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Résumé 1997:
The Year That Was

"Israel annexed East Jerusalem shortly after the 1967 war and says that it is part of its 'eternal capital'. Palestinians want East Jerusalem for the capital of their future state." (Reuters, April 2,1998) This summary of the nature of the conflict, which concludes a report on the latest controversial Israeli building plans in the Palestinian neighborhood of Ras al-Amud in Jerusalem, is a "short hand" endlessly circulated and reproduced in the print media. The serialization of the "short hand" has taken on a logic and life of its own, extending far beyond the popular print media. This is not to say that the national question can be or for that matter should be pried from a discourse of rights. Yet conceptualizing the texture of daily life in Jerusalem through the lens of nationalist narratives conceals as much as it reveals. In the words of the human rights attorney Ihab Abu Ghosh, director of the Jerusalem Legal Aid Center, at issue are the economic, social, cultural and political rights of people residing in the city, "whether the city will eventually be administered by India or China."

Few events since 1967 have had as dramatic an impact on the city that Palestinians call al-Quds as those between 1991 (Madrid) and 1993

(Oslo I). Animated by the peace process, Israel has sought to extend its hegemony over the city of Jerusalem and the rest of the West Bank through an aggressive building policy seeking to establish what it calls Metropolitan or Greater Jerusalem.[1] During the Gulf War, the West Bank was placed under military closure, which meant that West Bank residents needed special permits to enter Jerusalem. The policy of closure has been used systematically since then. Less than five years after Oslo, the historical function of al-Quds as an urban space for the economic, social and cultural life of the West Bank Palestinian community has been effectively eroded.

Notes on the Palestinian Community in Al-Quds

Since Oslo the rights of Palestinians to travel to and reside in Jerusalem have been under intense Israeli scrutiny and contestation. This includes the right of *presence*, *reproduction* (of family and community) and *access*. Before addressing the various coercions that inform the post-Oslo life of Palestinians in Jerusalem, a profile of the Palestinian community in al-Quds is in order. The political situation in Jerusalem has *de facto* disabled conventional ways of measuring and conceptualizing the development of a community. Two census were carried out during the British Mandate in 1922 and 1931, and a third took place immediately after the 1967 annexation of East Jerusalem. The transformations in 1967, particularly the redrawing of the municipal boundaries (an addition of 72,000 dunam and 26 Palestinian villages) and the resultant shift in the population, does not make this census a particularly meaningful interpretative tool.

While numerous surveys have been conducted around insurance, housing, taxation benefits since then, with various claims to comprehensiveness, in the 1996 Israeli *Statistical Yearbook* for Jerusalem population figures for neighborhoods in East Jerusalem are not given in actual numbers (as they are for Jewish neighborhoods) but rather in percentages. Cobbling together a variety of sources

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[1] On Jerusalem politics since 1967 see among others, B'Tselem, *A Policy of Discrimination: Land Expropriation, Planning and Building in East Jerusalem*. (Jerusalem: 1997); Riziq Shuqair, *Jerusalem: Its Legal Status and the Possibility of a Durable Settlement*. (Ramallah: Al-Haq, 1996); the news updates distributed by the *Alternative Information Center* and *Palestine Human Rights Information Center*.

multiplied by the yearly 3% birthrate, data on East Jerusalem can merely serve to trace the rough contours of an urban community.

A controversial and largely unsuccessful attempt at incorporating East Jerusalem into the recent Palestinian national census was not able to shed more light on the Palestinian population in the city. Hassan Abu Libda, head of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), had likened the recent census to a civil intifada, "It is going to be a big eye-opener for us [...] It is going to open what has always been a black box for Palestinians regarding their own situation and how much they know about it."[2] Although most publications are cognizant of the troubled genealogy of the Jerusalem part of their data, the figures nonetheless become part and parcel of national meaning-making industries, begging the question as to the kinds of relationships that come to bear upon the city and its representation.

Keeping this quandary in mind, the 1996 demographic survey of the PCBS revealed that about 10% of Palestinians in the Occupied Territories, or 254,000 reside in the Jerusalem district, of whom 170,000 reside within the Israeli defined post-67 municipal boundaries. The population of the district exhibits characteristics similar to those of the rest of the West Bank. As one might expect in an urban area, literacy rates are slightly higher in Jerusalem than they are in the rest of the West Bank (89.5% vs. 83.4%) and the fertility rates (3.95 vs. 5.61) and household sizes (5.7 vs. 6.7) somewhat lower.[3] The Jerusalem district differs significantly from the rest of the West Bank in the poverty index. Against a national poverty index of 19.12% (37.95% in Gaza, 11.03% in the rest of the West Bank), the Jerusalem district index was 3.97% in 1996.[4] Numerous commentators have cautioned against reading too much into this vast discrepancy. The Palestinian Economic Policy Research Institute (MAS) has suggested that access to Israeli insurance and welfare benefits as well as undocumented foreign and local charitable services artificially lower these figures. Most importantly,

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[2] *International Herald Tribune*, December 12, 1997.

[3] Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. *The Demographics Survey in the West Bank and Gaza Strip*. District Report Series (No.4), Jerusalem District, June 1996, pp.23-24.
[4] Radwan A. Shaban, *Living Standards in the West Bank and Gaza Strip*. (Jerusalem: Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute (MAS), 1997), p.32.

though, closure has not had the devastating effects on the Palestinian labor force within municipal Jerusalem as it has on the rest of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In an opinion poll conducted in December of 1996, 46.5% of Palestinian Jerusalemites named Israeli sources as the main source of family income.[5]

The attempt to profile the community becomes inevitably entangled with the highly charged politics of mapping the boundaries of the city.[6] A palimpsest of histories and memories structures the conception of these boundaries. The post-1967 Israeli expansion has invariably redrawn the *relationship* between Palestinian neighborhoods and villages within the Jerusalem district. However, in light of the deeply coercive context in which "urban planning" has been enacted over the last few decades, there has been a strong counter-discursive tradition resisting the attempts to render Palestinian spatial relationships invisible. In this sense, Silwan (municipality) and Anata (district) retain their village descriptors. Thus to speak and write of "a Palestinian village in the Jewish suburbs of Jerusalem" here becomes a social commentary expressing the complex ways in which Palestinians *experience urban space* in Jerusalem. The authors of the PCBS note that "while cities in the developing world are centers of massive migration," the reverse processes seem to be in motion in East Jerusalem.[7] Yet, this conception of al-Quds – 48.6% urban, 47.5% rural and 3.8% refugee camp – should not foreclose a recognition of the varied articulations of urban space in general, and the urban positioning of Jerusalem in particular.

Rights of Residency and Access

In a recently published opinion poll conducted in 1995 by the Guttman Institute of Applied Social Research (Jerusalem) and the Center for International and Security Studies at the University of Maryland (USA), 58% of Jewish Jerusalemites (61% of

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[5]Human Development Project, Birzeit University. *Palestine Human Development Profile: 1996-1997*, p.129.

[6]The Palestinian neighborhoods/villages within the Israeli defined municipal boundaries are: A-Tur, Al-Thuri, Bab al-Zahra, Bayt Hanina, Bayt Safafa, Isawiyya, Old City, Ras al-Amud, Shaykh Jarrah, Shu'fat, Shu'fat Refugee Camp, Silwan, Sur Bahir, Um Tuba, Wadi al-Joz. The PCBS includes the following villages in the district of Jerusalem: Abu Dis, Izariyya, Anata, Hizma, Jabal al-Mukabir, A-Ram/Dahyat al-Barid, A-Sawahra A-Sharqiya, A-Shaykh Sa'id, Siwana. The villages included in the Jerusalem district varies. For the sake of clarity, the *Jerusalem Quarterly File* will use the PCBS's definition.

[7] PCBS (1996)

Israelis not residing in the city) were "disturbed" by the fact that 28% of the population of the city was composed of Palestinians, 51% (65%) supported restricting housing construction for Palestinians in Jerusalem, while 65% (59%) were in favor of redefining the city limits to exclude "Arab Settlements [sic]"[8] The fact that more than half of all Israeli's are disturbed by the *mere existence* of Palestinians in Jerusalem reflects a culture in which the increasing racialization of public discourse remains by and large unquestioned. It reinforces a climate in which the mayor of Jerusalem, Ehud Olmert, can publicly make the comment "I do not like the growth of the non-Jewish population in Jerusalem"[9] without triggering a national soul-searching.

Commenting upon current municipal politics, the Israeli attorney Daniel Seidemann has suggested that the intifada derived "geography of fear" is increasingly in danger of being displaced by the "Hebronization" of the culture of Jerusalem. This metaphor of

spacialized violence and absolute exclusion aptly captures the sensibilities in Jerusalem in 1997, a year in which Palestinians witnessed the continuation and intensification of post-Oslo policies. In August nineteen "illegal" houses were demolished in the Jerusalem district. In Palestinian memory-making this number has been variously noted as constituting the highest incident of house demolitions in a single month following the demolition of 135 houses to make room for the Wailing Wall Plaza in June of 1967. The sites targeted for demolition last August can be read as a commentary on the direction of post-Oslo urban transformation:
- Anata (2 demolitions), Isawiyya (1) Jabal al-Mukabir (1): These areas struggle for survival in the shadow of the expansion of settlements in northeastern and southern Jerusalem;
-   al-Tur (1) and Silwan (3): Both confront right-wing settler groups in the historical south-central part of East Jerusalem;
-   Nabi Samu'il (4/partial): The 170 residents have been subjected to the onslaught of one of the newer pseudo historical settlement-suburbs, Neve Shamu'il (est. 1993);
-   Shu'fat (1), Shu'fat Refugee Camp (6): These areas, together with Bayt Hanina to the north, are being

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rendered contested zones after two decades of tacit municipal recognition as areas for Palestinian community building

Residency rights continued to dominate the vicissitudes of Palestinian life in the city in 1997. Thirty years earlier the right of Palestinians to reside in Jerusalem had been circumscribed by way of Israeli issued Jerusalem I.D. cards. Absence from the city for 7 years or more automatically revoked this right but was rarely enforced against Palestinians residing in the West Bank outside the Jerusalem municipal boundaries. After Oslo the municipality began to reassess its residency policies, and in the summer of 1995 it started to apply the absentee clause to the 50,000 to 80,000 Palestinians that had moved outside the municipal boundaries (primarily as a result of the politically created housing shortage in Jerusalem itself.) This is not to say that other kinds of coercions did not exist prior to 1995. For instance, premised upon a culturalist argument that claimed to affirm the patrilocal character of Palestinian society, Israel denied Palestinian women the right to apply for "family reunification" for non-Jerusalemite spouses, which in effect forced women to either marry within the city, or to forego their rights to

live and raise families in Jerusalem. (This policy was successfully challenged in court only as recently as 1994.)

Year	ID's Conf.	Year	ID's Conf.
1967	105	1982	74
1968	395	1983	616
1969	178	1984	161
1970	327	1985	99
1971	126	1986	84
1972	93	1987	23
1973	77	1988	2
1974	45	1989	32
1975	54	1990	36
1976	42	1991	20
1977	35	1992	41
1978	36	1993	32
1979	91	1994	45
1980	158	1995	96
1981	51	1996	689

Source: Alternative Information Center Press Release October 7, 1997.

The residency issue has sparked what remains arguably the most active form of local community organizing. Since 1995 a network of legal clinics and residency rights centers has sprung up in Jerusalem and in the rest of the West Bank. On August 19, 1997 a steadfastness camp was set up on private *waqf* land in Sawana. The approximately fifty

families in the camp represent the voices of Palestinians who had moved outside the municipal boundaries in the 1970s and 1980s to places like Bayt Hanina and the Israeli-sponsored housing developments in Izariyya, "returned" to reside within the municipal boundaries following the implementation of the ID confiscation policy, and found themselves once again confronted with inadequate housing facilities.

According to the figures released by the Ministry of Interior, approximately 4,000 Jerusalem I.D. cards have been confiscated between 1967 and 1996. The Alternative Information Center (which spent three years trying to get access to the data) maintains that this figure does not include the roughly 8,000 children affected by the municipality's decision to deny their parents the right to reside in Jerusalem. By the time the municipality quietly discontinued its policy in December 1997, the cards of an estimated 5,000 Jerusalemites had been rescinded. The policy was eventually discontinued for reasons that had less to do with political pressure than with the estimated 20,000 Palestinians who had returned to Jerusalem from the rest of the West

Bank as a result of the policy.[10] These figures have generated much discussion of late. Yet, even though this policy – taking aside the individual lives involved – was a "failure," it does not change the premises from which the policy emerged: the municipalities attempt to problematize the reproduction of the Palestinian community in Jerusalem.

Rights of residence and reproduction are intrinsically linked to rights of access. The PCBS categorical distinction between al-Quds and the "Rest of the West Bank" is not just emblematic of the iconography of Jerusalem in the nationalist narrative, but is just as much an expression of the concrete geo-social context that informs the recent history of the city. Before closure about 15% of the West Bank economy was in and/or moved through the city. The system of closures has isolated the city of Jerusalem and by necessity pushed the development of smaller commercial and cultural centers, catering to a limited hinterland, particularly Ramallah to the north and Bethlehem to the south. In a larger study on the effects of the system of closures and internal closures, Saleh

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[10] *Ha'aretz*, February 11, 1998.

Abd al-Jawad, a political scientist at Birzeit University, has argued that the fragmentation and division of communities that inheres in this system is leading to the sociocide of Palestinian life in the Occupied Territories, because closure, so al-Jawad, "forces people to live and think in a strictly isolated local sense." Cut off from that which has shaped and sustained it, the effects on the economic and cultural life of East Jerusalem have been devastating. De-institutionalization is one key term frequently referenced in discussions of problems affecting Palestinian life in the city. According to Juda Abdallah Jamal, the Assistant General Director of the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees, 80% of all Palestinian NGO's have moved beyond the military checkpoints lining the boundaries of the Israeli municipality in order to be accessible to staff and clients, retaining skeleton offices and post office boxes in Jerusalem.

Re-constructing Metropolitan Jerusalem

A: At the Margins of the Municipality

A sense of place and identity is realized through time. Spaces and spatial relationships are constantly made and remade. The non-coherence of Israeli and Palestinian map-making has been a problem that has taken many different forms. However, current militarized infrastructural attempts at substituting the north-south axis of al-Quds with that of Metropolitan Jerusalem, marks a moment of pervasive transformation.

On May 26, 1997 the Israeli liberal newspaper *Ha'aretz* reported that 30,000 dunam had already been confiscated in that year for settlement expansion, 20,000 dunam in the Jerusalem area alone, with half of all Israeli settlement construction taking place at Ma'ale Adumim. (Established in 1974 in the eastern part of the Jerusalem district, the settlement of Ma'ale Adumim was declared the first Israeli city in "Samaria and Judea" in 1991.[11]) In 1997 plans were underway to connect Ma'ale Adumim to Jerusalem. To this effect notice was given (on February 28 and again on March 6) in the Palestinian daily *al-Quds* detailing the lands (12,443 dunam) to be confiscated from "state lands" as well as two Palestinian villages within the municipal boundaries (A-Tur and Isawiyya) and three within the Jerusalem district (Izariyya, Anata and Abu Dis). In their legal

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[11]Jerusalem Legal Aid Center. *The Expansion of Ma'ale Adumim Settlement.* Unpublished Report.

interventions against the expansion of Ma'ale Adumim, the Jerusalem Legal Aid Center argued that this plan (called the E-1 plan) is "detached of any regional context" except that of a Greater Jerusalem narrative that *a priori* excludes Palestinians. Peace Now Spokeswoman Hagit Ya'ari characterized the E-1 plan as "a political move to deny Palestinians continuity [...] the plan will force Palestinians from Nablus seeking to reach Hebron, or those wishing to travel from Bethlehem to Ramallah, to cut through Israel [...] The plan will cause Palestinian villages to be totally cut off and turned into isolated enclaves.[12]

Of all the communities affected by the confiscations for Ma'ale Adumim the village of Anata has been the site of numerous local protests throughout the year. Home to about 12,000 people in northern Jerusalem, Anata's recent history has made it a symbol of a disenfranchised space *par excellence*. Law and Water Establishment (LAWE), a Palestinian human rights organization, did a study on Anata in which it detailed the processes that go into the "erasure" of a community.

In the aftermath of the redrawing of the municipal boundaries in 1967, the village lands ended up straddling the

West Bank and Jerusalem, with only 1/3 of its residents entitled to a Jerusalem ID card. After thirty years of land confiscation for a series of settlements - Ma'ale Adumim, Kfar Adumim (est.1979), Alamon (est. 1983) and Alon (est.1991) –Anata's land dwindled from 30,572 dunam to less than 10,000 dunam by 1996. Surrounded by settlements on three sides, and circumscribed by two settler road systems, drastic loss of land and the difficulties in accessing the land still available, Anata villagers have become increasingly proletarianized over the last few decades. With most of the village situated in area C (areas from which the Israeli civil administration has been attempting to remove as much of the Palestinian population as possible[13]), LAWE reported 50 houses to be at risk because they are outside the military imposed village limits. Anata had witnessed the destruction of 12 houses in its modern history. The study assembles a picture in which the omnipresent tensions and contradictions, disenfranchisement, unemployment (a result of closure)

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[12] *Jerusalem Post*, October 29, 1997.

[13]Following the Oslo Peace Accords, the Occupied Territories were divided into three classificatory categories : A (exclusive Palestinian administration), B (jointly administered by the PA and the Israeli Administration) and C (exclusive Israeli administration).

and overcrowding is tearing at the social fabric of the village, furnishing the disincentives for reproducing the community.[14] In 1997 Anata's disintegration continued. Following demonstrations against the proposed confiscation of land for Ma'ale Adumim in February 1997, two months later the municipality confiscated another 1544 dunam to build 800 new housing units in Anatot (est.1988) and Talmon (est. 1989).[15] According to *Palestine Report*, this leaves Anata with 3,250 dunam of land.[16] On October 20 the village was the site of another demonstration, this time protesting 23 house demolition orders.

If Anata represents one example of a community trying to reproduce itself in the shadow of Ma'ale Adumim in 1997, the Bedouin of the Jahalin tribe represent another. Evicted from the Negev in 1950, the Jahalin have been living in the southeast of the Jerusalem district ever since. With the growth and expansion of Ma'ale Adumim in the 1980's different Jahalin groups have been variously pressured to move. Accused of squatting on "state land"

or "closed military areas" the Jahalin have been in and out of court for the last fifteen years. Yet, it was the beginning of the eastern expansion of Ma'ale Adumim in the fall of 1993 that set the conditions for their permanent displacement. Following an Israeli Supreme Court ruling from September 4, 1996, the eviction processes of the Jahalin from area C to assigned alternative sites around the Izariyya garbage dump picked up momentum in 1997. In four phases (two in January, one in February and one in November) sixty-one families (about 610 adults and children) either had their tents and tin shacks destroyed with earth-movers or forcibly loaded onto trucks to be driven to the assigned new sites. Located next to the Jerusalem garbage dump, the new sites are detrimental to the Jahalin's livelihood, their goat and sheep herds. Among other things derived from an imagined simplicity of the conditions of their life, without building permits many Jahalin families spent the winter in metal shipping containers supplied to them by the municipality. Another 350 Jahalin families are to be relocated in 1998.

Last spring the Israeli media reported that in exchange for the cancellation of the E-1 plan and the freezing of settlements in the

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[14] LAWE, *Anata: Case Study of Collective Punishment and Housing Demolitions*. Report, May 1996.
[15] *Ha'aretz*, May 26, 1997.
[16] *Palestine Report*, March 21, 1997.

Jerusalem district until final status talks are held, the Palestinian Authority would accept construction on Jabal Abu Ghnaim/Har Homa. The February 27 approval of a plan to build 6,500 housing units on Jabal Abu Ghnaim - located in the southern Jerusalem and northern Bethlehem districts - and the beginning of construction on March 18, led to the biggest and most involved stand-off of the year. According to knowledgeable observers, the Palestinian Authority's inability to prevent construction at Jabal Abu Ghnaim, profoundly impacted upon the ways in which Palestinians negotiate access and use of the city's urban space. In a survey conducted by the Tami Steinmetz Center (Tel Aviv University) during the stand-off, 55% of all Israeli's thought that building on Jabal Abu Ghnaim was legitimate according to the Oslo Peace Accords.[17] Jabal Abu Ghnaim's infrastructure was completed in 1997, with plans underway to build 1,000 units in 1998.

B: Inside the City: Jerusalem's Historical Neighborhoods and Villages

The struggle of the Jahalin to preserve a way of life that at least partially is grounded in animal husbandry can easily fit into modernization narratives taking place elsewhere. The various photographs that circulated in 1997 depicting Jahalin shanty-type dwellings against the skyline of Ma'ale Adumim resonate within a global visual archive depicting contradictions in third world urbanization. In the aftermath of the violence that mark their founding moment, the settlements surrounding Jerusalem likewise easily give way to suburban natural growth narratives. In contradistinction, settlements in historical southeast Jerusalem cannot conceal their origin. The takeover of houses in what are the most economically marginalized Palestinian neighborhoods requires the perpetual reenactment of power. The immediacy of the climate of violence that surrounds these settlements and the kinds of relations that they openly display makes them highly controversial. Despite the current municipality's support for such projects, ironically it is often the General Security Services which voice a cautionary note. Reporting on a speech given by Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai to settlement leaders at Barkan (Nablus district) in regard to the mid-September Ras al-Amud standoff, the

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[17] *Palestine Report*, March 21, 1997

Jerusalem Post (September 17,1997) notes that "Mordechai assured them that the government is determined to strengthen the Jewish presence in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, but stressed that such activities must be part of centralized projects such as Gush Etzion, Pisgat Ze-ev, and Har Homa and must not be carried out independently."

The ideological narratives that drive settlements in these neighborhoods are premised upon a selective re-construction of Jerusalem's urban history, wedding arguments around archeo-religious distant pasts to the city's complex pre-state urban geography. As part of the foreign philanthropic initiatives that drove at least one-third of Jewish urbanization in Jerusalem in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, neighborhoods were built for instance for Yemenite Jews in Silwan (1882) and in Al-Thuri (1888).[18] Along with other Jewish communities located in the eastern part of the city, the Yemenites left Silwan in 1936. Through the use and abuse of Israel's controversial "absentee property" legislation, these properties have been the target of the Elad settler group. On October 9, the group moved into

eight Palestinian homes in the Wadi Hilwa neighborhood of Silwan and established the Ir David (City of David) settlement. These takeovers were subsequently declared illegal in an Israeli court of law, and on December 13 the GSS evicted settlers from at least one of the buildings. Nevertheless, Ir David has continued to grow. On March 20, 1977 settlers seized and moved into their tenth building in Silwan, and six months later (September 17, 1997) *Ha'aretz* noted that the Elad group claimed to have purchased dozen of properties near the ancient city of David, although few were ready to be inhabited. Of the many legal challenges against Elad, LAWE won a case in May 1997. The organization regards these cases as critical (despite their low success rate), not just because of the illegality of many of these property transactions but "to test the political will of the municipality to carry out orders of its judicial system. The political significance of placing Jewish families in Arab villages, under the protection of the Israeli police but living there against Israeli law serves as a powerful reminder of the

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[18] Ruth Kark, *Jerusalem Neighborhoods: Planning and By-Laws, 1855-1930* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 191).

eventual aims of the policies of the Jerusalem municipality."[19]

In September of 1997 a political alliance between the municipality and right-wing financing led to the expansion of the historical settler-belt into the northern tip of Silwan: Ras al-Amud. Although the national and international outcry caused a temporary strategic shift, replacing Ataret Cohanim settler families with students in the organization's yeshiva, the foundation for settlement expansion into south-eastern Jerusalem had been laid.

The crisis over Ras al-Amud inevitably led to comparisons with Silwan in 1991. In what journalist Danny Rubinstein described as an "intricate web of ownership rights" the fourteen-dunam plot targeted in the takeover had had Jewish owners (among others) in the pre-1948 period.[20] Israeli courts by and large have not challenged the legitimacy of these sales. However, in 1991 the Israeli Attorney General Yosef Harish ruled that Elad's presence in Silwan "harmed public order [thus] the government is entitled to prevent persons from taking possession of

property."[21] By 1997 these sensibilities had shifted dramatically.

In a press interview shortly after the Ras al-Amud incident, Jerusalem mayor Ehud Olmert articulated his position on the politics of dwelling in Jerusalem. He distanced himself from his Israeli liberal critics and their reading of the social topography of Jerusalem in which social peace is grounded in "the understanding that the city is a cluster of neighborhoods, each of which preserves its unique cultural, religious and national identity." Whereas his critics interpreted Ras al-Amud as a "brutal violation" of a previous "understanding," for Ehud Olmert, this previous "understanding" was premised upon the "ethical" and "moral" violation of the rights of Jews to live in certain areas. "The question is first and foremost moral. Just as in London and in Paris there is no law forbidding Jews from living in certain areas, there cannot conceivably be a law like that in Jerusalem. The argument that Jews and Arabs living together guarantees violence is completely groundless. Jews have been living in the City of David, Silwan, for ten years. Has anybody heard of a violent clash between them and the Arabs?" [22]

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[19] LAWE, *Litigating Silwan*. Report (October, 1996).
[20] *Ha'aretz*, September 18, 1997.
[21] *Ha'aretz*, September 17, 1997.
[22] *Ha'aretz*, September 25, 1997.

The "mosaic" model has been much criticized for merely providing a different apparatus through which domination is enacted in the city. Yet, at the very least it acknowledges the complexity of Jerusalem's urban positioning which stands in stark relief to the positions put forward by the current municipal administration. These were perhaps most honestly captured in a much publicized verbal exchange during the Ras al-Amud standoff, in which one of the youthful settlers was filmed shouting at a Palestinian woman: "It's ours, it's all ours."

Besides the fact that the discourse of choice categorically refuses to include Palestinians, the racially defined notions of belonging and exclusion cannot but act as undemocratic and destabilizing forces in a "multi-cultural" urban neighborhood. The violence and coercions that accompany these settlements destroy the social and economic fabric of the community. The Bab al-Silsila neighborhood in the Old City is a case in point. Charitable community organizations, such as Project Loving Care Society, struggle to bring sanity and a sense of normalcy back into the lives of particularly women and children in one of Jerusalem's true front line neighborhoods. But to return to Ehud

Olmert's comments on neighborly relations in Silwan. The brutality of the house occupations (mostly at night) the often legally enforced shared occupancy of buildings (e.g. Bayt Qara'in building), the barbed wire and dogs separating the co-tenants and since January 1998 the cameras and lights installed on the southern wall of the old city to monitor the Palestinian population, throws into question the moral and ethical conditions in which these neighborhoods re-produce themselves.

The Old City has been the testing ground and model for this fundamentally invasive and destructive pattern of Jewish settlement in the wake of the massive state-sponsored transformations in the late 1960s. In the last two years the municipality has again taken a much more active interest in the Old City. On August 27, 1996 it demolished the first "illegal" building in the Old City since 1967. Following the demolition of the Burq al-Laqlaq community center, five additional demolition notices were served that month in the Bab al-Huta quarter. Arguably the poorest neighborhood in the Old City, the quarter has become the latest target for settler takeovers, following the Bab al-Silsila neighborhood (where an estimated 50 buildings are

thought to now be in possession of the settler groups).

On the basis of a document by the Company for Renovating and Developing the Jewish Quarter, the Israeli Press reported on October 30 that plans were being prepared for the largest construction project since 1967 in the Old City's Jewish Quarter. With the explicit aim to increase by 25% the quarter's current population of 2,400 and to reconstruct the regions affected by the intifada, the plan includes more building, renovation of the Wailing Wall Plaza, a controversial unsealing of an old city wall gate east of Bab an-Nabi Dawud, and the installation of a central alarm for the protection of Jewish residents of the Old City."[23] In the words of Deputy Housing Minister Meir Poroush, "None of the Israeli Governments has done enough in the city; I see this project as a first class national duty to intensify Jewish presence in the city."[24]

With the stabbing death of an Ataret Cohanim yeshiva student close to Bab al-Amud on November 19, the Old City became the focus of municipal and national attention. The response to the attack - and the low-level violence that has marked the Old City since - was in tune with the kinds of arguments set forth in Israeli public discourse throughout the year,

involving the need to regain control over East Jerusalem. In the aftermath of the attack, the Old City and Ras al-Amud took on renewed urgency in certain quarters. Yet, according Yisrael Kimche, a municipal planner at the Jerusalem Institute of Israel Studies: "They may want to move more Jews into the Moslem Quarter, but there is nowhere to put them, and there is no room to build."[25]

Institutional control of East Jerusalem has been part of the municipality's articulated goal since Oslo. In October 1997 a Committee to Reinforce Sovereignty in East Jerusalem headed by the Minister of Religious Affairs Avi Blustein was commissioned to expand Israeli institutional presence in East Jerusalem. On November 4 the Palestinian daily *Al-Ayyam* quoted Israel Public Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani announcing a plan to start moving Israeli police headquarters to East Jerusalem.

The year ended with a furry over the counting of the population in East Jerusalem. In response to the Palestinian Authority's desire to incorporate al-Quds into the first formal national census, Israel rushed a law through the Knesset on December 12 outlawing the census in East Jerusalem.

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[23] *Jerusalem Post*, October 31, 1997.
[24] *al-Quds*, October 31, 1997.

[25] *Jerusalem Post*, November 21, 1997.