

# Mimesis of Types

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## Exploring urban Types and Metamorphoses through Theater

### Archetypes, Patterns, Types, and Everyday Life

This work approaches ‚urban architectural types‘ as configurations of tangible and intangible components and their meaningful socio-cultural interrelations, differing from prevailing approaches.<sup>1</sup> This article shows how essential characteristics of an ‚urban architectural type‘ are depending on in-depth reading through art, in our case: the theater. Hence, it maintains that an ‚urban architectural type‘ manifests only through its fully fledged life-pattern (e.g. as opposed to Rossi's emphasis on the persistence of the artefact).<sup>2</sup>

Although ‚archetype‘ originates in Jungian Theory and ‚pattern‘ in mathematics, ‚archetypes‘ in architecture.<sup>3</sup> are patterns in the sense of Alexander's ‚Pattern Language‘<sup>4</sup> due to two major aspects. Both are pre-supposed to be timeless and are comprised of synchronic configurations of spatial components and their interrelations.

*Archetypes-patterns* are abstractions, constructed through analysis or realized through insight or intuition. Their concrete manifestations support life situations likely to be found in different cultures and places. As arrangements of our physical environment they bear intrinsic meaning. Additional meaning is derived from the particular historic-cultural constellations in which they are considered.

Archetypes-patterns are presented as ideas or diagrams, always abstract, open, vague and only partially definable. Specific artefacts may be considered as realizations of an archetype-pattern (as well as of a type, as described below). *Artefacts* belong to the everyday life. They are concrete and circumstantial, necessarily including excessive and redundant aspects when compared to ideas or diagrams, i.e. archetypes-patterns. Between these opposed poles—archetypes-patterns on the one hand and artefacts on the other—there are types. *Types* are discovered in the motion of history, and constructed through processes of typology. They may be less or more abstract, closer or more remote from the pole of ‚archetype.‘

1 Moneo 1978.

2 Rossi 1982.

3 Thiis-Evensen 1987; Unwin 2017.

4 Alexander 1977, 1979.

5 Moneo, *ibid.*; Broadbent 1990.

6 Krier 1979; Kelbaugh 1996; Pevsner 1976; Rossi 1982; Vidler 1999.

Artefacts have excessive attributes and characteristics also in comparison to types, and may be equally seen as illustrations or examples of types and/or archetypes-patterns. The history of 'type' in architectural discourse has been extensively discussed,<sup>5</sup> showing how 'types' result from co-categorization according to form, shape, structure, function, style, etc. in processes of classification or typification.<sup>6</sup> The specificities of place and time may be regarded as actualizations of a pattern, imbuing it with life and meaning. Interweaving of patterns/archetypes creates the generic urban language; interweaving of types creates the *local urban language* intelligible through the practices of everyday life. Namely, quotidian meaning is present and consumed in physical forms and configurations, activities, moods, and atmospheres of places in the city and constitutes the experience of urbanism at a specific time and place.

In this article, „balcony“—as a configuration of semi-open space attached to a building—is an archetype-pattern. It emerges in a local language as a unique urban type—for example in the context of Naples, Vienna, Paris, or Tel Aviv. The balcony is a significant feature in the urban image of all these cities, yet there are notable differences in the realization of this archetype-pattern in the quality of the quotidian and daily experiences of urban life in each city. This experience is closely related to human perception and to the human body.

Theater as an art form is capable to distill the aspects of the urban type that are otherwise hidden from the researcher of architectural typology. Just as an architectural typology discloses an essential idea and/or diagram emerging from specific artifacts, so theatrical works are capable to reveal the essentials of life and meaning related to that urban architectural type. The present article maintains that, both the idea/diagram and the essentials distilled in the theatrical work, form complementary, interconnected and interdependent facets of the urban architectural type.

### Mimesis and the Direct Link between Theater and Urban Space and its Meanings

Like urban patterns, space in theater is interpreted through its use. However, in contrast to ordinary quotidian activity, in theater, urban space is enriched with additional meanings due to the symbolic nature of the theatrical stage on which it is found. On stage, every object, sight, idea, movement, speech, and relationship is perceived as representing a parallel phenomenon in real life outside the theater fiction. Representation is a binary relationship in which A is placed instead of B by virtue of similar characteristics, which are accentuated in A, the imitation. According to Aristotle, this posing of A to express B is not merely a reduction of the characteristics of that which is being imitated—B—but is also the embodiment of its distillation in materials and words as well as the revelation of its beautiful essence and its implementation. This process, according to Aristotle, is mimesis (Aristotle, *Poetics*).

Representation as system of signs, as in any system that conveys meaning, is based on an additional factor that is external. This external factor me-

diates and connects between the representer and the represented, interprets the representer as a sign and grants it meaning. This external factor is the addressee, and in the case of the theater, the audience.

The need for the physical presence of a public and the gathering of people together for the theatrical event is one of the theater's unique characteristics. Social and communal frameworks have been rooted in the essence of theater from its birth in the Greek polis. This virtual community of viewers can also be considered as users of the city. Audiences attending the theater are already charged with attitudes, values, images, symbols and meanings that are familiar from their daily lives. The theater audience interprets the stage representation, in light of these daily meanings, including the theatrical representation of the urban-scape. That is to say the theatrical event unfolds as a dialogue between its creators and the present audience.

In addition, according to Erika Fischer-Lichte, the theater is also a genre of cultural performance<sup>7</sup>, a term first coined by the American anthropologist Milton Singer in the late 1950s. According to Singer, some public events are cultural structures in which a set of basic images is articulated. These images are a clear expression of the way in which a culture understands and presents itself to members of the culture and to strangers, who are both present at the event. Drawing on Singer, Fischer-Lichte<sup>8</sup>, stresses the importance of theater as a cultural performance and as a community medium through which key themes, attitudes, and images can be examined in a specific time and place.

7 Fischer-Lichte 1997: 16.

8 Fischer-Lichte 1997: 19.

The foregoing serves as a starting point for this study's choice of examining the role of theater creators in exposing and emphasizing certain key aspects of urbanism. The theater helps reveal important cultural and urban issues inherent in these key aspects of urbanism. Consequently, the embodiment of a specific urban type in theater constitutes an x-ray of urbanism at a particular time and in a specific city. Moreover, the theater illuminates the urban experience as unique and emphasizes the sensory-poetic potential inherent in it as a network of spatial relations.

### Case Study: Tel Aviv Balconies in Hanoch Levin and Ruth Dar Productions

The following will examine Tel Aviv, a young city, which recently celebrated its 100th anniversary and exists as a central meaning and a central experience in the lives of its residents and users. In fact, since its founding in 1909, Tel Aviv has served as a central idea in Israeli culture as a whole.

Tel Aviv's urbanism, as reflected in typical everyday life, arises in the collaborative work of the playwright and director Hanoch Levin together with the scenographer and costume designer Ruth Dar, which lasted from the early 1970s until Levin's death in August 1999. Both Levin and Dar grew up, were educated, lived, and worked in Tel Aviv, the city whose images provided the foundations for their artistic creations.

Drawing from the corpus of their work, this paper focuses on the theatrical production of the play *Ya'akobi* and *Leidental* at The Cameri Theater in



Fig. 1 Balconies in Tel-Aviv, Dizengoff square 1930's

9 Aronis 2010: 36.

10 Many residential buildings in Tel Aviv that were built in the framework of the Geddes Plan in the 1930s and in subsequent years included a large front balcony and an additional service balcony adjacent to the kitchen.

The impact of building regulation through building type on social life in Israel has been discussed in several researches. Pl. see for example Allweil, 2017; Efrat, 2004; Kallus and Law Yone, 2000.

11 As a general rule, three types of front balconies can be discerned in the Tel Aviv area, which have different relations with the buildings from which they protrude and with the street. Metzger-Smoke, 1994; Etgar, 2011.

I. The first type of front balcony refers to a small square or rounded balcony that protruded from the wall and sometimes from the corner of the building. In view of its dimensions (c. 1.20 m x 1.20 m), this terrace was used mainly as a design element or as a seating area for a single person or couple. Sometimes it was built three steps above the level of the street, and therefore was more exposed to the street than other balconies.

II. The second refers to a square or rounded balcony with an open or semi-open railing made of iron bars, usually protruding from the line of the building. This balcony, which characterized the buildings of the tenements and was usually 1.90 meters deep, was a direct continuation of the public space, the living room. Its open railing allowed ventilation and a view to the street, but also revealed the event to whomever passes by. Carolin Aronis (2010) notes that because apartments in the housing projects were usually small, consisting of two to three rooms, the balcony was a significant spatial addition to the apartment space, providing additional space to stay in apart from the living room and the kitchen.

III. Another type of front balcony found in Tel-Aviv was sunken into the building volume and covered by an opaque railing and a shading apron. These balconies formed the 'strip window,' a characteristic element of international construction style. In contrast to the terrace with the open rail, this balcony made it possible to look into the street under the cover of the sealed railing and the shadow cast by the upper 'apron' throughout the day. Given the white plaster glistening in the strong sun, the shaded space of the porch created a 'black stripe' that almost completely hid the people.

1972, and two productions of the play *Krum* at the Haifa Theater in 1974 and The Cameri Theater in Tel Aviv in 2000. These works were chosen because their plots unfold primarily outside the house. An overview of the sites and events in those performances reveals the character of the fictional space and of the stage as a network of urban-types. These types characterize the theatrical works under examination and appear throughout Levin's writings, including his plays, stories, poems, and more; this paper will demonstrate the theatrical interpretation of the balcony archetype in its unique Tel Aviv variation in the 1970s and 1980s.

As will be discussed in the following, the theatrical medium is unique in the simultaneous representation of both archetype and type. For now, it is important to emphasize that the theatrical representation makes use of all the theatrical means, especially the scenography. Therefore, this study will focus as much on the means of representation as on the subjects of representation.

### Tel Aviv: A City of Balconies

Notably, in the 1970s Tel Aviv was referred to as a „city of balconies.“ This image was based on the pervasive presence of balconies in the urban-scape, which was the result primarily of a municipal bylaw dating from the city's early years in the mid-1920s requiring that 6.6 percent of each apartment should be devoted to a balcony.<sup>9</sup> As a result, 50 years later, most of the apartments in the city included one or two balconies.<sup>10</sup>

The profusion of balconies.<sup>11</sup> led to the great impact of this element on physically shaping Tel Aviv's urban landscape. The balcony provided interesting reflections of lights and shadows in the building's mass, and cast shadows on the street. The railing of the balcony was designed in a variety of forms that both drew attention to and provided decoration for the modernist architecture that characterized Tel Aviv in the 1930s and 1940s (fig. 1). However, unlike the European balcony that is primarily a decorative element, the Tel Aviv balcony had a distinctive social function, which engendered its central position in everyday urban life.<sup>12</sup>

In the housing projects built in Tel Aviv beginning in the 1950s, the balcony was a spacious, semi-open area, which served as a spatial continuation of the living room and as one of the main ways to ventilate and cool the apartment during the hot humid summer days.<sup>13</sup> The vibrant life of the balconies was extroverted and linked directly to the street (fig. 2 a–d). According to Metzger-Smoke, „[...] people on the balconies had loud conversations with people on the street. In the evenings, family and friends gathered on the balconies, where they ate, talked and played cards.“<sup>14</sup>

Tel Aviv of the 1970s was a city of low, three to four-story houses arranged in differentiated neighborhoods which were nonetheless very much alike. With petite bourgeoisie immigrants from all over the world living in its neighborhoods, the city enjoyed a wide diversity of customs, foods and languages. Because of the physical proximity of the apartments, the great variety of sounds and smells blended in the public sphere through the open balconies and win-

dows. These specific Tel Aviv patterns resulted in nosiness and prying eyes from the balconies outwards, and from the street into the balcony and the interior of the house, encouraging comparison and implicit competition (fig. 3).

Even as early as the late 1950s in Israel, shutters for closing balconies were marketed aggressively, beginning with asbestos shutters, followed by plastic shutters in the early 1960s (fig. 4). This resulted in a trend of closing balconies to appear in the urban sphere.<sup>15</sup> The plastic shutters made it easy to close the balcony and include it in the enclosed living area<sup>16</sup> that was „hidden from the sun and neighbors.“<sup>17</sup>

Although the installation of shutters was widespread, changing the appearance of the city, many residents continued to use the balcony as they had always done. Rather than using the shutters to completely close off the balcony, numerous residents used them as a partition with open grooves, and often the shutters were left wide open during the day (fig. 5) The closing of private spaces at nightfall and their reopening at sunrise as a result of the use of shutters became another layer that was added to the balcony's relationship with the street. Consequently, despite the strong linking of the balcony to the private interior areas of the house, the direct connection to the street continued to exist throughout the day and evening, through the active action of opening the shutters. Thus, the connection to the street remained as it had always been, with the voyeuristic atmosphere occasioned by the balcony even intensified.

### The First Production: *Ya'akobi* and *Leidental*: Immobility on the Balcony and Vitality on the Street

In 1972, the play *Ya'akobi* and *Leidental* premiered at the Cameri Theater in Tel Aviv. According to playwright and director Hanoch Levin, it was „[a] play with songs about a triangle that is not the most romantic: two sour men and a sour woman miss life.“

The show opened with the sounds of a piano playing in the background while the stage remained dark. A beam of light appeared and illuminated a section of the stage floor and the back screen. Into this light appeared the actor who played *Ya'akobi*, who then began speaking. In the fictional world of the play, *Ya'akobi* was on the street. Thus, from the opening moments of the play, the situation of being in the street was translated into the images of the theater, with a red curtain, the stage floor, a beam of light and an actor.

Additional meanings emerged during the performance with the exposure of the scenography. At the center of the stage, there was a red curtain placed at a height of approximately two meters, leaving an empty area between it and the stage walls, and a performance area of about two meters wide In front of the curtain. In this front area, on stage right adjacent to the screen, stood two chairs, and on stage left stood another, identical chair. Above the solitary chair on stage left was an iron balustrade, its bottom attached to a podium concealed by the screen. In a mirror image of the railing, above the two chairs on stage right was a black frame that formed a window (fig. 6).

12 Metzger-Smoke 1994: 29.

13 Shavit & Bigger, 2001: 253.

14 Metzger-Smoke 1994: 29.

15 Efrat 2005.

16 In her article (2010), Aronis presents evidence that the residents' need to close the balconies and use this space for various purposes first arose in the 1920s, and became established as a trend only from the 1960s.

17 Efrat 2005.



Fig. 2a The vibrant life of the balconies linked directly to the street.



Fig. 2b The vibrant life of the balconies linked directly to the street.



Fig. 2c The vibrant life of the balconies linked directly to the street.



Fig. 2d The vibrant life of the balconies linked directly to the street.



Fig. 3 A woman gazing down her balcony.



Fig. 4 Plastic and asbestos shutters in Tel-Aviv 1970's.

18 Ya'akobi and Leidental., Act 2

19 Ya'akobi and Leidental., Act 2

20 Ya'akobi and Leidental., Act 2

At first glance, it seemed that the stage contained very basic elements and theater props. However, a closer examination elevated their arrangement to resemble a typical grid of a building façade on a Tel Aviv street (fig. 7). The street scenes took place across the stage, thus creating a movement along the long axis of the stage, mirroring street traffic. The balcony railing, the window, and the performance area that mirrored the street created a relationship similar to the one existing in the city among the balcony, the window and the street.

It should be noted that the width of most Tel Aviv streets range from nine to fifteen meters, a distance which enables the viewer from the sidewalk or from the opposite balcony to perceive the facade of the building along with the pavement below it. Thus, placing the scenography on the stage in a typical grid pattern of a building façade places the audience in a voyeuristic position comparable to that of those who gaze at the events from the opposite balcony or sidewalk, a common everyday life situation and urban experience of Tel Aviv at the time.

The play opens with Ya'akobi speaking on the street. The second act immediately moves to Ya'akobi and Leidental on the balcony of the latter's apartment, with Ya-akobi hammering at the stunned Leidental: „Can't you see that I am a busy person? That I don't have time to fool around? How long do you think I will continue to stink with you on the balcony? [...] I'm a busy person, I'm busy, busy.“<sup>18</sup> Ya'akobi, who has just realized he was „born to live,“ demonstratively leaves the balcony and returns to the street. From this moment, a fundamental difference is created between the one who left and the one who remains seated.

In this scene, the balcony is a street definer, and the relationship between the balcony and the street is characterized by the activities taking place in each of them and by the pace at which they transpire. The balcony in Ya'akobi and Leidental is a place of relaxation and friendship, of the small routine rituals of life. Sitting on the balcony in the evening also includes enjoying refreshments and social activities such as eating herring, drinking tea, and playing dominos. These rituals, consisting of simple and familiar activities, provide the characters with a sense of security, closeness and intimacy. „[...] I think we are deeply immersed in happiness [...]“ Leidental declares just before Ya'akobi surprises him with a refusal to „stink on the balcony.“<sup>19</sup>

However, Ya'akobi seeks to return to the street and participate in the stream of life. The street is portrayed as a dynamic place brimming with important and urgent occupations: busy, crowded, and vital. Most importantly, it is a place that allows for accidental meetings, unexpected events, and, in their wake, changes. „We are not the same kind,“<sup>20</sup> Ya'akobi says to Leidental in Act 2, meaning that Ya'akobi sees himself as belonging to the street while he views Leidental as belonging to the balcony. Ya'akobi feels he belongs with the busy people, whose lives are meaningful, who take action, have futures, and participate in life. In contrast, for Ya'akobi, Leidental belongs to those who watch from the sidelines.

The depiction of and meaning attributed to the balcony in Ya-akobi and Leidental differ completely from the urban functioning of the Parisian balcony, for example.

At first glance, it seems that both Paris and Tel-Aviv cases illustrate similar relationship between a lively, vital street and the balcony overlooking it. But a closer look reveals a completely different situation and a different meaning associated with the balcony in its daily, local context, in each city.

As mentioned, the width of a Tel Aviv street was by most accounts between nine and fifteen meters. This width, perceived from the four story building, enabled the viewer from the balcony to frame the building opposite, along with the pavement below, in details. In Paris, on the other hand, the view of the street allowed for a wider perspective, capturing not only the building opposite and a piece of street beneath it, but a cityscape of 'the grand city of Paris' as a whole, i.e. as a general image of modernity. „A balcony high up [...] permitted people to look out over the whole city and appreciate its unity.“ As David Harvey notes.<sup>21</sup> Thus, the observer from the Parisian balcony disconnects himself from the quotidian and identifies with Paris as a leading image of *Progress and Modernity*.

Indeed, Paris, as a big city of the mid-19th century, was characterized by Industrialization and urbanization processes. These, together with the extensive construction work carried out by the Haussmann, increased the crudeness, poverty, and the level of air and water pollution — another aspect of modernity. The bourgeoisie, which was haunted by fear of disease and infection preferred to break away from the street perceived as vivid and exciting, but also mass, chaotic, and filthy.<sup>22</sup> In this context, Marni Kessler interprets Gustave Caillebotte's painting *View through a Balcony Grill (1880)* as „an illustration of the way in which the balcony could separate the public from the private, the filthy from sanitary.“<sup>23</sup>

In other words, the Parisian balcony is a separating element, a refuge in which the bourgeoisie can enjoy the vitality and colorfulness of the street without assimilating into the street's dirt and grime and without interfering with its working class.

Like Kessler, Temma Balducci<sup>24</sup> also relates to Paris through the art works of Manet, Caillebotte and other Impressionist, discussing the social and gender meaning of the Parisian balconies after Haussmann (fig. 8). According to Balducci the paintings discussed, reflects the balcony as an extended window that allows the city to be viewed from within the interior of the house — a protected, refined, private, and quiet atmosphere. As Kessler, Balducci also notes that Paris of the 19th century is a 'spectacle to be enjoyed' and the balcony protects the French bourgeoisie, enabling them to watch the street without the need for contact.

That is, in the case of Paris, there is an essential distance between the street and the balcony, and balcony residents are not involved in what is happening on the street, but only gaze upon it from the interior or from the small balcony. Moreover, the identification of the viewers with modernity as an idea; the de-



Fig. 5 My brother as a child and my grandfather playing in my grandparents' balcony in Tel Aviv. Shutters are open to the street.

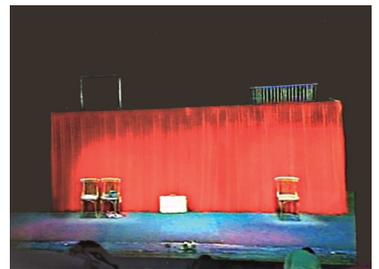


Fig. 6 Stage scenography for Ya'akobi and Leidental

21 Harvey 2003: 292.

22 Kessler 2006.

23 Harvey 2003: 54.

24 Balducci 2017.



Fig. 8 Édouard Manet, *The Balcony* (French: *Le balcon*), 1868

sire to differ from the working class identified with filth, dirt, and with the street; and the shape of the balcony itself as an expanded window; were all meanings reinforced by the preservation of high and low as metaphors of social status. One who is on the high balcony above the street is also elevated from a class standpoint. Consequently, the Parisian balcony allows for viewing and thereby control through the gaze from above.

The urban experience associated with the Tel Aviv balcony, as evidenced in Levin's work, is almost the opposite of that of Paris. A person on a Tel Aviv balcony has not been elevated to it, but is someone „stuck“ in it, unable to join life unfolding in the street. In the theatrical situation described above, Ya'akobi seeks to uproot himself from the degeneration offered by the balcony. The street is the artery of life, and those belonging to it are young people and couples going out to enjoy themselves. The old, the lonely, and the sick remain on the balcony like abandoned objects. Thus, for example, in his short story, *About Youth in the Mirror of Old Age*, Levin describes an old man looking from the balcony of his second-floor apartment upon a young man standing in the street.<sup>25</sup> The identification of the old man as a passive viewer is illustrated by associating him with the space where he is located:

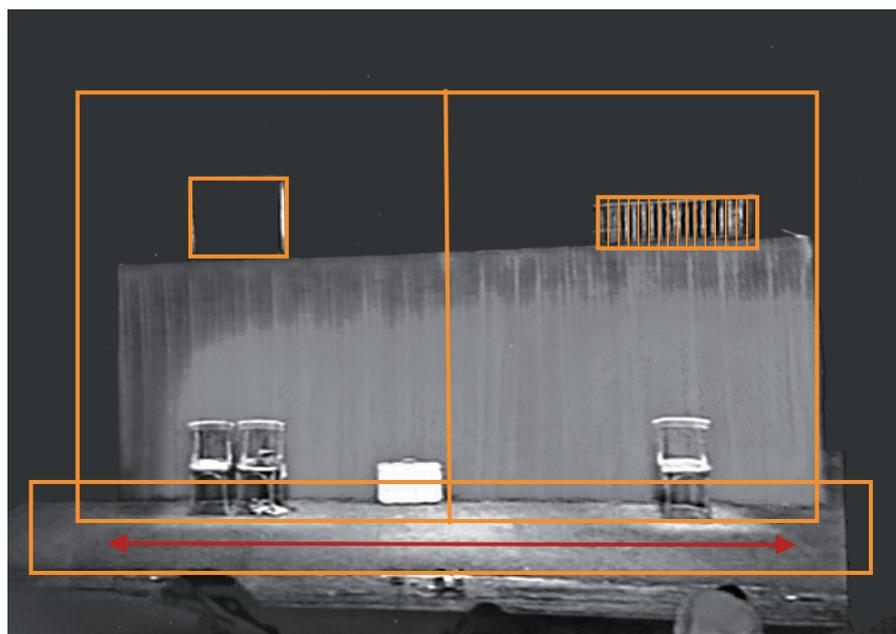
“He sat on the peeling plaster balcony, his bones pushing from weakness and his mouth full of insipid sourness [...] From the rows of rags hanging over the old man's head—old towels, woolen socks, tank tops, yellowish underwear wide as a woman's dress, and even a plastic bag that had been washed and now drying—among these rags a big shout is willing to hatch.”<sup>26</sup>

Wishing to participate in the dynamic life of the street and to gain existential recognition, the old man shouts to the young man who had thrown his cigarette box on the sidewalk: „Sir! This is not a garbage can!“ However, he receives no response beyond a grin. The observer's position on the Tel Aviv balcony, therefore, is characterized in Levin's work not as a position of

25 Levin, *Youth*: 1986.

26 Levin, *Youth*: 1986.

**Abb. 7a** Scenographic and theatrical elements form a typical grid of a Tel Aviv building façade.



power, but as one of no choice. Viewing the street is described not as a subversive act, but as a „remainder of an action,“the importance of which is to confirm the vitality of the street by way of contrast to the inertia of the balcony. Still, unlike the Parisian case, in Tel-Aviv a strong link between the balcony and the street maintains.

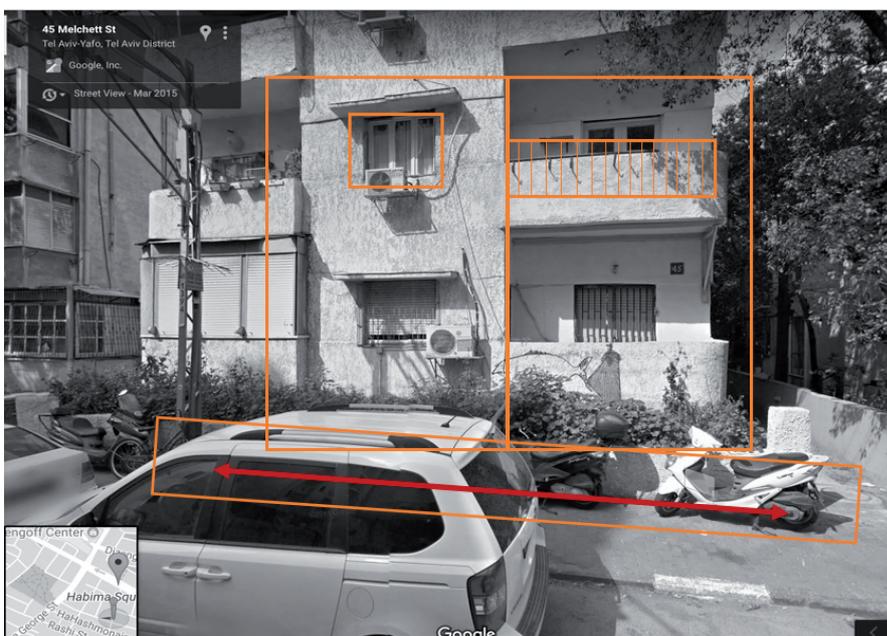
Additionally, The old man is not the only one who is watching, he is also being watched by the young man from the street. Yet, there is a fundamental and important difference between gazing from the balcony and peeping from the street into the balcony resulting from the degree of privacy of each of the spaces from which the viewing is carried out. The street is an urban-public space and anyone who goes out on the street is knowingly 'playing the game' and is prepared to be watched, whether by others walking on the street or by those sitting in cafés or on balconies or standing by their shop doorways. Therefore, one who goes out on the street assumes a desirable appearance using clothes and accessories. For example, in the play Ya'akobi and Leidental, David Leidental is carrying a suitcase in order „to look like a busy man hurrying somewhere ...“<sup>27</sup>

Ruth Shachash, the play's female protagonist, mocks her fate at the end of the play and sings: „[...] and then again I have to get up, go out into the street: heavy with jewels and frozen smiles [...].“<sup>28</sup>An individual's exposure on the street is far different from that on a balcony. A person on a balcony may be outside the house physically, and thus somewhat on the street, but that person is in a private space. As a result, while the prying eyes from the balcony to the street may be critical, the voyeuristic gaze from the street to the balcony is an invasion and even exposure of those who are on it.

This sense of invasion is evidence in the opening of another short story by Hanoah Levin, *Szczetzki*: „Szczetzki liked to walk in small streets of residential buildings; on the main street, the senses are sinking with great traf-

27 Ya'akobi and Leidental, Act 6.

28 Ya'akobi and Leidental, Act 28 .



**Abb. 7b** Scenographic and theatrical elements form a typical grid of a Tel Aviv building façade.

29 Levin, Szczetki: 1986.

30 Fischer: 1984.



Fig. 9a David Gerstein, *Balconies*, late 1970's. Sun Bath.



Fig. 9b David Gerstein, *Balconies*, late 1970's. Morning Hour.



Fig. 9c David Gerstein, *Balconies*, late 1970's. Fortress.



Fig. 9d David Gerstein, *Balconies*, late 1970's. A Look at the News.

fic, with loud noise and crowded shops, while Szczetki prefers to enjoy his senses in peaceful sights of people on the balconies of their homes or half of people in the windows of their rooms, or in their blurry figures behind the closed curtain, making gestures to eat, stretch out, or carry out acts painfully pleasing. Sometimes he would be lucky to see a young girl in a balcony sitting at the table eating fruit and writing.<sup>29</sup>

The duality of the Tel Aviv balcony, as a space straddling the private and the public, and as a space with a voyeuristic atmosphere woven into it is also reflected in the paintings of David Gerstein exhibited in the summer of 1980 at the Horace Richter Gallery in Jaffa. Yona Fischer wrote in the exhibition catalog:

„Three stories, balcony facing balcony ... They are all each other's neighbors.... Everyone, with passive curiosity, spies on everyone else... From his hiding place behind a window, he [the painter] stares directly at, above or beneath the balcony opposite, stopping to record ... the boundary between the revealed and the hidden... street and darkened apartment. The marking off of a strange living space, a kind of tiny, serene zoological botanical cage.<sup>30</sup> (fig. 9)

Voyeurism as an urban experience anchored in the language of the unique space of Tel Aviv, and first and foremost on the balcony, stands at the core of the play *Krum*, which premiered in 1975 at the Haifa Theater.

### The Second Production: *Krum* (1975): Balconies, Voyeurism and Gazing as Critical Ideas

In this production, gazing and voyeurism became the leading spine of the show. Directing and scenography (fig. 10) expressed gazing as a theme in three interrelated ways: through perspective; by creating a multi-site stage; and by the presence of actors on stage even during non-participating scenes.

The multi-site stage and the presence of two and sometimes three actors or characters at different locations on the stage at the same time enabled not only the viewing of private situations by actors and audience together (fig. 11), but also, for the audience, the ability to watch different situations simultaneously. The multiple situations echoed each other and thus created an example that proves the rule: every apartment echoed other apartments that created a street that was like other streets, continuing on to neighborhoods, and so forth, that were like others.

Like the multi-site pattern, the choice of the perspective scenery created multiplicity by duplicating Tel-Avivan buildings, and, accordingly, Tel-Avivan streets, and neighborhoods.<sup>31</sup> Consequently, the urban experience presented on the stage derives meaning as a typical Tel-Aviv urban experience from the echo of parallel situations in the public or audience consciousness.

Moreover, the perspective scenery makes implicit viewing, or gazing, itself a theme. The scenery imitated the gaze on a work of art, and in the case of the theater, the gaze of the audience. In the Renaissance, perspective was used to imitate reality. In this *Krum* production, perspective emphasized the fact that the scenography itself was a representation, or a meta-theatrical ref-

erence that raises the concept of point of view to the level of awareness. The viewer becomes aware of his or her own action of viewing, and, consequently, of the presence of other viewers around, as part of the audience. Therefore the awareness of viewing also explains the very act of watching the theater as a ‚cultural event‘.<sup>32</sup>

But more important, coincident with raising awareness to the act of viewing, the meta-theatrical situation raises awareness to the presented being a representation: the specific story presented on stage, as a universal social allegory, or in other words, a *theatrical archetype*. Furthermore, thus far the article has demonstrated the way in which art, and especially theater, contributes to the full characterization of a type, in our case the Tel Avivian balcony. The *Krum* 1975 production exemplifies how awareness of mimesis and representation, allows the viewer to perceive not only the *type* but also the *archetype*. Significantly, the perception of both the type and the archetype in theater happens simultaneously, without one interfering with the other. Another important aspect of the *Krum* 1975 production for the discussion here, stems from being a reference of comparison to a later production of the play, premiered 25 years after, in the year 2000. These 25 years brought a great change to Tel Aviv's city life.

### Urban Enclosure

During the 1980s and 1990s, office and residential towers gradually appeared along Rothschild Boulevard, in south Tel Aviv and especially in the northeast of the city. In addition, the city spread as residential neighborhoods continued to develop the north of the city beyond the Yarkon River. In the 1990s, the skyline changed completely and towers became a prominent urban feature. Azaryahu argues that „the skyline has become the most important configuration in one’s viewing of the city.“<sup>33</sup> The proliferation of towers expressed the realization of Tel Aviv's ambition to be the New York of the Middle East; that is, the realization of its image as a large, international and cosmopolitan city.<sup>34</sup> It is important to emphasize that the change in the skyline served as more than an expression of urban renewal, or a way to overcome the shortage of land reserves.<sup>35</sup> It represented even more than a realization of Tel Aviv’s ambition to be the New York of the Middle East. Instead, the change in the skyline implied a fundamental change in Tel Aviv’s urban experience.

For pedestrians, however, the towers hid the sky and narrowed the horizon. The towers cast shadows over the street, projecting a threatening and diminishing impression due to their height in relation to the human body. But most importantly, the height of the towers led to a disconnection between the street and its borders. The towers, especially those which were deliberately isolated, such as gated-communities, and exclusive institutions, turned a cold shoulder to the street. This phenomenon was expressed in a unified facade with small windows and narrow balconies, if any at all (fig. 12).

Aronis<sup>36</sup> notes the contribution of technological advances, such as air conditioners, intercoms, and elevators, to the closing off of buildings from

31 In her book, Ruth Dar describes the moments in which the houses, balconies, shutters and life experience behind them were identified as the essence of Tel Aviv’s urbanism: “Take a picture,” says Hanoch. “What?” “The houses, but what?” “But why? They are almost exactly the same houses as on Jonah the Prophet Street. What is the difference?” “Exactly, there’s no difference, because of that,” says Hanoch. “Take a picture”  
The landscape repeats itself with minor changes: apartment buildings, three to four stories, plaster again because of the proximity to the sea, narrow entrances to dark stairwells, open balconies on the ground floor and gray stone railings and tile flooring in old geometric patterns in orange and brown colors” (Dar 2015: 127).

32 Fischer-Lichte.



Fig. 10 The stage scenography for *Krum*, 1975, Haifa Theater.

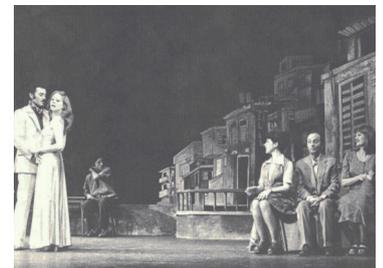


Fig. 11 Actors/characters seating in a café and watching a scenario that happens to be inside an apartment.

33 Azaryahu 2005: 346.

34 Azaryahu refers to the image of Tel Aviv as the “Israeli New York” and compares the silhouette of the skyline that appears in the Tel Aviv symbol from 2002 to the silhouette of the New York skyline. See Azaryahu, 2005: 162–158, 183.

35 Shavit & Bigger 2002.

36 Aronis, 2010



**Fig. 12** The towers with a unified glass facade and no balconies, turned a cold shoulder to the street.



**Fig. 13** Balconies were closed with glass and Aluminum, assigning the space exclusively to the interior of the house.



**Fig. 14** Residential towers in Tel-Aviv, squares of light float in the space of the night.

the street and to the obliteration of the social function of the balcony. The detachment from the street was also reflected in the materials from which the new towers and buildings were built. The coarse sand and stone and other local materials previously used were replaced with metal and glass, which added to Tel Aviv's international image but created a cold, introspective and anonymous atmosphere.

The high-tech style that characterized the construction of the towers influenced the appearance of Tel Aviv as a whole, and the city's balconies were gradually replaced by glass and aluminum windows rather than by shutters, assigning the balcony exclusively to the interior of the house (fig. 13). Since the renovations or closing of existing balconies were carried out in relatively low buildings, many balconies were closed in dark or reflective glass to prevent anyone from looking inside. In terms of urban space, such glass creates a state of greater opacity than does ordinary opaque glass because it reflects the viewer. That is, the window, the glass, is not only present like a wall, but returns the viewing immediately back to the viewer. In addition, as night falls and lighting conditions change, private interiors are exposed. Yet, unlike the exposure of an individual seated on the balcony, the private sphere is completely disconnected from the surrounding apartments and urban life. To the viewer from the street, the space is revealed beyond the glass, as in television scenes existing independently of each other, regardless of others or the street. Squares of floating light float in the space of the night (fig. 14).

### The Third Production: *Krum* (2000): Enclosure Comes to the Theater

These changes in the urban fabric and in the daily experience of the city were expressed in the production of *Krum* in 2000 at the Cameri Theater in Tel Aviv, directed by Michael (Miki) Gurevitch, and designed by Ruth Dar. In this production, the scenery was very dark and closed off part of the stage, creating a cube-like space with only one long narrow opening at the center-back. With the exception of mail boxes that appeared on the left-upper side of the stage, the space had no specific characterization: the windows were square openings, devoid of any features, the stairs were generic, almost a technical detail, and all were painted a uniform black (fig. 15).

This dark, enclosed scenery seemed like it coordinated and directed all the action into it. Moreover, in the 1975 production, horizontal axes of the stage had been emphasized, while in this 2000 production, the vertical axes were dominant. The emphasis on the vertical hinges gave the space inhuman, operatic proportions, which created an alienating and suffocating urban feeling. It created a large space that closed in on the characters and closed the characters within it. Even the narrow opening at the back of the stage, which was the only source for exits from and especially entrances into this urban box, was not open all the way to the floor. At the bottom of the opening was a small staircase leading to an elevated horizontal podium, a kind of balcony to the horizon that intensified the detachment and closure of the stage space from

the world outside. It should be emphasized that through the narrow opening in the back there was no horizontal line and hardly any sky.

Photographs of the stage from this production reveal the scenography, but according to Ruth Dar, „... the structures were invisible ... it disappeared in the dark ... only the windows showed ... the walls disappeared ... it disappeared in black, and only the windows defined the place ... windows and doors.“<sup>37</sup>

Thus, according to this stage interpretation, a Tel Aviv neighborhood was no longer a street to which balconies faced, but was a closed space where windows and doors floated as squares of light through which the interiors were visible. The gaze to the horizon was also framed and illuminated like a picture, using the vertical groove.

Delimitation of the private space and its inward integration took on another face in this setting. The two apartments that in the 1975 production were on the stage floor, on the same level as the fictional street, were now placed on a raised balcony with a railing or in a distinguished corner, with the other two apartments located above them. As in the first production of the play, but now more explicitly, the layout in the new production emphasized the reflection of the Tel Aviv building pattern. However, unlike in the 1975 production, in the new production, stairs led to the second floor. In essence, in the scenery, as in the actual city space, a mediated space was added between the street and the house.

With this change in the scenography, it can be argued that since the setting created a closure of the private space and caused its detachment from the public sphere, the interaction between them was generally a violent one. So, instead of a crowded neighborhood where the sights and sounds naturally blend through the openings, the production reflected relationships of invasion and trespassing. For example, the visit of the neighbor Felicia to Krum's mother's house comes across as more forceful and provocative than in the premiere, because the open doors culture and the close neighborly relations were no longer an accepted urban feature in the urban life of Tel Aviv. Accordingly, this entry into someone's house without prior notice no longer reflects the convergent space that the scenery presents or the experience of the audience in their daily lives in the city.

## Conclusion

This article focused on the archetype balcony by observing its unique appearance on the theater stage, in light of the balcony's specific characterization as a Tel Aviv type in the quotidian urban experience. As a Tel Aviv type, the balcony played a significant role in the urban life of the city in the 1970s. Its urban significance derived from its serving as an active intermediate space that was directly linked to the street and thereby connected the external and the internal, the private and the public, the seen and the unseen. Its function as a central social-urban feature was expressed in the direct transition of words, views, and objects from the balcony to the street, and even more importantly, from the street inward to the private space.



Fig. 15 The stage scenography for Krum, 2000.

37 Dar 2017.

In contrast, the Parisian balcony has a completely different character. The Parisian balcony is an opening in the interior, reflecting the spectacle of the street inward to the bourgeoisie watching from a distance. It elevates the viewer from the boulevard and enables control through the gaze from above. The Tel Aviv balcony, however, is physically close to the street, and even more important than its function of allowing viewing of the street is its ability to expose whoever occupies the balcony to the invasive looks of those passing by and to the prying eyes from other balconies.

Thus, the theater illuminates the voyeuristic atmosphere as an essential urban feature and presents the Tel Aviv balcony as a place where this feature is both physically and spatially realized. The distillation of the experience relating to the balcony as a type in the theatrical collaborations of Hanoch Levin and Ruth Dar present it as a place of degeneration and of viewing events from the side, while the flow of life and vitality belong to the street. Therefore, the view to the street from the balcony is characterized as a remnant of action, the importance of which is its confirmation of the vitality of the street in contrast to the inertia of the balcony. The gazing at other balconies is voyeuristic and prying, implicating competition and comparison and revealing urban space as exposed and public even when it seems private.

A broad look at the new production of the play *Krum* in 2000 demonstrated that the theater could be an effective tool in also reflecting the metamorphosis of the interaction of private and public in the urban space, and the change in the characterization of the balcony as a Tel Aviv type. Therefore, the theatrical performance constitutes an x-ray, a mimesis of urban space, distilling the character of the Tel Aviv balcony through the meanings it carries for the viewers in accordance with their day-to-day urban experiences at a particular period of time.

In addition, this study argued that theater not only interprets the pattern as a type with regard to quotidian local meanings, but also grants it universal social meanings by virtue of the symbolic nature of stage. Through the scenography as a representative element, and by turning gazing into a central theme of the show, the theatrical performance returns the gaze to the audience, the viewing public. The meta-theatrical techniques applied by Levin and Dar guided viewers as they identified parallels between urban voyeurism and theatrical viewing. This led the viewers to a conscious position that extends the concept of voyeurism as an urban feature to one of a critical perspective, enriching the theatrical image with universal meanings. Viewing the spatial archetype-pattern as merely a frame constitutes its meaning by its realization as a type in a specific city and time. The theater distills this realization and grants it meaning as a representation.

The representation of the type as part of the symbolizing power of stage allows viewers to simultaneously capture the distillation of the experience associated with it and to abstract the type back to the archetype and to its counterpart—the *theatrical archetype* as a universal social allegory. As a result, through the power of theatrical experience, the spatial archetype is comple-

mented by the theatrical archetype. The relationship between the first, urban archetypes and the second, theatrical, archetypes sheds light on their interconnectedness. This reinforces the article's position that urban architectural typology requires its counterpart—namely its essential socio-cultural meaning.

## Author

Efrat Shalom is a theater scenographer and costume designer currently finishing her Ph.D. in the faculty of Architecture and town planning at the Technion, IIT. Her thesis explores fiction-reality relations and focuses on the affinities between urban-scape in theatre and the contemporaneous surrounding space, with Tel-Aviv serving as case study.

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## Figures

*Fig. 1* <https://www.skyscrapercity.com/showthread.php?t=1280529>

*Fig. 2a* Rudi Weissenstein, 1950.

*Fig. 2b–2d* 1970's, pictures shared in a Facebook group of childhood memories in Tel-Aviv: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1795903607095646/>

*Fig. 3* <http://www.nostal.co.il/>

*Fig. 4* From a Facebook group of childhood memories in Tel-Aviv: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1795903607095646/>

*Fig. 5, 7a–7b, 13, 14* Efrat Shalom.

*Fig. 6* In Courtesy of the Cameri Theater Archive

*Fig. 8* Oil on canvas, 170 cm x 124 cm, Musée d'Orsay, Paris

*Fig. 9* Exhibition catalog, Tel Aviv: The Domino Press

*Fig. 10* Ruth Dar

*Fig. 11* Yakov Agor, in Courtesy of the Haifa Theater

*Fig. 12* Ilana Shkolnik, from the PicWiki site: <https://www.pikiwiki.org.il/image/view/28066>

*Fig. 15* In Courtesy of the Cameri Theater Archive

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