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The basic theme of this thesis originated some years ago with the stimulating discussions I had with my friends and colleagues Jan Cejka and Bilal Hammad about indigenous architecture. The trips we took together around the Middle East and Europe shaped my interest in the subject. In September 1981, I crossed the River Jordan to visit a number of villages in the occupied West Bank. I was overwhelmed by the architectural qualities I found, and I decided then to spend six months in the area so as to study the architecture of the Palestinian village. Today, six years later, I realize that what is written here is just the beginning.

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