

In the case of Deir Ghassaneh we are dealing with a situation in which the lag between critical changes in the socio-cultural conditions, and those in the built environment, are certainly less obvious and probably much more complex than suggested by Guidoni.

I would argue here, that the adoption of a new architectural system could only take place at what I referred to earlier as the "breaking point" of the traditional community. One can perhaps say that, to a great extent, the acceptance or rejection of a new architectural pattern depend on the pre-conditions (socio-cultural) which prevailed in the village community and hence made it possible for a new architectural system to intrude, and ultimately, prevail in the village. Thus the acceptance or rejection of a new architectural system depends more on the antecedent condition of the community rather than on "rational" evaluation of the system. On the contrary, the choice made is often "irrational". This irrationality was, and still is, being manifested in the adoption of systems which proved to be mostly unsuitable for the community which had, willingly or unwillingly, accepted them. For example, the use of concrete houses in semi-arid climate similar to that of Deir Ghassaneh, and the use of houses that open directly to the road in a community where privacy is still highly valued (Fig. II.17) indicates this "irrationality". As far as the economic feasibility of the concrete box, one can argue that it was the disintegration of the traditional building process, exemplified by the commoditisation of labour and building material, and not the market price of the concrete that made it economically feasible. While the great majority of the villagers could afford building a stone house at the turn of the century, only a minority can afford that today. The opposite is also true: any new architectural system would be disregarded by traditional society even though the system may seem to be economical, more suitable for certain climatic conditions, or perhaps seem to be more "rational". The experience of new Gournah designed by Hassan Fathy is a good example of this.

To encapsulate this conclusion I would suggest here a paradigm of causal sequence for the acceptance or rejection of new architectural forms in the following manner: