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UNDERSTANDING SOCIO-CULTURAL SPACES BETWEEN THE *HADHAR* AND *BADU* HOUSES IN KUWAIT

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Keywords

housing; Kuwait; Hadhar; Badu; tradition; modernity; globalization

Abstract

This study examines the socio-cultural spaces of the two major groups in Kuwait: the Hadhar and Badu. These groups are not an ethnic classification but are rooted in their historic settlements. The Hadhar refer to people who lived in old Kuwait town and were mostly merchants and artisans who made their living from the sea. The Badu on the other hand, most commonly referred to as Bedouins, are nomadic tribes who lived on the outskirts of old Kuwait town or in the Arabian Desert. This study employs cognitive maps to reveal fascinating insights into the lifestyles and cultural differences of these two groups as it relates to their domestic built environment. This study argues that house spatial organization is tightly coupled with a family's socio-cultural traditions and values; hence, there are major spatial distinctions between the houses of the Hadhar and Badu. These differences are apparent in the houses' main spaces such as the living hall, male guest reception space or diwaniya, and main entrance. This paper also contends that these differences are rooted historically in the traditional Hadhar mud brick courtyard houses and the traditional Badu Arabian tents. Although the oil boom and consequent impact of globalization transformed Kuwait's houses into modern villas, on the inside they are still linked to each group's traditional use of space.

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INTRODUCTION

Historically, it has always been thought that the traditional Kuwaiti house was the well-known mud brick courtyard house. As such, researchers have focused on its elements and functions within the urban fabric (AlJassar, 2009; AlAjmi, 2009; AlHaroun, 2015). However, other forms of housing have been neglected. There was the *Ashsish* in the outskirts of the old town, the *Dhow* which was a dwelling for merchants and pearl divers who spent months at sea (AlAnsari, 2011), and the traditional Arabian Tent that sheltered the nomadic Bedouin. Why were these housing types not highlighted in prior research as being part of Kuwait's traditional dwellings? One explanation may be that the courtyard house was the most prominent element in the old town's urban fabric and the other housing forms were not within the walls of the old town, and thus not considered as a representation of the vernacular.

This study acknowledges these other forms of housing and pays particular attention to the comparison between the traditional courtyard house and the traditional Arabian Tent. Understanding these two forms of housing and the people who lived in them is key to understanding Kuwait's domestic built environment. It also sheds light on the identity of the *Hadhar* and *Badu* peoples of Kuwait and the evolution of their contemporary households. The observation of the *Hadhar-Badu* dichotomy originated from the authors' backgrounds; the first author is from the *Hadhar* group, while the second is from the *Badu* group. For this study, these terms have been used to classify, research, and study the above-mentioned social-cultural groups of Kuwait. It aims to understand and highlight the differences and similarities of these two groups. Specifically, whether belonging to a distinct social group *Hadhar* or *Badu* in Kuwait would result in a specific house design and form, spatial arrangement, and identity. If so to what extend has globalization impacted their cultural lifestyle practices, characteristics, and behaviours? And what are the implications on practice in Kuwait's contemporary residential development? In order to further understand this phenomenon the method chosen for this study is cognitive maps. Thus, participants from the *Hadhar* and *Badu* groups have been selected and asked in a survey to sketch their houses. The data collected reflected interesting perceptions of space as it relates to each group. These observations have not only reinforced discussions from the literature review but also clarified the links between the past and the present in Kuwait's domestic built environment.

HADHAR AND BADU

Who are the Hadhar?

The name *Hadhar* is derived from the Arabic word '*Hadhar*' meaning cities, towns, or villages and the people who live in them (AlMawrid, 1988). Even though most of the *Hadhar* can trace their routes to Bedouin ancestors, the term characterizes their settling down and flourishing in urban life. They are comprised of mostly immigrant tribes who fled from famine in the heartland of Arabia now Saudi Arabia (Abu Hakima, 1983); some also originated from southern Iraq and Iran. This melting pot brought together diverse peoples from different backgrounds who turned to the sea for trade and pearl diving. Furthermore, Kuwait's rich maritime history exposed its people to different cultures, which made them more tolerant and understanding.

Kuwaitis use the term *Hadhar* for the people who used to live inside *AlSoor* or the Wall of Kuwait. Longva (2006) acknowledged "the term hadhar designates Kuwaitis whose forefathers lived in Kuwait before the launch of the oil era (1946) and worked as traders,

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sailors, fishermen, and pearl divers" (Longva, 2006). The wall was not only a shield against tribal attacks but was a physical manifestation of the separation between the old town and the desert. Five gates allowed people access to the city and to engage in trade with the Badu in Safat Square.

Who are the Badu?

The *Badu*, better know in English as Bedouins, are typically known as the nomadic/pastoral animal herding Arabs who usually lived in the Arabian Desert (Britannica, 2018). They are also known as tribesmen or '*qabael*' in reference to the tribe, which refers to a socio-political system formed through common patrilineal descent (AlZubi, 1999: 9). This study, however, deals with the growing derivative social meaning of Badu in Kuwait in the context of "country as opposed to city or primitive as opposed to civilized and the category to which it is purported to apply" (Longva, 2006: 171).

Why study these groups?

After the oil boom and consequent modernization Kuwait's built environment and people changed forever. Today, most *Hadhar* trace back their origins to *Badu* tribes throughout the Arabian Peninsula. They once roamed the deserts of Arabia but when famine struck their lands they immigrated to Kuwait to find better opportunities. Kuwait gradually became a trading hub and its town flourished in the crossroads between maritime trade from Asia and the caravans taking goods to Syria and Iraq. Thus, the *Hadhar* Kuwaitis were exposed to many cultures in their travels and trade, which in turn made them more tolerant and open to other cultures compared to their ancestors who still lived in the heartland of Arabia.

Hadhar who used to live in mud brick courtyard houses now live in modern villas. Bedouins also no longer need to live in tents and move around; so they may in fact be considered as *Hadhar*. They all live in the city and share similar lifestyles. After long transitional processes, all *Badu* have now been settled and "all Kuwaitis are now urbanized, and Hadhar and Badu therefore do not exist as distinct, ontological entities" (Al-Nakib, 2014: 6). Therefore, in an increasingly globalized world the *Hadhar* and *Badu* settlement groups are no more. They have all merged into the larger Kuwaiti society. Nonetheless, the *Hadhar-Badu* dichotomy still exists in Kuwait as a popular discourse in today's social culture with the Badu being the largest group in Kuwait's population. Each group has a unique and distinct cultural and ethnic personality that is derived from their past identities. They still carry with them their own traditions, traits, dialects, and behaviors. It is in these differences that this study intends to highlight and understand how socio-cultural qualities evolved into lifestyle practices specifically in the contemporary Kuwaiti house.

These two groups account for the majority of Kuwait's past and present population, yet no existing studies have examined the differences and similarities of these significant cultural groups in the context of their domestic built environment. While significant research has been conducted on the relationship between tribalism and nationalism in the Gulf, no attempt has been made to investigate how the *Hadhar-Badu* dichotomy influenced the built environment, especially their contemporary dwelling spaces. Furthermore, no in-depth research has been conducted to understand how modernity has impacted their lifestyles in relation to their homes. Therefore, this study intends to contribute to and understand new perspectives of Kuwait's transformation and subsequent modernization, thereby providing another layer of

meaning and information to further enrich the discussion of the modernity versus tradition paradigm.

BACKGROUND

Impact of Globalization

The "thrust of modernity" or globalization has had a great impact in the world, transforming people's way of life. Although, this study explores the effects on Kuwait's built environment, the phenomenon is universal. Anthony Giddens (1990) sees globalization as the inherent "thrust of modernity" that works for a greater interconnectedness global-wide. He defines globalization as, "the intensification of world-wide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa" (Giddens, 1990: 64).

For some it is a force of economic prosperity while for others it has and continues to have a negative socio-cultural and environmental impact on sustainable development. Culturally, some are concerned that "globalization will impose conformity and homogeneity and that their familiar, personal neighbourhood coffeehouses and indigenous religious communities will be replaced by impersonal global identities" (ECSSR, 2008: 19). Mahgoub asserts, "Globalization is viewed by some as a new form of colonialism and occupation…Economic superiority, allowing two-thirds of the world's wealth to go to only one-third of the world's population while one-third of the world's wealth is going to two-thirds of the world's population, is increasing the 'gap' between poor and rich countries" (Mahgoub, 2004: 507).

Modernization via globalization also affected social relationships, as Beck claims, "these changes have also generated new forms of individualisation. They affect patterns of interaction dependent upon housing and living arrangements .... Thus traditional forms of community beyond the family are beginning to disappear." (Beck, 1992: 97). Beck argues that the solution to the "negative consequences of modernity is not the rejection of modernity itself, but its radicalization" (Ibid). As a result, necessary are critical reflections on "modem impacts and their ecological, urban, and social conditions of existence, and hence potentially to seek approaches to change them" (Ibid).

Therefore, the challenge is to work within globalization yet recognize and confront its side effects by being "active participants instead of passive recipients of globalization" (Mahgoub, 2004: 518). Satler remarks, "Today feelings about globalization are more sophisticated. Globalization may bring within each regions of cultural difference, but it also threatens those regions with sameness. No global culture can absorb everything. A coexistence of diverse philosophies is not only possible but necessary" (Satler, 2000: 22).

Moreover, this paradigm is also argued by ElSheshtawy asserting that cities that witnessed rapid growth within the last decades are moving towards a model that attempts to balance forces of modernization and change while trying to preserve traditional elements within society (ElSheshtawy, 2000). Furthermore, Liangyong states, "that globalization and regionalization are like two sides of a coin and that they are inseparable" (Liangyong, 2000: 12). There seems to be a consensus that globalization is an inevitable reality and one needs to recognize its far-reaching effects all over the world, "sometimes even painful, changes in their accustomed ways of doing things. But if the challenges are great, so also are the opportunities" (Madison, 1998: 20).

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Culture, House Form and Identity

The environmental side effects of globalization have led many advocates for sustainable development and to re-examine culture and the vernacular. Culture is a key dimension in sustainability (Duxbury & Gillette, 2007) and it is important to recognize its impact in providing local solutions to global challenges. Moreover, the value in linking cultural and ecological sustainability provides for a better foundation to implement successful sustainable development (Throsby, 2008). Continuity of culture and its survival must be inspired by past traditions (Kenney, 1994). Furthermore, Hawkes explains how it is through society's values that everything is built and is an expression of its culture. Therefore, the 'application of culture' is integral for new paradigms that emphasis sustainability and well being (Hawkes, 2001).

Social symbolism of house form has been examined by many researchers. Rapoport understands house form and culture as primarily "a socio-cultural determinism of architectural form" (Rapoport, 1969: 10). He explains that the act of building a house is a "cultural phenomenon" and the socio-cultural forces are considered primary in shaping house form, whereas climate, construction materials, methods, and technologies are secondary. Rapoport sees "the content of spaces, their size and correlation, the level of understanding and connection between the built and the natural environment, private vs. public space organization, view of appropriate distance etc., directly influence architecture both in form and type" (Ibid: p.9, 47).

Despite Rapoport giving primacy to socio-cultural factors he does not exclude other aspects. In vernacular architecture, cultural and environmental factors are seen to merge as one, manifested in traditional vernacular elements. For example, in the Middle East the courtyard meets the culture's need for privacy and is also a direct response for the harsh desert climate. The skin covering the Arabian tent is breathable providing a cooling effect in the hot desert. Similarly, the verandahs and large windows in the Australian house is a translation of people's desire to 'connect with nature' as well as an environmental solution for ventilation. It is true that socio-cultural aspects are important, however, the final house form is influenced by both culture and the environment equally. Nonetheless, for this study although the researchers acknowledge the importance of the environmental factors influencing house design it will focus mainly in the socio-cultural factors within Kuwait's domestic built environment.

Appleyard sees the home as a symbol that conveys and expresses identity, and buildings are seen to "carry social messages…for their creators, owners and neighbors, about who they are" (Appleyard, 1979: 4). While social symbolism has been referred to, the reasons behind symbolic use of architectural elements have not been clarified. Tognoli (1987) highlights that the research direction is towards a more socio-cultural understanding of the house. He suggests that the home environment is more than just physical place, "in fact research on home shows a de-emphasis on the physical and special, and a reliance on social, cognitive, cultural, and behavioural issues that emphasize home as a security, comfort, and symbol of a place of departure and return" (Tognoli, 1987: 655).

Culture has also been very much associated with identity. The concept of identity expresses who people are and how they see themselves. In UNESCO'S declaration of cultural rights they state, "[C]ultural identity applies to all cultural references through which individuals or groups define or express themselves and by which they wish to be recognised; cultural

identity embraces the liberties inherent to human dignity and brings together, in a permanent process, cultural diversity, the particular and the universal, memory and aspiration" (UNESCO, 1996).

Cultural identity is therefore an expression of who people are, and it is by recognizing these differences that one may embrace the diversity of humanity. Many have recognized the value of identity in architecture. Identity can be rooted in an interpretation of a culture and it's self-expression, it can also give a sense of meaning for a place. "Architecture of identity" rivals "architecture as space" and "architecture as language" as one of the principle themes in architectural discourse (Abel, 2000: 141).

There are many examples in which people seek to explore identity in their dwellings. Rapaport argues for, "open-ended" design in housing to enable homeowners to take an effective part in designing their living spaces (Rapaport, 1968). Similarly, John Turner asserts that self-built housing provides opportunities for expressions of personal and social identity (Turner, 1976). Norberg-Schulz understands the relation of man to place is more than simply a matter of being able to orientate oneself to one's surroundings but has to do with a much deeper process of identification (Norberg-Schulz, 1980).

When a cultural identity is disconnected from its past it starts to search for a new form of self-expression. However, prior research demonstrated that in fact culture is never really disconnected from a society: it morphs into a new version where socio-cultural traits resist change. This study intends to further explore these issues. Its journey towards a new understanding of 'the self' may be understood through the constant changing of architectural landscapes. Perhaps in finding a new expression for a culture's identity it may use meanings from it's past to address future concerns.

KUWAIT'S DOMESTIC BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Traditional Courtyard House

The courtyard house was one of the most important elements of old Kuwait City. In order to understand this one needs to ask what factors catalysed its emergence in Kuwait. The country's harsh desert environment and strict adherence to religious values encouraged the development of innovative architectural concepts that created comfortable living spaces. The courtyard house emerged in order to maintain a delicate balance between culture and sustainable living, reflecting an awareness and sensitivity of the natural world. Kuwaiti courtyard houses are distinguished by several features or elements: the *Hosh* or courtyard itself; the *Liwan* or covered walkway; the traditional wooden doors; the *Diwaniya* (men's reception area); the *Bagdir* (wind catch); the *Jelleb* or well, the *Merzam* (gutter); the *Bircha* (water collection tank); its mud brick; its flat roofs; and usually, a one story structure (AlHaroun, 2015). Although similar to other regional vernaculars, the people, materials, craftsmanship, and overall sociocultural and economic dynamics that shaped the Kuwaiti courtyard house made it a unique local creation.

(Fig. 1) *Bait AlKhalid* is one of a few renovated traditional courtyard houses that still remain in Kuwait. The courtyard was a multipurpose open space where the entire family would gather and socialize. Some courtyards had a tree or shrubs, and most would have a *Jelleb*. The *Liwan,* or covered walkway, separated the edge of the courtyard from some rooms while the rest of the house spaces would directly overlook the courtyard. Some houses had more than

one courtyard, with each serving a different purpose. The most common examples would have a *Diwaniya*, although some would have a *Haram* (female court). The houses were built of mud brick or adobe, which was very effective against Kuwait's harsh climactic conditions (Ibid).

Figure 1. *Bait AlKhalid* or AlKhalid House in Kuwait City. The image to the upper left is the house overlooking the street and upper right image is the courtyard space (Source: Authors Archives, 2018).

The Arabian Tent

The *Badu* were a nomadic people. Their houses or dwellings were a typical Arabian tent called *bait es-shaar,* meaning the booth or house of hair made from a wool combination of sheep, camel and goat hair, making it blackish in colour. It was supported by round wooden poles (Fig. 2). The back-strip, functioning as a wall, was flexible and movable according to the wind direction and the users' needs. Sometimes they moved it several times in one day to block the harsh, cold, or sandy winds. The size of the tent varied according to the family's social status and wealth; a typical small family lived in a tent of one pole. As the family increased in size, status, or wealth, the number of supporting poles increased accordingly.
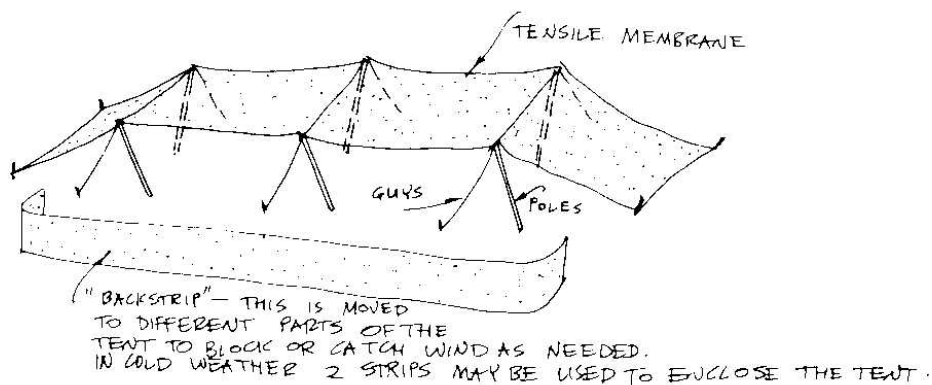

Figure 2. Badu tent (Source: Rapoport, 1968).

The nomad's tent was easily divided into two major spaces: one for the family and one for the *diwaniya;* a reception area reserved for the male members of the family and their male

guests. Charles Doughty, who visited and lived in these houses during the 1880s, described how they were built, "When the tent-cloth is stretched upon the stakes, to this roof they hang the tent-curtains, often one long skirt-cloth which becomes the walling of the nomad booth: the selvedges are broached together with wooden skewers. The booth front is commonly left open, to the half at least we have seen, for the mukaad or men's sitting-room: the other which is the women's and household side, is sometimes seen closed" (Doughty & Lawrence, 1921: 267).

The Modern Villa

With the oil boom came the emergence of new suburbs sprawling beyond the new city and so too came new houses. The built environment in Kuwait has been clearly impacted by the various economic, political, social and technological changes experienced by the city and nation. In fact, the transformation of the city through its master plans literally forced a new house design on Kuwait and its people – the *Hadhar* and *Badu*. People were forced to move to completely new neighborhoods and adapt to a new way of life. The speed of change gave no time to reflect on the far-reaching consequences that would reshape the city's urban fabric.

In his observations of Kuwaiti development, Saba Shiber writes, "the modern house or villa plunked on a uniform and non-descript plot which, with several hundred similar plots constitute the inorganic and uneconomic new neighbourhoods of Kuwait …The house sits clumsily in its plot exposed on all four sides to the elements, with a garden that is no garden at all for it consists of the corridor set backs from every boundary of the lot" (Shiber, 1964,287).

In examining the country's transformation, AlBahar states that, "Kuwait's residential building environment portrayed the most identifiable impressions of this accelerated phenomenon of cultural change" (AlBahar, 1990: 24). Post-oil houses differ radically from pre-oil houses. Rapid economic, political, social, and technological changes significantly altered people's perception of architecture. This resulted in a "plethora of eclectic" and a "carnival show, an architectural history showroom of copied styles and motifs" (Ibid, p.133).
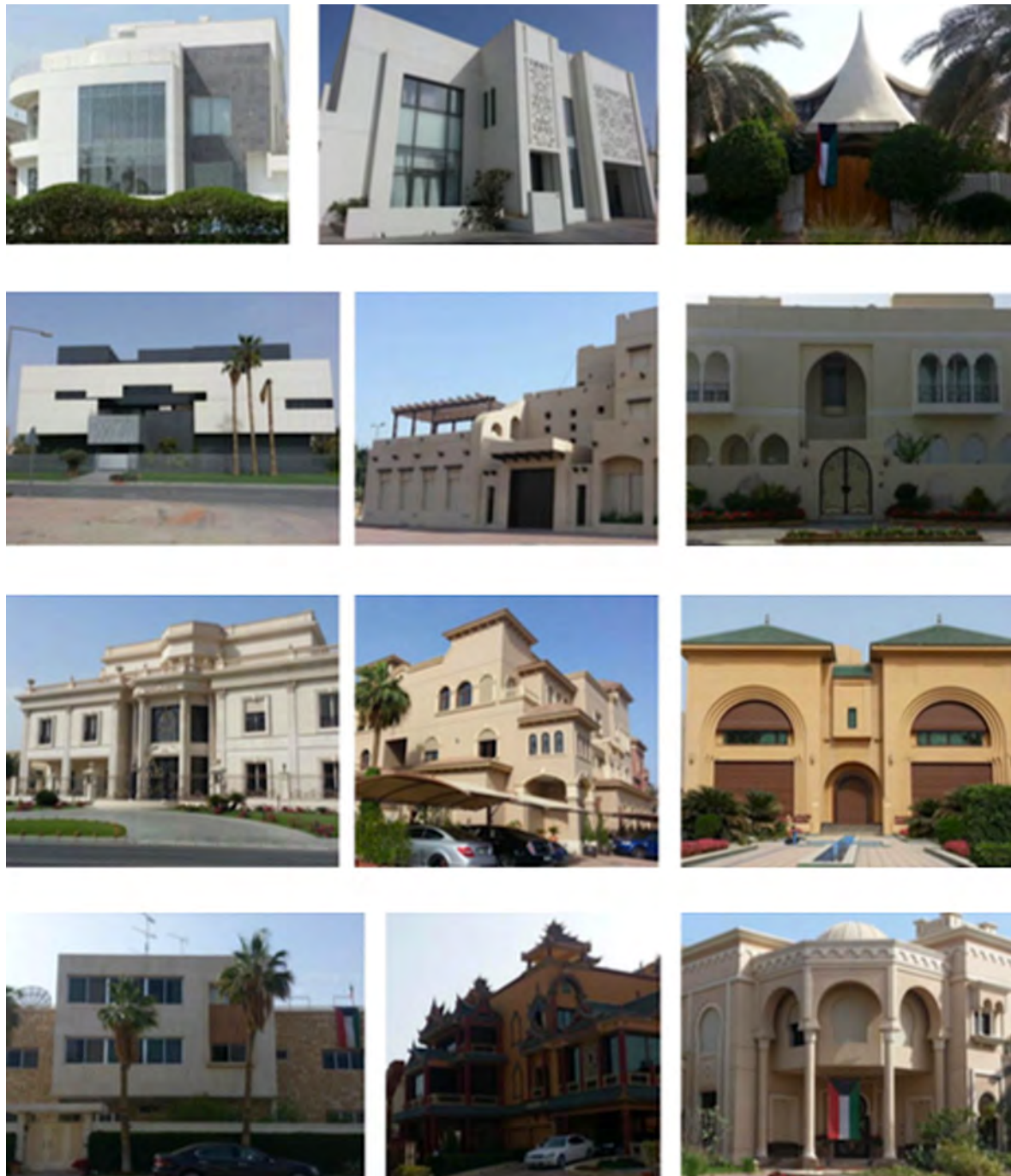
Figure 3. Contemporary/Modern houses in Kuwait (Source: AlHaroun, 2015).

The designs range from Neo-Islamic, Neo-Classical, Spanish, Cubist, Japanese, and many others. During the 1980s and later, highlighted after the first Gulf War, people searched for a Kuwaiti architectural identity, and so emerged Neo-Islamic designs alongside variations on traditional forms. (Fig. 3) clearly depicts the multitude of house styles and forms in Kuwait's contemporary residential landscape. What has led Kuwaitis to design houses that where completely foreign and away from their traditions and vernacular? Many researchers studied this phenomenon. It is apparent that Kuwaitis in their attempt to modernize felt they wanted

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to catch up with the rest of the developed world. They demolished old Kuwait town and went looking for a new identity in their built environment. In their journey, from vernacular, to modern, and beyond, Kuwait's architecture lost the human connection to nature and community relationships. New grids and houses changed how people lived and connected. The introduction of the automobile and highways took away the sense of community, which once people had when they walked to work, the mosque, or marketplace. Although modernity brought with it hope for a better future and technological advancement such as air-conditioning, in a way it also brought a sense of isolation and coldness. The buildings were concrete, steel, and glass with no reference to local culture. Many outside designers started to add balconies that were never used and *Masbrabiyas* (sun screens) that gathered dust. Moreover, no consideration was given to Kuwait's hot desert climate. Kuwait became a place of experimentation and hybrid building development.

Despite these overwhelming changes, current research notes that, although the house form changed, Kuwaitis still maintained certain socio-cultural spaces and traditional practices. AlHaroun's thesis (2015) demonstrated how Kuwaitis dealt with and adapted to the collision between traditional concepts and modernity; for example, how the courtyard has been replaced by the family living room, and how people's misunderstanding of the courtyard may in fact show how they valued outside spaces (AlHaroun, 2015). Similarly, AlJassar (2009) highlighted the persistence of the *diwaniya* as an important part of Kuwait's socio-culture (AlJassar, 2009). This research intends to further these understandings by shedding light in to what extent modernity affected Kuwait's household spatial arrangements.

The Evolution of the Hadhar and Badu Houses

Although both *Hadhar* and *Badu* now live in modern villas each group has different requirements and internal spatial configurations for their house designs. These differences have been discussed in this section and will be further highlighted and explored in the main empirical part of this study. (Fig. 4) below is a comparative plan analysis between the *Hadhar* and *Badu* house before and after the discovery of oil. It clearly depicts how social spaces in Kuwait's contemporary houses have a direct link to their traditional counterpart.
The courtyard was the heart of the traditional *Hadhar* house as seen in (Fig. 4-A). It was an exclusive space used by the entire family. However, after the 1950s and subsequent oil boom, the modern villa in (Fig. 4-C) introduced a new house typology to Kuwait. The courtyard has been replaced with the guest or family living room. In contrast with the *Badu,* the *Hadhar* in both house types always shared the same entrance for males and females. The only strictly male space that survived the transformation was the *diwaniya*. The importance of the *diwaniya* spaces is tightly linked to Kuwaitis' social and cultural habits.

The *Badu* used to live in Arabian tents (Figure 4-B) before settling in Kuwait. There is a clear gender-based separation in a typical Arabian tent in which the distinction between male and female spaces is clearly defined by a dividing screen wall called a 'qata'. As a patriarchal society, one would expect that the majority of space would be devoted to the man's domain; however, the women's side actually occupies two-thirds of the tent space while only one-third is left for the men. Interpreting their daily activities would explain the spatial divisions of the tent. While men spent most of their time outside the tent herding their camels, hunting, or raiding other tribes, women used to do most of the physical work of "pitching the tents, cooking, carrying water, spinning and weaving and looking after the flocks" (Faegre, 1979: 24). Although both domains share the same frontage where they can be approached by relatives and guests, the men's entrance is "generally offered less privacy" than the women's

domain which is considered a "forbidden territory to all others, while the women may watch the men through a small viewing hole in the Qata" (Ibid, p.24).
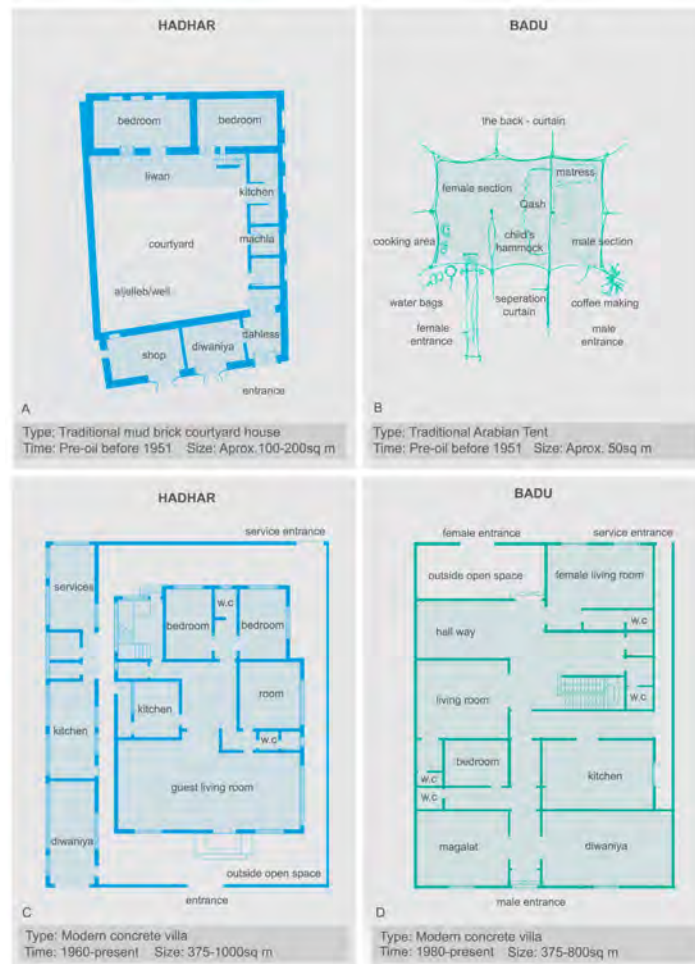

Figure 4. Comparative plan analysis between the *Hadhar* and *Badu* houses before and after the discovery of oil. (The above diagram was constructed by the authors (2018) however, the plans have been collected from the following sources: A: The National Council for Culture, Arts, and Letters: 2009, B: Torvald Faegre: Tents: Architecture of the Nomads: 1979, C/D: Collected from various architectural offices in Kuwait).

The *Badu's* contemporary houses (Fig. 4-D) have distinctly similar socio-cultural spaces rooted in the traditional Arabian tent. For example, the *diwaniya* and *magalat* spaces, which is a male social space where men typically sit on the floor, is directly linked to the men's section of the tent. Additionally, the *Badu* house, like the tent, continues to evidence strong gender segregation in the separate entrances and female living areas.

METHODOLOGY

Cognitive Maps

The term 'cognitive' means a "conscious intellectual activity such as thinking, reasoning, remembering, imagining, or learning words"(Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2012), which are all elements of perception. Therefore, cognition is a person's perceptual and sensory

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translation of the real world; a person's personality and experiences are revealed through his or her cognitive expressions. One such expression, and a significant tool in environmental cognition research, is the 'cognitive map'. The concept of drawing a space or place reflects various individual interpretations and provides a platform for researchers to discover and analyze emerging perceptions and understandings of the built environment.

Cognitive mapping "is a process composed of a series of psychological transformations by which an individual acquires, stores, recalls, and decodes information about the relative locations and attributes of the phenomena in his everyday spatial environment" (Downs and Stea, 1973: 7). Similarly, cognitive maps suspend impressions, thoughts, feelings and ideas until, consciously or unconsciously, the mind solicits, changes, and often distorts or manipulates its contents for some immediate purpose. In this way cognitive maps (images) allow us to bridge time, by using past experiences to understand present and future situations (Downing, 1992: 442).

Today, research in cognitive spatial mapping and perception traces its origins to Edward Tolman's work from 1948 and Kevin Lynch's notable study from 1960, introduced in his book *The Image of The City*. His book was the first to study "the mental image of a city" as it was, "a first word not a last word, an attempt to capture ideas and to suggest how they might be developed and tested" (Lynch,1960: 3). Lynch continues to define the city image and its elements as physical forms and classifies them as: paths, edges, districts, nodes and landmarks. Since then, there have been many studies of cognition and perception that have used sketch maps. Cognitive approaches to the study of human environments gained momentum and were used to study people's perceptions of spaces around the world.

In Kuwait, the first use of the 'cognitive expression' started after the demolition of old Kuwait City, from the mid-1950s to the mid-1960s. In an attempt to save past imagery, Kuwaiti artists such as the renowned Ayoub Hussein AlAyoub painted scenes from his memories of old Kuwait City. Born in 1932 in Kuwait, AlAyoub painted over 600 works representing life in Kuwait's past (AlGhunaim, 2008). In parallel, a few historians and researchers used sketch maps to locate houses from old neighborhoods; however, their research was not usually focused on the built environment.

In 2014, AlHaroun presented the first known study of Kuwait City and the Kuwaiti House that used cognitive maps as a research method (AlHaroun, 2014). It highlighted current understandings of Kuwait's built environment by exploring perceptions of its city and home spaces. In 2015, AlHaroun continued to use cognitive maps as a research tool on contemporary attitudes to vernacular elements in Kuwait's domestic building environment (AlHaroun, 2015). This study continues to use cognitive maps by investigating the differences and similarities between the two major cultural groups in Kuwait; the *Hadhar* and the *Badu*. The use of cognitive maps is intended to provide deeper knowledge of how people were affected by the transformation of Kuwait City.

Data Collection

Data has been first collected via a pilot sample obtained from students from the College of Architecture at Kuwait University. This group provided an interesting first glimpse of the differences and similarities between the *Hahdar* and *Badu* houses. However, it was not enough to gauge diverse understandings from each socio-cultural group. In addition, there was not an equal response from the *Hadhar* and *Badu* groups. The *Badu* group was

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significantly underrepresented. Therefore, to obtain a more diverse sample the researchers used a snowball sampling strategy that originated from their prospective socio-cultural group, which included the researcher's family, friends, and *diwaniya* guests. The data collected was from various locations in the university, houses, and *diwaniyas.* Each participant was asked to complete a questionnaire; the first part asked for demographics such as age, gender, nationality, socio-cultural group, educational level, occupation, type of housing, and area of residence. While the second part asked for one question which was "to draw your house or apartment floor plan". There were no time limitations to complete the survey, however most participants completed the drawings within ten minutes.

Some participants in the pilot study drew their house as elevation instead of a floor plan, which made it more challenging to analyze and understand the spaces. This may be due to them not understanding the question or that they do not know how to draw floor plans. To avoid the language barrier, the questionnaire has been written in both Arabic and English and the researchers rewrote the question to ask the participants to specifically draw floor plans. Despite this, there were still participants who drew elevations. Any participant who did not mention their socio-cultural group was eliminated. Any unclear or blank sketch was also disqualified. The final participant count was 120 with an even distribution between the two groups; 60 *Hadhar* and 60 *Badu*.

Data Analysis

This study's findings further reflect the value of cognitive maps in research through the participant's perceptions and mental representation of their homes. The maps, "are not just a set of spatial mental structures denoting relative position, they contain attributive values and meanings" (Kitchin, 1994: 2). Furthermore, "the knowledge of space (cognitive maps) is critical to attitudes toward, decision making about and behaviour within places" (MacEachern, 1992: 245). Therefore, the data analysis used was a form of content analysis using open coding, which was used to analyze the cognitive maps. Instead of only looking at words within texts, the strategy was to look specifically for design elements within the sketch. The cognitive maps have been carefully examined and general observations have been made regarding the sketches. The second step was to analyze the data from all the participants, ranking the most identified house element in their current house. Every house element drawn or written about by the participants has been recognized and identified as an element in the data analysis. The data collected was the number of participants who identified a specific element in their sketches. The house elements became the categories, contrasts, similarities, and emerging patterns have been observed from the data, providing the themes used to structure the discussion presented below.

FINDINGS

(Table 1) below presents the study's participant demographics. Of the 120 participants who drew their houses, 60 were *Hadhar* and 60 were *Badu*. The majority of the participants were young women that lived in houses with their families. (Table 2) shows the data extracted from the cognitive maps of the two socio-cultural groups. It ranks the most identified element in both the *Hadhar* and *Badu* houses.

Table 1. *Hadhar* and *Badu* participant profiles (Source: Authors, 2018).

HADHAR	#	BADU	#
Male	14	Male	20
Female	46	Female	40
Below 35	40	Below 35	28
Above 35	6	Above 35	12
Apt.	12	Apt.	10
House	43	House	35

Table 2. Comparative data table of sketches of contemporary *Hadhar* and *Badu* houses. Total participant's sketches: 120: *Hadhar*: 60, *Badu*: 60 (Source: Authors, 2018).

HADHAR HOUSE				BADU HOUSE			
RANK	NAME OF HOUSE ELEMENT	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IDENTIFYING ELEMENTS (FREQUENCY)	% OF MAPS IN WHICH ELEMENT APPEARS	RANK	NAME OF HOUSE ELEMENT	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IDENTIFYING ELEMENTS (FREQUENCY)	% OF MAPS IN WHICH ELEMENT APPEARS
1	DOOR/ENTRY	49	81.6%	1	DOOR/ENTRY	41	68.3%
2	BATHROOMS	39	65.0%	2	FAMILY LIVING	39	65.0%
3	GUEST LIVING	38	63.3%	3	BATHROOMS	32	53.3%
4	KITCHEN	38	63.3%	4	KITCHENS	28	46.6%
5	BEDROOMS	31	51.6%	5	BEDROOMS	23	38.3%
6	STAIRS	30	50.0%	6	STAIRS	20	33.3%
7	WINDOWS	21	35.0%	7	DIWANIYA	20	33.3%
8	FAMILY LIVING	18	30.0%	8	WINDOWS	17	28.3%
9	MASTER BEDROOM	15	25.0%	9	MULTI-FLOORS	16	26.6%
10	SERVICE ZONE	12	20.0%	10	COURTYARD	12	20.0%
11	MULTI-FLOORS	10	16.6%	11	CORRIDOR	7	11.6%
12	ELEVATOR	9	15.0%	12	MAGALAT	6	10.0%
13	STORAGE	9	15.0%	13	DINING ROOM	6	10.0%
14	DINING ROOM	9	15.0%	14	MAID ROOM	6	10.0%
15	DIWANIYA	7	11.6%	15	FEMALE ENTRANCE	5	8.33%
16	FRONT ENTRANCE STEPS	5	8.30%	16	GUEST LIVING	5	8.33%
17	CORRIDOR	5	8.30%	17	OUTSIDE KITCHEN	5	8.33%
18	DRESSING ROOM	5	8.30%	18	LAUNDRY	5	8.33%
19	COURTYARD	3	5.0%	19	STORAGE	4	6.66%
20	OFFICE	3	5.0%	20	DRIVER ROOM	4	6.66%

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Our study identified 20 design elements within the respondents' sketches. Most of these elements are found in both *Hadher* and *Badu* houses. The *magalat* and female entrance has exclusively been identified in the sketches of the *Badu* group. On the other hand, (Table 2) shows that there are three space elements in *Hadhar* houses that could not be found in *Badu* houses: the elevator, dressing room, and office. Moreover, the *Hahdar* participants' sketched the service zone, which included the maid or driver room, whereas the *Badu* participants specifically named each room. Besides the above observations the following themes have been inferred from the findings.

The Diwaniya

In our survey, the most salient distinction between the two groups was the '*Diwaniya*', a gathering place inside Kuwaiti houses where men congregated and spent time together discussing various issues from business and politics to everyday life. The analysis of the survey shows that the *diwaniya* is a significant space in *Badu* houses. In their sketches, 33% of *Badu* respondents visibly identified the *diwaniya*, while only 12% of *Hadhar* respondents identified that space. The *diwaniya* is seemingly an important space for both groups but even more so for the *Badu*. Why has it been identified more in the *Badu* sketches?

One explanation may be obtained by understanding the history of the *diwaniya*. Aljassar (2009) acknowledged "for a patriarchal society such as Kuwait, the *diwaniya* plays a vital role in the everyday activities of Kuwaiti society." He explained that for Kuwaiti men, "it is a place of social interaction, a place for conducting business and closing deals, a place for cultural exchange, and a place of political power and lobbying" (AlJassar, 2009: 192). The history of the *diwaniya* could be traced back to the central Arabian tribal social system from which most prominent Kuwaiti families originate. One of their main traditions is the gathering of tribal men in the sheik's tent or house to discuss relevant matters. Such a place used to be called *majlis*, the seating place. By the time these tribes settled in Kuwait in the early 17th century, *majlis* evolved into the *diwaniya* located in the traditional Kuwaiti house.

However, for the *Hadhar* not every house had a *diwaniya*. There would usually be one *diwaniya* for a 'family name' (an extended family), many of whom represented the ruling family, merchants, and other prominent members of society. The *Hadhar* group may use the *diwaniya* once or more per week. This concept has been passed to modern Kuwait. However, for the Badu group, it is a place where most of the males spend a large amount of time and it consequently can be found in a majority of their houses today. This may be understood as how the gendered separation of living spaces in the Arabian tent manifested itself in the form of the *diwaniya* and *magalat* for the males and the guest reception room for the females in the contemporary *Badu* house.

Therefore, the *diwaniya* is a more significant space for males in the *Badu* group than the *Hadhar* as it relates to daily gatherings. The study argues that house spatial organization is tightly coupled with the family's socio-cultural traditions and values based on their historic place of living. Thus, found that there are major spatial distinctions between the houses of *Hadhar* and *Badu*. These differences are not only apparent in the *diwaniya* but also in the house main spaces such as living hall and main entrances.

The Magalat

The *magalat* is the only space that is specific to the *Badu* group with 6 of the participants identifying it in their sketches. The *magalat* is a small space that is often attached to the *diwaniya*. It has no specific or clear format; sometimes it could serve as a reception area to the *diwaniya* with no defined enclosed space, or it could be a small '*diwaniya*' placed right on the edge of the house directly next to the main entry door for daily use by young men as a casual *diwaniya*. (Figure 5) shows four *Badu* houses that both have a *diwaniya* and a *magalat*. They are very much connected. The only difference is that the *magalat* is a place where people usually sit on the floor, and on many occasions even food is served on the floor. This specific spatial arrangement and behavior has also been found in Arabian tents. Therefore, one may conclude that the *magalat* may have evolved from the *Badu's* historic living space. However, its contemporary reinterpretation in the modern *Badu* house is an indoor air-conditioned space where males sit on the floor. This finding may also reveal how the *Badu* group adapted to the effects of modernity. It seems that there are some socio-cultural architectural spaces such as the *diwaniya* and *magalat* that appear to be resilient forms, which persisted in Kuwait's contemporary built environment.

Figure 5. Sketches of four *Badu* houses highlighting the strong relationship between the *diwaniya* and the *magalat* (Source: Study Participants, 2018).

Gender-segregated Living Spaces and Entrances

Kuwait's religion is Islam and Kuwaitis both *Hadhar* and *Badu* are still in a predominantly conservative Muslim society. Due to its history as a regional trade hub, Kuwaitis, especially *Hadhar* were exposed to many different people and cultures. The *Badu* on the other hand were people of the desert and although nomadic, they did not interact much with the outside world. Therefore, despite both groups being Muslim, the place they lived whether it was in the town or desert, and their daily lifestyle had a direct influence on their socio-cultural relationships with the built environment.

The findings indicate that there is a distinct gender separation of spaces within the Badu participants' homes. (5) participants' from the Badu group identified a separate female entrance for their houses, whereas none of the *Hadhar* group did. Similarly, (5) from the Badu group identified guest living room. The sketches reveal that this female entrance usually leads to the guest living room, which suggests it is a female *majlis* or social gathering space. This indicates that for the Badu household, the men usually congregate either the *diwaniya* or in the *magalat*, and women in the guest living room.
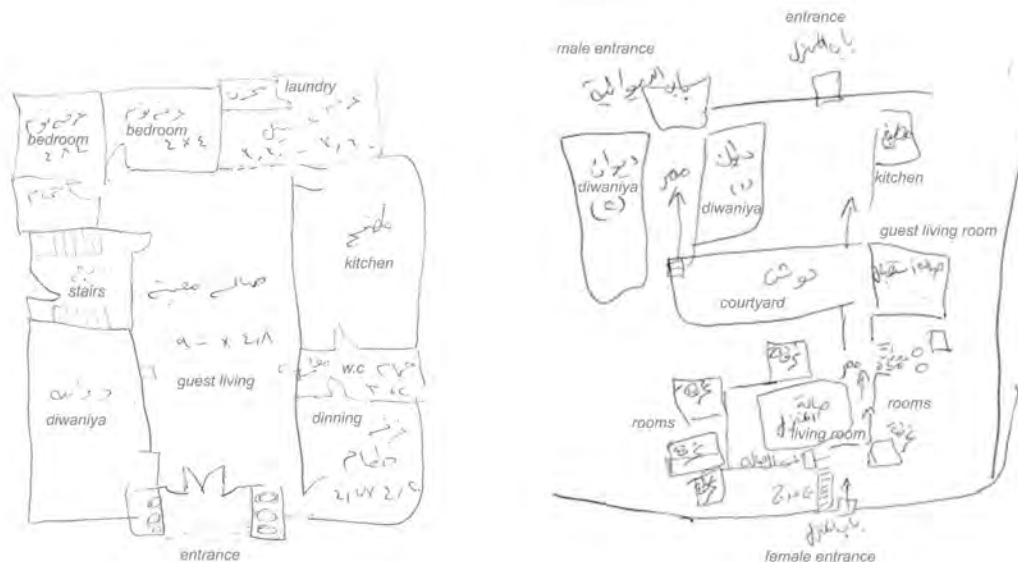

Figure 6. Comparative house sketch between the *Hadhar* on the left and the *Badu* on the right. Notice the clear difference between the two houses. The *Hadhar* house has one main entrance, a *diwaniya* for men and guest living for both genders. The *Badu* house has multiple entrances that would indicate clear gender segregation of the entrance and living spaces (Source: Study Participants, 2018).

In the *Hadhar* group of participants, (63%) overwhelmingly identified the guest living room as their main social gathering space followed by the family living room (30%) and the *diwaniya* (around 12%). However, 65% of the *Badu* participants' identified the family living room as the main social gathering space, followed by the *diwaniya* (33%), the *magalat* (10%) and the guest living room (8%). (Table 3) clearly shows this difference.

The data suggests that the two groups have different lifestyles and, accordingly, different uses for different spaces. The majority of *Hadhar* participants identified the guest living room as the most recognized space in their homes. This group usually use the guest living room for both genders, the family living room for the family only, and the *diwaniya* only for men. Whereas the *Badu* participants mostly identified the family living room for both genders and men would use either the *diwaniya* or *magalat*. Likewise in the *Badu* household, it seems that the guest reception room is very much related and identified as the female quarters or living space. This further reinforces the idea that both *Hadhar* and *Badu* have different uses for social spaces and that the *Hadhar* household is less segregated than the *Badu* household.

Table 3. Shows the difference between the *Hadhar* and *Badu* living spaces (Source: Authors, 2018).

HADHAR HOUSE	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IDENTIFYING ELEMENTS (FREQUENCY)	% OF MAPS IN WHICH ELEMENT APPEARS	BADU HOUSE	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IDENTIFYING ELEMENTS (FREQUENCY)	% OF MAPS IN WHICH ELEMENT APPEARS
1. Guest Living Room (Male & Female)	*38*	*63.3%*	1. Family Living Room (Male & Female)	39	65.0%
2. Family Living Room (Male & Female)	18	30.0%	2. Diwaniya (Male)	20	33.0%
3. Diwaniya (Male)	7	11.6%	3. Magalat (Male)	6	10.0%
			4. Guest Living Room (Female)	5	8.0%

CONCLUSION

Research Significance

The significance of the findings was not that *Hadhar* and *Badu* have different house spatial arrangements but in fact that difference has been a natural progression from their traditional dwellings. This means that despite the impact of globalization and consequent effects of modernity, certain aspects of Kuwaitis culture survived and adapted in their house form and spaces. This morphology has also been discussed in prior research. AlJassar highlighted how the diwaniya survived Kuwait's modern transformation (AlJassar, 2009) while AlHaroun discussed contemporary understandings of the courtyard (AlHaroun, 2015). Recent research in ArchNet-IJAR also discussed culture and architecture in a different context. Zejnilovic presented the evolution of the built environment in Sarajevo, which highlighted the persistence of culture despite shifting political affiliations from the Ottomans to the Austro-Hungarian Empire and then socialist Yugoslavia. The various cultural groups and ideologies had different residential typologies, space configuration and visual expression (Zejnilovic, 2015; 2018).

Resistance to change has been evident throughout history. In the last centuries many cultures and civilizations endured the effects of colonialism. Today, among the concerns, especially from the 'Global South' is that "the impact of globalization on the culture of the 'developing' 'post-colonial' countries is pervasive and endemic" (Dandekar, 1998: 6). Some in the Arab world view globalization as "another term for capitalism and imperialism" and that "all Arabs and Muslims need to consider it an imminent danger that is endangering the political, social, cultural and economic stability" (Za'za', 2002: 1). Despite this, the findings of this study may suggest otherwise. It seems that culture always finds a way to adapt and survive in today's globalized world.

This section will discuss the implications of this and other findings for research, practice, and society. For research, it enriches discussions from the literature review further highlighting the importance of culture. In fact, this research presents a case study in how resilient some socio-cultural architectural elements and spatial configurations are in the face of massive transformations of the built environment. In addition, culture is not necessarily expressed in form but is definitely witnessed in the spatial use of spaces such as the *diwaniya* and *magalat*. For example, in Kuwait a house may be modern from the outside but from the inside it is very much a reflection of culture and tradition.

For practice, this research provides architects and designers another level of understanding into Kuwait's domestic built environment. It also solidifies spatial concepts and highlights the differences between the *Hadhar* and *Badu* house. The study intends to enhance knowledge for designers to encourage future research, dialogue and collaboration. What does it mean to design for a *Hadhar*? Or *Badu*? These inquiries are not meant to classify or stereotype any group; rather they intend to enrich understandings of culture and celebrate differences. Designers need to be aware of both localization and globalization and understand that culture becomes of paramount importance to promote sustainable development. There seems to be a gap between theory and practice. Knowledge gained from research has not always been used or applied in the real world. Therefore, this study recommends for practitioners in the field that they need to be aware of not only 'what' but 'for whom' they are designing. Unfortunately, client requirements and site has become more important than other factors. High real-estate prices and Kuwait's housing crisis has led people to build mediocre block houses (AlHaroun, 2015). Also, in Kuwait, designers often neglect significant cultural and environmental considerations when designing a house. Thus, understanding their clients' socio-cultural background becomes of great importance. It is the intention of this study to provide new understandings into the Kuwaiti house in order to direct designers to build more sustainable homes and better quality of spaces.

Limitations

The sketches provide great insights into contemporary social frameworks and lifestyles of the *Hadhar* and *Badu* as it relates to their domestic built environment. However, the study does have a few limitations. First, the collected cognitive maps may collect and infer certain types of information and several follow up questions become essential. For example, does socio-economic status influence the results? The researchers did not collect this type of information, and therefore, it is not clear whether income level would alter the spatial arrangement in people's houses. However, logic dictates that the more affluent one is, the larger the land he/she may afford, and therefore, may demand different types of spaces such as swimming pools, larger gardens, etc. Yet despite adding new requirements to their houses, they may still follow the overall socio-cultural trend of their prospective group.

Second, for the *Hadhar* participants 14 were men and 46 were women, for the *Badu* participants 17 were men and 43 were women. Most of the participants were women. Although, they have identified the spaces that expressed a strong sense of segregation in the house, it is not clear whether an equal distribution of genders would have changed the results. To what extent does their gender effect their selection of male spaces such as the *diwaniya* or *magalat*. Would a more gender-balanced sample change the results? Would more male participants suggest more *Hadhars* would have selected the *diwaniya*? Therefore, it is the recommendation of the research team to conduct further research via in-depth

interviews of both *Hadhar* and *Badu* to gain further insights and socio-cultural understandings.

To conclude, the findings revealed significant differences between the *Hadhar* and *Badu* houses most highlighted by the *diwaniya* and *magalat* spaces and how gender is segregated via different living spaces and entrances. This paper argues that these differences are rooted historically in the *Hadhar* mud brick traditional courtyard houses and the *Badu* traditional Arabian tents. Both *Hadhar* and *Badu* have different uses for social spaces, and the *Hadhar* household is less segregated than the *Badu* household. Although the oil boom transformed Kuwait's houses into modern villas, on the inside they are very much linked to each group's traditional use of space. Therefore, further research is imperative to understand this phenomenon and contribute to the discussion of the modern versus tradition paradigm. In fact, the findings of this study may suggest that the effects of modernity are far less than what was revealed in prior research.

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