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Privacy and Gendered Domestic Spaces in the 21st Century: Mapping Sociocultural Continuity in the Community led-housing Project of Ksar Tafilelt, Algeria

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Abstract

As a sociocultural product, the home is shaped by specific sociocultural norms and values. Economic development and modernisation have significantly affected the architecture of many Muslim homes, resulting in a disconnection from Islamic culture. This paper explores two sociocultural factors in Muslim housing: privacy and gender segregation. The analysis highlights how the principles of traditional Islamic architecture are still woven into contemporary designs, using Ksar Tafilelt in Algeria as a case study. The aim of this paper is to demonstrate that the Mozabite house in Ksar Tafilelt continues to uphold the social customs and religious beliefs of its residents despite the influences of modernisation.

Through fieldwork and comparative analysis, both the traditional house in the original Mozabite settlement and the contemporary house in Ksar Tafilelt are examined in terms of user zones rather than functional zones. This approach investigates how these homes uphold traditional Mozabite architectural patterns while accommodating contemporary comfort needs. The study methodology also includes a combination of questionnaires and interviews conducted with a sample of 70 residents from Ksar Tafilelt.

The findings reveal factors that have enabled the Mozabite community to maintain its Islamic identity. They also emphasise a notably conservative, family-oriented culture, which is reflected in the organisation of household spaces. This research study highlights the significance of involving the community in housing projects and comprehending the sociocultural principles of the local population throughout the construction process.

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Keywords

Architectural heritage; Privacy; Gendered spaces; Domestic spaces; Socio-cultural continuity

1. Introduction

Residents from diverse cultures design their living spaces in ways that adapt to and fulfil their sociocultural needs (Rapoport, 1991; Al-Homoud, 2009). Due to economic development and modernisation, cultural values and considerations, along with social performance and sustainability, have often been understudied. This has led to architectural designs being significantly shaped by Western architecture (Sani & Mahasti, 2013; Hegazy, 2015). The push for rapid development has resulted in the standardisation of architectural styles and building technologies, particularly impacting housing design in the developing world, especially in Islamic Arab countries. Moreover, the

influence of sociocultural factors on the design of houses in these countries has been insufficiently explored, complicating efforts to uphold social and cultural sustainability. Such conditions have led to the loss of the distinctive identity of Muslim Arab architecture and have disrupted the continuity of local sociocultural values within Muslim communities.

Currently, some architects and designers prioritise aesthetics, economic factors, and technological construction methods, often overlooking social and cultural needs (Al Thahab et al., 2016; Al Husban et al., 2021). Several scholars advocate for a more integrative and interdisciplinary approach that connects the physical, sociocultural, psychological, and economic dimensions of housing (Despres, 1991; Somerville, 1997; Shabani et al., 2011). Furthermore, many authors emphasise the necessity for flexibility and adaptability in housing, an issue that has become increasingly pressing due to the evolving needs of residents (Magdziak, 2019). Hassan Fathy asserted that vernacular and traditional architecture are vibrant sources that infuse a place with social vitality. He promoted a greater respect for integrating tradition into architecture, interpreting it as a social reflection of personal habits. Fathy contended that architects are responsible for cultivating a heightened awareness of the importance of incorporating the culture and local identity of the community into their designs. Thus, a suitable approach to constructing modern housing should respect contemporary needs and cultural requests by merging traditional housing principles with modern elements (Sani & Mahasti, 2013).

This paper investigates the continuity of two sociocultural factors in Muslim households: privacy and gender segregation. It employs the community-led housing project of Ksar Tafilelt as a case study to illustrate how the Mozabite houses in this settlement adhere to their community's sociocultural principles and religious beliefs. Furthermore, it emphasises how these homes replicate traditional architectural patterns, particularly concerning privacy and gender segregation, while accommodating contemporary lifestyles.

The study underscores the significance of understanding and integrating the social and cultural values of the local community into building construction. Through fieldwork observations and comparative analysis, the traditional houses in the original Mozabite settlement and the contemporary homes in Ksar Tafilelt are examined. This analysis focuses on user zones rather than functional zones, exploring how these residences preserve traditional Mozabite architectural patterns while meeting the demands of contemporary living and expected comfort. The study's methodology also incorporates a combination of questionnaires and interviews conducted with a sample of 70 residents from Ksar Tafilelt.

2. Literature Review

Islamic Arab countries are among the regions that embrace a rich architectural heritage; however, during the twentieth century, numerous traditional buildings and heritage symbols faced deterioration and destruction due to the impacts of modernisation and globalisation (Salman, 2018). This has resulted in a globalised built environment that lacks reference to the Islamic local character (Beynon, 2010; Zalloom & Aboutorabi, 2014; Zetter & Watson, 2006). Moreover, these changes have led to the loss of the identity of Muslim Arab architecture and disrupted the continuity of local socio-cultural values within the communities, such as privacy and gender segregation (Zetter & Watson, 2006).

Findings from previous studies indicate that gender segregation and privacy are among the essential sociocultural factors that shape the design parameters of the typical traditional Islamic house (Al-Rostomani, 1997; Lewcok & Freeth, 1978; Majida et al., 2012). These two factors also influence the internal layout transformations and the construction and design of houses in Islamic Arab countries (Hosseini & Ali, 2015; Othmann et al., 2015; Abed et al., 2022). A review of the literature has highlighted a shift in these two traditional Islamic principles (Al-Mohannadi & Furlan, 2022). Some research studies have indicated that privacy is not upheld in modern houses, and there is a lack of the Islamic housing concept due to the limited awareness of Islamic knowledge among the younger Muslim generation, who may have been influenced by Western culture (Alitajern & Nojoudi, 2016; Sana & Beenish, 2016). It has also been suggested that the importance of privacy diminishes daily in Muslim homes due to Western lifestyles (Bekleyen & Dalkiliç, 2011). Azhani et al. (2019) argued that there is a need for greater awareness of Islamic and cultural traditions in constructing houses that meet Muslims' needs. Babangida and Sani-Katsina (2018) state that

privacy can be significantly enhanced when considered at the initial design stage, particularly through the integration of design elements informed by Islamic design principles.

Sociocultural factors are recognised as having a strong relationship with the built environment, making it essential to design dwellings that are culturally responsive to residents' needs. Khemri (2020) argued that many sustainable projects fail in developing countries due to their designs lacking environmental, economic, social, and cultural contextual considerations. These projects do not encourage residents' participation in decision-making, which must consider people's social and cultural values to create a housing environment that adequately meets residents' needs.

Furthermore, architects are encouraged to design buildings that cater to people's sociocultural needs through a deeper understanding of them and how they interpret the use of their housing and cultural identity (Hekmat Ismail, 2015; Al Husban et al., 2021). Moreover, scholars assert that sociocultural factors significantly affect a house's long-term social and cultural sustainability (Shehab & Kandar, 2021). Djermouli (2019) explains that when the community is involved in housing projects, the resulting urban settlements provide better living conditions because they address the residents' requirements. Thus, encouraging residents' participation and considering their sociocultural needs during the design of houses tends to enhance residential satisfaction and improve environmental quality (Shehab & Kandar, 2021).

Several scholars have argued that a more integrative and interdisciplinary approach is needed, in which the physical, sociocultural, psychological, and economic dimensions are interrelated (Despres, 1991; Somerville, 1997; Shabani et al., 2011). They also emphasised the necessity for flexibility and adaptability in the housing sector due to the changing needs of residents (Magdziak, 2019). Sani and Mahasti (2013) contend that respecting both the contemporary and sociocultural needs of residents can be one of the best solutions for successfully designing and constructing modern housing. They explain that this can be accomplished by merging the essential criteria of traditional vernacular architecture with the new elements of contemporary houses. Furthermore, Abuorf and Wafi (2020) advocate for creating hybrid architecture by integrating traditional and modern technologies in house design.

With regard to the case study of this research, Algeria has undergone rapid urban growth that does not adhere to the country's traditional urban planning principles (Kedissa and Mezhoud, 2023). Kedissa and Mezhoud (2023) assert that housing designs in Algeria have overlooked one of the most significant sociocultural factors in traditional Islamic architecture—privacy—and have placed greater emphasis on aesthetic values instead. Consequently, housing has been influenced by Western architecture, which lacks local cultural value and fails to meet the needs of the local community (Djermouli, 2019).

In this context, this research highlights the significance of addressing residents' sociocultural needs during the decision-making phase, as well as the importance of community engagement and an understanding of social and cultural principles in building construction, with Ksar Tafilelt serving as a case study.

3. The traditional settlements of the M'zab Valley

The M'zab Valley is a region in the northern Algerian Sahara, approximately 600 km south of the capital city of Algiers (see Figure 1). The area features a vast rocky plateau and is renowned for its seven traditional settlements, known as 'ksour,' along with their respective palm groves. The Mozabite traditional settlements were urbanised by the Ibadis, who sought refuge in the Valley around the early 11th century (Chabbi, 1988; Bouchaira & Dupagne, 2003). These Mozabite ksour were designated as World Heritage sites by UNESCO in 1982 (UNESCO World Heritage Convention, 1982). They developed in extremely harsh climatic conditions amidst political conflicts. The Ibadis found in this region the conditions for safety and physical and moral isolation after being hunted and persecuted for centuries. These circumstances enabled these refugees to maintain their community cohesion and cultural identity for a prolonged period.

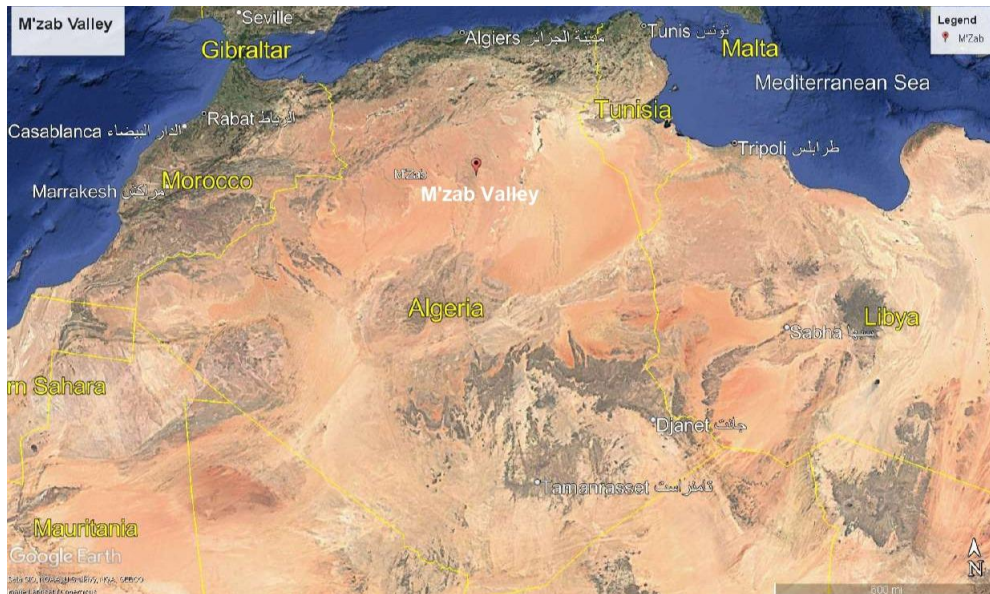


Figure 1: Geographical location of the M'zab Valley (source: Google Earth)

3.1. Urban and architectural characteristics of the Mozabite traditional settlements

The Mozabite traditional settlements consist of three main elements: the Ksar, palm grove, and cemetery (see Figure. 2). They were constructed in response to several factors, including military defence, the climatic conditions of the area, and the religious and sociocultural needs of the inhabitants (Chaabi, 1988; Cataldi et al., 1996; Bouchaira & Dupagne, 2003; Rezaei, 2021).

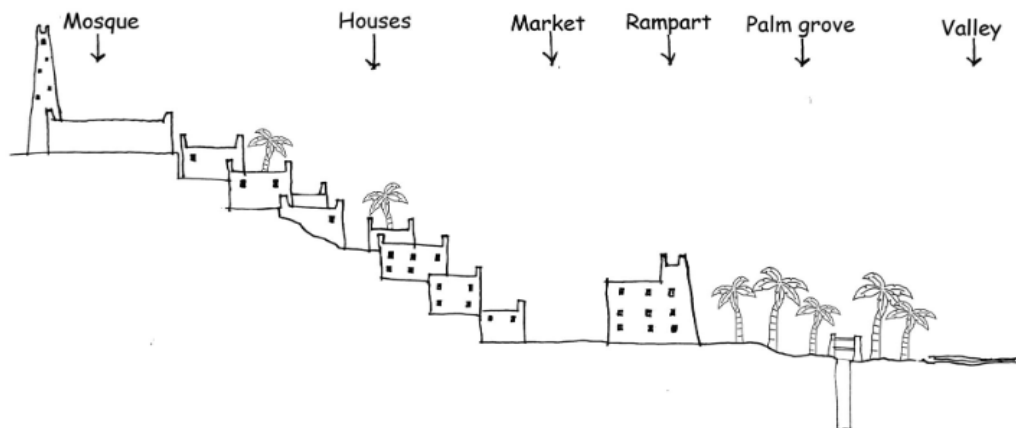


Figure 2: Organisation of a Mozabite Ksar (Source: Rezaie, 2021)

A massive wall surrounds the ksar to protect it from winds and sandstorms (Bouchaira & Dupagne, 2003; Solieman, 1988). This defensive wall was also constructed to delineate the boundaries of the settlement. Additionally, the ksar boasts watchtowers situated at elevated positions to safeguard the settlement, cemeteries, and palm groves, while also regulating valley water levels during the rainy seasons (Bouchaira & Dupagne, 2003). The traditional Mozabite settlements were hierarchically organised, beginning with the mosque at the central and highest point of the hill. Surrounding the mosque, houses were progressively built close together in an orderly fashion, forming concentric circles (see Figure 3). Subsequently, the market was established at the lowest level of the ksar (Cataldi, 1996; Bouchaira & Dupagne, 2003).

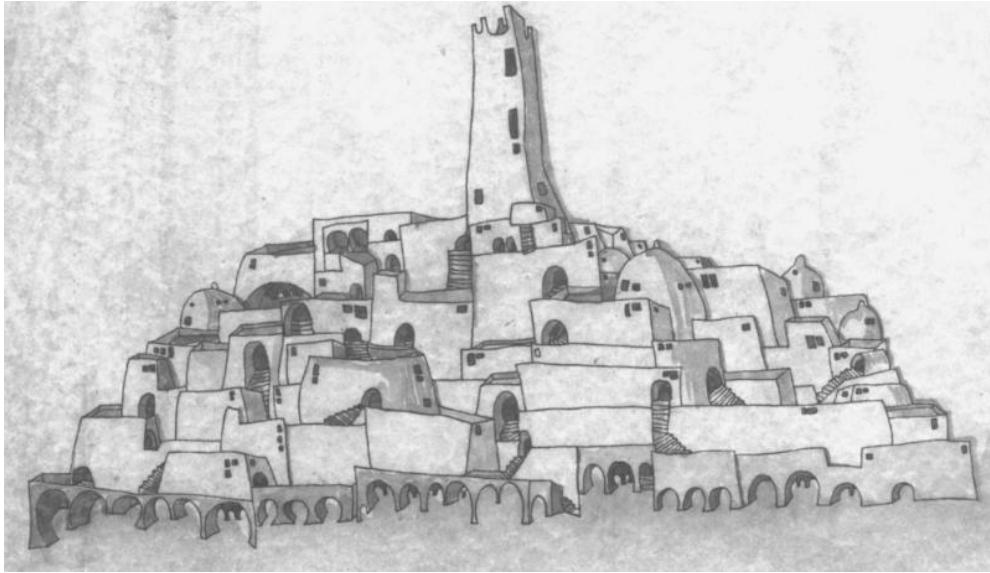


Figure 3: Image of a traditional Mozabite Ksar with a mosque and minaret at the peak (Cataldi et al., 1996)

The traditional settlements are characterised by a compact, contiguous urban fabric with a tightly-knit street hierarchy (see Figure 4) (Rezaei, 2021). Streets are generally winding and narrow to mitigate the impact of wind and sandstorms, creating shaded areas. They are hierarchically arranged from public to semi-public, semi-private, and finally private. The width of the streets corresponds to an increase in privacy, and there is also a transition and specialisation in the functions of the streets, moving from the economic space to the residential area.

Cemeteries and palm groves are situated outside the old Ksar. Every Ksar features its own cemetery and palm grove.

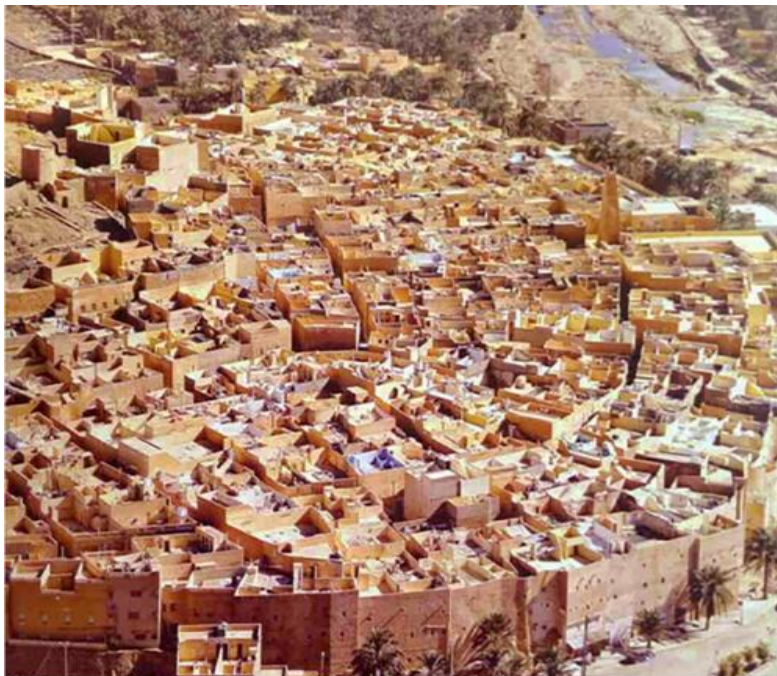


Figure 4: Mozabite traditional settlement, Ksar Bounoura (Source: Azil and Vicario, 2022)

3.2. The traditional Mozabite House

Mozabite houses reflect the construction and building traditions of the Mediterranean in general and North Africa in particular (see Figure 5). The design adapts to the harsh climatic conditions of the Sahara Desert as well as the strict religious and socio-cultural principles of the Ibadi community (Cataldi et al., 1996). These religious and socio-cultural guidelines encompass several elements, such as spatial organisation, openings, height, and orientation of the house, to meet the needs of residents, particularly regarding the socio-cultural aspect of privacy.

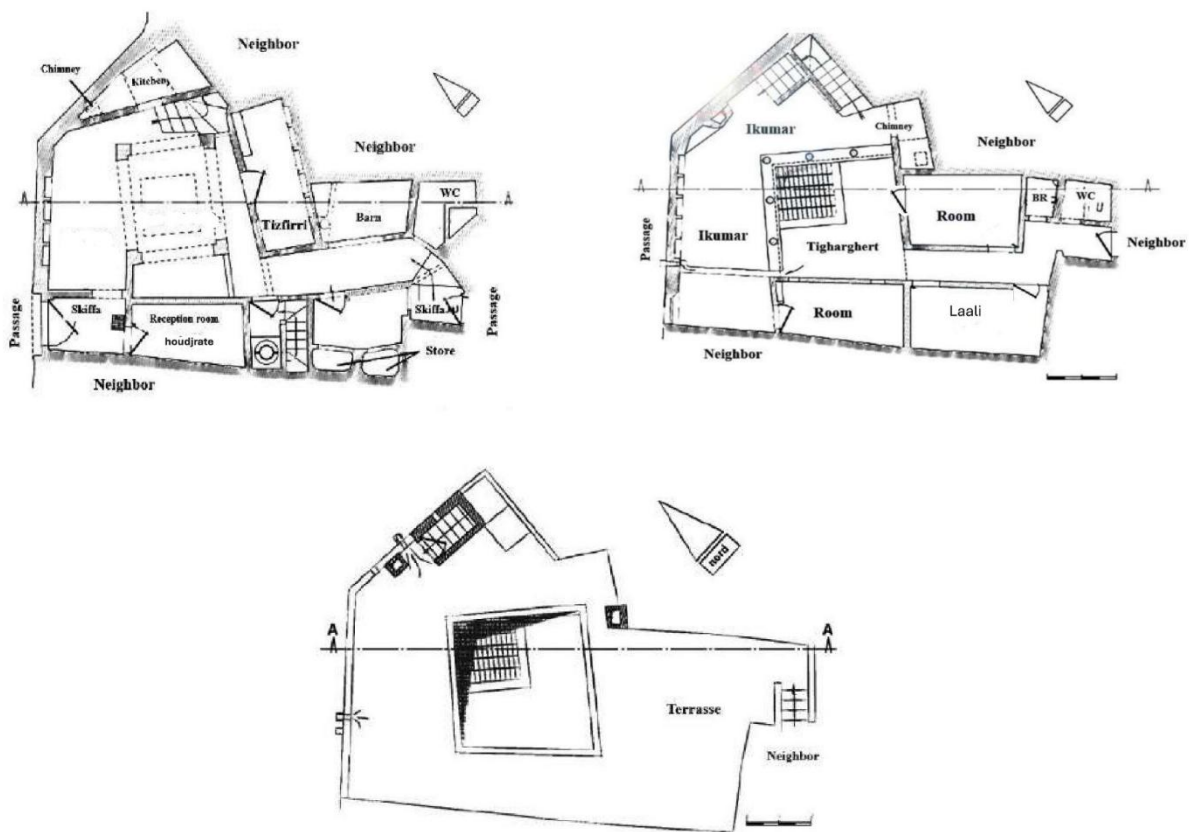


Figure 5: Plans of a traditional Mozabite house (source: Rezig 2021. modified by the researcher)

4. Case Study: Ksar Tafilelt

The housing crisis in the M'zab Valley has resulted in uncontrolled urban growth, resulting in the construction of poorly designed and haphazardly located homes. This expansion has encroached upon the traditional Mozabite Ksour and intruded into the palm groves that once provided refuge from the intense summer heat; these areas now resemble a residential subdivision (Gueliane 2019). Consequently, this situation has undermined the sociocultural and natural values of the tangible and intangible heritage of the M'zab Valley (Bouali-Messahel 2011; Souidi and Bestandji 2019). The ongoing housing crisis in the region and the challenges brought about by uncontrolled urban growth has heightened awareness among the Mozabites regarding the importance of returning to their traditions. This consciousness has prompted the establishment of new extensions in the M'zab Valley, referred to as the new Ksour. These developments seek to meet the urgent demand for housing, preserve the Ksourien ecosystem, and harmonise tradition with modernity. Each new Ksar in these settlements is situated close to the traditional settlements, ensuring a connection in population and architectural style (Gueliane 2015, 2019).

Ksar Tafilelt is a community-led housing project initiated by Amidoul Association. The residents are at the heart of the settlement's development in this endeavour. Houses were constructed by the community, for the community, and designed to meet the community's needs. It comprises 1,050 housing units spread over 22.5 hectares, situated on a hill within an extensive set of ridges that overlook the M'zab Valley (see Figure 6 and 7) (Diafat & Madani, 2019). The Tafilelt project reinterprets the urban planning principles of traditional settlements and adapts them to the needs of contemporary life (Addad, 2012). It replicates the primary principles of composition and spatial organisation found in traditional settlements. While taking the traditional settlement as an urban reference, it also develops specific modern criteria, integrating them with the traditional ones. The project aims to provide affordable housing for low- and average-income households—particularly young families—to preserve the palm grove of the traditional settlement, which is threatened by uncontrolled urban expansion, and to rehabilitate the endangered ecosystem of the palm groves (Rezaei, 2021).

Amidoul Association is a collective of Mozabite individuals from the traditional Ksar of Beni Isguen. Established in 1993 as a small association, it evolved in 2011 into a real estate promotion company. Amidoul is a non-profit association that acquired the rocky hill where Ksar Tafilelt is situated. It sells houses at cost price with zero interest, covering only the construction expenses. Amidoul Association is now responsible for managing the entire settlement of Tafilelt. They receive assistance from the Azzaba of the traditional settlement of Ksar Beni Isguen and the residents of Ksar Tafilelt. Their goal is to ensure that the settlement remains safe, secure, and clean, addressing the needs of the residents and providing essential services.



Figure 6: Site plan of the traditional settlement of Beni Isguen (top) and Ksar Tafilelt (bottom)



Figure 7: Site plan of Ksar Tafilelt

According to the responses from Amidoul association, funding for the project was shared among the government, the association, and the local inhabitants. The government's contribution was primarily in the form of a discount on the land price, which was sold to the association at 20% of its market value. The project of Tafilelt benefited from the PSH (Participative Social Housing) scheme. There were three primary conditions attached to this scheme. The houses were allocated to individuals under three conditions (Bouali-Messahel, 2011):

- Residents should have no other house
- Only families can have a house, not single individuals
- Families should not have received any previous government support for their housing

Once the beneficiaries met these conditions, they were required to pay one-third of the house cost at the beginning of the construction process; thereafter, payments could be made in instalments (Rezaie, 2021). Beneficiaries were permitted to move into their houses after two-thirds had been paid.

Data gathered from interviews and questionnaires indicated that the Mozabite community was actively involved in every stage of the housing development process of the project. They were pivotal in identifying their housing needs, planning and designing their homes, raising funds, managing the development, and relocating to the newly constructed housing. The co-production process commenced with the engagement of intellectuals, including the project manager and administrators, to supervise the project's execution. Initially, the architects convened with the beneficiaries to discuss their housing needs and clarify the project's procedures. Following this, regular meetings were scheduled to assess progress, updates, and challenges, facilitating collective decision-making. The architects ensured that all parties were aligned and actively involved throughout the process. Architects, engineers, and builders collaborated to design and construct the houses, ensuring that the proposed design aesthetically reflected Mozabite architecture while structurally fulfilling the residents' requirements. Participants confirmed that the construction site remained accessible to beneficiaries outside of working hours. Members of Amidoul, particularly the architect, noted that key meetings between architects and beneficiaries were held during religious festivals, as well as during traditional events and at various stages of house handovers. During these meetings, beneficiaries were invited to share their ideas, suggest modifications, and raise any concerns. Additionally, beneficiaries were encouraged to visit the site every weekend, primarily on Fridays (the first day of the weekend in Algeria), to assist with activities requested by the association. Mr. Mustapha Tellai, a member of the association, stated that the primary objective for beneficiaries participating each weekend is to strengthen their relationships, as they all live in the same settlement. Furthermore, beneficiaries were encouraged to show solidarity by assisting one another. Once the construction process was complete, Amidoul Association created a contract for the residents. This contract specified a list of rules and conditions that residents were required to sign before moving into their houses and living in the Ksar. The rules in this contract were familiar to the Mozabites, drawing inspiration from the traditions and principles of the indigenous Mozabite community, ensuring that everyone comprehended these guidelines.

5. Results

Based on fieldwork observations, the findings indicate that the houses in Ksar Tafilelt have a layout similar to that of traditional Mozabite homes. While the original spatial hierarchy of the Ksar has largely been preserved, some houses have undergone adaptations due to instances where their locations were unsuitable. The traditional Mozabite house served as a model for the dwellings in Ksar Tafilelt, which are larger and feature more intricate spatial designs, while also incorporating contemporary living conveniences.

In traditional settlements, a clear distinction exists between private life within the home and the outside world, with mobility being highly regulated. Ksar Tafilelt follows construction principles similar to those found in traditional settlements. Its streets are organised hierarchically, transitioning from public to semi-public to semi-private areas.

Access to the house from the street is through a taskift, which prevents any direct view of the interior from the outside. The taskift is a curved entrance designed to preserve the house's intimacy. It leads to the patio and then to the centre of the house, West Eddar, an open living space surrounded by rooms. West Eddar features a skylight in the ceiling called a shebbek to ensure air and light reach the ground floor. The houdjrate serves as the male reception room on the ground floor, typically segregated from other rooms to shield West Eddar from potential male visitors. A staircase connects the ground floor to the first floor, which comprises bedrooms and a bathroom. Another staircase provides access from the upper floor to the terrace. The terrace walls are sufficiently high to maintain family intimacy while allowing for good ventilation. The analysis of fieldwork observations and participant responses regarding the house indicates that several elements related to dwelling design and spatial planning are still being upheld (see Figures 8, 9

and 10). The spatial hierarchy of the house in the traditional settlement has remained almost identical to that of the houses in Tafilelt.

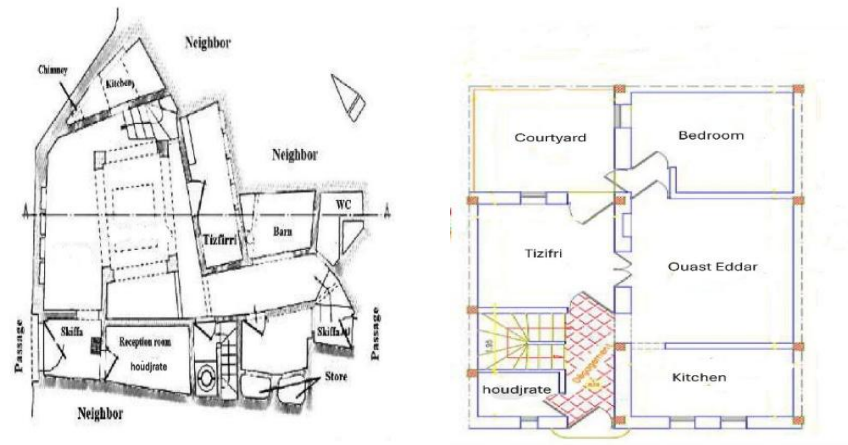


Figure 8: Plan of Ground Floor of a traditional Mozabite house (left) and a contemporary house in Tafilelt (right) (source 1: Rezig 2021. Source 2: Amidoul Association website, modified by the researcher)

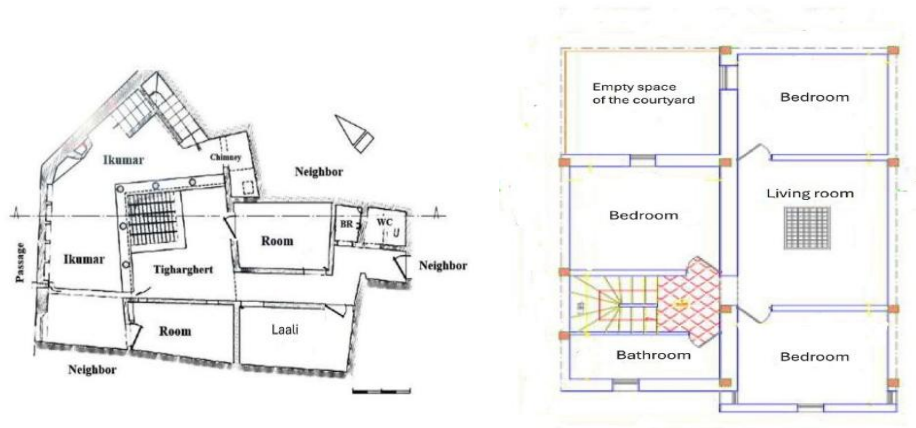


Figure 9: Plan of First Floor of a traditional Mozabite house (left) and a contemporary house in Tafilelt (right) (source: Rezig 2021. source: Amidoul Association website, modified by the researcher)

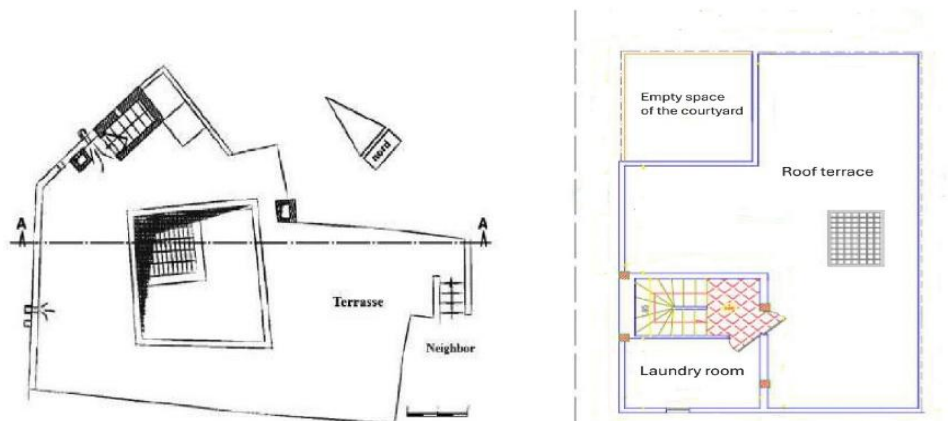


Figure 10: Plan of Roof terrace of a traditional Mozabite house (left) and a contemporary house in Tafilelt (right) (source: Rezig 2021. source: Amidoul Association website, modified by the researcher)

The taskift, West eddar, houdjrate, shebbek, and tizefri remained present in the inward-looking interior of the house. A reduced number of openings was also adopted to maintain the privacy of the house. The height and orientation of

the house and openings adhere to regulations that preserve the neighbours' privacy within their dwellings and allow them to receive their share of sunlight. Conversely, fieldwork data and analysis revealed that contemporary and traditional space use patterns coexist. Furthermore, new cultural values have emerged, alongside adaptive changes in social relationships and space use, in response to the demands of contemporary life.

Ksar Beni Isguen has been regarded as a reference model; however, Ksar Tafilelt has developed its own distinct characteristics and does not strictly adhere to all aspects of traditional architectural and urban morphology. As societies continually evolve, adaptation and innovation become essential. Architects in Tafilelt have adapted traditional architectural and urban designs to meet the contemporary needs of residents. Ksar Tafilelt has introduced new facilities, including a sports centre, stadium, and a wedding hall. Regarding the houses in Tafilelt, three types were introduced to accommodate residents' financial situations: small, medium, and large. The house in Tafilelt features larger, regularly shaped rooms, a laundry room on the roof terrace, and garages.

The arrangement of spaces within different communities varies according to their distinct sociocultural and religious needs. In the Mozabite community of Tafilelt, the structure of the Mozabite house comprises spaces designated for use by specific individuals at particular times. The use of these spaces is primarily governed by time and the users' identities, reflecting the sociocultural and religious characteristics of the Mozabite community. Fieldwork observations revealed that the interior organisation of the Mozabite house in Tafilelt divides the space into different areas designated for specific users based on gender. These areas consist of a male space and a female space. The male space is primarily used for receiving non-mahram male visitors—men who are not directly related to the household by blood. This room, known as the "houdjrate," serves as the guest room for male visitors, akin to those found in traditional houses. It is positioned at the entrance of the house, without encroaching on the private life of the domestic spaces. The female area is secluded from the male reception room. Specific spaces are exclusively used by female family members, such as the tizifri (women's reception room), the kitchen, and the terrace. The tizifri is a family sitting area and a guestroom for female visitors. According to participants' responses, women predominantly occupy the house, and its use varies based on the presence or absence of men, who mainly spend their time outside, using the house chiefly as a place to rest. Respondents indicate that a woman's responsibility for managing the family lies primarily within the home, encompassing responsibilities such as cleaning, cooking, laundry, and childcare.

Gender segregation is prominent in Mozabite households, where women tend to be somewhat secluded. The design of these homes aims to limit interactions between women residing in the house and male visitors, whether they are strangers or non-mahram relatives. The use of space within the homes varies based on the presence of men. For instance, the domestic areas are used much more during the day when only women are at home. When male guests are present, the use of domestic spaces shifts. Women tend to avoid the room designated for receiving male guests, and this area is kept separate from those used by women. The entrance to the room is sometimes covered by a curtain for added privacy. Conversely, men in households avoid the women's reception room when female visitors are present. As a result, the house is typically divided into distinct spaces assigned to specific users, primarily categorised by gender and time. Additionally, the process for visitors entering and moving through the interior of a Ksar Tafilelt house follows the same principles and guidelines found in traditional homes. The design thoughtfully addresses the privacy needs of occupants.

Based on this, participants were asked whether their houses met their privacy needs (see Figure 11). The majority of respondents, 96%, indicated that their homes did satisfy their privacy requirements. Only a small minority, 4%, reported that their homes were somewhat overlooked; however, this issue did not present a significant problem. Residents who expressed concerns about their houses being overlooked were primarily those facing the main street connecting Ksar Tafilelt to the traditional settlement, as well as individuals living in studio apartments. These participants, mainly women, noted that they could be seen from their terraces due to their proximity to the mosque. The respondents did not consider this a substantial issue, as they found ways to manage the situation. Women in studio flats mentioned they attempted to avoid using their roof terrace during prayer times. In contrast, those living on the main street reported installing double doors and/or curtains at the main entrance.

Consequently, privacy is a vital cultural element that has influenced the design of settlements and homes, and the inhabitants of Ksar Tafilelt hold it in high regard.

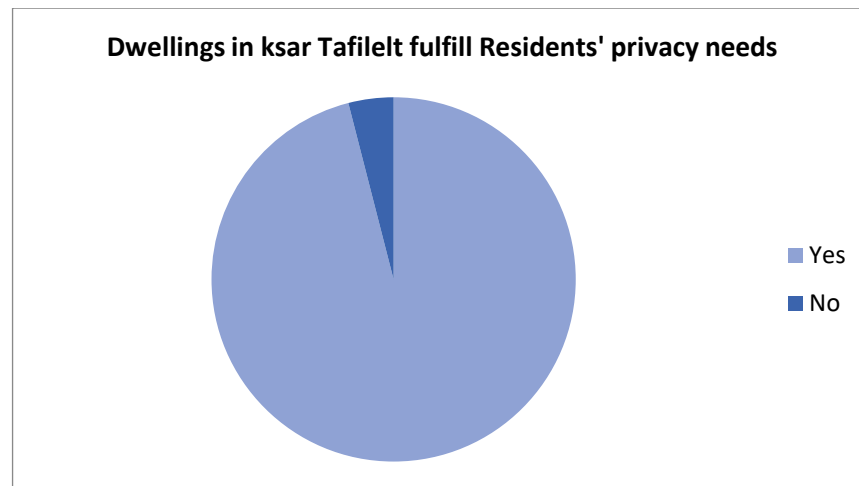


Figure 11: Dwellings in Ksar Tafilelt fulfill residents' privacy needs

6. Discussion and Conclusion

The high degree of modernisation in the West has significantly impacted the Islamic Arab countries; however, findings indicate that urbanisation and economic development in Ksar Tafilelt have not resulted in a substantial change in housing design. Observations from fieldwork confirmed the continued influence of Mozabite sociocultural principles in Ksar Tafilelt, particularly regarding privacy and gendered spaces. These enduring principles are rooted in the strong sociocultural values of the indigenous Ibadi community and remain evident in the 21st century.

The internal layout and space use patterns of houses are significantly shaped by these sociocultural and religious factors, which are crucial in influencing housing in Ksar Tafilelt. The traditional Mozabite house is designed to fulfil specific privacy requirements that are distinctly defined within this community. This Mozabite planning strategy incorporates a spatial configuration where various areas inside the house are allocated for use by particular individuals at specific times.

Furthermore, the findings indicated that the enduring nature of these two sociocultural principles depends on the collaborative process embraced by the Mozabite community. As previously noted, Ksar Tafilelt is a community-led housing project where residents build their own homes. This cooperative approach is not an unfamiliar practice for the Mozabite community; rather, it is a cultural expression of collaboration grounded in strong religious ties and a profound sense of community that has been passed down through generations. Therefore, as residents were engaged from the early stages of the housing project, their needs, particularly sociocultural ones, were considered.

The persistence of these principles assists in bridging the gap between the need to uphold a sociocultural identity within the Indigenous Ibadi community and the increasing demands of contemporary life in the country. An effective design solution should respect both the necessities of modern living and the sociocultural needs of the residents. Furthermore, given that sociocultural change is inevitable, it is vital to take into account the sociocultural needs of residents during the decision-making phase of the project when addressing contemporary issues lifestyles. Consequently, this research study underscores the importance of comprehending the social and cultural principles of the local community and engaging residents in building projects, particularly in the decision-making process.

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