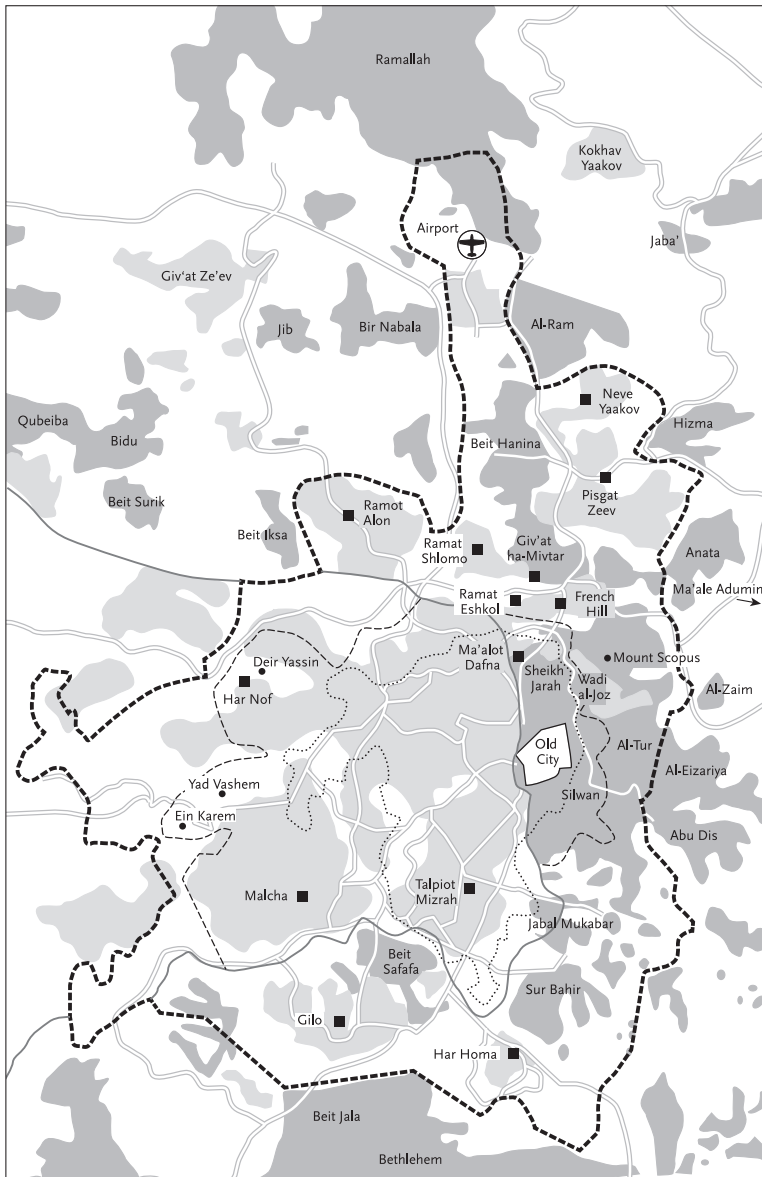


Jerusalem, showing municipal borders and neighbourhoods



0 ————— 2 kilometres

○ Israeli neighbourhoods

● Palestinian neighbourhoods

■ Jewish suburbs built since 1967

..... City boundary under British Mandate

— Green Line

- - - - - City boundary, 1948–67

----- City boundary after 1967

YONATAN MENDEL

NEW JERUSALEM

ENCYCLOPÆDIAS OF PSYCHOLOGY cite a type of religious psychosis known as the Jerusalem Syndrome, which can be triggered by a visit to the city. Symptoms can include bellowing liturgical songs, delivering moralistic sermons and an intensified concern with cleanliness and ritual purity. Though similar reactions have been recorded at other holy cities, notably Rome and Mecca, Jerusalem holds the record for this psychopathology.¹ From the point of view of any normal urban logic, however, the city itself appears crazier still. Its boundaries extend far beyond its core population centres, encompassing dozens of villages, barren hilltops, orchards and tracts of desert, as well as new-build suburbs with scant relation to the historical city; in the north, they stretch up, like a long middle finger, nearly to Ramallah, to take in the old Qalandia airport, some 10 kilometres from the Old City walls, and bulge down almost to Bethlehem in the south.

Jerusalem's former Deputy Mayor, Meron Benvenisti, has said of these monstrously extended city limits:

I've reached the point that when someone says 'Jerusalem' I am very cynical about it. This is a term that has been totally emptied of its content. Today there is no geographic concept called 'Jerusalem', and instead I suggest using a new term, 'Jermudin', which is the territory stretched from Jericho to Modi'in. Someone decided to rub the hills that have no connection to Jerusalem with holy oil, and today we need to deal with a 'Jerusalem' region, which is unmanageable and which is held by force.²

But if the cityscape of Jerusalem has no decipherable urban logic, what rationality has shaped its growth? In Benvenisti's view, 'it all started from the post-1967 municipal borders and the famous principle of maximum

square kilometres of land and minimum number of Arabs.³ There is much to be said for this hypothesis; but we will have to begin a little earlier than that.

From Canaanites to colonizers

The history of the Old City probably starts around 1,500 BC, when a Canaanite community known as the Jebusites built the first walled fortifications, taking advantage of an elevated location amid fertile lands, raised above the coastal plain, and sited on the mountain aquifer. The walls would be rebuilt, torn down and built again countless times in the centuries that followed, as the city was conquered by the Jews under King David (c. 1,000 BC), followed by the Babylonians (c. 600 BC), the Persians (536 BC), Alexander the Great (333 BC), the Maccabees (164 BC), the Romans (63 BC), the Arabs, under Umar Ibn Al-Khattab (637 AD), the Crusaders (1099), Saladin (1187) and the Ottomans, under Sultan Selim (1517). In the course of this, it is said, King Solomon built the first Jewish temple in the city, Jesus was crucified here and the Prophet Mohammed ascended to heaven. The present walls were built in the 1530s, at the command of Suleiman the Magnificent, encompassing a square kilometre of narrow streets and alleyways. For the next three centuries or so, the life of the city persisted within the walls, only expanding beyond them in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

After the British conquered Jerusalem in December 1917, replacing the Ottomans as the imperial power in the region, the city was subject to more dramatic change. Intensified Jewish immigration raised the proportion of Jews in the British Mandate Palestine population from 10 to 40 per cent and brought Arab–Jewish relations to a nadir. Jerusalem was declared the capital of Mandate Palestine. Construction in the fast-expanding ‘New City’, outside the walls, proceeded apace: the Hebrew University on Mount Scopus (1925), the King David Hotel (1929), where the British administrative and military headquarters were located; the National Institutions House (1930), which lodged the Jewish Agency, the Jewish National Fund and the Jewish Foundation

¹ See for example Mark Popovsky, ‘Jerusalem Syndrome’, in David Leeming, Kathryn Madden and Marlan Stanton, eds, *Encyclopedia of Psychology and Religion*, vol. 2, New York 2009.

² Nir Hasson, ‘Meron Benvenisti, Why Does Jerusalem Not Exist Anymore?’ (in Hebrew), *Haaretz*, 29 May 2011.

³ *Haaretz*, 29 May 2011.

Fund; and modern residential quarters, such as the Jewish neighbourhood of Rehavya (1923) where Benjamin Netanyahu later grew up, and the Arab-Palestinian neighbourhood of Talbiyah (1920), from which Edward Said and his family fled in 1947. By the end of the Mandate period, Jerusalem's population had risen to 160,000—around 100,000 Jews and 60,000 Palestinians—almost three times more than in 1922, and the New City enjoyed a modernized infrastructure of water, electricity and improved roads. But if Jerusalem's administrative and political importance made it a locomotive of urban construction in Palestine, it also brought increasing turmoil. Official British estimates number the Arabs killed by security forces during the Great Revolt of 1936–39 in their thousands. In 1946, the Irgun blew up the King David Hotel, killing 91; in 1948, Palestinian militants blew up the National Institutions House, killing 12.

The UN Partition Plan of November 1947 assigned 60 per cent of Palestine, including the coastal areas, to the minority population ('the Jewish State'), and 40 per cent, including western Galilee, to the majority population ('the Arab State'). Jerusalem was designated a *Corpus Separatum*, to be ruled by an international body. The *Corpus Separatum* concept, however, proved to be untranslatable into either Hebrew or Arabic. The Arab Higher Committee objected to the whole idea of the partition of Palestine, while control of Jerusalem—or at least part of it—was a strategic priority for the Zionist leadership under Ben-Gurion, which rejected any form of internationalization.⁴ The UN Plan therefore marked the outbreak of the 1948 War, resulting in the creation of the State of Israel and the expulsion of more than 700,000 Arab-Palestinians, the beginning of the ongoing Palestinian Nakba.

The aim of the Israeli forces in Jerusalem was to 'establish facts on the ground', annexing Palestinian land and villages to create a territorial continuity between surrounding Jewish neighbourhoods of the city, in order to create a viable, defensible capital. The targeted districts included Deir Yassin (renamed Giv'at Sha'ul in Hebrew), where the massacre of April 1948 hastened the flight of Palestinians from the city, as well as northern villages such as Lifta (Mei Nafto'ah), southern neighbourhoods such as Katamon (Gonen), Talbiyah (Komemiyut) and Baq'a (Ge'ulim), and western villages including Beit Mazmil (Kiryat Yovel), Malha (Manhat), Khirbet al-Hamama (today the site of the Yad Va-Shem Holocaust

⁴ Avi Shlaim, *The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World*, London 2000, p. 36.

Museum) and Ein Karim (Ein Karem). Israeli military occupation established the basis for the Green Line demarcation between Israeli and Jordanian-administered territory, enshrined in the April 1949 Armistice Agreement. Jerusalem was to be partitioned, with a concrete and barbed-wire barrier separating the much larger Israeli-controlled Jerusalem (26 sq km), which included Palestinian villages such as Qalunya (renamed Motsa in Hebrew) and Sheikh Badr (now the site of the Israeli parliament), from the smaller Jordanian-controlled Jerusalem (6 sq km), which included the Old City with its Jewish Quarter and holy sites.

The period of 1948–67 saw the development of two very asymmetrical Jerusalems, on either side of the barbed wire. Israeli Jerusalem became the country's official capital, and state symbols—Parliament, government administration buildings, Mount Herzl National Cemetery, the National Museum, the Shrine of the Book, Yad Va-Shem Holocaust Museum, the National Library—were rapidly established there, boosting employment. Box-like apartment blocks sprouted across Jerusalem's hillsides, creating new neighbourhoods such as Kiryat Menahem (1956) and Nayot (1960). The Israeli government approved a generous expansion of its municipal boundaries to the west, north and south, the city's territory growing to 38 sq km by 1963. Meanwhile Jordanian Jerusalem, cut off from the old commercial quarter, experienced impoverishment, net population loss and a downgrade in status. The Western powers had cynically overseen the annexation of the 'Arab state' by the Hashemite monarchy of Jordan. The King did all he could to erase Palestinian national consciousness and encourage a 'Jordanian identity', not least by decreeing that official textbooks should replace the term 'Palestinians' with 'Arabs'.⁵ The eastern side of Jerusalem was reduced to being Jordan's second city, a holy site to be exploited by the King for political reasons, while power and economic growth shifted to Amman.⁶ With Jerusalem partitioned by barbed wire, the two populations lived back to back, observing each other only from the roof tops. In his Hebrew poem *Jerusalem*, the late Israeli poet Yehuda Amichai captured this urban division well:

On a roof in the Old City
laundry hanging in the late afternoon sunlight
the white sheet of a woman who is my enemy,

⁵ See, for example, Riad M. Nasser, *Palestinian Identity in Jordan and Israel: The Necessary 'Other' in the Making of a Nation*, New York 2004, pp. 68–70.

⁶ Roger Friedland and Richard D. Hecht, *To Rule Jerusalem*, Berkeley 2000, pp. 248–49.

the towel of a man who is my enemy,
 to wipe off the sweat of his brow.
 In the sky of the Old City
 a kite
 At the other end of the string,
 a child
 I can't see
 because of the wall.
 We have put up many flags,
 they have put up many flags.
 To make us think that they're happy
 To make them think that we're happy.

'Unification'

In 1967, military expansion once again played a major role in reshaping the city. This time fighting erupted after a long period of tension between Israel and neighbouring Arab countries, with a pre-emptive Israeli attack on the Egyptian Air Force on 5 June 1967, which brought Syria and Jordan into the war. Israel's swift defeat of the Arab armies, IDF occupation of the Golan Heights, West Bank, Gaza Strip and Sinai Desert, all had geopolitical implications and repercussions on the countries involved.⁷ For Israel, whose territory had been quadrupled in six days, conquest brought a euphoric sense of power, combined with messianic sentiments about the country's 'might' and its 'miracle' victory, taken as evidence of the Almighty's support.⁸ Jerusalem was the ideal stage for this 'power trip' and the Old City—of which, pre-war, Defence Minister Moshe Dayan had said, 'Who needs this Vatican, anyway?'—became in the post-war period 'the rock of our existence'. Images of the Paratroopers Brigade crying at the Western Wall and the voice of their commander, Mordechai Gur, excitedly informing the military radio, '*Har ha-bayit be-yadenu*'—'The Temple Mount is in our hands'—became synonyms for the 1967 Israeli victory and for the new state of affairs which now prevailed.

The first urban-planning decision was taken the next day. Jerusalem's new mayor, Teddy Kollek, toured the Old City with Ben-Gurion. Both agreed the 800-year-old Mughrabi neighbourhood should be

⁷ See, for example, Tom Segev, *1967: Israel, the War, and the Year that Transformed the Middle East*, New York 2007.

⁸ Baruch Kimmerling, *The Invention and Decline of Israeliness: State, Society and the Military*, Berkeley 2001, p. 109.

demolished, to create a ceremonial national plaza in front of the Wailing Wall. Hundreds of Muslim inhabitants were ordered out and their houses were destroyed. The Western Wall Plaza became a reality almost overnight, and the Israeli flag planted on the site where the houses had stood symbolized the triangle between state, religion and collective forgetfulness in post-1967 Israel. And while the future of the rest of the Occupied Territories remained a matter for debate—should the land be annexed to Israel, kept under military occupation or negotiated for peace?—there was no doubt about what was to be done with East Jerusalem: it was to be ‘unified’ with West Jerusalem, at least according to Israeli law, and become an integral part of the State of Israel. A committee appointed by Dayan, including three IDF generals—Chaim Herzog, Rehavam Ze’evi, Shlomo Lahat—submitted a new map of Jerusalem on 27 June 1967.

Not surprisingly, given the nature of the committee, the boundaries they drew were an irrational mix of military requirements and the desire for territorial expansion, with hardly any thought given to urban planning. The result was a disturbing new city: ‘unified’ Jerusalem was not simply the sum of west Jerusalem (38 sq km) and east Jerusalem (6 sq km), but included an additional 70 sq km of land from the Occupied Territories surrounding the city in the north, east and south. This was a new kind of Jerusalem, not only in terms of its borders, but also for its residents. Twenty-eight Palestinian villages which had never been part of any Jerusalem now found themselves under the jurisdiction of ‘the united capital of the Jewish people’. The city multiplied its territory by three, based on the Israeli demographic and military-strategic ‘equation’ described by Benvenisti above: maximum square kilometres of land, minimum number of Arabs. In several instances—for example, Beit Iksha and Beit Sahour—the orchards and farmland of Palestinian villagers were included in Jerusalem, while the villagers and their homes were left out.

Nevertheless, some 70,000 Palestinians were unavoidably absorbed into the city, making up a quarter of its new population. The Ministry of the Interior offered them the option of Israeli citizenship but most rejected this, on the grounds that it would help legitimize the occupation and annexation. The Jerusalem Palestinians were therefore given the status of ‘resident’, which meant they were entitled—at least on paper—to municipal services. They could also vote in municipal

elections, but again Palestinians generally scorned this ‘right’ as merely legitimizing their subordination.

The annexation of East Jerusalem and its periphery was, of course, widely condemned abroad as flouting international law. Even Israel’s great ally felt compelled to register a protest, the American Ambassador to the UN, Charles Yost, stating that:

The US considers that the part of Jerusalem that came under the control of Israel in the 1967 War, like all other areas occupied by Israel, is occupied territory and hence subject to the provisions of international law governing the rights and obligations of an occupying Power.⁹

Exceptionally, the US even voted for UN Resolution 267, which stated that the UN Security Council ‘censures in the strongest terms all measures taken by Israel to change the status of the City of Jerusalem’, adopted unanimously on 3 July 1969. The city’s status was changed regardless. In 1980, Israel went on to enshrine the position of ‘unified Jerusalem’ in a Basic Law of the Knesset, titled ‘Jerusalem, Capital of Israel’. Apparently prey to the sensation of *déjà vu*, the Security Council then adopted UN Resolution 478, which ‘censures in the strongest terms the enactment by Israel of the Basic Law on Jerusalem and the refusal to comply with relevant Security Council resolutions’. It declared the Jerusalem Law null and void, to be ‘rescinded forthwith’, and called on ‘all states that have established diplomatic missions in Jerusalem to withdraw such missions from the Holy City’, which in practice meant relocating to Tel Aviv. ‘Unified Jerusalem’ thereby entered a select class of capital cities acknowledged as such only by themselves.

Outside-in

Waving aside the international condemnation, weightless as it was, Israeli leaders turned to the task of planting their own population in the annexed zones. ‘We must bring Jews to Eastern Jerusalem at any cost’, said Ben-Gurion, in June 1967. ‘We must settle tens of thousands of Jews in a brief time. We cannot await the construction of orderly neighbourhoods. The essential thing is that Jews will be there.’¹⁰ The

⁹ Cited in Amir S. Cheshin, Bil Hutman, and Avi Melamed, *Separate and Unequal: The Inside Story of Israeli Rule in East Jerusalem*, Cambridge 1999, pp. 46–7.

¹⁰ Uzi Benziman, *A City without a Wall*, Jerusalem 1973, p. 2.

strategy of engineering a new reality by putting ‘facts on the ground’, later associated with Ariel Sharon’s initiatives in other parts of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, was pioneered in Jerusalem. By July 1967 the Labour Prime Minister Levy Eshkol had appointed a committee of senior officials, headed by Yehouda Tamir, to find ways to ‘populate and develop East Jerusalem’. The aim was to de-problematize the act of occupation and unification by creating a continuum between West and East Jerusalem that would obliterate the Green Line, the 1948–1967 border, and make the violation of international law appear as ‘natural’ as possible. The committee’s master plan, submitted in September 1967, proposed the creation of crescent-shaped *Shekhunot ha-Bari’ach*—‘hinge’ or ‘lock neighbourhoods’—that would link the existing Jewish enclave on Mount Scopus to West Jerusalem via a new road, Levy Eshkol Avenue, that would pass through Jewish quarters only. Over the next few years a series of new residential quarters, planned primarily for Jewish inhabitants, sprang up on the far side of the Green Line; Ramat Eshkol (1968), Giv’at ha-Mivtar (1970), Ha-Giv’ah ha-Tsarfatit [The French Hill] (1971) and Ma’alot Dafna (1972) became the Jewish ‘security lock’ on Mount Scopus.

In 1969 Golda Meir, the Israeli ‘Iron Lady’, succeeded Eshkol and took control of the ‘unified Jerusalem’ project. A new master plan now proposed the development of *Shekhunot ha-Taba’at*, or ‘Ring Neighbourhoods’, a bizarre new turn in the dialectic of military, political and urban-development considerations. Rather than building outward from the older neighbourhoods at the heart of Jerusalem, this plan advocated the construction of Jewish residential quarters on its remote periphery, strung around the new city limits. As if stolen from the office of an IDF engineer, the blueprints were strategic in nature: new-built houses, clad in the mandatory white ‘Jerusalem stone’, were positioned like turrets on the mountain ridges overlooking the city and along the arteries leading into it. The first of these were Neve Ya’akov (1970), established on land confiscated from Al-Ram, in the far north of the city, and Gilo (1971) in the south-west, on land confiscated from Beit Jala, which had the highest elevation in Jerusalem. They were followed by Talpiyot Mizrah (1973) in the south-east, on land confiscated from Jabal Mukabar; Ramot Alon (1974) in the north-west, on land confiscated from Beit Iksha, and now Jerusalem’s largest suburb; and Pisgat Ze’ev (1982) on the city’s north-east frontier, on land confiscated from Beit Hanina and Hizma. This urban-development logic, or illogic, repeated itself in the 1990s

at the time of the Oslo Accord negotiations, when 'unified Jerusalem' expanded to 125 sq km after further annexations in 1993. Ramat Shlomo (1995) was built on the city's north-east boundary, on land confiscated from Al-'Issawiya; Har Homa (1997) was established in the far south-east on a hill known in Arabic as Jabal Abu-Ghneim, with land confiscated from Beit Sahour.

These Jewish suburbs in the Occupied Territories created, as Eyal Weizman puts it, 'a belt of built fabric that enveloped and bisected the Palestinian neighbourhoods and villages annexed to the city'.¹¹ They served not only as satellites of the Jerusalem 'motherhood', claiming Israeli sovereignty over all the territory in between, but also as bridges to the 'Greater Jerusalem' settlements located beyond the municipal border, deep in the Occupied Territories. Settlements such as Ma'ale Adumim in the east (given city status in 1991) and Giv'at Ze'ev in the north-west (established 1983) were linked by roads and architecture to the neighbourhood-settlements on Jerusalem's municipal perimeter, which were in turn connected to the city centre. Weizman has described the upshot as 'disparate shards' of homogeneous Jewish housing, woven together by road and infrastructure networks. Another Israeli planner likened the neighbourhood-settlements' links to the city centre as 'balloons tied by a string'.¹²

Neo-Orientalism

Something more was clearly required in addition to these underlying military-strategic rationales if Israelis, and Israeli-Jewish Jerusalemites in particular, were to imagine their capital as a legal, 'natural', coherent geographical space. Regardless of what was said abroad about the illegality of Jerusalem's expansion, under Israeli law the terrain encroached upon could be legitimately annexed to the city. This was helpful because, of the 497,000 Israeli-Jewish residents of Jerusalem today, more than 200,000 live beyond the Green Line; which means that, according to international law, almost every second Jewish inhabitant of the official Israeli capital is a settler. Municipal annexation ensures that, under Israeli law, this figure will never be included in the official statistics for

¹¹ Eyal Weizman, *Hollow Land: Israel's Architecture of Occupation*, London and New York 2007, p. 25.

¹² Quoted in Moshe Amirav, *Jerusalem Syndrome: The Palestinian-Israeli Battle for the Holy City*, Eastbourne 2009, p. 72.

Jewish settlers in the West Bank. Terminology was also deployed to naturalize the process: housing estates built in the Occupied Territories were always referred to in the media and official records as *neighbourhoods*, part and parcel of ‘unified Jerusalem’, never as *settlements*; this helped to disconnect—at least in the Israeli mind—the eastern part of municipal Jerusalem from the rest of the occupied West Bank. A question of semantics, for some; of political reality, for others.

But it was architecture that was given the most far-reaching role in ‘uniting’ the city. Here there was a clear break from the utilitarian modernism that characterized the first decades of the Israeli state. In the early years the question had been how to build the maximum residential units with minimal infrastructural expenditures. The solution in West Jerusalem—but also in other cities, including Haifa—was a monolithic take on the International Style: rectangular blocks that looked a bit like railway carriages set on end, which gave these new neighbourhoods a rather boring character; square, in both the geometrical and the slang sense.¹³ By contrast, the post-1967 construction style responded to what Israeli authorities saw as a new set of problems: their unprecedented sovereignty over the Old City, including the holy sites of Muslims and Christians; international criticisms of Israeli-Jewish neighbourhood-settlements built on land confiscated from Palestinian villages; the difficulty of creating a continuum between the western neighbourhoods and those in the east, built on newly confiscated Palestinian land. Their solutions—simulacra of ‘historic’ styles; surface ‘cladding’—would make ‘unified Jerusalem’ the most postmodern of cities.

The architects selected by Kollek and his team went first to the Old City as part of their fieldwork, to soak up ideas and inspiration. Filled with the euphoria of the 1967 military victory, they agreed that a neo-Orientalist style would be most appropriate for an Israelified Jerusalem, demonstrating how aesthetically sensitive the Israelis were to the region’s cultural heritage, and how naturally they blend into the landscape. Features of an Orientalized-Arab architecture—arches, gates, domes—were adapted for modern construction techniques and became

¹³ David Kroyanker, *Jerusalem: Neighbourhoods and Houses, Periods and Style*, Jerusalem 1996, p. 190 (in Hebrew). Kroyanker, an Israeli architectural historian, sees the buildings in Stern Street (Kiryat Yovel neighbourhood) and Ha-Nurit Street (Ir Ganim neighbourhood) as the ultimate examples of this style: 8- and 9-storey buildings with no elevator, due to the austerity of the times.

part of the landscape of the 'new Jerusalem'. The style corresponded closely to several key political ideas: the Israeli stress on the 'return' of the Jewish people to their Oriental 'roots'; the need to forge a unification between old (and biblical) Jerusalem and the new housing projects that would downplay the act of occupation; and an extension of the Zionist colonialist paradigm of bringing modernization and development to the 'unchanging East'. In reality, as the Israeli architectural historian Zvi Efrat has argued, this so-called 'contextual' architecture involved formless clusters of 'sentimental buildings, influenced by alleged "regional" connections'—'pseudo-historical creations of Oriental and Mediterranean mimicry', said to embody 'an association with antiquity and national roots.'¹⁴

Holy stone

Another crucial architectural element, which helped to both whitewash the occupation and to create a continuum between east and west, was the decision by the Israeli authorities to reinforce a British Mandate by-law that all buildings in the city must be made of *bona fide* 'Jerusalem stone'. In the 1930s this had involved using solid blocks of limestone in construction work; during the 1948–67 period, the city authorities in West Jerusalem had sanctioned the use of an outer layer of stone, covering an inner structure of bricks or cinderblocks. After 1967, this by-law was extended to all areas annexed to the city, thus raising the price for Palestinian construction work and rendering much of it illegal. The ubiquitous use of ever-thinner stone-cladding on shopping malls, hotels and high-rise blocks played a vital part in Israel's strategic and symbolic struggle to imbue the sprawling suburbs of new Jerusalem with the 'sacred' identity of the holy city. The use of Jerusalem stone was as much ideological as architectural: it served to 'authenticate' areas which had never previously been part of Jerusalem and to extend the mantling of holiness to far-flung settlements, both inside and beyond the municipal borders. By means of a mere 6 cm of limestone, outpost cities such as Ma'ale Adumim can share in Jerusalem's sacred aura.

Architecture thus played an essential role in the temporal as well as the spatial unification of the city. It added a romantic and artistic dimension to the military and political contingencies that had driven the city's

¹⁴ Zvi Efrat's text in his exhibition, 'The Israeli Project', held in Tel Aviv in October 2000, quoted in Weizman, *Hollow Land*, p. 47.

expansion, creating a ‘natural’ continuity between different epochs: from the Bible, through Jerusalem’s sacredness, up to Zionism and modern Israel. Weizman suggests that the use of neo-Orientalist architecture and Jerusalem stone provided ‘the fantasy deemed necessary for the consolidation of a new national identity and the domestication of the expanded city’:

It placed every remote and newly built suburb well within the boundaries of the ‘eternally unified capital of the Jewish people’, and thus, as far as most Israelis are concerned, away from the negotiation table. What is called Jerusalem, by name, by architecture, and by the use of stone, is placed at the heart of the Israeli consensus.¹⁵

There is a double irony about this iconic stone, which has become a symbol of the city in Israeli eyes and of ‘Jewish building’ worldwide. First, the stone is mainly quarried and produced in Hebron, Nablus and other areas of the West Bank—in Arabic it is known, more scientifically, as *hajar Nabulsi*—and much of the heavy labour involved is carried out by Palestinians. Second, its use exemplifies the post-67 colonialist attempt to imitate local Palestinian architecture while excluding Palestinians: thus tens of thousands of stone-clad houses sprouted on the higher land in the north, east and south of newly annexed ‘Jerusalem’, overlooking the far poorer and underdeveloped Palestinian villages and townships of the ‘united city’.¹⁶

Indeed this is the heart of the ‘unification’ project: not just putting architectural facts on the ground, but populating them with Jewish-Israeli inhabitants, far beyond the Green Line. Yet while Israel’s abrogation of international law can tell us much about the Jewish state—not least its obsession with power, demography and fears of the day after tomorrow—focusing on definitions of international law alone would be insufficient for an understanding of the complex processes taking place in the city. It can foster the illusion that partitioning could still be an equitable solution, which I believe is far from the truth. On a more concrete level looking at the Green Line alone, rather than the people who live on both sides, can limit our analysis of what the state is doing and the motives and experience of the people themselves.

¹⁵ Weizman, *Hollow Land*, p. 47.

¹⁶ Haim Yacobi, ‘The Third Place: Architecture, Nationalism and the Postcolonial Gaze’, *Theory and Criticism* 30, 2007, pp. 63–88 (in Hebrew).

Politics and peoples

The Israeli authorities have fought relentlessly to increase the number of Jews and reduce the number of Palestinians in Jerusalem, in order to thwart attempts to challenge Israeli sovereignty there. But despite their policies, the proportion of Palestinians in the city has grown from 25 per cent in 1967 to 36 per cent in 2012. According to the projections, ‘united Jerusalem’ will be 40 per cent Palestinian by 2020; and by 2030, if Israel does not find a way to change this ratio—and it will—Palestinian Jerusalemites would make up a majority. The fifty shades of discrimination that have been deployed against the Palestinian residents of Jerusalem under successive mayors and governments, radically different in some respects, all shared a joint goal: to act against the Palestinian national interest within the city.¹⁷ The evidence for this is most bluntly stated by the Israeli authorities themselves. As Amir Cheshin and Avi Melamed, two former ‘advisers on Arab affairs’ to Jerusalem mayors in the 1980s and 1990s, warned:

Do not believe the propaganda . . . the rosy picture Israel tries to show the world, of life in Jerusalem since the 1967 reunification. Israel has treated the Palestinians of Jerusalem terribly. As a matter of policy, it has forced many of them from their homes and stripped them of their land, all the while lying to them and deceiving them and the world about its honourable intentions.¹⁸

The ‘logic’ behind this strategy is spelt out in the Jerusalem 2000 Master Plan, under the heading ‘Demographic balance “according to government decisions”’:

According to the aim presented by the municipality and adopted by the government, the city needs to keep a ratio of 70 per cent Jews and 30 per cent Arabs. However . . . demographic patterns in the city since 1967 have distanced Jerusalem from this aim. There has not been a 70:30 ratio in Jerusalem since the 1990s and the proportion continues to be violated.¹⁹

¹⁷ According to the Israeli Information Centre for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, B’Tselem, Israeli policy towards the Palestinians in Jerusalem cannot be described in any other way than discriminatory; see their extensive reports on the subject at: www.btselem.org/english/jerusalem

¹⁸ Amir Cheshin, Bil Hutman and Avi Melamed, *Separate and Unequal: The Inside Story of Israeli Rule in East Jerusalem*, p. 251.

¹⁹ Jerusalem 2000 Master Plan, published August 2004, Chapter 7, ‘Population and Society’ (in Hebrew).

The Master Plan goes on to make ‘severe predictions’ about the growing ratio of Palestinians—who are supposed to be equal residents—in the ‘united city’ and the need to take ‘far-reaching measures’ in order to prevent this process. Jerusalem’s ‘ratio’ strategy has very practical implications for the Palestinian population, both as a ‘matter of policy’, as Cheshin and Melamed put it, and through deliberate neglect. Teddy Kollek, the legendary Labour Mayor of Jerusalem for three decades (1965–93), provides a good illustration of overt and covert attitudes towards the Palestinian Jerusalemites. Kollek’s 1968 Plan included massive construction projects in the eastern part of the city, ‘to ensure Jerusalem’s unification, in a manner that would prevent the possibility of its being repartitioned’.²⁰ Officially, Kollek is remembered in Israel as a ‘die-hard advocate of religious tolerance’, who ‘made many attempts to reach out to his Arab constituents’, while ‘improving the water and sewage systems in Jerusalem’s Arab neighbourhoods’.²¹ But as Kollek himself confessed to the Israeli daily *Ma’ariv* in 1990, after 25 years in office:

We said things without meaning them, and we didn’t carry them out. We said over and over that we would equalize the rights of the Arabs to the rights of the Jews. [This was] empty talk . . . Never have we given them a feeling of being equal before the law. They were and remain second and third class citizens . . . For Jewish Jerusalem I did something in the past twenty-five years. For East Jerusalem? Nothing! What did I do? Nothing. Sidewalks? Nothing! Cultural institutions? Not one. Yes, we installed a sewerage system for them and improved their water supply. But do you know why? Do you think it was for their good, for their welfare? Forget it! There were some cases of cholera there, and the Jewish residents were afraid that they would catch it, so we installed a sewerage and water system for cholera prevention.²²

In the 1993 municipal elections, Kollek and the Labour Party were defeated by the Likud Party’s Ehud Olmert, in coalition with the Ultra-Orthodox parties. This signalled a significant shift of power, for Olmert was heavily dependent on the Haredi community, 90 per cent of whom turned out to vote, compared to a 50 per cent turnout for the secular community. This gave the Ultra-Orthodox a much larger role in decisions on budgets, infrastructure and housing in the city, and they did what they

²⁰ Jerusalem Master Plan 1968 (in Hebrew).

²¹ See the Go-Jerusalem official website page on Kollek.

²² Cited in the B’Tselem report, ‘A Policy of Discrimination: Land Expropriation, Planning and Building in East Jerusalem’, May 1995.

could in order to secure the needs of their voters and people. Broadly speaking, however, Olmert during his ten years as Mayor of Jerusalem (1993–2003) continued Kollek’s policies of speaking about the need to equalize the provision of services and infrastructure between Jewish and Arab-Palestinian neighbourhoods while failing to do anything meaningful about it.²³ There were plenty of reasons for this—inherent preferences, strained finances, the 70:30 ratio which both Labour and Likud took as their aim, practical political considerations on where to spend largesse, as ‘the Arab-Jerusalemites will not vote for me anyway’.

However, the principal consideration was always to make sure that Israel remained the sovereign power in East Jerusalem and—especially after the Oslo Accords—to weaken the Palestinian Authority’s position there. Thus the historic Orient House, the Jerusalem headquarters of the PLO in the 90s, was closed down by the Israeli police in 2001. Palestinian cultural centres were also shut down. In addition, the demolition of Palestinian houses increased during this period, mostly on the grounds that they were built ‘with no permit’.²⁴ Under Olmert’s successor Uri Lupolianski, Jerusalem’s first Ultra-Orthodox Mayor (2003–08), there was little change in policy. When asked by Channel 10 why many Arab houses in Jerusalem were not connected to the water supply, Lupolianski first denied it and then declared: ‘It’s a matter of mentality. The Arabs, by their nature, prefer not to be connected to the water pipe.’ It was during Lupolianski’s term that the Israeli government started to build the Separation Wall around and through the ‘united city’, leaving Palestinian neighbourhoods like Kafr ‘Aqab and the Shu’afat refugee camp inside the municipal boundaries but walled off from the city,

²³ This was nicely illustrated when an opposition member of the City Council, Meir Margalit, tabled a question for Olmert about the provision of municipal services to the Arab village of Ein Fuad in eastern Jerusalem. The reply duly came back from Olmert’s office, denying that there was any discrimination in provision: ‘Ein Fuad receives all municipal services, including welfare, education, lighting and cleanliness.’ A sly smile no doubt played Margalit’s lips when he read those lines. He penned back a short message to the mayor: ‘There is no such place as Ein Fuad’. See Meir Margalit, *Discrimination in the Heart of the Holy City*, Jerusalem 2006, p. 176.

²⁴ In reality, and due to the discriminatory Israeli policies, these permits became almost impossible for Palestinians to get. Therefore, their decision to build with no permit can be considered as their ongoing act of ‘spatial protest’ against Israel’s and the Jerusalem municipality’s urban-planning policies. See Iruş Braverman, ‘Powers of Illegality: House Demolitions and Resistance in East Jerusalem’, *Law and Social Inquiry*, vol. 32, no. 2, 2007, pp. 333–72.

while the principal effect has been to cut Jerusalem off from the rest of the West Bank.

Yet these policies have had the unintended consequence of convincing more and more Palestinian Jerusalemites to stay in the city, and attracting back others who had left for other parts of the West Bank, once they realized that Israel was trying to revoke their Jerusalem-resident status. One result of their return has been a steady growth in the proportion of Palestinians in the city. Palestinian school students, for example, were estimated in 2012 at 88,845, or 38 per cent of all school students in the city, by the Jerusalem municipality. However, this number is far from representing the real situation on the ground. The municipality's own figures state that there are 106,534 Palestinian-Jerusalemite children aged 6–18—that is, about 44 per cent of the city's children—who are all supposed to be at school. The figures indicate not only that the Jerusalem City Council wants to play down the numbers but that it turns a blind eye to the low attendance record, itself an indication of the fact the municipality has never provided this sector of the population with sufficient schools.²⁵ The socio-economic asymmetry is equally stark: the average wage in West Jerusalem stands at \$54 a day; in East Jerusalem it plummets to \$27. An estimated 78 per cent of East Jerusalem Palestinians live in poverty, and 84 per cent of Palestinian children are below the poverty line.²⁶

Jerusalem's current Mayor, the secular right-wing millionaire Nir Barkat, elected in 2008, has taken a slightly different approach. Like his predecessors, Barkat is also driven by the desire to strengthen Israeli sovereignty over all parts of the city; but his strategy suggests that the continuing discrimination against Palestinians and the obvious inequalities between the different zones has been playing against Zionist interests, as it reinforces the sense of two different cities within 'united Jerusalem' and so makes a future political partition of it seem more feasible. Barkat's policies were therefore more sophisticated. He gave the East Jerusalem portfolio to his opposition rivals, the leftist Meretz Party. He has begun a project of naming streets in East Jerusalem, which had previously been neglected by the City Council. One such was the ceremonial opening of Umm-Kulthum Street in Beit Hanina, where Barkat

²⁵ Or Kashti, 'East Jerusalem: The Capital of Dropouts', *Haaretz*, 5 September 2012.

²⁶ Association for Civil Rights in Israel, *Jerusalem Day 2012: Unprecedented Deterioration in East Jerusalem*.

could cheekily hint to the Palestinian population that the Israeli-Jewish municipality could ‘contain’ them and their culture, synecdochically represented by the great Egyptian singer. At another ceremony, launching a 43-million shekel project to improve the ‘mechanics street’ in Wadi al-Joz—new sewerage, lighting, sidewalks, trees, roundabouts—Barkat announced: ‘This is just one example of the comprehensive project of narrowing the gaps between the east side of the city [and the west]. We are active in all fronts, including transportation, education, and infrastructure, and you can now start to see the results.’ As he told the *Times of Israel*:

Years of neglect damaged the unity of the city in the eyes of the world. When we claim that the city is united but we don’t demonstrate that we know how to deal with all the residents, it hurts us . . . [We need] to work hard and make sure that we deal with all the residents so we actually unite the city much more strongly.²⁷

Barkat went on to explain that this could prevent a Palestinian uprising, in the context of the seething anger over the Separation Wall: ‘The strategy has to be to improve the quality of life for the [Palestinian] residents of Jerusalem, improve how they feel about the city, make sure that they have a lot to lose. As long as that trend continues, the rationale for any kind of violence among the residents of Jerusalem will decline.’ At the same time, Barkat’s policy of ‘Judaizing’ Arab Jerusalem included stepping up the number of Jewish settlement projects inside Palestinian neighbourhoods, strengthening the Israeli grip and making it impossible to define where ‘Arab Jerusalem’ ends and ‘Jewish Jerusalem’ starts—and thus ruling out the possibility of political partition. His plans include a Jewish-Israeli student village, Sha’ar Ha-Mizrah [Eastern Gate], in the Palestinian village of ‘Anata; a 200-unit settlement, Kidmat Tsiyon [Harbinger of Zion] between Abu Dis and Jabal Mukkabar, funded by the Florida multi-millionaire Irving Moskowitz; two settlements named Olive Heights and David Heights, also funded by Moskowitz, overlooking the village of Ras al-‘Amud; and Simon’s Estate in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood, in alliance with the US-based group Nahalat Shimon International. Mayor Barkat has also given full backing to the dubious archaeological projects of Elad, which has been undertaking large-scale excavations in the heart of the Palestinian township of Silwan, looking for remnants of a mythologized ‘City of David’. These measures need to

²⁷ David Horovitz, ‘Nir Barkat: How I’m ensuring Israeli Sovereignty in Jerusalem’, *Times of Israel*, 29 February 2012.

be seen as part and parcel of his efforts to ‘improve’ Palestinian neighbourhoods.

Pray for Jerusalem

Yet perhaps the most dramatic division that has opened up over the past few decades has been inside the Jewish-Israeli population. The demographic change is again perhaps best illustrated through education. The Jewish school system is separated into three streams: ‘general’—that is, secular—‘national-religious’ and ‘Haredi’. From 1998, the number of Haredi students in Jerusalem overtook the other two categories; since then, the gap has continued to widen. Between 2006 and 2011, the number of students in the general stream fell from 32,400 to 30,200, a drop of 7 per cent; the national-religious stream increased by 3 per cent, from 25,700 to 26,500; but the Haredi stream shot up by 10 per cent, from 85,900 to 94,200. In 2013, Haredim make up 63 per cent of Jerusalem’s Jewish-Israeli schoolchildren. This process of de-secularization—or religification, if you prefer—started in the 1980s, and began to show up in Jerusalem’s statistics from the 1990s. ‘It was a very simple demographic story’, commented the historian David Kroyanker. ‘There was no group of Orthodox elders of Zion that met around a table and planned to take over Jerusalem. The growing number of Ultra-Orthodox in the city was just an outcome of the fact that they reproduce in figures ten times higher than the secular community.’²⁸

Many of the Jewish neighbourhoods of Jerusalem have now taken on an entirely different character. The ‘Hinge Neighbourhoods’ established on occupied territory to the east of the Green Line after the 1967 War initially had a mixed population of secular and national-religious residents; but from the 1980s, things started to change. The Ultra-Orthodox neighbourhoods just west of the Green Line, such as Shmu’el ha-Navi and Sanhedriya, began to suffer from over-crowding; a growing number of Haredi residents started to move eastward, buying apartments in the Hinge Neighbourhoods and creating Ultra-Orthodox ‘enclaves’ there. In one of these, Ramat Eshkol, the process of Haredification began in the late 80s and intensified in the 90s, followed by a similar pattern in nearby Giv’at ha-Mivtar and Ma’alot Dafna. The same process occurred in Ramat Shlomo, creating a continuity of Ultra-Orthodox neighbourhoods

²⁸ Neta Sela, ‘Jerusalem should be a Haredi city’, *Ynet*, 24 May 2006 (in Hebrew).

in north-eastern Jerusalem. The success of Haredi candidates in the 1993 City Council elections, noted above, led to more municipal investment for the community. The average Haredi-Jerusalemite family earns half the amount of a secular family—in 1995, the figure was 3,700 shekels, compared to 7,100 shekels—and is correspondingly more dependent on government support and national insurance.²⁹ In the latest development, a combination of rising house prices in Jerusalem and the overcrowding of newly established Ultra-Orthodox neighbourhoods has forced some to leave the city in search of cheaper accommodation, ‘found’ for them by the government in Modi’in Illit and Beitar Illit, two Haredi city-settlements in the West Bank.

Accompanying this has been the growing flight of mostly young, secular residents from the city, in search of what they perceived as more liberal, peaceful or promising habitats. From the 90s, Jerusalem has been experiencing net emigration combined with a rising population, due to the high birth-rate of the Haredi and Palestinian communities. At the same time, the city has been growing poorer: average income per person is 3,300 shekels, exactly half that of Israel’s business capital, Tel Aviv. In 2010 Jerusalem was awarded the dubious title of the poorest city in Israel.³⁰ These trends have begun to alarm Israeli policy-makers. Since 1998 the Jerusalem Development Authority, a joint agency of the Israeli government and the City council, has been trying to initiate projects that will attract entrepreneurs, students and high-tech workers to come to live—and invest—in the city. Among these are BioJerusalem and AcademiCity, which aim to ‘attract’—the keyword—bio-tech companies and students to the city; if they are ‘secular’, ‘Zionist’, ‘working’ and ‘wealthy’, all the better. The JDA has also been connected to more controversial projects, such as the Simon Wiesenthal Center’s attempt to build a ‘Museum of Tolerance and Human Dignity’ on the lands of the Muslim cemetery in Mamilla, in West Jerusalem. Another suggestion is to expand the boundaries of the city to the west: instead of bringing new Jewish-Israelis to the city, which is quite a mission, Jerusalem will swallow the ‘strong’ villages on its border—‘strong’ meaning in the Israeli context ‘national’,

²⁹ Momi Dahan, ‘The Ultra-Orthodox Jews and Municipal Authority, Part II: Budgetary Effects of the Demographic Composition in Jerusalem’ (in Hebrew), *Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies Research Series No. 82*, Jerusalem 1999, pp. 15–16.

³⁰ This is according to the statistics of poverty in big cities in Israel. See Asah Shtull-Trauring, ‘Ahead of Jerusalem Day, reports highlight extent of city’s poverty’, *Haaretz*, 11 May 2010.

‘Zionist’, ‘working’—such as Beit-Nekofa, Even-Sapir and Beit-Zayit. This is just another stage in the ever-lasting Israeli struggle to keep Jerusalem ‘united’, ‘Jewish’ and apparently, since 1998, ‘attractive’.

A personal tale

I was born in Jerusalem in 1978, but now I live in Tel Aviv. My two sisters have left the city as well, and so have the vast majority of their school friends and mine, choosing to live in the Tel Aviv metropolitan area, or in between the two cities—in Modi’in, for example. The next stage, once the young adults have flown the nest, is the decision of their parents to follow, especially once grandchildren make their appearance. This is a personal story, but it is not unrepresentative of many ‘secular’ Jewish-Jerusalemites’ trajectories over the past decade or so. To keep it in the family, one might consider the changing residential patterns in my parents’ apartment block, along the lines of an Israeli ‘Yacoubian Building’. For the past thirty years my parents have lived on the third floor of an eight-storey building in Giv’at Oranim, a neighbourhood in West Jerusalem. The social changes that have occurred in the city over this period are clearly reflected in the identity of the residents. So far as I know, none of the children of my age group who grew up there have stayed in Jerusalem. Moreover, every secular family that left the building was replaced with a national-religious or Ultra-Orthodox family who moved in. The change is strongly apparent in the streets. On Friday evening, for example, if I go to pick up my grandmother from the nearby district of Rehavya, I have to drive very carefully as many Ultra-Orthodox Jews are making their way to the synagogues, old and new, located in the area. My old primary school, Lurya, now functions as a synagogue on Saturdays and high holy days, to fulfil the growing needs of the observant population. On a short walk around the area last Yom Kippur, I heard the sounds of prayer coming from several other primary schools. I don’t mean this to be judgemental; it is just an attempt to personalize the changes that have swept Jerusalem in the last three decades.

As a child growing up in Jerusalem in the 1980s, my perception of the division between ‘West’ and ‘East’ was limited to the contrast between my immediate neighbourhood, where I studied and played, and the Old City—an adventurous, colourful Orient, where we strolled through crowded alleyways on Saturday family outings. Inside the massive walls, which I always associated with King Solomon, my imagination was

captured by the image of a sheikh, a rabbi and a priest, walking side by side, while the smell of incense mingled with the taste of almond juice and the shouts of Arab shopkeepers. Memories that today sound like the Orientalist *Moorish Bazaar* of Edwin Lord Weeks. I remember being taken on a school trip to David Citadel—‘The Tower of David Museum: Where Jerusalem Begins’ was its slogan—where we 12- and 13-year-olds searched for the exact spot from where King David had glimpsed Bathsheba bathing on the roof. It was only much later that I dared to accept that the celebrated symbols of ‘the eternal Jewish capital’ had other stories: that, despite their homophonic names, the magnificent city walls were not built by our beloved Solomon but 2,500 years later, by the Muslim-Ottoman Sultan Suleiman; that David Citadel got its name from the 11th-century Crusaders; that the Tower of David, ‘Where Jerusalem Begins’, was in fact a 19th-century mosque with a cylindrical minaret, built almost three millennia after the peeping king. I realized that the Old City was not synonymous with East Jerusalem, but only a tiny part of it, and that many Jerusalemites—*Yerushalmim* in Hebrew, *Maqdisiyyin* in Arabic—were Palestinians. Later I learned that they lived in places I had never heard of nor visited, such as Umm-Tuba, Kafr ‘Aqab and Al-Walaje. To my confusion, I found out that there was even a refugee camp within the municipality of ‘my city’.

Those images and the denials they represented may have been formed in a little boy’s mind, but they are suggestive of much greater processes of rejection and erasure. The fact that these are so intensively practised by both sides might even be considered a unifying phenomenon in this city of tensions. Debates between Jews and Muslims, Israelis and Palestinians, are seen as zero-sum games, battles in which all weapons—religious, archaeological, legal or political—are recruited to prove the city does not belong to the other. While American tourists will be sold Elad’s excavations of Byzantine ruins as biblical locations, visitors to the Museum of Islam at al-Haram al-Sharif will find no reference to a historical Jewish presence. Mordechai Keidar, a lecturer at Bar Ilan University, made a political fortune for himself, at least among right-wing Israelis, when he told Al-Jazeera that ‘Jerusalem is not to be found anywhere in the Qur’an’.³¹ But this kind of argumentation can be counter-productive, not only because it demonstrates a narrow understanding of the processes of sanctification, but because it can equally well be used by either

³¹ Chana Ya’ar, ‘Prof. Mordechai Kedar: “A Ball of Fire”’, *Arutz Sheva: Israel National News*, 12 January 2012.

side. Should one decide to play the game and check the holy books, one will indeed find that Jerusalem, Al-Quds in Arabic, is not mentioned in the Qur'an; the only hint given is to Al-Aqsa, 'the farthest mosque'. But nor is Jerusalem, Yerushalayim in Hebrew, mentioned in the five books of the Torah; again, the only hint is to a 'place which the Lord your God shall choose'.³² Samaritan Jews argue that the only indication of the place 'chosen by God' as the location of the holy temple is 'next to the shoulder of Nablus', which they take to be Gerizim Mountain, where they live. Have we been praying in the wrong direction all these years?

The religious, social and political unrest continues to simmer, if under the surface. It seems impossible that Jerusalem will be able to contain all its contradictions. The Israeli determination to have all of Jerusalem, never to share sovereignty with anyone, together with the increasing number of Palestinians, and the layers of myths on both sides, have created an absurd political reality that takes the city nowhere. The official celebrations of Jerusalem Day, the Israeli national holiday dedicated to the 1967 'unification' of the city, are a supreme example of this: the vast majority of those dancing with Israeli flags under the Old City walls are national-religious Jews, representing the 'new spirit' of Jerusalem—a messianic, non-integrative, Zionist urban space. There are hardly any Haredim there, nor any 'secular' Jews, let alone any of the Arabs who make up over a third of the city's inhabitants. In celebrating its 'unification', the city looks more fragmented than ever.

It is therefore only logical to believe that Jerusalem will be genuinely united only if its sovereignty is shared by both its peoples. In my view the 'two-state' option of partition—dividing it in the middle to create a 'pure' Jewish west and a 'pure' Palestinian east—is no longer a feasible solution, either to the Jerusalem question or to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict at large: the 'facts on the ground' of Israeli settlements and Palestinian population growth have rendered a 'pure' geographic division on any equitable basis all but impossible. The other option remains: a joint sovereignty exercised by both Israelis and Palestinians, with a mandate to develop the city to meet the national, social and political needs of both peoples. Then Jerusalem might stand a chance of recovering from the psychopathological syndrome that carries its name.

³² Qur'an, Sura 17:1; Bible, Deuteronomy 12:5.