David, rooted in the traditional built fabric of the city.

In accordance with Jerusalem’s building requirements, the reinforced concrete of the Eden’s exterior was sheathed in local stone, for centuries the material associated with the city’s architecture. Here it was not the hand-hewn masonry traditional in Jerusalem, however, but machine-polished stone. The hotel’s modern construction techniques and cutting-edge abstract design echoed Ratner’s more famous National Institutions Building and marked the Eden as modernist and Zionist. The simple façade was punctuated by tall,

round arches that defined the corner entrance while referencing the indigenous imagery of Jerusalem. Those slender arches, which became the hotel's logo featured in much of its promotional material, linked the building to its surroundings, the traditional fabric of Jerusalem, in which the arch, as David Kasuto and Michael Levin have noted, was one of Jerusalem's most recognizable architectural forms.⁶⁰ The character of the Eden's modernism, like that of many contemporary modernist buildings created in Jerusalem in this period, was not universal or international, but regional and vernacular.⁶¹

At the building's entrance, the starkness of Ratner's rigidly geometric, rational exterior gave way to interior rooms characterized by softness and a feeling of cozy domesticity. They were the commissioned work of Berlin-born architect Werner Joseph Wittkower (1903–95), brother of the well-known art historian Rudolf Wittkower. The Eden was one of Wittkower's early hotels, only the second in a long line of hotels he designed over several decades.⁶² After successfully practicing in Berlin decorating the homes of prominent Jewish bourgeois families, Wittkower immigrated to Palestine, where he promoted a modernism premised on the idea that the country required an authentic vocabulary that would represent its informal character, its Mediterranean locale, and its rejuvenated spirit.⁶³ In his architectural practice in Palestine, Wittkower demonstrated particular sensitivity to the local climate, adapting northern decorating approaches to the intense light and heat of Palestine by introducing such features as sand-colored shades, printed cotton textiles, and lightweight, mostly blond wood furniture. His practice also acknowledged what German-born architect and historian Julius Posener (1904–96) observed: that the homes of Jewish immigrants in Palestine were closely tied to what they had left behind.⁶⁴ Wittkower's interiors represent what would become characteristic of current German hotel and domestic interior design when he preserved something of the domestic culture of the German Jews flooding into Palestine with the rise of the Nazis. Recognized by the time of the Eden Hotel project as one of the leading architects in Zionist Palestine, he was among the few to specialize in interior design with an eclectic, relaxed, warm, homelike character; in this, he made a significant contribution to the domestic culture of the Zionist home in the Mandatory era. Wittkower's decorative program for the Eden's interiors offers a remarkable case study in design history; unlike most Zionist hotels of the period, of which neither interiors nor images have survived, the Eden's entire photographic archive remains intact, offering detailed testimony to a lost cultural and architectural phenomenon.⁶⁵

The Eden had a cheerful lobby, welcoming bar and lounge, and homey long rectangular dining room. It layered visual signs for modernism, Zionist ideology, and hospitality, and offered a home-away-from-home to travelers. Within the hotel, promotional material for various Zionist organizations encouraged tourists to contribute to the national project, but the most powerful stimulus to participation may have been the setting's architectural expression of modernism, which projected a progressive image of the New Palestine. The two most notable aspects of the interior public spaces were the informal arrangements of scattered groups of furniture and the bare white walls, ceilings, and white tiled floors found throughout the public rooms. Printed floral fabrics and oriental rugs contributed color to the otherwise neutral decor. This balance between white and color defined the hotel's public rooms, in which human scale and domestic functions, rather than formal principles, set design priorities.

The Eden's entrance lobby greeted the visitor with a welcoming, modernist yet not austere design scheme flooded by light from its large, high windows. The angular, airy space featured expansive all-white surfaces, free of decoration or art objects, and paneled walls veneered with dark-grained wood in a refined grid pattern; the furnishings,

in contrast, introduced an organic element to the otherwise severe space and suggested the ease and comfort of a hygienic modern home (Figure 6). Light furniture, floral fabrics, and oriental rugs evoked the atmosphere of a typical modern Central European bourgeois home. Presented within Ratner's modernist structure, the interiors' balance of light and dark, of clean surfaces and organic contours, of the familiarly domestic and the hygienically modern, all contributed to the elegant informality that was Wittkower's signature.

Situated one level above the lobby, the lounge was furnished with ebonized chairs upholstered in plain light-colored fabric (Figure 7). Based on seating Wittkower had designed for the Gat Rimon Hotel on Tel Aviv's shore, the lounge's chairs featured caning for the backs and sides, suggesting both continuity and the local setting: caning was popular in the furniture of modern Central European dwellings, while its lightness and coolness made it equally appropriate for Palestine. Throughout the space, richly colored oriental rugs, probably bought at a local market or brought from Turkey, covered the floors, in contrast to the simple light-colored surfaces of the walls and coffered ceiling. Whereas such rugs were utilized at the King David as ingredients for highly decorated spaces that evoked the grandeur of an ancient palace, at the Eden they were used to create the illusion of a home, one such as the hotel guest had left behind in Europe.

Curtains covering the walls between the windows added further color to the neutral hues of the space and provided the well-proportioned room with texture. The tall windows were dressed with translucent white fabric, which admitted bright outdoor light and offered a clean background for the lightweight, dark freestanding furniture. The striking wall sconces set around the room demonstrate Wittkower's interest in lighting design: he experimented with illumination for many of his interiors, designing fixtures ranging from the traditional to the avant-garde.⁶⁶ For the Eden, he produced innovative forms that offered a dialogue between natural and artificial light. He designed fixtures for the public rooms using a variety of metal finishes, such as polished nickel, iron, and white-painted metal plate. The design of the large wrought-iron chandelier that



Figure 6. The Eden Hotel, Lobby. Photograph, Werner Joseph Wittkower Archives, Tel Aviv.



Figure 7. The Eden Hotel, Lounge, two views. Photograph, Werner Joseph Wittkower Archives, Tel Aviv.

hung from chains at the center of the dining room was based on vernacular examples, typically found in the local markets of Jerusalem. Wittkower's designs for lighting complemented his decorative program for the Eden's interiors and contributed to their modernist eclecticism (Figure 8).

For the Eden's interiors, Wittkower's most ambitious project to date, he may have consulted Alexander Koch, the Darmstadt-based publisher whose popular German publications promoted modern home design and domestic culture in interwar Germany. The rooms featured in Koch's publications were casual and free of any conspicuous formal system: they were aptly characterized by Josef Frank as spaces that "are not artworks, nor are they well-tuned harmonies in color and form, whose individual elements (wallpaper, carpets, furniture, pictures) constitute a completed whole."⁶⁷ Indeed, in designing the public spaces of the Eden, Wittkower demonstrated his awareness of the *Wiener Wohnkultur*, the domestic design culture of early-twentieth-century Vienna associated with Frank and his circle, who merged neoclassical sensibilities, the modified inspiration of historical styles, and folk elements.⁶⁸ In the many Jewish bourgeois homes Frank was commissioned to design, he broke with the convention of a unified interior governed by a single decorative system in the favor of casual eclecticism. In doing so, he liberated furnishings from their architectural surroundings, an approach Wittkower easily adapted to the Eden's interiors.

The identification of relaxed modern décor with the contemporary Jewish home was formally defined in a 1927 exhibition in Vienna entitled "The Jewish Woman and the Jewish Home," in which the home was described as a protective sphere of "refuge from the haste of modern life and protection against the erosion of tradition and familial bonds."⁶⁹ Viennese designer Oscar Wlach (1881–1963) together with Frank and Oskar Strnad (1879–1935), his former classmates at Stuttgart's Technische Hochschule, were among the most active designers to put this stylistic attitude into practice in early-twentieth-century Vienna.⁷⁰ The only unchangeable elements of the dwelling, Wlach argued, were the ceilings, walls, and floors; all other components within the interior space were potentially movable, independent, and capable of arrangement free of any fixed principles or overt intentionality. The comfort of the home's interior would contrast with the rigid, formal, severe modernist architectural shell.⁷¹ In articles in the Jewish journal *Das Zelt* on the decoration of the typical Central European middle-class Jewish home, Viennese critic Max Eisler noted approvingly that the "good" interior of the modern Jewish home was first of all



Figure 8. The Eden Hotel, Sitting Room. Photograph, Werner Joseph Wittkower Archives, Tel Aviv.

“comfortable and relaxed,” not a showcase to fulfill social expectations. Jewish designers, he noted, achieved this effect by aligning their designs with actual habits of modern living and also by retaining the old sense of “home” as a setting that did not “strive to be extraordinary, but rather ordinary.”⁷²

The influence of this outlook can be traced in Wittkower’s interiors for the Eden. Just as the modern home could be a safe and relaxing haven from the stressful outside world, the Zionist hotel, with its familiar European domestic atmosphere, was intended to offer the Jewish tourist an occidental haven from Oriental Jerusalem in the clean surfaces, open spaces, and warm, familiar furnishings of its public rooms, featuring stylized furniture, all-white surfaces, and highly polished wood paneling. In contrast to the public spaces of the King David Hotel, the Eden’s interiors made no references to historical or local Jerusalem. Rather, they manifested a fresh vocabulary that acknowledged the local climate while foregrounding Zionism’s pioneering character. Presenting the public spaces as if they were intimate domestic settings rather than a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, Wittkower synthesized the forward-looking character of the national project and communal memory of Central European home life.⁷³ The contrast between the interior and the exterior of the Eden

summarized and symbolized two contrasting forces that came to shape the entire Zionist ideology: the discipline of self-sacrifice in the creation of a new state, reflected in the exterior, and the preservation of the past in order to make the nascent state attractive and comfortable, reflected in the domestic culture, directly taken from the agenda of the Central European home.

The demise of the Zionist hotel

Political, cultural, and social crises contributed to the end of the Zionist hotel. The years between 1936 and 1939 were challenging ones for the young *Yishuv*: the Arab Revolt affected every aspect of daily life, undermining security and slowing development. A serious lack of financial resources led to the deterioration of all Zionist hotels. Some became deserted almost overnight and others closed in the wake of World War II. Remarkable as they were, the hotels failed to survive past the founding of the State of Israel. During the war, their only visitors were members of the British military community. Consequently, promotion shifted to target these new consumers, with Zionist organizations using extensive advertising to draw British guests to Jewish- rather than Arab-owned hotels.

With statehood in 1948 and in the wake of the Holocaust, the meaning of Zionism changed and the movement's message now emphasized Israel as a place of refuge. In this new cultural and social reality, Zionist tourism of the 1920s and 1930s became obsolete and the Zionist hotel lost its meaning along with its market. Most Zionist hotels, after briefly proposing accommodations mainly for British military people during World War II, were closed down or converted into apartments or commercial buildings. In the midst of the Arab riots, only months after the grand opening of the spectacular Eden Hotel, its desperate owner Abraham Lifschitz, who had invested his limited sources in what he believed would be a flourishing enterprise, had had to ask such organizations as the Jewish Agency for financial support.⁷⁴ When help was not forthcoming, the Eden, so recently opened as a first-rate Zionist hotel, became a low-budget lodging, remaining so until it closed its doors in the 1970s.⁷⁵

The King David Hotel proved to be the only survivor of the golden age of hotel building in British Mandate Palestine. A powerful architectural expression of the progressive image of the New Palestine, the Zionist hotel proved short-lived, while the King David, with its visual program alluding to turbulent biblical times, is ironically the only significant Mandatory-era hotel in Israel still in operation today. During World War II, the British Mandate government leased its premises as an administrative and military center. In July 1946, a bomb placed in the kitchen by the Jewish underground movement Etzel destroyed the hotel's entire southern wing.⁷⁶ When divided Jerusalem was unified in 1967 and the city's eastern sections formally governed by Jordan were retaken in the Six Day War, the King David, under new management, was expanded, with a new floor added.

Zionist hotels represent an important cultural phenomenon within the Zionist tourism movement of the Mandatory era. Their architectural and decorative programs reflect the attempt of European Jewish immigrant society to create a home in Palestine, one in which memory and the diaspora were integrated with the idea of utopian place in the crafting of a new national culture. These hotels testify to the inseparable bond between material culture and sensibility, between ideal and image in the forging of the new Zionist society. Although very much a product of the interwar European environment, the hotels' ideological agenda distinguished them from any other body of hotels in the world.

Notes

1. Conrad Hilton quoted in Wharton, *Building the Cold War*, 12.
2. For example, Brian L. McLaren, *Architecture and Tourism*, argues that during the Italian colonization of Libya, the modern and the traditional were consolidated in hotel architecture in order for travel and accommodation to be aligned with fascist political propaganda. In Italy in the same period, the nation's medieval and Renaissance heritage was invoked to elevate the regime's image and symbolize national regeneration. Restoration undertaken to recover the authentic for tourist purposes extended to hotel architecture. See Lasansky, *The Renaissance Perfected*.
3. Berkowitz, *Western Jewry*; Cohen-Hattab, "Hitpathut tashit ha-tayarut"; Bar and Cohen-Hattab, "A New Kind of Pilgrimage." On the transformation from pilgrimage to modern tourism in Palestine, see Cohen-Hattab and Katz, "Mi-Terra Santa le-turizm" and "The Attraction of Palestine."
4. The new image of Palestine being marketed to Jewish tourists reveals itself in the newsletters of the organizations that promoted tourism and organized trips to Palestine, such as the Keren Hayesod (the United Israel Appeal) and Hadassah (the Women's Zionist Organization of America). Active in Europe and the United States, these organizations recognized that developing tourism infrastructure could generate considerable income for the settlers in Palestine and they also perceived tourism as a central engine for ideological propaganda.
5. Cohen, "A Phenomenology of Tourist Experiences," 179–201.
6. Reynolds-Ball, *Jerusalem*, 10. The history of the Mediterranean Hotel is explored in Gibson and Chapman, "The Mediterranean Hotel."
7. Bar and Cohen-Hattab, "A New Kind of Pilgrimage," 135, 143.
8. Phone interview with Victor Huga, 20 November 2007. In architecture, the term *Beaux-Arts* describes the academic architectural approach to classicism, emphasizing unity and decorum, that was taught at the *École des Beaux-Arts* in Paris. It has come to be identified with the use of a cast-iron structural skeleton covered with stone or other material to convey a variety of historical styles.
9. For an example of Muslim tourist guides, see *A Brief Guide to Haram al-Sharif*. On the Supreme Muslim Council and its efforts to promote tourism, see Kupferschmidt, *The Supreme Muslim Council*.
10. On the significance of Nebi Musa in the context of the emergence of the Palestinian national movement, see Friedland and Hecht, "The Nebi Musa Pilgrimage."
11. On the so-called First National Style and modern architecture in Turkey, see Bozdoğan, *Modernism and Nation Building*.
12. The Palace Hotel, currently under reconstruction, will reopen in 2010 as a luxury hotel operated by the Waldorf Astoria Collection. The basis for the new design is a 1993 plan by architect David Kroyanker implemented by Yehudah Feiglin. In addition to preservation and restoration of the original building, the plan includes a five-floor tower that will house the guest rooms.
13. I would like to thank Ado Vallaster for allowing me to reproduce Hufschmid's drawings for the interior of the King David Hotel (figures 3 and 4 below) and for generously allowing me access to this unpublished material, which documents the architecture and décor of the most lavish of all of Palestine's hotels.
14. Palestine Hotels Limited, a corporation registered in Jerusalem in 1929, was formed by Egyptian Hotels Limited in conjunction with other financial groups and individuals, including Egyptian Minister of Finance Sir Joseph Cattawi Bey, Sir Victor Harari Pasha and his son Colonel Ralph Harari, and Barons Felix and Alfred Manasca of Alexandria, as well as the American Palestine Economic Corporation of New York, founded by Louis Brandeis, Felix Warburg, Baron Edmond de Rothschild, the Palestine Jewish Colonization Association, and Lord Melchett.
15. Farago, *Palestine at the Crossroads*, 30; "Tourism—Our Main Industry, the Government's Indifference," *Palestine Weekly*, 7 June 1929, 507.
16. The King David's first director was the hotelier Joseph A. Seiler (1896–1948), whose legendary family of hoteliers owned a number of properties in the Alpine resort of Zermatt, Switzerland. See Izakson, *Mareh mi-dor ha-gesher*, 59. On the construction of the hotel see "The King David Hotel," *Palestine Weekly*, 2 August 1929, 88.
17. Hufschmid was a graduate of the *École d'Art* and the *École des Arts Industriels* in Geneva, where he resided for his entire career. He also attended the *Kunstgewerbeschule* in Zurich and designed hotels in Egypt and Beirut. On Hufschmid, see Leitung, *Lexikon*, 475.
18. For more on Vogt's hotel architecture, see *Kriens–Kairo*. The essay by Peter Omachen, "Hotelarchitektur," examines Vogt's work in hotel architecture. His Swiss hotels include

- the Hotel Rütli (1897), the Rheinischer Hof (1897), the Monopol & Metropole (1898), the Waldsätterhof (1898), and the Nationalhof (1900) in Lucerne, as well as the Carlton in St. Moritz. For Egyptian Hotels Limited, Vogt designed the Luxor Hotel, the Cairo Ritz-Hotel (1905), and an expansion of the Mena House in Cairo, in the shadow of the pyramids.
19. Vogt quoted in Semberg, ed., *The Story of the King David Hotel*, 10.
 20. "Gem Museum at the King David," *Palestine Post*, 1 January 1933, 9.
 21. Sherman, *Mandate Days*, 163.
 22. The Swiss Werkbund, modeled after the Deutscher Werkbund, was a national artists' organization, founded in 1913.
 23. On Hufschmid's designs for the interiors of the Immeuble Clarté, see Rüegg, *Furniture and Interiors*, 132–33.
 24. In a 1925 article Hufschmid published in *Fachblatt für Innen-Dekoration*, the leading German journal for interior design, he justified his preference for historical styles in modern interiors by noting that "the older styles were once 'modern.'" See Hufschmid, "Gedanken über den neuen Stil," 101.
 25. "Die Jüdischen Hotels," *Palästina* 5, no. 4 (1908): 70.
 26. Herzl, *Altneuland*.
 27. Landsberg, "Hotels in Palestine," 80.
 28. Minutes of the meeting of Achuzat-Bayit Association of 3 June 1907, quoted in Katz, "Ideology and Urban Development," 406. In 1921 Tel Aviv became an independent municipality; in 1925 a master plan was commissioned from the Scottish architect and urbanist Patrick Geddes; and in 1934, it was formally declared a city.
 29. On the process of urbanizing Tel Aviv during the British Mandate period, see Troen, "Establishing a Zionist Metropolis," 34; and Katz, "Ideology and Urban Development," 402–24; the latter provides an analysis of the development of Tel Aviv in relation to Zionist urbanization and European models.
 30. Schatz, *Bezalel*, 7; Baerwald, "Omanut ha-moledet," 95–96.
 31. Quoted in Meyer-Meril, "Alexander Levy," 320. The Palästina Baugesellschaft was founded in 1919 by Alexander Levy and included among its members Alexander Baerwald and Fritz Kornberg. Its 1920 publication, titled *Vom Bauen und Wohnen im neuen Palästina*, edited by Levy, focused on the provision of housing for new settlers in Palestine. The goal of the organization was to plan settlements, to design and construct residential and commercial buildings, and to advocate methods of industrialization.
 32. Baerwald, "Omanut ha-moledet," 95.
 33. *Ibid.*
 34. See, for example, Zakim, *To Build and Be Built*.
 35. Julius Berger, "Absatzpropaganda und Exportförderung nach Palästina und dem Mittleren Orient," *Palästina*, 15, no. 3–4 (March–April 1932): 105.
 36. Josef Frank, "Palästinensische Baufragen," *Die Neue Welt*, 14 September, 1928, 5. Frank had been a central figure in the Austrian Werkbund in the late 1920s and early 1930s. In 1933, in an upsurge of anti-Semitism in Austria in response to the rise of the Nazis in Germany, a number of right-wing members of the Werkbund resigned to protest the organization's perceived Semitization. The Werkbund split into two separate organizations, the socialist Jewish Werkbund, centered on Frank and Oscar Strand on the one hand, and the right-wing Catholic New Werkbund under the leadership of Hoffmann and Clemens Holzmeister. See Stritzler-Levine, ed., *Josef Frank*, 55–58.
 37. In addition to *Fachblatt für Innen-Dekoration*, Koch published numerous books focusing on interiors and the decorative arts, such as *Einzelmöbel und Neuzeitliche Raumkunst* (Darmstadt, 1930); *Innen-Dekoration unter Mitwirkung hervorragender Künstler und Fachleute herausgeben und geleitet* (Darmstadt–Stuttgart, 1939); *1000 Ideen zur künstlerischen Ausgestaltung der Wohnung* (Darmstadt, 1926); *Handbuch neuzeitlicher Wohnungs-Kultur* (Darmstadt, 1917); *Farbige Wohnräume der Neuzeit* (Darmstadt, 1926).
 38. The extensively documented architectural production of the 1920s and 1930s has been the focus of numerous studies, while the era's less familiar domestic culture and interior design have rarely been investigated, an omission that has shaped critical thinking on modernism. The most influential studies of architectural modernism include Nikolas Pevsner's seminal *Pioneers of Modern Design* and *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age* by his student Reyner Banham. See Whiteley, *Reyner Banham*.

39. Among the architects who broke free of the conventions of the grand hotel and adopted modernist values in hotel design were Adolf Loos, Peter Behrens, Richard Neutra, Emile Fahrenkamp, and Erich Mendelsohn. Loos designed the Hotel auf dem Karlsplatz in Vienna, the Hotel am Semmering in the Semmering area in the lower Alps, Austria, the Hotel Esplanade in Zagreb, the Grand Hotel Babylon in Nice, the Sport Hotel in Paris, and the Exhibition Palace hotels in China and Juan le Pins, France; none of them were realized. His renovation of the Esplanade Sanatorium in Karlsbad was the only instance in which the architect worked on a hotel project actually built. Behrens designed hotels in San Remo and in Brün, neither of which was built. Fahrenkamp designed the Palace Hotel Breidenbach Hof in Düsseldorf and Mendelsohn designed a hotel in Palestine and two in England, one of them in conjunction with Richard Neutra; none were realized.
40. Meyer, "Stilgeschichte des Hotels," 45.
41. *Ibid.*, 42.
42. Topp, "An Architecture for Modern Nerves," 417.
43. Werner Bloch, "Touristik," *Jüdische Rundschau*, January 25, 1938, 7. The Zionist Information Bureau for Tourists, founded in 1925 in Jerusalem, was a not-for-profit organization established by three major organizations within the Zionist movement: the Jewish Agency, Keren Hayesod (the United Israel Appeal), and Keren Kayemet Le-Yisrael (the Jewish National Fund); it was meant to establish a tourist system in Palestine. See Bloch, "Hotels," 34.
44. Author's interview with the late Hugo Teltsch, Tivon, Israel, 20 April 1999.
45. Interview with Kurt Levy conducted by Pedro Zuniga, 17 January 2003. I would like to thank Pedro Zuniga for sharing this source.
46. See for example Raz-Krakovitzkin, "The Zionist Return to the West"; and Saposnik, "Europe and Its Orients."
47. Helman, "Cleanliness and Squalor in Inter-War Tel-Aviv."
48. On the concept of the New Man in Zionist thought, see Pehnt, "The 'New Man.'"
49. Hirsch, "We Are Here to Bring the West," 32.
50. The Eden Hotel originated as the Marshak Hotel, a small establishment situated near Zion Square consisting of five guest rooms. It expanded in 1919, when it moved to a larger building on Jaffa Street. The hotel was owned by the Marshak family, whose daughter Rosa married Abraham Lifschitz. In 1928, the Lifschitzes established the Eden Hotel on Ben Yehudah Street. Correspondence with Pedro Zuniga, 3 April 2004.
51. Abraham Lifschitz to the Jewish Agency, 23 September 1938, Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem, box S53/643.
52. "Das Hotel- und Pansionsgewebe in Palästina," *Palästina Nachrichten*, no. 10, 1941, 4.
53. Text of advertisement that appeared in various Zionist newspapers and periodicals in Europe and the United States in 1938, including *Hadassah News Letter*, *Jüdische Rundschau*, and *Neue Jüdische Presse*.
54. Born in Odessa, Russia, Ratner was a graduate of the Technische Hochschule in Karlsruhe, where he qualified as an architect in 1922. A year later, he immigrated to Palestine and settled in Haifa. On Ratner's work, see Sosnovsky, *Yohanan Ratner*.
55. Ratner, "Likrat ha-signon ha-mekori," 35.
56. Ratner, "Architecture in Palestine." Ratner's other writings on the national style include "Hesegei ha-arkhitekturah be-Yisrael"; "Will Israel Have a National Style of Architecture?"; and "Hinukh arkhitektim be-Yisrael."
57. On the adaptation of European modernism to a Zionist national style, see for example Buras, "Josef Neufeld in Eretz Israel"; Nitzan-Shiftan, "Contested Zionism"; Heinze-Greenberg, "Immigration and Culture Shock"; Weill-Rochant, "Tel Aviv des années trente"; and Meyer-Maril, "The Stylistic Development of Architecture in Tel Aviv." The study of modernist architecture in Jerusalem has focused on the work of Erich Mendelsohn. See for example Heinze-Greenberg, *Erich Mendelsohn*; *idem*, "Immigration and Culture Shock"; Nitzan-Shiftan, "Contested Zionism."
58. Storrs described his strategy of preserving Jerusalem's heritage in his preface to Ashbee, *Jerusalem*, 20.
59. On building laws in Jerusalem during the twentieth century see Levin, "The Stones of Jerusalem"; on the program of restoring Jerusalem and the politics behind it, see Wharton, "Jerusalem Remade."

60. Kasuto, "Ha-bniyah ha-modernit bi-Yerushalayim," 34. Michael Levin has pointed to the arch as one of four elements that distinguish Jerusalem architecture (the other three are the dome, cantilevered features, and local stone). See his articles, "The Stones of Jerusalem"; "Arkhitekturah bi-Yerushalayim," 4–6; "Modern Architecture in Jerusalem"; and, with Tamar Goldshmid, *Ha-ir ke-muze'on*, 25–30.
61. On the vernacular character of early modernist architecture in Palestine, see Herbert, "Bauhaus Architecture in the Land of Israel."
62. Wittkower was a graduate of the universities of Heidelberg and Berlin, completed his architectural studies in the Stuttgart Technische Hochschule and trained under Richard Doecker. He moved to Berlin, where he worked for the contracting firm of Sommerfeld and Co. and in 1927 opened his own practice, establishing a reputation as an interior decorator of urban apartments. With the rise of the Nazi Party in 1933, he closed down his practice and immigrated to Palestine. Until 1948 Wittkower worked in his own practice in Tel Aviv. From 1949 to 1966 he partnered with architect E. Baumann and in 1974 he established a practice with architects Arieh Adiv and Israel Stein. Wittkower designed several major hotels in pre-state Israel, including the Gat Rimon in Tel Aviv (1936), parts of the interiors of the Kaete Dan Hotel in Tel Aviv (1932), and the interior of the Dora Bloch sanatorium in Ramat Gan (1938), in addition to the interiors of the Eden Hotel (1938). After the founding of the State of Israel in 1948, he designed some of the country's most ambitious hotels, including the Nordau-Plaza Hotel in Tel Aviv (1948), the Accadia Hotel in Herzliya (1955), and the New Sheraton in Tel Aviv (1977). See Agassi, *Ha-brizah ha-krirah*.
63. Wittkower, "Climate and Industrial Building in Palestine," *Monthly of the Association of Engineers and Architects in Palestine* 7, no. 1 (August 1946): 7–12.
64. Julius Posener, "La Décoration de la Maison Palestinienne," *Art et décoration*, September 1938, 310–16.
65. The photographs of the Eden Hotel are reproduced here thanks to Arye Sonnino and Israel Stein, who own the Werner Joseph Wittkower Archive in Tel Aviv and who are responsible for preserving his legacy.
66. Wittkower is credited with introducing neon lighting into the country, in his work for the Kaete Dan Hotel in Tel Aviv. See Agassi, *Ha-brizah ha-krirah*, 35.
67. Frank, "Die Einrichtung des Wohnzimmers," 417.
68. For more on the *Wiener Wohnkultur*, see Long, *Josef Frank*.
69. Regarding the exhibition "The Jewish Woman and the Jewish Home," see Freimark, "Die Jüdische Frau."
70. On the concept of alternative modernism in Austrian interior design and for discussion particularly of Frank's work, see Stritzler-Levine, ed., *Josef Frank*; and Long, *Josef Frank*.
71. Wlach, "Zu den Arbeiten von Josef Frank," 42.
72. Eisler, "Die Schöne Wohnung," 106.
73. Wittkower, "Climate and Industrial Building in Palestine," 8.
74. Abraham Lifschitz to the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem, 23 September 1938, Jerusalem Municipal Archives, box 553/643.
75. Until Abraham Lifschitz's death in the early 1970s, the Eden functioned as a low-budget hotel, serving many parliament members during the 1960s. It was sold to the Bank of Israel in 1974 and since the 1980s has housed the headquarters of the Ministry of Absorption. A 1995 restoration master plan by the Jerusalem municipality, which was not realized, proposed adding a wing and turning the building into a 140-room business hotel. See C. Ben-David, "Grand Hotels," *The Jerusalem Report*, 10 August 1995, 46–47.
76. The bomb explosion killed 91 people. Still regarded as one of the most dastardly crimes in the history of Israel, the event played a defining role in the struggle of the Jewish community against the restrictive British immigration policy, which had condemned thousands of Jews to death in Europe.

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