

The Rise and Fall of Arab Jerusalem

Palestinian politics and
the city since 1967

ROUTLEDGE STUDIES ON THE
ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT



Hillel Cohen



THE RISE AND FALL OF ARAB JERUSALEM

This book examines Palestinian politics in Jerusalem since 1967, and in particular since the outbreak of the second Intifada in September 2000, focusing on the city's decline as an Arab city and the identity crisis among the Jerusalemite Palestinians. Principally concerned with Palestinian politics and how they have evolved over time from the grass roots upwards, it covers issues such as the separation wall, military activity and terror, planning regulations, the joint Jewish–Arab struggle against the occupation, and efforts to remove Palestinians from the city.

Drawing upon conversations with hundreds of Palestinians – Islamists, nationalists, collaborationists, and apolitical people – as well as upon military court files and Palestinian writings, Hillel Cohen tells the story of the failure of the Palestinian struggle in Jerusalem in both its political and military dimensions. He points at the lack of leadership and the identity crisis among Palestinian Jerusalemites which were created by Israeli policies (the separation wall, the closure of Palestinian institutions) and Palestinian faults (the exclusion of Jerusalem from the Palestinian Authority in Oslo Agreements, or the suicide attacks in the second Intifada).

Providing a broad overview of the contemporary situation and political relations both inside the Palestinian community and with the Israeli authorities, the book gives a unique insight into Palestinians' views, political behavior, and daily life in Israel's capital. As such, it is an important addition to the literature on Palestinian politics, Jewish and Israeli studies, and Middle Eastern politics.

Hillel Cohen is a research fellow at the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies and teaches at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He has published widely on the Palestinian refugees in Israel, on the Nakba, and on Israeli–Palestinian relations in general.

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book deals with the Palestinians who live in East Jerusalem and the processes that this unique population has undergone since the Oslo Agreements and especially since the outbreak of the al-Aqsa Intifada. It examines the political and military activities of the Palestinians in the city, their dynamic identities, and their relationships with both the Palestinian national movement, on the one hand, and the Israeli experience, on the other hand. Our subject is not only political movements and their functioning, but also the individuals who are subordinated to Israeli rule and are demanded to respect it, and at the same time are expected by their fellow Palestinians to participate in the struggle for national liberation. We examine the character of the political and social institutions in the city, the population's involvement in the armed struggle, terrorism and non-violent resistance, the impact of the separation wall on life in Jerusalem, joint Israeli–Palestinian activity in the city and voting patterns among Palestinians in both the Israeli municipal elections and elections for the Palestinian Legislative Council.

Even the most superficial glance at events in Jerusalem reveals that despite the fact that Jerusalem is among the areas that were occupied by Israel in 1967 and is considered by the Palestinians as their religious and political capital, there is a substantial difference between the conduct of Palestinians in the city and those who live elsewhere in the Territories. Israelis feel this difference easily, especially since the year 2000: while a Jew would not usually dare walk through the markets of the Palestinian cities of Hebron, Qalqilya or Khan Yunis, the markets in the Old City of Jerusalem are crowded with Jewish visitors. While Hamas and Fateh cells battle Israel Defense Forces (IDF) soldiers in Samaria and Qassam missiles are fired at Sderot, merchants in East Jerusalem welcome Jewish customers with a smile. The contrast is rooted not only in the different ways that Israel has acted in the various territories it conquered in 1967 but also in the political conventions that have developed among the Palestinian residents of the city. This is not to say that they

do not participate in either the political or the armed struggle; they do. During the last years, as in previous years, there were several “individual” attacks on Jews initiated by Palestinians from East Jerusalem.¹ However, the character of their participation is different, as is their political identity – and this is the focus of this study.

Understanding the unique nature of the Palestinian struggle for and in Jerusalem requires familiarity with the history of Jerusalem as a religious and national focal point for the Palestinians and with both the Israeli and Palestinian processes that have led to the creation of the unique Palestinian-Jerusalemite identity. Therefore, this book begins with the historical background of the city’s standing in the Palestinian experience from the beginning of Palestinian nationalism through the first Intifada (Chapter 1) and then analyzes the changes that occurred in the Palestinian political activity and Palestinian identities in East Jerusalem during the Oslo years (Chapter 2). Next, it closely examines the participation of Arabs from East Jerusalem in the armed struggle since the outbreak of the al-Aqsa Intifada (Chapter 3) and the political struggles that occurred in the city, both within Palestinian society and as part of the struggle against the Israeli regime (Chapter 4). This chapter also analyzes the results of the elections for the Palestinian Legislative Council in 2006 and the background of Hamas’ victory in the city. Finally, the book presents the main states of mind found among Palestinians in the city and explains why political passivity has become the default option for many of them.

Methodology and sources

This study is based primarily on my personal, intimate knowledge of Jerusalem, my hometown, and on hundreds of meetings and conversations with Palestinians, some I met for the first time while conducting this study, many others I have known for long years. They are from heterogeneous backgrounds and hold a large range of worldviews: members of the Hamas and those who favor cooperation with Israel; present and former Fateh activists; leftists and rightists; politicians and those who avoid all political activity; members of elite non-governmental organizations and the unemployed and destitute. I believe that I made contact with individuals involved in most types of social, religious, military, and political activity found in the city. The fact that, in the midst of the conflict, many Palestinians, including those who belong to radical movements, agreed to speak with Israeli researchers is worthy of mention. The main force motivating them is their desire to present their position to the Israeli public. It seems to me that their desire to maintain open channels of communications with Israelis is important, in and of itself.

Naturally, the result of these conversations is impressional rather than quantitative data. Therefore, I used additional sources such as court files of Palestinian Jerusalemites who were tried for political or military activity. Reviewing dozens of files from the Jerusalem and military courts makes it possible to obtain – and present – a broad portrait of the Palestinian military activity in the city, analyze the character of the organizations, and learn about the activists’ belief systems and the network of connections between them. To the degree possible, I crosschecked

the two types of sources: after learning about various events by studying the court files, I approached the people who had been involved in the incident. Conversely, after hearing about a specific incident, I searched out the relevant court records. The websites of Palestinian movements, especially the discussion forums, were an additional source of information. Posts on the forums include letters smuggled out of jails, personal accounts, and verbal skirmishes between activists in Fateh, the Leftist Fronts, and Hamas. This is very valuable material for understanding the inter-organizational dynamics, both in the city and in general. Again, after reading material on specific events, I tried to contact people involved in them, in order to deepen my understanding of the subjects they had raised. Publications of the Supreme Palestinian Election Committee were used in the chapter analyzing the results of the municipal elections which, unlike the other chapters, includes precise statistical data.

Note on terminology and transliteration

The tremendous gap between the Israeli and Palestinian perspectives on history and on the conflict between them makes it impossible to find terminology that is acceptable to all. The holiest site in Jerusalem, for Jews and Muslims alike, can exemplify this difficulty. While the Jews use the term “the Temple Mount,” Palestinians consider this term to be misleading because they doubt that a Jewish temple had ever existed there. The term they prefer is “*al-Haram al Sharif*” (the Noble Sanctuary) or “*al-Aqsa*” (after the name of the mosque located there). Usage in this book will reflect the context in which the term occurs. Many Palestinians consider their armed struggle legitimate and do not define it as “terrorism,” even when civilians are harmed intentionally. Most Israelis view the Palestinian armed struggle as terrorism also when it is directed at military targets. Here I prefer the approach that distinguishes between armed actions against military targets and those aimed at civilians. The latter can be called “terrorism,” and so I have done in this book.

The overall reality in Jerusalem is also the subject of a semantic debate over whether or not East Jerusalem should be considered occupied territory. Israel applies Israeli law in the Palestinian areas that were annexed to the city in 1967 and does not consider them occupied, while the Palestinians and a large part of the international community do not consider the annexation valid, and argue that according to international law the area should be defined as occupied. However, the subject of this book is not legal status but rather the reality of life; not the territory but rather the people. And there is little doubt that the existential reality is that the *Palestinian residents* of Jerusalem, without reference to the legal status of the *territory*, live under conditions of occupation: they are not eligible to vote in the elections to the Israeli parliament, the Knesset, that is, they are devoid of the basic political, democratic rights, and in addition, the Israeli policy since 1967 has been intended to weaken their hold on the territory (by expropriating Arab land, preventing construction, etc.), while strengthening Israel’s control. Therefore, when using the word “occupation,” I am referring to the people and not necessarily to the territory.

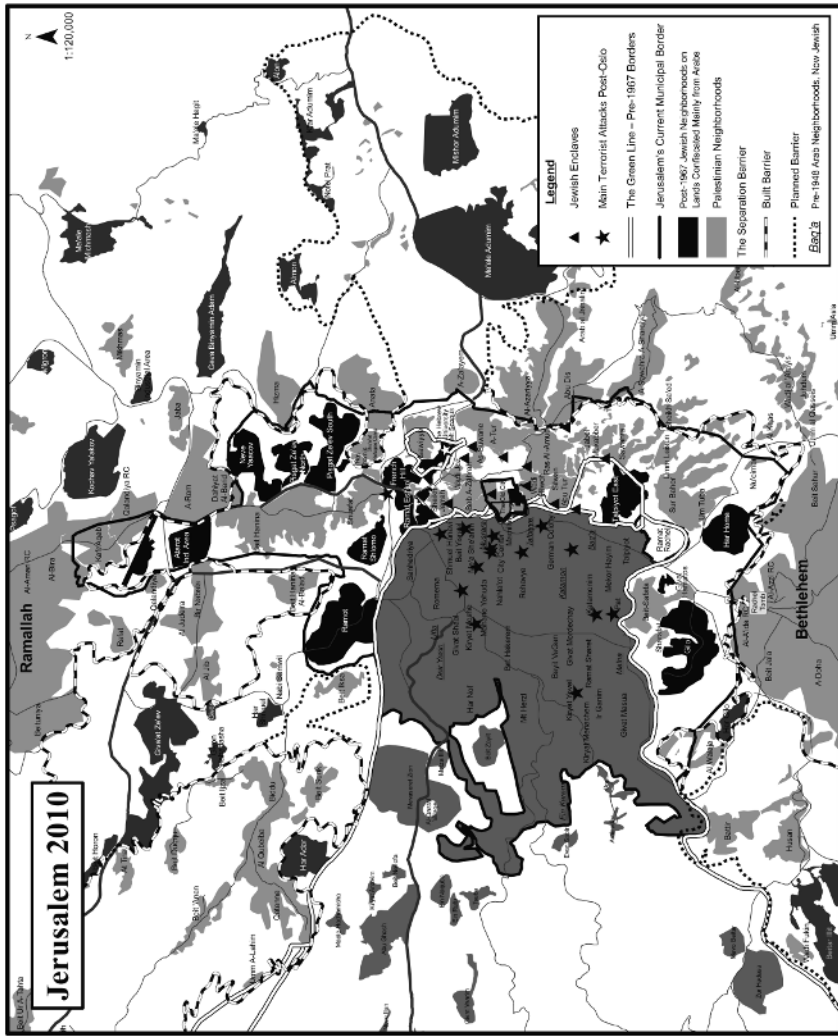
It is worth mentioning that the term “East Jerusalem” by itself – which is in common usage – is somewhat misleading. This term refers to the territory annexed to the municipal borders of Jerusalem – and de-facto to Israel – following the 1967 war. Not only that most of this area had not been “Jerusalem” before the war, it also does not lay in the east of Jewish Jerusalem but surrounding it from the north, east, and south. Nevertheless, this is now the most common term and we join the public and the literature in this regard.

The transliteration from Arabic is basically according to the simplified IJMES rules, except for terms in the colloquial Palestinian dialect, where my transliteration follows the actual pronunciation.

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My deep gratitude to Wally Marks (dec.) whose moral and financial support made the English edition possible. Wally will be sorely missed. I would like to express my appreciation for the English translation to David and Elana Wesley, and to Shoshana Michael-Zucker for her active participation. I’d like also to thank my friend and colleague Yael Berda for her advice. The book is dedicated to all lovers of Jerusalem, Al-Quds, and to my friends and family in the city.



Map of Jerusalem, 2010

PROLOGUE

On October 4, 2000, Muhammad al-Surkhi, a resident of Jabel Mukabber in East Jerusalem, was killed by shots fired by Israel Defense Forces (IDF) soldiers during an incident in the village of Beitunia, north of Jerusalem. His parents went to the hospital in Ramallah to identify his body and then brought it back for burial in their home neighborhood. Many residents of Jabel Mukabber attended his funeral, including his friend and neighbor Bassam Mashahare who was, at the time, employed by the Israeli Egged bus cooperative in West Jerusalem. In Mashahare's mind al-Surkhi's death connected to pictures that had been shown repeatedly on Palestinian television: the final moments in the life of young Muhammad al-Durra, who had been killed in the Gaza Strip earlier in the week, while his father stood by helplessly; pictures of then Knesset member Ariel Sharon visiting the Temple Mount, where the al-Aqsa mosque is located, and pictures of those killed and injured at demonstrations protesting that visit. Mashahare felt that he must do something. At the funeral, he walked alongside Hussam Shahin, an enthusiastic activist in the *Shabiba* (Fateh Youth) in the Jerusalem area and asked Shahin to reincorporate him into the movement's activities.¹ The violent confrontation that flared up at the end of the funeral between the deceased man's friends and Israeli security forces, who attended the funeral in order to make their presence known, reinforced his decision.

For Mashahare, joining the new stage in the conflict against the Occupation was a natural step. Born in 1968, he has lived his entire life under Israeli rule. Like other Palestinians in East Jerusalem, he received the status of an Israeli resident, which entitled him to certain social and civil rights (such as National Insurance and the right to vote in municipal elections) but denied him, his parents, and other members of the community the basic political right of participating in elections for the sovereign parliament that controlled the territory in which they lived. They were deprived of a chance to help shape the government and express their national identity. In other words: Mashahare lived under occupation and was aware of it. He

was also aware of the other ways in which the occupation was manifested, including ongoing discrimination against the Palestinian residents of the city and the construction of Jewish neighborhoods on land expropriated from Palestinians.

After he completed elementary school in Jabal Mukabber, Mashahare attended the municipal Al-Rashidiyyeh Secondary School, across from the Herod's Gate. There, he met teens from all of East Jerusalem and formed his political identity. Cells of different Palestinian organizations were active in the school's upper grades and Mashahare was close to *al-Shabiba*, the Fateh youth movement, which became a dominant force in East Jerusalem in the mid-1980s. In his twentieth year, the first Intifada began. He was one of the masked men who set up barriers, threw rocks, and wrote slogans on fences, especially in the neighborhood where he lived. When he continued his higher education at al-Umma College in North Jerusalem, he joined the Fateh student cell headed by Hussam Shahin.

After the Oslo Agreement was signed between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization in 1993, Mashahare stopped his political activity almost completely. Like many others, he believed that a new period had begun in Palestine, one in which people like him would be able to live in freedom and dignity. He joined the job market in West Jerusalem, successfully applied for a permit to have his fiancée, a Palestinian born in Jordan, remain in Jerusalem, and lived in relative calm. However, his opposition to the Occupation remained in place, as did his love of weapons. In 1995, when visiting Jordan, he amused himself with his relative's hunting rifle and tried hunting rabbits. In 1999, when visiting distant relatives in Jenin, he used his own money to buy an FN pistol from a Palestinian policeman and concealed it in his home.

Unlike Mashahare, Hussam Shahin considered politics a way of life. When Yasser Arafat signed the Oslo Agreements, he was one of the activists who organized demonstrations supporting the agreement and after the Palestinian Authority was established, he traveled between Jerusalem and Ramallah where he visited the offices of senior Fateh officials including Faisal Husseini and Marwan Barghouti. These two leaders, together with younger members of Fateh, supported the Oslo Agreements even though they were aware of their disadvantages for the Palestinians. They also supported maintaining contacts with Israelis along the entire political spectrum. Shahin was responsible for the Shabiba's international relations and was involved in meetings with Israelis, which were usually held in Europe. He also participated in a forum where young members of the Fateh and Likud movements met. However, neither his trips to Europe nor the evenings spent in the restaurants and clubs of Ramallah went to his head. Like many other Fateh members, Shahin's eyes were slowly opened to the illusion of Oslo. They came to realize that the Israeli settlements continued to grow rapidly after the agreement was signed and personally experienced the disconnection of East Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank territories. They felt that Israel was trying to mock them and did not intend to withdraw to the 1967 borders or allow the establishment of a sustainable Palestinian State.

Without getting into arguments about whether the al-Aqsa Intifada was planned in advance by the Palestinian Authority or not, and about who was responsible for

the failure of the Camp David talks in 2000, there is no doubt that the visit of Israeli opposition leader Ariel Sharon to the Temple Mount on September 28 stirred up Palestinian public opinion. Palestinian activists, led by members of Fateh, hurried to lead the protest. The day after the visit was a Friday and a massive, violent demonstration was held on the Haram, with both nationalist and Islamic activists participating. The Israeli security forces killed seven demonstrators and the fire spread far, even within the borders of Israel. The demonstrators, too, did not silence their weapons: armed men, some of them members of Fateh, participated in demonstrations in the territories and opened fire at IDF positions. This marked a change in the Palestinians' *modus operandi*.

The violent events came to be known as the "al-Aqsa Intifada" because they began after Sharon's visit to the sacred site. However, more than a response to the visit itself, they were an expression of anger over Israel's behavior since the signing of the Oslo Agreements and of frustration caused by Palestinian helplessness in the face of the faulty, sometimes corrupt, functioning of some Palestinian leaders. Debates within the Fateh movement on the issue of negotiations with Israel also contributed to the creation of a militant camp that confronted the veteran leadership. This camp was led by local Fateh leaders, heads of the Tanzim in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In their case, bitterness over having been pushed to the margins of the decision-making circles combined with the feeling that the Palestinian strategy was inherently erroneous. After the failure of the Camp David talks in 2000, they presented an alternative policy based on three principles: ending security cooperation with Israel and creating a joint national front with other organizations; abstaining from negotiations under American sponsorship and demanding international sponsorship; and mobilizing the masses to a popular uprising against the occupation (including, as necessary, limited armed struggle in the territories).² Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount provided an opportunity to put the third principle into action. It was during the first week of demonstrations that Muhammad al-Surkhi, Mashahare's neighbor, was killed.

Two weeks after al-Surkhi's funeral, the confrontation was yet to subside. The number of Palestinians killed continued to mount while there were very few injuries on the Israeli side. The Palestinians wanted to change this balance. Mashahare began to set up an armed cell. Just one week later he, Shahin, and another partner named Ja'far Nasser drove to an IDF roadblock near Abu Dis, armed with three submachine guns. They parked the car on a side road. One member of the cell remained at the steering wheel while Mashahare and his other comrade climbed a nearby hill to observe the barrier. They found a position from which to shoot and set their sights on the soldiers. However, there were many Palestinians at the roadblock and they decided not to shoot. A few days later, Mashahare was arrested by the Shabak (the Hebrew acronym for the Israeli General Security Agency) and, in late 2001, he was sentenced to five years in prison and another two years of probation. Shahin was not arrested for another three years. Until his arrest, he spent most of the time with Arafat's men in the Muqata'a (the building which was built by the British for their army, then used by Jordan, then by the Israeli military government, then by the

Palestinian Authority as its headquarter) in Ramallah. During that time, he established a cell of the al-Aqsa Brigades in his “Jerusalemite” village, Jabel Mukabber, and served as a contact person between Arafat’s bureau and wanted men throughout Samaria. In 2007, Shahin was sentenced to eighteen years’ imprisonment.

The failed action initiated by Shahin and Mashahare is instructive, not only about the prevailing spirit among the Palestinian public at the beginning of the al-Aqsa Intifada but also about the changes taking place among Fateh activists. When Mashahare, a minor Jerusalemite Fateh activist, asked to participate in the struggle, he was expressing the change in awareness that Fateh members experienced between the signing of the Oslo Agreements and autumn 2000. They moved from supporting the diplomatic process to stubborn opposition to it. It was also an expression of the feeling of many Palestinians – in this Jerusalem residents are no different from others – that Israel does not value the lives of Palestinians and will not hesitate to kill women and children. The quick response of Shahin (who obtained the weapons from comrades in the movement’s military wing), testifies to the fact that the Tanzim’s leadership had chosen the combative option. Furthermore, this particular action illustrates the existence of a close connection, to the point of dependence, between Fateh members in East Jerusalem and those in the West Bank. In this case, as in many others, the military actions of Fateh members (and members of the other movements) in Jerusalem relied on the movements’ infrastructure in the West Bank for both funding and weapons. Another important point is the speed with which the cell was exposed, before it succeeded in mounting even one successful operation. It can be assumed that this is because of the extensive intelligence systems that the Shabak has throughout the West Bank and especially in Jerusalem.

The Shabak’s deep intelligence infiltration into the Palestinian population in East Jerusalem, together with the permanent presence of the police and Border Guard forces, are among the reasons that Palestinian residents of the city initiate relatively few armed actions. Even so, the Palestinians of Jerusalem are organized in the same organizations as Palestinians in the territories (unlike the Palestinian citizens of Israel who have their own institutions), live under occupation (although the occupation of Jerusalem is different than that in the territories), and have a deep connection to the Palestinian ethos. This explains why, when asked, they do not shy away from aiding and abetting terrorists from the territories and why they also take initiative at times.

However, the different nature of the Palestinian struggle in Jerusalem is not merely the result of the tactical success of the Israeli security forces. Other contributing factors are the practical annexation of the eastern part of the city to the western part, Israel’s declarations that it intends to perpetuate its control of East Jerusalem, the more frequent contact that the residents of East Jerusalem have with Jewish Israelis, the physical barriers separating the city from the rest of the territories, and the special legal status of the Palestinians in East Jerusalem (and the benefits this entitles them to receive). Together, all these factors have combined to create a different type of Palestinian, a sort of hybrid between an Israeli Arab and a Palestinian from the territories.

At Mashahare's trial, the *mukhtar* (village head) of Jabel Mukabber testified at the request of Mashahare's attorney, Leah Zemel. The testimony is not representative of the prevailing opinion in East Jerusalem but is indicative of the range of opinions regarding the desirable attitude towards the Israeli authorities and is a reminder that reservations about the armed struggle are more common in Jerusalem than elsewhere. In his testimony on behalf of Mashahare, the mukhtar, Yusef Qumbar, said: "This family was not involved in anything and they never made any trouble. I know the accused, who was and remains a good man. We [the heads of the family and the community] have met and decided that there will not be anything like this again and this will not be repeated." In other words, the mukhtar's statement completely ignored the nationalist aspect of Mashahare's action. He preferred to present it as a mistake, one that the general public opposed. He also promised – without relating to his ability to keep the promise – to prevent any further combative action on the part of members of his community.

This statement was made for the purpose of convincing the court to lighten Mashahare's sentence so it is natural that his associates would try to present a moderate, anti-militant position. However, the perspective that the residents of East Jerusalem should not be part of the armed struggle – which is clearly in opposition to the central Palestinian discourse that considers participation in the armed struggle a matter of national and religious obligation that brings prestige and honor – is not solely the position of the mukhtar and others who are close to the authorities, and it is not only expressed in moments of distress. Even Jerusalemite members of militant movements like Hamas and Fateh often say that the nature of the struggle in Jerusalem needs to be different than it is in other parts of Palestine, both because of the difficulty of taking action in Jerusalem, which is entirely under Israeli control, and also because of the high price that the Palestinian residents would be likely to pay if they were to choose the path of armed struggle. These movement members do not necessarily speak out against the armed struggle – a cornerstone of the Palestinian national and religious ethos – but they do offer alternatives to it. Clearly this is not the only opinion found, and there is no shortage of Jerusalem residents who support the use of arms, but it is relatively common in local discourse. The development of a unique political discourse in Jerusalem is the result of the long years in which a unique Jerusalemite identity was formed, as we will see in the following chapters.

1

JERUSALEM: CAPITAL OF PALESTINE AND FOCUS OF IDENTITY, 1917–93

Creation of a capital 1917–48

During the final decades of Ottoman rule in Palestine, Jerusalem was the capital of an independent district (*sanjak*, *sancak* in Turkish) directly accountable to the government in Istanbul. This was an expression of its unique status and importance in the empire. The boundaries of the sanjak were wide and included the sub-districts of Bethlehem, Jaffa, Hebron, Beersheva, and Gaza; that is, the entire center of the country and southward. The privileged families in the city constituted the main source of leadership for the entire sanjak. The holiness of the city for members of the three monotheistic religions along with its regional political status led the British, who conquered the city in December 1917, to proclaim it Palestine's capital. The boundaries of this new political entity – Palestine – were determined with the separation of the land east of the river Jordan from the land to its west in 1922 and the marking of the border between the British mandate and the French mandate in Lebanon in 1923. Jerusalem, the capital, became the nerve center of the British administration, and the Jews and Arabs living in the land also regarded it as their natural capital (despite the competing claims of other cities).

The fact that members of elite Jerusalem families, especially the Husseinis, headed the Arab nationalist movement in Palestine added to the stature of Jerusalem as an Arab political center. When the Mufti of Jerusalem, Hajj Amin al-Husseini, was recognized as the chief mufti of Palestine (1921) and was made head of the Supreme Muslim Council (1922), Jerusalem became the seat of Palestinian national institutions and the capital of the Palestinian-Arab state in the making. Invoking Jerusalem's holiness for Islam enabled the mufti to mobilize the Islamic world to support the Palestinian struggle, and contributed to the consolidation of Jerusalem's status. As would be expected from a national movement uniting Christians and Muslims, Christian Arab religious personages also became part of the struggle against

2 Jerusalem: capital of Palestine and focus of identity, 1917–93

Zionism, while emphasizing the holiness of Jerusalem for Christianity.¹ Thus, during the mandate period, Jerusalem became both a religious and national symbol.

The importance of Jerusalem for Christianity, including for Christian Arabs, stems naturally from it being the venue for the activity of Jesus. That Jerusalem is holy for Islam is also accepted without question. Jerusalem is the city to which Muhammad and his followers turned when praying in the early months during which the community of believers emerged (*awla al-qiblatayn*), and it is considered the third most sacred city in Islam (*thaleth al-haramayn*), after Mecca and Medina. Jerusalem is also the place to which the prophet Muhammad was brought in his wondrous night journey (*isra'*) and from whence he ascended heavenward to meet the earlier prophets and angels (*mi'raj*). These traditions were known to Muslims throughout history, and as during earlier periods, the national-religious struggle surrounding the city increased its centrality in public awareness. The Supreme Muslim Council, under Hajj Amin promoted this perception. Every spring it called the masses to gather at *al-Haram al-Sharif*, the Temple Mount, to begin a procession to Nebi Musa in the plains of Jericho, and the day of Muhammad's ascension to heaven was celebrated in al-Aqsa mosque with the greatest enthusiasm.

Husseini focused upon Jerusalem not only because the city was his power base, and his family had held religious and administrative positions there for many years (muftis, qadis, and mayor of the municipality until 1920), but also because he believed that the Zionist movement held Jerusalem as its highest priority. This analysis was not totally correct. Among the Zionists there were various attitudes concerning Jerusalem, and its centrality was more symbolic than practical. But Husseini argued, and apparently also believed, that the Zionist movement wanted to control Jerusalem and especially the Temple Mount. Political moves and demographic processes led many in the Palestinian public to adopt his approach. They were not indifferent to the gradual strengthening of the Jewish *Yishuv* in Jerusalem while the Arab population were becoming a minority in the city, and they were aware of Zionist attempts at the beginning of the mandate period to purchase the square in front of the Western Wall (al-Buraq, in Arabic, after the miraculous horse that took the Prophet from Arabia to Jerusalem and had awaited him near this wall until he descended from heaven). The Jewish struggle to change the status quo in that square, attempts to erect a divider between men and women, to set up benches for seating, and to blow the *shofar* beside the Western Wall, all of which increased the tension around the holy plaza, impacting on Arab awareness not less than the economic advantage gained from Jewish migration to the city.² Indeed, it is not by chance that the bloody attacks on the Jews of Hebron, Safed, and other places in the summer of 1929 began after rumors spread that Jews were murdering Muslims in Jerusalem and were attempting to take over the mosques.

The belief that the Jews were acting to destroy the Temple Mount/al-Haram mosques has been a fundamental element in the Islamist discourse ever since the days of the mufti. Even today the Islamic movement in Israel, headed by Sheikh Ra'ed Sallah, mobilizes the Arab public under the banner "al-Aqsa is in danger." Arab suspicion has been more than a figment of the imagination: radical Jews

organized in order to harm the Temple Mount mosques in the early 1930s (the plan was aborted by the Haganah) and such activity has continued until the latest plan – reported before the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip (2005).³ Islamic spokesmen note that not only does the extremist-religious periphery favor destruction of the mosques and construction of the third temple, but so do more central elements in Israeli society.⁴ Archeological excavations in close proximity to the Temple Mount Square, undertaken by the state under the patronage of Jewish East Jerusalem settlers; the opening of the Western Wall tunnel in September 1996; state budgets allocated to associations preparing holy objects in anticipation of building the third temple; the archeological excavations at the Mughrabi Gate that began in 2007; and other activities of a similar nature prove, according to the Islamist perception, that the Israeli establishment too is involved in the attempt to take control of the holy mount.

With their roots in the mandatory period, these feelings served then to reinforce the status of the city as a *symbol* of Palestinian nationalism. However, at the same time the city began losing its status as a focus of nationalist *activity*. There were material historical reasons for that. First, during the Palestinian Arab Revolt in 1936–39, it was the villagers who carried the rebellion forward. Members of the well-to-do urban families, including the Jerusalem elite took almost no active part in the rebellion. This meant that the nationalist activity and the prestige accruing from it relocated to rural locales. An additional factor in the decreasing centrality of the city in Palestinian politics then was the flight of the mufti Hajj Amin from the city in October 1937, for fear of arrest by the British.

It would be hard to exaggerate the importance of that event. From 1937 to 1948 the mufti wandered, together with other members of the Higher Arab Committee, between Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Nazi Germany, and Egypt, and the Palestinian political center wandered with them. While the avowed aspiration of the exiled leadership was to set up a Palestinian state in the entire area of Mandatory Palestine, whose capital was Jerusalem, it was acting from outside the city, and Jerusalem lost its standing as a leading political center. The absence of the national institutions from the country had a negative influence on the functioning of the national movement in the 1948 war, including in the holy city.

Capital-in-waiting 1948–67

The Palestinians in 1948 were like a flock of sheep without a shepherd. The national leadership was in Cairo with limited freedom of movement and even more limited funds. Those leaders still inside Palestine lacked authority and means and left their cities along with the rest of the inhabitants, sometimes even before the others. The leadership crisis was one of the important causes of defeat. Around Jerusalem, the loss entailed uprooting of the Arab villages that had been the rural hinterland west of the city. They had been the homes of several tens of thousands of people. Residents of the Arab neighborhoods in the western part of the city were also uprooted.⁵ The Arab side too had its gains, most important being the conquest of the entire Old City

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of Jerusalem and displacement of the inhabitants of the Jewish Quarter, but for the Palestinians these successes paled in comparison with the dimensions of their disaster. Still, the Palestinians continued to emphasize the symbolic status of the city even after their defeat was final. In September 1948, as the battle subsided, the Palestinian leadership declared the setting up of an “All Palestine Government,” with its temporary seat in Gaza, but Jerusalem was proclaimed the capital of the new Palestinian state. Here, then, is a neglected historical detail: in the modern era it was the Palestinians who were first to announce Jerusalem as their capital; the government of Israel took such a decision only on December 5, 1949. Probably because the Zionist leadership accepted the 1947 Partition plan, according to which Jerusalem was supposed to become *corpus seperatum* under UN administration.

However, the Palestinian declarative step too reveals the gap between the symbolic “Jerusalem, the capital of Palestine,” as opposed to reality. A Palestinian state did not arise in 1948, and the eastern part of the city came under Jordanian control. While the original residents of the eastern part of the city, in contrast to other Palestinians, became neither refugees nor a national minority in a Jewish state, they too experienced psychological and political crisis. Refugees from nearby villages settled in the city, including inside what had previously been Jewish neighborhoods (the Jewish Quarter, the Shimon Ha-Tzadik neighborhood in Sheikh Jarrah). The level of basic services – such as water and electricity – suffered, because until then they had been part of a joint network including the western neighborhoods. Moreover, from being part of a capital city, East Jerusalem became a border city of secondary importance. In parallel, the Jordanians entrenched Amman as their sole capital at the expense of Jerusalem, and in 1951, one year after annexing Jerusalem and the West Bank, they decided that government institutions in Jerusalem would no longer serve as independent main branches of the various ministries but would instead be subordinate to the offices in Amman.

Protests from Jerusalemites who believed that the Hashemites were seeking to suppress Palestinian national identity and undermine the political status of Jerusalem, were rejected outright. To sweeten the pill and to gain legitimacy from Palestinian Arabs for their rule of the West Bank, the Jordanians co-opted senior Palestinian leaders into the Hashemite bureaucracy. Some of those supported the Jordanian annexation policy.

Nonetheless, Palestinian nationalism continued to ferment beneath the surface. This erupted in the assassination of King Abdullah on July 20, 1951. On that day the king came to pray, as he did regularly on Fridays, in the al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, when the assassin, Mustafa Shukri al-Ashu, a resident of the Sheikh Jarrah quarter, approached the king and shot him dead. The investigation revealed that one of his handlers had been Musa Abdullah al-Husseini, a member of the family of the Mufti. The investigation ended without all the details becoming known, but there is no doubt that the opposition to Jordanian policies on the part of nationalist Palestinians centered in Jerusalem had led to the attack.⁶

But the assassination was an exceptional occurrence. On the whole, those living in the West Bank and Jerusalem rarely acted against the Hashemite monarchy, even

though the question of Palestinian identity and the relations between the two banks of the river Jordan remained open, and Palestinian demands for political representation did not abate. It would appear that the discrimination felt by the Palestinians (rightly or not), both in budgetary allocations and in decision-making, was one of the factors responsible for preserving Palestinian identity among Jerusalemites. In 1959 King Hussein tried to deal with the discontent of West Bank and Jerusalem residents concerning his policies by declaring Jerusalem the second capital of the kingdom. The municipality was given the title *imana*, a term that had previously been reserved only for Amman, and the king announced his intention to build a palace in the city. But these steps proved to be less than symbolic. The city did not receive special funds, its problems were not dealt with, and it was in no way treated as if it were a capital city. Continuing neglect led two years later to the collective resignation of the members of the Jordanian city's municipal council.⁷

The founding convention of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in May–June 1964, in the Intercontinental Hotel in Jerusalem, symbolized not only the rebirth of institutionalized Palestinian nationalism but also the fact that the renewed nationalist movement continued to regard Jerusalem as its capital. While Ahmad Shuqayri, head of the PLO, under the auspices of the Arab League, was, for political reasons, not allowed to present territorial demands to Jordan, the founding of the organization aroused even more the nationalist-Palestinian feelings of West Bank residents.

At that time, the political demands of the Palestinians in the West Bank were not completely defined, but opposition to the Hashemite government and its policies toward the West Bank kept growing. In November 1966, after the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) reprisal action in the village of Samu' in the southern Hebron hills, a wave of anti-Hashemite demonstrations began throughout the West Bank. It was only natural that Jerusalem became one of the centers of events. On Friday, November 25, after prayers at the al-Aqsa Mosque, huge demonstrations took place in town, both inside and outside the wall. Demonstrators fired gunshots towards policemen stationed at Damascus Gate. In one case, a soldier's weapon was snatched, and the demonstrators began to shoot (fatally wounding other demonstrators). A total curfew was placed on the city until after the funerals. The Jordanian governor of Jerusalem placed an armed guard beside the PLO offices in Jerusalem and in Beit Hanina, ostensibly to defend their workers, but in reality to dissuade them from leading the demonstrations. Simultaneous assemblies and demonstrations took place in other cities in the West Bank, and events were led by national activists from Nablus and Jerusalem. A manifesto demanded, among other things, that Jordan institute full cooperation with the PLO and not obstruct the Palestinian *fedayeen* (combatants who are willing to sacrifice their lives, the common term for Palestinian militants at the time).⁸ On the eve of the 1967 War, Jerusalem experienced another wave of stormy demonstrations. In his memoirs, the then governor of Jerusalem, Anwar al-Khatib, relates that Ahmad Shuqayri, chairman of the PLO, had come to Jerusalem for Friday prayers several days before the battles broke out and was immediately lifted on people's shoulders as the masses shouted slogans in support of

the PLO. At the end of the prayers, al-Khatib continues, someone in the congregation grabbed the microphone from the preacher and passed it over to Shuqayri who delivered an impassioned speech.⁹ Indeed, Jerusalem and al-Haram al-Sharif at its center were an important focus of Palestinian nationalism before the 1967 war. And among the city's personages were more than a few who emphasized their Palestinian nationalism (for the most part within the framework of pan-Arabism).

Like many others, Shuqayri then believed that Arab armies would defeat Israel, and his hope was that the PLO, under his leadership, would take control of the liberated Palestinian land. But his hopes failed to materialize. In six days of fighting, the IDF succeeded in dealing a serious blow to the Egyptian, Syrian, and Jordanian armies and neutralized them, conquering wide areas in each of these countries. East Jerusalem was brought under full Israeli control, as were tens of thousands of the Arab residents who lived there.

Capital in the making 1967–93

Israeli conquest of East Jerusalem occurred in the midst of a process of strengthening of Palestinian national identity among its inhabitants. However, at that time this identity was quite complicated and did not necessarily entail separation of the West Bank from the eastern one. That is one of the reasons that when the outstanding figures in the city re-established the Supreme Muslim Council in July 1967, their proclamation stated that “Arab Jerusalem is an inseparable part of Jordan.”¹⁰ True that there were also other reasons for this declaration: the understanding that the internal disagreements should be left for a time after the withdrawal of the IDF from the area; the assumption that from the standpoint of the international community, the demand to return the land to the previous authority was stronger than the demand to establish a new body; and the strong connections that existed between some of these figures and the Jordanian regime.

Setting up the Supreme Muslim Council was institutional expression of the struggle of residents of East Jerusalem against Israeli occupation and especially the Israeli decision of June 28, 1967 to extend Israeli law to East Jerusalem within its expanded boundaries (virtually the annexation of East Jerusalem). But the aspirations of its members were even more far-reaching. They sought to become the national leadership of the West Bank Palestinians. The Israeli reaction to the Council's initiative was uncompromising: the initiators of the council were exiled to outside the city until they undertook to desist from all political activity, and during the first years after the war, heads of the council were banished from the country one after another. Among the banished were Sheikh Abd al-Hamid al-Sayeh, President of the Shari'ah Court of Appeals (later appointed chairman of the Palestine National Council); Attorney Muhsin Abu Maizar; former minister Kamal Dajani; and Ruhi al-Khatib, mayor of the Arab Jerusalem municipality – whose council was dispersed immediately after East Jerusalem was annexed to West Jerusalem.¹¹

These first steps of the Arab local leadership, on the one hand, and the responses of the state of Israel, on the other, were an indication of the long-term intentions

of the two sides regarding the city and its future. At the end of the war, the Fateh movement immediately joined the array of forces, taking its place as the leading Palestinian movement thanks to its rapid recovery and the momentum with which it began to organize armed cells in the West Bank and Jerusalem.* Its position differed in principle from that of the political leadership in the city: for Fateh, Jerusalem was not an inseparable part of Jordan but rather was the capital of Palestine. The rapid organization of Fateh in the city and in the West Bank in general was due not only to their opposition to the occupation but also to their fear of a political agreement entailing Israeli withdrawal and a return of the land to Jordan. That would have meant the loss of any chance for Palestinian sovereignty in their own homeland.

The central committee of the Fateh, then still a movement in the making and not an official member of the PLO, met in Damascus two days after the end of the war. Yasser Arafat and Abu Jihad (Khalil al-Wazir) pushed the decision for armed struggle inside the Occupied Territories as quickly as possible, while at the same time bringing about civil rebellion on a large scale. Arafat took it upon himself to form armed cells in the West Bank. Within a few days, Arafat, together with some of his comrades, crossed the river Jordan and began to set up cells in the occupied territory. During the six months he spent in the West Bank, he also came to Jerusalem where he organized a group of Fateh. In August he met with Faisal Husseini, whom he knew from the days when they had both lived in Cairo. Husseini was active simultaneously in several national groups, and Arafat brought him arms and offered him command of Fateh in Jerusalem. Husseini was arrested in October 1967 without having had a chance to take any action, and was sentenced to one year in prison. At the same time other Fateh cells were active in Jerusalem. In October, the one to which Fatma Barnawi belonged (she was appointed to the command of the women's police force in the Gaza Strip with the establishment of the Palestinian Authority in 1994) left an explosive charge in the Zion Cinema that was discovered before it exploded. Other cells of Fateh and the Popular Front – which was established in December 1967 and immediately joined the armed struggle – were uncovered before they managed to bring off any attacks in the city. But in the following months, Jerusalem cells of the two organizations did succeed in carrying out a number of operations. The ones that stand out most were the “night of the hand grenades” (August 18, 1968 by the Popular Front) and the car bomb in Zion Square (November 22, 1968 by Fateh).

The success of Israeli security forces in prevention, discovery, and arrest caused the Fateh headquarters to redeploy to outside the Occupied Territories. But the status of the movement in the Palestinian and general Arab arena gained in strength with the passage of time, and its attempts at recruiting activists in Jerusalem continued. After the battle of Karame (March 1968), perceived by Palestinians as proof of the ability of Palestinian guerilla organizations to successfully engage the IDF, Fateh became the most important Palestinian force. This received conspicuous institutional reinforcement when, in July 1968, the Palestinian National Council took a decision to change its composition. From a council whose members

represented the Palestinians according to their places of residence, the council became one in which guerilla organizations were seated according to their relative size. Fateh received a plurality in the Palestinian National Council, and in February 1969 it selected Arafat, from the Fateh leaders, to head the PLO. These developments meant the strengthening of the unique Palestinian identity and led to greater support for the PLO in East Jerusalem as well, and concomitantly, decreased support for Jordan. During the following five years, the process accelerated even more: events of “Black September” in 1970 – the Palestinian attempt to take over the monarchy and the harsh military response of King Hussein – in which Hussein appeared as an enemy of the Palestinians – further weakened identification with the Hashemite government, and the decision of the Arab League (in Rabat, 1974) that the PLO was the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people fortified the Palestinian nationalist trend.

In practice, however, the change was not so material. Strengthened Palestinian identity, even in its most definitive PLO version, did not bring about upheavals in the daily life of the public in Jerusalem and in the West Bank in general. Merchants continued to have economic dealings with Israel, laborers continued to work at construction sites, in restaurants, and in agriculture in Israel, while joining the armed Palestinian struggle was the choice of only a few individuals. Practically no new pro-PLO institutions appeared. There were three main reasons for this. First, the Palestinian inhabitants of the city enjoyed, for the most part, economic advantages from living under Israeli government, especially in connection with employment and allowances. So they did not hurry to act against the occupation or even to organize national institutions. This was the situation, as a rule, for the population in the Occupied Territories altogether, who during the first decade after the war enjoyed relative prosperity – and this applied even more to Jerusalem. Another reason for the absence of national Palestinian institutions and the limited mobilization to the ranks of the PLO was the effort that Israel expended to prevent the entrenchment of the PLO in the Occupied Territories. Israel struggled against the Fateh and Palestinian leftwing elements who began the process of building social institutions and networks. This task was assigned to the *Shabak*, the Israel Security Agency: in addition to gathering intelligence and countering terrorism, this organization had been made responsible for preventing “political subversion”; in other words, it was to act against civil institutions and organizations that opposed the Occupation. The economic advantages that could be gained under the Occupation were the carrot. They, together with the stick that was ready to act against opponents of the Occupation, caused the paucity of national activity.

Another retarding factor, no less important, was found in internal Palestinian politics: as a leadership in exile, the PLO leadership did not encourage establishment of national institutions in Jerusalem and the West Bank. It feared that the strengthening of local figures would lead to the emergence of alternate power centers, thereby weakening its own status. Most of the PLO’s energy and budget during the 1970s were thus directed to building its political institutions in Lebanon. Moreover, the Fateh movement saw itself – especially as pertains to the Occupied

Territories – as a guerilla movement and was not concerned with developing social institutions. Thus, despite the 1972 decision of the Palestinian National Council to support the trade unions and other organizations in the territories, the mainstream of the PLO did not exert much effort in building such institutions. A Jerusalemite veteran member of the Fateh expanded on these two points from his personal perspective. He explained that when he was about to be released from prison in 1980 (he had been incarcerated ten years previously), he reached the conclusion, together with other Fateh members who had been imprisoned with him, that the movement in the Territories should focus on political activity and even create connections with Israeli oppositional elements. According to him, the external PLO leadership tried to torpedo the idea. For one thing, it feared that negotiations on the future of the Occupied Territories would take place behind its back. It was only after a stubborn struggle that the local activists – headed by Faisal Husseini – succeeded in receiving a go-ahead from the movement’s leadership.¹²

During the 1970s, the only national elements that acted to build institutions were leftwing groups (the Palestinian Communist Party, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine) centered in the Jerusalem/Ramallah region. At the same time, although only in the social sphere (and with no clear political agenda), Islamic elements intensified their activity. During the “oil era” after the 1973 war, when the oil prices were at their peak, these benefited from generous budgets from the Gulf states and assistance from



FIGURE 1.1 War games

The armed struggle was the *raison d’etre* of the PLO from its establishment in 1964 until the signing of the Oslo Agreements in 1993, then it came again to the fore in 2000. However, there is no overt Palestinian armed presence in Jerusalem, and only kids allow themselves to walk “armed” in East Jerusalem.

Jordan, who regarded the “Muslim Brotherhood” as an ally in its struggle with the PLO. Oil money enabled accelerating construction of mosques and educational institutions (from kindergarten age through college), as well as creation of a cadre of activists. The alliance with Jordan enabled participation of the “Brotherhood” in the Waqf apparatus and they were actually able to exercise control over it, while setting the al-Aqsa compound at the center of their activity.¹³ Another decade or more would pass before the influence of these moves was felt.

The 1980s saw a significant change, with the Fateh joining in the political activity. Fateh ex-prisoners who believed that armed struggle should not be the only action possible, founded the Fateh youth movement, the *Shabiba*, intended also to compete with the leftwing youth movements. They set up local committees that organized social and political activities as well as student groups in the institutions of higher education. In spite of the intimations of crisis in the Fateh (caused in part by its involvement in the civil war in Lebanon in the mid-1970s and by news of corruption within the leadership), it was still considered to be the most faithful representative of the Palestinian national spirit. Partly because of the reputation it had gained in the struggle against Israel, the Fateh quickly became a mass movement, but of equal importance were the budgets the Arab League placed at its disposal after the peace agreement between Israel and Egypt. The Fateh abandoned an exclusive focus on guerilla operations to become a movement combining military, social, and political activity. This, along with its conservative social character (contrary to the pronounced secularity of the Left), enabled it to appeal to all sectors of the public. The new educated generation – the children of villagers and urban laborers who had gained a higher education thanks to the economic expansion and the opening of universities in the Occupied Territories – became one of the main publics targeted by the Fateh, helping it to become established as a broad and leading movement.¹⁴

This process blended with the idea of *sumud* (steadfastness) that took hold in the Occupied Territories at that time, according to which the very act of clinging to the land and preserving its Arab identity was not less a patriotic act than taking up arms and fighting the Israelis. But the Fateh took the idea of *sumud* one step further: clinging to the land is not just a personal matter – while each person remains on his own soil and cares for his own household, it is also a national duty that is best put into practice through the local institutions that are coordinated into a fabric of organizations whose actions are inspired by the PLO, under the leadership of Fateh.

How did these processes influence Jerusalem? Strengthening of Fateh came in tandem with the decline of the politics of the elites (such as the Supreme Muslim Council) and with the breakup of the National Guidance Committee – the local Palestinian leadership which was established by leftwing figures from within the Territories – whose members had been attacked by the “Jewish underground” at the beginning of the 1980s when it had also been declared illegal by the Israeli authorities. The result was the creation of a decentralized political system with many secondary power centers in the Territories, and a political center in the diaspora. This process harmed the centrality of Jerusalem. Participation of the “new intelligentsia” – the graduates of the Palestinian universities – in political activity

also weakened the Jerusalem center. Yet two factors helped the city to retain its status: one was the mobilization of many residents of the city and suburbs to the Fateh and the other organizations of the PLO, which gave them weight within the PLO. Ironically, the other factor was the Israeli annexation of East Jerusalem and the extension of Israeli law over the city, which resulted in greater freedom of expression and organization in Jerusalem than in the rest of the Occupied Territories where military law prevailed. That being the case and because of Jerusalem's status in the Palestinian ethos, the Palestinians set up their national institutions in the city, and Jerusalem became a cultural, media, and political center.

Indeed, in many ways, during the 1980s the city was transformed from a symbolic to a real capital: the important Palestinian newspapers were printed in Jerusalem; labor unions, writers' associations, and the national theater established themselves in Jerusalem, and meetings of the political leadership were held there. The centrality of the city was also clear from the fact that out of about 160 million dinars that were sent to Palestinians in the Occupied Territories via the Jordanian-PLO Committee in support of *sumud*, Jerusalem received about 38 percent.¹⁵

But Jerusalem differed from the other Palestinian cities in yet another way: in most of the cities of the West Bank, municipal elections were held in 1976, bringing an increase in the number of city mayors who were pro-PLO and who began to act together as a national leadership. In Jerusalem, the Palestinian citizens were not able



FIGURE 1.2 The Press in the service of the nation

The editorial boards of the most important Palestinian newspapers were based in Jerusalem between 1967 and the establishment of the Palestinian Authority in 1994. *Al-Fajr* daily (here: its offices in 1986) was known for his pro-Fateh approach. Like many other newspapers it ceased to function following the Oslo Agreements, while Ramallah became the center of Palestinian media.

to elect a municipal leadership because they lived under an Israeli municipality. To reach a position of leadership in the city it was necessary therefore to gain legitimacy in other ways. With the weakening of the traditional leadership, recognition was now gained through civic contribution and connections with the national PLO leadership. In the mid-1980s, Faisal Hussein stood out. He already belonged to the Fateh then, and he was considered to be the foremost political leader in the city.

Hussein, as was mentioned, was one of the activists who had been recruited by Arafat to the Fateh during the latter's stay in Jerusalem at the end of 1967, a fact which had been discovered by the Shabak and led to Hussein's arrest. That accorded him a certain amount of credit, but many others were in a similar position. His rise was also aided by his familial roots and his personal history which are deserving of some mention: Faisal Hussein was the son of Abd al-Qader al-Hussein, who belonged to the aristocratic, leading family of Jerusalem, and who commanded the Holy Jihad units in the Jerusalem hills during the 1948 war, until his death in the battlefield in April of that year. The 1948 war, ending for the Palestinians in catastrophe (*Nakba*) did not create many Palestinian heroes that the public could embrace, and the senior Hussein was one of the few who achieved broad national recognition. This recognition came in no small measure from the fact that contrary to most of the members of the elite families, he himself became a warrior. Faisal was eight years old when his father was killed, and he had already managed to wander with his parents from Baghdad where he was born to Saudi Arabia where his father was given political asylum, and to Cairo where he was living in 1948 while his father was on the battlefield. After his father's death, Faisal remained in Cairo, and when he completed his high school studies, he moved to the University of Baghdad to study science. Like many Palestinians, his political tendency at the time was pan-Arabic, and he joined *al-Qawmiyyun al-Arab*, the Arab Nationalists' Movement. He underwent officers training at Inshas (Egypt) in 1963. A year later, when he was 24, he first arrived in Jerusalem to settle there, and with the founding of the PLO that same year, he was appointed deputy department head in one of its offices in the city.¹⁶ About two years later he left for Syria where he joined the Palestine Liberation Army, the military arm of the PLO.

Hussein returned to Jerusalem after the war of 1967 when he, like others, infiltrated across the Jordan River. He took an active part in the efforts of *al-Qawmiyyun* to root themselves more firmly in the territories and to bring about civil rebellion and armed struggle. At the same time, he was in touch with Arafat, who supplied arms to graduates of *al-Qawmiyyun*, in an attempt to attract them to join the Fateh, as some, including Hussein, did (most joined the offspring of *al-Qawmiyyun*, the Popular Front). The Shabak conducted an unsuccessful chase after Arafat but managed to arrest Hussein.¹⁷ When he was released, he did not return to military or political activity. For about ten years he worked in whatever jobs came along: olive oil merchant, farmer (on the family's land in Jericho), technician in al-Maqased Hospital, reception clerk in a hotel, and more. During that time he fortified his connections within the Jerusalem public; having started as the son of the famous martyr (*shahid*), he became a personage in his own right. In 1979 he and colleagues

set up the Association for Palestinian Studies that was at first primarily a research institute that worked out of a building belonging to Hussein's family, the Orient House. By then he was already in touch with the PLO leadership in exile.

In the 1980s, when the Fateh movement began to build its socio-political networks (later known as the *Tanzim*) in the Occupied Territories, Hussein was among the founders in Jerusalem. His original intention was, apparently, to act on a national level, but Israel issued him with a restraining order, limiting his movement to within the boundaries of Jerusalem for a period of five years (1982–87). So Hussein devoted himself to local action instead.¹⁸ In addition to the research institute, he established an association for human rights that was affiliated with the Fateh and whose center was in the eastern part of the city. He was also in contact with a group of Fateh members who served as journalists and editors of *al-Fajr* East Jerusalem newspaper that was financed by the PLO.

Gradually, Fateh institutions filled the institutional void stemming from the boycott against the Israeli municipality of Jerusalem, and Hussein took his place as an outstanding leader. His basic approach, formed at this time, was that the leadership in Jerusalem must represent all the political trends and not only his own Fateh movement. After the prisoner exchange agreement between Israel and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (the General Command) in 1985, Hussein recruited released prisoners from all parts of the political spectrum for work in Orient House and its associated institutions. In that way he extended the connection of the entire population with Orient House. He also gradually built up a forum of representatives of political organizations and various sectors of the population with whom he discussed political, social, and economic issues touching on daily life under Israeli control, and he brought about the creation of a unified leadership for the Palestinian-Arab residents of the divided city. Apparently, his connections with the leftwing fronts (a natural continuation from his membership in *Qawmiyyun al-Arab*), on the one hand, and his link with the religious establishment (as a descendant of the Hussein clan), on the other, as well as his personal manner, made it easier for him to win the confidence of a wide public. During this period Hussein began to cultivate relations with Israeli political elements, first with the anti-Zionist left, with whom he acted in full partnership, then with less radical Israeli elements (more about this later).

Capital under fire: Jerusalem during the first Intifada

At the time that the first Intifada broke out in December 1987, the socio-political networks of the Fateh were fairly new (a fact scarcely remembered now), but they were well established in the field, and parallel networks of the Islamist and the leftwing movements were scattered throughout the Territories. This enabled the United National Command – which was based upon the Fateh and the leftwing movements – to initiate events on either a local or national scale and to further solidify its status. But there were two elements competing with this leadership: one was the PLO leadership in Tunis, which wanted to retain control over events; the

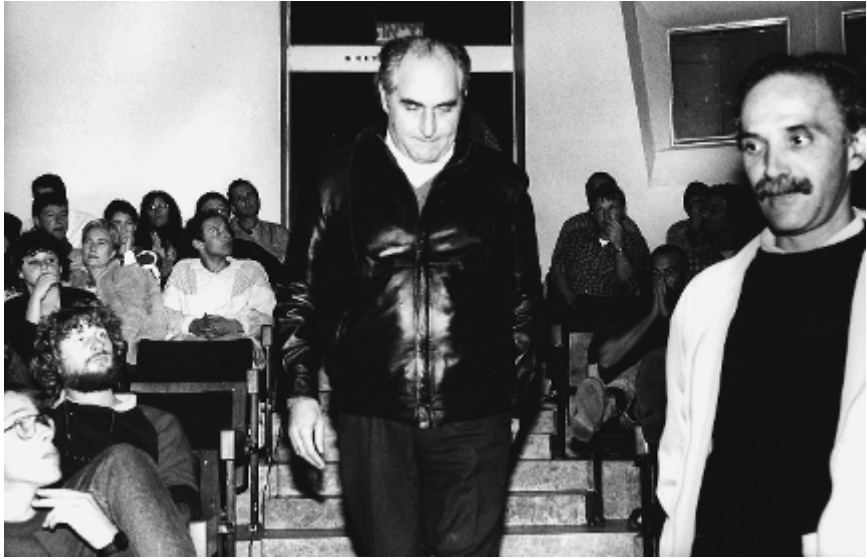


FIGURE 1.3a Faisal Hussein with Michael Warschawski



FIGURE 1.3b Faisal Hussein with Teddy Kollek

Palestinian Jerusalemite leader Faisal Hussein (1.3a, in the center) took the strategic decision to open dialog with Israelis in the late 1970s. His early contacts were established with far-left activists like Michael (“Mikado”) Warschawski (Figure 1.3a, standing on the right), who introduced him to Israeli audiences. In the late 1980s Hussein widened his contacts and met with more mainstream figures. In Figure 1.3b he is pictured with the legendary mayor of Jerusalem, Teddy Kollek (to the right).

other was the newly formed Hamas movement, which was based on cells of the Muslim Brotherhood and various Islamic institutions, and did not subordinate itself to the United National Command.

The strategic decision taken by the local national leadership was to assign primacy to PLO-abroad, and to accept its role as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, both under Occupation and in the diaspora. The idea was to unify the forces rather than to divide them. Jerusalem was one of the central connections between Tunis and the Occupied Territories, and through it, instructions and budgets flowed from the diaspora leadership to activists in the field. The effect was to improve the status of the Jerusalemite activists and leaders within the Palestinian national leadership. A clear sign of this was the appointment of Faisal Husseini as head of Fateh in the West Bank, and his cooption in 1989 to the Central Committee of Fateh, the strongest body in that movement. It numbered nineteen members and had, until then, consisted only of figures living outside Palestine (along with him, Zakariyya al-Agha, Fateh leader in the Gaza Strip was also appointed). The announcement issued by Fateh about the addition of new members to the central committee did not specify their names, for fear they would be arrested, but Fateh's top leaders in the territories as well as many others knew very well who was being spoken of.¹⁹

The integration of Palestinians from the Territories into the Palestinian decision-making circle, was one of the important ramifications of the Intifada in the internal-Palestinian arena. A no less important process (taking place in Jerusalem as in the other regions of Palestine), was the organized entry of the Muslim Brotherhood activists to the armed struggle against Israel. The medium for this was the Hamas movement, the offspring of the "Brothers," that arose at the beginning of the Intifada. The Islamists too had devoted considerable effort to building up their institutions, particularly in Jerusalem, since the 1970s. This, along with the status of Jerusalem in Islam, as well as the activity of emissaries of Sheikh Ahmad Yassin (such as Sheikh Jamil Hamami), made Jerusalem into one of the centers of Hamas in the West Bank. Al-Haram al-Sharif gradually changed from an Islamic symbol to a focus of activity. Still, the main role was played by Fateh. A thorough survey conducted at the end of the 1980s provides an indication of the relative strength of the Islamic trend (Hamas, Hizb al-Tahrir and the Islamic Jihad), the Left, and the nationalist trend (centered around Fateh) at the beginning of the Intifada. Of about 400 respondents from Jerusalem, 185 stated that they aspired to establish a secular Palestinian state, 46 hoped for a socialistic state, and 93 were striving for an Islamic state.²⁰ The killing of about twenty Palestinian demonstrators on the Temple Mount / al-Haram al-Sharif by Israeli security forces in October 1990 strengthened Hamas in the city to a certain extent, but apparently did not significantly change the balance of forces.

However, Jerusalem's unique status quickly found expression. During several weeks at the beginning of the Intifada, there were violent mass demonstrations in the city's Arab neighborhoods. But Israel's security forces applied severe measures, and participation subsided to an individual or small group level, rather than being

of a mass nature. Methods used by Palestinian youths included stone-throwing and setting fire to the vehicles of Jews that reached the Arab neighborhoods. The aim was to mark out Palestinian territory. There was a very significant reduction in the visits of Jews from beyond the municipal Green Line in the Palestinian neighborhoods and the Old City of Jerusalem. Further signs of the Intifada in the city were the commercial strikes – total or partial – that were carried out in the Palestinian quarters of the city for a long time. They were meant to make evident the authority exercised over the population by the leadership, and that usually succeeded. A more difficult phenomenon was the stabbing: one of the first instances was in May 1989 when a Palestinian named Nidal Zallum stabbed to death two Israelis on Yaffo Street – Nissim Levy and Kalman Vardi, and during the three years that followed, there was stabbing of Jews (who were either wounded or killed) both in the western and eastern parts of the city. These acts were usually undertaken on the initiative of the individual, without any organizational connection. An additional form of activity, one encouraged by the local leadership, was attacks on government offices and other symbols of “Israeliness” in the Palestinian neighborhoods of the city (including Egged buses and Red Star of David ambulances). Here too, these acts conveyed a clear message, and their result was a decline in the enforcement of Israeli law – but also a decline in services provided to the Palestinian-Arab residents.²¹

These activities contributed to Palestinian detachment from Israeli institutions and entrenchment of the Palestinian ones in the city. That had been one of the declared objectives of the uprising, and it was shared by the Palestinian Jerusalemite leadership. In most of the neighborhoods of East Jerusalem, *sulha* (traditional reconciliation) committees had been formed under the auspices of Palestinian organizations, and these handled local disagreements and lessened the need for Israeli police intervention. Orient House too, even though it had been closed by Israeli order, continued functioning, via its various departments operating in alternative buildings, as a source of authority for most local Palestinians. The coalition set up by Husseini with most of the Palestinian factions – including Hamas and the leftwing fronts – enabled Orient House to fill this function.

Still, the situation in Jerusalem was more complex than in other Palestinian cities. The Intifada leadership’s call to local Palestinians to detach themselves from Israeli government institutions gained much support in the rest of the Occupied Territories, but had only partial success in Jerusalem. The circumstances and unique legal status of Palestinian residents of Jerusalem did not permit them to detach themselves from Israel completely. Thus, the call for the resignation of Palestinian policemen from the Israeli Police that was widely accepted in the West Bank and Gaza, had smaller effect in Jerusalem. The same was true for Palestinians who had been working in the Jerusalem municipality or in government institutions such as the Income Tax Department and the Ministry of the Interior. It may be stated that the Intifada raised the level of tension and violence between Jews and Palestinians living in the city, while revealing at the same time, the uniqueness of East Jerusalem, and the differences between it and the other regions occupied by Israel in 1967.

The ambivalence among the Palestinian population toward the right methods to be used in Jerusalem was reflected in the municipal elections of 1989, when the Intifada was still at its height. In a surprising move, Hanna Siniora, a journalist and businessman having close relations with the PLO, proposed setting up an Arab list headed by him to contest the municipal elections in Jerusalem. He argued that such a list could advance the interests of the inhabitants of East Jerusalem in a number of areas (taxation, infrastructure, residential construction), without harming nationalist principles, especially the resistance to the annexation of East Jerusalem. His initiative was rejected by the PLO leadership in Tunis, and in Jerusalem it was activists of the Popular Front who took it upon themselves to make clear the intensity of their opposition to his move by setting fire to his two automobiles.²² Siniora retreated from his proposal. At the same time, it would appear that Faisal Husseini had already begun to develop the position that Jerusalem should remain an “open city”, that is, in any agreement with Israel, sovereignty over Jerusalem would be divided, but there would be no division on the ground. This approach too came from a view of Jerusalem as a city requiring unique treatment.

Husseini’s idea of an open city took shape in parallel with the PLO’s strategic decision to enter into negotiations with Israel, while according Israel recognition. A landmark in this process was the declaration of Palestinian independence in November 1988 based upon the UN partition decision, as well as acceptance of Security Council decision No.242 by the PLO. The Intifada subsided and was replaced by political contacts in which the “internal leadership” played a leading role. In the discussions with the U.S. Secretary of State, James Baker, that took place in Jerusalem in preparation for the Madrid Conference (1991), it was Faisal Husseini, Zakariyya al-Agha, and Hanan Ashrawi who represented the Palestinians. Among other reasons, they were acceptable to Israel because they were not considered to be formal PLO representatives, since their cooption to the national institutions had not yet been announced. They were acceptable to the PLO precisely because they did belong to its institutions and subordinated themselves to the PLO Executive. At that time, Orient House entrenched its status as the center of Palestinian diplomatic activity: it housed the preparatory meetings of the teams that were participating in the Israeli–Palestinian discussions in Washington (the open American channel) as well as of the professional teams.²³

But the political negotiations increased the traditional tensions between the internal and the external leadership. Arafat, it would seem, still feared the independent positions of Husseini and his cadre, and he played a dual game by which he neutralized the local team. Along with the open negotiations being conducted on the Jerusalem–Washington axis, in which Husseini played a central part, Arafat agreed to open a hidden channel in Oslo, to be handled by the “outside” people, Abu Mazen (Mahmoud Abbas) and Abu ‘Ala (Ahmad Qurei). The internal leadership that conducted negotiations in Washington was instructed to take a hard line stance, but at a certain stage, Arafat instructed them not to include the question of Jerusalem in the document of Palestinian demands. The Palestinian negotiators viewed that as a concession, and they promptly resigned. At that point the main

negotiations moved to the external PLO team handling the Oslo process. Led by Arafat, the team conceded on the matter of including East Jerusalem within the boundaries of the Palestinian Authority, and they agreed to defer the discussion of the status of the city until the stage of the permanent agreements.

Despite Arafat's deep attachment to Jerusalem which he had never hidden (a famous example is his call for millions of martyrs to "march toward Jerusalem"), he believed that at that time it was more urgent to create a territorial base on Palestinian territory than to have a foothold in Jerusalem. In retrospect, many believe that Arafat's concession of any sign of Palestinian sovereignty in East Jerusalem contributed greatly toward the collapse of the Palestinian institutions in the city and the de-politicization of its residents during the Oslo years.²⁴

Even if that is not the only reason for the political passivity of East Jerusalem residents during the following decade, there is no doubt that excluding Arab Jerusalem from the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority increased the distance between Jerusalem residents and the residents of the West Bank, reinforced their status as being connected to Israel no less than to the Occupied Territories, and augmented the creation of a unique Jerusalem Palestinian identity.

2

CAPITAL IN DECLINE: THE POLITICAL PROCESS AND THE DOWNWARD SLIDE OF AL-QUDS (JERUSALEM) 1993–2000

The disagreement between external and internal Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) on the matter of Jerusalem was, of course, not the only one in Palestinian politics. An issue that cut much deeper was over the legitimacy of negotiating a peace agreement with Israel. On this matter there had been internal Palestinian discussion since the mid-1970s, at which time two camps squared off against each other: one, beginning as a clear minority, believed that one should not ignore that Israel in fact existed, and therefore, it was necessary to try to reach some arrangement with her in order to gain sovereignty over at least part of historical Palestine (i.e., the entire West Bank and the Gaza Strip, including East Jerusalem) without giving up the right of return. The opposing camp held that any relinquishing of parts of the homeland was unacceptable and that, therefore, no legitimacy could be accorded to the existence of the state of Israel.

Changes in the international arena following the Gulf War of 1991, the aspiration of the PLO for recognition by the United States, the desire of the internal leadership to leverage the Intifada's achievements, and the appearance of the Hamas movement as an alternative to the PLO, caused the strengthening of the Palestinian camp which supported recognition of Israel in exchange for American and Israeli recognition of the organization. This camp led to the Oslo Agreements. A question of utmost importance is whether the recognition of the state of Israel and its right to exist was sincere or was merely a tactical maneuver stemming from the PLO's desire to establish itself territorially in order to continue the struggle. As I understand it, in the Fateh movement itself, these two approaches exist side by side. More on that below.

The signing of the Oslo Agreements, and especially the meager results achieved by the Palestinian negotiators, including in the matter of Jerusalem, moved opponents of the agreement to form an unprecedented coalition consisting of the leftwing fronts (the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Democratic

Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) which were a part of the PLO) and the Islamic movements (which acted outside it). This coalition mounted a political and military campaign intended to forestall implementation of the agreements. A look back at the Oslo years (1994–2000) reveals that there were actually four struggles taking place simultaneously and influencing each other: an internal Israeli struggle between supporters and opponents of the process (that reached its height with the assassination of the Israeli Prime Minister, Yizhak Rabin); an internal Palestinian struggle between supporters and opponents of the agreement (the opponents used terror attacks as a means to torpedo it); and two levels of Israeli–Palestinian struggle. One, between Israel and the Palestinian movements that opposed the agreements, was chiefly military and intelligence-oriented; and a second between Israel and official elements in the PA who attempted to carry out government activity within Jerusalem contrary to the agreements, but on the other hand, supported the agreements and even security coordination with Israel.

The Oslo years: the security dimension

The methods of operation of opponents of the agreements with Israel, especially those of Hamas, underwent extensive changes throughout the years. During the first Intifada, the majority of the Hamas command (in contrast to the Islamic Jihad) opposed attacking civilians, mainly because of the Islamic rules of war (a well-known Hadith – even though open to interpretation – forbids Muslim fighters to kill the elderly, women, and children or to uproot fruit trees). Their main method of operation, thus, was to open fire on military vehicles and on Jewish settlers (whom the Palestinians regard not as ordinary citizens but as the spearhead of the occupation). In Jerusalem, the military activity was relatively marginal, and like the other organizations, most of the Hamas cells focused upon “soft” violence such as setting vehicles on fire, throwing stones and Molotov cocktails – which even in themselves sometimes led to casualties¹ as well as nonviolent acts such as demonstrations, hanging out flags, and writing slogans. An additional type of action undertaken by Hamas from its early years was kidnapping soldiers. This action was first used in the Gaza Strip in 1989 by Mahmoud al-Mabhouh (assassinated 21 years later in Dubai) who was the mastermind behind the kidnapping of the Israeli soldiers Avi Sasportas and Ilan Sa’adon; and was brought to Jerusalem in 1992 in order to use the relative freedom of movement enjoyed by Palestinians living in East Jerusalem who possessed Israeli identity documents. The Jerusalem Hamas cell first to make use of this advantage was headed by Mahmoud ‘Attun, a resident of Sur Bahir in the southern part of the city (a member of his family was elected to the Palestinian parliament on the Hamas slate in the 2006 elections, and was arrested in 2007 along with other Hamas members of parliament). ‘Attun, born in 1970, completed his high school studies in his village and continued his higher education in the Da’wa Islamic and Sciences College in Umm el-Fahm. He was about eighteen years old when the first Intifada broke out, and at the beginning, he was involved in setting fire to buses and in other Hamas activities for which he was detained more than

once by the security forces. Between one arrest and the next, he tried to continue his studies and served as head of the student union in the college. At the age of twenty-two, after the Madrid talks, he decided to become more active. Together with Muhammad Issa, a Jerusalem reporter for the journal of the Islamic movement in Israel, *Sawt al-Haqq wal-Huriyya*, he set up the “al-Wahda” (Unity) cell. They carried out the attack in Wadi Ara in which two policemen were killed, and in December 1992 they kidnapped Border Police Sergeant Major Nissim Toledano with the intention of using him to free Hamas prisoners, first among them, Sheikh Ahmad Yassin. The kidnapping never reached the stage of negotiations: faulty planning, lack of experience, and absence of a connection with senior Hamas figures led to killing Toledano in the hiding place they had prepared near Ma’ale Adumim, and the Israeli government responded by deporting 415 imprisoned Hamas and Islamic Jihad activists to Lebanon.²

These actions, taken in the pre-Oslo era, were still consistent with the limitations adopted by most of the Hamas cells not to harm ordinary citizens but only security forces and settlers. In the wake of the Oslo Agreements, more voices were raised in Hamas calling for disregard of that restriction in order to prevent implementation of the agreements. The differences of opinion disappeared after the massacre perpetrated by a settler from Kiryat Arba (Hebron), Dr. Baruch Goldstein in the Cave of the Patriarchs (the Ibrahimi Mosque) in Hebron on Purim in February of 1994: as a result, a majority of the Hamas command decided in favor of intentional attack on civilians.³ Attacks on buses in Afula and Hadera that spring were the implementation of that decision (the first assault took place on the fortieth day after the Hebron massacre), as was the shooting in downtown Jerusalem (October 1994). But the central Izz al-Din al-Qassam unit, formed that same year in Jerusalem, chose, despite the changed circumstances, to act only against soldiers.

Hamas members in the city still relate the history of that cell, some of whose members have since been killed and others imprisoned. It was Gazan Hamas activist Sallah Jadallah who initiated the founding of the unit in early 1994 when he was a college student in Ramallah. There, he met a Jerusalemite student Ayman Abu Khalil, who was active in the Islamic students’ cell (*al-kutla al-Islamiyya*), and proposed that they set up a Hamas cell together based on residents of East Jerusalem and that they carry out sophisticated actions. Abu Khalil lived in a modest home in Beit Hanina, on the main road to Ramallah, with his mother who was a teacher and his sister Iman, and he was aware of the possibilities open to him as possessor of a Jerusalem identity card. Just a few days after Jadallah had approached him, Abu Khalil went looking for more friends to join the cell. He had no trouble finding suitable candidates. One was Tareq Abu ‘Arafe from Ras al-’Amoud (his brother Khaled was appointed minister for Jerusalem affairs in the Hamas government at its inception in 2006; another of his brothers is a caricaturist). Abu ‘Arafe brought in his brother-in-law, Ragheb ‘Abdeen as well, and another resident of Ras al-’Amoud, Hasan al-Natshe, son of a clothing merchant from the Old City in Jerusalem, also joined. They held their meetings in the al-Aqsa mosque. Their friends relate that at that time, the group began to pray the dawn prayer on a regular basis, and they also

added optional prayers to their daily schedule. Along with the growing religious fervor, Abu Khalil consolidated his ties with the command of the military wing of Hamas in the Gaza Strip, receiving arms and instructions from them in return.

Members of the cell traveled Israeli highways in vehicles with Israeli license plates, attempting to locate potential kidnapping victims. The first soldier they snatched was Shahar Simani from the Duvdevan special force. He put up a struggle and was shot and killed. His body was hidden in a wadi next to Beit Hanina. In July 1994 they snatched the soldier Arik Frankental, and he too tried to resist and was shot to death. At this point, the cell members had at their disposal, in addition to arms received from Gaza, the weapons of the dead soldiers. Their personal confidence grew, and they decided to attack the home of Ariel Sharon in the Old City. A police patrol that noticed them next to Wadi Joz, just outside the walls of the Old City, held a shoot-out with them during which three policemen and one member of the cell were wounded. The police called in reinforcements, Shabak and special units entered the picture, and after a prolonged chase, Abu Khalil, commander of the cell, was captured, and the two brothers-in-law, Abu 'Arafe and 'Abdeen, were killed.

But the cell survivors, al-Natshe and his friend Abd al-Karim Bader, decided not to give up. In October of that year, together with the originator of the cell, Jadallah, they organized another kidnapping. This victim, their last, was a Golani unit fighter, Nachshon Waxman. Before acting, the cell members had located a suitable hiding



FIGURE 2.1 Ariel Sharon in the Old City

Ariel Sharon (left), is rightly considered to be the architect of the settlement project. He expressed his commitment to the idea of settlement in all parts of Jerusalem when he rented a house in the Muslim Quarter of the Old City (here: in his house with supporters, 1987). These Jewish enclaves within the Arab neighborhoods take place in parallel to the construction of large Jewish neighborhoods on land confiscated usually from Arabs.

place in Bir Naballa (near Ramallah) which they fortified. They also appointed a contact man to pass on messages, keeping their own location hidden. Their declared intention was to bring about the release of Hamas prisoners, but their hiding place was discovered. Israel conducted negotiations with the kidnappers, and in the meantime, special units prepared for breaking into the house. There is disagreement about details of the event, but all agree that in the course of the break-in, the three kidnappers and Waxman, their victim, as well as Captain Nir Poraz from the assault force were all killed.⁴

That was the end of the era of Hamas' selective attacks, and it appears that since that time, no cells have arisen in Hamas who make it a point not to harm civilians. Suicide attacks became more frequent; the attack in Beit Lidd on the Tel Aviv-Haifa highway in January 1995 (Hamas together with the Islamic Jihad), in buses in Ramat Gan and Jerusalem that summer, and the four suicide attacks of February–March 1996 in Ashkelon, Dizengoff Center in Tel Aviv, and, on two separate occasions, buses travelling on Jaffa Road, the main road inside Jerusalem. Hamas announced that the attacks in 1996 were revenge for the Shabak targeting and killing of the “engineer” Yihya ‘Ayyash, a sabotage expert and senior leader in the military arm of Hamas, at the beginning of the same year. But one cannot assume that this was the only motivation. At the time, movement leaders both locally and abroad were



FIGURE 2.2 Suicide attacks in downtown Jerusalem

Suicide attacks were the strategic weapon used by Hamas in their successful attempt to prevent the implementation of Oslo Agreements. Hamas activists from the city were instrumental in providing guidance and shelter to the attackers. The PA security agencies were confused as to whether to cooperate with the Israelis against Hamas and betray the idea of the armed struggle, or to enable Hamas to attack Israeli targets. Here: bus route 18 after a suicide attack; Jaffa st., February 1996.

in the midst of a sharp dispute about the continuation of military activity. While some of the movement's leaders were in touch with officials in the PA as well as unofficial Israeli elements regarding a cease-fire, other leaders – especially outside the country – called for escalation and urged the military branch to undertake further attacks, in order to halt negotiations with Israel and the strengthening of the PA.

These attacks had a number of ramifications. One was less support for the political process among the Israeli public – and the election of the rightwing leader Binyamin Netanyahu as Prime Minister. Another was the increased tension between Hamas and the PA, with the latter demanding a monopoly on the use of force. A third was recognition on the part of both Palestinians and Israelis of the ability of Hamas to recover relatively easily from the targeting and killing of militants and sabotage experts. After the death of 'Ayyash, more telling attacks were carried out than during his lifetime, evidence that his replacement “engineer number two,” Muhi al-Din Sharif, was every bit as effective. Sharif was a Jerusalemite, born in Beit Hanina (to a father who had a falafel stand in the Old City), and became involved in suicide attacks with other Jerusalemites. However, it is also important to note that not the entire leadership of Hamas in Jerusalem supported these attacks: Sheikh Jamil Hamami (Abu Hamza), graduate of al-Azhar, lecturer in al-Quds University, member of the Supreme Muslim Council, and one of the Hamas founders in the West Bank, severely criticized the suicide attacks in Jerusalem and was compelled to resign from movement leadership.

Between the second half of 1996 and the advent of the second Intifada, the number of attacks declined, including inside Jerusalem, although the city did continue to suffer from some bursts of violence and attacks (the double suicide attack on the pedestrian shopping mall in July 1997, a suicide attack in September the same year, and knife wounds and shooting in the Old City [targeting students of the Ateret Cohanim Yeshiva among others]). There were a number of reasons for the decline, but it is impossible to assess the relative importance of each one. They included the relations between Hamas and the PA; improvement in the security coordination between Israel and the Palestinians under the aegis of the CIA; and perhaps also the relatively small amount of support these attacks gained among the Palestinian public.⁵ It is also difficult to evaluate the influence of various aspects of the Netanyahu government's behavior: was it the government's insistence on reciprocity that brought about the decrease in the number of attacks, or might it have been the transfer of most of Hebron to the PA's jurisdiction (January 1997) that calmed the atmosphere?

But there was a central set of events during that period that may be seen as a watershed in relations between Israel and the PA (and apparently it was these that moved Israel to sign the Hebron protocols). It was the fighting between the Israeli and Palestinian security forces following the opening of the Wailing Wall tunnel in September 1996. Nablus (the tomb of Joseph), Gaza, and Jerusalem were the focus of events. There were exchanges of fire on the border between Jerusalem and Ramallah, and the Israeli army sent tanks and attack helicopters to the scene. In al-Aqsa mosque a mass prayer was held with 7,500 Muslims participating, some of

whom began after the prayers ended to throw stones at Jewish worshippers at the Western Wall.⁶ Some seventy Palestinians and seventeen Israelis were killed during the three-day clashes, and the sum total of events indicated the fragility of the agreements, the feeble security arrangements, the lack of Palestinian faith in the Netanyahu government or in Israel altogether, as well as the centrality of Jerusalem for the Palestinians. The ambivalence of the Palestinian security elements was also manifested during the events: some of their people acted to lessen the friction; others participated in the fighting.

The ambivalence of the Palestinian security agencies is worth noting. Its origins may be found in a combination of strategic, factional, and personal considerations. Overall, it may be said that the differing approaches among Palestinian security forces stemmed from the internal division inside Fateh (upon whose members the security apparatuses were based) in regard to Israel and agreements with her. The wing that saw peace with Israel as a strategic choice favored close security cooperation with Israel, since it understood that acts of terror would put an end to the political process, and the vision of an independent Palestinian state would recede into the distance. According to a Jerusalemite who served as an officer in the Preventive Security force, when the suicide attacks began, he and his men expected to receive instructions from Arafat to use all means, including live fire, to deal with Hamas members. Such instructions never arrived. The same officer explained that their desire to break the terror cells of Hamas came from an analysis according to which the attacks were liable to cause the Palestinians irreparable damage by giving Israel legitimacy to employ much greater force, to withdraw from the diplomatic contacts, and to perpetuate their control over substantial parts of the occupied territories. In retrospect, he saw reconquering West Bank cities during the al-Aqsa Intifada and building the separation barrier inside Palestinian territory as confirmation of this analysis.⁷ In some cases, political party considerations were there to be added to the strategic analysis: the competition between Fateh and Hamas caused some of the security apparatus personnel to support an uncompromising struggle against Hamas in order to narrow the power base of the Islamists in Palestinian society.

On the other hand, in Fateh there were elements who from the beginning viewed the Oslo Agreements as a jumping off point on the way to furthering the idea of a Palestinian state from the sea to the river (according to 1974 "stages' plan"), while others, at the beginning of the process had believed in a solution of peace until they concluded from the Israeli behavior during the Oslo years that Israel did not intend to permit the Palestinians to establish a viable independent state with Jerusalem as its capital. The murder of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin showed both groups the strength of the opponents of the agreements among the Israeli public, and so did the election of Binyamin Netanyahu to head the government. This being the case, it was difficult for the moderate Palestinian security agencies to struggle against the militant opposition, perceived as more faithful to the fundamental values of the Palestinian people than the PLO leadership. So they failed to act decisively against terror, and sometimes they even joined those leading the armed struggle. Arafat's indecisiveness (apparently believing that controlled terror would strengthen

his hand in negotiations with Israel), and his simultaneous support for figures from both camps in Fateh, prevented the emergence of a unified policy in the PA.

Social-family considerations also made the struggle against Hamas more difficult. It is enough to note that two of the relatives of Hasan al-Natshe, a member of the Jerusalem kidnapping cell, were high-level members of Jerusalem Fateh and acted as representatives of the local Preventive Security apparatus. While they lacked information on the activity of their relative, it was impossible to know how they would act if such information reached them. This is also the case with those who guided the suicide bombers in Jerusalem in February–March 1996. Two of them were members of the Abu Sneineh family from Ras al-Amoud, and nephews of a businessman from East Jerusalem who was among the associates of the head of the Preventive Security Service, Jibril Rajoub. Both al-Natshe and Abu Sneine are very large extended families, and in both instances, second degree relations are involved. While it is difficult to assess the ramifications of Palestinian familial-social structure for inter-organizational relations – there are examples indicating various directions of influence – it is important to take note of the diverse possibilities.

The complex relationship between familial obligations and organizational ones exists in Jerusalem as in the other parts of the occupied territories, but because of the many attacks in Jerusalem, the city became a center in which all these conflicting interests come together. A unique characteristic of how the organizations operated in Jerusalem at that time is connected to the attitude of Faisal Husseini who saw Orient House as a center for Jerusalem Palestinians whoever they were. Because of that, Orient House offered legal and economic assistance to Hamas prisoners as well, which lessened inter-organizational friction in the city. Husseini believed that since the city was under full Israeli occupation and not under partial Palestinian sovereignty, Palestinian unity was obligatory.

Confused society under dual sovereignty

The terror assaults in the western part of the city were only one aspect of the new situation which Jerusalem residents faced in the wake of the Oslo Agreements and their problematic implementation. For the Palestinian population in the city, the very fact of establishing the PA and the entrenchment of Palestinian security apparatuses in Jericho in the spring of 1994 caused a perceptual upheaval. Even before those bodies began to function in Jerusalem itself, the city was seething with confusion and excitement. Thousands of Jerusalemites went down to Jericho to celebrate its transfer to the control of the PA in May 1994. They mingled among the uniformed Palestinian soldiers carrying their weapons proudly, located relatives who had returned with the Palestinian Liberation Army or Fateh, and were overjoyed at the sight of the signs of Palestinian sovereignty in their homeland for the first time in history. In this new reality, many found themselves rethinking their position. Wealthy merchants from East Jerusalem who had close connections with Israeli government elements created a new network of connections and loyalties with the Palestinian security agencies; malfeasors sought out new sponsors; political

activists looked for support; and anyone who met Arafat took their photo with him and hung it in an appropriate spot.

In the weeks following, the Palestinian security forces began to establish themselves in East Jerusalem. The most active among them was the Preventive Security Force under the command of Rajoub. In June the first word had already arrived about his attempts to recruit Palestinians who had collaborated with Israel by promising them pardons and immunity. He also held meetings with members of the Fateh in Jerusalem and proposed that they act within the framework of the security body. Many of them agreed. Overall, he sought to establish his force as a governing body and an address for victims of crime in East Jerusalem. He thereby hoped not only to replace the Israeli police as the representative of the sovereign on the spot, but also to enforce national principles (preventing the sale of land to Jews, for example) among the entire population. This force also strove to establish its authority over local criminal gangs and customary arbitrators. Rajoub did not always attempt to neutralize them. Sometimes they were offered the possibility of acting under his men.⁸

Quickly groups began to operate in the city, a few of them armed, in the name of the PA. They began to combat the drug dealers who operated openly in many neighborhoods, seeking to eradicate the affliction that had been undermining Palestinian society in the city for many years. In their view, it was both a social and national mission. The prevailing opinion among Palestinians was that distribution of drugs was done under the auspices of Israeli security forces or at least with their intentional disregard, and that the collaborators with Israel were among the biggest drug dealers in town. Indeed, East Jerusalem is the Palestinian city in which the rate of drug users and addicts is the highest.⁹ Activists who were recruited for administrative bodies of the Authority also began to mediate local disputes, to compel people to appear for investigation in the detention facilities that were opened in Jericho, and to serve in units assigned to protect Palestinian personages and institutions. This activity revealed the fact that the Israeli police had for many years neglected the struggle against crime in East Jerusalem, but also contradicted the agreements between Israel and the PLO according to which the city was outside the jurisdiction of the PA.

Israel was in no hurry to contest this activity. While Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin had indeed announced in May 1994 the intentions of his government to limit Palestinian activity in Jerusalem, at the same time there was the Israeli government's commitment not to harm Palestinian institutions inside the city (as was stated in the letter of Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres to his Norwegian counterpart Jurgen Holst on September 9, 1993).¹⁰ The Israeli perception of security during the Oslo years also made a direct struggle difficult against Palestinian security apparatuses – they were seen as assisting in the struggle against Islamic terror, and some among the Israeli security services were of the opinion that it was best to allow them to act in East Jerusalem in return for their security activity in cooperation with Israel. Nonetheless, there was a growing sense that Israeli sovereignty was being compromised, and at the end of 1994, the Knesset passed the law “Implementation

of the Agreement on Gaza and Jericho Areas (Restrictions of Activity),” that was intended to provide legal means for a struggle against Palestinian activity in Jerusalem. The objective of the law, as set forth in its first paragraph, was “unless with the agreement of the Israeli government, to prevent Palestinian Authority or PLO diplomatic or governmental activity or anything similar within the borders of the state of Israel that was not consistent with respect for the sovereignty of the state of Israel.”

However, the law was one thing and reality another. As the political process went forward, the PA, by virtue of its very existence and its widening influence over areas next to Jerusalem, created a dual government in the Arab quarters of the city, in which the enforcement elements of both political entities were acting side by side. A letter from East Jerusalem, sent to the deputy commander of the General Intelligence service in Jericho, Sallah Jadid, in mid-March 1996, is a good example of this duality. The writer, working mostly in the local Sharia courts (here too a dual system exists: Israeli and Jordanian-Palestinian), was involved in a dispute with Attorney Fahmi Shabane, who worked with the PA. The letter of complaint against the East Jerusalem attorney reads as follows:

For a long time the aforementioned attorney has been exercising his authority in and around Jerusalem in the name of our national [Palestinian] Authority by means of threats and promises and by harming people, including harming their good names, for his own personal profit [. . .]. Things have reached such a pass that he has attacked me verbally in public, and I responded that it is my right to complain about him to the national [Palestinian] Authority and also to the Israeli police department in order to defend myself. I was surprised to receive telephoned threats [. . .] in the name of the Palestinian Authority, “if I dare file a complaint against him in the Israeli police department or to the National Authority.” Sir, I won’t describe here all his deeds that give a bad name to our national Palestinian Authority. We support our National Authority, and we are people who obey the laws and the constitution according to the rules, and we refuse to obey those who disregard the law and act against the national norms. I turn to you for fear of the development of family disputes and request that you take those actions you deem suitable.”¹¹

This letter indicates the complicated relations that developed between Palestinian residents of the city and the Palestinian Authority. One thing that stands out in it is the obligation to declare the obedience they feel toward it because it is the “national authority,” that is, the highest Palestinian authority. Of course, this is sometimes the result of authentic national feelings, but it may also be seen as paying lip service in the course of petitioning official elements. At the same time, the letter writer and many others argue that it is impossible to ignore the fact that they are living under Israeli sovereignty, and they thus have the right to turn to Israeli government institutions, at least in special cases. This is an expression of the tension between the national ideal of fully independent Palestinian government in Jerusalem and the

reality in which Jerusalem residents are in fact under Israeli jurisdiction. To this must be added the further tension between the desirable and the actual in the workings of the PA. From the very beginning of its activity in the city, there was much criticism of the arbitrary power exercised by those working for the Authority, the corruption of some of them, favoritism shown for relatives and friends, etc. Similar complaints were also heard towards the PA in areas that were under its official responsibility. Those living in the Territories had three main options: to ally themselves with the Authority and its members in an attempt to enjoy its special benefits, to remain politically passive, or to identify with opposition organizations, like Hamas, and wait for the right moment when they came into power (which happened, as we know, in 2006). In Jerusalem at that time an additional option existed: maintaining channels of communication with Israeli elements. And some chose that option.

Several months after word began to spread about the activity of Attorney Shabane, he was arrested by the Israeli police. It emerges that the connections between residents of East Jerusalem and the police, and the criticism in East Jerusalem of the behavior of those working in the PA aided the district police in gathering incriminating material about him. When he was brought to court to have his detention extended, a police representative asserted that the intelligence material in police hands indicated that Shabane “did in East Jerusalem as he wished and he terrorized city residents, using violence as his method of action. The Minorities Department has in its possession testimony describing a difficult pageant of abuse and torture at the hands of the defendant himself and at his instigation.” After Shabane’s arrest, further complaints were collected against him, said the police representative,

linking the defendant to a long string of the most serious offenses, including kidnapping for purposes of extortion, possession of weapons, attack under aggravated circumstances, intentional grave bodily injury, extortions by threat and violence, contact with foreign agents and inciting to revolt. From these complaints we see a pattern of recurring acts of terrorization and instilling fear in East Jerusalem while undermining the rule of law.

At the end of a long trial, the accusations against Shabane were reduced in number, and he was sentenced to community service. (It is an irony that Shabane appeared in the Israeli TV in 2010 and accused the PA of corruption, but this happened under totally different circumstances.¹²) During “Oslo years,” however, his arrest, and the arrest of other PA officials, helped the police force to limit the presence of Palestinian security elements in the central part of East Jerusalem, that is: the Old City and the commercial and business center alongside it. In the peripheral neighborhoods, the influence of the police remained relatively limited.

Direct action against Palestinian officials was one of the methods used by the Israeli police, representing the Israeli government in its attempts to cope with the phenomenon of dual government. Another way was to compete with the Authority

apparatuses on doing the better job of keeping law and order in East Jerusalem. The Israeli police augmented its forces in East Jerusalem and began to involve itself in matters that it had previously ignored, such as arguments between neighbors, aiming to prove the state's effective control throughout the Arab quarters of the city. At the same time the police located Palestinian personages from East Jerusalem who agreed to act as arbitrators on its behalf. During the golden period of that method, approximately one hundred people in East Jerusalem held certificates as conciliators on behalf of the Israeli police department. Thus, two competing networks of customary arbitrators and "*sulha* committees" emerged and were active in tandem: on the one hand, people working in the name of the PA (and coordinating their activity with Orient House, with the office of the Palestinian governor of the Jerusalem district, or with the Palestinian security apparatuses), and on the other hand, those cooperating with the Israeli police. Each of the sides tried to bring about compromise in local quarrels, to fight drug dealers, and to resolve domestic disagreements. The line of action that evolved then in the police department (in contrast to what had been usual before the existence of the PA) was to arrive as quickly as possible at each site of a mass argument, family disagreement, or gunfire; to take charge, and to prove "who was boss here."

The police department had an advantage because of the relatively organized disposition of forces it had at its disposal: it could quickly organize a Border Police team and dispatch it to any event and thus stabilize the situation, while at the same time sending the customary arbitrators who worked with it in order to bring about *'atwa*, a customary cease-fire. No less important: the compromises proposed found an attentive ear in the police criminal investigation department and in the courts. The arbitrators themselves had the support of the police department and this gave them greater power: their own personal problems and those of their relatives were resolved, and through their contact with police officers, they became mediators between the population and the Israeli establishment.¹³ On the other hand, the police and those close to them also had their drawbacks: the police represented the disliked establishment, and its favorites were sometimes suspected of disreputable motives. It was argued that they did not stand up to those thought to be close to the regime or collaborators. But the Authority apparatuses had their own disadvantages as well as advantages. Disadvantages include the bad name some of the arbitrators who acted under the auspices of the Authority acquired and the knowledge that being helped by them would not be seen favorably by the Israeli government. Their advantage was their connection with the society within which they acted and with the national movement that in many ways served as a focus of identification. The person who was the adviser on Arab affairs of the Jerusalem police department for about a decade and recruited the arbitrators, Reuven Berko, believes that the police defeated the PA: "All the alternative elements of government were eliminated. The same goes for those with ideas of a militia," he insists. But it was not an easy struggle, and it is not at all certain that it was decided in favor of the police department. Lacking exact data, it is difficult to compare the percentage of the East Jerusalem population turning to the police in matters of disputes among

neighbors, violence inside the family, attacks and similar violations of the law to that in Israeli society as a whole or even within Arab society in Israel. What is certain is that many still prefer to resolve their problems within an internal Palestinian framework. The steps taken by Palestinian security elements against the arbitrators working for the police also dissuaded some of the residents from asking for help from the latter. In one instance an officer of the Palestinian General Intelligence recruited one of the “Israeli” arbitrators and ordered him to dial him and leave his cellular phone open during a meeting of the arbitrators with Israeli police officers. At the other end, Palestinian intelligence officers recorded those participating, and a while later, some of the arbitrators received warnings not to continue working for the Israeli police. One of the leading “police” arbitrators was even kidnapped and taken to Ramallah, but that happened after the collapse of the Oslo process, in 2002, when the entire system was near total disintegration.¹⁴

An analysis of the activity of Israeli security elements in Jerusalem during the Oslo years reveals their conviction that the Palestinian residents in the city were obliged to accept Israeli sovereignty, since East Jerusalem had been brought under Israeli jurisdiction. This perception caused a high Shabak official to define the Palestinian security elements as a “multiple-armed octopus and a *golem* who rose up against its creators.”¹⁵ That approach on the part of the law-enforcing authorities might be only natural, but it suffers from a somewhat simplistic understanding. They tend to ignore the fact that for many Palestinian Jerusalemites, Israeli control is merely Occupation, and thus illegitimate. They also ignore the fact that Palestinian national activity in the city is not a result of the Oslo Agreements but rather of the very existence of a Palestinian population of approximately a quarter of a million people inside Jerusalem, with a complicated web of affinities and loyalties.

Analysis of the activities of the Palestinian security elements during the Oslo years shows that they targeted the Palestinian population in the eastern part of the city in order to assert the control of the PA. They had no dealings with the Israelis whatsoever. Furthermore, the highest levels in Fateh decided not to initiate attacks against settlers in the eastern part of the city. A central Fateh activist in Jerusalem alleges that when the proposal was raised to cope with the Silwan settlers by attacking them, Arafat rejected it outright. This policy was in place throughout the Oslo years, even during the period in which, according to Israeli security elements, the PA initiated attacks on settlers in the occupied territories.¹⁶ The significance of this was that in practice, the PA recognized the special status of Jerusalem and its weakness *vis a vis* the unilateral moves Israel took there. The isolated attacks against settlers of East Jerusalem were undertaken by members of Hamas, the fronts (Popular and Democratic), or “independents.”

For their part, Palestinian security elements acted vigorously within the Palestinian communities to anchor their control in East Jerusalem. They waged an uncompromising battle against drug dealers, their goal being to firmly entrench their status as struggling for the good of Palestinian society; against collaborators in order to staunch security leaks; and against land dealers, who were regarded as undermining the authority of the PA, violating the Palestinian ethos, and strengthening

Israel's control in East Jerusalem. In spring of 1997 the season of hunting down the land agents began. In May of that year the Authority's Minister of Justice, Freih Abu Medyan, announced adoption of the old Jordanian law prohibiting the sale of land to Jews. The Mufti of Jerusalem, 'Ikirma Sabri, anchored this decision in religious law, and the security apparatuses began the chase after the land agents. The struggle spread all through the occupied territories, but its focus was in Jerusalem: two Jerusalem brokers were murdered during that month – the veteran Farid Bashiti, who was involved in many land deals, and a young inexperienced man named Ali Jamhur, who was just taking his first steps in the business.¹⁷ Both, incidentally, were involved in deals in which harm was suffered by senior PA officials. In the struggle against the land agents, the Palestinian intelligence branch used veteran agents as well as new ones recruited for this mission.¹⁸

In this sphere, too, the Authority went beyond violent moves; complementing them with preventive steps and constructive ones. Prevention was the aim of instructions issued by the Palestinian Jerusalem district governor, Attorney Jamil Nasser, requiring permission from the district for every land sale. Intelligence agents were to examine the background of those requesting to buy land in the city, in order to make certain that they were not just fronting for the transfer of land to Jewish hands. Although residents of East Jerusalem are not legally subject to the governor, many complied with these instructions to avoid possible complications.

Positive steps were also taken: Faisal Husseini together with Palestinian businessmen set up a fund to rescue land that was on the verge of being sold to Jews. Another fund acted under the auspices of the PA. But it would seem that for the struggle in the field against the land dealers, the funds and the new regulations were not efficient enough. In a number of cases, the office of the governor issued permits for land deals with front men known for their connections with Jewish land dealers and settler associations, either due to family connections or bribery. Also, a number of Palestinian land dealers managed to form close ties with Palestinian officers, thereby benefiting from relative immunity. The activity of the various funds also was very problematic: in several instances large sums of money found their way into the pockets of swindlers who falsely persuaded the Authority that particular lands were in danger of sale, and thereby received from the Authority large sums of money (such a specious deal took place next to 'Isawiyye, and another in Ras al-Amoud). Recently, Palestinian official bodies have begun to investigate suspicions that members of the Palestinian government were involved in several of these cases of fraud.¹⁹

Thus, the Oslo years brought with them deeply felt and often conflicting changes. On one hand, the founding of the PA created a link between different groups in the city and the Authority and its apparatuses as well as a sense of fundamental national identification with the independent Palestinian government. On the other hand, the heavy hand employed by Israel against Palestinian institutions hampered the activity of the Authority in the city and drove a wedge between it and the politically unorganized residents. Also, the power-oriented behavior of the Authority people, and its problematics in the sphere of human rights, caused some of the Jerusalemites to believe that they also had a lot to lose from annexation to



FIGURE 2.3 Ahmad al-Batsh and the 1996 elections

Ahmad al-Batsh of the Old City was a military activist with Fateh and was imprisoned in 1976. Twenty years later – and after being a member of the command of Fateh-Jerusalem – he was elected to the Palestinian Legislative Council in the first ever Palestinian national election. Here, with the flag, he celebrates Fateh’s victory in the 1996 elections.

the Authority’s jurisdiction, which might not respect their rights, maybe even less than Israel does. Consequently, many Palestinian residents in the city experienced ambivalence toward the PA.

The mixed feelings about the PA were evident in the elections held in January 1996. The percentage of Jerusalem Palestinians voting was about 30 percent, much lower in comparison with an average of 75 percent nation-wide, suggesting that the PA had not managed to establish itself in the city. But it may also be observed that Israel acted unofficially to limit Jerusalem Palestinian participation in these elections despite having undertaken a commitment to enable such participation: a central instrument was the Israeli police force. “We didn’t threaten people to dissuade them from voting, but we did influence them,” admits the then Jerusalem police adviser for Arab affairs, Reuven Berko.²⁰ Still, that is only one of the reasons for the light participation in the elections. Many stayed away because they had decided on their own to wait and see what would be the fate of that stumbling PA that was not managing to stand up to Israel and had difficulty building worthy government institutions. It should be noted, though, that participation of Palestinians in the elections to the Israeli Jerusalem municipality since the mid-1980s has been even lower, almost nil. Here too, it is not the result of the threats residents of East Jerusalem receive from Palestinian organizations, as Israeli officials sometimes tend to argue. No less significant is their deep opposition to the municipality and all it symbolized. Politically the municipality represented the coerced annexation of East

Jerusalem to Israel and the Israeli occupation, and in daily life, it was the municipality that collected city taxes without providing proper services, and was responsible for the lack of satisfactory zoning plans, for home demolitions, the poor education system, and many more aspects of urban dereliction and harassment.

Thus, a situation evolved in which Palestinians were living in a city whose municipality they did not elect, where they had no right to vote for the Knesset which determined their fate, and where they were in a dilemma as to their connection with the Palestinian Legislative Council, that in any case had no authority in the city.

Toward the end of the 1990s, passivity was the main characteristic of political life in the city. The conflicting interests of the inhabitants – situated between Israel and the PA, between the local and national Palestinian leadership, between personal interests and the national struggle – transformed the absence of action into the default option. Here and there young people acted against blatant symbols of Israel or settler organizations; here and there intellectuals and activists met to discuss the future of Jerusalem and how they could preserve its Arab identity; they wrote position papers and submitted recommendations. But the majority remained silent, and attempts to move the inhabitants to protest against Israeli policies on various issues brought meager results. Even members of the Palestinian organizations limited their activity. Only unusual events, happening in line with the desires of the Palestinian (or the Israeli) leadership to bring about escalation, would cause many to come out to the streets. One example, mentioned previously, was the opening of the Western Wall tunnel in 1996. Another took place at the end of October 1998 when Fateh declared a “week of rage” following Israel’s refusal to free security prisoners (instead it freed criminal prisoners). For a number of days there were violent clashes in East Jerusalem between dozens of youths armed with stones and bottles and the security forces, during which dozens of Palestinians were injured – along with a few policemen – and prominent local Fateh activists were detained. These events testified to the existence of deep currents among the Palestinians in the city, flowing from opposition to Israel and its actions. But their continuation was also abetted by unique circumstances: there was the election of new activists to the leadership of Fateh in the city who regarded the events as an opportunity to show their mettle, while the mysterious murder of a resident of East Jerusalem, perpetrated, it was suspected, by a Jew, increased the tension. Except for that, the East side of the city knew no mass organized activity. The declarations of heads of Fateh in the city during 1997, that populating the Jewish settlement in Ras al-Amoud (to be dealt with later on) would lead to a huge conflagration, were not supported in fact. Participation in demonstrations against revoking I.D. cards of Palestinians in Jerusalem and against home demolitions was also limited to a few individuals.

It is fair to say that the Oslo years brought about an almost absolute standstill of political activity in Jerusalem. Along with the reasons already mentioned, there was an additional important factor: the closure that had been placed upon the Occupied Territories on and off starting in 1991, including forbidding entrance of West Bank and Gaza Strip residents into Jerusalem except with a special permit, became

permanent at the beginning of the Oslo period. Thus, the process of cutting Jerusalem off from the rest of the Territories began. The main reason given for the closure was security, but its security effectiveness was limited, and the harm it did to Arab Jerusalem was extensive. This situation was a glaring expression of the profound difference in how Israelis and Palestinians regarded East Jerusalem. For official Israel, all of Jerusalem, including its Palestinian neighborhoods and villages, is a part of the state of Israel and therefore included in the places forbidden to entrance of Palestinians from the Territories. For the Palestinians, East Jerusalem was part and parcel of the Occupied Territories: politically it was the “capital of the future Palestinian state,” and spatially, it was the focus of an organic urban Arab space, independent of the municipal boundaries of the city, not to mention that many residents of the neighborhoods bordering Jerusalem on the north and east held Jerusalem ID cards.

More than anything else, the forced separation of Jerusalem from the territory that constituted its economic and social hinterland, typified the Oslo years there. Jerusalem, which had been the main provider of services and the commercial center of the neighboring towns and villages stopped fulfilling that role, and the lively movement between all parts of the West Bank that had been largely channeled through Jerusalem was diverted from the mid-1990s to alternative paths. Jerusalem lost its status as the center of the area between Ramallah and Bethlehem and became a peripheral city. When that happened, many Palestinian institutions that had managed to survive until then in the city despite Israeli constraints decided to transfer their offices to outside the municipal boundaries in order to be accessible to West Bank residents, and the political status of the city declined even further.

Palestinian personages in the city claim that the PA did not do enough of real significance to preserve the Palestinian institutional presence in Jerusalem. The existence of a national political center in nearby Ramallah and the longlasting competition between the internal and “returnee” leadership caused the PA to give preference to building up the governmental institutions in Ramallah and the other cities under Palestinian control, and most of its efforts in Jerusalem focused on achieving control over the independent institutions there (including Orient House).²¹ In these internal struggles it was not always the PA leadership in Ramallah that won out, but the internal divisions harmed the Palestinians’ ability to struggle for the preservation and development of their control in the city. And the growth of the center in Ramallah enticed several veteran urban institutions (like the Association of Palestinian Writers) to move their offices northward, to outside the city, in order to be closer to the PA decision-making center and to enjoy greater freedom of action. Many organizations left the city for economic reasons when they discovered that the donor states prefer organizations within the PA jurisdiction than those under Israeli jurisdiction. New institutions (like the important dailies *al-Hayat al-Jadida* and *al-Ayyam* chose Ramallah for their headquarters because they were bound to the PA and reported first and foremost its activities, whereas such veteran newspapers as *al-Fajr* and *al-Nahar*, that had been centered in the eastern part of

Jerusalem, stopped publishing. Meetings of the leadership of Fateh and the other movements also took place for the most part in Ramallah.

So it was that during the Oslo years Arab Jerusalem was emptied of its institutions, and the slogan “Jerusalem as the capital of the Palestinian state” was emptied of its meaning. The Oslo process, whose supporters raised the banner “On the way to the liberation of Jerusalem,” caused an opposite result: again, as during the final days of the Mandatory government, Jerusalem lost its status as a thriving political, national, and religious center and became instead a city of symbolic importance only. But such symbolism should not be disparaged. The clashes of the Western Wall tunnel reflected its importance as did the “al-Aqsa Intifada” (to be dealt with below). But for all practical purposes, the city became marginal in the Palestinian political system. Attempts of six members of the Palestinian parliament from the Jerusalem District, all from Fateh, to create an effective body that would advance the PA’s treatment of Jerusalem were unsuccessful. The weakness of the Palestinian Legislative Council in standing up to the executive branch, characteristic of the period of Arafat, and the competition between the external and internal leadership prevented success.

Physical separation of the city from the other Palestinian territories and the special legal status of Jerusalem’s residents reinforced even more the sense of difference among East Jerusalem Palestinians. So a new generation arose that had matured during the Oslo years and that viewed the PA as a neighboring entity, rather than as a source of authority and identity, and regarded its population as Palestinians of a different species rather than partners in a common fate. This generation was totally aware of having more rights than the other Palestinians in the Occupied Territories. Sometimes it used them to further the national struggle (for example for assistance to attackers), but more than that, the Jerusalem identity card accorded them a certain sense of stability in the face of the Israeli government’s whims, on the one hand, and those of the PA on the other.

The Israeli policies – a Palestinian perspective

During the Oslo period the Information Office of the PA published several studies about Israeli and Palestinian practices in Jerusalem. Most of the information in them is not new, but they provide insight into how the Palestinians viewed Israel’s actions before and after the agreements. The studies surveyed the methods adopted by Israel after 1967 to entrench its control over East Jerusalem. They described a process that included: (1) *demolition*: destruction of the Mughrabi neighborhood in the Old City, immediately after the end of the battles, in order to develop the Western Wall Plaza; home demolitions continue until now; (2) *evacuation* of Arab residents: the Jewish Quarter became a neighborhood for Jews only, and its Arab residents were removed; and (3) *expropriation*: the Jewish neighborhoods in the eastern part of the city (the largest being Gilo, East Talpiot, Ramot Eshkol, French Hill, Ramot, Neve Yaakov, Pisgat Ze’ev, and Ramat Shlomo on the Shuafat ridge) were built for the most part on Arab lands.

This tremendous construction project, done in stages, had three objectives, and these did not escape the eyes of the Palestinians: ensuring a Jewish majority not only in “united Jerusalem” but also in the eastern part of the city; fragmenting Arab urban space; and creating a barrier between the Palestinian neighborhoods in the city and the Palestinian localities in the Territories. These acts did not end after Oslo: for example, the stubbornness surrounding the construction of the Har Homa neighborhood, built in southern Jerusalem, partly on land that had been confiscated from Arabs, stemmed from the desire to create a barrier between Um Tuba and Sur Baher in southern Jerusalem and Beit Sahour and Bethlehem inside the Occupied Territory outside Jerusalem.²² Construction of the small Jewish neighborhood in Ras al-Amoud (mainly on Jewish-owned land) was also intended, among other things, to introduce a wedge between Silwan and Abu Dis, that is, to cut off Arab Jerusalem from its natural hinterland and hinder Palestinian sovereignty in the city’s Arab neighborhoods.

These studies also included basic land data: prior to 1967 the jurisdiction of Jewish Jerusalem extended to about 38 sq km; following that date, about 70 more sq km of Jordanian Jerusalem and other local councils, were annexed to the Jewish municipality. About one-third of the land area of Jerusalem beyond the Green Line, approximately 23 sq km (23,000 dunams) were expropriated by the state, mostly to build the new Jewish neighborhoods.

But the territorial struggle is only one aspect of the struggle in Jerusalem. There was also the demographic struggle. The expanded borders of Jerusalem were determined according to the principle of “maximum land, minimum Palestinian population,” that is, to include areas with relatively small populations, even if in the past these had not exhibited a direct link with the city. When the borders of the city were determined in 1967, the numerical relation of Jews to Arabs was approximately 3:1 (non-Jews constituted 25.8% of the inhabitants).²³ Israel tried to maintain this proportion, and to that end, it encouraged Jews to come to live in the city while giving Palestinians incentive to leave. In the mid-70s, Igum, a unit attached to the Israel Land Administration, was established. Its mission, among other things, was to encourage “population movement” to outside the urban bounds of Jerusalem or even to outside the country, and to break up the nucleus of Muslim residences in the Old City.²⁴ The activity of Igum continued for only a few years, but Israeli policies did not change essentially even after it was dismantled; many of the original Arab inhabitants of the Muslim Quarter left it for higher standard housing in the suburbs, and the quarter is dotted with Jewish settler points. But several reservations need to be added to this account: not always was the departure of Arabs connected with Israeli policies. Many left the Old City because of its living conditions. On the other hand, Jewish settlement in the Arab neighborhoods, while being encouraged by Israeli governments, was at first the initiative of non-governmental rightwing religious bodies and not solely of the government. Also, the Palestinian-Arab negative migration from Old City Jerusalem was balanced by the inflow of inhabitants of a lower socio-economic class to inside the walls, especially Palestinians who wanted to keep their city resident cards. Because of this mixed movement, it is

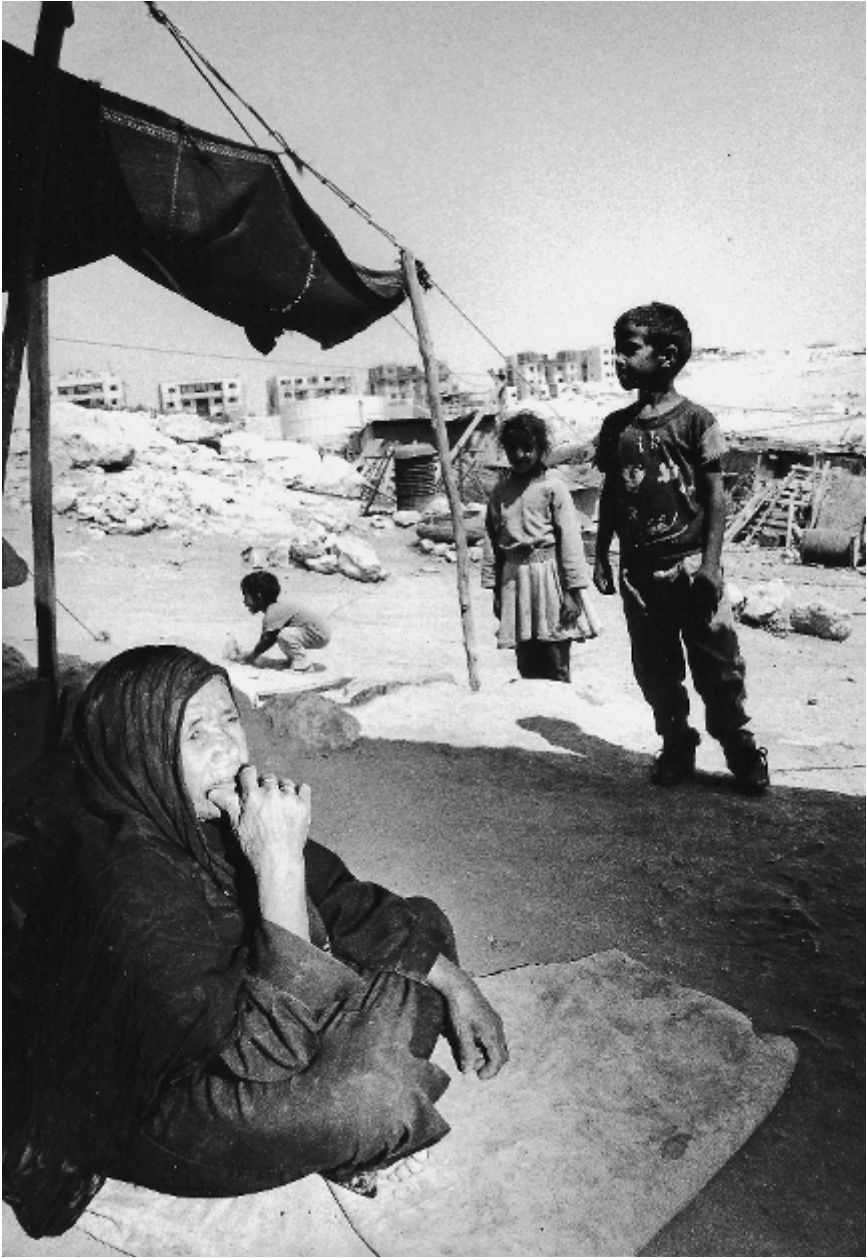


FIGURE 2.4 Ma'ale Adumim and 'its' Bedouins

Ma'ale Adumim is a town settlement of some 35,000 residents (2010), in the eastern part of "Greater Jerusalem." Like most settlements in and around Jerusalem, it was the labor government that started the project in the early 1970s. During the 1990s, dozens of Bedouin families of the Jahalin tribe were forced to leave their encampments in order to make space for a new neighborhood of this ever-expanding town.

difficult to estimate the incoming and outgoing Jerusalem population movements or the extent of influence of the various factors. In any case, when Palestinians argue that Israel is trying to “transfer” them outside the borders of the city, it is not without evidence.

The severe limitations on Palestinian construction in the city – absence of suitable outline plans, together with demolition of homes built without permits – are perceived by Palestinians as directed specifically toward making life unbearable for them so they will abandon the city. A further harsh tool – confiscating identification cards – has been employed against Palestinians during the years of the Oslo Agreement. Human rights organizations have called it the “quiet transfer.” The Ministry of the Interior and the National Insurance located Palestinians who had moved outside the municipal boundaries of the city and confiscated their Jerusalem I.D.s, thereby preventing them from entering the city of their birth. This was made possible because Israeli law had given Palestinian residents of Jerusalem the status of permanent residents and not citizens, and according to the law, permanent residents who have transferred the center of their lives outside the boundaries of the state lose their right of residence. These are Palestinians, born in the country, and not foreigners; and it was not they who came to the state of Israel requesting residence; rather the state of Israel came to them in 1967 and made them its residents despite their wishes. But these facts neither added to nor detracted from their legal situation. In this manner, thousands of Palestinians were deprived of their right of residence in Jerusalem. Others were compelled to leave due to obstacles the Ministry of the Interior placed on the entry to Jerusalem of husbands or wives from the Occupied Territories.²⁵

The spatial-demographic struggle thus did not abate during the Oslo years; it perhaps even increased, and the agreements did not lead to a sense of reconciliation and cooperation. During this period it became clear that before Oslo, Israeli governments had aided, either openly or clandestinely, associations of settlers working in East Jerusalem to acquire homes in the Muslim Quarter, in Silwan, and in other neighborhoods (either by legitimate or doubtful means).²⁶ Some of the procedures were changed during Rabin’s second term in office (1992–95), but the state continued to support settlers in East Jerusalem in various ways at that time, as well as during the incumbency of Binyamin Netanyahu and then of his successors until the present time.

The political process, thus, did not bring about a qualitative change in the policies of Israeli governments nor even a decrease in the deep gaps between the Israeli and Palestinian perceptions of Jerusalem. The Jewish neighborhoods in East Jerusalem – thought of as settlements by the Palestinians – continued to expand; in Israeli eyes, these were viewed as an inseparable part of Jerusalem. The Palestinians, on the other hand, saw the expansion as a violation of the Oslo Agreement which, as they understood it, prohibited changes in the status quo of the city during the interim period prior to discussions on permanent agreements concerning it.

Without going into the details of the rules and regulations of the Ministry of the Interior and of the National Insurance, and without examining construction



FIGURE 2.5 Daily life in tense times

While the Israeli policemen are expecting riots in the Old City, the Palestinians try to continue their daily life.

percentages and zoning plans, it can be stated that during the Oslo years, Israel regarded the Palestinian community in the city as a branch of the PA and an opponent it needed to control. For its part, the Palestinian national movement did not give up on its demands for sovereignty in the city and what it considered to be the Palestinian right to have functioning institutions there. The general Palestinian-Jerusalemite community was caught in the middle, between the harsh Israeli policies and the problematic functioning of the PA.

With the Oslo Agreement considered more harmful than useful; with the paralysis of Palestinian institutions in East Jerusalem, with the closure surrounding them, and their status in the city in danger, the local Palestinians entered a waiting mode. This was the case during the tenure of the Netanyahu government and even more so when Ehud Barak became Prime Minister, publicly promising to reach a permanent settlement with the Palestinians within a year.

3

COLLAPSE OF THE CAPITAL: AL-AQSA INTIFADA AND THE ARMED STRUGGLE

In the latter part of the year 2000 hopes for a breakthrough in relations between Israel and the Palestinians came to a frustrating end. The discussions between the two at Camp David had not borne fruit; opposition leader Ariel Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount (al-Haram) provoked mass demonstrations in both Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Territories and then a sharp Israeli response that cost the lives of many Palestinians; the subsequent talks in Taba, held in January 2001, when the violence had already reached new heights, did not result in any agreement at all. The Palestinian organizations, those affiliated with the opposition as well as to the PA, opted for an escalation of events, as did the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), which responded with great force, thereby fueling a desire for revenge on the part of the Palestinians. The al-Aqsa Intifada, in which Israelis and Palestinians met for the first time since 1948 in large-scale armed struggle, was under way.

Palestinian, Israeli, and foreign observers offer a variety of explanations for the Palestinian choice – official or not – of an escalation of the struggle. One analysis has it that the Palestinian intention was to bring about a crisis that would compel the international community to intervene and propose an arrangement more advantageous; another explanation is that it was not the Palestinian Authority (PA) itself but rather opposition elements that led the Intifada at first, whereas the PA joined in order not to lose its hold on the public; yet others add that the demonstrations were intended mainly against Arafat and his associates and that it was the latter who shifted the fury to Israel to maintain their own control. Another analysis has it that the Palestinians chose violence because they wanted to found their state with blood and fire and therefore did not accept the generous proposals of Barak. Another approach that tries to analyze internal Palestinian logic explains that Barak's proposals were insulting and humiliating and the state that was offered to the Palestinians was no more than Bantustans, so that the only choice remaining for them was to rise up. Still another analysis, a bit far-fetched, has it that the

Palestinians were not really interested at all in a sovereign state but that their chief desire was to cause harm to Israel, that being the key to understanding their actions.¹

There is also no generally agreed explanation of Israeli behavior. Some describe it as stemming from a lack of choice following the Palestinian attack; others argue that Israel tried to exploit the violent events to break the Palestinian spirit; some emphasize the role of the army whose desire was to end the ongoing foggy situation; and yet others describe Israel's moves simply as a failure in leadership.² In any case, when the second Intifada broke out (intended by the Palestinians or not), and with the quick escalation (to which Israel manifestly contributed, whether intentionally or not), armed struggle again became the preferred choice of many Palestinians, both inside and outside Jerusalem.

By nature, the armed struggle is a matter for individuals. The masses do not bear arms and do not initiate warlike action. This is certainly so in the case of terror or guerilla warfare. Still, the influence of terror on all facets of the struggle is critical. Not only because of the casualties – as we know, more Israeli civilians are killed in road accidents than by acts of terror – but rather because of the existential anxiety they arouse among the affected groups. This is the main reason that national liberation movements choose violence: demonstrations and assemblies, international decisions and conferences, do not influence public opinion and decision-makers as much as do acts of terror. In addition, armed struggle has carried much weight during the 1970s in changing the self-awareness of Palestinians from a group of refugees into a people struggling for its liberation, hence its crucial position in Palestinian ethos.³ Also not to be ignored is the attraction of acts of terror for individuals or small groups with a clear ideology. It is perhaps the only way they can have a significant influence on the course of events.

An important point must be added here. Since the Israeli–Palestinian conflict is a dispute between two peoples who both see the same patch of land as their homeland, armed struggle against the occupying power has different and significantly more complex results than in the case of a classical anti-colonial struggle. On the one hand, in the absence of a struggle, as during the period preceding the First Intifada, Israel avoids negotiations with the Palestinians. On the other, open struggle, claiming lives in the occupying society as did the Second Intifada, led to escalation and the hardening of positions on the part of Israel. One possible conclusion is that only a struggle using controlled violence (or a mass non-violent one) can bring about a change in the Israeli political perception, as did the First Intifada.

However, leaders of the al-Aqsa Intifada could not have anticipated the outcome. They believed that the heavy price of the bloodletting extracted from Israeli society would cause the public to put pressure on its government to be more conciliatory toward the Palestinians. They misjudged and suffered the consequences. The suicide bombers – without any connection to the assertion that they were a response to the IDF's drastic over-reaction during the first stages of the Intifada – led to the unification of Israeli society in demanding that the IDF strike back harder at the Palestinians, and the army was ready and more than willing to undertake the mission. Among the top leaders of the PA were those who anticipated this reaction, such as

Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) and head of the Preventive Security Force in the West Bank, Jibril Rajoub. But their voice was not heard sufficiently. Meanwhile, as the Intifada escalated, learned analyses gave way to a mutual urge for revenge. The two sides also each presented a rationale for the escalation: the IDF redefined its mission as intended to sear the awareness of the Palestinians; the Hamas movement took upon itself to create a balance of terror between itself and Israel.

Jerusalem was the main target for Palestinian attacks. One-third of all Israelis killed in suicide attacks in Israel and the Territories (174 out of 525) were killed in the city. This chapter describes military actions in Jerusalem, those involved, the support systems, and the influence of that activity on the Palestinian institutions in the city. The description will focus on several of the cells which were active in the city, their methods of operation, their social and military connections, and the positions of the various movements concerning armed struggle.

Near the beginning of the book the reader encountered the story of Bassam Mashahare whose military activity began immediately with the eruption of the Intifada. This was one type of activity in Jerusalem: joining the armed branch of some organization. A larger number chose to participate in violent mass demonstrations that broke out all over the city and the Occupied Territories. But Israel responded with a particularly heavy hand – a Palestinian human rights association reports on the arrest of hundreds of Jerusalem minors who participated in events during the first weeks of the Intifada. Some, according to this source, were tortured during interrogations – and this form of protest disappeared.⁴ Other Jerusalemites became military activists after being solicited by recruiters from various organizations. They felt that Jerusalemites should not have less affinity for the Palestinian struggle just because of their city of residence. Often they would feel that the opposite was the case: they should make use of their extra rights as Jerusalemites for the sake of the armed struggle. While during the mid-1990s there were signs that the support for terror against civilians was slightly lower among Jerusalemites than among Palestinians in general,⁵ the Second Intifada and the drastic Israeli reaction in the early stages changed everything, and the support for terror gained strength in Jerusalem as well.

Three methods of operation were possible for Jerusalemites who chose to participate in the armed struggle: forming an operational cell under one of the organizations within the PA's territory; providing intelligence and logistical support for cells based within that territory; or acting independently. Activity unconnected to an organized framework could take place individually (attack by a lone person) or as part of an independent cell. All these types of action existed during the Intifada years, and that fact is an indication that quite a few Palestinians in the city felt total identification with the Palestinian struggle against Israel and believed that the Jerusalemites should participate in the armed struggle. It is to be remembered though that some attacks – among them a couple of cases of knifing by women – were the product of personal or familial frustration, with the armed struggle serving as a socially legitimate way out of harsh situation.

A few statistics: according to Shabak data published by the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center of the Israel Intelligence Heritage and Commemoration Center, during the first five years of confrontation (October 2000–October 2005) thirty suicide attacks were carried out in Jerusalem in which 174 Israelis were killed. In addition twenty-one people were killed from shooting, nine from knifings, five from bombs, and two more from the explosion of a wired vehicle. Hamas and Fateh carried out the same number of suicide bombings in the city – thirteen each; the Islamic Jihad carried out three attacks, and an additional suicide bombing was carried out by an independent cell. According to the report, Fateh cells carried out 43% of the suicide attacks in Jerusalem, and it shares the top spot with Hamas, while countrywide Fateh carried out 23% of the attacks – less than Hamas (40%) and the Islamic Jihad (25%).⁶ There were 186 fatalities “resulting from acts of terror carried out by East Jerusalem Arabs” both inside and outside the city. That is almost 20% of all those killed in the Intifada (1069 at the time of publication of the report). That is a significant datum, though in most cases the East Jerusalem participants acted together with West Bankers or Gaza Strip residents, and usually they acted as assistants and not as initiators or participants.

Jerusalemites and the suicide attacks

Segmenting responsibility for suicide bombings in Jerusalem according to organizations is important, but to characterize the military activity of the Jerusalemites, additional aspects must be considered, especially who initiated these attacks and what was the role of residents of the city. Here is found an important datum: not even one of the thirteen attacks initiated by the Fateh in the city was driven by Jerusalem Fateh activists. On the other hand, in several attacks of Hamas, Jerusalemites played leading roles (the attacks in Café Moment and in the cafeteria of the Hebrew University on Mt. Scopus carried out by the Silwan cell, and the attack in Café Hillel in Emek Refa'im carried out by the 'Isawiyye cell), while in the remainder, Jerusalemites served only as accessories. Indeed, in a majority of the attacks in the city (including Fateh's), Palestinian residents were involved, whether in helping to choose the location for attack, or to give shelter to the suicide attackers, or by driving them to the scene.

The attack on the Egged bus line 32 near Pat neighborhood in June 2002 in which nineteen men and women were killed is an example of the chain of command and execution of the attacks in the city. The initiative for this attack came from heads of the Izz al-Din al-Qassam (Hamas military wing) in Nablus. They recruited a student of religion in Al-Najjah University named Muhammad al-Ghul to carry out a suicide bombing. They were also those who chose Jerusalem as the arena for the attack. However, lacking knowledge of the city, its exits and entrances and their own difficulty in entering it, they drove al-Ghul to the town of al-Azariyya (Bethany) bordering East Jerusalem. A while later, Khalil Barak'ah, a Hamas accessory from Bethlehem, also arrived at the meeting point, the Azariyya gas station, holding a can of soft drink and some biscuits, as had been prearranged. The two

identified themselves to each other using a code word, and Barak'ah picked up al-Ghul in a taxi and brought him to the head of the Izz a-Din network in Bethlehem, Ali 'Allan.

Veterans of the Hamas military wing in Bethlehem are very familiar with Jerusalem. Some were accustomed to going to the al-Aqsa mosque; others had also worked in the city. But after the Oslo Agreements and more so after the outbreak of the Intifada, they were denied entry. In order to carry out attacks despite this obstacle, Bethlehem people recruited activists, mostly from the villages southeast of Jerusalem, who held Jerusalemite ("blue") identity cards that enabled them freedom of movement. Among them were the brothers Ramadan and Fahmi Mashahare (relatives of Bassam mentioned in the preface), residents of Jabel Mukabber. One needs to bear in mind that Jabel Mukabber is one of the villages where the Sawahra ex-nomad tribe was settled, and that the tribe houses are scattered within the municipal borders of the city and beyond them, in the Bethlehem district. The large families of the tribe have economic, familial, and social ties both in Jerusalem and in Bethlehem. This being the case, it was not difficult for Hamas people from Bethlehem to create ties in Jabel Mukabber, the largest village of the Sawahra.

Fahmi Mashahare was assigned the task of selecting an object worthy of attack and gathering intelligence information for the mission. He made several preparatory trips and finally suggested an Egged bus from line 32 as the objective, since its route passes close to the Jerusalem village of Beit Safafa, and he assumed that Arabs seen getting on the bus would not arouse particular suspicion. On the morning of the attack, Barak'ah drove the suicide bomber from Bethlehem to Abu Dis, and Mashahare picked him up there, took him into the city in his car (while his brother, Ramadan, drove ahead of them so that he could warn them if there was a sudden roadblock ahead). Barak'ah brought him to a pickup station for line 32 near Beit Safafa. Al-Ghul got on the bus, and a few minutes later he blew himself up together with nineteen other passengers on the bus.⁷

This is an example not only of the strong Palestinian urge to carry out attacks in Jerusalem, but also of the fact that the initiative, as well as responsibility for most stages of the organizing, belonged to activists from outside the city. It also enables us to see the connection between Hamas activists from various parts of the country and the integration of Jerusalemites during the last stage of implementation. In other suicide attacks, Hamas used Jerusalemites at the stage of execution, as in the attack on a bus of line 20 in the Jerusalem neighborhood of Kiryat Yovel in November 2002 in which the suicide bomber was driven by Ahmad al-Sa'adeh from the al-Tur neighborhood, or that on line 14 in June 2003 in which seventeen people were killed by a suicide bomber brought there by Jerusalemites Omar Sharif and Samer al-Atrash. The accessories were not necessarily loyal members of Hamas. The driver of the suicide bomber for the attack on line 2 in Jerusalem in August 2003, in which 23 people were killed, was a young man from Wadi Joz, Abdallah Sharabati, who was closer to the criminal world than to the religious one.⁸ So it was not always the case that help for the suicide attackers was motivated by strong religious beliefs or clearly formulated nationalist values. The political indifference mentioned earlier,

along with financial reward, together with resentment towards Israel and a bit of adventurous spirit brought forth residents of the city to drive suicide attackers into Jerusalem whether they actually knew their plans or just ignored them.

As the Intifada continued and the number of Palestinian casualties increased drastically, so was there growing support among the Palestinian public for suicide bombing. Fateh, not wanting to leave the arena to the Islamic movement, also began planning suicide attacks through the military elements of its Tanzim (Fateh's local infrastructure), and al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, which were established during the second Intifada. They too were aided by Jerusalemites to carry out suicide attacks in Jerusalem. The taxi driver Muhammad Abu Teir (a member of the extended family of the senior Hamas of the same name), who worked in an Israeli taxi station was one of those mobilized to Fateh-Tanzim to aid the suicide bombing missions. His recruiter was Sami Fawaghira from Bethlehem whom he had known for some time. Fawaghira was an activist in Fateh who had during the first Intifada been sentenced to life imprisonment (he was wounded in the course of his arrest and his body to this day still contains pieces of platinum) but was released in 1994 as part of the Oslo Agreement. When fighting broke out, he was one of the Fateh members who supported the return to armed struggle. He organized a number of young men and women from around Bethlehem who expressed their willingness to commit suicide, and it was the role of Abu Teir to help him move around Jerusalem and examine different ways of entering the city and the locations of roadblocks. A number of times Abu Teir was asked by Fawaghira to move around the city and report on the roadblocks. On one occasion he was sent to check out the situation at the entrances to Jerusalem from the direction of Bethlehem. Abu Teir did not check them out but told Fawaghira that he had just returned from a trip on the tunnel road and that all the roads were blocked. It was the last Friday of March, 2002. Fawaghira did not abandon his plan and managed to sneak Ayat al-Ahras, a young woman from the Dheishe refugee camp who had decided to carry out a suicide bombing, into the city. She blew herself up in the entrance to a supermarket in the Kiryat Yovel neighborhood, killing two others along with herself.

Ayat al-Ahras was not yet eighteen years old when sent to the mission. She took upon herself to commit suicide (and took the reasons for that decision with her), and became a symbol of fighting Palestinian women: songs were written about her, and legends accompanied her image. Fawaghira was arrested by the IDF and the Shabak during the "Defensive Shield" operation (April-May 2002), and he was sentenced and imprisoned, and this was also the fate of Abu Teir. The latter, the Jerusalemite member of the group, deserves some attention. Abu Teir, it turns out, was also into stealing vehicles, sometimes in partnership with Fawaghira. His girlfriend was a young Jewish woman named Keren, who helped him sometimes by stealing the keys of cars he desired. He was not the only Palestinian who was involved in suicide attacks while having a Jewish girlfriend (a phenomenon that has not received enough attention, like the phenomenon of mixed Israeli-Jewish Palestinian couples in general). In his thefts, Abu Teir made no distinction between Jews and Arabs: he stole from the one, and he stole from the other. Indeed, this is

a classical Palestinian-Jerusalemite criminal: making friends with Jews and Arabs; working with Jews and Arabs; stealing from Arabs and Jews – and ready to help Fateh when asked to do so. Perhaps under certain circumstances, he would have been ready to help prevent the attack; there is no certainty that he supported the suicide attacks. He simply did what his friend and partner in vehicular matters asked of him – and most of the information he passed on was about blocked roads, not on roads that were open to Jerusalem.⁹

Abu Teir worked in a taxi station many of whose customers were Jews. Murad ‘Allan is another Palestinian with a Jerusalem identity card (even though he actually lived in the ‘Aida Refugee Camp on the periphery of Bethlehem) who was involved in terror activity. ‘Allan worked for a living in a café in the veteran Jewish neighborhood of Rehavia, in the center of Jerusalem. His frequent trips to the holy city while most of his neighbors were forbidden entry to it raised the suspicion among some that he was collaborating with the Jews. And as was customary in the refugee camps in the area, whoever was suspected of collaboration had to prove the opposite by carrying out an attack. That is what Maher Abu Srur, a resident of the camp and a Hamas activist, did. Recruited as a Shabak collaborator, he murdered his operator, Haim Nahmany, in 1993. So too did Hassan Abu Sa‘irah, a resident of the nearby camp al-‘Azzi, who murdered his operator from the Intelligence Corps 504, Colonel Yehuda Edri, in 2001. But ‘Allan was not a collaborator, and as far as is known, did not meet for working discussions with intelligence coordinators. On the contrary: at the beginning of the Intifada, he had belonged to a cell that fired at the Gilo neighborhood, and one of his brothers was Ali, a leader in the armed branch of Hamas in Bethlehem. In any event, the task he undertook was to blow up the café where he worked. He was arrested in August 2004 without having carried out his program.¹⁰

Here is a question that is difficult to answer: to what extent does work among Jews influence the readiness of Palestinians to carry out attacks? That question is relevant these days especially in and around Jerusalem, since an absolute majority of residents of the Occupied Territories are forbidden to work in Israel. Some would argue that meetings at places of work (and in general) lead to seeing the “other” in a human light, and thereby lessen the willingness to take lives through suicide attacks. Also, those who view the difficult economic situation of the Palestinians as the most important reason for attacks believe that providing employment for Palestinians is likely to decrease their motivation to serve in terrorist activities. On the other hand, it is also possible that patronizing or hostile attitudes towards employed Arabs might engender negative feelings towards Jews and also a willingness to attack them. A similar question may be asked regarding Jews who work with Arabs: do they become less aggressive when they are sent to serve in the Territories as reserve soldiers? Both questions have yet to be studied.

In any case, there are residents of East Jerusalem whose ideology is not influenced by social ties or by a regular monthly income. Among these are members of the Jerusalem Hamas cell that operated for many long months inside and outside the city, the “Silwan Cell.” It was one of the more active groups that arose in the city:

they were the ones who smuggled in the suicide bomber to *Café Moment* in Paris Square inside the city; they carried out the attack in the cafeteria of the Hebrew University on Mount Scopus; and it was they who attempted to carry out the strategic attack on the largest fuel reservoir in the Tel Aviv area, Pi Gllilot. The fact that most of them were employed by Jews did not cause them to like the Jews, to acquiesce in continuation of the Occupation, or to advocate unarmed struggle. For them, liberation of Palestine and establishment of an Islamic state were the highest values.

Members of the Silwan cell, unlike some of the persons mentioned above, were not mere tools in the service of the revolution but rather were initiators and leaders. Wael Qasem, commander of the cell, was born in March 1971 in Silwan. He relates that he was born into a religious family, studied in the local elementary school and in the al-Rashidiyyeh municipal high school, and afterwards, computer programming in the Ibrahimiyya College on the slopes of Mt. Scopus. From a young age, he felt committed to religious, social, and cultural action and joined the Muslim Brotherhood. During the First Intifada, when he was eighteen, he joined Hamas in order to fulfill the sacred act of Jihad, but after a short time, he decided to devote his time to organizational activity and to *Da'wa*, the call to Islam. Since then he has been involved in movement matters, and much of his time has been devoted to study.

At the end of 2001, in one of the mosques in Ramallah, Qasem met Muhammad Araman, a leader in the Izz a-Din al-Qassam. The al-Aqsa Intifada was already in full force, and Araman asked Qasem to locate objectives for strategic attack. Qasem saw this as an opportunity to fulfill his obligation and as a privilege. In his mind, he related, he saw the martyrs (*shuhadaa*), the veterans of the military branch of the movement, some of whom he had known personally, and whom he wished to emulate. Qasem naturally turned to three of his close friends (one was his brother-in-law) with whom he had grown up and with whom he had prayed in the Ein al-Loze neighborhood mosque in Silwan known as the " Hamas Mosque." He proposed to them that they join the holy struggle. They agreed.

The first action the cell tried in February 2002 was to place an explosive charge under the vehicle of a police officer beside his home in the neighborhood of Pisgat Ze'ev. The action failed in spite of the precise preparations. Qasem drew conclusions: it was not worth expending so much energy for an all but insignificant result like the killing of one police officer. One must think big. At exactly the same time Araman spoke to him and told him about a young man, Fuad Hourani, who was ready to carry out a suicide attack. Araman asked Qasem to choose a suitable location. Qasem drove with Muhammad 'Odeh, a friend from his sabotage cell, to *Café Moment* in downtown Jerusalem. The two noticed that the place was quite full, and they decided that it suited their objective. On the Sabbath of March 9, Qasem drove to Ramallah where he met Hourani and Araman and decided with them that he would meet the suicide bomber at 10pm in the mosque in Beit Hanina. On the way to the meeting, Qasem took another look at *Moment* together with another member of his cell, Wisam Abbasi. Afterwards they picked up Hourani. They

managed to cross a checkpoint that was placed on the Ramallah–Jerusalem road without being discovered, reached the café, and Hourani entered it and blew himself up. Eleven people were killed and sixty-five injured.

For the “Jerusalem Cell,” as they called themselves, the attack had two main messages. One had to do with the general situation during that period – a message of revenge. A few days earlier three children from the Abu Kweik family and two children from the al-Masri family in Ramallah had been killed by a shell from an IDF tank. Apparently the target had been the father of the family, a Hamas activist, Hassan Abu Kweik, who had not been in the shelled vehicle. In any case, Qasem presented the attack as revenge for the killing of the children. Beyond that, the attack also had a political message: the Jews think they are placing closure on Jerusalem and that Jerusalem is under their jurisdiction. We prove to them that this is not so, he said. We are not giving up on Jerusalem.

About two months later, in May 2002, the cell was involved in carrying out another suicide attack, this time in the town of Rishon LeZion to the south of Tel Aviv, where ‘Abbasi worked. This time too, Araman was the one who brought Qasem together with the suicide bomber, this time in the village of Beit Ikra, northwest of Jerusalem. Qasem later told that he had not met the suicide bomber beforehand and had not known his name. When they met on the way to the attack, they ate supper together, and Qasem tried to get to the bottom of the bomber’s motivation for the suicide attack. He noticed that here was a man acting from choice and with the knowledge of the good that would come to his people and to himself from that deed. The living suicide bomber, Muhammad Mu‘ammar, spoke against the compromises of the leaders and said that in his opinion, only the Jihad would bring salvation to the Arab people, not assorted surrender initiatives. They went on foot from the village of Bet Ikra to the Jerusalem–Tel Aviv highway, and Qasem was impressed from Mu‘ammar’s physical strength. But even more, from Mu‘ammar’s strong beliefs that helped him carry forty kilograms of explosives on his back.

Wisam Abbasi took them in his vehicle to Rishon LeZion, showed Mu‘ammar the club, let him out of the car, and returned to Jerusalem with Qasem. On their way back a police traffic patrol stopped them. The policeman fined them for driving over the speed limit. In spite of the repeating reports emanating from his police radio about the attack in Rishon, Qasem relates, the policeman did not think to ask him and his friend where they were coming from and where they were going. For them it was one more reason to believe that Allah wanted them to succeed. The movement paid the fine.

Towards the end of that month, members of the Jerusalem cell tried to carry out what they referred to as a “strategic attack” by placing an explosive charge in an oil tanker on its way to the fuel storage area in Pi Giliot, north to Tel Aviv. The damage caused was light, almost unnoticeable. During the following weeks they placed explosive charges on railroad tracks in an attempt to derail trains. These acts too were not especially successful, from their perspective. At the end of July they placed a charge in a cafeteria at the Hebrew University campus on Mt. Scopus. This act

was carried out without any suicide: Muhammad ‘Odeh, who had until shortly before worked in the university, suggested the site. The explosive charge was put inside a student-like backpack, one of the members of the cell threw it over the campus fence, ‘Odeh took the bag with the explosives to the cafeteria and “forgot” it there. After he left, he phoned the number of the cellular that had been left in the backpack to activate the charge. No explosion was heard. He reentered the university, took the bag and brought the explosive charge to experts who located the problem. Three days later, he went back and left the backpack in the cafeteria. This time it exploded, killing nine people and injuring twenty.

The attack in the university was considered by many to be a crossing of a red line. The Arabic term for a university campus is *Haram Jami’i*, meaning academic territory, on which violent deeds are prohibited. Still, Qasem insisted it was a legitimate target. He argued:

We saw no fault in setting the charge in the Hebrew University, since the enemy too – may God smite him – does not refrain from attacking everywhere, and *al-Haram al-Sharif* [the Temple Mount, where on a number of occasions Muslim demonstrators had been killed] and the *Haram al-Ibrahimi* [the cave of Machpelah, the tomb of the patriarchs in Hebron, in which Baruch Goldstein had killed 29 Muslim worshippers in 1994], are the two most important testimonies to that.¹¹

These words express the position of Hamas at that time. Hamas viewed the suicide attacks as an appropriate response to the merciless Israeli aggression: they were an expression of the desire for revenge, and potentially, they could bring about a balance of terror between Israel and the Palestinians.

The Silwan cell was captured about two weeks after the attack in the university. The Prime Minister’s office issued a press release in which it emphasized the fact that the perpetrators had come from East Jerusalem. “This is a direct blow to the trust we have shown the residents of East Jerusalem, who may pay a heavy social and economic price when the Jewish population cuts off contact with them and they come to be treated as suspects everywhere they go. Apparently these extremist elements have not obtained ‘permission’ from the Arab population of Jerusalem to cause such damage to its reputation with all the implications of that result.”¹² This was a not-so-hidden threat to the Palestinian population of East Jerusalem (termed “Arabs” rather than “Palestinians” by the Prime Minister Office (PMO)), based on the assumption that public support for the actions of Hamas was not extensive, and it was intended to deter the population from offering aid to the movement.

Qasem did not accept the premise of the Israeli analysis. He believed that the situation was precisely the opposite. He interpreted the groups of his relatives and acquaintances crowded outside the courtroom (many remained outside because preference was given to the relatives of those killed in the attacks) as an expression of faith in his actions, and he was convinced that they represented many others as

well. He thought of himself as one carrying out the desires of the Palestinian population of Jerusalem who were interested in participating in the religious-national struggle. In his statement before the sentence was read aloud, Qasem said that the Jerusalemites were the first to call for a Jihad, and that he and his fellow members of the cell had acted out of their commitment as Jerusalemites.¹³ Not much time would pass before the elections to the Palestinian legislature in 2006 would prove that he was correct in his analysis: the attacks carried out by the Hamas movement had not lessened the support it enjoyed, perhaps the opposite.

The Silwan cell was the most active one in the city, but there were also others, the most prominent being the one whose members planned and helped carry out the murderous attack in Café Hillel. Heading the Jerusalem team of this cell was Ahmad 'Ibeid of 'Isawiyye, who was recruited to the military branch of Hamas at the end of 2002. He brought along his relative Na'el 'Ibeid, and the task assigned to them was to locate suitable targets for an attack. After scouting the city a number of times, they chose the Hillel Café on Emek Refa'im Street, central area of the nightlife scene in Jerusalem. Their contact in Ramallah was referred to as Abu al-Abed. It was he who taught Ahmad 'Ibeid a quick course in sabotage: how to make an explosive charge; how to connect the detonator to the explosive material; how to attach a delaying mechanism and a remote detonating device, etc. The course proved to be unnecessary: at the beginning of September 2003 Abu al-Abed told 'Ibeid that he had located a suicide bomber ready to undertake the task and would send him an already prepared explosive belt. And indeed, the belt arrived in Shuafat inside a carton of fruit, and the two buried it in the ground on land belonging to their family, east of the built-up area of 'Isawiyye. Afterwards, they took the belt to a house under construction in the Shuafat Refugee Camp belonging to another resident of 'Isawiyye.

After one potential suicide bomber changed his mind, the Ramallah command center sent Ramez Abu Salim, a student who had been a member of the student cell of Hamas in al-Bireh, to do the job. Abu Salim managed to enter the city and Ahmad drove him to Emek Refa'im Street. Ahmad dropped him off at the entrance to the café and left, and immediately afterwards, Abu Salim killed seven of those in the café along with himself and wounded seventy.¹⁴

One of the questions connected to this tragic event remaining unanswered (even though it has been decided on a judicial level) relates to the culpability of those associated with the house in the refugee camp in which the explosives belt was hidden for a while and in which it was attached to the suicide bomber. The owner's son, Amro Abed al-Aziz, a blind doctoral student in the Department of English Language and Literature in the Hebrew University, a figure known to many at the university, had been in touch – to a certain extent – with Ahmad 'Ibeid. He was put on trial and accused of murder and aiding the enemy for proposing the use of his flat to 'Ibeid, knowing that the intention was to prepare a suicide bomber for the attack. Abed al-Aziz pleaded not guilty to all the charges, claiming that 'Ibeid had hoodwinked him and had exploited his blindness to conceal the belt in his house. Furthermore, he expressed his strong repugnance for any harm done to

innocent people, arguing that that was and had always been his position. The Jerusalem district court judges were divided on the issue, but the majority found him guilty and he was sentenced to four life sentences.¹⁵

Thus, Abed al-Aziz, a man with close ties and relations of mutual respect with Jews, had (according to the judges) joined the 'Isawiyye cell headed by Ahmad 'Ibeid – who usually prayed at al-Aqsa and for ideological reasons had joined 'Izz a-Din al-Qassam. As in the case of the taxi driver Abu Teir or 'Allan from Café Filter mentioned above, here too, we find that life within mixed and contradictory social and political systems (that is, ongoing contact with Jewish society and its beliefs and Palestinian society and its perceptions) does not prevent taking a clear stand and choosing a side in a moment of truth or under pressure.

On the other hand, involvement in suicide attacks and even initiating them do not necessarily indicate an attitude of life or death struggle against the Jews. The statements of heads of the cells mentioned above, made just preceding the pronouncing of sentence, testify to the existence of differing attitudes even among members of the military branch of Hamas. When asked about regret, the head of the Silwan cell, Wa'el Qasem replied that “the believing soul answering the call of its God does not feel regret.” And preceding the pronouncing of sentence in court in Jerusalem, he declared that he gives thanks to God that he has succeeded in going their way, the way of the Jihad and the defense of Palestine and its holy places. The head of the mother cell of the 'Isawiyye cell, Sallah Dar Musa, from the village of Bet Liqia west of Ramallah (whom 'Ibeid knew by the code name of Abu al-Abed) spoke in a different voice:

It was a time that is past. It brings us to a new period. I wish for your government that it not bring us back to this circle of violence. Don't expect at all that in this life the Roman proverb will be realized that “you shall be the lord and I your slave.” We are a movement of national liberation like every national liberation movement in the world. We do not wish to be mourning just as you do not wish to be mourning. We do not wish for ourselves the tortures that you have undergone [apparently referring to the Holocaust]. On the day that you were given the choice of being slaves or masters, you arose and became like the hero Samson. It is impossible that we will be less than that. Perhaps you asked yourselves what were the motives of a person who performed these deeds. Are these motives like those the media publicize? Are they motives of the love of terror and killing? Or perhaps they are motives of self-defense, because we feel insecure when our mothers cry and our children are murdered?

The military court was not impressed with what Abu al-Abed said. “The accused stands before us even now arrogantly and with a satanical grin, and instead of apologizing for the terrible crimes committed against innocent people, he justifies his actions with these and other excuses that do not deserve any additional platform,” the court declared.¹⁶

We can understand the difficulty of an Israeli military court to accept or even to understand the words of Abu al-Abed. In spite of the difference between his words and those of Wa'el Qasem from the Silwan cell, neither of them expressed regret for what they had done. On the contrary: they considered their acts legitimate, whether as self-defense, as striving to reach a balance of terror with Israel, as a justified war upon the attacker or as a response to divine summons. Still, an attempt to understand the Hamas activity during the al-Aqsa Intifada years obliges us to pay attention to the range of ideas and motivations among Hamas members, and to the fact that some of them, as was expressed by Abu al-Abed, do not reject the idea of Jews and Arabs living in peace in the holy land.

Here we return to the important difference between the Fateh in Jerusalem and the Hamas. The suicide attacks in the city in which Fateh activists were involved have been presented in the preceding pages, but inside the city there was not a single Fateh cell that initiated attacks such as these. All Fateh attacks inside the city were led by Fateh members from Bethlehem, Ramallah or elsewhere. The role of the Jerusalemites in implementing the attacks was marginal, if vital, and sometimes these were minor criminals and not regular Fateh members activated for this purpose. In the background, apparently, was the division within Fateh concerning suicide attacks inside Israel, the opposition of many of the Jerusalem leadership to such attacks and the close relations that Fateh-Jerusalem had with Israeli peace movements. Indeed, it was not only the weakness of Fateh but also the joint Israeli-Palestinian activity against settlements and against the occupation – in which Fateh-Jerusalem was profoundly involved since the mid-1980s – that shaped the political-military behavior of the movement in the city and their choice to avoid attacking civilians.

The third Palestinian trend, the leftwing, did not reject suicide attacks (the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, PFLP, was responsible for an attack in the Carmel Market of Tel Aviv in November 2004), but its weight in the al-Aqsa Intifada attacks was relatively negligible. The desire to avoid harming civilians was a marginal consideration, if at all: they too accepted the common approach that so long as Israel continued without letup to harm unarmed Palestinians, they had the right to act similarly. But several factors contributed to its marginality in this field: the absence of belief in the promised rewards of the world-to-come, the desire to distance themselves from the Islamic movements, the general weakness of the leftwing movements, and their concern for the influence of the wave of suicides on Palestinian society itself. In any case, the PFLP did not build up a complete network to dispatch suicide bombers, and its members usually limited themselves to assisting other bodies or to joint activities. A good example was one attempted attack in Jerusalem in March 2002. A Jerusalem PFLP activist, Louie 'Odeh was mobilized at the beginning of the Intifada to the Fateh's al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades in Samaria without leaving the PFLP. He had gained his knowledge of sabotage at an accelerated course taught by a Hamas expert – such cooperation among activists from the various organizations in setting attacks in motion was not unusual during this Intifada. In March 2002 the then-commander of the "Brigades," Nasser 'Aweis, assigned him to find a Jerusalemite ready to bring a suicide attacker into the city.

'Odeh approached his friend Khaled Halabi, the PFLP person in charge in Beit Hanina, requesting his help. Together they selected Gandhi 'Odeh, also a PFLP activist, and convinced him to bring in the suicide bomber. After several conversations of persuasion, he agreed, and they brought Gandhi to meet the suicide bomber who had been staying in a hideout in Ramallah. The two left in the direction of French Hill, but an Israeli Border Patrol force stationed in Beit Hanina noticed them and opened fire at them. The suicide bomber was shot and killed, thus aborting the attack.

Contrary to 'Odeh, who was active at the same time in Fateh and in the PFLP, Halabi limited himself to activity in the PFLP. He began as a minor activist in 1993; in the mid-1990s he became head of a cell that initiated semi-violent activity and demonstrations; in 1998 he was appointed to be the PFLP person responsible for Beit Hanina and Hizma, and in 1999 he joined the military arm of the organization. When the Intifada broke out, he recruited about twenty more youths from the neighborhood for the PFLP and for them he became the authority. It was natural for him to help 'Odeh when 'Odeh approached him to find someone to assist the suicide bomber, without regard to the organization initiating the action.¹⁷

This attempted attack was different; for the most part, the PFLP continued to favor the old methods of action. Its activists placed explosive-laden vehicles inside the city (one in Talpiot and another in the city center) and they hid explosives (for example a booby-trapped watermelon in a bus, or an explosive charge in a restaurant). Another cell of the Front planned to assassinate Rabbi Ovadya Yosef and other prominent persons, and yet another cell planned to kidnap Israelis in order to demand the release of the General Secretary of the organization, Ahmad Sa'dat.¹⁸ These actions also failed completely or else caused very few casualties. A single action that redounded to the credit of the Front and proved that it had retained a measure of its operational ability was the successful assassination of the Minister of Tourism Rehavam Ze'evi, in October 2001. Like the explosive-laden vehicles and the concealed booby traps, the initiator of this action too was the PFLP command in Ramallah and its military arm there and not of Jerusalem activists. In this action too, Louie 'Odeh assisted on a logistical level.

"Traditional" terror

Suicide bombings became the identifying symbol of the Second Intifada and the preferred type of action for many in the Islamic and other movements. But members of Hamas did not focus only on suicide attacks. A group in Hamas that acted differently – one that should be mentioned even though it did not succeed in implementing even one of its plans – was set up by Malek Bkeirat and the manner of its formation offers another glimpse into the social background of the hard nucleus of Hamas activists in the city, as does the background of the person heading it. Bkeirat was born in 1979 to an Islamist family from the southern village of Sur Baher that gave birth to a number of hardened Hamas activists. His father Najeh was an Islamic activist who was imprisoned for two years at the beginning of the 1980s

accused of hostile activity. Malek was two years old at the time. His father continued his activity within the Islamic movement even inside prison as well as after his release, and he headed the Islamic Heritage Committee (which was close to Hamas) that was active on the Haram. It was only natural for Malek, his son, to join Hamas as a youth. In 1993, when he was fourteen, he was arrested for the first time. In Islamist circles, the story has it that he was interrogated in Tel Mond Prison for three months without saying a word. When he was released, he continued to act within the movement and with his father, and in 2001 he married. Near the end of that year, when the al-Aqsa Intifada was one year old, he decided to set up an armed cell. He recruited Isma'il 'Affane from his own village, and together they got hold of several thousand sheqels and traveled to Bethlehem. They didn't approach local members of Hamas but rather turned to a member of the Palestinian security apparatus whom he knew, and asked for arms to carry out attacks. Those were the days when some of the Palestinian Security Forces, including some affiliated with the Fateh, felt an obligation to contribute to the armed struggle. Members of the Security services sold them a revolver and bullets and held a short training session for them. Later they added another member to the cell and bought him a revolver as well. But first they created a short initiation examination for the new member: they went with him to Liberty Bell Garden in Jerusalem, met an armed Israeli soldier walking alone, and assigned to the new member the task of attacking the soldier and snatching his weapon. The fresh recruit, Akram Abu Zahra, began to move towards the soldier and they stopped him and told him that he had passed the test, and they added him to their group.

The trio met many times and planned an assortment of attacks: throwing Molotov cocktails at a restaurant on the Armon Ha-Natziv promenade, murdering the security guard at the School for the Blind, murdering two soldiers who were guarding a kindergarten in the East Talpiot quarter, and murdering a collaborator from their own village. But they were apprehended without managing to implement a single one of their plans.

In their case too, the court became an arena of confrontation: at one of the sessions Bkeirat physically attacked Avi Sasson, the interrogator from the Minorities Department of the Jerusalem Police, and broke his nose, but Bkeirat also expressed remorse for his actions. He explained that he had attacked Sasson because the latter had pushed his wife, and in a bid for a lighter sentence, he emphasized that he had not made any use of the weapon he had bought. Apparently, that argument did not avail, and he was sentenced to nineteen years in prison.¹⁹ At the same time, his father was occupied with many additional activities, both on the Haram where he was involved in the renovation of the Marwani Mosque (known also as the Solomon's Stables), against the will of the Israeli government and without asking its permission, and throughout the Occupied Territories where he was involved in humanitarian activity (he was one of the organizers of the assistance convoy to the Jenin Refugee Camp after the IDF "Defensive Shield" operation in 2002). A short time later the father was sentenced to eight months in prison for attempting to smuggle a mobile phone to his son inside the prison.

Most of the Jerusalem members of the Hamas cells mentioned here knew each other from previous actions at al-Haram al-Sharif and the social ties increased their self-confidence. Their fervent belief in the justice of their cause moved them to participate in militant activity, and the family support they usually enjoyed enabled them to persist in their activities. For example, Bkeirat's wife – who had married him only half a year before his imprisonment – declared that she was not ready to divorce him even though he had been sentenced to a long term in prison, because she recognized his good qualities. Social and family support were important sources of strength for the Hamas in Jerusalem, but other Palestinian elements were also active in the city and were not leaving the stage solely to the Islamists.

During the first weeks of the Intifada, certain elements in the Palestinian security forces sought to take over the armed activity inside the city (and elsewhere) and channelize it. They believed the time was ripe for activating those who had been recruited in Jerusalem. The Preventive Security force, the General Intelligence branch, and also Force 17 had all recruited activists there. A decisive majority were “sleepers”: after a short training period in the use of weapons or in gathering intelligence, they had not been asked to act on a regular basis for the organization that had recruited them. They received a modest monthly salary. The original objective in recruiting them had been to create a network of activists who would be economically dependent upon the PA, would be loyal to it, and would constitute the foundation for activity in Jerusalem when the need arose. Among them were some who had been activated on a regular basis and had been asked to provide information to their operators about residents of their neighborhoods. As one explained after being arrested:

I would collect for Muhannad (an officer in the Bethlehem Preventive Security Force) information on all sorts of people, on subjects connected with security; in other words, to find out whether someone from Beit Safafa was a Shabak collaborator; on economic subjects, if someone had bought a house or car or other things, and also social and moral subjects: whether or not someone went around with women or smoked drugs or other things like that . . . I gave the information straight to Muhannad by phone or in my meetings with him in Bethlehem.²⁰

But most of the recruits were sleepers, and the opportunity to activate them came with the outbreak of the Intifada. The case of Ahmad Haweis of al-Tur is typical. He was recruited to the General Intelligence headed by Tawfiq Tirawy at the end of 1997, and during the summer of 1999 he underwent military training in Jericho. The instructions he received were to gather information on collaborators and on Palestinians who had requested Israeli citizenship (the Mufti of Jerusalem under the PA, Ikirme Sabri, published a *fatwa* forbidding such requests and Orient House also came out against the phenomenon). When the Intifada broke out, he was assigned to carry out attacks in the al-Tur neighborhood. He added another activist, and according to the indictment presented against them, the two had set fire to trucks

distributing Israeli dairy products and had thrown Molotov cocktails at army vehicles, in one instance injuring a soldier.²¹ Their goal had been to maintain the momentum of the Intifada in the city. Force 17 had taken similar action: two of its recruits, 'Amer Salhab and Ali al-Ghul, had received improvised hand grenades and instructions to throw them at Israeli objectives. That had been during the first month of the Intifada, and they chose a police target: headquarters of the Judea-Samaria District police, located in Ras al-Amoud. The grenade only caused damage to a vehicle parked nearby. A month later, they moved to unrestricted activity against civilians. They threw a grenade at a vehicle passing by Mt. Zion and went to throw a grenade at cars on Highway 1 inside the city. In these cases too, there were no casualties except the grenade thrower himself. When he removed the pin, the grenade exploded in al-Ghul's hand, and his hand was severed.²²

It would appear that it was not by chance that members of the Preventive Security Force in Jerusalem usually avoided participation in this offensive activity. Not all in Fateh agreed with the militant line, and the dispute cut through all its ranks. On the political level, it was Abu Mazen (Mahmoud Abbas) who warned of the danger in turning to armed struggle, and in security circles, Jibril Rajoub, the commander of the Preventive Security in the West Bank, was among the leaders opposing the escalation. There were activists in the field who adopted a similar approach; some were Rajoub's men. Confronting them were those supporting militarization of the struggle. Their option was to join the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, led by head of the Fateh-Tanzim, Marwan Barghouthi.

After his arrest, Marwan Barghouthi told his interrogators that in the first stages of the Intifada, those heading the Palestinian Security network suggested to Yasir Arafat to announce a cease-fire, but Arafat did not respond to their request. Barghouthi added that there were senior leaders in the PA who began to avoid him because he favored escalation and because he had the silent agreement of Arafat. He did not mention the name of Rajoub, but during this period, the tension between them increased. Whatever the case may be, Barghouthi understood that Arafat's silence constituted his agreement for action, and Barghouthi began to initiate attacks in the Occupied Territories. At first he avoided suicide attacks (those were the province of Hamas and the Jihad, was what he told his people) and also attacks inside Israel altogether, but he quickly began to support such attacks as well, in an effort to dislodge the Israeli public from its support of the Occupation and because he did not wish to leave the field to the Islamic movements.²³

Apparently there were, in Jerusalem, a relatively large number of opponents to such activity, and some of them expressed their views at a meeting of Fateh activists with Arafat at the beginning of 2002. Arafat did not accept their opinion. Even if he personally had not directed the moves and had not ordered the attacks, Arafat was unwilling to come out against armed struggle, according to one Jerusalem activist who participated in the meeting and was himself an opponent of armed activity inside Israel. "He expected these events to compel Israel to agree to more compromises than in Camp David," another activist interprets, "but the result was the opposite: the Second Intifada only exacerbated our situation."²⁴

The internal dissension in the Fateh and the opposition of many Jerusalemites to armed struggle accounted for the limited extent of the movement's activity in Jerusalem. But militant activists from nearby towns did not want Jerusalem to remain outside the circle of armed struggle, so they initiated attacks there. Thus, suicide attacks initiated by Bethlehem Tanzim members; thus, explosive charges smuggled in, such as the one in the Biankini café; and thus, shootings that killed several Israeli citizens (in Atarot, Neve Yaakov, Yaffo Street, and the road to Ramot) planned by Ahmad Barghouthi, comrade and relative of Marwan Barghouthi, head of the Tanzim.²⁵ Only one cell of the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades was founded in Jerusalem: its members, all from Jabel Mukabber, fired shots at the police station in the East Talpiot neighborhood, at a police van, and at houses in the neighborhood, but they caused no casualties. In any case, this cell was an exception, not the usual pattern of the Fateh in the city. The Popular Front and the Democratic Front, on the other hand, organized cells that operated in neighborhoods in the eastern part of the city. Two important centers of activity were in the 'Isawiyye and Ras al-Amoud neighborhoods. 'Isawiyye is located at the foot of the campus of the Hebrew University on Mount Scopus, and Ras al-Amoud is the upper neighborhood of Silwan overlooking both the village and the Temple Mount / al-Haram from the east.

It is hard to know with certainty just why these two neighborhoods led the way in militancy. One possible reason might be the local activist tradition of the leftwing fronts there (the Hamas, as well, was strong in Ras al-Amoud, but the local club was identified with the Popular Front). Then too, these two neighborhoods had suffered more than a little, living under Israeli control, even though not necessarily more than other neighborhoods, and even though pressure does not always result in greater militancy. Ras al-Amoud was a major target for the Jewish settlers' association, Ateret Cohanim, that eventually built a small neighborhood in it, on land whose ownership had been disputed: the Wohlin Kolel (Jewish religious study community) argued that they had purchased the land during the 1920s, whereas those occupying the land, members of the al-Ghul family, claimed that it was owned by them. The Israeli High Court of Justice decision went against the al-Ghul family in 1984, based among other things, on the fact that the Jordanian custodian of enemy property had already stated that the al-Ghul family had registered the property in their name illegally.²⁶ More than a decade later, during the term of the Netanyahu government, construction for Jews began. As was the custom in Jerusalem, the Jews were allowed a higher "building percentage" (more intensive land use) than their Arab neighbors, which added to the frustration. The fact that several Palestinian residents in the buildings next door to the settlers had now reached financial agreements with them fomented trouble within nationalist circles there.

Although it did not have a clear link to the disagreement about the land, the al-Ghul family was one of the leaders in the national struggle in the region and honorably represented the Popular Front in the Silwan-Ras al-Amoud area. Several members of the family were suspected of murdering a resident of the neighborhood who sold land to the Jews during the First Intifada, and they were tortured during their interrogation²⁷; one member of the family, mentioned previously, was the

Force 17 activist who was injured while attempting to throw a hand grenade on Israeli cars; and in the Second Intifada, several members of the family were involved in setting up a cell of the Popular Front. At the height of the Intifada, three cells of the Popular Front, connected to one another, were operating at the same time in Ras al-Amoud, all under the direction of Muhammad al-Ghul. The members in the cells came from the extended family along with other youths from the neighborhood. The cells operated for a relatively long time, almost three years. Most of their activity falls under the Israeli term of “disturbing the peace” as differs than terror. They burned tires, blocked roads, organized processions, wrote slogans of the Front on the walls, etc. Those who were students in the Abu Dis campus of al-Quds University were active in *Jabhat al-Amal al-Tullabi* – the Students’ Action Front – the student cell of the Popular Front. They disseminated flyers, handed out material from the movement, and organized conferences. They did not flinch at semi-military operations either. They threw stones and Molotov Cocktails at the Judea-Samaria police station in their neighborhood and at the IDF road block nearby.²⁸

A second focus of activity of the leftwing fronts in the city was in the village of ‘Isawiyye. There, cells of the Democratic Front were most prominent. The village, which became an urban neighborhood in 1967, has lost much of its land: the new Jewish “French Hill” neighborhood was built on some of it; construction for Palestinian use in the remainder of the village land was restricted, and many buildings that had been built in the village without permits were demolished through the years by the Jerusalem municipality. The proximity of the neighborhood to French Hill brought about complicated relations: friendships and partnerships, but also competition and conflicts. It would seem, though, that residents of the village felt that they were in a constant struggle against the Israeli establishment. In the First Intifada, the political activists in the village encouraged the youngsters and young men to fight against the Occupation, whose negative results – in lack of construction permits, municipal services, and infrastructure – they encountered every day. The municipality tried to improve the situation slightly and built a new school in the village, but for the residents that was only minor relief in a situation of unceasing discrimination. When the al-Aqsa Intifada began, militant associations manned both by politically aware activists and frustrated youths sprang up in the village.

The location of the village of ‘Isawiyye – in close proximity to the Hebrew University and the Hadassah Hospital, and also to the road to the settlement of Maaleh Adumim – provided the local activists with tempting possibilities. The most common was firing guns and throwing stones at vehicles traveling on the road to Maaleh Adumim beneath the village. One villager, a member of the armed wing of the Democratic Front, Samer al-‘Isawi, organized several armed teams inside the village. He usually also directed them in their first operation. He was committed to the Front’s struggle. Beyond this, it may be surmised that the killing of his brother Fadi by Israeli soldiers in a 1994 demonstration following the massacre perpetrated by Baruch Goldstein in the Cave of Machpelah in Hebron, also impelled him to take action. One of the teams he set up consisted of two young people from the

village, ‘Ala and Muhammad Mahmoud. At the end of July 2001 during the early night hours, Samer arrived from Ramallah with two weapons, met the two in ‘Isawiyye, and went down with them to the highway. Muhammad was the lookout, with Samer and ‘Ala taking up positions to shoot, and when a police van came by, they fired at it and wounded the driver. Another village activist, Murad ‘Ibeid, brought the two Kalachnikov (AK47) rifles and a number of weeks later, they again took their places above the highway and opened fire on a bus. Soon after this second operation they were arrested. At their trial, they expressed regret for their deeds.²⁹

Samer, who was born and raised in ‘Isawiyye, spent much of his time in Ramallah. He also came to the village to direct Hussein Dirbas. On the night of October 30, 2001 Samer went with Hussein to the outside parking lot of the Hebrew University. This time it was Samer who opened fire that he directed at a car in which two students were seated. The car was damaged, but the students were unhurt. A relative of Hussein Dirbas joined Hussein later on, and together they undertook a number of operations in which they fired rifles at vehicles. They also had at their disposal pipe bombs that they had intended to throw at the security vehicle of the university, but they drew back from that. Yet another operation they had thought to undertake (but decided against) testifies to the lack of sufficient funds: Samer had assigned them to rob a GMC car whose owner was Jewish and whose driver was from ‘Isawiyye, but they changed their minds so as not to harm their neighbor’s livelihood.³⁰ They were arrested in Jerusalem. Samer al-‘Isawi, their activator, was arrested during the Israeli army’s “Defense Shield” operation in Ramallah. He was sentenced to thirty years in prison. The number of members of the Democratic Front from ‘Isawiyye who were in prison during 2005 reached eleven.

Other young men from the village did not carry weapons and limited themselves to throwing stones from the cliffs of ‘Isawiyye toward the Maaleh Adumim highway underneath them. In response, the police blocked most of the roads leading to the village, including the road leading from it to the Hadassah Hospital and the Hebrew University – with mounds of earth, leaving just one road open. Following each of the events, road blocks were placed even in the lone exit road from the village remaining open, and access to and from ‘Isawiyye became a difficult and unpleasant task. Many of the young men were arrested.³¹

A large number of the stone-throwers acted on their own initiative, with no outside direction. Political activists of the fronts and Fateh in the village even expressed their opposition to such acts, especially to attacks on the Hadassah Hospital and its parking lot. “During the First Intifada, throwing stones was an integral part of the struggle, aimed at achieving national goals,” explained one of the opponents, a released security prisoner. “Now it’s done just to release tension, to create confusion.”³² In other words: even if the background for these acts was opposition to Israel and its deeds, they should still not be regarded as wise political acts stemming from an overall view of the desired objective and the methods to achieve it.

Still, the independent action testifies to the fact that there are people who do not need an organizational umbrella in order to act, as well as to the depth of the

frustration in the eastern part of the city. The youths who participated in these activities were often from low-income families and employed in bare-subsistence jobs. Even without a developed political consciousness, there is no doubt that they felt that they were living within discriminatory confines and were being deprived of their rights. That they acted without any organizational framework is evidence that their accumulated rage was enough to obviate the need for an activator or instructions from outside. That was also the case following the death of one of their fellows, Samir Dari, in November 2005 at the hand of a border policeman (who was later put on trial and acquitted). Many of the villagers then mounted a violent demonstration, and several members of the family went out to ignite cars in the Hadassah Hospital parking lot – but it was more a matter of releasing frustration than a well thought out political act. Sometimes organized activists tried to recruit the embittered and enraged to their ranks: Fateh activists set up a unit of Molotov cocktail throwers in this way; the opinion of probation officers submitted during their trial indicated the possibility that they had acted from frustration and not out of ideological motives.³³

The unorganized actions were not only about throwing stones. In the summer of 2001, two young men from Silwan acquired weapons and set up an independent cell that operated around their neighborhood. They shot at an Egged bus next to Lions Gate, at Jewish homes in the Abu Tor quarter, and at the security station and

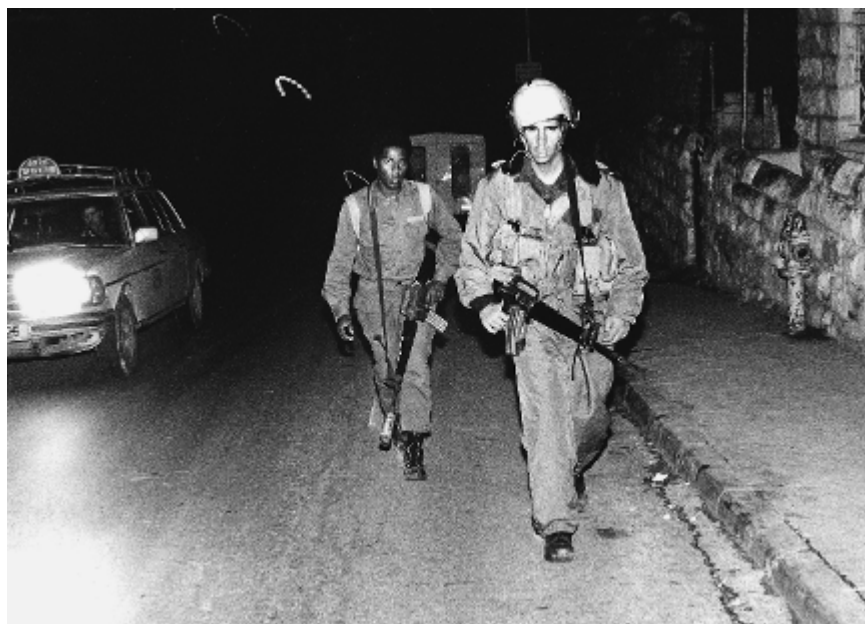


FIGURE 3.1 Israeli security forces patrol in East Jerusalem regularly, sometimes, as in this case, with rubber bullets in addition to live ammunition. In the Palestinian village of Silwan their presence is more intense, due to the settlement activity in the village and the Palestinian resistance to this activity.

a home in Silwan in which Jewish settlers were living. Another youth from Silwan with his comrade threw a Molotov Cocktail at the security vehicle of Silwan settlers. In all these incidents there were no human casualties, and they caused only light damage.³⁴ Another group operating in the same area was more effective, in spite of the youthful age of its members. The initiator of the cell was the janitor of the school in Abu Tor, and its members were students in the local school whose ages ranged from fourteen through eighteen. That cell too arose in 2001 at a time when anger at Israeli operations was swelling. At first they prepared Molotov Cocktails and threw them at houses in Abu Tor and at cafés – one of which was totally destroyed – along the Armon Ha-Natziv promenade. They also attacked: they repeatedly struck a passerby who noticed what they were doing until he lost consciousness, and they stole his wallet and his bag.

In January 2002 members of the cell decided to upgrade their operations. They acquired knives and tear gas and went to the Armon Ha-Natziv promenade and knifed a middle-aged Jew as he was jogging along it. They also placed gas balloons near a house on Naomi Street and exploded them. A fire broke out at the spot. In February 2002 they attacked a young couple walking along the promenade. The couple tried to flee, and the girl, Moran Amit, tripped and fell and was stabbed to death by members of the cell. That was the end of the cell. Security forces were summoned by a passerby and the girl's companion. They gave chase. The cell members threw an improvised explosive charge at the border police, but the latter continued to pursue the attackers and arrested them. One of them, Samer Abu Mayyale, died at the time of his arrest. His comrades claimed that he was beaten to death by the border police.³⁵

The youngsters were put on trial and were sentenced to long prison terms. The cell organizer and one of his comrades refused to express remorse. A declaration of remorse – often made by Palestinians on trial – was perceived by them as a ritual of surrender in which they were supposed to deny their faith and hang their heads before the existing social-political order and before the military-legal power of Israel. The remaining members of the cell expressed their regret to the court as was expected of them. There is no reason to think that those expressing remorse actually were sorry for what they had done. Declarations and beliefs are not always consonant with one another. For the same reason, participation in soccer competitions in memory of Abu Mayyale organized by the Abu Tor soccer team does not necessarily testify to agreement with his deeds. And public opinion believes that a martyr deserves an honorable memorial even if one disagrees with what he did.³⁶

In short, the armed struggle that took place in Jerusalem and with the participation of its population was limited in scope from the standpoint of the level of initiative of Jerusalem residents, but the number of Jewish casualties resulting from the Jerusalemite involvement was relatively large. The Fateh in Jerusalem, for reasons already explained and others to be dealt with further on, did not initiate true attacks, in contrast to the Hamas movement in the city that implemented a number of significant attacks both as to their methods and their results. The leftwing fronts tried their hand at explosive charges and spectacular sabotage, but without much success.

However, they did manage to set up and activate a number of cells that engaged in shooting and throwing Molotov cocktails in various parts of the city. The Islamic Jihad did not leave its stamp on the attacks in the city. Nonetheless, it should be noted that for most of the cells operating in Jerusalem, no matter from which organization, the authority came from outside the city. They leaned on logistical support from command centers outside Jerusalem and received instructions from the military commanders in the West Bank. At the same time, there were independent cells operating in Jerusalem whose deeds testified to the depth of opposition to Israel among some of the population.

During the years when they were at their height, the effects of the attacks on the daily lives of many Jerusalem Jews was very significant. Many stopped traveling by public transportation and avoided going or allowing their children to go to places of public entertainment. But as the suicide attacks subsided, the situation in Jerusalem returned to normal. One of the clearest signs of that was the return of the Jews to the Old City markets. In the Gaza Strip and the West Bank cities, Palestinians have continued their armed struggle by launching Qassam missiles and by other means, and the IDF has continued its operations, exacting a heavy price in blood. But in Arab Jerusalem, or to be exact, in parts of it (one needs to be specific since the Old City does not resemble the Shuafat Refugee Camp, nor does Saladin St. resemble Silwan), it would seem as if there were no conflict between the peoples. And while Jews did not dare enter Jenin or Khan Yunis, they were welcomed in the markets of Jaffa Gate and Damascus Gate. This phenomenon is of particular interest because of the fact, among other reasons, that East Jerusalem residents are not cut off from the Palestinian condition; many of them have family ties to the Occupied Territories (especially with Hebron), and, as we have seen, they also did not refrain from taking part in the armed struggle.

The rapid return to normalcy in the city influenced the number of Jerusalem Palestinians killed. According to the data of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, the number of fatalities in the Jerusalem district from the beginning of the Intifada until February 2005 was 64 (most of them outside the municipal boundaries of the city), from among a total of 3,798 killed altogether. That is to say that among a population numbering almost one-tenth of the total in the Occupied Territories, the casualties suffered were less than two percent of the total casualties, about one-fifth of what would be expected according to their share in the total population. It should be noted that Jerusalem is exceptional also in that the number of Israelis killed within it was three times that of the number of Palestinians killed, whereas in the total for the entire country, the number of Palestinians killed was over three times the number of Israelis killed. The lower percentage of Palestinians killed is the result of the absence of Palestinian armed forces in the city, and because of East Jerusalem being under Israeli law, that limits the usage of military power. Further, with the city cut off from the Occupied Territories, its residents were able to distance themselves from the armed struggle when they discerned the damage it caused. The choice of many to avoid more active participation in the armed struggle was apparently also the result of having more to lose (the buying power of the Israelis,

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for example, or their willingness to employ Palestinians). All these contributed to reinforcing the view, also among political circles, that the important challenge in Jerusalem was not armed struggle but rather the struggle for the Arab identity of the city and the right to remain in Jerusalem and live there honorably. Many political and institutional associations focused their activity on these challenges, both before and after the Second Intifada broke out.

4

POLITICAL ACTION IN THE SHADOW OF THE AL-AQSA INTIFADA

Despite some success by Palestinian militants in initiating attacks, exacting losses, and engendering fear among the Israeli public, it would seem that the al-Aqsa Intifada did not advance the Palestinians in the direction of realizing their vision of an independent state. While Palestinians, mostly the Islamists, were correct in concluding that the Hamas attacks had contributed to the Israeli decision to withdraw unilaterally from Gaza Strip (2005), still many would agree that the situation of the Palestinians after the Intifada is not better than what it had been on its eve. Israel managed to cope militarily with the suicide attacks, and its international standing has not been harmed, as Palestinians had expected it would be, neither has the international community applied significant pressure that would cause Israel to restrain its actions or to offer more forthcoming proposals to the Palestinians. However, in the more important battle of consciousness about which the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Commander-in-Chief, Moshe Ya'alon, spoke during the Intifada, the Israelis have achieved nothing at all. The Palestinians still do not accept the right of Israel to confiscate land and settle Jews on it, and they reject Israel's intention to continue its direct and indirect control over the Palestinians, to determine the boundaries of Palestinian space, and to monitor those who enter or leave it. Nor in the matter of recognition of Israel's right to exist, has there been any significant change. The fundamental perception, according to which Israel has been an alien element that has taken over a country not its own, with the aid of the Western powers, remains the opinion of the majority. There is an important trend in Palestinian society that believes that the situation calls for reaching an arrangement with Israel for the sake of the Palestinians themselves; nonetheless, the amount of power Israel has aimed at the Palestinians during the al-Aqsa Intifada, not only at those engaged in blatant acts of terror but also at physical infrastructures and government institutions, has only entrenched the prevailing Palestinian perception that Israel is a violent and dangerous element forcing itself upon the region.

Failure of the armed struggle has occurred together with a decrease in the range of institutional and political Palestinian activities. There were a number of causes for this. First – during the period of the Second Intifada, Israel acted not only against the military apparatuses but also against all Palestinian institutions. In Jerusalem this was exemplified by the closing of Orient House, the Bureau of Commerce and Industry, and other institutions. Another reason was that the armed struggle is the most significant instrument in the arsenal of national liberation movements. A defeat places the movement in a weakened position from which it is almost impossible to present any political demands, increases the despair among the masses, and lessens the willingness to organize politically. A third reason is the internal divisions within the Fateh concerning the effectiveness and legitimacy of armed struggle, and the struggle between Fateh leadership of the “inside” (those who led the First Intifada in the Territories) and the Returnees (Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) leaders who had returned to the homeland after Oslo). The divisions over strategy did not coincide with that between the inside and “outside” leadership, and both camps were hurt by them. The Palestinian Left, that had already been hurt and weak before the Second Intifada, ever since the collapse of the Communist bloc and even more so after the Oslo Agreements, did not succeed in creating an institutional infrastructure, and only the Islamic trend retained and even increased its strength.

The failure of the Palestinian strategy and the internal divisions caused a decrease in the public’s belief in the Palestinian Authority (PA) leadership, and in certain cases it also caused the national idea itself to lose some of its attraction. However, the alternative to the nationalist idea is not necessarily surrender and acceptance of Israeli control. Even those Palestinian Jerusalemites who say that right now – and the emphasis is on “right now” – there is no point in struggling for Palestinian sovereignty over the city, do not give up usually the vision of Jerusalem as the capital of the future Palestinian state.

In addition, the national idea has a ready alternative, and that is a return to religion. Yet, there is bifurcation even in this domain. Sometimes the result of a return to religion is increased political activity (as in the instance of the younger generation of Hamas), but recently, one finds a gain in the power of the Islamic party that had been relatively marginal previously – the Liberation Party (Hizb al-Tahrir) – for whom armed struggle against Israel is not the most preferred tactic. To be precise: following the example of the prophet Muhammad, the Party believes that re-establishing the Caliphate comes before the Jihad. On these grounds the Party, as an organized body, does not take part in the armed struggle. At the same time, it does not prevent its members from doing so, while denying the legitimacy of the PA. From the second half of 2006 there was a noticeable strengthening of the movement. In August 2006, for the first time in its history, it held a huge gathering in the Occupied Territories, with the participation of tens of thousands, to commemorate the end of the Islamic Caliphate after the First World War. The huge participation was not only the result of the preparations carried out by party members through the years. Despairing of the national idea and its representatives was what increased the attraction of the Hizb al-Tahrir, as well as the difficulties in

functioning being encountered by the Hamas government elected at the beginning of that year. Many believers saw in these difficulties a sign of little hope for the national Islamist approach the Hamas government represented, and found their way to the party that engraved on its banner a renewal of the Caliphate and opposition to the Arab nation-states. Not surprisingly, conspiracy theorists among opponents of the party claim that its meteoric rise was orchestrated by the Israeli security services because it opposes “Jihad now” and takes a critical stand towards Palestinian nationalism. It would be hard to assume that Israel was repeating today its error of the 1970s and ‘80s, when it did not prevent the activity of the Muslim Brothers, thinking they would serve as a balance against the PLO, but this is how the opponents of Hizb al-Tahrir see it.¹

Palestinian Jerusalemites were politically passive also during the Oslo years. One reason, applicable throughout the Occupied Territories, was the very establishment of the PA. After long years of struggle, many activists were tired of political action. Some tried to integrate into various positions in the Authority, others turned to the arena of non-government organizations (NGOs), and yet others gave up public activity entirely. In Jerusalem there were additional reasons: the benefits of Israeli residency and the fear of losing them also contributed to the passivity of the general public. In the Israeli political discourse, there is a recurrent demand to cancel the residency status of Palestinians involved in acts of terror and also of members of their families, and this threat has its effect. An additional threat hanging over the heads of Palestinians in Jerusalem is the demolition of their homes. Thousands of homes in the eastern part of the city have been built without permits (more about this later). Every year the Jerusalem municipality and the law enforcement authorities demolish dozens of them. The rest of the population lives under the fear that their homes might be destroyed, and they prefer not to be involved in opposition activity (even if not violent) for fear that their homes will be demolished in revenge.

Another characteristic of the city is that even those interested in political activity do not find a worthy scene of action. That is because of what the local Palestinian discourse refers to as the “absence of a Jerusalem agenda.” Palestinian activists in Jerusalem argue that the special status of Jerusalem and its residents, and the fact that they are not officially subject to the PA require a unique approach. The intention is not to object to the authority of the PA but rather to recognize the unique political and legal status of the Jerusalemites, and that Jerusalem would have a special status in any future arrangement. This understanding makes it necessary to come up with alternatives and create appropriate methods of struggle. Based on this, Faisal Hussein organized, at the end of the 1990s, a team to examine the needs of the various sectors of the East Jerusalem population and to formulate methods of action in their regard, as part of an inclusive political vision. Among other things he hoped to prevent the “dissipation of identity” of East Jerusalem Palestinians toward Israeliness or at least to prevent the detachment of the younger generation from the national Palestinian movement and its values, processes discernable at the time in the city, stemming from disappointment with the PA along with other reasons mentioned above.

The reports prepared by the team and its conclusions expired together with Faisal Husseini, who died in 2001 (many note his departure as one of the reasons for the decline of the Palestinian political apparatus in the city), and nine years later, almost all the Palestinians in Jerusalem agree that there is no clear political line around which they might unite.

Despite that, even during the Oslo years and during the Intifada, there was political activity. But it was and still is characterized by the absence of direction, the absence of a source of authority, and a deep sense of despair. The despair arose from the difficulty in challenging the Israeli machine, with much larger resources at its disposal, enforcement mechanisms (both the use of force and the legal system), and its propaganda capabilities. Mass-popular activity has been very limited: it centered mostly around going out into the streets on the occasion of memorial days or protest actions, sometimes spontaneously, and sometimes at the urging of political elements (those receiving salaries from the Palestinian security bodies were sometimes instructed to bring people out to such events). That was the story during the first weeks of the al-Aqsa Intifada, when hundreds of youths came out in protest processions on Fridays in the nearby streets to al-Haram al-Sharif. Thus, hundreds of youngsters gathered in the streets of East Jerusalem on Land Day of 2001, after the attack on Sheikh Ahmad Yassin (March 2004), during Arafat's funeral (November 2004), after the killing of the al-Ghalya family in Gaza (summer of 2006) and the Na'amne family in Bet Hanun (November 2006), during the Israeli attack in Gaza (January 2009) as well as in connection with other events. There were also spontaneous (or semi-spontaneous) outbursts in protest against the entry of Jewish settlers into homes in East Jerusalem. On the last day of March 2004, settlers of El-Ad (City of David Foundation) settled in a building they had purchased in the Palestinian village of Silwan. That led to mass disturbances in the village, when youths who had been involved in the past in the stoning of Silwan settlers and their security vehicles were among the leaders.² The entry of Jewish settlers to two buildings in the al-Tur neighborhood (April 2006) was also accompanied by mass disturbances (and several days afterwards, a Palestinian who had been involved in the sale of the property was murdered). On rare occasions, protest against the separation wall did manage to collect hundreds of demonstrators, but they were the exceptions. For the most part, East Jerusalem residents chose to sit sheltered at home without taking part in any sort of political activity.

The ones who tried to keep the flames of activity burning during the first years of the al-Aqsa Intifada were the professional politicians and the devoted national activists. Their activity consisted for the most part of declarations, intended to prove that the Palestinians had not surrendered their capital Jerusalem. Israeli security elements – led by the political echelon – continued the unyielding struggle that had been directed against the Palestinians during the Oslo years, and even exploited the new political situation to sharpen it, sometimes detaining political figures in order to discourage activity. For example: in July 2001 the Palestinian Bureau of Commerce in Jerusalem was closed, and the head of the Bureau, a member of the Legislature Council, Ahmad Hashem Zughayyer was arrested for interrogation. In



FIGURE 4.1 Sheikh Sa'ed: between the fences

Sheikh Sa'ed is one of the Sawahra neighborhoods on the border between Jerusalem and Bethlehem district. It was cut off from Jerusalem by the separation wall, despite the fact that some of its residents carry Israeli-Jerusalemite identity cards. As a result, the kids were prevented from going to their school, which is located on the other side of the wall (September 2004).

August 2001 the Israeli Police raided Orient House, and closed it by order of the Minister of Internal Security Uzi Landau (a closing order for those institutions has been renewed every six months until now). In September of that year the minister in charge of Jerusalem affairs in the Authority, Ziad Abu-Zayyad was arrested while in the city. As a resident of al-'Azariyya possessing an I.D. of the Occupied Territories, he was removed outside the Jerusalem boundaries. A month later, police came to his home to conduct a search. In December, Professor Sari Nusseibeh, then holder of the Jerusalem portfolio in the PA, together with a member of the Palestinian Legislative Council Hatem Abd al-Qader and others, tried to hold a welcoming party for foreign diplomats in Hotel Imperial in East Jerusalem during the holidays. The police arrived and arrested them and their entourage. In September 2002 Israel closed the Jerusalem Association for Art and Folklore and the Union of Arab Clubs, both of which had continued to function in the city.³ It is unclear whether these institutions had any connection with illegal activity, and it would seem that the closure was essentially a political step. This policy continued in the years following the Intifada: the Israeli security agencies dedicated time and energy in preventing Palestinian institutions in the city from celebrating the election of the city as the capital of Arab culture by the Arab league for 2009.

As a result of these pressures, the Palestinian struggle for Jerusalem took place for the most part outside it, and for the most part, that struggle was merely symbolic. In June 2002, Arafat set up a special, twenty-seven-member committee for Jerusalem

affairs: representatives of the Palestinian National Council, of the Legislative Council, of the PLO executive, and well-known Jerusalemites. This committee was charged with developing action possibilities inside Jerusalem, but it almost never convened, and certainly did not formulate a comprehensive policy concerning the city. Arafat, for his part, continued to signal his sovereignty over East Jerusalem through a variety of symbolic means: he received delegations from leaders of the churches located in the city, met in the Muqata'a in Ramallah with consuls who were based in Jerusalem, appointed local Shari'a judges, bestowed the Jerusalem award on various prominent personages, and approved the Palestinian Jerusalem law (in October 2002) that stated that the city was the capital of independent Palestine and the permanent seat of the three branches of government, the legislative, executive, and judicial.⁴

The ceremonial steps, with all their importance for those involved, had no influence on the daily life of Palestinians in Jerusalem nor on the political situation. The minister without portfolio for Jerusalem, Hind Khoury, appointed to her post in Abu Mazen's Cabinet in February 2005 after his election as Chairman of the PA following Arafat's death, tried to persuade the Palestinian government to act more seriously on the matter of Jerusalem, but she too discovered that the obstacles standing in the way of official Palestinian activity were many. Thus, the Authority Cabinet usually preferred to act in Jerusalem via non-governmental institutions already existing in the city and experienced at coping with Israeli policies on an individual, local level. At the same time, a committee was set up in each government office that would be responsible for the ministerial activity in Jerusalem.⁵ Such an attempt was made during the short period of Khoury's membership in the Cabinet. In March 2006, after the failure of Fateh in the elections, she left Jerusalem to take up her new appointment as Palestinian Ambassador to Paris, and her role in Jerusalem matters was filled by Engineer Khaled Abu Arafah, a Hamas member from Ras al-Amoud. He did not have a chance to do much in that capacity: in June 2006 he was arrested together with other top Hamas leadership, following the kidnapping of IDF soldier Gilad Shalit on the border of the Gaza Strip in June 2006. More on this later. In any case, it was the sense of many East Jerusalemites that the PA was not investing enough in the city and its residents.

Al-Haram al-Sharif as a political center

The al-Aqsa Intifada again proved the political and military superiority of Israel. Thanks to that superiority, Israel could take extreme steps such as arresting Hamas government ministers. Due to this superiority, many Palestinians refrain from any political activity at all. But it would seem that there is still one site, al-Haram al-Sharif (the Temple Mount), whose symbolic force and religious and national centrality have created a space in which the Israeli superiority is somewhat moderated. The importance of al-Haram al-Sharif (named also al-Aqsa, after the main mosque in the compound) is agreed upon by all trends of Palestinians, and harm done to its sanctity can and does serve as a lever to move the masses, even those who usually avoid any political confrontation. A peripheral event of April 2006 can

well illustrate the uniqueness of the al-Aqsa for the local Palestinians. During that month a new, computerized loudspeaker system was installed in al-Aqsa Mosque, and the Muezzin Naji al-Qazzaz was recorded calling the public to prayer. The system was programmed so that if due to some delay the human Muezzin fails to begin chanting the call to prayer, the apparatus starts automatically, and al-Qazzaz' voice is heard throughout the Old City. A Jewish engineer from the company that produced the system for the Waqf programmed the hours of its operation, but he was unfamiliar with the Muslim prayer hours, and the call to prayer at noon was mistakenly arranged for midnight. The apparatus worked properly: on the first night after it was installed, forty-five minutes after midnight, the voice of the Muezzin broke through the silent Jerusalem night, calling believers to come to pray. Many hundreds, perhaps thousands, of the residents of the Old City, along with residents of the surrounding areas, heard the call. Since they knew it was not the hour of prayer, they assumed that it was a call to come and defend the Haram, and many streamed toward it, whether carrying sticks or empty-handed. It took great efforts on the part of the Waqf watchmen to explain to them that it had been an error and that they should return home. If indeed passivity is the central characteristic of political life in East Jerusalem, al-Haram al-Sharif is the exception.



FIGURE 4.2 Al-Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount is a dream object for both peace-loving people and warmongers. It is the most powerful political and religious symbol for Israelis and Palestinians, and some Muslims and Jews tend to deny the mutual linkage of their competing religions to this site. The idea of sharing this holy compound is not very popular, and there are constant attempts by Islamic groups, Jewish organizations, PA organs, Israeli agencies and pro-Jordanian elements to expand their presence there. This site witnessed several violent outbursts, and granted the second Intifada (uprising) its name “al-Aqsa Intifada.”

Islamic political activity took place in al-Haram al-Sharif in various ways all through the years of Israeli government, beginning from the days of the Supreme Muslim Council set up in 1967. When the Muslim Brotherhood began to establish its institutions in the city during the 1970s, al-Haram al-Sharif was one of the focuses of its action. The earliest members of the Hamas in Jerusalem will remember the founding event of the movement in Jerusalem in 1987, just a few months before the Intifada broke out. The Muslim Brotherhood was then in the process of expanding and gaining control over institutions (especially student associations and trade unions). In March 1987, movement leaders invited the members of various Islamic bodies affiliated with them from all over Palestine to a most impressive ceremony in al-Aqsa. According to their testimony, tens of thousands of members of the Muslim Brotherhood came from all the universities in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, from high schools, from voluntary organizations, and wide circles of their supporters. The main spokesman was Sheikh Ahmad Yassin; it was his last visit to al-Aqsa to the day he died. Toward the end of the event, all those present arranged themselves in row after row, recited a prayer, and stamped with their feet loudly in unison "and the ground trembled under their feet." This show of strength and unity gave its participants the sense that they were the rising power in Palestine, and it was with that sense that they began the Intifada at the end of the year.⁶

The rallying of the Palestinians around al-Aqsa, their willingness to defend it, and their ability to do so stem not only from its sanctity but also from the relative freedom of movement they enjoy in the site. This freedom is the result of the prodigious (exaggerated, some would say) caution Israel has employed towards the site since its conquest in 1967, when Moshe Dayan, Minister of Defense, decided to leave administration of the Temple Mount in the hands of the Muslim Waqf. Since then, the Waqf has changed its form several times so that the present Waqf in no way resembles the Waqf of 1967. But one thing has been constant: Israel has willingly limited its sovereignty over the Temple Mount and has bestowed upon the Waqf a special status there. Another notable example of Israel's caution is the traditional decision of the police (in fact, of the government) not to enable Jews to pray in public on the Temple Mount even though its sanctity is of the highest and there are many who yearn to pray there. The police department argues that such public prayer would lead to violation of the public order, and this together with decisions of the High Court of Justice accepting that argument, has transformed the Temple Mount into a political tool of the first order for the Palestinians.⁷ Today it is difficult to assess what would have happened had the government decided otherwise in the matter of asserting full Israeli sovereignty over the Temple Mount and allowing Jews to pray there. For the matter at hand it is more important that these decisions enabled the Palestinians, especially the Islamists among them, to create in the heart of Jerusalem a public space of activity, where they have relative self-control.

But it would be a mistake to think that Israel has given up sovereignty over the Temple Mount. A look at events of recent years reveals that state apparatuses act with a particularly hard hand during Palestinian demonstrations in the Mount, either

out of actual operational need (e.g., defending Jews praying at the Wailing Wall), or due to loss of control, or as a show of strength in order to cover up the fact that the balance of powers on the Mount is unlike other places. Thus, in October 1990, security forces killed twenty Palestinians who demonstrated against a cornerstone-laying ceremony initiated by the Jewish movement Temple Mount Faithful; and thus, in September 2000, seven demonstrators were killed in the wake of Ariel Sharon's ascent to the Temple Mount.

Moreover, the police force, representing Israeli sovereignty on the Temple Mount, attempts to exercise its authority by additional means. Two of the most notable are maintenance of a permanent presence of uniformed Israeli police, and bringing to trial Palestinians involved in incidents on the Mount. Among others, Palestinians suspected of involvement in demonstrations there at the beginning of the al-Aqsa Intifada, including setting fire to the police station, were brought to court, as were those who threw stones at Jews praying near the Wailing Wall (for example on the Jewish fast of Tish'a b'Av, on July 31, 2001), and some were sentenced to various prison terms.⁸ Muhammad Abu Qteish, the person responsible for the Waqf shift on the Mount on September 29, 2000, at the time of MK Sharon's visit there, was also put on trial. According to the charges submitted against him, Abu Qteish was the one who called on Muslims via the loud speaker system to come and defend al-Aqsa, resulting in a demonstration at the spot, accompanied by stone-throwing toward the Wailing Wall. He was also accused of yelling at police officers two months later: "Get out now, come get off al-Aqsa; it isn't yours; it belongs to the Muslims, and if you don't leave, I swear to you that I'll start a mess right here and now, and the result will be the start of a war in the entire Middle East."⁹

The final example emphasizes that in the holy Mount, the Palestinians feel that they can challenge the Israeli authorities; it is perhaps the only place in Jerusalem where a Palestinian might dare to inveigh against an Israeli officer. In the background of his mind there is the sense of Palestinian sovereignty (though it be limited) over the Mount, the centrality of al-Haram for Muslims all over the world, and the assumption that those who take a stand there have the backing of all Muslims. On the other hand, that man was put on trial. And viewed from still another angle, following this incident and others, the government decided at the beginning of the al-Aqsa Intifada to forbid Jews to ascend the Mount, a decision that remained in force until August 2003. In other words, the Palestinians succeeded during the course of the Intifada to tighten their hold on al-Haram – but only temporarily.

The way things developed tells us that neither side intends to give in. With the reopening of the Temple Mount to Jewish visitors in the summer of 2003, groups and individuals began to frequent it – including some who advocate renewing the Jewish ritual on the Mount. That aroused opposition in certain Muslim circles who had become accustomed to Jews not being permitted to visit the site and to the sense that they were in control of the Haram and had relative freedom to do as they wished there. They did not limit themselves to verbal protests. During the first week of renewed visits, dozens of Muslim worshippers appeared and tried in various ways to prevent the entry of the Jews. Among other things, they spread their prayer rugs

beside the Mughrabi Gate with the intention of making movement difficult for the Jews; they surrounded the visitors, started yelling at the policemen who accompanied them, etc. The police arrested three of those involved in the incidents: Nihad Zughayyer, a young man close to the Islamic Movement; Fawwaz Bashir, head of the Waqf guard unit on the mountain; and Mustafa Abu Zahra, member of the Supreme Muslim Council. The police immediately offered the three their freedom on bail in return for them signing their willingness to stay away from the Temple Mount for two months. The first two agreed. Abu Zahra refused. He was brought before a judge in the Magistrate's Court, who directed that he be released on bail. The state appealed in the District Court, and the Judge accepted the request of the police that he be banned from the Temple Mount, but she stipulated that it be for just one month instead of the original two.¹⁰ The victory of the police was not only in the fact of the restraining order but also in their having easily overcome the attempt to prevent Jews from praying there. Israeli sovereignty on the Mount was renewed.

As may be seen in the incident described above, one of the methods used by security forces to cope with behavior on the Mount has been through restraining orders directed at Islamic activists. Such orders were issued between 2001 and 2003 against, among others, engineer Tawfik al-Khatib from the Islamic Heritage Association, and the Waqf official Bassam Abu Libde. According to Islamic sources, Israel has intensified its use of restraining orders since early 2007, and issued some 150 such orders in 30 months. Also, since the year 2000, Israel has ordered the closing of several of the organizations active there, such as the Islamic Heritage Association headed by Abu Malek Bkeirat (mentioned above in connection with the activity of his son in Hamas), and the al-Rifada, Ikra, and al-Wifada associations that were identified with Hamas. These associations are primarily concerned with religious-social activity and, among other things, they organize study circles, and during Ramadan they are accustomed to plan events for children and mass *Iftar* meals (at the end of the fast) on al-Haram. Al-Rifada activists also undertook the maintenance of the al-Aqsa Mosque. Founders of these associations, though do not conceal their support for the ideology of the Muslim Brothers, take care to register them with the Registrar of Companies and to conform with the other Israeli laws, in order not to give Israel any legal excuse to close them. But when it is closure by virtue of the emergency defense regulations (which give the executive branch powers), there is no practical significance to their adherence to Israeli law. The investigation of the so-called Hamas treasurer in Jerusalem, Sheikh Ya'qub Abu 'Asab also revealed that these associations were funded by the same Saudi sources who funded other clearly Hamas institutions.¹¹

The Islamic associations al-Rifada and al-Wifada did not work simultaneously. According to activists of these associations, the latter began to function immediately after a closing order was issued to the first – and this was not by mere coincidence. An activist with them both explains that he and his associates had registered several non-profit associations in advance with the Registrar of Companies, some under the name of people not known to have affinity towards the Islamic Movement, to

be used if there should be a need (shelf associations). And during Ramadan 2005 this stratagem proved to be useful. The closing order for al-Rifada was issued in September by the then-minister of defense, Shaul Mofaz. The same evening there was to be a mass activity for children, in al-Aqsa, during the course of which each child was to receive a bag of sweets with the al-Rifada symbol on it. Because the association had been declared illegal, the activists knew that they would not be allowed to enter the area of the Mount. They dug out the shelf association al-Wifada, printed stickers with its name on them, and dozens of activists gathered and stuck its name on thousands of surprise bags that had been prepared for the children. On their way to al-Aqsa, near Lions' Gate, they were stopped by police officers who told them that al-Rifada was not allowed to hold any activities and so its meeting was cancelled. "We don't know what you're talking about; we belong to al-Wifada," they replied, producing the document from the Registrar of Companies, and they showed the bags of sweets with the new labels. The police had no choice but to enable them to hold the celebrations.¹²

The Islamic activists enjoy relating, perhaps to magnify, these small victories, but in the background there is always the sense of real fear of the steps Israel pursues on the Mount: continuation of digging tunnels near the Mount, Jewish prayer groups gathering in these tunnels and near the Small Wailing Wall (in the heart of the Muslim Quarter), and semi-official Israeli declarations supporting construction of a Jewish house of prayer beneath the Temple Mount – all these together created the feeling that Israel was managing to chip away at more and more Muslim rights on and around the Haram.¹³ The Jews, they understand, do not intend to give up easily on the Temple Mount, and the competition surrounding the holy site has just begun. What is no less serious for the Islamists is that since 2007 an unofficial agreement has been reached between Jordan – still the official employer of Waqf personnel in Jerusalem – the state of Israel, and conciliatory Palestinian elements, with the aim of constraining the steps of the radical Islamic Movements on the Mount. One of the results of this agreement was the dismissal of several of the Haram guards by the Jordanian Waqf ministry. There is disagreement about the exact details. Islamic circles claim that dozens of workers were fired. The Waqf leadership says that only a few individuals lost their jobs. The Islamists argue that they were dismissed because they had exhibited enterprise and devotion at work. The Waqf says it was because they had reached pension age. The Islamists insist that many outstanding activists from the Islamic Movements were among those fired (Radi Abu Teir; brother of the local Hamas leader, Muhammad Abu Teir; and three imams in local mosques: Iyad 'Attun from Sur Baher, and Muhammad and Mahmoud Abu Khdeir from Shu'afat). The Waqf says it was just a coincidence. In any case, the Islamists believe that the personnel changes were only the cover and that the main thing was that as part of the personnel changes, those appointed to be responsible for shifts had no desire to try to stop the creeping Jewish control over the Mount, and that the instructions to the guards have also changed. Among other things, they were forbidden to accompany closely Jews ascending the Mount in order to pray there. That was a change from the existing custom, and like other changes that occur within

or near al-Aqsa – archeological excavations, purchase of homes by Jews – this change too testifies, in the opinion of many, that the Jews intend to control the holy mountain. It is not for nothing that one of the devoted Waqf people referred to the situation of al-Aqsa today as “the worst it has been since the conquest of the Crusaders.”¹⁴ And since this is the most sacred site in Palestine, the third most holy for Islam, it is a matter of interest not only for Jerusalemites. Residents of the entire country together with the Muslim world have been called to the flag.

The Islamic Movement in Israel – and al-Aqsa

Since Israel’s conquest of East Jerusalem, there has been increased interest in the Muslim world about happenings on al-Haram al-Sharif.¹⁵ Since the 1990s, the Islamic Movement in Israel has come to stand at the head of the al-Aqsa faithful. For about two decades, the movement has been deeply immersed in all that was happening in Jerusalem, especially within the sacred space. The movement’s breakthrough occurred when activists, headed by Sheikh Ra’ed Sallah, took upon themselves to advance the renovation of the Marwani mosque (Solomon’s stables) and the ancient al-Aqsa mosque, located in spaces underneath the existing mosques. These renovations, starting in 1996, were undertaken without the permission of the Israeli Antiquities Authority or any other Israeli body, and they aroused much opposition in wide circles of the Israeli public. Archeologists feared that the excavations would harm the antiquities found there; the Temple Mount Faithful and the Chai V’Kayam movements appealed to the Israeli High Court of Justice, arguing that transforming Solomon’s Stables into a mosque would harm the Jewish freedom of religious rites and the sanctity of the place; and some regarded the renovations as an intentional act aimed at hiding evidence of the existence of the ancient Jewish Temple on the Mount. Indeed, the argument that there was never a Jewish temple on the Temple Mount (Palestinian spokesmen refer to the temple as “al-Haykal al-Maz’oum” – the “alleged Temple”) is one of the cornerstones of the current Islamic discourse. The High Court justices, incidentally, decided that there was no reason to obligate the state to stop the Islamists’ work at the site,¹⁶ and the Islamic Movements have continued working there.

As customary in the Islamic Movement, some of the renovating was done by volunteers, Palestinians from within Israel, from Jerusalem, and from the Occupied Territories. Hundreds of people came to work, and among other things, they tiled the new areas both inside and out. Others contributed building materials, work days of trucks and tractors, and all the other things that were needed. The movement proved its organizational abilities and its competence in moving people to act. It also proved that its affinity with al-Aqsa was no less than that of any other Palestinian element and that its ability to influence and to change was perhaps even greater than that of other circles. The charismatic leader of the movement, Sheikh Ra’ed Sallah became a well-liked figure in Jerusalem as well.

Beyond the renovation work, which increased the room for worshippers at al-Aqsa by several thousands of additional places, another of the movement’s central

objectives has been to increase the Muslim presence in Jerusalem in general and at the Haram in particular. This is an attempt to cope with a decline in the number of Palestinians reaching the city due to the Israeli closure policy and the limitations placed on the age and place of residence for worshippers on the Temple Mount. For the Islamists, it was an effective way to maintain the Arab-Islamic identity in the city, since as Israeli citizens, the state has difficulty in preventing them from reaching the city. And indeed, every Friday, and sometimes also in the middle of the week, buses arrive from Galilee, the Negev, and the Triangle to Jerusalem, bringing thousands of Muslim male and female worshippers. After the prayers, the visitors go for a tour around the Old City's markets and eat in its restaurants, thereby bringing back to life the commerce of the Old City in Jerusalem. It is an important byproduct of the pilgrimage to the city, and many merchants today are grateful to the Islamic Movement for that. Some of the funding for the well-developed transportation network that brings them comes from donors throughout the Muslim world.

Another arena in which the Islamic Movement participates is the ongoing monitoring of what happens in the vicinity of al-Haram/the Temple Mount. Its members report to the international and Arab media on each new Israeli excavation, on each widening of a tunnel, on every planned renovation. Often they express opposition to the renovations even if Israel explains the necessity in terms of safety, since they do not trust the Israeli authorities. This was the case with the construction of a new bridge to the Mughrabi Gate that leads from the Wailing Wall to al-Aqsa. The original embankment collapsed in the snow in 2004, and a temporary bridge was built. When Israel started at the beginning of 2007 to construct a new bridge, the Islamic Movement called its people to demonstrate against it. It used the movement's popular slogan "al-Aqsa is in Danger" that activates its supporters and rallies them to the defense of al-Haram. During this demonstration in February 2007, sheikh Ra'ed spat at the face of an Israeli policeman, and in a sentence that lasted until January 2010 he was sentenced to nine months in prison.¹⁷

The activity of the movement is not restricted to emergency situations. Every summer the movement brings thousands of children to their summer camp in Jerusalem, enabling them to relish the sanctity of the place. When Israeli rightwing groups announce their intention to ascend the Temple Mount (before Tisha b'Av, the three pilgrimage holidays, or for political reasons like before the separation from the Gaza Strip) the Islamic Movement also recruits tens of thousands of Muslims to gather there.¹⁸ Such events attract all the main Palestinian trends – headed by Hamas and Fateh – as well as Arab members of the Knesset, but the northern Islamic Movement headed by Sheikh Ra'ed Sallah enjoys the highest standing on the Mount, and although members of the southern branch of the movement enjoy a presence there, it is of a more limited nature.¹⁹

The Islamic Movement actually constitutes an additional focus of political activity in the city since Sheikh Ra'ed created a pact with outstanding personages, including the former Mufti of Jerusalem, Sheikh 'Ikirme Sabri and others. While, in the course of the al-Aqsa Intifada Sheikh Ra'ed was not present in Jerusalem due to his

imprisonment for 26 months and the subsequent restriction of entry to the Old City (for four additional months), but when the ban was lifted in November 2005, he returned to activity in the city. Together with his colleagues he acts as a lobby for Islamic sanctuaries in the city and for the Palestinian case in general. These people meet now and then in the city; from time to time they hold a conference on current affairs. Sabri was indeed removed from his position as Mufti by the Chairman of the PA, Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) in 2006, apparently because he spoke out in an extreme manner, but the two personages continue to appear together. The new Mufti of Jerusalem, Muhammad Hussein, also appears sometimes with Sheikh Ra'ed. Opposition to the work being carried out near the Mughrabi Gate was expressed by each in his own way: the Mufti Hussein issued a fatwa calling upon Muslims to defend Jerusalem, while Sheikh Ra'ed organized a popular protest, was arrested by the police, and was issued a restraining order banning him from the Old City.²⁰

Participants in the conferences organized by Sheikh Ra'ed at times include the Bishop 'Atallah Hanna, bishop of the Greek Orthodox church. 'Atallah, born in the village of al-Rame in Galilee, is among the few Arabs accepted into the higher body, the synod, of the Greek-Orthodox patriarchy in the city. For years he has served as the church's liaison with official Palestinian elements and with the Islamic trend. When speaking he emphasizes Christian-Muslim unity, and the contract of Omar, the agreement between Omar Ibn al-Khattab, the Muslim conqueror of Jerusalem in the seventh century, and the Jerusalem patriarch Sufronius, in which the former undertook not to harm Christians in return for the latter's acceptance of Muslim control. That was part of the move to create a common Muslim-Christian front for the defense of Jerusalem initiated by the Islamic Movement that came into being in March 2007. The new front gained the support of various personages and elements in Jerusalem, including the Fateh movement.²¹

An alliance such as this enables the Islamic Movement to represent itself as – and in fact to be – the representative of all Palestinians and not only of the Muslims among them. That objective is also achieved in another way. Participants in conferences of the Islamic Movement usually include personages who do not belong to it, like Sa'id al-Uqbi, a Beduin activist in the Negev; Raja Aghbariyya, General Secretary of "Sons of the Village"; and Muhammad Zeidan, the General Secretary of the Arab Association for Human Rights.²² Apparently this is the only attempt of its kind, unofficial, to found a leadership body common to Palestinians in Israel and in the Occupied Territories. The choice of Jerusalem as this body's focus of activity is important, but not surprising.

While the Islamic Movement is active in al-Haram, it also encourages residents of East Jerusalem to participate in the struggle over places holy to Islam within Israel proper. In this way, they express their dissociation from the concept of the Green Line (1949 armistice borders), advance their perception that sees Palestine as a single entity, and recruit residents from the Territories and Jerusalem for the idea. The main struggle in which the movement has been involved in recent years in West Jerusalem is against plans (of the Simon Wiesenthal Center) to set up the Tolerance



FIGURE 4.3 The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate: between settlers and Arabs

The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in the holy city has to maneuver between the Israeli authorities and the Church's Palestinian believers. The Patriarchate was involved in some shady land deals with Jewish settlers, but at the same time, monks protested against the settlers. This monk was injured during a demonstration against a Jewish settlement in the heart of the Christian quarter, in a building belonging to the church, which was transferred to a Jewish company in 1990.

Museum on land of the Mamilla Muslim cemetery. This grandiose project entails removal of a number of Muslim graves, and the Islamic Movement has been among those leading the struggle against it, arguing that it would offend Muslim feelings and Muslim precepts. The struggle is taking place in part in the courts and in part in the field, and Islamic Movement activists are directing it together with the former Mufti 'Ikirme Sabri and other Jerusalem personages. Together, they organized many dozens of Muslims from East Jerusalem whose relatives are buried in the Mamilla Cemetery, and they held a protest gathering in the square of the High Court of Justice, during the discussion of their appeal against construction on top of the graves.²³ A central place in this activity is also held by Mustafa Abu Zahra, who has been mentioned above. He succeeded in being appointed by the Shari'a Court in West Jerusalem to responsibility for the cemetery, and he was involved in organizing a voluntary workday in the site together with the Islamic Movement, in which about 1,000 people participated. As in the wake of his activity in the Haram, so too in May 2006, right after the workday, he was taken in for questioning by the police and received a restraining order banning him from the area for ten days.²⁴

The organizational ability of the Islamic Movement, the fact that it has put Jerusalem at the head of its agenda, and the centrality of al-Aqsa in Palestinian religious and political consciousness made the movement into one of the most important elements in the city. Its vision differs from the Palestinian national one, Jerusalem as capital of the future Palestinian state, and differs also from the “open city” concept of Hussein and others. According to the vision of Sheikh Ra’ed, the city would be the capital of the Islamic Caliphate. But contrary to the liberation party, the longing for the Caliphate does not replace political action.²⁵ Nevertheless, it is a vision for the future. And meanwhile the Palestinians in Jerusalem face countless daily problems stemming from life under Occupation, without an Islamic Caliphate and even without hope of independence in the near future. This coping often occurs by means of NGOs, and as will be seen, a large number of them work in conjunction with Israeli organizations.

NGOs in Jerusalem

A comprehensive survey of all the NGOs active in Jerusalem would be an impossible task within the confines of this book. Hundreds of organizations and institutions are active within the eastern part of the city. Some came into being during the British Mandate period (like the Arab Women’s Association), and some were founded after the rise of the PA (The Union of Retired Teachers); some more active (like the



FIGURE 4.4 Commercial life in the Old City is based on tourism. In addition to international tourism, which is dependent on the security conditions, the merchants of the city also enjoy “Islamic Tourism” from Arab communities in Israel. This was an initiative of the Islamic Movement, which took it upon itself to keep the markets of Jerusalem alive in order to preserve its Muslim-Arab character.

al-Maqased Hospital Association) and others less. They are concerned with a variety of domains, motivated by various factors, belong to differing political and social trends, and receive funding from different sources. In order to simplify the picture, they can be classified according to the area of their activity: welfare and assistance organizations, human rights organizations, organizations concerned with education and health, trade unions, research institutions, and cultural and religious institutions. Some of the organizations combine, of course, more than one sphere of activity.

Many veteran institutions are an integral part of the Palestinian political system; and they have ties with various Palestinian organizations (a few have connections with Jordanian elements). Alongside these, there are many new organizations, a product of the allocation of American and European funds beginning at the end of the First Intifada and with greater frequency during the Oslo years. Their ties with, and dependence on, external, foreign elements have several ramifications. One is that their activity is determined to a certain degree by the principles set by the funders. In other words: they are not only obligated to serve their public but also to act according to the desires and values of the financing foundations. Second, the salary that workers in these organizations receive is often higher than that of workers of a similar level in the government administration. These two factors have resulted in a certain amount of alienation between the public and the organizations: at times they are accused of exploiting Palestinian suffering in order to make a fortune; and at times they are defined as foreign agents (similar to the claim frequently heard among the Israeli rightwingers against leftwing movements that are aided by European foundations).²⁶ These NGOs suffer from another problem: after the establishment of the PA, Yasser Arafat feared the entrenchment of the NGOs who were demanding democratization and transparency, and he viewed them as a threat to his regime. He attacked them openly, including making them subject to the Ministry of the Interior (meaning the security agencies), the arrest of prominent activists, and publication of newspaper articles against the organizations and their leaders while shifting accusations about the absence of budgetary transparency to the organizations themselves.²⁷ One might think that the move was intended only to shield the problematic workings of the PA, but not always were these accusations without foundation. An examination of one of the central associations in East Jerusalem, the al-Qanun Association (LAW), undertaken by the contributing nations, revealed that of about ten million dollars that had been allocated to the association between 1997 and 2002, approximately four million had not reached the objectives for which they had been budgeted, and there was a suspicion that they had been transferred to private pockets. According to Palestinian sources, the head of the association, Attorney Khader Shqeirat, was investigated by the PA following European pressure, gave some explanation, and was released after a short time. Such events did not contribute to expanding belief in the NGOs. Incidentally, criticism was also levied on the head of the Fateh Tanzim, Marwan Barghouthi, who was arrested by Israel in April 2002 and who appointed Shqeirat to serve as one of his defending attorneys. His cries and those of his colleagues for struggle against corruption and against the corrupt in Fateh were perceived on this background as unreliable.²⁸

In spite of the criticism and the increased budgetary monitoring, the NGOs continued their activities in East Jerusalem as in the other parts of the Palestinian territories, at varying levels of honesty, organizational affiliation, and political involvement. What concerns the present book is the question of their involvement in the struggle for Jerusalem. Superficially, welfare organizations, institutions struggling against addiction to drugs, or trade unions were not part of the political struggle (as distinguished from human rights organizations, some of the research institutes and some of the religious institutions). But even those not acting directly in the political sphere usually do not ignore the political ramifications of their activity and sometimes even emphasize them. This is not surprising: first, it is only natural that activists in a society struggling for self-determination would place every move taken within its wider context – the national struggle – and they would see every institution they founded as another brick in building the future state. Second, the foreign funds usually would adopt the prevailing national Palestinian discourse – and the dialogue between the backers and the recipients take place within the national discourse. Moreover, since welfare, health, education and the like are supposed to have been the responsibility of the state, Palestinian self-initiative testifies to creating on the ground a Palestinian alternative to the state of Israel. A declaration of intent of one of the important institutions in the city that combines welfare and educational activity under a political banner can illustrate the matter.

Not long after the death of Faisal Hussein in spring 2001 members of his family together with several Jerusalem personages decided to memorialize him by means of an institution that would bear his name: the Faisal Hussein Foundation. The Foundation's declaration of intentions stated that its objectives are to preserve the cultural characteristics of Jerusalem and the Palestinian identity of its population and to help develop the institutions located there, especially in the spheres of education and health. As part of its activity, the Foundation adopted the Waqf schools in the Jerusalem district, 37 in number (28 of them within the municipal boundaries of the city), that were in dire straits from the standpoint both of their physical infrastructure and their level of studies. The Foundation funded improving the infrastructure in these schools, prepared curricula for them, distributed scholarships to outstanding students, and more. Among other projects, the Foundation also funded a program of Drug Addicts Anonymous in the Jerusalemite neighborhood of Wadi Joz, set up and equipped youth libraries, and it contributes funds to the Arab hospitals in the city through renewing medical equipment, and participation in the costs of hospitalization for those unable to afford it.

The Faisal Hussein Foundation strives to serve as a fund that coordinates between the various organizations in the city and participates in funding quite a few of them. It also has developed an innovative method of mobilizing funds – “Buy time in Jerusalem.” According to the Foundations calculations, the annual cost of maintaining the existing institutions in Arab Jerusalem is \$30 million a year (not including the development budgets). In terms of smaller units of time this means a cost of \$625,000 per week, \$85,000 per day, \$3,600 per hour, \$60 per minute, and \$1 per second. The Foundation proposes to anyone interested – at its internet site and at

public events – to take advantage of the great privilege of supporting economically all the Palestinians institutions in the city for one second, minute, or any other unit of time, each person according to the promptings of his heart.²⁹

The budgets collected and distributed by the Foundation are intended not only to provide for needy populations, but also, as the Foundation declares, to preserve the Arab character of the education and health systems – thereby preserving the Palestinian Arab identity of residents of East Jerusalem. Here is an aspect usually absent from most considerations of the health system in East Jerusalem. The application of the Israeli National Health Law to residents of East Jerusalem as well is of course a positive development, as it provides health insurance and health treatment for all, something non-existent in the Occupied Territories; but this law also has had negative consequences for Palestinians. The Arab health institutions (including the leading hospital al-Maqased) were compelled to sign agreements with the recognized Israeli Health Funds (*kupot holim*), since the law offers insurance coverage only through them. Local Palestinian activists see this as a move by the Israeli administration aimed at taking control of the Arab health system, and an additional element in Israeli efforts to Judaize the city and uproot its Arab-Palestinian identity. They believe that the PA should have financed these institutions and their patients in a way that would enable them to escape dependence upon Israeli institutions.

The struggle to preserve the Arab identity of the Palestinian institutions had been the cornerstone of the Palestinian struggle in Jerusalem since its occupation by Israel in 1967. This struggle has had its successes, the most significant being the rejection of the Israeli curriculum for use in the East Jerusalem school system – but also its failures: closing the hospital in the Old City (the Hospice), control by the Jerusalem municipality and the Israel Electric Company over the East Jerusalem Electric Company, etc. In the new situation after Oslo and after the al-Aqsa Intifada, the Palestinian Jerusalemites feel that the Israeli institutions are closing in on them more and more – both spacewise (using the separation wall), economically, and in the matter of their freedom of association within the space that remains to them; hence they devote considerable effort to preservation of their Arab identity. Some act on this plane because they prefer non-violent political struggle. Others combine the political struggle with support for armed struggle as well.

Preservation of the national character of the Palestinian institutions in the city is one aspect of the struggle. A second is the attempt to preserve the Arab character of the space, among other things, by means of renovation and preservation of historical Islamic structures and renewal of residential buildings in the Old City. A number of bodies participate in such enterprises, and despite the resemblances in their work patterns, they differ both in regard to their financing and the sources of their inspiration. The most important body is UNESCO which in 1981 declared the Old City of Jerusalem a world heritage site. The following year, the organization declared the city an endangered heritage site. Since then, the organization has allocated funds for renovation and preservation of buildings (mostly Islamic) in the city, in coordination with the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Jerusalem municipality,

the Antiquities Authority, but also with the Muslim Waqf Administration, the Palestinian Association for Preservation (*Riwak*), and heads of the churches. Israel's demand to include the sites in and around the city in the list of sites under its authority was rejected due to non-recognition by the UN of the Israeli annexation of Jerusalem, but the organization continues to coordinate its steps with Israel, as the sovereign power in the field.

During the mid-1990s, Israel began to revoke Israeli residency status of East Jerusalem residents who left, and Palestinians began streaming back to the Old City. This influx presaged increased danger to the historical structures in the Muslim Quarter, and UNESCO decided to step up its preservation and renewal efforts. It joined with the Welfare Association, a Palestinian institution based in Switzerland that was advancing at the same time an ambitious plan whose stated objectives were to revitalize the Old City of Jerusalem, preserve its heritage, and raise the standard of living of its residents. The Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development from Kuwait, the Islamic Development bank from Saudi Arabia, and the American Ford Foundation have joined together and allocated more than \$12 million to inaugurate the renovation plan. The participating bodies have avoided the blatant political declarations often found in statements of Palestinian spokesmen, on the assumption that if they rankle the Israeli establishment, their possibility of taking action in Jerusalem may be constrained.

The work – apparent to those visiting the Muslim Quarter – has been carried out by top-ranking professionals. The first step was a survey in which historical structures in need of renovation were identified, as well as residential buildings (often in the Old City the two types overlap). Afterwards, a distinction was made between those buildings needing immediate preventive care, others needing basic renovation, and those needing preservation because of their architectural uniqueness. Residents of the Muslim Quarter were included in the doings, with the aim of increasing community involvement and independent enterprise. By the end of 2003, eighty-two residences, twenty-six public structures (including plazas for public use), and fifty-five commercial structures had been renovated. The plan received the prestigious prize for architecture of the Aga Khan Foundation for 2004, and UNESCO continues its activity in the city, especially in and around al-Haram al-Sharif.³⁰ Despite the professional character of the enterprise and the cultural discourse accompanying it, one should not ignore that it is part of the struggle for Jerusalem, especially if one bears in mind the Israeli policy to weaken the Muslim hold in the city, which was mentioned previously.

Islamic organizations also take part in the preservation of Muslim buildings in the city. They include the al-Quds Institute headed by the important mufti Sheikh Yusef al-Qaradawi assisted by the Iranian religious sage and former Minister of the Interior Ali Akhbar Mukhtashemi, head of the Yemenite parliament Abdallah al-Ahmar, and the former Lebanese Minister of Education Michel Edde. This is an umbrella organization that unites, as can be seen, Muslims (Sunnis and Shiites) and Christians. It too provides budgets to associations aiding preservation of Islamic buildings in the city (and other matters to be touched upon later).³¹ The residents of the city

themselves benefit in various ways from these projects, whether directly when their homes are renovated and their living conditions improve, or as workers employed in the building and renovating. The external support reaching the Palestinians in East Jerusalem from Arab and other sources therefore constitutes an important element in the struggle over the character of the city.

Depending upon external sources is one of the ways in which the weak cope (the pre-Zionist Jewish population in Jerusalem was traditionally dependent upon external sources of funding, but so too was the Zionist movement since its inception, as well as the state of Israel from its beginning). An additional method by which Palestinian Jerusalemites struggle is the uncovering and documentation of the practices of the Israeli occupation system, in an attempt to influence Israeli and international public opinion. There are a number of Palestinian organizations in Jerusalem that document Israeli violations of human rights. Some also extend legal assistance to those harmed by the system. The al-Quds Center for Social and Economic Rights is one of these organizations. It is headed by Ziad Hammuri, a man of the left who, during the 1990s, headed the Committee of Victims of the Municipality Tax in East Jerusalem. The declared objective of the Center, founded in 1997, is to challenge discriminatory Israeli policies and the harm they do to human rights in Arab Jerusalem. The Center documents violation of human rights and provides legal help to its victims. Since its founding, the Center has turned to the courts and to government ministries in the cases of many hundreds of Palestinians Jerusalemites regarding cancellation of national insurance payments; Ministry of the Interior invalidation of identity cards; family reunification; home demolitions; exaggerated property taxes; etc. The Center also documents cases it handles and publishes reports about matters of principle such as Jewish settlement, both public and private – in East Jerusalem.³²

Another organization, the Jerusalem Center of Democracy and Human Rights, also close to the Palestinian Left, works more at documentation and less in legal aid. It was established by Ali Abu Hilal, a member of the Palestine National Council representing the Democratic Front. During the early 1980s he was a prominent activist in the trade unions, and in 1986 he was deported from the country (some claim that he was involved in setting up underground cells). He returned in 1991 as part of a deal in which the Democratic Front returned the body of Samir As'ad, a Druze IDF soldier who had been killed in Lebanon.³³ In August 2005 the Center had the opportunity to document what happened to Abu Hilal himself: as one born in Abu Dis and possessing an I.D. from the West Bank (i.e., not a Jerusalemite), Abu Hilal was officially barred from entering Jerusalem, even though he lived there with his family. In the midst of a conference being held on the campus of the Al-Quds University in Sheikh Jarrah on the topic of the influence of the closure on institutions of higher learning in the city, the police arrived and arrested Abu Hilal for illegal presence in Jerusalem. He was released 24 hours later and removed to outside the boundaries of the city.³⁴

Education and identity

The closure and the separation wall that was built in Jerusalem had a negative effect on the educational system in East Jerusalem but they are not the only causes of its ongoing deterioration. The low level of the education provided for the children of Arab Jerusalem, the high dropout rate and controversy over the curricula being taught are issues that occupy Palestinian activists in the city and have occupied them for a long time. For nationalist circles, education has been the primary arena for combating the occupation since the first day of the first school year under Israeli rule. Already on September 1, 1967, the dispute erupted at full strength. The Ministry of Education required schools in the city to use the Israeli curriculum (more accurately, that of the Arabs in Israel). Residents of East Jerusalem objected, for two main reasons. The practical reason was that the Israeli matriculation certificate is not recognized in Arab countries and would prevent high school graduates from attending academic institutions in neighboring countries. As a matter of values, they wanted to maintain their heritage and not allow Jewish officials to decide what ought to be studied. Activists also detected the reason why Israel wanted to change the curriculum: to disconnect the children of East Jerusalem from Arab, nationalist values; weaken their connection to other residents of the West Bank and inculcate an historical perception that fits into the Zionist narrative. Therefore, in September 1967, many parents did not send their children to city schools and the number of children there dropped drastically. The main figures are: in the first five years after 1967, the number of elementary school students dropped by approximately 15%. In junior high schools (*i'dadi*) the decrease was even greater. Approximately 4,150 students studied in municipal junior high schools in 1967 while enrollment in 1972 was only about 1,450 (meaning, a drop of approximately 65%). In the three most important high schools – Ma'muniyyeh, Abdullah Bin Hussein, and Rashidiyyeh – there was a precipitous drop of approximately 85% in enrollment. While more than 1,800 students studied in these schools in 1967, their number had dropped to only about 300 in 1972.³⁵

The figures led the Israeli Ministry of Education to recant its stubborn position. After a short attempt to implement the Israeli and Jordanian curricula simultaneously, which led to a very long school day and required students to pass two sets of matriculation exams, it yielded to the parents' demands and finally reinstated the Jordanian curriculum in high schools but not in elementary schools. Elementary schools returned to the Jordanian curriculum only in 1981, following the expansion of the Waqf's educational system, which led many students to abandon the municipal schools. Although Israel's agreement to adopt the Jordanian curriculum was accompanied by several conditions – the requirement to learn Hebrew and Israeli review of the textbooks and maps – it did allow students who completed elementary school to continue their education in high schools that used the Jordanian curriculum and then go on to higher education. This was a rare accomplishment for the nationalist circles (which was achieved by both pro-Jordanian and Palestinian factions) and one that also had ramifications for the future: as a result of the schools'

adherence to the Jordanian curriculum, it was easier for the PA, after its establishment, to replace the Jordanian curriculum with the Palestinian one.

Looking back, it can be said that the success of the struggle for using an Arab curriculum in East Jerusalem was made possible by the existence of alternative educational systems that could absorb the students who left the official system. First and foremost was the Waqf school system (that was founded by the *al-Maqased* Association for this purpose and transferred to the Waqf later). If these schools, which were funded by a joint Jordanian-Palestinian fund,³⁶ had not existed, the leadership and parents would not have been able to boycott the city schools. As a result, four parallel, competing educational systems function in East Jerusalem: (1) the municipal schools operated by Israel, (2) the Waqf schools, (3) the UNRWA schools, and (4) the private (mostly church) schools. Since mid-1990s, the first three have taught according to the Palestinian curriculum, though Israel pays the salaries of the employees in the municipal schools.

According to statistics of the Palestinian Ministry of Education (which was established in 1994), the municipal-Israeli education system in East Jerusalem includes 33 schools where close to one-half of all schoolchildren in East Jerusalem study, approximately 25,000 in elementary school and approximately 2,500 in high school. These schools are characterized by a low level of achievement, teachers who lack motivation and adequate professional preparation, and by the fact that they are free of charge.³⁷ The Waqf schools are characterized by strict adherence to an Arab curriculum (previously Jordanian and now Palestinian) and a high level of teaching. The disengagement between Jordan and the West Bank (1988) and the PLO's budgetary crisis following the first Gulf War (1991) caused significant damage to the funding for these schools. The level of instruction dropped and the number of students decreased significantly. The schools began to recover after they became subordinate to the PA; between 1996 and 2000, they were able to double enrollment and increase the number of schools from 16 to 27. Since reliable data are not available for the period after 2000, it may be assumed that these numbers have again dropped, both because of the Authority's budgetary difficulties and because the closures do not allow teachers to travel freely to their workplace.

As about the private schools – thirty in number, of which half are elementary schools – most of them are subordinate to the Palestinian Ministry of Education and in some, students take the British (or another foreign) matriculation exams. The tuition charged by these schools, especially the good ones, is relatively high and that means that fewer and fewer parents are able to afford sending their children to them. Still, in 2000, approximately 12,000 students studied in private schools. Another type of school are those that belong to UNRWA. They were founded by the United Nations Relief and Work Agency in areas with a high concentration of refugees. There are eight such schools in the Jerusalem district, in the Shuafat Refugee Camp, Silwan and Abu Dis.

One common problem is shared by all schools in East Jerusalem, regardless of their national or political orientation: a severe shortage of buildings and classrooms. The Palestinian Ministry of Education blames the massive expropriation of land by

Israel and the lack of building permits for this problem. The municipality of Jerusalem and the Israeli Ministry of Education can complain to no one. The State has become the largest landowner in the city. Despite this, the head of the Jerusalem Education Administration, Benzion Nemet, told the Knesset Education Committee, at a meeting early in the 2007 school year, that a lack of land for building is the reason for the shortage of school buildings. He estimated that the cost of expropriating land to build the 1,000 classrooms currently needed would be \$38 million. Considering the fact that the State has expropriated many thousands of acres for public use in East Jerusalem, most of them for public and private construction for Jews, this explanation might raise some eyebrows.³⁸

The increase in tuition at private schools, the gathering of Arabs with Jerusalem identity cards within the separation fence and the increasing difficulties faced by the PA and its Ministry of Education since 2002 have heightened the demand to enroll children in the municipal schools. It is important to remember that attending a municipal school is not considered unacceptable from a nationalist perspective. To the contrary, it is very legitimate, for two reasons. First, the Palestinians have succeeded in having the Palestinian curriculum taught in Israeli-run municipal schools and second, since the 1980s, most of the Palestinian movements have established political cells in all of the schools, regardless of their affiliation and source of funding. Therefore, they have gained influence even in the municipal schools.

It should be noted here that Palestinian national organizations are also quite successful in the field of informal education. There are clubs in almost every neighborhood and most have placed themselves under the authority of the PA's Ministry of Youth and Sport. In the summer, they also operate day camps in which thousands of children participate. From an intra-Palestinian perspective, these clubs and day camps are an arena for the struggle between the Hamas and its satellites on the one hand, and Fateh on the other, because each movement operates its own frameworks and they compete with each other for the children's loyalty. (Children attending Fateh day camps were even taken to Ramallah to see Yasser Arafat when he was detained in the Muqata'a.³⁹) However, all of them are devoted to maintaining the Arab-Palestinian identity of Jerusalem and offer an alternative to the Israeli discourse on the city's unity.

Back to the city schools. As a result of the Palestinians' success in determining the educational content taught in the schools of East Jerusalem, combined with the low tuition and the lack of nationalist reservations, many parents wish to send their children to municipal schools. However, in the 1990s, the Israeli educational system in East Jerusalem began to collapse under the burden because of a lack of municipal and government funding. As a result, thousands of those who knock on its doors are turned away. There are no precise figures regarding the number of students rejected because the city has not made the effort to keep these records. In any case, data from 2005 indicate that there is a shortage of approximately 1,000 classrooms in East Jerusalem schools. Furthermore, several hundred classrooms are located in unsuitable buildings. The estimated number of students who wish to study in city schools but are rejected, in violation of the compulsory education law, is in the

thousands. In 2000, Attorney Danny Seidman of *Ir Amim* (“City of Nations” or “City of Peoples”) filed a petition with the High Court of Justice, in the name of 116 students who asked to register for school but were rejected. The following year, 2001, he filed another petition on behalf of 905 students, in cooperation with the neighborhood committees of Kafr Aqab, al-Tur, ‘Isawiyye and Sur Baher, the Beit Hanina Community Center and Jerusalem City Council member Pepe Alalo. The High Court accepted the petition and instructed the municipality to build an additional 245 classrooms but the decision was not implemented. In 2007, the government promised the High Court to build 400 additional classrooms in Arab schools of Jerusalem. As of October 2008, only a few classrooms had been built.⁴⁰ From the perspective of many Palestinians, this is an additional proof that Israel wants to control them without granting them their basic rights – or to push them outside the city.

A new initiative for dealing with the situation began in 2005 when the parents’ committees in the East Jerusalem city schools joined together and created an umbrella organization with the purpose of promoting their children’s education. “In Israel they talk about a computer for every child. We are only asking for a chair for every child,” said Abd al-Karim Lafi, an architect, who was elected head of the organization. After the 2006 school year began, the parents’ committees from most of the schools in East Jerusalem had joined the umbrella organization. Lafi’s



FIGURE 4.5 The education system: Isawiyye girls’ school

The education system is an important realm of competition between the PA, Israel and Islamist groups. In many schools in the city, like Isawiyye elementary school for girls (in the photograph), the teachers are paid by Israel but teach according to the Palestinian curriculum (censored by Israel).

belief that a unified organization would increase their ability to place their issues on the public agenda was proven correct. In October 2006, the Education Committee of the Knesset met to discuss the conditions of schools in East Jerusalem and Lafi was invited to present his claims. He spoke about the lack of classrooms, the crowding, and the high dropout rate and demanded that the State fulfill its obligations to allow every boy and girl to a complete compulsory education. The Knesset members expressed their agreement with his demand while the representatives of the city, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Finance explained that they did not have enough adequate budgets to build the number of classrooms required or that they lacked sufficient information.⁴¹

Although its accomplishments have been insignificant to date, the new organization is unique. First, it is an apolitical organization, meaning that it is not connected to any of the existing movements in the Palestinian (or Israeli) political map. Therefore, the association does not examine the positions of the representatives from the various schools. "Outside they can be members of Hamas, the Front, collaborators or Fateh," said Lafi, "In the Association, we do not deal with politics but work to promote the education of our children." The second unique aspect of the organization is that it is a pan-Jerusalem organization. Third, it is led by a representative, elected leadership. This organization, therefore, has more than a little potential: the elected parents' committee represents a majority of the Palestinian students in Jerusalem and is, effectively, the largest representative Palestinian organization in the city.

The very fact that the parents committee is a broad and broadly representational Palestinian organization may be the reason that Lafi was summoned for questioning at the Jerusalem Police Department. "I told the investigator, 'It is the right of every child receive an education, even if he is Arab. International law also requires an occupying power to provide education,'" he said. "Israel wants us to be uneducated. We refuse." The Association's success in unifying the parents' committees from dozens of schools led several Israeli organizations to consider it a possible platform for establishing a Palestinian list that would run in the Jerusalem municipal elections. Personally (not in the organization's name), Lafi opposes this possibility for the traditional Palestinian reason: participating in the elections would serve as recognition of the Israeli rule in East Jerusalem. However, he does not oppose the establishment of a body that would represent all of the Arabs in East Jerusalem.

Be that as it may, the organization is currently working towards a defined goal: improving Palestinian education in East Jerusalem. Achieving this goal requires contact with the responsible Israeli institutions, and the committee does indeed present its demands to the municipality, Ministry of Education and the Knesset. Its activity is aided by Israeli organizations or partners in the struggle, including Ir Amim and Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI), as well as the neighborhood administrations that operate under city sponsorship, even though many have disagreements with these administrations. And so, in addition to military activity, militant political activity and party politics, there is another type of public activity in East Jerusalem, which also works for the purpose of maintaining the Arab identity of

Jerusalem and its Palestinian residents but has not subordinated itself to the Palestinian national institutions, and frequently works in cooperation with Israeli organizations.

Palestinian–Israeli joint struggle

The reality of life in Jerusalem, where Jews and Arabs live side-by-side even though in separate neighborhoods, has led to a relatively high level of joint activity – not necessarily on an equal basis – in many areas: commerce and industry, politics, and crime. This phenomenon is not unique to Jerusalem but it is part of the city’s political tradition and, since the closure was imposed on the territories and Israelis have been forbidden to enter the cities of the West Bank and Gaza Strip (in late 2000), Jerusalem has become one of the only places where there is direct, civilian contact between Israelis and Palestinians.

The politically motivated joint activities in the city can be categorized according to their initiators and goals. On one end of the spectrum is the Jerusalem municipality and the organizations connected to it. The municipality acts due to its obligation to provide services to all residents of the city and its ambition to reduce tension between the different communities in the city. Its activities in the realm of coexistence sometimes have added value: to show that Jerusalem is a united city under Israeli sovereignty, that Israeli institutions do not discriminate between Jews and Arabs, and that the Arab population accepts Israeli rule. In other words, the municipal frameworks where Jews and Arabs meet are intended to reinforce the existing political order even if they do, at times, attempt to improve the quality of life of East Jerusalem residents. The common denominator of the participants in these programs, as distinguished from their organizers, is that they are not necessarily motivated by a political perspective.

On the other end of the political spectrum are the movements and groups whose goal is to challenge the current order. Palestinians who participate in the activities of these movements do so out of a clear political perspective that opposes Israeli rule in East Jerusalem and frequently maintain a connection to the Palestinian national institutions. This also applies to some of the Israeli participants. Both believe that the best way for achieving this is through joint Palestinian–Israeli activities.

Another type of organization attacks the *results and consequences* of the existing order and presents its hypocrisy, without attacking it directly. Thus, for example, the human rights organizations fight discrimination against Palestinians in the city in the fields of construction, residency, and education. However, as human rights organizations, they generally do not have a political platform but rather act against the inequity of the Palestinians and present the oppressive and discriminatory aspect of the “united Jerusalem.” Another type of activity is also found in the middle of the spectrum – groups where Israeli and Palestinian neighbors meet for dialogue, which sometimes incorporate the specific struggles of Palestinian residents without making comprehensive political demands.⁴²

The accepted Palestinian national approach approves of cooperative struggles against violations of human rights and the Occupation but does not approve of

participation in joint activities that are not part of the Palestinian struggle for independence. These are considered “normalization” of relationships under occupation, something they thoroughly oppose (normalization, *tatbi‘*, is a derogatory term in the Arabic political lexicon). Despite this, during periods of calm many Palestinians in Jerusalem are willing to participate in non-political joint activities and to allow their children to participate in activities of this type. When tensions and violence increase, they are less willing. By contrast, the idea of a joint struggle with Israelis frequently remains on paper, primarily because of the reluctance that many have regarding any political activity.

The attempt to characterize the participants in joint political activities shows that they act from a variety of motivations: there are those who participate in them in hopes of achieving concrete goals, such as improving the educational system or other goals that we will describe below. Others are interested in true cooperation that will lead to the creation of a space in which Jews and Arabs can live together in security and freedom. There are also activists who consider the Israelis who work with them a tool that can be used to unsettle Israeli society and its cohesion. In most cases, the Israeli activists are aware of the different Palestinian attitudes, but not always.

A little historical background: the current map of joint, anti-establishment political activity began to develop in the mid-1980s with the founding of the Alternative Information Center, the first Israeli–Palestinian organization established in Jerusalem that undertook the creation of an Israeli–Palestinian partnership to fight against the Occupation and for freedom, justice, and equality. This partnership began with members of the left-wing fronts in the PLO, who believed there should be a single, democratic state between the Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea, but the Center also established connections with Fateh, the centrist Palestinian national movement. Its primary activities were in the field of disseminating information and, in this context, it built connections between Palestinian sources and journalists, especially foreign ones. It was also involved in a variety of protest activities and the authorities sometimes limited its activities. This happened, for example, in September 1987 when people from the Center and other organizations attempted to hold a demonstration in Jerusalem to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the massacre in Sabra and Shatila. The police refused to approve the demonstration and submitted evidence in court, purportedly showing that the demonstration was organized by the PLO. That same year, the Shabak conducted a search of the Center’s offices and found that it had provided printing services to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), including printing a booklet that instructed people who might be arrested on how to behave when interrogated by the Shabak. As a result, the head of the center Michael (Mikado) Warschawski was sentenced to eight months in prison.⁴³

Another Israeli–Palestinian organization that functioned during those years was the “Committee against the Strong Hand.” Although it did not make headlines, the importance of this short-lived organization was that it created a framework for joint activity of Fateh and radical Israeli activists and was the opening through which Faisal Husseini was exposed to the Israeli political system. Conspicuous Israeli

activists on the committee were Warschawski, Emmanuel Farjoun, Tikva Parnas, Gideon Spiro and others, mostly from the Information Center. Participants from the Palestinian side Faisal Husseini, Salah Zuhaika (later on secretary-general of Fateh in Jerusalem) and others. The committee organized several joint rallies and press conferences to protest heightened Israeli activity against Palestinian civil organizations in the territories. As a result of its joint activity, the Palestinian opposition to the occupation began to penetrate the Israeli media (which was not easy before the first Intifada), and Fateh members came to understand the advantages inherent in working together with Israelis.⁴⁴ This Israeli–Palestinian activity was unique because it was an egalitarian and cooperative Israeli–Palestinian framework.

Husseini expanded his encounters beyond the radical left, first with the Zionist left and later with the center and the right. Shortly before the first Intifada, he even met with Likud activists in the city (such as Moshe Amirav). The fact that Israeli–Palestinian political activity occurred in Jerusalem specifically should not be surprising. It will be remembered that many Palestinian organizations, at that time, chose to be active in the city, rather than in the West Bank that was under direct Israeli military rule, and the city was leading center of Palestinian political activity. However, beyond its role as the acting capital of the Palestinian national movement, East Jerusalem lacked fences and barriers, making it a natural meeting place for activists on both sides.

During the same period, in 1985, Israeli and Palestinian neighbors in Wadi al-Zeitoun valley, near the village Sur Baher held one of the first joint protest demonstrations in the city. Residents of the village had discovered that the Jewish National Fund intended to plant trees on land in the valley where they farmed. Activists from the adjacent Jewish neighborhoods, Talpiot and Arnona, organized several hundred residents of the neighborhoods to protest together with residents of the village. Neither the Jews nor the Arabs were organized in a political framework. The Jews wanted to express good neighborliness. The Palestinians greeted the initiative gladly.⁴⁵ The people involved in these initiatives were not cut of a single cloth, as can be seen in their future paths: some of them joined political groups that espouse Israeli–Palestinian cooperation, while others continued to carefully maintain their distance from organized politics and from any activity that could be interpreted as supporting the surrender of Jewish sovereignty in greater Jerusalem.

The first Intifada erupted a short time after these first tentative contacts and, despite the fact that it led to a decrease in social and economic connections between Israelis and Palestinians, the circle of Israelis who became involved in joint political activity with Palestinians grew. There were those who considered this an opportunity to bring about genuine political change and attempted to create Israeli–Palestinian pacts; others felt that, in their effort to subdue the Intifada, the security forces had crossed red lines and wanted to prevent Israel from violating human rights; still others who expanded their activity in the field of neighborly relationships. Hillel Bardin, Veronica Cohen and others organized meetings between residents of Talpiot, East Talpiot, and Jabel Mukabber at the height of the first Intifada, when rocks and Molotov cocktails were being hurled at homes of Jews in

the neighborhood. The joint activity was intended to reduce the tension between the sides. Additional dialogue groups were established in al-Tur and in the Old City and between residents of 'Isawiyye and French Hill. Despite the fact that members in these groups occasionally participated in protest activities, these organizations were founded on a local basis, dealt with very specific issues and were not part of the established political activity in the city. In radical Palestinian political circles, there was criticism of the neighborhood activity. They claimed that it conflicted with the goals of the Intifada – disengagement from Israel and raising the price that Israeli society had to pay for perpetuating the occupation. One way to deal with this dilemma was inviting PLO activists to the encounter groups. This gave them legitimacy and allowed less politically involved Palestinians to continue with the meetings. Either way, during the first Intifada, the idea that it was necessary to expand contact with Israelis who were willing to listen to the Palestinian point of view gained adherents.

This Palestinian approach contributed to the growth of human rights organizations in the city. Palestinians cooperated with these organizations and they became central actors in the public arena in the city and in Israeli–Palestinian relationships in general. *HaMoked*: Center for the Defense of the Individual and *B'Tselem*: the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories were founded during the first years of the Intifada. Both deal with human rights and both work with Palestinians, too. The first organization focuses on legal and other aid to victims of violence and victims of Israeli policy in various fields (Jerusalem residency, family unification, rights of prisoners and detainees) while the latter gathers and disseminates information. Late in the first Intifada, the Public Committee Against Torture in Israel and *Shomrei Mishpat*: Rabbis for Human Rights were founded. By its nature, the latter is a Jewish organization but it works in cooperation with Palestinians in Jerusalem and elsewhere. In addition, older organizations such as the Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI) intensified their activities on behalf of Palestinians in the territories and East Jerusalem. Similarly, establishment of cooperative activities of Israeli and Palestinian women began.⁴⁶

During the first Intifada, Faisal Hussein continued to adhere to his position espousing cooperative activity with the Israeli “peace camp.” He developed relationships with activists of Peace Now in Jerusalem and together they initiated the joint activities. Late in the Intifada, when Jewish settlement began in the Wadi Hilwe section of Silwan (“The City of David”), left-wing activists from Jerusalem worked together with people from Orient House in an attempt to stop the Jewish settlement in the neighborhood. Activists from the Silwan Land and Property Defense Committee demonstrated together with Jewish groups that opposed the settlement; Faisal Hussein marched in demonstrations together with members of Peace Now and other left wing organizations. The legal battle was also conducted jointly. Although the struggle’s success was very limited, it did help establish an Israeli–Palestinian political coalition that extended beyond the boundaries of the non-Zionist left and continued to exist, although in a weakened form, throughout the al-Aqsa Intifada and after Hussein’s death, to this very day.

This coalition did however have limitations. Prior to the municipal elections in 1993, the possibility of establishing a joint Israeli–Palestinian list to compete for seats on the Jerusalem city council was broached. The initiative came from Israelis: council members Moshe Amirav and Sarah Kaminker, together with Hillel Bardin and others. They believed that only mass participation of Palestinians in the municipal elections could bring an end to the discrimination they suffered. In order to overcome the decades-long boycott of the elections, the three traveled to Tunis where they met the Palestinian leadership. Arafat heard their proposal but, as was his custom, avoided giving an unequivocal answer. Only a short time before the deadline for filing lists of candidates, a message was received from the PLO granting permission to include Palestinians who live in Jerusalem on the list but not Jerusalemite Palestinians. Therefore, they decided to forgo the plan and avoid participation in the elections.⁴⁷

The preparations for the municipal elections were made before the Oslo talks became known. The elections themselves were held in November 1993, two months after the agreement of principles was signed between Israel and the Palestinians. The Palestinians boycotted the elections. Ehud Olmert was victorious over Teddy Kollek and became mayor of Jerusalem. While the municipality under his leadership played a central role in the fight against Palestinian institutions in the city, the early post-Oslo period also saw a flowering of cooperative Israeli–Palestinian activity in Jerusalem. If, during the Intifada, joint activities had been limited to groups on the margins of the political map and organizations with a defined agenda, during the Oslo period the trend towards Israeli–Palestinian cooperation strengthened. One reason for this was the atmosphere of reconciliation that prevailed in its early years. The other reason was financial: many Western foundations gave priority to funding joint activities and this encouraged Israeli and Palestinian organizations to initiate them. The Israel/Palestine Center for Research and Information (IPCRI) estimates that a variety of countries and foundations donated \$20–25 million to “People to People” activities, whose purpose was spreading the pro-peace perspective throughout a wide swath of both populations by bringing them together.⁴⁸

Jerusalem was one of the important focal points of this activity and more than a few joint ventures were established in research, education and other fields. Cooperative political activity was only a small part of the sum total activity. One interesting political initiative, which did not come to fruition, was the establishment of a Palestinian shadow municipality. Late in the 1990s, Palestinians assumed that they would soon receive control over East Jerusalem (if not over the entire area, at least over part of it). A proposal to train a skeleton professional staff – division and department heads – that would be able to begin working quickly, was developed. The idea of establishing a symbolic, parallel municipality had been raised in the past but this time the Palestinians’ ambition was to move from symbolism to practice. With assistance from representatives of the Zionist-leftist Meretz party on the city council, led by Ornan Yekutieli and Meir Margalit, a plan was developed for training the staff and funding was found shortly before the al-Aqsa Intifada erupted. However, the growing wave of violence, the collapse of the peace talks, and the



FIGURE 4.6 Teddy Kollek served as Jerusalem's mayor between 1965 and 1993, and has personified the idea of "United Jerusalem." He used to take donors to both Jewish and Arab neighborhoods of the city and initiated several projects in the eastern quarters. However, after he had left the office he admitted that his energies were dedicated to enlarging the Jewish presence in Jerusalem, while what was done in the Arab neighborhoods can be better defined as cosmetic.

death of Husseini in May 2001 (one month after Yekutieli passed away) led to the abandonment of the plan.⁴⁹

This was not the only joint, popular struggle during the Oslo years that failed. Other conspicuous failures included the battles against the construction of Har Homa and the Jewish neighborhood in Ras al-'Amoud, and against house demolitions in various parts of the city. First and foremost, the failures were a result of the balance of powers between the sides, which leaned strongly in Israel's favor, but the weakness of Palestinian institutions in the city also contributed. All of these factors, together with the problematic behavior of the PA and the reality of life in Jerusalem under the closure (as described above) led to the ebbing of popular political activity.

The al-Aqsa Intifada, which erupted after a lengthy period of tension, led to a decrease in the amount of joint activity and a change in its character. Research, social and educational activities decreased and the joint activities that survived (or developed then) were in the field of human rights and joint political struggle (meaning, fighting the Occupation). Beyond the natural recoiling from joint activity during conflict, the waning of activity was accelerated by the decision made by the Palestinian Non-Governmental Organizations' Network (PNGO) not to work with Israeli organizations unless they supported the establishment of a Palestinian state with its capital in Jerusalem, as well as the right of return of the Palestinian 1948 refugees. This rigid formulation, which reduced the number of acceptable Israeli organizations to nearly zero, was the result of the Palestinian organizations' deep disappointment in their Israeli partners who did not, in their opinion, take sufficiently clear positions against the IDF activities in the territories. However, in late 2002, two years after severing the relationships, the Palestinian organizations concluded that the damage done by distancing themselves from the Israeli public and from Israeli public opinion was greater than the benefit they had derived, and so the decision was updated and softened: the PNGO now made joint activity conditional on the Israeli organization's opposition to the occupation and settlements, without mentioning either the right of return or Jerusalem. Social activities, such as encounters between Israeli and Palestinian school children and joint research projects, are still not supported by the PNGO, which opposes maintaining social, economic and cultural relationships as Israelis as long as the occupation continues.⁵⁰

Still, a large part of the political struggle against the occupation, as well as the struggle against discrimination against Palestinians in Jerusalem, is conducted in joint Israeli-Palestinian frameworks or through inter-organizational cooperation, with the initiative sometimes coming from the Palestinian side and sometimes from the Israeli side. The main arenas in which there is cooperation are planning and construction (including the fight against house demolitions), residency rights (including family unification), the struggle for equal education (as described above), the struggle against the fence (which is currently being completed) and the unique struggles in Silwan and Sheikh Jarrah where local activists and their Israeli supporters are attempting to halt the spread of Jewish settlement, which is backed by an armed presence and, in Silwan, also by extensive archaeological excavations.⁵¹



FIGURE 4.7 Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood: Israelis and Palestinians

Palestinian families in Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood together with Israeli activists initiated a joint Israeli–Palestinian struggle against Israeli settlement in Palestinian neighborhoods in East Jerusalem. The Israeli courts confirmed that the settlers have the right to evacuate Palestinians from houses built on land owned by Jews prior to 1948. The Palestinian residents are themselves refugees who lost their houses elsewhere in Israel during the 1948 war.

The struggle against the separation fence in Jerusalem is different from the other struggles and more difficult to coordinate. The official Palestinian policy opposes construction of the fence/wall because it is not located on the Green Line but rather passes through areas occupied in 1967. However, the issue on the ground is much more complex. Residents of East Jerusalem, like Palestinians in other areas, quickly understood that this is a flagship project of the State of Israel and could not be stopped. Therefore, the struggle is, at times, merely symbolic and the result is that local committees against the barrier have not been able to attract a massive following. For the most part, those people who have not suffered direct harm because of the fence ignore its existence. Those who have been harmed by it, attempt to minimize the damage by focusing on their personal interests rather than on the national level. Sometimes, residents have tried to change the route of the barrier so that their houses or neighborhoods would be included within Jerusalem and not in the West Bank. Sometimes, they presented the opposite demand and asked to be included in the West Bank. In many communities, residents were unable to agree on the route that they preferred. At times, what benefits one person harms his neighbor. For example, residents of Sur Baher and Umm Tuba in the southern part of the city were divided over the route of the barrier: the original plan presented by the IDF left most of these villages and their lands outside of the barrier surrounding Jerusalem. Residents of these villages who felt that they would be harmed by this route petitioned the

High Court. As a result of their petition, representatives of the IDF and the village came to an agreement on a route that would include most of the houses and lands in the city's boundaries. However, not long passed before other residents filed another petition, this time against the agreement that had been reached, because they owned additional land outside of the fence and wanted their land annexed to the city, too, so they would have free access to it. The fact that these petitions demanded that land then under the control of the PA be included in Israeli territory was negligible in their perspective. The petitions were rejected but they are still instructive regarding the dilemmas that construction of the wall poses for residents of Arab Jerusalem.

In the village Nu'eiman, also in the southern part of the city, residents were divided over the question whether it was worthwhile for them to disconnect from Jerusalem and keep their access routes to Bethlehem and Beit Sahour open or vice versa. In their case, the situation was doubly difficult: although Nu'eiman had been included in the boundaries of the city after the 1967 war, its residents carried West Bank identity cards and, therefore, legally were not allowed to live in their homes. The security forces harassed residents of this village, arrested them and prevented them from having access to their homes for many long months.⁵² It is possible that this harassment was one of the reasons that motivated many of them to prefer disconnection from Jerusalem.

Similar questions also arose in northern Jerusalem. Residents of Al-ram and Dahiat al-Barid were not united on the question of how to deal with the barrier's route. Petitions and counter-petitions were filed by individuals and institutions (among them Christian institutions) and were motivated by their individual or institutional interests. This also happened in the case of al-Quds University. The town Abu Dis, where the university's main buildings are located, is one of the places that was most severely harmed by the wall. The shortest route from Abu Dis to Jerusalem, the historic Jericho-Jerusalem road, was blocked by an eight-meter high wall. As a result, residents are unable to reach either al-Haram al-Sharif or Al-Maqased Hospital where they regularly received medical treatment. Homes, yards, and agricultural fields were also damaged by the wall. The university's central sports stadium was another site that faced serious damage. When this became clear to the university administration, it used its connections with influential parties in Israel and around the world to have the route of the wall changed. However, as we noted above, the success of one party in changing the route of the barrier necessarily harms someone else and was the case in Abu Dis, too. The wall does not cut through the university's stadium but it has now destroyed the property of people living adjacent to the campus.

The Palestinian public in East Jerusalem, therefore, did not develop a unified, unequivocal position regarding the barrier's route, neither regarding the ways to struggle against it. This reflects the barrier's general logic: increasing the fragmentation of the Palestinian public. The State of Israel, for its part, negotiated the route with individuals and institutions and decided, by itself, with whom it should compromise. When petitions were filed in court, the judges attempted to incorporate

both security needs and the needs of the Palestinian public (naturally, they tended to prefer the former).⁵³ And so, in face of the most influential step taken by Israel in the territories during recent decades, the Palestinians did not have a unified position. Quite the contrary, the construction of the wall added to Palestinian fragmentation and division.

Although the divisions among Palestinians have made joint Israeli–Palestinian activity more difficult it did not prevent it. Many Israeli activists took part in the struggle against the wall, together with Palestinians, whether by demonstrating at construction sites (*Ta'ayush*: Arab Jewish Partnership, *Gush Shalom*: the Peace Bloc, Anarchists against the Wall) or by documentation (Indymedia, the Alternative Information Center) or through legal action (ACRI, *Bimkom* – Planners for Planning Rights) or as neighbors. Demonstrations and activities against the separation barrier have taken place on all sides of Jerusalem, in al-Ram, 'Anata, Beit Surik, Sawahra, Abu Dis, Nu'eiman, Walaja, Battir and Al-Khader. The demonstrators' guiding principle was to hold joint, non-violent protests but some demonstrations became violent because of excessive reactions by security forces or because Palestinian youths threw stones and bottles. The weakness of the Palestinian political system found expression in these demonstrations: only infrequently were organizers able to bring out the masses to participate. Only infrequently did activists from other neighborhoods join the demonstrations; most took an active part only in the area where they lived. The lack of a pan-Jerusalem leadership, the paralyzed institutions and the confusion created by construction of the wall form the background for this failure. Despite this, all of the political organizations, including the Islamic movements, granted the protest their patronage and accepted the principle of joint, non-violent activity if only for a limited time.

The petition against the route of the separation fence between Mevasseret Zion and Beit Surik set a precedent. It is a clear example of a joint Israeli–Palestinian campaign (a large majority of the Israelis, as is well known, have supported the construction of the wall, and only some minor groups opposed it – and coordinated the struggle with the Palestinians). Residents of Beit Surik and neighboring villages began a protest march and demonstration. The Beit Surik Local Council petitioned the Israeli High Court, represented by the Palestinian Israeli attorney Mohammad Dahle. In addition, many Israelis were involved in the struggle, each for his or her own reasons. Some residents of the suburb Mevasseret Zion supported correcting the route of the barrier out of a desire to reduce the damage it would cause to their neighbors, the village farmers. The Council for Peace and Security, which consists of former senior military officers, proposed an alternate route for the fence, which combines a certain level of consideration for the needs of village residents with general support for the separation barrier. The Bimkom organization of architects and planners presented the damage that the planned barrier would do to the population. More and less radical left-wing activists, some of whom opposed the very idea of the fence, including the Anarchists, Gush Shalom, members of Ta'ayush and others, participated in protest activities organized by the village and adjacent villages. In a precedent-setting ruling, the High Court ordered that the route of the

fence be changed and instructed the State to pay careful attention to the proportionality of the damage it does to the Palestinians. Many consider this ruling to be the result of the combined pressure.⁵⁴ However, despite the ruling's importance and changes made in route of the barrier in other segments, the barrier (which is a high wall, rather than a fence, in most places within Jerusalem) continues to be built around Jerusalem and do very substantial damage to daily life of the Palestinians at the city and its suburbs.⁵⁵ In other words, despite several successes in the High Court and the International Court of Justice in The Hague, the Palestinians were also defeated in this struggle, which was civil by nature.

House demolitions and urban planning

Another area where there is cooperation between Palestinian and Israeli activists in Jerusalem is the struggle against house demolitions and the allied field of alternative urban planning. As we discussed above, the master plans that the Jerusalem municipality has prepared since 1967 do not provide an adequate response to the residential requirements of the Palestinian population in East Jerusalem. There are a variety of reasons for this, some political and some topical. On the political level, the desire to maintain an absolute majority of Jews in the city – 70% Jews versus 30% Arabs, as the government decided in the 1970s – has been an important factor in the non-preparation of a master plan for the Arab neighborhoods in Jerusalem and the lack of government housing projects for the Palestinian Arabs in the city. The new Jerusalem 2000 master plan realizes that preventing the growth of the Palestinian population in the city is impossible and, therefore, expects that the percentage of Palestinian residents in the city will reach approximately 40% in 2020. Yet, for this very reason the Minister of Interior, Shas leader Ellie Yishai, has hindered the approval of the plan which has so far not been approved (April 2010). The municipality claims that it encourages Palestinian building in Jerusalem, but this is not so on the ground, and in most areas there are severe limitations on such building. On a topical level, it is possible to point out additional difficulties on planning the Arab neighborhoods: the divided ownership of land, which requires taking many owners into account (unlike the new Jewish neighborhoods which were built on large tracts of land expropriated by the state for this purpose); lack of complete land registration records (the law states that only land owners or rightful claimants to land can make plans for it and not all land in East Jerusalem is organized and registered with the Lands Registry Office) and the fact that the Palestinians' attitude towards land is not simply economic but rather derived from emotional and family values, prevents solutions such as voluntary unification and division. As a result, large parts of East Jerusalem are not planned or alternately, the existing master plans are inadequate. The consequence on the ground is illegal, unauthorized building on a large scale. The municipality, for its part, attempts (if not as hard as it could) to fight against unauthorized construction using, among other techniques, house demolitions. The Ministry of the Interior also takes part in the demolition work, when green areas are involved.

Palestinian institutions have very few, if any ways, to fight against the city's policy regarding house demolitions. Orient House regularly provided legal assistance for people whose houses were at risk of being demolished and it is said that Yasser Arafat would give money to Jerusalem residents as compensation for homes that were demolished, because of his deep connection to the city. Arafat's "petty cash" for Jerusalem affairs no longer exists and what remains of Orient House has no financial aid to distribute. The struggle against home demolitions is primarily conducted with the private funds of the people involved and by private attorneys, Jews and Arabs. For the most part, it is more a personal struggle than a public-political one, although human rights organizations (Israeli and Palestinian) monitor the results of demolition orders and their implementation and point out Israel's discriminatory planning policy.

Alongside the individual struggles, there are non-profit organizations that devote substantial efforts to preventing house demolitions and changing the government and city policies. The Committee against House Demolitions devotes itself to these goals as does *Shomrei Mishpat*: Rabbis for Human Rights. These organizations, financed mostly by international funds, not only provide localized help to people whose homes are in immediate danger of being demolished by turning to the courts but also are active on the public and demonstrative level. Their activists rebuild homes that have been demolished, attempt to block the bulldozers at demolition sites and contact media outlets – all for the purpose of causing a fundamental change in the city's policy regarding house demolitions. The activities of these organizations are coordinated with Palestinian groups. Traditionally, organizations of this type cooperated with Palestinian NGOs but cases of corruption have led to a new approach: work with communities, rather than organizations.

Another type of attempt to bring about fundamental policy changes is being conducted by two other Israeli organizations: the Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI) and *Bimkom* – Planners for Planning Rights. In 2006, they began an in-depth study of the planning deficiencies in East Jerusalem. Their basic claim is that the city does not have the legal right to demolish houses until it prepares a master plan that make it possible to build legally. In order to test this claim on the legal level, they used the Jabel Mukabber and Sawahra neighborhoods in the southeastern section of the city, which include large amounts of unplanned land, as an example.

A unique planning project is being conducted jointly by residents of East Jerusalem and Bimkom in the village 'Isawiyye on the slopes of Mount Scopus. Its purpose is to prepare a new master plan for the village and to have it approved by the city and the District Planning and Construction Committee. It is too early to evaluate its success. Some background: the current master plan for the village was prepared by the city and came into force in 1991. As in the case of other East Jerusalem neighborhoods, the plan did not take the natural growth of the village into account and left very little space for its development. It did not even include all of the buildings that existed at the time and allocated insufficient land for public buildings. Furthermore, the roads that appeared in the plan were not actually paved by the city,

unlike the schools that were indeed built. The shortage of housing led many residents to build, each on his own land but without a permit, on the routes of the planned roads, in green areas and outside of the master plan's boundaries. The city, for its part, demolished dozens of these buildings over the years and demolition orders are outstanding against many more. At this point, Bimkom entered the picture and took upon itself, in cooperation with the residents, to prepare an alternate master plan that would provide a response to the population's needs and take all of the houses currently standing into consideration, for the purpose of legalizing them.

From a traditional nationalist Palestinian perspective, submitting a master plan to the city of Jerusalem, which the Palestinians do not consider to be the sovereign authority, is not a simple thing to do. The difficulty is intensified because the purpose of the master plan is not only to allow construction but also, as is inherent in master plans, to limit it (as regards to the height of buildings, the density and precise location, etc.). The lack of trust between residents of East Jerusalem and the authorities in this area, which is the result of the decades-long policy of reducing Palestinian construction and presence in the city, does not make working together easier. The fact that the planning is being done by a human right organization, rather than by the city, reduces suspicions only slightly.

Political difficulties are exacerbated by local difficulties. Some of the clans in 'Isawiyye have extensive landholdings, while others have only a little. Some of them have already been harmed by previous expropriations of land while others have hardly been touched. All of these considerations must be taken into account during the planning process. Furthermore, a plan of this type must allocate 40% of the land for public use and there is the question of whose lands will be allocated for this purpose.

This project, known as the Kaminker Project (in memory of the late city planner Sarah Kaminker, who was a member of the city council and fought to improve the planning for residents of East Jerusalem), is dependent not only on the residents' willingness and the professionalism of the planners but also, in the end, on approval by the city and the District Planning Committee. At present, it seems that some people in the establishment are trying to move the project forward, while others are not interested in approving a master plan that would make it possible for Arabs to build in accordance with their natural growth. The Israel Nature and National Parks Protection Authority has declared the land bordering on the buildup section of 'Isawiyye a "National Park," which limits construction there. Residents in 'Isawiyye believe that the real reason is political, and mention that the director of this Authority in Jerusalem region is a settler who worked for El-Ad settlers association. Many residents of the adjacent Jewish neighborhoods have also expressed their objection to the expansion of 'Isawiyye. In the village one can find different attitudes. On one hand, it seems that after a considerable period of suspicion, many residents accepted the principle of cooperative efforts, both within the village and together with *Bimkom* when working with the authorities. On the other hand, unauthorized construction has continued in the village without taking the draft plan into consideration.

The political approval for working together with Bimkom was granted, first and foremost, out of necessity. Like the organization of the parents' committee in the field of education, the residents of 'Isawiyye cannot ignore the fact that the power, law and funding for planning are on the side of the State and its institutions. When faced with the choice between unauthorized construction and demolition of houses or joint planning that takes the needs of the population into account, many have chosen the second option. The people promoting the idea include prominent social and political activists in the village, some of them have spent many years in Israeli prisons; representatives of the village committee, some of whom have working relationships with the Israeli establishment; and political personalities such as Sari Nusseibeh, who gave the project his blessing.

Al-Quds University: academia in the midst of controversy

Sari Nusseibeh, one of the prominent Palestinian figures in the city, has served as president of Al-Quds University since 1995. After the death of Faisal Husseini, he also held PA's Jerusalem portfolio for several months, as an appointee of Arafat, but their relationship had its ups and downs and Nusseibeh did not keep the portfolio for long. As of 2010, he is still president of the university, where approximately 7,000 students study and which is, apparently, the largest Palestinian institution in the city. In many ways, the university can be seen as a microcosm of Palestinian politics in Jerusalem, with the limitations imposed on it and its strident, internal debates; it reflects the dichotomy of Palestinian existence in Jerusalem.

This dichotomy begins with its name. Al-Quds University bears the Arabic name of Jerusalem but most of its students are forbidden to enter the city and most of its buildings are located outside of the city boundaries. The School of Law and the School of Sciences and Technology, as well as the university's main campus, are located in Abu Dis, just to the east of Jerusalem's borders. Health Professions and Media Studies are taught in al-Bireh. Several university institutes are located in Jerusalem proper, including the Institute of Islamic Archaeology (in the Cotton Market in the Old City), the Women's College in Wadi Joz, the School of Humanities in Beit Hanina, and the administration building. The name Al-Quds was, therefore, chosen mainly for symbolic reasons but not only: Jerusalem is indeed the center of the university and its extensions are within the boundaries of the Jerusalem region as it existed in the period prior to the closures and the wall.

There is no shortage of other ways that the dichotomy is expressed. The university is not registered with the Israeli Council of Higher Education because, from its perspective, East Jerusalem is not part of the State of Israel. By contrast, it is recognized by the Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education and is a member of the Union of Arab Universities. The Israeli authorities do not recognize the degrees that Al-Quds granted (for salary matters), and this is a major concern to the university's graduates who have been employed in teaching, social work or other professions in the public sector in Jerusalem: because the university is not recognized,

their degrees are not recognized by the State of Israel and, therefore, they cannot work in their professions and receive a salary commensurate with their education.

In 2000, the association *B'tzedek* ("With Justice"), a Jewish, religious, right-wing NGO, initiated a further step to limit the university's operations by petitioning the High Court and asking it to instruct the Prime Minister and Minister of Education to close the university because it was functioning within the borders of the State without being recognized by the Council for Higher Education as required by law. In response, the Al-Quds University administration contacted a foreign university and asked the State to recognize it as an extension of that foreign university. This was a typically "Jerusalemite" solution: unable to completely ignore Israeli control, Jerusalem residents find a stratagem that allows them to acknowledge reality without a declarative recognition of their annexation to the city.⁵⁶

Politics within the university is also complex. The president of the university, Sari Nusseibeh, a philosopher by training and the son of Anwar Nusseibeh who was the governor of Jerusalem in the early 1960s and a member of the Jordanian parliament, is considered a moderate Palestinian figure (although he was arrested and accused for spying on behalf of Iraq in 1991, which was never proven). Together with former Shabak head Ami Ayalon, he initiated the People's Voice (*Hamifkad ha-Leumi*) which was designed to be a two-pronged, mass organization of ordinary Israelis and Palestinians, who would use peaceful means to push the leadership of both peoples to an agreed solution. His compromise-oriented approach included undermining one of the fundamental beliefs of the Palestinians, the demand to allow the return of the 1948 Palestinian refugees to their homes inside Israel, because he believed that this was not possible. Many Palestinians attacked him for this stand, the Israeli government still ordered the offices of the university to close in July 2002. The very fact the university had a connection to the Palestinian Authority was, in the eyes of the then-minister of internal security, Uzi Landau, sufficient cause. Israeli and international organizations protested the closure and after some time the offices were opened again.⁵⁷ Nusseibeh continued to maintain his political line and on the academic level, he encourages research cooperation between the university's institutes and Israeli institutions.⁵⁸ This policy, too, has many harsh opponents among the university community.

The issue of Nusseibeh's signing of an agreement with the Hebrew University for cooperation in the field of dentistry, in 2005, brought the tensions that exist in the institution regarding the political positions of its president to the surface. Nusseibeh's purpose in signing the agreement was to open the first Palestinian school of dentistry. Both theoretically and practically this is a worthy purpose from a Palestinian national perspective, but means that he used, joining with an Israeli institution, was considered politically problematic. This is true in ordinary times and was even more so at that particular time. When British, Palestinian and others professors were promoting an academic boycott of Israel, the agreement between Nusseibeh and the Hebrew University made it possible for Israel and its supporters to cast the boycott's initiators in somewhat a ridiculous light. Opponents of academic cooperation distributed fliers in the territories that attacked Nusseibeh, the union of

Palestinian university employees called a one-hour protest strike at all institutions of higher learning, articles against him were also published in the Arab-Israeli press and one writer even called Nusseibeh, a “border guard for the Israeli establishment.” Yet, Fateh-Jerusalem came to Nusseibeh’s defense and issued an official flyer calling on people not to attack the president of the university but rather to understand the delicate reality in which the Palestinian institutions in Jerusalem function.⁵⁹ Thus, it was again proven that Tanzim-Jerusalem takes a moderate approach, even relative to Fateh in other areas and reminds everyone of the reality of Palestinian life in the city.

Fateh support cannot necessarily be interpreted as support from the entire student body. In practice, the students are a difficult adversary for the administration. Many of them, as well as many faculty members, oppose joint projects with Israelis for national and religious reasons. They also raise economic objections. For several years, the university has been in the midst of a financial crisis, faculty members and support staff do not receive their salaries on time and this leads to frequent strikes. Opponents of the joint projects use this fact to attack the trend toward cooperation. For example: in May 2006, all of the students cells, except for Fateh, held a demonstration demanding that the money invested in “normalization” be transferred to the staff salary lines. This was shortly before the Student Union elections and the tension on campus had reached a climax. Four months previously, Hamas had won the parliamentary, national elections but the Fateh’s students cell, *Al-Shabiba Al-tulabiyya*, had begun to recover and fight back in the elections for the various student councils. Activists there considered the elections at Al-Quds University to be a test of the major political movements’ power. The race was close.

Some background: traditionally the Student Union at Al-Quds University was controlled by the Islamic movements. This was the case from 1984 through 1992, after four veteran colleges the city united to form the Al-Quds University. At that time, there was an unofficial student council, “The Mosque Committee” which was associated with the Muslim Brotherhood. In 1992–98, the Islamic bloc (identified with Hamas) won all eleven seats on the student union council. Only in 1999, did the Fateh succeed in winning its first seat on the council although the leadership remained in the hands of Hamas, which called it “Hamas University.” This was not only because of the election results but also because several prominent activists in Hamas’ armed wing Izz al-Din al-Qassam, including “The Engineer 2,” Muhi al-Din al-Sharif; his comrade Zuheir Farrah, who was killed by the Shabak in A-Ram; and leaders of the military arm, Adel Awadallah, Sallah Jadallah and others had studied there. In the first four years of the al-Aqsa Intifada, no elections were held for the council. It seems that the University community was occupied with other issues: during Operation Defensive Shield (April 2002) alone, the university suffered from a wave of detentions in which five faculty members and more than 200 students were detained, one student was killed and offices and equipment were damaged.⁶⁰

Elections for the student council were reinstated in 2005 and preceded by another wave of detentions, in which Israeli security forces arrested Hamas activists from the

university. From the perspective of the security forces, any activity in the framework of the Islamic Bloc (*al-Kutla al-Islamiyya*) in the university is considered hostile activity for all purposes, regardless of the content. The Israeli courts have accepted this approach and approved detaining activists until the proceedings against them are completed, whether they participated in actual terrorism or focused on social and religious activities. Thus, the Israeli judicial system gave the security forces a “green light” to expand the circle of detainees. The results were not long in coming: the bloc’s activists in the various schools were detained one after another. The detainees included Dahlia Sarandah from Ras al-’Amoud who was suspected of being the leader of the female Islamic students cell and Muhammad Dar ‘Aliyan from Beit Safafa, the suspected leader of the male students’ cell.⁶¹ These detentions may have caused a minor change in the balance of powers at the university and Fateh won, for the first time, a majority of the council with six out of 11 representatives. The Fateh victory eased pressure on the university administration a bit but opposition to joint initiatives with Israeli institutions remained in place. In practice, most of the students who participate in the joint activities are either supporters of Fateh or politically independent, while the Islamic and left-wing opposition generally boycotts these activities. In any case, in the 2006 elections Fateh tied with the Hamas after stormy confrontations.

During the election campaign at the university, Fateh members demonstrated admirable fighting spirit that apparently grew out of a fierce desire to maintain some of their strongholds after the movement was defeated in the elections for the Palestinian Legislative Council in January 2006. Fateh cells reacted similarly in other academic institutions. However, this is not necessarily evidence of a genuine Fateh revival; Hamas still had several important strongholds, including the parliament and government, and the rivalry between factions of Fateh over policy and leadership of the movement continues. Despite this, Fateh continued to lead the Students Council in 2007. That year, following the clashes between Fateh and Hamas in Gaza, the council issued a statement (probably coordinated with the university administration and the PA security agencies) prohibiting activity of the Hamas cell at the university. In the elections of 2008, the Hamas-led Islamic Bloc boycotted the elections, and Fateh won a large majority (out of the 49% who voted). It is important to note that following the Israeli attack on Gaza in early 2009, the university, supported by the students, announced that it is stopping all joint activities with Israeli academic institutions.⁶²

In any case, the official representatives of the Palestinian Jerusalemites in the Palestinian Legislative Council are Hamas members (although they have been in prison since 2006). What are the sources of Hamas’ success in Jerusalem in the 2006 elections to the PLC, what is the foundation for Fateh’s failure, what keeps the left from getting off the ground and what were the differences between voting patterns of Jerusalem residents and other Palestinians in the 2006 elections? These are the questions we will discuss in the next section.

5

PALESTINIAN ELECTIONS IN JERUSALEM: THE LOCAL AND THE NATIONAL

The death of Yasser Arafat in 2004 marked the end of an era in Palestinian politics. After a brief period of preparations, general elections for the office of the President of the Palestinian Authority (PA) were held. Out of 1.7 million registered voters, only about 800,000 people voted in the Authority's entire territory, meaning the turnout was slightly less than half. In the Jerusalem District, only about 20 percent of the eligible voters cast a ballot, approximately 28,000 out of approximately 160,000. A vast majority of the voters were outside of the city limits; in Jerusalem proper only about 6,000 people voted, fewer than 6 percent of the approximate 114,000 who were eligible.¹ This was another reminder of how the Palestinian residents of Jerusalem have distanced themselves from politics, at least from the politics of the PA. Despite this, among the political public in the city, those who participated in the elections, the distribution of votes among the candidates was quite similar to the national distribution: Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) won approximately 62 percent of the votes; Dr. Mustafa Barghouti, founder of the Palestinian National Democratic Initiative, received approximately 20 percent. There was a slight difference in the support for the Democratic Front candidate Taysir Khaled, who received nearly 6 percent of the votes in Jerusalem but whose national average was closer to 3.5 percent.²

Preparing for elections

The 2006 elections to the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) have revealed well-known and less-known characteristics of the Palestinian political system, and the following pages are dedicated to close examination of the campaign to, and the results of, the elections in Jerusalem. The call to hold new elections for the PLC was voiced immediately after the presidential elections. The PLC had been in office for nearly a decade, since the first elections to the PA institutions in 1996. Its public

standing had been declining steadily; not only because it had been in office for so long but also because of its faulty functioning. An important factor for its deterioration was the absolute supremacy of the executive branch over the legislative branch in Arafat's days, which nearly emptied legislature of its powers. The constitution that the council proposed was not approved by the chairman and placed in a deep freeze. The Audit Committees that it established did not receive the information they requested from ministries and its attempts to uproot corruption and human rights violations were only partially successful.³ It is also likely that the fact that the parliament was almost completely dominated by one party – Hamas did not participate in the 1996 elections and Fateh's official and unofficial representatives held an absolute majority of seats – diminished its value and authority in the eyes of the general public. Either way, in the post-Arafat reality, which included Israel's announcement of its plan for unilateral disengagement from the Gaza Strip, the Palestinian initiated lull (*tahdi'a*) and intra-Palestinian dialogue, the demand to hold new elections for the PLC gained momentum. Hamas also joined the call coming from many quarters to change the electoral system and the demands were accepted. In the concluding proclamation issued after the "National Dialogue" between the main Palestinian movements in Cairo in March 2005, the parties called on the PLC to replace the system of regional elections with a mixed regional and national system.⁴ In June 2005, the PLC amended the Election Law, increasing the number of seats from 88 to 132 and stating that half of the seats (66) would be elected in regional elections and half on national lists. On August 20, Abu Mazen issued a presidential order setting elections for January 2006 and declaring, in the first section, "the elections will be held in Jerusalem and other districts of the homeland."⁵

For the leadership of the PA, holding elections in Jerusalem was a fundamental component of its overall political concept that considers Arab Jerusalem part of Palestine and the Palestinian residents of the city part of the Palestinian political system. Israel sees the issue in a completely different light: the government maintains its policy of a "united Jerusalem under Israeli sovereignty," and works to prevent any signs of Palestinian sovereignty in the city. Giving Palestinian residents of Jerusalem the right to vote in elections for institutions of the PA stirs up a new dilemma every time. Before the elections in 1996, a compromise formula was found, which was also used for the presidential elections in 2005: a limited number of Palestinians were allowed to vote in post office branches in East Jerusalem. These elections were held under various Israeli restrictions.⁶ In the 2006 elections, a new problem arose: the decision of Hamas to participate in the elections led the government of Israel to declare that it would not allow elections to be held in East Jerusalem. One month before the elections, Israel was still standing by its refusal and the head of Palestinian negotiating team Saeb Erekat admitted, in an interview with the Al-Quds newspaper, that this posed a dilemma for the Palestinian leadership because it did not want to delay the elections but also did not want to hold them without including Jerusalem and its residents.⁷ All of the political factions in Jerusalem joined together and called on the PA not to hold the elections without the participation of Jerusalem residents. The Americans, who supported holding the

elections on their scheduled date (they did not expect the Hamas victory), convinced Israel to allow the residents of Jerusalem to vote. At first, Israel proposed allowing the residents of Jerusalem to vote outside of the city but two weeks before the elections, Israel made its peace with the situation and announced that it would allow the residents of Jerusalem to participate in the elections, using the format developed for the 1996 elections. According to this arrangement, Israel allowed a limited number of people (6,300) to vote in the city, not at official polling stations but rather in post office branches, from which the ballot envelopes were sent to the Central Election Commission. The logic of the system, in Israeli eyes, is that it prevents the election from becoming a symbol of Palestinian sovereignty in the city.⁸ A petition to the High Court filed by Yiftach Palmach Ze'evi, the son of Minister Rechavam Ze'evi who was killed by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) members, and others against holding the elections using this format was rejected by the judges and the elections in Jerusalem were under way.⁹

While these stormy diplomatic events were occurring, the local political system was also becoming frenzied. According to the new system, each of the parties was entitled to nominate a national list and a local list in each of the electoral districts. Independent candidates were also able to establish lists and contend in the general elections (on the condition that they met the threshold requirements) or run as individuals in the regional elections. As is customary before elections, overt and covert meetings were held, momentary alliances made and broken, advisors meddled, parties' central committees made proposals, self-appointed stars made demands, newspapers published more and less authorized versions of the news, regional representatives demanded representation and, very gradually, lists were formulated.

As they did before the 1996 elections in the days of Faisal Husseini, the various factions in Jerusalem attempted to form a joint list for the 2006 elections. This time, the motivating force came from the Secretary-General of the PFLP, Ahmad Sa'adat, who was being held in a PA jail in Jericho under international supervision since 2002 (as part of a complicated deal between Israel, the PA, and foreign states). He sent a letter with a proposal in this spirit to Abu Mazen, who did not reject it out-of-hand. PFLP member Khalida Jarrar was a leading proponent of the idea. There were also people in Fateh who supported it, such as Hatem Abd al-Qader, a representative of Jerusalem in the outgoing legislature. These people believed that the unique situation in Jerusalem required the creation of a joint body that could be a source of authority for all of the organizations. However, in 2006, as in 1996, the initiative did not come to fruition and the various parties began to formulate their individual lists.

The task of formulating a list was no simple matter for members of Fateh in Jerusalem, as in all of the districts. As was noted above, the movement had been in the midst of a difficult crisis for ten years, which worsened after the death of Arafat. It is worthwhile to explain this in a little more detail. When the PA was established and the senior cadre of Fateh moved to Palestine, a new situation was created, with two parallel systems of authority in the territories: the local Fateh leadership and the Fateh command from Tunis (the latter known also as "the Returnees") that included

the movement's veteran leadership. The foundations of the local leadership were laid during the Intifada years and two Supreme Committees (*al-Lajneh al-Harkdiyya al-'Uliya*) were established, one in the West Bank headed by Faisal Husseini and Secretary-General Marwan Barghouti, and the other in the Gaza Strip, headed by Zakaria al-Agha and Secretary-General Ahmad Hilles. They were accepted by the local population as the leaders of the first Intifada, and of Fateh in the Territories. Both Husseini and al-Agha were also added to the Central Committee (*al-Lajna al-Markaziyya*) during the Intifada. The Central Committee used to be the most powerful body of Fateh, and the joining of Husseini and al-Agha symbolized the rising power of the Territories in the make-up of Fateh. However, all of the other twenty members of the Committee were senior leaders from "the outside," and this reflected the power relations between the "inside" and the "outside." As long as the Central Committee was not in the territories, the competition between the two systems was rarely, if ever, expressed. Indeed, during the first Intifada, Fateh members sang, "*Tahiyat l'Abu Ammar wal-Lajne al-Markaziyye*" ("Greetings to Arafat and the Central Committee") and shouted at demonstrations "*Hiye, hiye, hiye lajne Markaziyye*" ("Hail, hail, hail, the Central Committee") to demonstrate their connection and subordination to the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and Fateh leadership in Tunis. However, the moment that Fateh headquarters were established in Palestine, competition surfaced. Each of the parties considered itself the true kernel of Fateh, took credit for the achievements of the national movement, presented itself as worthy of leadership and holding the more desirable positions in the government offices and security services. The veteran members of the organization, the Returnees, who moved with Arafat from Jordan to Lebanon after Black September, and from besieged Beirut to Tunis, considered the PA the product of their struggle and residents of the territories, soldiers subordinate to their authority. Leaders of the Intifada in the territories, who motivated and mobilized the masses to participate in the popular uprising, grew up in the territories and spent long years in Israeli prison cells were convinced that it was their struggle that had led to the establishment of the PA and that the time had now come for them to take the reins from the veteran, external leadership. Despite the fact that more than a few interpersonal and inter-institutional connections had been forged in the years since the PA was established, the fundamental division was maintained throughout the Oslo years.

One of the steps taken by the external leaders, shortly after their arrival, was to trim the wings of the internal leadership. The Central Committee, which was at the pinnacle of the movement's formal pyramid, transferred the authority of the Supreme Committees of Fateh in the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip to itself, through the offices of Hani al-Hassan, head of the Recruitment and Organization Branch (*al-T'abi'ah wal-Tanzim*) of the Fateh and Sakher Habash (Abu Nizar), a member of the Central Committee and of the movement's Emergency Committee. They required all districts (*aqalim*) to follow their guidelines and report to them, rather than to the leadership of Fateh in the territories. This move damaged the power and prestige of those who had led the first Intifada and it also had financial



FIGURE 5.1 Palestinian activists at the 2006 elections

Palestinian activists regarded the participation of Jerusalemites in the 2006 elections to the PLC as a demonstration of their commitment to the Palestinian national struggle, thus encouraging people to participate in the democratic process.

ramifications: districts that did not accept the authority of the Returnees, did not receive financial allotments. Many branches of Fateh were paralyzed by the debate, which was also felt by Fateh in Jerusalem.

In the late 1990s, local activists demanded that the Fateh General Conference, which includes representation from all districts in Palestine and the Diaspora where the movement is active and from all of its constituent sections (women, students, fighters and workers, etc.), be convened. According to the movement's constitution, the General Conference is the source of its institutions' authority and it elects the Central Committee and the other movement institutions. It had last been convened in 1989, when the "Fifth Conference" (*al-Mu'tamar al-Khamis*) elected a Central Committee that included only very minimal representation of the territories. Everyone knew that a new assembly would completely change the balance of power between the internal and external forces, so local Tanzim activists began to organize primary elections in all of the regions and institutions, in preparation for the Sixth Conference. However, the incumbent Central Committee, with Arafat's support, neutralized the process because it knew that most of its members would be removed from office, and the frustration of the internal members increased. There is merit to the claim that this internal dispute was one of the factors that pushed the Tanzim Fateh, led by Marwan Barghouti, to demonstrate its strength, to both the PA and Israel, by escalating the violence during the first stages of the al-Aqsa Intifada, while the external leaders tried to undermine his position by advancing other "inside" leaders.¹⁰

The Fateh movement perceives itself as a democratic movement, although in the underground conditions in which it functioned, its members were reconciled to the fact that it was a limited democracy. When it became a political party after the Oslo Agreements, the demand for complete democratization of Fateh surfaced. The failure to convene the Sixth Conference did not dampen the spirit of the people who demanded change. Prior to the elections for the PLC in 2006, they demanded that there be internal elections to select the regional and national lists. Despite some people's reservations, it was decided to hold elections: the power of those who opposed primaries had weakened and after Arafat's death, it was no longer possible to keep the movement unified without re-distribution of power. In November 2005, internal elections were held in the various districts. In Jerusalem, 41 candidates contended for 12 seats, on the assumption that, in addition to the six seats allocated to the district, Fateh would allocate six places on the national list to representatives of Jerusalem. At that time, the candidates did not yet know that this was a false hope because the Central Committee wanted to keep the right to determine the national list for itself and would also intervene in the district lists.

The division of opinion within Fateh and between the various candidates made it difficult to hold the primary elections and this was even harder in Jerusalem because Israel did not allow voting within the city. Despite this, the primaries were held and members of Fateh voted at polling stations outside of the city. On the morning of the elections, November 29, 2005, a rumor spread that Abu Mazen had ordered that the primary elections in Jerusalem be frozen. Only in the afternoon did

it become clear that this was a false rumor (which might have been spread by an interested party) and the elections began. The first information provided by the Fateh spokesperson in the district was that there were 40,000 registered members of Fateh in Jerusalem and they would pick the candidates. This figure raised doubts about Fateh's voter registration lists and there were suspicions that people had enrolled their associates and relatives in the party in advance of the elections (as is done in other places). In the end, it was reported that there were 23,000 eligible voters. Of these, 9,000 actually voted.

The candidate who won the largest votes was Hatem Abd al-Qader 'Id, a member of the first PLC and one of the leaders of the first Intifada in the Jerusalem area. He was followed on the list by Othman Abu Gharbiyya, a member of a Hebronite-Jerusalemite family who headed Fateh's Department of Political Guidance. Abdullah Abdullah, Director General of the Palestinian Foreign Office, was elected to the third place and Talal Abu 'Afife from the Shu'fat Refugee Camp, who was also active in the first Intifada, came in fourth. Elected after them, in descending order, were: Sheikh Ahmad Naffa' from the Qalandiya Refugee Camp, whose brother Bashir Naffa' headed the Special Security Force and had been killed three weeks earlier in Amman by radical Islamists; Hamdi Rajabi, head of the *Shabiba* (Fateh Youth) in the city; Ahmad Abd al-Rahman, advisor to the president and Fateh spokesman; Ahmad Ghneim, former head of the Tanzim in the city and a member of the Fateh Revolutionary Council; Jamal Abu-Leil, a local Tanzim member; and Muhammad Sawwan, also a member of the Tanzim in Jerusalem. Dr. Emil Jarjou'i, a member of the PLO Executive Committee, and Dimitri Daliani, an assistant to Sari Nusseibeh and founder of the Christian National Assembly, were elected to the places reserved for Christians.

The elections were accompanied by mutual incriminations and claims of forgery made by some who had lost the race. In fact, only the polls in al-'Azariyya were disqualified for irregularities but candidates and observers did point out that there were some places where candidates went to the polling place and did not find their name on the list of candidates and other places, not known as Fateh strongholds, where several hundred people voted, with a large majority for the same candidate. Since these were first public elections that Fateh held after coming out from the underground, some of the mishaps might be attributable to a lack of experience in conducting internal elections, although it is also clear that the search for clan-based and other patterns of support also characterized these elections. Ideology, it seems, had less influence than the size of families and other support groups.

However, after all of the commotion, these elections did not determine either the composition of the Fateh list in the district or the places of the Jerusalem residents on the national list. Abu Mazen, who headed the Fateh Nominating Committee, prepared the official list of Fateh candidates that was based only in small part on the results of the primaries and the desires of the "inside" activists (which did not necessarily coincide). In response, the heads of the Fateh-inside prepared their own national list and submitted it as an independent list for election. In mid-December, the Central Elections Commission had before it two Fateh lists, the official list

submitted by Abu Mazen and the alternate list, called “The Future” (*Al-Mustaqbal*), that was submitted by the imprisoned Marwan Barghouti, who headed the list, followed by Muhammad Dahlan and Jibril Rajoub. This list also included Jerusalem residents, Ahmad Ghneim (number 10), Jamal Abu-Leil, who did not do well in the primary elections (19), and Muhammad Shehade (21), a leader of the *Fateh Shabiba* (Fateh Youth) in the Jerusalem district. Only intensive mediation efforts, combined with fears that Fateh would collapse, led to the unification of the lists. Two candidates who fared poorly in the primaries but had support outside of the district, Ahmad Abd al-Rahman and Ahmad Ghneim, were moved up to the third and fourth places on the Jerusalem district list. Thus, when the Fateh list for the Jerusalem district was compiled, the two people who had received the most votes in the primaries were followed by those who had placed seventh and eighth. Abdullah Abdullah, who came in third in the primaries was moved to sixth on the national list, which enabled him to achieve what he desired. There were also changes in the Christian candidates: Dr. Bernard Sabella, a resident of Beit Hanina and a lecturer at Bethlehem University, replaced Diliani.

The dispute over the composition of the Fateh list was not influenced by ideology or the hot debate about how to fight Israel. Therefore, Barghouti who supported an armed struggle and even encouraged terrorist attacks within Israel, and Jibril Rajoub who opposed these attacks, were able to lead the alternate list together. Although Rajoub explained, in an interview with *Al-Arabiyya TV* that the two had always enjoyed a good relationship and they were both soldiers of Arafat who followed his instructions, the statement seemed to be an effort to whitewash the dispute. It is no less interesting that the argument about the way to conduct the struggle against Israel was marginal in their eyes, when compared to the dispute between them and the Fateh Central Committee. Perhaps Rajoub’s support of the armed conflict in the Territories, including East Jerusalem, increased over the years: during the same interview, Rajoub presented the shooting attack at the Qalandiya Road Block in December 2005, where a soldier was killed, as an example of a worthy act of struggle. This could be seen as an attempt to bring his views closer to those of Barghouti but also as a delayed response to the destruction of his headquarters by Israel.¹¹ By contrast, other members of Fateh expressed, either openly or in closed forums, clear opposition to the armed struggle because of the physical and political damage it does to the Palestinians and their image. For example, that was the opinion of Nasser Qos, an independent Fateh candidate in Jerusalem, who had been Faisal Hussein’s security guard and was, himself, the Fateh coordinator in the Old City. At a meeting held four days before the elections he said that the focus should be on popular actions and that the military form of the Intifada had done great damage to the Palestinians. A similar position was expressed by Talal Abu ‘Afife.¹²

Abu ‘Afife, who came in fourth place in the primary elections but was removed from the list, decided, like Nasser Qos, to run as an independent. In their eyes, and in the eyes of many others, the list created by the power struggles described above was not sufficiently attractive to the Jerusalemite public, in addition to the fact that they themselves were not included in it. Thus, for example, Ahmad Abd al-Rahman

failed in the primaries but had a place on the list. He was indeed considered a senior Fateh member and had edited the movements' publications for two decades (1974–94) but he had never lived in Jerusalem and was a stranger to the city's residents. Abd al-Rahman received approval to run on the local list only because his family's origin was in the village of Beit Surik, on the northwestern outskirts of Jerusalem. Although he did have impressive family roots – his father was killed in 1948 while fighting for the road to Jerusalem with the Holy Jihad Forces under the command of Abd al-Qader al-Husseini – the general public did not consider them sufficient to make him a leading candidate or reduce the bitterness of those who were lowered on the list when he and Ahmad Ghneim were advanced. In the 1996 elections, many Fateh members ran as independent candidates (also in Jerusalem) and were elected to the PLC and this served as a precedent for Fateh members who ran as independents in 2006 and hoped to repeat their success. This time, however, their move did serious damage to Fateh, as we will see below.

Unlike Fateh, Hamas and the Fronts did not conduct a public process for selecting their candidates. To the best of our knowledge, Hamas conducted some type of survey of its members before deciding to participate in the elections and after it was clear that there was broad support for the idea, Ismail Haniyye coordinated preparation of the national list and, possibly, the regional lists as well. In any case, unlike the Fateh list in Jerusalem in 1996 that included Jerusalem natives and migrants from Hebron, refugees and the villagers, or the Fateh list in 2006, which weighed the results of the primaries and the interests of the two main camps in the movement, it seems that the primary consideration when compiling the Hamas list was the candidates' activism and their popular support. This does not mean that there were no power struggles between the different parties involved in compiling the list or between the candidates themselves but, because Hamas did not suffer from the same fundamental division between "locals" and "returnees," the struggles did not lead to a rupture in the movement. In a few cases, it seems that the candidates were not even interested in the position but rather accepted the movement's dictates. For example, Dr. Ibrahim Abu Salem, who headed the list for the Jerusalem district, was in jail at the time the list was assembled. He had been arrested in September 2005 in his home in Bir Naballa, between Jerusalem and Ramallah, in a wave of arrests that included many Hamas members and was interpreted as an attempt by Israel to damage Hamas' preparations for the elections. This was not a baseless thought: his administrative detention expired five days before the elections. When arrested, Abu Salem was taken to a tent encampment known as "the sheikhs' encampment" at the Ansar 3 prison in the Negev, where many Islamic detainees were concentrated. As someone who was known for his moving sermons, Abu Salem was honored by giving the *khutba* (sermon) at the 'Id al-Fitr prayers. "Some of the detainees said that this sermon made the holiday in prison one of the most beautiful holidays they had ever experienced," he later said. While imprisoned, he began to receive phone calls asking him to head the Hamas list in Jerusalem. At first, he was hesitant. Later, he was convinced and used a mobile telephone, which had been smuggled into the prison, to give speeches at election rallies in Jerusalem and its environs.¹³

Abu Salem was born in Bir Naballa, in 1948 shortly after his parents fled the village Sidra, near al-Ramla, and became refugees. He went to elementary school near Ramallah and to the Al-Aqsa High School in Jerusalem. After that, he went to study Islamic law (*Shari'a*) at Amman University in Jordan and upon his return, began to preach in the Ramallah area. He finished his Master's degree at Al-Azhar University in Cairo and wrote his doctoral thesis while in Marj al-Zuhour, as one of the 415 Islamic deportees exiled by the Rabin government in late 1992. At that time he was already teaching in the Shari'a college of Al-Quds University and had published some books. The many times he had been arrested – generally without a trial but rather using administrative procedures – did not hurt his activity or his status. Indeed, he was proud of having been the movement's first administrative detainee.¹⁴

The movement's second candidate, Muhammad Totah, is a generation younger than Abu Salem. Born in 1968 and a descendent of a family with deep roots in Jerusalem, he studied at the Dar el-Aytam school in the Old City from first through twelfth grades. He continued his education in business administration, completing a bachelor's degree in Cyprus and a Master's at Al-Quds University, where he also began teaching. Indeed, as we noted above, the Islamic movement had a strong foothold in the university, among both students and faculty. He worked for a variety of commercial enterprises but in recent years had begun devoting a large amount of time to Islamic organizations in the city. He was responsible for the central network for teaching the Koran (each neighborhood and village in the district had a group



FIGURE 5.2 The activity outside the ballots at the 2006 elections was much more intense than inside. Only 16 percent of the Jerusalemites participated in the elections, another sign of the passivity and de-politization of the Palestinians in the city.

for memorizing chapters of the Koran), was the Secretary-General of the 'Iqra Association that had been closed by order of the Israeli authorities, preached in several mosques and gave classes on al-Haram al-Sharif. Totah is also considered an activist in the defense of al-Haram and the lands around it.¹⁵ During his election campaign, he was assisted by another resident of the Old City, Sammy Qasem, who organized meetings for him, transported volunteers and convinced people to support him.

The third candidate on the Hamas Jerusalem list was Ahmad Attun, a resident of Sur Baher, who was also born in 1968. Like Abu Salem, he studied at Al-Aqsa High School. He received bachelor's and Master's degrees in religious studies from Al-Quds University. Attun spent most of the first Intifada, from 1988 to 1992, in prison and was in and out of jail throughout the 1990s. He heads the (Islamic) Cultural Center in Sur Baher, used to preach in one of the local mosques, and coordinated the Koran study group in the village. The fourth candidate on the Hamas Change and Reform List in Jerusalem was Wa'el Husseini. Born in 1962 and an electrical engineer by profession, he divided his time between professional work and education, and was appointed to headmaster of the al-Nahda School. He was also one of the Marj al-Zuhour deportees and had been arrested several times. Husseini was the son of a veteran Jerusalemite family but was born and lived most of his life in Bethlehem.

From this, it is evident that the Hamas movement filled its district lists with people who were active in its associations and, although known primarily in Islamic circles, had demonstrated their willingness to use their time and talents on behalf of the public. This is true of the district lists. The national list was different: like the Fateh national list, which included only one Jerusalemite candidate in realistic place (Jihad Abu Zneid of Shu'afat refugee camp, a leader in Fateh's women movement, who was 24th), the Hamas national list also included only one resident of Jerusalem in a realistic place, Sheikh Muhammad Abu Teir. Unlike the Fateh candidate, Abu Teir was second on the Hamas list.

Abu Teir, a native of Umm Tuba near Sur Baher, on the southeast slopes of the city, went to elementary school in the village and attended the same high school as two of his colleagues, Al-Aqsa, where he completed his studies in 1971. Even in high school he had a clear connection to religion and *jihad* burned of his bones. He left Jerusalem and went to Jordan in order to join the fighting forces. Since there was no Islamic force, he joined Fateh. He was trained to use weapons in Lebanon and when he returned to Jerusalem in 1974, he was arrested immediately. He was sentenced to 13 years in prison and released shortly before the beginning of the first Intifada. During the Intifada he was detained twice for several months and was already a senior member of Hamas. When the military arm of Hamas, the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, was founded, he was involved in purchasing weapons for the activists, was arrested again in 1992 and sentenced to six years in prison. In 1998, approximately one year after his release, he was again detained and questioned about his military activity in the Hamas framework. The investigation was tough and in an interview he recalled that his chief interrogator was referred to as "Yunis." When

Yuval Diskin was appointed head of the Shabak in 2005 and his picture published, he realized who had interrogated him. This time, he spent seven more years in prison and was released shortly before the elections.¹⁶

The fact that each of the two major lists included only one authentic Jerusalem candidate (Fateh also had a supposedly Jerusalemite candidate Abdullah Abdullah, in sixth place) emphasizes the marginal place of the city in the Palestinian political system and the drastic decline in its standing after the Oslo process. A veteran Fateh activist in the city said that any inquiry would find that every Palestinian village has more colonels and generals in the PLO than Jerusalem.

Another national list, The Third Way, also had a Jerusalemite candidate in a realistic place, Hanan Ashrawi, who was second on the list. However, Ashrawi was Jerusalemite only on paper. Indeed, she had been elected to the PLC in 1996 as a representative of Jerusalem (as an independent allied with Fateh) but this was considered reasonable because her activities were focused in the city (in Orient House and another frameworks). Today, Ashrawi is no longer active in Jerusalem and does not live there. The organization she runs, *Miftah*: Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy, works out of Ramallah (although this might not be voluntarily but rather because of the closure on Jerusalem). Fifth on the Popular Front's list was Daud Dir'awi from the small village Nu'eiman on the border of Jerusalem and Bethlehem. The PFLP succeeded in winning only three seats for its national list and he remained outside of the PLC. His village also remains outside Jerusalem as result of the construction of the barrier.

Returning to the district lists: the Popular Front chose not to compete in Jerusalem under the name that it used in the rest of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, "Martyr Abu Ali Mustafa List." The leadership assumed, correctly, that this would cause the Israeli authorities to take action against it and its candidates. Therefore, the candidate who identified with the PFLP and represented the Front in the PLO National Council, Abd al-Latif Gheith, ran in the city as an independent. He was a typical Jerusalem candidate: the head of a Palestinian human rights non-governmental organization (NGO) (*Al-Damir*) and considered a senior figure in the PFLP, one of his daughters worked as a physiotherapist in an Israeli hospital, his son-in-law was employed as an engineer at a bakery in West Jerusalem and his son was in jail for activity with the Front. This son was not the only PFLP member in jail at the time. Many central PFLP activists in the Jerusalem district were also imprisoned. The PFLP coordinator in Abu Dis, Muhammad Hanafsa; its coordinator in 'Isawiyye, Muhammad Sinawi; and the person responsible for them in Jerusalem, Sallah Hammouri, were arrested by the security forces, in addition to Mu'tasem Sheikh who, together with Hammouri had reestablished the PFLP's organization of university and high school students *Ittihad al-Talaba*. The arrests were not limited to this level. In summer 2005, the people who are considered the political leadership of the PFLP in Jerusalem, Rasem 'Abeidat, Dr. Ahmad Maslemani and Naser Abu Khdeir were also arrested. Abu Khdeir was suspected of being the contact person with the organization's military wing but the concrete accusations against them related to civilian activity: financing and participating in assemblies, helping bereaved

families and prisoners, and renting offices. The High Court accepted the State's position that no distinction should be made between social and military activities of forbidden organizations and the three were detained until the legal proceedings against them were completed.¹⁷ The circle of activists available to help Gheith and the PFLP's national list campaign, not large to begin with, was reduced even further.

The Democratic Front joined with the People's Party (formally the Communist Party) and the Palestine Democratic Union to form a combined list *Al-Badil* (The Alternative). The candidates connected to these parties ran in the city as independents, even though their political affiliation was known. The candidate identified with the Democratic Front was Hani 'Issawi, a resident of the village 'Isawiyye, a member of the Palestinian National Council and a member of the Democratic Front's highest institutions. 'Issawi was the uncle of Samer, an activist in the military wing of the Front in 'Isawiyye who commanded the armed cells in the village, which were described in the previous chapter, and of Fadi who was killed in 1994. His election campaign opened with visits to the graves of Fadi, Faisal Husseini, to whom he had been close, and Abd al-Qader al-Husseini (located on al-Haram al-Sharif) and to the monument in memory of his brother Osama who was killed during the battles in Beirut in 1982. 'Issawi was among the heads of the Democratic Front who supported contact with radical Israelis and, in 1988, had been in contact with members of *Derech Hanitzotz* ("Way of the Spark"), a group of Israelis who functioned in coordination with the Democratic Front.¹⁸ Today, he is involved in social and economic activities in his village and is participating in the revised planning project in the village, which was described above, and in the village transportation cooperative that operates a bus line from the Damascus Gate to 'Isawiyye. The representative of the People's Party (formerly the Communist Party) was Fadwa Khader, a member of the party's executive committee, an activist in women's organizations, a member of the Committee against the Separation Fence in Jerusalem and head of the party's women's network in West Bank villages.

The final number of candidates on the Jerusalem district lists was thirty-nine, six Fateh candidates on the list that Barghouti and Abu Mazen agreed on (four Muslims and two Christians), four Hamas candidates (Hamas did not compete for the seats reserved for Christians), two from The Alternative, who ran as independents, and a candidate from the Popular Front, also running as an independent. They were joined by twenty-six additional candidates: fourteen Fateh members who were not included in the list and tried their luck as independents and twelve genuine independents: business people or other public figures with a taste for politics but not affiliated with any organizational framework. Some ran out of a desire to serve their communities while others wanted to improve their social and political (and possibly economic) standing.

Prior to the elections, civil society organizations in Jerusalem tried, together with the Central Elections Commission – Palestine, the political parties and international organizations to encourage Jerusalem residents to become involved in the election process. NGOs held several assemblies in Jerusalem and invited the candidates to present their positions to the public. There was more than a little interest and some

of these meetings attracted an audience. The speakers presented their views regarding Jerusalem. Everyone agreed that it was necessary to focus efforts on preserving the Arab identity of the city; everyone sorrowfully agreed that there is neither a Palestinian source of authority in Jerusalem nor a clear work plan, and everyone adopted the idea of establishing an Al-Quds Fund that would help revitalize the institutions in the city. In other words, it seemed that the platforms had more in common than not and the main differences were the people transmitting the messages, their level of commitment, ability and connection to the public, and the public's trust in them.

Simultaneous with the Palestinians' attempt to awaken the public in preparation for the elections, Israel acted, even after it agreed to allow the elections to be held in the city – to limit the activities of the political parties. It worked primarily to prevent Hamas and the Fronts, which it defines as terrorist organizations, from functioning within the city and distributing any campaign propaganda. However, activists from other parties were also detained and the police were extremely strict about the prohibitions on posting advertisements in public places, on holding assemblies without a permit, etc. In the weeks before the elections, the police arrested candidates from various parties several times, detained activists who were posting advertisements without a permit for questioning and prevented assemblies from being held in public places. The actions against the activity of Arab institutions in Jerusalem also continued and several institutions affiliated with Hamas were closed by order, and closure orders against institutions affiliated with the PLO were renewed. Although Hamas activists claimed that Israel was harassing only them and assisting its adversaries, this was definitely inaccurate. While most of the institutions closed belonged to Hamas and there were broader and longer arrests in its ranks, Fateh candidates were also detained and some Fateh institutions were also closed.¹⁹ Members of The Alternative and the PFLP were also harassed, detained and subpoenaed for questioning. This was the atmosphere on January 25, 2006 when the Arab residents of Jerusalem went to vote in the second elections for the Palestinian Legislative Council.

Results of 2006 elections: an analysis

As we saw above, Fateh approached the 2006 elections in the midst of a serious internal crisis. In addition to its internal split, the movement had suffered a growing lack of public confidence since the mid-1990s, because of its failure, as the leading party in the PA, to bring freedom and dignity to the Palestinians under occupation, and the corruption of several officials. For the first time, Hamas presented itself as a governmental alternative, based on its institutions located throughout the territories, including East Jerusalem, and on the volunteering spirit and enthusiasm displayed by many of its members. Its slogan, "Change and Reform," combined with the fact that Israel and the United States fought against it, added to its appeal. The left-wing fronts, whose hold on the public decreased after the collapse of the Soviet Bloc and the establishment of the PA, became a marginal factor and the

attempt to resuscitate the PFLP led to an aggressive series of arrests by Israel, leaving it battered and injured by election day. The movements that represented themselves as alternatives, such as The Third Way and Mustafa Barghouti's Independent Palestine movement did not successfully position themselves as a realistic option for government and the real battle was waged between Fateh and Hamas. Fateh attempted to take advantage of its economic resources: each Fateh candidate spent an average of \$50,000 on the election campaign, according to the reports that the candidates submitted to the Central Elections Commission, while candidates of Hamas in Jerusalem spent, on average, less than one-third that amount. However, even money did not help Fateh maintain its power. The Fateh movement, which had an almost complete control of the first Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), failed in the 2006 elections, winning only forty-five seats out of 132. The Hamas movement won an absolute majority: seventy-four seats. The remaining thirteen seats were divided between independent candidates and the left-wing and center lists.²⁰ This was a genuine revolution for the Palestinian political system, one that had, and continues to have, implications for its relationships with the international community and with Israel.

Since the elections were conducted using a combined national–regional system, it is interesting to compare the voting for *district candidates* (for our purposes: the Jerusalem district) with the voting for the *national lists* in Jerusalem district. This comparison shows that there was a significant difference in the voting patterns for the national list and voting for regional candidates. In the national elections, Hamas won twenty-nine seats compared with twenty-eight for Fateh, meaning they are nearly equal. The remaining nine seats were divided between the Martyr Abu Ali Mustafa List of the PFLP (3); the leftist The Alternative (2); the Third Way of Salam Fayyad and Hanan Ashrawi (2); and Independent Palestine headed by Mustafa Barghouti (2). In the district elections, by comparison, the difference was far greater. Hamas garnered forty-five seats in comparison to seventeen for Fateh, and only four were left for others. This result raises the possibility that the results reflect not only the political views but also the organizational ability of the various lists, internal disputes, the attractiveness of individual candidates, and other factors. In this section, we will examine this assumption, while focusing on Jerusalem and analyzing its uniqueness in the context of the elections.

The distribution of votes for the national lists was slightly different in Jerusalem than it was in the national results. Approximately 39,000 people cast their ballots in the Jerusalem district. The Hamas list received 41 percent (approximately 16,000 votes) while the Fateh list won approximately 35 percent (approximately 13,700 votes) and the left-wing lists (PFLP, The Alternative and Independent Palestine) together won almost 17 percent (approximately 6,500 votes). The uniqueness of Jerusalem is perhaps surprising: the left-independents are represented in Jerusalem far beyond their representation in Palestine as a whole, 17 percent in comparison to approximately 10 percent nationally. There was already a hint of this in the results from the 2005 presidential elections. Simultaneously, Hamas won less support in the city than its national average (41 percent in comparison to 44.4 percent) and Fateh



FIGURE 5.3 The 2006 elections: inside the ballots

The 2006 elections ended with Fateh's defeat. In Jerusalem, like elsewhere, Hamas got the majority of the votes. However, the Jerusalemites voted, more than any other city, for the center-left parties.

is even less popular (35 percent in comparison to 41.4 percent). It may be that the relative success of the left in Jerusalem can be attributed to the extensive activity of left-oriented NGOs on human rights issues, but this cannot be determined with certainty.

Those were the results of the voting for the national list in the Jerusalem district. In addition, Jerusalem was allocated six seats in the district elections. Both large lists and independent candidates competed for these seats but the voting itself was for individuals, meaning that voters received a ballot on which they were able to mark the names of up to six candidates whom they supported (according to the number of seats allocated to the district). In other words, every Jerusalem resident participating in the election could vote for six names with complete freedom. It was not necessary to vote for four Muslims and two Christians or for candidates from only one party. If the total number of voters, approximately 39,000, is multiplied by the number of names each voter was allowed to choose – six – the result is approximately 234,000. The final tally shows that votes were cast for approximately 167,000 individual names. This means that voters, on average, chose only four names. It can be assumed that Hamas voters selected the movement's four candidates and were satisfied with that. However, other voters also voted only for those candidates to whom they felt close or who they considered most worthy.

The largest number of votes were cast for the Hamas candidate Ibrahim Abu Salem, who garnered 15,337 votes. Since the Hamas national list received approximately 16,000 votes in Jerusalem, it appears that almost all of the Hamas voters in

the city voted for Abu Salem. The remaining Hamas candidates Jerusalem received between 14,000 and 15,000 votes each, meaning that each one had the support of at least 85 percent of those people who voted for the Hamas list. Therefore, all of the candidates on Hamas' Change and Reform list in Jerusalem won places in parliament and now occupy the four seats that were allocated to Muslims. It is worthwhile to note that in the 1996 elections, the leading candidates in Jerusalem won approximately 18,000 votes each. These were Ahmad Qurei' (Abu 'Ala, who ran on behalf of Fateh) and Hanan Ashrawi (who ran as an independent).²¹ Hesitantly, it could be said that the level support for Hamas in Jerusalem in 2006 does not equal the support expressed for the Oslo process (or to the idea of democratic elections) in early 1996.

Returning to 2006, the candidate who received the largest number of votes in Jerusalem after the Hamas candidates was Hatem Abd al-Qader 'Id, an organizational Fateh field activist and former journalist who had served in the PLC as a representative of Jerusalem since 1996. As a member of parliament, he was very active and maintained a high media profile. In the Fateh primaries held prior to the 2006 elections, he came in first place and in the elections themselves he received 13,444 votes, which was 600 votes fewer than the fourth Hamas candidate and, therefore, he was not reelected. Taking into consideration that the Fateh national list received 13,698 votes in the city and the fact that he is not from a large family, it is clear how broad his support was within the movement and how significant his achievement. (It is also interesting to compare these results with those from the 1996 elections, when he won approximately 8,200 votes. The increased number of votes in 2006 is evidence of the fact that the public does not consider Fateh cut of a single cloth but rather distinguishes between the various candidates and appreciates active, honest parliamentarians like Abd al-Qader.) However, his achievement was not enough to re-win a place in the PLC. The second place Fateh candidate, Othman Abu Gharbiyye, received far fewer votes, only about 9,000. It is said that before the election, when Abu Gharbiyye asked acquaintances in Jerusalem to support him, they responded with comments like, "First make sure that your family supports you," a hint of an internal disagreement within the family. The candidates who had been "parachuted" onto the list, Ahmad Abd al-Rahman and Ahmad Ghneim (senior members of Fateh-Jerusalem) each received fewer than 8,000 votes. The only successful Fateh candidates in Jerusalem, who entered the PLC, were the Christians, whose seats were not seriously contested.

Thousands of voters cast ballots for the left. It is interesting that some candidates received more votes than their parties. A conspicuous example is Abd al-Latif Gheith who received more than 4,800 votes in the district elections while the PFLP's national list received only 2,135 votes in Jerusalem (slightly more than 5 percent of the total votes). It may be assumed that Gheith, in addition to being a familiar personality in Jerusalem political circles, was supported by his extended family (which originated in Hebron). In other words, there were some who voted for him out of "progressive" political motivations, while others were motivated by traditional factors.

Analysis of the votes for the district list shows that together, the four Hamas candidates received approximately 58,000 votes while the four official Fateh candidates for the Muslim seats received approximately 37,000 votes. However, as we noted above, there were 14 Fateh members who stood for election as independents. They received approximately 38,000 votes. This means that the overall number of votes received by Fateh members was greater than that received by Hamas candidates, even without taking into consideration the approximately 8,500 votes cast for Fateh's Christian candidates. Clearly, this does not mean that support for Fateh was actually greater than support for Hamas; the results of voting for the national lists is clear evidence of the general tendency. However, it does tell us that the balance of power between Hamas and Fateh is not 4:0 as the division of the "Muslim seats" indicate, but rather closer to 8:7.

The phenomenon of Fateh members competing outside of the party list was common throughout the territories (this also occurred in the 1996 elections when some of the independents beat official candidates, including in Jerusalem) but in the 2006 elections, which were the first two-party elections, it led to a weakening of the movement rather than to strengthening one internal Fateh camp at the expense of another. Since this was the case, Abu Mazen, as leader of Fateh, ordered that the seventy-four Fateh members who had competed against the official list in the sixteen electoral districts be expelled from the party. The relatively large number of Jerusalem residents among those expelled, approximately 20 percent, indicates that the crisis within Fateh is felt more strongly in Jerusalem than elsewhere.

As important as the distribution of voters among the lists and candidates is, the percentage of voters who cast ballots in each district is no less important as an indicator of public attitudes towards the political system. It is one of the substantive figures to be considered when analyzing the 2006 elections. In 1997, the Palestinian Central Elections Commission estimated that the number of residents in the Jerusalem district was about 324,000, approximately two-thirds of them within the municipal boundaries of the city. (This is an estimate because Israel prevented the Palestinian Bureau of Statistics to conduct a census in Jerusalem.) When elections were held a decade later, the population had reached approximately 400,000. The Central Election Commission estimated that approximately 161,000 of the residents were eligible voters and that approximately 114,000 eligible voters lived within the municipal boundaries of the city.

According to statistics gathered by the Palestinian Central Elections Commission, the voter turnout rate in Palestine as a whole was approximately 77.7 percent, whereas the voter turnout in the Jerusalem district, outside of the municipal boundaries of the city was close to 50 percent and among those living in Jerusalem, voter turnout was less than 16 percent, meaning that about 18,000 out of 114,000 potential voters actually cast a ballot.²² There is no doubt that this is a low figure but it is important to note that it is three times higher than the number of Jerusalem residents who participated in the presidential elections one year earlier and approximately four times higher than those who voted in the Jerusalem municipal elections. The primary reason for the growth between 2005 and 2006 is the participation of

Hamas supporters in the elections. Despite this, the percentage of political participation was still very low and, as we have noted, avoidance of action is one of the central characteristics of Palestinian politics in Jerusalem.

There are several explanations for the tendency of Jerusalem residents to avoid participating in the Palestinian elections. The most important is that Israel allowed only 6,300 people to vote within the boundaries of the city (only half of them actually did so) so that tens of thousands were forced to travel outside of the city in order to cast their ballot. The roadblocks permanently erected around Jerusalem made it difficult for them to travel to polling places in the suburbs and this deterred potential voters, especially since the flow of traffic at the roadblocks was not particularly speedy. The rumors about a severe Israeli reaction (such as canceling residency rights) towards those who voted in the elections and especially towards those who voted for Hamas, also deterred people from going to the polls. These reasons are joined by even deeper political reasons: the PA has no authority in Jerusalem and, therefore, it is less important to the residents of the city who is elected to its institutions. To this, one can add the lack of faith in the PA among Palestinian Jerusalemites, and the weakness of the Palestinian institutions in the city.

These elections, therefore, clearly reflected the state of the Palestinian political system in Jerusalem, its weaknesses, faults, ambitions, and fears. They also reflect the positions of Palestinian Jerusalemites. Those who are organized politically are no different from the overall Palestinian public in the territories, as can be seen in the similar voting patterns in Jerusalem and the territories. However, many others do not see themselves as part of the political game and certainly do not want to endanger their status as residents of Jerusalem.

However, these matters depend not only on the Palestinians in the city. The decision of whether or not they will remain under Israeli sovereignty or whether Israel will forgo its sovereignty over parts of the city, in favor of the PA, is largely dependent on the Israeli side. Israel, as these lines are being written, has yet to make its decision. Indeed, the voices calling for an Israeli withdrawal from the more distant neighborhoods of East Jerusalem are being heard more often, but at the same time the mayor elected in Jerusalem in November 2008, Nir Barkat, run under the slogan: "Jerusalem: to strengthen, not to divide." The Israeli debate is heard clearly in East Jerusalem and is received with mixed feelings. On a personal level, some express complete support for Israeli withdrawal and others fear it. On the political level, almost all Palestinians support Israeli withdrawal, but there are those who think that the Palestinians should accept any Israeli departure, while others say that Palestinians should insist on full withdrawal of Israeli to the line of June 4, 1967. However, both sides are convinced that a partial, unilateral withdrawal would not be a sufficient solution for the problem of Jerusalem and the conflict as a whole.

JERUSALEM 2010: CONCLUSION AND A LOOK TO THE FUTURE

Hamas victory in 2006 elections was followed by Israeli and US attempts to “punish” the Palestinians for their vote, and more importantly, by the creation of two separate Palestinian entities (since summer 2007): one in Gaza, led by Hamas, the other in the West Bank, led by Abu Mazen and Salam Fayyad’s emergency government (supported to a certain degree by Fateh). And though the Jerusalemites were affected by these developments less than the residents of the West Bank and Gaza, the Israeli war on Hamas influenced Palestinian political activity in Jerusalem as well. Following the abduction of the Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit in summer 2006, Israel arrested Hamas leaders in the West Bank and Jerusalem including cabinet members and members of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC). Israel also decided to revoke the Israeli identity cards (residency certificates) of Jerusalem’s four representatives to the PLC and the minister for Jerusalem affairs because of their membership in Hamas. The Muslim Brotherhood in Jerusalem was declared in summer 2007 as an illegal organization, and members of the Islamic movement in the city were arrested and charged. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) mounted a series of operations in Gaza Strip in which several hundred Palestinians were killed, and the Palestinians in Jerusalem responded with mass demonstrations, mainly during the Israeli operation Cast Lead in January 2009. These moves again made it clear that the political system and Palestinian reality in Jerusalem are not free-standing but rather an inseparable part of the overall relationship between Israel and the Palestinians. In other words, just as events in Jerusalem (especially, but not only, on the Haram) effect the entire Palestinian public, so do events in the Israeli–Palestinian arena effect the Palestinians living in East Jerusalem.

The abduction of Shalit, the arrest of senior Hamas officials, and operation Cast Lead demonstrated the true balance of power between the Palestinians and the Israelis. The Palestinians can occasionally mount a successful attack, maintain their fighting spirit and continue to fire rockets at the Jewish towns in the Negev, as a

symbol that the struggle is continuing, but Israel is capable of doing almost whatever it desires in the territories: enter the areas defined in the agreements as Area A to arrest members of parliament, impose closures or curfews, and mount military operations that exact large numbers of casualties (on the Palestinian side). As long as it benefits from the support of the United States, Israel is also able to neutralize the attempts of the international community to investigate its activities or stop its activities.¹ This was so during the Bush administration, but there are signs of change under the Obama administration, who criticized Israel for expanding Jewish settlements in East Jerusalem.

Indeed, if there is any change in the political activity regarding Jerusalem, it is not to be found in Palestinian or Israeli political behavior, but rather in the new policy of the Obama administration. The American demand to freeze construction in the settlements including East Jerusalem, and their concern regarding house demolishes in the 1967-annexed areas in Jerusalem, have trembled the political arena. The 2010 Israel-US dispute on construction in East Jerusalem was defined by the White House spokesperson to be the deepest crisis between the USA and Israel in two decades, thus one can rightly argue that the election of Obama might influence Jerusalem more than the victory of Hamas.²

The American opposition to Israeli building in the 1967-annexed parts of Jerusalem has shaken Israeli self-confidence to a certain degree, but the current power relations in the city are the result of forty-plus years of Israeli domination, that have been characterized by Israeli superiority in all fields. During these years, Israel has succeeded in completely changing the character of the urban space. The boundaries of Jerusalem were expanded and changed unrecognizably, as was the composition of its population. In the territory that was annexed to Israel, large expanses were expropriated from their Arab owners for the construction of Jewish neighborhoods. These neighborhoods are now home to some 190,000 Jewish Israelis (i.e., 40% of the population in the annexed areas are Israelis). This process has left the Palestinian neighborhoods and villages in the Jerusalem region without land available for construction, further weakening the Palestinian hold on the city. The Palestinian political and cultural centers in the city ceased to function following the Oslo Agreements, and even Palestinian daily presence in Arab Jerusalem decreased significantly as a result of the closure regime initiated by Israel since the mid-1990s. Al-Aqsa Intifada and the erection of the separation-security wall around Jerusalem isolated the Palestinians in Jerusalem from the Palestinian Authority even more, and made them more vulnerable to Israeli policies.

It is important to bear in mind that the route of the separation wall around Jerusalem (“the Jerusalem envelope”) includes most, but not all, of the Palestinian neighborhoods that were annexed to Jerusalem in 1967 in Israeli territory. Furthermore, it does not consider the daily needs of the Palestinians residing in those neighborhoods. The wall cuts through villages and neighborhoods, blocks the main routes to and from the city, conceals the horizon, prevents residents of the city’s rural hinterland from entering the city, foils access to religious, medical, and social centers in the city and leaves tens of thousands of “Jerusalem” residents outside the

entrance barriers. No less important, the wall disconnects the Palestinians in the city from the territories, changing Arab Jerusalem from a central city, the heart of a metropolis ranging from Ramallah in the north to Hebron in the south, into a marginal city. This is the real success of the Israeli efforts: Al-Quds, Arab Jerusalem, which was to have been the capital of the Palestinian State, has totally lost its status. The important institutions have abandoned it, whether because of Israeli pressure or because of the temptation of being closer to the Palestinian Authority's center of power in Ramallah. A vast majority of Palestinians cannot even approach the city and the Palestinian community in the city, which led the Palestinian national movement, has become marginal and negligible. Furthermore, Israel is yet to say its last word: in certain Israeli circles the idea that all of the Arab neighborhoods, other than the historical basin, should be removed from Jerusalem is gaining strength. If this is done, the Palestinians in the city will become an even smaller minority within the total population and their ability to oppose Israeli rule will decrease significantly. If this is not done, and a negotiated solution is not found, the tension in the city would increase.

What has happened in Jerusalem is part of a more general process, set in motion by Israel, to divide the Palestinian people and the Palestinian territories. Palestinians from the neighboring Arab states are usually not allowed to enter the Territories and, therefore, half of the Palestinian people is disconnected from its homeland; residents of the Gaza Strip are prevented from traveling to the West Bank; residents of the West Bank are prevented from traveling to the Gaza Strip; residents of most of the West Bank are forbidden to travel to the Jordan Valley; travel between areas of the West Bank is difficult and time-consuming because of the many barriers; residents of both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are not permitted to enter Jerusalem, let alone Israel. It seems that Israel hopes that this will eventually lead to a weakening of the Palestinian national identity and there are those who propose establishing two separate entities, one in the Gaza Strip and one in the West Bank, while leaving Jerusalem under exclusively Israeli control. In a way, all this could be considered a giant experiment in the construction of identities, one which tests the assumption that the separate Palestinian national identity (*wataniyya*), as opposed to the Arab national identity (*qawmiyya*), is the result of a historical process that took only a few decades and, therefore, it will take but a few more decades to turn the wheel back and cause the Palestinians to become assimilated into another entity or, at least, to disintegrate their national identity. Even if this is not a consciously formulated, explicit policy, Israeli moves in the field indicate that this is probably the policy. In addition to the geographic separation, non-recognition of the Palestinians' elected leadership and Israel's choice of unilateral action also point in this direction.

The residents of Jerusalem have no choice but to participate in this experiment. And though it is too early to determine what the outcome will be, it is possible to point to its ostensible success in the short-term: Palestinian society in Jerusalem is divided, weak, and confused, with a hybrid political identity and a question mark hanging over its political future. Political activity among Palestinian Jerusalemites

takes place only in limited circles and the low turn-out rate in the election is a symptom of this. Fateh, the movement that led the Palestinian struggle for independence for more than three decades has been weakened, and its activity in the city is almost unnoticed. The various movements are unable to develop a joint forum and there is no one who is capable of being a source of leadership and authority for the city's residents. The elected leadership, which is identified with Hamas, represents a large portion of the population but not the entire population. In any case, it is imprisoned or expelled and other activists in the movement live under constant threat of having their residency revoked, meaning they would be expelled from their native city, Jerusalem. The activity of left-wing and centrist parties is almost imperceptible. The residents' contact with the Palestinian Authority has decreased and many do not consider it a source of authority or a focal point of identity. The Authority has disappointed Palestinian society in general and the residents of Jerusalem even more so. Ironically, it is their connection to Israel that has allowed them to continue a relatively ordinary life even though the fighting between the sides continues. It is no wonder that many Palestinian nationalist activists now broadcast despair, though some believe that Fayyad's government and its efforts to gain power in East Jerusalem might bring about some positive change. Other than the Islamic activists who can point to the achievements of the Intifada – first and foremost the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip – many Palestinians feel that they have been beaten in the last round of the struggle and that their defeat in Jerusalem is almost complete. Many of those who believed in dialog as a way of resolving the conflict now think that Israel is not interested. Those who believe in the violent struggle are aware of the Palestinians' relative weakness. They are comforted by the thought that “what goes up, must come down” and even mighty Israel will lose some of its power. Occasionally, personal and political frustration pushes some of them to mount an attack of desperation.

For most Palestinians, the US–Israel debate over East Jerusalem is a sign of hope, but without functioning institutions in Jerusalem this cannot change the mood of passivity that reigns in East Jerusalem. The same is true for the Israeli–Palestinian joint activity in East Jerusalem. The protest against the settlements, especially in the Arab neighborhoods of Silwan and Sheikh Jarrah, have widened considerably in 2009 and 2010, and Israeli and Palestinian activists hold weekly demonstrations and activities in these two sites. However, the participation of Palestinians in these activities is rather limited. There are a few reasons for this: an emotional and ideological resistance to cooperate with Jews under the slogan of Jerusalem for All; lack of trust in the motivations of the Israeli activists; the atmosphere of passivity; lack of faith in the ability to change the situation in the city; lack of Palestinian leadership that calls for joint activity – and fear from the response of the Israeli authorities. Palestinians who participate in joint activities against house demolitions or against settlements expose themselves to Israeli revenge: police investigations, arrests, and the like. Thus, most of the joint activity is based on local activists in the Palestinian neighborhoods who wish to resist the system and have the courage to do so, rather than on activists organized by the Palestinian established movements.

Local leaders like Hatem Abd al-Qader do participate occasionally in the joint activities against the religious settlers of East Jerusalem, but they do not lead it.

Another basic cause for the relative inactivity of the Palestinian Jerusalemites is the fact that they disagree among themselves on fundamental questions regarding their future, including the degree to which they want to be connected to the Palestinian Authority and the level of their commitment to the armed struggle. New dilemmas are arising in the city's political circles: should the Jerusalemites set their own agenda or continue to be politically dependent on the Palestinian Authority? How should the special status of Jerusalem and its residents effect their political agenda? Is there a way to motivate the masses to act? Observers are unable to avoid asking how representative the political movements active in the city actually are.

In the midst of this chaos, it is possible to identify four principal approaches or states of mind currently prevailing in Palestinian-Jerusalemite society, but it is difficult to estimate their relative strengths. Each one of them has a completely different analysis of the current situation and the steps that ought to be taken. The first approach is the Islamic approach. Its members are characterized by religious belief and fervor. They have prior knowledge of how history will progress; they are convinced that all of the difficulties they are experiencing are only temporary and, in the end, Islam will prevail. Inside, they feel that they are part of a giant body that is spread over continents and historical eras; that they are continuing in the path of Omar Ibn al-Khattab, who conquered Jerusalem from the Byzantine empire, and of Sallah al-Din al-Ayyubi (Saladin), who freed it from the rule of Crusaders; that they are brothers of the Muslims fighting against oppression in Chechnya, Afghanistan, and around the globe. Even if Jerusalem is currently in the hands of foreigners, they still consider it a privilege to live in the holy city and crowd into its mosques. The presence of the Jews and their government is nothing more than a part of the divine plan and they know how it should be interpreted: this is the land where the heretics are to be judged on the Judgment Day and this is why Allah has brought them here. Even Israel's harsh measures do not change their consciousness: they are convinced that the more the Palestinians are oppressed, the more the masses will come to believe that Islam is the solution. From their perspective, the worse it becomes, the better it will be. Any (conscious) feeling of inferiority is foreign to them and they certainly do not share the identity crisis that many of their peers are experiencing. During the Oslo period and the al-Aqsa Intifada, both armed cells and the new Palestinian leadership originated in Islamic circles. They made the mosques into sources of identity and focal points for activity and brotherhood. If someone needs to borrow money, a blood donation or a place to hide for the night, he can find it easily. Within themselves, they are divided into groups and subgroups but outwardly, they have more in common than not. Among the Islamic groups, those close to Hamas are the most prominent; however, the Liberation Party (*Hizb al-Tahrir*) is enjoying a certain rejuvenation in the city and in the territories in general. Members of the *Salafiyun*, *Da'wa* and Islamic Jihad can also be met in the city. All of them lift their eyes to al-Aqsa and consider themselves its protectors. Beyond spreading their doctrine in classes and mosques, they have a horizon for political

activity that the others lack: the mass gatherings for prayer. When Israel prevents men under age 45 from praying in the mosques on the Haram, they gather at the roadblocks around the city and hold mass prayer services there. They did this during Al-Aqsa Intifada and during the Second War in Lebanon, in the summer of 2006 and in 2009. These are the largest public events in the city, exceptions in the flat landscape of political activity.

The second prevailing mood is not a political approach. Quite the opposite. It is a mood of passiveness, driven partially by a feeling of inability to change the situation and recognition of Israel's power. The difficult economic situation and dependence on Israeli sources of income (employment and stipends) reinforce this attitude. The people who hold this position are not necessarily apathetic towards events but they do not believe in their ability to act. Consciously or unconsciously they avoid taking action. They place their trust on external forces: the Palestinian Authority, the Arab world, and international public opinion, while concentrating their personal efforts on survival or providing for their families. Some of them have always acted in this way; some are young people who grew up in the Oslo years or during the al-Aqsa Intifada and have never had any political affiliation, but others are "people disappointed with Fateh" who were active during and after the first Intifada but now feel helpless. The Palestinian identity of these people is comatose. They prefer to stand aside and see what the fate of the emerging Palestinian entity will be and what Israel plans for them. When speaking with Israelis, they generally avoid the word "occupation," emphasize their good relationships with Jews and their distance from politics. Even if their home is destroyed by the municipality or Israel prevents a relative of them to unite with his family in the city, they respond to this as a personal problem that needs to be solved on the personal level and not as a national problem that requires organization. However, their passivity is not an unchanging constant. They also have red lines, and religious and national emotions. Harm to Islamic holy sites in the city will bring many of them out for the struggle, and within a short time they become indistinguishable from Islamic activists. On the other hand, a reasonable compromise with Israel, which offers them hope and dignity, will also benefit from their support.

The third approach has few adherents: people who believe that it is important to actively work on finding a solution to the problem of Jerusalem, sometimes in cooperation with Israelis. Though many of them are believers, they neither place their trust in Allah nor avoid taking action. It is hard to evaluate how much support they have among the public, but it may be assumed that if they can successfully bring about an improvement in the quality of life in the city (but not only economically, also on the national level), there will be support for them. This group includes both members of Fateh, and past and present members of the left-wing fronts, who believe that a violent struggle in Jerusalem will benefit neither the Palestinians who live there nor the Palestinians in general. Their Palestinian identity is strong and active, as is their local identity as Jerusalemites. They put forward creative ideas such as establishing two municipalities within the city, ensuring the participation of all Jerusalem residents in municipal questions and other ways of distributing authority.

Their survival as an influential factor is frequently dependent on the good will of the Israeli side: without partners, their faith in coexistence and joint action is pointless. The tendency of Israeli officialdom to adopt unilateral moves is a source of weakness for them, as they are well aware. In any case, they continue to work within their communities and in cooperation with like-minded Israelis on behalf of their city. Some of them are theoreticians, whose life experience goes back to the first Intifada. Many others are young field activists who grew up (politically) during the second Intifada and believe in non-violence and in the idea of sharing Jerusalem. They are the very group that leads the joint Palestinian-Israeli struggle in the city.

The fourth approach in the city (and in Palestinian society generally), which was the leading approach for many years, is nationalism *a-la* Fateh. Its weakness is evident but it should not be disregarded and it is certainly too early to eulogize it. Many of its members have joined one of the other three approaches listed above: some have adopted an Islamic worldview, even if they have not joined one of the Islamic movements, others have ceased playing an active role, and still others are active in alternative political frameworks. However, many have remained loyal to the basic nationalist ideas. The debates within Fateh over the armed struggle and the relationship with Israel, and the intra-organizational struggle for control make it difficult for members to focus on a clear plan of action and weaken the movement. However, reorganization of Fateh has the potential to revitalize and reactivate it, and members of this current hope that the Fateh sixth conference that was held in Bethlehem in August 2009 is a sign of a positive change. The ability of Fateh in Jerusalem was evident in the results of the 2006 elections for the PLC: the Fateh movement and its candidates, both official and previous, won majorities in several polling places in the city. The election results in the al-Tur neighborhood are an interesting example, seemingly marginal but very instructional. In al-Tur, Fateh won an absolute majority, 274 votes out of the 313 ballots cast. More important than the percentage of votes cast for the movement's list is the fact that in al-Tur, unlike other polling places, all six official Fateh candidates (including Christians¹²) received more than 225 votes. This means that party affiliation overcame rivalries, competition, and other loyalties. This is the result of Fateh's high-quality organization in the neighborhood, the preparatory work done there, the Fateh-controlled club that is active all year, and the neighborhood personalities who lead it. For our purposes, it is also a sign that in certain conditions, Fateh might be capable of functioning properly and re-creating its successes.

Although it would seem that an abyss separates the four approaches described above, the boundaries between them is not always rigid. They have more than a little in common: all of them are fighting to maintain Arab life and Arab-Palestinian identity in the city. The Islamists do this while emphasizing the holy places of Islam. Most of the politically passive people, do it through their daily lives; their struggle to survive in the city and live in it has become part of the Palestinian struggle to preserve the city's Arab nature. The struggle to build another home is a struggle for space. The battle for a blue Israeli identity card is a battle for the right to remain in the city. Even if they would not phrase it this way, their struggle is part of

the pan-Palestinian struggle. This is certainly true of adherents to the nationalist approach. Even those who believe in dialogue, believe in dialogue for the purpose of strengthening and solidifying the Palestinian presence in the city. They accept the Jewish presence without accepting Jewish hegemony. In this way, a relatively new phenomenon is being created in and around Jerusalem: even Islamic forces do not shun joint activity with Israelis, to the extent that the purpose is to call the Israeli occupation into question, strengthen the Arab hold on the city, and enter into a dialogue regarding the city's future.

The struggle between Israel and the Palestinians over East Jerusalem, al-Quds, is not over. Even if Israel has proved its superiority during al-Aqsa Intifada, its victory is not complete. As a rule, the Palestinians do not accept its claim to authority in East Jerusalem, especially not the Old City and al-Haram al-Sharif. The Palestinians in Jerusalem itself, who are in a relatively weak position, continue to work in order to strengthen the Arab identity of the city, strengthen the national (and Islamic) consciousness of its residents and reinforce the Palestinian hold on the city. The neglect of the Arab neighborhoods by the Israeli authorities, and the lack of attention to the needs of the population except for security reasons, only strengthen the belief that Israel will not be able to rule these areas forever. Thus meanwhile, each group among the Palestinian populace works with the means at its disposal and emphasizes its particular focal points. This is their contribution to the struggle, which can be termed as *sumud*, steadfastness (which is the common nationalistic term) or *ribat* (an Islamic term, preferred by Hamas circles, that gives religious connotation to *sumud*). Occasionally a militant group, or an individual, would mount an attack to remind both Israelis and Palestinians that the military option has not been abandoned. Palestinian leaders will continue to voice the demand to sovereignty in Jerusalem, in the framework of negotiations with Israel or to the ears of the international community.

Unilateral steps taken by Israel, such as reshaping the municipal borders of Jerusalem will enhance Israel's relative strength in the remaining territory but will not lead to a fundamental change in the life of the Palestinians in the city or to Palestinian acceptance of the verdict. Activists of the nationalist movements in Jerusalem – the Democratic Front, the People's Front and Fateh – have already made strong statements against excluding Palestinian neighborhoods from the boundaries of the city, because they know that it would weaken the Palestinian communities in the holy city. The Islamists have additional reason to oppose this strenuously: changing the boundaries would lead to the exclusion of tens of thousands more Muslims from al-Quds and its holy mosques. There are calls for a broad popular struggle if Israel attempts to implement a plan of this sort.³ However, as noted above, it is not entirely clear that these politicians can actually bring out the forces in response to their call – and it is clear that the current Israeli leadership opposes this idea on national ground.

The situation can be summarized as follows: in the current balance of power Israel has the power to make unilateral moves in the city, such as accelerating Jewish building in East Jerusalem or unilaterally disconnecting Palestinian neighborhoods

from the municipal boundaries of Jerusalem. So far, Israel uses its power to promote Jewish settlement in all part of East Jerusalem, both in the giant post-67 Jewish neighborhoods, and in enclaves within Palestinian communities. US new position has made this policy more difficult to implement, but has not changed the direction of the Israeli policy.

A unilateral Israeli disengagement from Palestinian neighborhoods in the city would be perceived as aimed at perpetuating Israeli control in the Old City and its environs and preventing Palestinians – Muslims and Christians – from entering it. This will increase the hostility towards Israel and position it as a powerful, hostile force. (This is not to argue that an arrangement regarding the joint management of the city will necessarily lead to Israel's acceptance by the Arab and Islamic worlds, but it would probably lead to a slight decline in the level of hostility towards Israel.)

Therefore, it seems that there are currently three principal options available to Israel, none is easy to adopt: (a) maintaining the status quo, that is, maintaining Israeli control in all of “greater Jerusalem” – which is what Israel tries to do. However, the term “status quo” is somehow misleading because in Israeli eyes it implies strengthening the Jewish control of the entire city (by intensifying Jewish settlements in all parts of greater Jerusalem including the holy basin, giving incentives to Jews to move to Jerusalem and to Palestinians to leave) as has be done for years. This is the policy that the current Israeli leadership would have been glad to implement, but Israel's dependence on the US and the international opposition to it make this option difficult. (b) Unilateral Israeli disengagement from the Arab neighborhoods in East Jerusalem while strengthening Jewish control in the holy basin – this option might make the control over the city's Palestinian population easier, but is not supported by the majority in Netanyahu government who believe in “greater Jerusalem,” neither by many Palestinians. (c) Disengagement as part of an arrangement that insures joint management of the Old City and its holy places; this “peaceful” direction option is problematic because of the opposition to it in the Israeli political system, and because of the lack of a Palestinian legitimate leadership that can commence negotiations on Jerusalem.

Selecting the best possible alternative ought to be accomplished according to the ideology of the decision-makers and the potential results. However, Israeli society is characterized by ideological disagreements in all that relates to the conflict with the Palestinians, and the situation is characterized by a profound tension between the national-religious ideology and the potential negative consequences of its implementation. As a result, the ability of the Israeli government to maintain the “expanding status-quo,” is limited, and there is a search for a new one.

In the Palestinian side the situation is not any better. Disagreements regarding the basic questions of whether to halt the armed struggle and negotiate with Israel have split the Palestinian political system and Palestinian society. The feeling that the gap between the Israeli and Palestinian positions is almost unbridgeable strengthens those who oppose negotiations on Jerusalem on both sides. This gives the Israelis, who are the rulers of both parts of the city, a significant advantage. Thus, the Israeli authorities were able to prevent the cultural activities organized by the

Arab League and local institutions under the title “al-Quds: the capital of Arab Culture 2009,” and have been able to arrest activists and minimize joint Israeli–Palestinian activities against the settlements in East Jerusalem. The combination of rightwing government under Binyamin Netanyahu (elected in 2009) and rightwing city council under Nir Barkat (elected in November 2008) is ideal for the settlers of East Jerusalem, and less promising to the Palestinians who live in the city. And as is seen now, in spring 2010, any significant change is not likely to happen unless there is a substantive change in the balance of power between Israel and the Palestinians (e.g., by a real change in US policy) and unless there is a change in the consciousness of Israelis and Palestinians that includes complete, mutual acceptance and a real willingness to share in (or partition) Jerusalem.⁴

NOTES

Introduction

- 1 The most conspicuous examples were the attack on the Mercaz Harav Yeshiva in March 2008 and the “Tractor Attack” in July 2008. In the former, Ala’a Abu Dheim, a resident of East Jerusalem (Jabel Mukabber), murdered eight high school students. He worked in the Jewish community as a mini-bus driver and is not known to have acted in the framework of any organization. In the latter case, Hussam Dweiat, a resident of Sur Baher, ran over and killed three Jews while driving a tractor down Yaffo Street, the central street of West Jerusalem. Dweiat worked for Jews, had a Jewish girlfriend and, with her, a Jewish child. They separated long before the attack and the mother and child now live in a settlement over the Green Line. Dweiat was not a member of any Palestinian organization and, according to his neighbors, was an alcoholic.

Prologue

- 1 The material regarding Mashahara is taken from records of his questioning in Jerusalem District Court, Case 1263/00 and personal acquaintance with some of the people involved. On Shahin see also his file in Judea military court, 1436/04.
- 2 Graham Usher, “Facing Defeat: The Intifada Two Years On,” *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 32:2 (Winter 2003), pp 23–25.

1 Jerusalem: capital of Palestine and focus of identity, 1917–93

- ★ Al-Fateh movement was established in the late 1950s, and did not join the PLO until 1968 (though some of its members did). It started its military attacks on Israel on January 1, 1965, and became part of the PLO, and actually the main movement in it, in 1968. In 1969 the head of Fateh, Yasser Arafat, was elected chairman of the PLO.
- 1 See, for example, the declaration of Christian religious figures against selling land to Jews and extending the sanctity of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher to the entire country in the newspaper *al-Jami’ah al-Arabiyya* of February 12, 1935 (immediately following the proclamation of a *fatwa* in a similar vein by Hajj Amin).
 - 2 On the intention to purchase the Wailing Wall, see Tom Segev, *One Palestine Complete* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2000); on the tension in connection with the Wailing

- Wall preceding the events of 1929, see *ibid*, chapter 13; and Yehoshua Porat, *The Emergence of the Arab-Palestinian National Movement, 1918–1929* (London: Frank Cass, 1974), chapter 7.
- 3 The 1930 initiative was of a young man from the ultra-Orthodox Meah Sha'arim neighborhood of Jerusalem. Word of the plan reached Haganah commanders in Jerusalem, and they sent a member of the movement to “eliminate” the Jewish youth. The only evidence to this is a testimony of the Haganah’s member, Aryeh Butrimovich, who kidnapped the head of this radical group (see Haganah Archives, testimony 07. 09 [previous number 2831.00]). On Jewish radical activity in 2005 see *The Jerusalem Post*, 2 March 2005.
 - 4 On Jewish activism concerning the Temple Mount after 1967 and the complicated relations with government elements, see Nadav Shragai, *Mount of Dispute* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1995, Hebrew).
 - 5 Uziel Shmaltz, “The Arab Population in Jerusalem,” *Hamizrah he-Hadash*, 34 (1992), p 9 (Hebrew).
 - 6 Anwar al-Khatib al-Tamimi, *With Salah a-Din in Jerusalem* (Jerusalem: 1990), pp 125–30 (Arabic).
 - 7 For useful analysis of Jerusalemites-Jordanian relations see Naim Sofer, “The Political Status of Jerusalem in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, 1948–67,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, 12:1 (1976), 73–94. See also Osama Halabi, *The Municipality of Arab Jerusalem* (Jerusalem: Passia, 1993, Arabic), pp 19–20.
 - 8 Moshe Shemesh, “The IDF Raid On Samu’: The Turning-Point in Jordan’s Relations with Israel and the West Bank Palestinians,” *Israel Studies*, 7:2 (2002), pp 153–56.
 - 9 al-Khatib (op cit., note 6), pp 95–96.
 - 10 The memorandum on founding the council is quoted by David Farhi, “The Muslim Council in East Jerusalem and in Judea and Samaria Since the Six-Day War (Hebrew),” *Hamizrah he-Hadash*, 28:1–2 (1979), pp 5–11 and 20.
 - 11 *Ibid*; see also David Ronen, *The Year of the Shabak: Deployment in Judea and Samaria, First Year* (Tel Aviv: Ministry of Defense, 1989, Hebrew), p 36; see also the autobiography of Sheikh Abd al-Hamid al-Sayeh, *Palestine, No Prayer under Bayonets* (Beirut: Institute of Palestine Studies, 1994, Arabic).
 - 12 Interview with H’, August 27, 2006, Jerusalem.
 - 13 Yifrach Zilberman, *Radical Palestinian Islam in Jerusalem* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 1993, Hebrew), pp 4–5.
 - 14 On activity of Fateh in West Bank universities during this period see Hillel Frisch, “The Palestinian Movement in the Territories: the Middle Command,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, 29:2 (1993), pp 258–61.
 - 15 Anne Latendresse, *Jerusalem: Palestinian Dynamics, Resistance and Urban Change 1967–1994* (Jerusalem: Passia, 1995), p 43.
 - 16 Yezid Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p 110; Neil Patrick (ed.), *Palestinians in Profile* (Jerusalem: Panorama, 1993), pp 247–48.
 - 17 Sayigh, *ibid*, pp 163–64. For a Shabak perspective on the affair, see Ronen, op cit, pp 87–88. Hebrew.
 - 18 Biographical details on Husseini on the website of the association founded in his name www.fhf-pal.org/faisal/fcul1.htm.
 - 19 Interview with one of the Intifada’s organizing leaders in Jerusalem, July 31, 2006.
 - 20 Abraham Ashkenasi, *Palestinian Identities and Preferences; Israel’s and Jerusalem’s Arabs* (New York: Praeger, 1992), p 127.
 - 21 See Michael Roman, “The Influence of the Intifada on Jewish-Arab Relations in Jerusalem (Hebrew),” *Hamizrah he-Hadash*, 34 (1992), pp 162–77.
 - 22 Conversation with a member of the Popular Front leadership in Jerusalem during the Intifada period, August 7, 2006, Jerusalem.
 - 23 For details of contacts during that period see Menachem Klein, *Jerusalem, the Contested City* (New York: New York University Press in association with the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 2001), pp 129–51.

24 Conversation with a member of the Palestinian National Council, August 2, 2006, Jerusalem.

2 Capital in decline: the political process and the downward slide of Al-Quds (Jerusalem) 1993–2000

- 1 One prominent case of victims of Molotov Cocktails in Jerusalem occurred in early September 1993 when the cell of Bader Hirbawi and Bassam Idris threw Molotov Cocktails at celebrants at a Bar Mitzvah party in the Har Zion Hotel, critically wounding three of them. See High Court Case in misc. crim. app. 6317/94, presiding judge, Yizhak Zamir.
- 2 On 'Attun and his band, see the Islamic website www.sabiroon.org; additional details are based on the author's acquaintance with a fellow member of the cell, Muhammad Issa, and on talks with him prior to his arrest.
- 3 A conversation with a member of the Hamas leadership in the Gaza Strip, who had participated in this debate and was among those who changed their minds and favored targeting civilians, July 1996, Gaza; see also Khaled Hroub, *Hamas: Political Thought and Practice* (Washington D.C.: Institute for Palestine Studies, 2000), pp 246–47.
- 4 Interviews with those close to the cell, and see also my "The Last Battle of the Hamas Cell", *Kol Ha'ir*, October 21, 1994, pp 46–49.
- 5 See Klein, pp 212–13, based on public surveys by Khalil Shikaki. The data indicate that Palestinian opposition to terror against civilians rose from about 33% at the beginning of 1995 to about 70% in March 1996.
- 6 Regarding the demonstrations and the response of the police see investigations in the case of Jamal Abu Nijma vs the State of Israel, Jerusalem Magistrate's Court, case 19962/99.
- 7 Interview with Preventive Security officer, Jerusalem, August 21, 2006.
- 8 Hillel Cohen, "The Palestinian Security Services Have Begun Operating in the Eastern Part of the City," *Kol Ha'ir*, July 15, 1994, p 19. Based on conversations with criminals, collaborators, and arbitrators in East Jerusalem.
- 9 Husni Shahin, head of the committee against drugs in Jerusalem, stated to the news agency *Palestine Today* that of 130 deaths from overdoses during 2006, about 100 occurred in Jerusalem and its suburbs, but that is not to be taken as an exact figure. And see www.paltoday.com/arabic/news.php?id=32078 (last accessed 14 May 2007) for accusations about the active role of Israel in distributing drugs and/or ignoring drug dealing in the eastern part of the city. The Palestinian police report published on the internet site of the PA Ministry of Information raises similar accusations and it points to Jerusalem as a center of commerce in and use of narcotics: www.minfo.gov.ps/index.php?scid=2&pid=564 (last accessed August 2007).
- 10 For the exact wording of the letter see Sami F. Musallam, *The Struggle for Jerusalem* (Jerusalem: Passia, 1996), pp 39–40. Regarding the ministerial committee, see *The Jerusalem Post*, June 18, 1994, also cited in Musallam, p 56.
- 11 The letter is at the disposal of the author.
- 12 Detention request and testimonies, file 196/96 Magistrate's Court, Jerusalem. Recently, Shabane has been serving as a senior adviser in the office of the governor of the Jerusalem district, then, in 2010, accused the PA of corruption, see www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/1149660.html (last accessed 19 August 2010).
- 13 Interview with Reuven Berko, August 22, 2006, Givatayim.
- 14 Conversation with the customary arbitrator who was kidnapped and later released, August 10, 2006, Jerusalem.
- 15 Nadav Shragai, "Jerusalem is Not the Problem, It is the Solution," from Moshe Amirav (ed.), *Mister Prime Minister: Jerusalem* (Jerusalem: Carmel, 2006), pp 23–69 (Hebrew).
- 16 According to Israel, PA elements were involved in several attacks on settlements. One major example is of General Ghazi Jbali, the commander of the National Security forces, who was allegedly behind the shots fired at settlements in Sameria. Israel cancelled his

- VIP certificate and demanded his immediate extradition to Israeli hands. The PA refused. His name was removed from the list of wanted by Israel only in the Wye Agreements (October 1998). See also the internet website of the IDF Southern Command www1.idf.il/darom/site/he/darom.asp?pi=10335&pageNo=2 (last accessed August 2007).
- 17 See also Klein, pp 262–66.
 - 18 For more information on the activity of the Palestinian Intelligence Service in this sphere, the method of recruiting agents and methods of operation, see the file State of Israel vs Nadia Dabash, Jerusalem District Court, criminal case 425/97.
 - 19 Member of the previously existing Palestinian Parliament, Hatem Abd al-Qader Eid, said at a meeting of candidates before the elections of January 2006 – organized by the Lawyers' Club in Jerusalem – that Arafat had allocated millions of dollars to buying land in Jerusalem that had fallen into the hands of swindlers. He added that the investigation was in the hands of the public prosecutor. See *al-Quds* electronic newspaper www.alquds.com/qinside.php2opt=3&id=24824 (last accessed 11 March 2007).
 - 20 Interview with Reuven Berko, see note 13.
 - 21 Klein, pp 201–4.
 - 22 Muhannad Abd al-Hamid, *al-Quds Bayna Istratejiyatayn* (Jerusalem Between Two Strategies) (Arabic). Ramallah, PA, Ministry of Information, 1996; PA, Ministry of Information, *Talwid al-Quds: Haqa'iq wa-Arqaam* (Judaization of Jerusalem: Facts and Figures) (Arabic). Ramallah, 1995. For background and additional information see Amir Heshin, "East Jerusalem – Policy Versus Reality," *Hamizrah he-Hadash*, 34 (1992), pp 178–92; and B'tselem, the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, *Policy of Discrimination: Land Confiscation, Planning and Building in East Jerusalem* (Jerusalem: B'tselem, 1995).
 - 23 Heshin, pp 182–83.
 - 24 Binyamin Lubetkin, head of the Ownership and Registration Branch in the Israel Lands Administration, to the Assistant General Manager of the ILA. Uri Baydatz, "Igum Annual Report for the Years 1973–74," Appendix 2 (unnumbered pages, in the author's possession).
 - 25 Jerusalem Center for Social and Economic Rights, *Human Rights Violations in Occupied Arab Jerusalem* (Jerusalem, 2000); and an earlier report of Betsalem and the Center for the Defense of the Individual, *The Quiet Transfer: Revoking Palestinians' Residence Status in East Jerusalem* (Jerusalem, 1997).
 - 26 A broad spectrum of information on "doubtful means" used by the settlers and the state in order to take over Palestinian property in East Jerusalem is found in a report written by Haim Klugman, the Director General of the Ministry of Justice during the mid-1990s. That report has still never been officially published. An individual case, for example, can be found in the decision of the Jerusalem District Court, civil case 1185/96 in which the judge decided that the Elad Association which purchases homes in Silwan had concealed documents regarding this case from the court and that "the testimony of David Beerli (head of the Association) was not trustworthy." Details of the involvement of state officials having an interest in illegally controlling property are found in the Jerusalem District file 895/91 dealing with possession of the central building in which Jews were living in Silwan – the Abassi family home. In this file it is determined that the Custodian of Absentee Property (who worked in collaboration with the Elad Association) acted in bad faith when he pronounced the entire property to be abandoned, even though some of the owners were present in Israel.

3 Collapse of the capital: al-Aqsa Intifada and the armed struggle

- 1 For an analysis of Palestinian views about the militarization of the Intifada see Hillel Frisch, "Debating Palestinian Strategy in al-Aqsa Intifada", *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 15:2 (2003), pp 61–80.

- 2 Raviv Druker and Ofer Shelah, *Boomerang: Failure of the Leadership in the Second Intifada* (Jerusalem: Keter, 2005) (in Hebrew).
- 3 On this theme see the comprehensive book by Yezid Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1997).
- 4 Report of the al-Qanun Association, January 4, 2001, quoted in the Hamas website www.palestine.info.net/arabic/palestoday/dailynews/2001/feb01/5_2.htm (last accessed August 2007).
- 5 Menachem Klein, *Jerusalem, the Contested City* (New York: New York University Press in association with the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 2001).
- 6 See the full report at www.intelligence.org/sp/heb_n/ct_iss_b.htm (last accessed October 2006).
- 7 Publication [without any title] which includes complete data about the suicide bombings, on the website of the Office of the Prime Minister, www.pmo.gov.il (last accessed 12 August 2009).
- 8 *Ibid.*
- 9 On Abu Teir and his connections, see the file of his trial, The State of Israel vs Muhammad Abu Teir, SCF (Serious Crime File) 5027/02, Jerusalem District Court.
- 10 Report of the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, at the Israeli Heritage and Commemoration Center (IICC). www.intelligence.org.il/sp/c_t/s_report/sep1_04.htm.
- 11 Interview with Wa'el Qasem, published in a number of Islamic internet websites. Read on February 28, 2006 at website: www.palintefada.com/vb/archive/index.php/t-14.html
- 12 Press Announcement from the Prime Minister's Office, August 21, 2002, www.pmo.gov.il (last accessed 12 August 2009).
- 13 The interview mentioned in n11 above, and court file State of Israel vs Wa'el Qasem and partners, Jerusalem District Court, SCF 5071/02.
- 14 SCF 776/04. At the same time as the attack in the Jerusalem café, there was an additional suicide attack alongside the Tzrifin Army Base, initiated by the Ramallah command, in which nine persons were killed.
- 15 State of Israel vs Amro Abed al-Aziz, Jerusalem District Court, SCF 775/04.
- 16 Military Prosecutor vs Salah Subhi Dar Musa, Judea Military Court, file 4404/03.
- 17 Louie 'Odeh vs Military Prosecutor; Khaled Halabi vs the Military Prosecutor; Military Appeals Court for Judea and Samaria and Gaza, Appeal 2164/04 and 2165/04.
- 18 See State of Israel vs Bilal 'Odeh, Jerusalem District Court, SCF 4049/01, who was accused of bringing the boobytrapped watermelon and the explosive charge into the restaurant. On the operations of the Popular Front in Jerusalem in general, see "Expert Opinion" written by the Security Services ("Amir" from the Counterterrorism Branch); in the file of State of Israel vs Rasem Abeidat et al, Jerusalem District Court, SCF 841/05. This opinion deals with social, political, and military events together, with the objective of illuminating the connections between the three planes in operations of the front in Jerusalem.
- 19 State of Israel vs Malek Bkeirat, Jerusalem District Court, SCF 5005/02; for descriptions of Bkeirat, his family, his activity, and his experience while in prison from a point of view that identifies with him and with his struggle, see for example www.alusraalleebia.com/muntada/forumdisplay.php?f=18 (last accessed October 2006).
- 20 A quote from his statement in the police station, State of Israel vs Musa Sleiman and Raed Zeitawi, Jerusalem District Court, Motion for Release 1750/02 and 1752/02.
- 21 State of Israel vs Ahmad Haweis, Jerusalem District Court, Motion for Release 2496/01.
- 22 State of Israel vs Salhab and al-Ghul, Jerusalem District Court, file 1028/01.
- 23 Excerpt from statement during interrogation, see State of Israel vs Marwan Barghouthi, Tel Aviv District Court, SCF 1158/02.
- 24 Conversation with a member of the Fateh leadership in Jerusalem, July 2006, Jerusalem.
- 25 State of Israel vs Marwan Barghouthi, Tel Aviv District Court, SCF 1158/02; and in the matter of Biankini, see appeal of Ahmad Shahin vs the Military Prosecutor, Judea and Samaria Court of Appeals, File 2769/04.

- 26 Estate of Ahmad al-Ghul et al vs Habad Kolel et al, High Court of Justice, Civil Appeal 805/79.
- 27 The suspicions against some members of the family were proved unfounded, and interrogators and officers from the minority branch who had been involved in falsely incriminating them were put on trial for using prohibited methods of interrogation, untruthfully reporting to the State Prosecutor, and more. It was a scandal that arose in the Jerusalem district police department, and although the highest levels were not charged, the court found that apparently they had given their tacit agreement to the violent methods employed by the minority branch interrogators. The Jerusalem district court found four of the policemen guilty (Criminal File 576/91), and the High Court of Justice acquitted one of them (Criminal Appeal 7461/95).
- 28 See State of Israel vs Ishaq al-Ghul, Jerusalem District Court, Criminal File 430/04; State of Israel vs Daoud al-Ghul, Jerusalem District Court, 6896/04; State of Israel vs Qunbar Jamil and Sonoqrot 'Amer, Jerusalem District Court, Criminal File 426/04.
- 29 State of Israel vs 'Ala Mahmoud and Muhammad Mahmoud, Jerusalem District Court, SCF 5016/02.
- 30 State of Israel vs Hussein Dirbas, Jerusalem District Court, SCF 5014/02; and State of Israel vs Hamze Dirbas, Jerusalem District Court File 5012/02.
- 31 See for example Jerusalem District Court, Motion for Release 2654/01; Motion for Release 6183/04; Criminal File 326/04.
- 32 Conversation with activist in "Isawiyye, August 2006.
- 33 State of Israel vs Osama Dari, Jerusalem District Court, Criminal File 2031/06; State of Israel vs Muhammad 'Ibeid et al, *ibid*, Criminal File 2031/06. It would seem that the approach of the courts to punish "ideological transgressions" more severely had filtered down to the probation officers, but that is a subject for research of a totally different kind.
- 34 See State of Israel vs Isma'il Wai and 'Imad Abbasi, Jerusalem District Court SCF 632/03 and State of Israel vs Abou Rammuz, Jerusalem District Court, Criminal File 1260/00.
- 35 State of Israel vs John Does, Jerusalem District Court, SCF 5015/02, and appeal to the High Court of Justice according to 1789/03 and 1821/03. See *Nidaa al-Quds* (the online newspaper of the Islamic Jihad), February 11, 2002 for the assertion that he was killed by the policemen after his arrest.
- 36 The games take place in recent years, in Jerusalem and Hebron (the city of origin of the Abu Mayyale family).

4 Political action in the shadow of the al-Aqsa Intifada

- 1 On demonstrations the party held to commemorate the anniversary of ending the Caliphate see article in the *Dunia al-Watan* newspaper, August 26, 2006, www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news.php?go=show&id=54208 (last accessed 19 August 2010). Readers' reactions express various attitudes towards the movement, including accusations of receiving financing from the Shabak or from Britain. The official position of the movement as presented by a member who responded is that every individual is entitled to join the Jihad, but the party as a party does not do so because it must be done under the guidance of the Caliph, as in the days of Muhammad.
- 2 The state of Israel vs Ahmad Abu Nab and Nizar Abu Rammuz, Jerusalem District Court, Criminal File 362/04 Motion For Release 6364/04.
- 3 See information in YNET of the same day, www.ynet.co.il/articles/1,7340,L-1432090,00.html (last accessed 19 August 2010).
- 4 According to press releases of the Palestinian Ministry of Information, various dates www.oppc.pna.net (last accessed 19 August 2010).
- 5 See interview conducted with her by the Wafa – Palestinian News Agency in spring 2005. Published in electronic newspaper *al-Sabah* www.alsbah.net/alsbah_nuke/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=7177 (last accessed 26 January 2007).

- 6 Descriptions by members of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jerusalem who participated in the event as told to the author in 2006–7.
- 7 For High Court of Justice decisions from recent years in this matter see Bagatz 6932/04 The Temple Mount Faithful vs Police Officer Ilan Franko; High Court of Justice 5332/05 the Temple Mount Faithful vs Police Officer Ilan Franko; Bagatz 6225/06 the Temple Mount Faithful vs Police Officer Ilan Franko. Judge Vitkon ruled thus for the first time in 1968 in Bagatz 222/68 Nationalist Circles, Registered Association vs Minister of Police, stating that without a doubt it is the right of Jews to pray on the Mount, as noted by the president of the High Court of Justice Aaron Barak, file 2697/04, Gershon Salomon vs OC Jerusalem district of the Police.
- 8 See for example State of Israel vs Ahmad Abu Sara, Jerusalem District Court, Criminal File 1242/00; State of Israel vs Mansour Hashima, Jerusalem Magistrate's Court, Criminal File 3579/01.
- 9 State of Israel vs Muhammad Abu Qteish, Jerusalem Magistrate's Court, Motion for Release 7085/00; Muhammad Abu Qteish vs the State of Israel, Supreme Court, Motion for Release 127/01.
- 10 State of Israel vs Abu Zahra, Motion for Release (Jerusalem District) 4818/03.
- 11 For closing order against these institutions see State of Israel, Ministry of Internal Security, Proclamations and Orders, pp 14–15 (edited by Yizhak Wachtel, Deputy Legal Adviser to the Security Services, September 2006). On the arrest and interrogation of Abu 'Asab see report of the Intelligence & Terrorism Information Center at www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/html/final/sp/heb_n/sep_e_05.htm and additional information from conversations with association activists. On July 10, 2007 the Magistrate court of Jerusalem ordered that three people who were accused of involvement in transferring money to Hamas activists in Jerusalem would remain in custody until end of their trial; see file 8031/07 State of Israel vs Farrah and others. On the number of restraining orders in 2007–10 see <http://alquds-online.org/index.php?s=news&id=4761> (last accessed 19 August 2010).
- 12 Discussions with association activists, summer 2006, Jerusalem.
- 13 Rumors in the matter of building a Jewish synagogue beneath the Temple Mount were so persistent that Vice Prime Minister Shimon Peres took the trouble to deny them in an interview for the al-Jazeera network, and his words were published in a news item of the Palestinian Information Bureau "Palestine Press" on January 4, 2006.
- 14 Personal conversations, summer 2006, and a newspaper article published July 25, 2006, on the Hamas internet website – www.palestine-info.info/arabic/palestoday/reports/report2006_1/25_7_6.htm (last accessed 19 August 2010).
- 15 On Jerusalem under today's Islam see Yitzhak Reiter, *From Jerusalem to Mecca and Back: The Islamic Consolidation of Jerusalem* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 2005).
- 16 Association of The Temple Mount Faithful vs State of Israel and others, appeals to High Court of Justice, 6403/96 and 7128/96. Interestingly enough, the judges were united in their decision, but Yitzhak Zamir (supported by Aharon Barak) and Eliezer Goldberg provided different reasons to it.
- 17 Head of the Shari'a Courts under the Palestinian Authority, Sheikh Taisir Bayyud al-Tamimi, had expressed his opposition to renovation of the site by Israel back in December 2004 (see *al-Ayam*, December 25, 2004), and from then until the beginning of 2007 access to the gate (serving mostly Israelis and tourists) is by means of a temporary wooden bridge. On sheikh Ra'ed trial see file, Jerusalem, 1687/07.
- 18 The movement publication *Sawt al-Haq* wrote about it more than once. See for example www.sawt-alhaq.com/ar/modules.php?name=Sections&op=viewarticle&artid=220 (last accessed 11 January 2007).
- 19 That is how it was in April 2005, when rightwing Israelis tried to organize a mass ascent to the Temple Mount in an attempt to foil the Israeli plan to withdraw from the Gaza Strip. Arab Knesset members arrived on the scene and Hamas leader Hassan Yussef, and

- members of the Islamic movement stationed themselves at the head of thousands of Muslims already waiting there. See for example reports in *al-Ayam* newspaper from April 11 and 12, 2005.
- 20 See news from March 2007 in the site devoted to the activities of the Islamic movement in Jerusalem. www.ansar-alquds.net/news/news.htm (last accessed 11 January 2007).
 - 21 Supportive statements of Fateh and other bodies are quoted at the site mentioned in the previous note.
 - 22 Conversations and speeches in conferences held at the Commodore Hotel in al-Sawane neighborhood in Jerusalem, July 5, 2006 and September 6, 2006.
 - 23 *Al-Quds*, October 4, 2006. See report also in the online publication of the Islamic movement in Israel www.pls48.net/default.php?sid=13591 (last accessed 11 January 2007). Their appeal was rejected and the court okayed the construction of the museum.
 - 24 The action received wide coverage in the Arab media. Among other things, the participants censured making a students party in the western part of Independence Park which, according to them, had also housed graves. For a detailed report see <http://old.amin.org/news/uncat/2006/may/may25-0.html> (last accessed 11 January 2007), and in the Islamic movement publication www.sawt-alhaq.com/ar/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=4549 (last accessed 11 January 2007). For an additional source see www.islamic-aqsa.com/ar/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=919&mode=thread&order=0&thold=0 (last accessed 11 January 2007).
 - 25 Thus, for example at the annual conference “al-Aqsa is in danger,” Umm al-Fahm, 2006. See the report of Yoav Stern in *Haaretz*, September 15, 2006.
 - 26 See for example the attack of Meir Eindor on the Israeli–Palestinian Forum of Bereaved Families, then headed by Yizhak Frankental, in *Be-Sheva*, July 10, 2003. In *Be-Sheva* on the Geneva initiative, November 28, 2003; quote from letter to the Commander-in-Chief against Women of the Machsom Watch organization “that identifies with the Arab enemy and is funded by the European Union,” in *Hatzofeh* February 22, 2006. In February 2010 several Israeli Knesset members submitted a law proposal (P2081/18) according to which Israeli NGOs would be required to inform of any foreign governmental funding.
 - 27 To an interesting analysis of these organizations under the Palestinian Authority (not specifically in Jerusalem) see Rema Hamami, “Palestinian NGOs since Oslo,” *Middle East Report* (Spring 2000), pp 16–19, 27.
 - 28 Arnon Regular, “Suspicion of Embezzlement of Contributions to the Largest Humanitarian Organization in the Occupied Territories,” *Haaretz*, March 25, 2003. www.haaretz.co.il/hasite/objects/pages/PrintArticle.jhtml?itemNo=276604 (last accessed 22 January 2007); for Palestinian criticism, see Khalil al-Zaban, “Open Letter to Abu-Mazen,” *al-Sabah*, April 20, 2003 (www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/content-491.html; last accessed 19 August 2010); see also *al-Qanaa*, January 27, 2004 and Arab Thought Forum, *Democratic Formation in Palestine: the Sixth Annual Report on the State of Democracy in Palestine* (Jerusalem, 2004), p 136 (www.multaqa.org/pdfs/6DemocracyRENGLISHB.pdf; last accessed 19 August 2010).
 - 29 Information on the foundation and its activities is found on its website www.fhf-pal.org (last accessed 22 April 2007).
 - 30 On the struggles between Israel and UNESCO and on the role of preservation in the Arab struggle against Judaization of Jerusalem, see Umayma Abd al-Latif in the internet edition of international al-Ahram in English <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2001/543/fo2.htm> (last accessed 19 August 2010). See also Shirin Nasser in the same weekly in <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2000/510/re5.htm> (last accessed 19 August 2010). On the UNESCO decision of October 2003 to expand its activity, and background on its activity until then, see its online documents. <http://domino.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/85255e950050831085255e95004fa9c3/ec635fb7bc566b7685256fbf006b84b3!OpenDocument> (last accessed 8 April 2007). For UNESCO activity in 2009 see its report at <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001869/186955e.pdf> (last accessed 8 April 2007).

- On Aga Khan Prize see www.akdn.org/agency/akaa/ninthcycle/page_05txt.htm (last accessed 8 April 2007).
- 31 See internet site of the organization: <http://alquds-online.org> (last accessed 9 April 2007).
 - 32 See for example the annual report of al-Quds Center for Social and Economic Rights, *Quick Escalation in Harming Human Rights of Jerusalem Residents* (Jerusalem, March 2003); and the internet site of the Center www.jcser.org (last accessed 9 April 2007) published in Arabic, English, and Hebrew, where one can find its annual reports till present.
 - 33 On the deal, see the internet site of the International Coalition for the Missing Israeli Soldiers. www.mia.org.il/archive/910912reu.html (last accessed 19 August 2010).
 - 34 See internet site of the organization. www.jcdhr.ps/ (last accessed 19 August 2010).
 - 35 The Palestinian Authority, Ministry of High Education, *Al-Quds Al-Sharif: al-Waqe' wa-Tahadiyyat al-Mustaqbal (Jerusalem the Oppressed: Reality and Challenges for the Future)* (Ramallah, 2000), p 38. Also available on the ministry's website <http://www.mohe.gov.ps/ShowArticle.aspx?ID=170> (last accessed 19 August 2010). The name of the author is not given. Unreferenced figures in this section of the book are based on this Arabic publication, which contains important historical and statistical information.
 - 36 The joint Jordanian–Palestinian fund was established after the Baghdad Conference of the Arab League (November 1978). Its purpose was to fight Sadat's initiative for a separate Israeli–Egyptian peace and transfer money for the benefit of the *sumud* (“steadfastness”) of residents of the West Bank (including Jerusalem) and the Gaza Strip.
 - 37 *Al-Quds Al-Sharif* (see note 35, above), p 43. The number of students in the municipal schools has grown by several thousand since then.
 - 38 Press release issued by the Knesset Committee on Education, Culture and Sport following its meeting on October 18, 2008.
 - 39 For coverage of one of these visits, see *al-Ayyam* newspaper, July 16, 2004. (Arabic).
 - 40 See the Hebrew *Ir Amim* report, *Shortage and Barrier: Denying the Palestinians' Right to Education in East Jerusalem* (Jerusalem: Ir Amim, October 2005). English reports dated October 2005 and September 2006, plus an update from September 2007 are to be found at www.ir-amim.org.il/eng/?CategoryID=186 (last accessed 19 August 2010). See also, the press release issued by the Knesset Committee on Education, note 38.
 - 41 See note 38.
 - 42 For an analysis of joint activities in the city from a different perspective, see Nimrod Goren, *Going Against the Wind: Civil Organizations in Jerusalem in the Shadow of On-going Conflict* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 2004) (Hebrew).
 - 43 On the prohibition against the demonstration, see Michael Warschawski et al. vs Commander of the Southern District, Bagatz 669/87; on the conviction and appeal, see Supreme Court Criminal Appeal 538/89, Michael Warschawski vs the State of Israel.
 - 44 Michael Warschawski, *The Alternative Information Center: 20 Years of Joint Struggle* (Jerusalem: The Alternative Information Center, 2006).
 - 45 Conversation with one of the people who initiated the protest, Hillel Bardin, October 2006, Jerusalem.
 - 46 For personal documentation of Israeli–Palestinian women's activities, with discussion of all the barriers and difficulties inherent therein, see Daphna Golan–Agnon, *Next Year in Jerusalem: Everyday Life in Divided Land* (New York: New Press, 2005). ACRI's website is www.acri.org.il; HaMoked's website: <http://hamoked.org/>.
 - 47 See note 45.
 - 48 IPCRI: Israel/Palestine Center for Research and Information studied the reasons for the fading of these initiatives, see www.ipcri.org/files/yes-pm.html (last accessed 19 August 2010).
 - 49 Conversation with Meir Margalit, November 15, 2006, Jerusalem.
 - 50 David Wurfel, “Israel/Palestine: the Peace Movement Endures Crisis,” *Peace Magazine*, April–June 2003; www.peacemagazine.org/archive/v19n2p06.htm (last accessed 19 August 2010).

- 51 The website of the Israel Committee against House Demolitions is <http://icahd.org> (last accessed 19 August 2010); a blog written by day camp staff members is found at <http://summergamescrew.blogspot.com/> (last accessed 19 August 2010); The Alternative Information Center internet site is found at www.alternativenews.org/ (last accessed 19 August 2010).
- 52 On the dispute between residents of Sur Baher and Umm Tuba over the route of the fence, see Petition against Commander of the Israel Defense Forces in Judea and Samaria et al., Bagatz 940/04 and Bagatz 9156/04. On Nu'eiman, see the Petition of Ahmad al-Dir'awi et al. vs Minister of the Interior, Bagatz 7218/03.
- 53 Bagatz 5488/04; Bagatz 6080/04; Bagatz 3648/04.
- 54 Village Council of Beit Surik et al vs the Government of Israel et-al. Bagatz 2056/04.
- 55 For greater detail see, Israel Kimhi (ed.) *The Security Fence in Jerusalem: Implications for the City and its Residents* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 2006) (Hebrew).
- 56 For the content of the petition see, B'tzedek Association vs the Prime Minister et al. Bagatz 7658/00.
- 57 www.peacenow.org.il/Default.asp?Redirect=4&CategoryID=42&ReportID=262 (last accessed 10 June 2008).
- 58 Joint programs with Bar Ilan University existed until 2000 (see www.biu.ac.il/SOC/se/bug/alquods.html; last accessed 19 August 2010). Programs with the Van Leer Institute continued for longer (www.vanleer.org.il/ar/content.asp?id=470; last accessed 19 August 2010), as did those with the Hebrew University (see below) and Ben Gurion University in the Negev.
- 59 Amir Makhoul in an article published in *Mahsom (Occupation Magazine)*, May 25, 2005, see www.mahsom.com/article.php?id=930 (last accessed 19 May 2008). On the internal Palestinian dispute and the conflicting advertisements, see <http://www.majdnews.com/site2/modules/news/article.php?storyid=977> (last accessed 19 May 2008).
- 60 See the university's press release at www.alquods.edu/archive/damage/articles/a2.htm (last accessed 19 May 2008).
- 61 See Military Prosecutor vs Muhammad Dar 'Aliyan, Administrative Appeal, Judea and Samaria 1941/04 and Military Prosecutor vs Dahlia Sarandah, Administrative Appeal, Judea and Samaria 1363/05.
- 62 Details on the Fateh Shabiba website www.palvoice.com/forums/showthread.php?t=51588&page=1 (last accessed 20 August 2007) and the Islamic Bloc www.palestinianforum.net/forum/showthread.php?t=60563 (last accessed 17 July 2008). Both contain interesting information about demonstrations, marches, quarrels and accusations of forgery. On declaring the Islamic Bloc as illegal (2007) see <http://alkotla.info/mws/?articles=topic&topic=118> (last accessed 19 August 2010).
On the results of 2008 elections and discussion on their meaning see www.mo5ayyam.com/vb/showthread.php?t=11664 (last accessed 17 December 2008). On the decision to cut ties with Israeli institutions (February 2009) see <http://fatehforums.com/showthread.php?t=19298&page=160> (last accessed 19 August 2010).

5 Palestinian elections in Jerusalem: the local and the national

- 1 For the estimate that were 6,000 voters, see for example www.elaph.com/ElaphWeb/Politics/2006/1/122860.htm (last accessed 20 August 2010) and also the Ir Amim position paper *Palestinian Elections in East Jerusalem*, at www.ir-amim.org.il/Activities/Elections/PositionPaper.doc (last accessed 15 May 2006).
- 2 For results of the presidential election by district in Arabic, see the internet site of the Central Elections Commission – Palestine at www.elections.ps/pdf/result3.pdf (last accessed 20 August 2010).
- 3 For analysis of the relationships between the various authorities within the PA, see Amal Jamal, "State-Building, Institutionalization and Democracy: The Palestinian Experience," *Mediterranean Politics*, 6:3 (2001), pp 1–30.

- 4 The points agreed during the dialogue, including this one, were published in *Al-Hayat al-Jadida*, March 18, 2005.
- 5 See the order in the appendices to the Final Report of the Central Elections Commission – Palestine (*Malaheq*), page 11, in www.elections.ps/pdf/Final_Report_PLCElections_2006-Appendix.pdf (last accessed 15 May 2006).
- 6 Report of the Jerusalem Center for Democracy and Human Rights on the Israeli obstacles before and during the presidential elections www.jcdhr.org/me/reports&studies/taqreer.htm (last accessed 15 June 2006).
- 7 *Al-Quds*, December 27, 2005.
- 8 Aluf Benn, “Olmert Decides ‘To Climb Down from the Tree.’” *Ha’aretz*. January 11, 2006. (Hebrew).
- 9 Yiftach Palmach Ze’evi et al. vs the State of Israel et al. Bagatz 550/06; Gilad Erdan and Eliezer Chen vs Acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, Bagatz 596/06; for a similar High Court petition filed before the 1996 elections, see Elisha Peleg vs the Government of Israel, Bagatz 296/96.
- 10 See Amos Harel and Avi Issacharoff, *The Seventh War: How We Won and Why We Lost in the War with the Palestinians* (Tel Aviv: Yediot Ahronot, 2004), p 33. (Hebrew).
- 11 Giselle Khoury interviewing Jibril Rajoub on the program *Bil-Arabi*, December 29, 2005, www.alarabiyya.net (last accessed 1 July 2006).
- 12 *Al-Quds yajib an Takun Ala Ras al-Awlawiyat* (Jerusalem should be the Highest Priority) *Al-Hayat al-Jadida*, January 23, 2006.
- 13 For the interview see, www.palestine-info.info/arabic/palestoday/reports/report2006_1/5_2_06.htm (last accessed 20 August 2010).
- 14 From the Hamas-identified website www.palestine-info.info/arabic/palestoday/reports/report2006_entekhabat06/entekhabat_tashre3i_06/quds/22_1_06 (last accessed 10 January 2007).
- 15 According to the two previously cited sources.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 See the case *The State of Israel vs Maslamani et al.* Jerusalem District 841/05 and material from the investigation. For the appeal of their detention and its rejection by Justice Procaccia, see *Rasem Abeidat et al. vs the State of Israel*, Supreme Court, Criminal Case 6552/05 (together with cases 6432/05 and 6388/05).
- 18 For his connections with *Derech Hamitzotz*, see the material submitted during extension of the remand hearing and appeals, Supreme Court, Criminal Cases 621/88 and 347/88.
- 19 See www.ansarara.org/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=151 (last accessed 10 January 2007). For statements made by the Israel Police on the arrests and preventative action related to the elections, see www.police.govs.il/districtsmain.asp?path=web_jerusalem/dover/ (last accessed July 2006).
- 20 The data in this section are based on final results of the elections for the Palestinian Legislative Council, as they were published by the Central Elections Commission – Palestine, unless noted otherwise. The website of the Commission is www.elections.ps/atemplate.aspx?id=680 (last accessed 20 August 2010).
- 21 “Documents and Source Material,” *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 25:3 (Spring 1996), pp 145–46.
- 22 *Lajnat al-Intikhabat al-Markaziyya – Filastin, al-Intikhabat al-Tashri’iyya al-Thanya* (Central Elections Commission – Palestine, The Second Parliamentary Elections) (Ramallah, May 31, 2006), p 74. (Arabic).

Jerusalem 2010: conclusion and a look to the future

- 1 See *Ha’aretz*, December 12, 2006. Regarding the Israeli operation in 2009, the UN decision called for “an immediate, durable and fully respected ceasefire,” on January 8 (S/ RES /1860 (2009)), but Israel stopped its military activity only on January 17.

- 2 See for example www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/03/12/AR-2010031202615_2.html (last accessed 20 August 2010).
- 3 For sample comments of Palestinian political leaders on the issue, following the exclusion of the Shu'afat refugee camp from the "Jerusalem envelope" wall, see the report of the Palestinian Information Office on the conference held in the camp in July 2005: www.minfo.gov.ps/admin/Palweb_File_Manager/files/wall/20-07-05a.htm (last accessed July 2008).
- 4 Scenarios regarding the future of Jerusalem, both more and less optimistic, were presented by the joint team of the Israeli Florsheimer Institute and the Palestinian International Peace and Cooperation Center: *Jerusalem in the Future – Scenarios and a Shared Vision* (Jerusalem, 2005). For important studies on Jerusalem (and proposals for solutions) see also the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies website, <http://jiis.org/?cmd=publication.7> (last accessed 20 August 2010).

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