

Typology: **House with Liwan**

Country: **Syria**



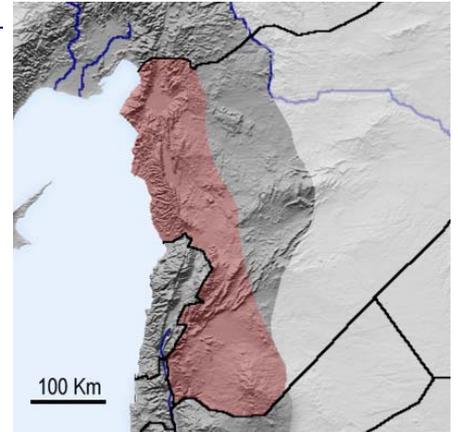
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## SYNTHESIS

The liwan is a central space formed by a very large arch: it plays a central role in the organization and distribution of the various rooms and the house. This central space is in open-air on one side, and is flanked with two rooms. The liwan was originally Persian, and can also be found in some houses with courtyards, as in Damascus or Aleppo, as well as in a few rural houses with court.

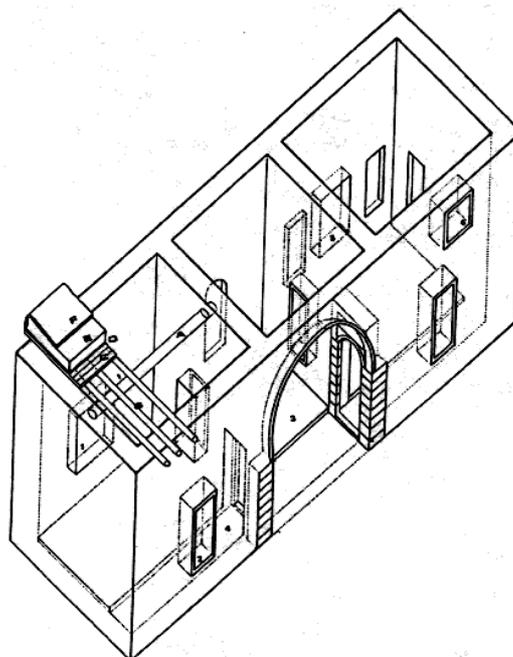
Beyond its role as central area, the iwan is a place to rest and relax.



## ANALYTICAL GROUP OF THE TYPOLOGY

Urban/rural (Environment)	Grouped (Implantation)	Fixed (Character)	Changing (Origin)	Permanent (Use)	Rooted (Cultural)	Medium (Economic level)	Compact (Morphology)
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## FORMS OF THE TYPOLOGY



## INVENTORY OF THE COUNTRY'S TYPOLOGIES

Rural house with court	Urban house with court	Basic house	Lebanese house
<b>House with Liwan</b>	House with Riwaq	Tent	

## FORMS OF THE TYPOLOGY

### Implantation

This house is found in village historical centers, in central regions, and surroundings of farms or agricultural activities

One can also find the liwan in a large urban courtyard.

### Use/associated activity

This house is mainly used for dwelling. In rural environments, agricultural activities can be associated.

### Dating

The Persian origins of this house may go back to the 11th century, but this is not the case for houses still standing today: they date back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century up to the end of the 19th century.

### Altitude

From sea level to 1000 meters high.

### Orientation

The most common orientation is Nord, but local constraints can condition choice.

### Ground surface covered

The house usually takes up 50 percent of the plot. In certain villages, the area covered can reach 100 percent.

### Surface area of housing

Between 50 and 100 square meters

### Number of floors

One or two levels

### Number of homes

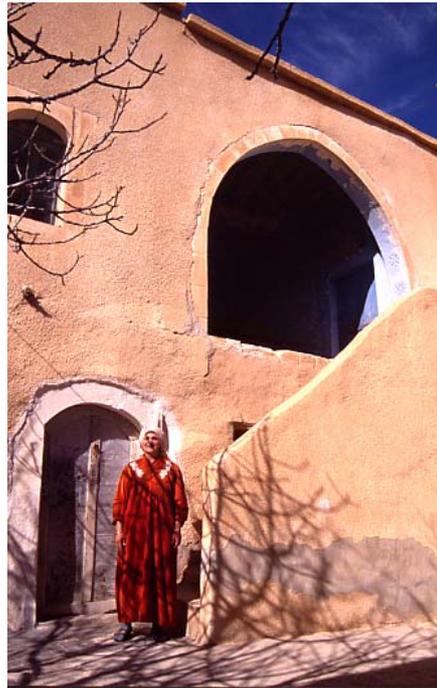
1 only

### Number of families

1 family only

### Average number of members per family

From 5 to 10 people



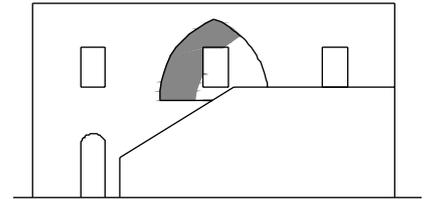
### Functional outline

The house with iwan is mainly a household. The iwan is always in a central position. The two side rooms are used for domestic life: sleeping, cooking, etc. the iwan is sometimes an area for work activities, tool storage, were animal shelter.

The doors of the side rooms open onto the iwan but the windows from the opposite walls, opening the rooms to open air and exterior light.

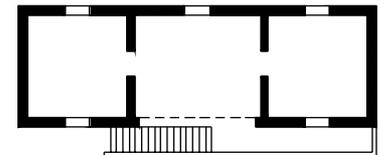
Many household activities, like cooking, bathrooms and toilets are outside, as well as part of the agricultural work.

Elevation

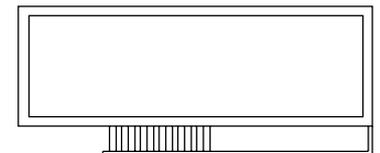


+1

Roofing



5



## **Walls**

The walls are made with stone masonry, between 40 and 60 cm thick.

## **Framework**

Load bearing stone walls. The floor is made with beams, joists and wooden laths.

## **Roofing**

The waterproofing of the roof is made by a layer of earth on top of a wooden roofing.

## **Rendering**

The walls are rendered with lime or earth, and are often whitewashed. The floor is made with compacted earth.

## **Openings and projections in the facade**

The liwan is still shaped as a large arch opening onto the whole inside area. All the other openings are rectangular.

## **Traditional systems of air-conditioning**

Air-conditioning is naturally brought through the many openings.

## **Drinking water supply systems**

In villages with water supply systems, houses can be connected and get water directly. In most villages, however, water must be fetched at public fountains or wells.

## **Waste water drainage systems**

Public systems are common when there is a potable water system. When no such system exists, waste water is evacuated towards a septic tank in the ground.



## CURRENT STATE OF VITALITY AND PRESERVATION

Most of these houses have been well maintained and are still inhabited today; they have, however, undergone major transformation since the beginning of the 20th century. In rural environments, they are often run down for lack of maintenance and interest, as a result of massive urban emigration.

## TRANSFORMATION PROCESS

Effect / cause

### Typological transformations

- **Volume**  
The iwans have often been closed and are now living spaces. The doors and windows have been replaced by walls. Additional floors and volumes are also quite common to adapt the house to modern needs.
- **Facades partitioning**  
The tampering of the large arch is the main typological transformation
- **Structure**  
New volumes are often added, made with concrete.
- **Space organization**  
The central room has become the living room. Additional kitchens and bathrooms can profoundly alter the typology.

### Change in use

This type of house is still used for dwelling

### Change in use of construction materials and techniques

- **Used, live**
- **Little used**  
wooden stone
- **No longer used**  
lime, traditional rendering and hard-packed earth.
- **New use**  
concrete, aluminium and plastic.



## CAPACITY FOR REHABILITATION

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### Aspects of the typology

Score from 0 (very poor) to 10 (excellent)

- . Capacity for sale or rental on the property market | 5
- . Capacity for adaptation to present-day family and social requirements | 5
- . Capacity for adaptation to present-day comfort requirements | 5

Score from 0 (insignificant) to 10 (major)

- . Technical difficulty of rehabilitation | 2
- . Administrative difficulty of rehabilitation | 1
- . Financial difficulty (very high cost) of rehabilitation | 5

### Obstacles preventing rehabilitation/causing the user to decide not to rehabilitate

Score from 0 (does not represent an obstacle) to 10 (represents a major obstacle)

- . Administrative difficulties | 2
- . Major technical difficulties | 2
- . Irreversible deterioration of the structure | 6
- . Listed/protected building | 0
- . High cost of rehabilitation | 5
- . Absence of aid/subsidies | 8
- . Cost of the project and permits | 3
- . Status of building/lease | 5
- . Inflation of property prices | 2
- . Social decline (delinquency, ...) | 1
- . Poor environmental conditions (absence of minimum infrastructures, ...) | 5
- . Desire to change the building for a modern one | 8
- . Lack of sensitisation/appreciation on the part of the users | 8
- . Not considered necessary (by the user) | 8

### Comments

## LEXICON

**Liwan** : An arch opening onto a living area or lobby. In extenso, the word liwan now defines the place and the lobby itself.