

## CHAPTER 8

# Jerusalem between Segregation and Integration: Reading Urban Space through the Eyes of Justice Gad Frumkin

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## Introduction

Jerusalem is seen as an archetypal example of a divided city, where extreme ethno-national polarization is deep rooted in a long history of segregation. In this chapter I challenge this perception by re-examining urban dynamics of late Ottoman and British Mandate Jerusalem, while questioning the manner in which urban segregation is theorized and understood.

In the past few decades, there has been a reinvigorated scholarly discussion of urban segregation, driven by the challenges of difference and diversity.<sup>1</sup> Entrenched segregation between different groups (defined by race, ethnicity, religion or class), or the “parallel lives” of different communities, living side by side with little contact, are seen to undermine the multicultural model of the late twentieth century. At the same time, mechanistic models of integration through urban mixing are increasingly challenged, and it is no longer accepted as evident that segregation is always undesirable. Nor is it obvious that everyday contact between different communities necessarily helps to engender greater understanding and dialogue. Scholars have been debating how to locate the discussion of urban encounter and segregation in the lived experience of the city. Writing on this topic suffers from the idealization of urban cosmopolitanism, on the one hand, or, conversely, describing segregation in overdetermined terms. To avoid this double pitfall, closer attention to the historical and spatial context is necessary, as well as close examination of socioeconomic realities. One suggestion, that I follow in this chapter, is to focus on life histories.<sup>2</sup> By

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- 1 This chapter forms part of ‘Conflict in Cities and the Contested State’ project, funded by the ESRC’s Large Grants Programme (RES-060-25-0015). For a comprehensive overview of the scholarly discussion of urban segregation, see Laura Vaughan and Sonia Arbaci, “The Challenges of Understanding Urban Segregation,” *Built Environment* 37 (June 2011): 128–138.
  - 2 G. Valentine, “Living with Difference: Reflections on Geographies of Encounter,” *Progress in Human Geography* 32, no. 3 (2008), 323.

focusing primarily on the specific viewpoint of an embodied subject, it is possible to explore the matrix of social relations as they are played out in urban space. Following individual urban histories also allows a consideration of different sites and places across the city and beyond, facilitating a multi-scalar approach that looks at a series of sites as well as the city as a whole. The spatial biographies of individuals are thus an effective way to test and challenge common assumptions on ethnic boundaries, their meaning and depth.

In fact, in the context of Palestine/Israel there is a growing interest in personal histories as a means of social and urban history. As elaborated by Rochelle Davis, memoirs and autobiographies have the potential to challenge official histories by bringing in the experience of the everyday.<sup>3</sup> Salim Tamari and Issam Nassar see autobiographies as a way to bring the voices of marginalized groups and aspects of their lives that have long been missing from the dominant political accounts of modern Palestine's troubled history.<sup>4</sup> Tamari and Nassar, in their work at the Institute of Jerusalem Studies, have been closely involved in the publication and study of fascinating autobiographical sources from lost diaries, memoirs, and photo albums.<sup>5</sup>

This chapter looks at urban segregation in late Ottoman and British Mandate Jerusalem primarily through the eyes of one individual—Justice Gad Frumkin. Born in 1887 in the Old City of Jerusalem to an influential Hassidic Ashkenazi publisher, Frumkin started his career as a Hebrew journalist. In 1908, attracted to the causes of Ottomanism and Zionism, he developed political ambitions to run for the Ottoman Parliament, and studied law in Istanbul. After the 1917 British occupation of Jerusalem he was appointed judge, as a result of the intervention of the Zionist leader Chaim Weizmann, and was promoted almost immediately to the Supreme Court, where he served for nearly thirty years. He was the most senior Jew in an official position during the Mandate, and had close ties with the Arab elite; he was the only leading Zionist to have direct contact with the Mufti Hajj Amīn al-Ḥusaynī in the 1920s. In the 1930s he was involved in negotiations with prominent Arab Palestinians for a bi-national regime in Palestine, but his efforts were rejected by the Jewish Agency. His illustrious career was terminated in 1948, when he was effectively

3 Issam Nassar and Salim Tamari (eds.), *Dirasāt fī l-tārīkh al-ijtima'i li-bilād al-Shām: qira'at fī l-siyar wa-siyar al-dhatiyya* (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Dirasāt al-Filasṭīniyya, 2007).

4 Ibid.

5 Among the publications of the Institute, see Issam Nassar and Salim Tamari (eds.), *Pilgrims, Lepers & Stuffed Cabbage: Essays on Jerusalem's Cultural History* (Jerusalem: Centre for Jerusalem Studies, 2005); Salim Tamari, *Year of the Locust: A Soldier's Diary and the Erasure of Palestine's Ottoman Past* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).

ousted from the Israeli Supreme Court. Frumkin was a member of the ruling establishment throughout most of his life. But as his career developed, his strong ties with Arab Palestinians were increasingly at odds with tendencies within the Jewish-Zionist *Yishuv* (society) in Palestine. Thus Frumkin inhabited a position that was simultaneously at the center and the margins; he called into question the definition of these categories as they are applied in Palestine/Israel.

The main source for this chapter is Frumkin's published memoir, *Derekh Shofet beyerushalayim* [The path of a judge in Jerusalem (Tel Aviv, 1954)].<sup>6</sup> The memoir is rich with anecdotes and observations of everyday life in late Ottoman and British Mandate Jerusalem. Frumkin is especially attentive to details of space, which makes him very useful for this discussion. He takes the trouble, for example, to describe the layout of the Ottoman Serai (governor offices), and the exact office arrangement in the Supreme Court during the Mandate. The memoir is hardly a new source: it has been used extensively by Israeli historians such as Ilan Pappé and Tom Segev, who study the late Ottoman and British Mandate period.<sup>7</sup> However, these historians relied on the memoir primarily to examine the political dynamics between Zionists and Arabs during the Mandate. They did not look at Frumkin himself, or use his writing to rethink boundaries and interactions between communities in Jerusalem. Frumkin was studied in depth only by the legal historian Nathan Brun, who focused on his dismissal from the Israeli Supreme Court.<sup>8</sup>

When considering the memoir, we should bear in mind that it was written in the early 1950s. An obvious concern is the reliability of Frumkin's descriptions of late Ottoman Jerusalem after many decades; and while one cannot accept his accounts literally, there is ample evidence to show that Frumkin drew heavily on his personal archive to write the book, and he did not rely solely on his memory. But a further concern is the ideological bias of the book. Written after his ousting from the Supreme Court, the memoir was undoubtedly designed to defend his legacy and his contribution to the Zionist project and to the establishment of Israel. In such a context, Frumkin was likely to downplay details that could compromise his Zionist credentials. In one example, he omitted his relations with a leading anti-Zionist Jewish member of the Ottoman

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6 All translations are mine.

7 Tom Segev, *One Palestine, Complete: Jews and Arabs under the British Mandate* (London: Little Brown, 2000).

8 Nathan Brun, "ha-Kavod ha-Avud shel ha-Shofet ha-Elyon: Parashat 1 Minuyo shel ha-Shofet Frumkin le-Beyt ha-Mishpat ha-Elyon be-Yisrael," *Kathedra* 101–102 (1992): 151–190, 159–186.

Parliament, Emmanuel Carasso.<sup>9</sup> There is a felt tension between the author's desire to recount his own life story, and his wish to portray himself in a favorable light in the eyes of his Israeli readers. This ambivalence marks the memoir and makes it a fascinating source that often needs to be read against the grain. Especially interesting are Frumkin's descriptions of his close relations with the Arab Palestinian elite, or his Ottomanist disposition: these should be seen as understated, as he had little incentive to overstate aspects that could only detract from his image. Alongside the memoir, this chapter is based on Frumkin's earlier writings: his journalistic articles in the Hassidic *Habatselet* newspaper between 1905 and 1909; his letters and notes, kept in his personal archive (at the Central Zionist archives); his translation of the Ottoman codex, the *Majalla*; and his legal writings and court rulings, compiled and published in Hebrew.<sup>10</sup>

To provide an overall picture of the complexity of encounter and segregation in Jerusalem, I focus on a series of "micro" spaces, divided schematically to "residential spaces," "civic spaces," and "work spaces." However, this analytical categorization does not imply that these are not thought of as separate spaces; quite the contrary, commerce, labor, political activity, and social relations were interlinked and often occurred in the same environment.

### Residential Spaces: Segregation and Integration in the Old City

Jerusalem is typically described as a city that has always maintained a high level of residential segregation along ethnic and confessional lines. In European guide books and travel accounts from the early nineteenth century, one encounters the layout of Jerusalem arranged along four confessional quarters: Christian, Armenian, Jewish, and Muslim. The basic cross shape of the city, with two main streets cutting north-south and east-west, separating these four quarters, was the organizing principle through which Jerusalem was encountered, experienced, and understood by western visitors and scholars; this principle is still dominant in the historiography.<sup>11</sup>

9 Nathan Brun, *Shoftim u-mishpetanim be-Erets Yiśra'el: ben Kushta li-Yerushalayim*, 1900–1930 (Jerusalem: Magnes, Hebrew University, 2008).

10 Gad Frumkin, *Majalat aḥkam al-aṣliyya: kovets dine ha-tsedek* (Jerusalem: [s.n.], 1928); Gad Frumkin, *Pesakim nivharim shel Gad Frumkin shofet be-vet ha-mishpat ha-'elyon le-Erets Yiśra'el*, 1920–1948, ed. Shalom Kassan (Tel Aviv: Y. Ts'ets'ik, 1962).

11 Ruth Kark, *Jerusalem and Its Environs: Quarters, Neighborhoods, Villages, 1800–1948*, Israel Studies in Historical Geography (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2001).

This historical perception has ramifications for the present condition of the city. Influential mayor Teddy Kollek, who ran the city between 1965 and 1993 and orchestrated the “unification” of Jerusalem after the 1967 occupation of East Jerusalem, explained his philosophy in the following terms:

Within the Old City Walls there were [historically] separate quarters: the Christian quarter, the Armenian, Greek, Ethiopian ... Coptic, Jewish, Muslim, etc. The [quarters] maintained good relations between them, with ups and downs, for many centuries. We are continuing this tradition. Jerusalem is not a melting pot, we are not trying to make “Goulash” from everybody. It’s a mosaic of different cultures and civilisations living together in one city. We are interested in preserving this state of things and this will be the city’s character in the future.<sup>12</sup>

Kollek’s rhetoric celebrated age-old, voluntary segregation as a recipe for tolerance and cultural diversity. However, in practice Kollek’s policies were highly discriminatory: the construction of Jewish-only neighborhoods and the neglect of Palestinian neighborhoods under the pretense of “non intervention” left Palestinians without adequate planning and public services.<sup>13</sup> Thus, Kollek used the “mosaic” metaphor to justify the creation of a checker-board pattern of self-segregated Jewish neighborhoods and Arab “ghettos” locked between them. More recently, in the 2000s, Jerusalem’s “natural” polarization along ethno-national lines has been presented as a key reason for its inevitable political division between Israelis and Palestinians.<sup>14</sup>

The dominant notion of the four historical segregated quarters was challenged persuasively by Salim Tamari, who argued that such quarters did not exist in the local imaginary of the city before the late 1930s, and that the Old City was far more mixed in confessional terms. Tamari based his reading on the memoirs of Wasif Jawhariyya, a musician and a civil servant in the Jerusalem municipality, a Christian Arab who was born and raised within the supposed confines of the Muslim quarter during the late Ottoman rule.<sup>15</sup> Portraying an

12 Jacob Malchin, “Interview with Teddy Kollek, 1984,” *Yahadut Hofshit* (September 2009), [www.free-judaism.org](http://www.free-judaism.org).

13 Amir Cheshin, Bill Hutman, and Avi Melamed, *Separate and Unequal: The Inside Story of Israeli Rule in East Jerusalem* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

14 Yisrael Kimchi, “The Operational and Metropolitan Framework of Jerusalem,” in *Forty Years in Jerusalem 1967–2007*, ed. Ora Ahimeir and Yaacov Bar Siman Tov (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 2008), 11–21.

15 Salim Tamari and Issam Nassar, *The Storyteller of Jerusalem: The Life and Times of Wasif Jawhariyyeh, 1904–1948* (Northampton, MA: Olive Branch Press/Interlink Publishing, 2013).

intricate picture of inter-communal links and relationships based on patronage, trade, business, and neighborly relations, Tamari argues that the image of Jerusalem as a segregated city divided into ethnic-denominational quarters, was a projection of western scholars and visitors that became reality when it was imposed on the city during the Mandate era. Locally, the city was perceived through neighborhoods or localities (*maḥallāt*) that were ethnically and religiously mixed.

How do Tamari's conclusions apply also to Jewish residential patterns in Jerusalem? The historiography has presented the Jewish quarter in the south-east area of the Old City as a centuries-old spatial-demographic reality.<sup>16</sup> And yet the term Jewish quarter (*ha-rova ha-yehudi*), almost never appears in local Hebrew sources before the twentieth century. Rather, we find the term "Street of the Jews" Reḥov Ha-Yehudim referring to a main street and its side streets, with dominant Jewish (Sephardic) presence since the fifteenth century.<sup>17</sup> This area was not, however, exclusively Jewish, nor did all Jews reside in this locality. In late Ottoman census documents<sup>18</sup> and in the Islamic court records<sup>19</sup> we find ample evidence of a Jewish presence in virtually all parts of the city. Ashkenazi Jews arriving in the city in large numbers from the middle of the nineteenth century chose to settle in the localities of al-Wad and Bab al-Hutta, in the north-east parts of the city, as noted in surveys of historical Jewish presence in the "Muslim quarter."<sup>20</sup> In memoirs of Jews such as Frumkin, David Yellin, and Yitzhaq Shiryon who resided in these areas, we find no indication that they perceived themselves as living outside the Jewish area of Jerusalem.<sup>21</sup> Nor is it

16 Yehoshua Ben-Arieh, *Jerusalem in the Nineteenth Century: The Old City*, vol. 1 (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984); Yehoshua Ben-Arieh, *Jerusalem in the Nineteenth Century: Emergence of the New City*, vol. 2 (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986); Kark, *Jerusalem and Its Environs*.

17 This observation is based on a digital survey of the two most important Hebrew newspapers in Jerusalem, the Frumkin's *Habatsalet* (1870–1911) and Eliezer Ben Yehuda's *Tsvi* and *ha-Or* (1884–1915). Both newspapers are available electronically at <http://www.jpress.org.il/view-hebrew.asp> (accessed October 2014).

18 Adar Arnon, "Population Censuses in Jerusalem in the Later Ottoman Period," *Cathedra* 6 (December 1977): 95–107; Adar Arnon, "The Quarters of Jerusalem in the Ottoman Period," *Middle Eastern Studies* 28, no. 1 (1992): 1–65.

19 Amnon Cohen, Elisheva Simon-Pikali, and Eyal Ginio, *Yehudim be-Bet ha-Mishpat ha-Muslemi: Hevrah, Kalkalah ve-Irgun Kehilati bi-Yerushalayim ha-'Othmanit: ha-Me'ah ha-Tesha 'Esreh* (Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi, 2003).

20 Shabtai Zecharia, *Batim ve-Mosadot Yehudim ba-Rova ha-Muslemi ba-Ir ha-Atika* (Jerusalem, 1985).

21 David Yellin, *Yerushalayim shel temol* (Jerusalem: ha-Ṷ'ad le-ḥotsa'at kitve David Yelin Hotsa'at R. Mas, 1972); Yizḥak Shiryon, *Zikhronot* (Jerusalem, 1943).

clear why the Ashkenazi and Sephardic communities, given their differences in ritual, language, and culture, should naturally reside in the same part of town.

Gad Frumkin was, in his own words, one of the “children of al-Wad”—a locality in the heart of the Old City that housed the Serai (government house) and the mufti’s house. Al-Wad was a predominantly Muslim area that had a large Jewish presence around the turn of the century; it was made up of Ashkenazim (mostly Hassidic) and North African Jews. According to 1905 census documents, Jews made up at least 45 percent of households.<sup>22</sup> The area was known in Hebrew as “Hebron Street,” as it housed a large number of Ashkenazi Jews who originally settled in Hebron before coming to Jerusalem. There were numerous synagogues and Jewish religious schools in the area. The Frumkins lived in a small compound with two little courtyards, the family print shop, and a small synagogue. The compound bordered on the mansion of the Jerusalem mufti from the Ḥusaynī nobility. The Ḥusaynīs were also Frumkin’s landlords, and they had good relations with Gad’s father, Yisrael Dov Frumkin. In the 1920s this fact facilitated the connection between Gad Frumkin and Hajj Amīn al-Ḥusaynī, the grand mufti and rising political leader of Arab Palestine.

In the memoirs we find detailed descriptions of the web of relations between Ashkenazim and Arabs. These relations focused on economic matters—commerce, work, and real estate; as well as civic and political matters. But connections with non-Jews were also a necessary feature of Jewish religious life, as Jews regularly relied on gentiles to perform certain forbidden tasks on Jewish festivals and on the Sabbath, such as making fire and turning lamps on and off. Thus we find in the memoirs the story of “der Bashitke,” Mūsā Bashītī, an Arab coal vendor, who used to buy the leavened bread (*chametz*) from the Ashkenazi communities during the Passover season. “Reb Moshe,” as he liked to refer to himself, spoke excellent Yiddish and Ladino, and used to finish his workday smoking a pipe in a Sephardic cafe in the “Street of the Jews”. The everyday reliance on gentiles for religious reasons meant that Jews had to reside in proximity to non-Jews, and an exclusive Jewish residential community was simply unthinkable. An account published in Frumkin’s newspaper, the *Habastelet*, on a visit to the Jewish neighborhood of Neveh Tsedek outside Jaffa, records the complications involved in living in an exclusive Jewish community through this somewhat humorous conversation between the reporter and a local Jew:

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22 Arnon, “Population Censuses in Jerusalem.”

“There is no neighborhood of gentiles nearby ... and what do you do on Sabbath and festivals?”

“Let us be thankful to the thieves ... it is a real miracle, that the thieves have made this place their favorite place.”

“Aha, so you catch the thieves and make them into ‘Sabbath gentiles’?”

“Why are you turning everything upside down? ... it’s more simple and straightforward. When the residents saw the situation [with the thieves], they petitioned the government to place a garrison here, and they—the gendarmes—they protect us from fire and also light the way for us when the need occurs.”<sup>23</sup>

An interesting gauge of the level of Ashkenazi-Arab interaction is the use of Arabic words and idioms in Yiddish. A 1930s study of “Palestinian Yiddish” spoken in Jerusalem and Safad found no less than 700 expressions, idioms, words, and terms borrowed from Arabic: from everyday greetings and obscenities to building trade terminology, weights and measurements, and agricultural terms.<sup>24</sup> In comparison, the study found only 35 expressions borrowed from Ladino, the language of Sephardic Jews, and these were limited to food and household objects. This suggests that Ashkenazim had closer interactions with Arabs than with Sephardim; and that the Ashkenazi-Arab encounters were frequent and diverse, encompassing aspects of business, politics, and administration, alongside everyday social life.

One way to track the interaction between the different communities is through movement in the city. The quotidian rhythms of urban life often receive little attention in discussions of segregation and polarization, which typically focus heavily on residential patterns, and therefore provide a more static understanding of urban space. When looking at historical periods, residential patterns are easier to research as they can be mapped with the aid of archival evidence such as census documents. In contrast, the daily routes of people through the city are by necessity ephemeral and difficult to reconstruct a century later. However, movement is key to the formation of the subjective experience of the city, and it necessarily involves chance encounters. The paths and roads used reflect, no doubt, wider social and political patterns; but they also leave room for accidental meetings. Interestingly, Frumkin chooses to introduce Jerusalem to his readers not through a static mapping of the city,

<sup>23</sup> *Habatsalet* (27 April 1908).

<sup>24</sup> Mordecai Kosover, *Arabic Elements in Palestinian Yiddish: The Old Ashkenazic Jewish Community in Palestine, its History and its Language* (Jerusalem: R. Mass, 1966).



but rather through “walking tours,” following the footsteps of his errands and leisurely escapades as a child. Rather than bringing his readers to the iconic sites of the Old City, such as the Wailing Wall or the Holy Sepulchre, Frumkin describes small alleys, shops, and vendors; he pays most attention to Ashkenazi institutions and merchants, but is careful to describe other tradespeople and officials. One such description, of his errands to the Ottoman *mutassarif* (governor) offices, starts with the shop of a Sephardic Jew, before crossing the yard of Serai, through a crowd of Muslim villagers, bumping into the two Ashkenazi *mukhtars* (appointed representatives); ascending to the governor offices he encounters Turkish clerks and the head of the district’s Ottoman education, a local noble Arab; and all this is timed carefully with the arrival of the Ottoman pasha with his carriage, from his residence outside the city gates, through al-Wad Street to the Serai, so that the necessary form can be signed in time. This account demonstrates that the necessities of business, commerce or subsistence required everyone (from the pasha to humble villagers) to travel through the city, and in this process to inevitably encounter members of other communities and social classes.

At the same time this image of high level of residential “mixing” and frequent interaction should not create the impression that religious and ethnic identities did not matter. Nor is it my intention to portray late Ottoman Jerusalem as an idyll of multi-ethnic harmony. Such nostalgic portrayals exist, but Frumkin’s memoirs are not one of them. Frumkin himself maintains that the frequent encounters did not lead to mutual understanding: “Arab and Jewish courtyards were adjacent, and the children met and quarrelled with each other: these were two separate worlds lacking any mental or cultural proximity.”<sup>25</sup> From other accounts we also know of common street fights between Ashkenazi boys on the one hand, and Arab and Sephardic boys on the other.<sup>26</sup>

Frumkin’s descriptions of late Ottoman Jerusalem resonate with recent debates on urban multi-culturalism. While ethnic difference, inclusivity, and openness are celebrated (at least in rhetoric) in many global cities, there are also fears for community cohesion, and the danger of “living together separately,”<sup>27</sup> with communities leading “parallel lives” in the same city.<sup>28</sup> Some

25 Gad Frumkin, *Derekh Shofet Beyerushalaim* (Tel Aviv: Dvir, 1954), 323.

26 Jacob Yehoshua, *Hakhamim bi-Yerushalayim ha-yeshanah* (Jerusalem: R. Mas, 1968).

27 Michael Romann and Alex Weingrod, *Living Together Separately: Arabs and Jews in Contemporary Jerusalem* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991); Ghazi Falah, “Living Together Apart: Residential Segregation in Mixed Arab-Jewish Cities in Israel,” *Urban Studies* 33, no. 6 (1 June 1996): 823–857.

28 Ted Cantle, Daljit Kaur, Mohammed Athar, Chris Dallison, Andy Wiggans, and Harris

scholars and policy makers are concerned about the detrimental effects of “voluntary segregation,”<sup>29</sup> others point out that physical proximity and “mixing” is no guarantee for mutual understanding or fruitful dialogue.<sup>30</sup> In my view, it is counter-productive to think of “segregation,” “integration,” and “inclusiveness” in absolute terms and as simple dichotomies. Rather, these terms refer to a spectrum of possibilities that are not always quantifiable and measurable and rely much on subjective perceptions. Furthermore, inter-communal interaction can take on many shapes; two communities can have strong commercial interactions with a minimal number of intermarriages, for example.

Frumkin relates that his more meaningful encounters with Arabs occurred not in the street but rather in domestic space. Frumkin's father had close relations with Arab elite families such as the al-ʿAlamīs, al-Ḥusaynīs, Quṭb, and others. Frumkin's involvement in municipal and Jewish communal affairs, his dealing with the Serai as well as his commercial activities put him in contact with these families, and they were frequent visitors at Frumkin's house in al-Wad. His father's links with Arab scholars and public figures meant that Frumkin grew up to become more familiar with Arab Jerusalem than the average Ashkenazi boy. He also received private Arabic lessons at home, and spoke and understood Arabic well even before he departed for law studies in Istanbul.

In 1905 the family decided to move out of the Old City to a more convenient house closer to Jewish residential developments outside the walls. As Salim Tamari has observed, residential neighborhoods outside the walls were more segregated along ethnic and confessional lines than neighborhoods in the Old City.<sup>31</sup> Issues of landownership and investment, according to Tamari, were the prime reason for the segregated nature of extra-mural development. It is note-

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Joshua, *Review of Community Cohesion in Oldham: Challenging Local Communities to Change Oldham* (Coventry: Institute for Community Cohesion, 2006).

- 29 O. Valins, “Stubborn Identities and the Construction of Socio-Spatial Boundaries: Ultra-Orthodox Jews Living in Contemporary Britain,” *Transactions—Institute Of British Geographers* 28 (2003): 158–175.
- 30 I. Cole and B. Goodchild, “Social Mix and the ‘Balanced Community’ in British Housing Policy—A Tale of Two Epochs,” *GeoJournal* 51, no. 4 (2000): 351–360; John Clayton, “Everyday Geographies of Marginality and Encounter in the Multicultural City,” in *New Geographies of Race and Racism*, ed. Claire Dwyer and Caroline Bressey (Aldershot, UK/Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008); A. Amin, “Ethnicity and the Multicultural City: Living with Diversity,” *Environment and Planning A* 34 (6) (2002): 959–980.
- 31 Philipp Misselwitz and Tim Rieniets (eds.), *City of Collision: Jerusalem and the Principles of Conflict Urbanism* (Basel/Boston: Birkhäuser, 2006).

worthy, however, that the Frumkins did not choose to settle in one of these Jewish-only neighborhoods, but rather chose Reḥov Haḥabashim (“Abyssinian Quarter”), a mixed area populated with wealthy Arabs, Jews, and Europeans. The quarter was popular with Jewish intellectual modernists, such as Eliezer Ben-Yehuda and David Yellin, as well as more recent Zionist immigrants. The area was the center of modern Jewish education in Jerusalem: it housed the arts and crafts school Bezalel, the German-sponsored school Lemel, and its teachers’ seminar, the Bnei Brith Library, and a commerce school.<sup>32</sup> The area teemed with young students and teachers, many of them from the Jewish colonies or new arrivals in Palestine, what is often referred to as “the New Yishuv.”

Frumkin, an 18-year-old Hassidic Jerusalemite, was not naturally close to these circles. However, through various chance encounters he found himself drawn to these “youth of the Abyssinians,” as he refers to them. He joined their discussions, and partook in their gymnastics, singing, dancing, and outdoor excursions, walking in the moonlight westwards to the fields at the outskirts of the city. Fascinated and attracted to the new milieu, Frumkin was moving away from the Hassidic modernist circles of his father towards Zionist notions of Jewish identity and the Jewish future of Palestine—this was manifest in his 1909 wedding to Hannah Eisenberg, the daughter of a citrus magnate from the Zionist colony Rehovot. In his memoirs he attributes his ideological transformation to the new surroundings of the Abyssinian quarter and the encounters they facilitated. During his wanderings in the “Latin quarter of Jerusalem,” as he describes the neighborhood, Frumkin established contacts with the Zionist leadership, and this took him later to the agricultural colonies, to Jaffa, and later to Istanbul and London as a representative of the Jewish “New Yishuv.” However, moving out of the city walls also allowed him to develop his ideas in another direction—that of integration in the local Arab environment and the Ottoman system. In the early twentieth century, Zionism, Ottomanism, and integration with the local Arab society did not seem to be contradictory options. New civic spaces, emerging in the late nineteenth century, were able to contain and support these different trajectories.

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32 Shabtai Zecharia, *Merkaz ha-Haskala ha-Yerushalmi* (Jerusalem: Sasar, 1996).

## New Civic Spaces

The question of civic and public space in Middle Eastern cities has long been contested in the historiography.<sup>33</sup> Some scholars, from Weber onwards, have argued that Islamic cities traditionally were characterized by an absence of civic spaces. In contrast with medieval European cities, Middle Eastern urban centers lacked municipal organization and autonomous guild-like socioeconomic structures, and this manifested itself in their urban layout. Some scholars of Jerusalem who have followed this line of thinking, emphasized the lack of European styled civic spaces such as impressive city squares or monumental civic buildings in Jerusalem prior to the twentieth century; they saw this as symptomatic of the “primitive” character of Ottoman Jerusalem and Islamic cities in general.<sup>34</sup> In contrast with this approach, other scholars of Islamic cities have often stressed the importance of city markets, coffeehouses, bathhouses, the main mosque and its square, as archetypical social spaces of congregation and encounter. Others still have questioned the validity of a Eurocentric framework and terminology to study Middle Eastern cities.<sup>35</sup>

What has gone largely unnoticed in the scholarship on Jerusalem was the emergence of new civic spaces as part of a dramatic re-organization of the late Ottoman city. The development of Jerusalem in the late nineteenth century has been described in terms of growth and expansion, with the main story being the spread of the city beyond the city walls. This description characterizes scholars hostile to Ottoman legacy, such as Yehshua Ben-Aryeh, and also those more sympathetic, such as Alexander Schölch.<sup>36</sup> And yet the development of the city in the final decades of Ottoman rule involved more than simply expansion: it spelled a profound re-articulation of urban layout and civic identity, modeled on European notions of public space and civic institutions. The newly-founded municipality played a key role in this transformation. A municipal

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33 For an overview see Nezar AlSayyad, *Cities and Caliphs: On the Genesis of Arab Muslim Urbanism* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991); Seteney Shami, *Publics, Politics and Participation: Locating the Public Sphere in the Middle East and North Africa* (New York: Social Science Research Council, 2009).

34 Ben-Arieh, *Jerusalem in the Nineteenth Century: The Old City*; Ben-Arieh, *Jerusalem in the Nineteenth Century: Emergence of the New City*; David Kroyanker, *Adrikhalut bi-Yerushalayim: ha-beniyah ba-Ir ha-'Atiqah* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1993).

35 AlSayyad, *Cities and Caliphs*.

36 Alexander Schölch, *Palestine in Transformation, 1856–1882* (Washington, DC: Institute for Palestine Studies, 2006).

hospital, an archaeological museum, a theater, a railway station, a municipal garden, and a privately-sponsored public library were among the new establishments opened during this period. The center of the city—politically and economically—shifted decidedly westwards, from the inner parts of the Old City and the Haram environs to the area of Jaffa Gate. This was the result of official initiatives, local private entrepreneurship, and European influence. Jaffa Gate emerged as the modern town center and boasted several post offices, banks, cafes, hotels, shops of imported goods and the main transport hub. Especially prominent were several photographers' studios whose huge trade signs can easily be seen in photographs of the area from this period. Young Frumkin had his picture taken in one of these studios, like other aspiring middle-class Jerusalemites (image 1). It was also the site of the new municipality offices, the rebuilt Ottoman barracks, and the town clock tower, erected in 1906. The new center developed on the seam line between the Old City and the new parts, connecting the two in an organic way. The commercial buildings that sprang up concealed the city walls, obscuring the difference between the "Old City" and Jerusalem's new parts. A continuum of public open space stretched from the inner parts of the Jaffa Gate, through the small plaza in front of the gate, alongside Jaffa Street and the Mamilla road, to the new municipal gardens further up the road. Clearly these developments reflected European notions of modern urbanity, and some western visitors, searching for the biblical city, were shocked and disappointed to arrive at the Jaffa Gate where Jerusalem seemed "as commonplace as a Parisian suburb."<sup>37</sup> Yet for Jerusalemites and the Ottoman authorities, the new town center was a showcase of the city's modernity and progress. This site facilitated frequent and diverse interaction between tourists and residents and between the different ethnic/religious groups. But furthermore, by providing an urban context to the new Ottoman framework, it also created the possibility of a shared identity that did not exist previously in the Old City, despite frequent and amicable interaction between different groups.

The urban re-organization of Jerusalem was predicated on the Tanzimat, Ottoman political and administrative reforms.<sup>38</sup> The new Ottoman citizenship law of 1869 promised equality to all citizens, regardless of their confessional identity. This was the administrative basis of new civic institutions such as Jerusalem's municipality (located outside the Jaffa Gate), which included Jews and Christians as city councilors. Similarly, the new clock tower, positioned

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37 Pierre Loti, *Jerusalem* (London: T. Werner Laurie, 1915), 42.

38 Haim Gerber, *Ottoman Rule in Jerusalem, 1890–1914* (Berlin: K. Schwarz, 1985).



FIGURE 8.1 *Photographer: Garabed Krikorian. Gad Frumkin as a young man. Jerusalem (1905–1908?). Courtesy of the Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem, Israel.*

above the Jaffa Gate, reflected the new perception of universal time that appealed to all residents.<sup>39</sup> It differed from confessional ways of thinking and marking time, such as Islamic calls for prayer and the bells of Christian churches.

Gad Frumkin grew up in this transforming landscape; he watched these changes with great interest. After the family moved to the new part of the city, young Gad continued to work in his father's print shop in al-Wad, traveling daily by foot to and from the Old City. He recounts that there were two routes to walk from the Abyssinian area to al-Wad. The quiet and shorter route passed through the sparse settlement north of the Old City, alongside Jewish and Muslim houses, through vineyards and groves, and entered the city through the Damascus Gate. Frumkin recalls fondly the "fields of ripening wheat, the song of the birds chattering from the top of the olive trees" in the pastoral landscape north of the Damascus Gate.<sup>40</sup> The other route was busier and longer and took Frumkin through the hustle and bustle of Jaffa Street, past the municipal gardens, and the city center of Jaffa Gate; it was this route which was to shape Frumkin's life and outlook. The dramatic 1908 revolution, as experienced by Frumkin in the new city center of Jerusalem, had a determining impact on his future career.

In 1906 Frumkin became the managing editor of his father's newspaper, the *Habatselet*. He changed the character of the newspaper, introducing more news reports on events in Jerusalem, Palestine, and the Ottoman Empire. The *Habatselet* reported more on general developments in Jerusalem, not only those regarding the Jewish communities, but also international news, articles on science and exploration, and translated prose, for example articles by the French writer Jules Verne. With the outbreak of the 1908 "Young Turk" revolution, *Habatselet* was early to announce the dramatic reinstatement of the Ottoman constitution on a full page; it celebrated the new age of freedom and equality with special reports from Jerusalem and Jaffa. Soon afterwards the newspaper started to refer to the local Jews as "Ottoman Jews," rather than "subjects of the Sultan."

In Jerusalem, the revolution was marked and celebrated in a large event in the Jaffa Gate area: a procession from the Ottoman barracks inside the walls, through Jaffa Street to the municipal gardens outside the walls. Frumkin, who was keen to witness the event, arrived at the municipal gardens directly from

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39 Yair Wallach, "The Governor and the Oud Player," in *The First Governor: Sir Ronald Storrs, Governor of Jerusalem 1918–1926*, ed. Nirit Shalev-Khalifa (Tel Aviv: Eretz Israel Museum, 2010), 76–87.

40 Frumkin, *Derekh Shofet Beyerushalaim*, 130.

the print press, in his work clothes. "Where are the celebrating Jews? Are they taking part in this celebration, are they voicing their opinions in public?" he asked himself.<sup>41</sup> He noticed the almost complete absence of Ashkenazi Jews, while the Sephardim, who were present in large numbers, "intermingled with the Arabs, and together they were more interested in cracking nuts, drinking lemonade and listening to the army band playing in the intervals between speeches than in the speeches themselves."<sup>42</sup> Frumkin came home around midnight and wrote an article on the demonstration; he concluded by calling on Jewish youth to study Arabic and Turkish, "so that they can follow the events and prepare themselves to become equal partners in the new system." The following day he discovered that his father (still the chief editor of the newspaper) had deleted these lines calling for Jewish integration in the non-Jewish environment. Y.D. Frumkin apparently believed that this call for integration went too far. The issue of studying languages other than Hebrew was extremely sensitive in the Ashkenazi community, and in conservative circles this idea was strongly resisted out of fear that they would lose control over the younger generation.<sup>43</sup> Gad Frumkin was outraged by his father's intervention, and confronted him at the newspaper offices in al-Wad. Their short and angry exchange ended with an irrevocable break between father and son, as Gad quit the room without asking permission. The father's small cluttered office in the closed confines of the al-Wad print shop appears in Frumkin's description as the complete opposite of the open space of exciting possibilities of the municipal gardens. While Y.D. Frumkin's attitudes were relatively liberal and open for an Ashkenazi Orthodox Jew, his horizons proved ultimately too limited and insular for his son. Young Frumkin decided to embark on his own separate way: first he contemplated establishing his own newspaper, then decided to travel to Istanbul to study law, in the hope of running for the Ottoman parliament. He left Palestine several months later against the wishes of his father, who actively tried to prevent him from doing so. The description of this formative break between an Orthodox father and a modern son challenges the perceived boundaries between Palestine's Orthodox Jewish community ("Old Yishuv") and the Zionist "New Yishuv." It appears that Y.D. Frumkin, albeit skeptical and critical of political Zionism, did not try to stop his son from associating with those in Zionist circles. He was willing to accept his marriage into a family of Zionist colonists, but would not allow him to preach in favor of active integra-

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41 Ibid., 146.

42 Ibid.

43 Menachem Friedman, *Hebrah bemashber legiytiymasyah: haYishuv hayashan ha'ashkenazy, 1900–1917* (Jerusalem: Bialik institute, 2001).



tion in Arab and Ottoman Palestine. And for Gad Frumkin, it would seem that the Arabic language promised political integration and modern citizenship.

Frumkin's association of Jerusalem's new civic spaces with public life and politics in modern Arabic is reminiscent of Habermassian terms, where the public sphere (defined in abstract, rather than urban terms) is a place for rational dialogue on the public good. Frumkin preached for participation in public life based on an exchange of ideas that would go beyond cross-ethnic practices of socializing around commerce and entertainment. Hence his disparaging comments on the crowd in the municipal gardens, who preferred to crack nuts and listen to the orchestra rather than pay attention to political speeches.<sup>44</sup> Yet, considering the performativity of practices of political participation, it is evident that the new possibilities of modernity within the Ottoman system did not demand necessarily an explicit articulation in political speeches. Rather, these possibilities were embodied in practices and woven into life through manifold physical and sensory experiences in these civic spaces. We find such experiences in memoirs of other Jerusalemites, such as the Arab Muslim soldier Iḥsān al-Turjīmān, the Arab Christian musician Waṣīf al-Jawhariyya, or the Jewish journalist Yaacov Yehoshua; these authors mention looking at the clock tower, reading news telegrams posted outside the Ottoman post offices, talking about politics with friends in a Jaffa Gate cafe, listening to the army band playing patriotic tunes in the municipal gardens, or purchasing western clothes in a shop of imported goods. All of these activities involved a continual redefinition and articulation of identity for local Jerusalemites. The Ottomanist vision, whether articulated in high modern Arabic language or not, allowed members of Jerusalem's diverse communities to come together and celebrate a common identity that was tied closely to the civic spaces of the city. This Ottoman vision lost its appeal during World War I as the campaign of harsh military repression alienated the city's population from the Ottoman regime.<sup>45</sup> In 1917, British occupying forces were welcomed by the overwhelming majority of the population. And yet this unanimity soon disappeared as British plans for Palestine became known. The British pledge to make Palestine into a "Jewish National Home" opened a rift between local Jews and the Muslim and Christian population, who increasingly defined themselves in national terms, as Arab Palestinians. The very same civic spaces that were used during the late Ottoman

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44 The Habermassian framework of the public sphere as a site of rational exchange was thoroughly critiqued, and its usefulness in Middle Eastern contexts was also questioned. See Shami, *Publics, Politics and Participation*.

45 Tamari, *Year of the Locust*.

period for popular celebrations became battlegrounds between nascent ethno-national visions. In April 1920 the plaza in front of the Jaffa Gate became the site of the first violent anti-Zionist riot in the history of modern Palestine (the “Nabi Musa uprising” or “Easter riots”). This was only the beginning of a violent conflict that continued throughout the twentieth century and beyond.

### Work Spaces

Political developments during the British Mandate encouraged Arab Palestinians and Jews to see themselves in antagonistic terms, as competing ethno-national communities. The tendency towards residential segregation in Jerusalem intensified, with the construction of Jewish and Arab middle-class neighborhoods in the new parts of the city. Frumkin himself was one of the founders of Rehavia, a Jewish-only bourgeois neighborhood. His decision to move there from a mixed neighborhood dominated by the Arab elite can certainly be read as a statement in favor of Jewish-Zionist separatism. However this reading is too simplistic. Frumkin continued to come into daily contact with Arab circles, in his work as a judge in the courts. Through his professional role and social contacts, Frumkin remained committed to Jewish-Arab dialogue and integration, unlike most leading Zionist figures.

Discussions on segregation and integration in divided and polarized cities have treated issues of labor and trade, when compared with residential patterns, as largely secondary. Without a close analysis of the spaces of work and commercial encounters, one can easily fall into a trap of imagining these cities as sharply divided between zones of clear identity, with movement across the divide limited to a minimum. Such a picture can be misleading. In British Mandate Palestine, the labor market and commerce were an arena of competition and cooperation. As social historian Deborah Bernstein has shown, political leaderships on both sides attempted to restrict economic exchange between communities. The Zionist leadership championed Jewish labor and produce, while the Arab leadership promoted a boycott of the Jewish sector.<sup>46</sup> However, economic relations continued even in sites that were highly segregated, such as the Hebrew city Tel Aviv.<sup>47</sup> In Jerusalem, it seems, economic ties were

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46 Deborah Bernstein, *Constructing Boundaries: Jewish and Arab Workers in Mandatory Palestine* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000).

47 Deborah Bernstein, *Nashim ba-Shulayim: Migdar ve-Leumiyut be-Tel Aviv ha-Mandatorit* (Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi, 2008).

stronger than in other cities. Arabs and Jews used the same commercial center along Jaffa Street. Government offices were more mixed than other work environments: the Mandatory courts at the Russian Compound, in which Frumkin worked, were one example.

Frumkin became a judge in Jerusalem's county court in 1918. His appointment was secured through the intervention of Chaim Weizmann with the British authorities. Weizmann saw Frumkin as a natural candidate to be the Zionist representative in the court system. While Frumkin himself objected to being presented as the "Jewish judge," he was happy to receive a monthly salary from the Jewish Agency to complement his income from the courts.<sup>48</sup> Within less than two years, Frumkin was promoted to the Supreme Court (1920), where he served for 28 years to become the most senior judge. Frumkin was the only Jewish judge in the Supreme Court, alongside Arab Palestinians and British judges. He was, effectively, the highest-ranking Jew in an official position in the Palestine Mandate.

The courts were located in the Russian Compound, the large enclosure built by the Tsarist Empire in the 1850–1860s to accommodate Russian pilgrims to Jerusalem. The compound was taken over by the Ottoman authorities during the war and used for military and administrative offices, and the British found the large modern buildings similarly useful. The compound was located northwest of the Old City, between the commercial Jaffa Street and the prestigious street of European consulates, schools, and hospitals (later named by the British "Prophets Street"). In residential terms the area was mixed between local Jews, Muslims, Christians, and European residents. The courts were the site of frequent encounters of Jews, Arabs, and British officials. Translators, lawyers, litigants, prosecutors, witnesses, judges, police, journalists, and visitors mingled on a daily basis. The fact that Frumkin shared offices with Arab colleagues made him unique among prominent members of the Zionist elite. Few Zionist public figures came in direct daily contact with large numbers of Arab Palestinians; even fewer considered Arab Palestinians as their peers. Frumkin describes his own encounters in the 1930s in the following words:

I encounter Arabs every day. They are the majority of my "customers" in court, I come across them as friends ... finding myself—sometimes inadvertently, in conversation with Arab men of all factions coming to visit my friends the Arab judges in the office, and listening to the conversations of

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48 Brun, "ha-Kavod ha-Avud shel ha-Shofet ha-Elyon: Parashat 1 Minuyo shel ha-Shofet Frumkin le-Beyt ha-Mishpat ha-Elyon be-Yisrael."

young Muslim and Christian clerks in the court, and students in the law school.<sup>49</sup>

Frumkin describes these frequent encounters as the background to his initiatives for dialogue with the Arab Palestinian leadership. Frumkin was close to the Zionist political leadership, but was highly critical of its dismissive attitudes towards the “Arab question.” Frumkin repeatedly warned against the repercussions of neglecting Jewish-Arab relations. His criticism was reminiscent of similar warnings made by leading Sephardic figures such as Yoseph Chelouche<sup>50</sup> and Eliyahu Elayashar,<sup>51</sup> who also had close professional and personal familiarity with Arab Palestinian society.

Frumkin’s comments can be read as an affirmation of the “contact hypothesis” which stipulates that the best way to promote social integration and reduce prejudice is to bring different social groups together in an everyday context. In the early 2000s scholars were celebrating the “thrown togetherness”<sup>52</sup> and cosmopolitanism of cities with high levels of diversity, arguing that everyday situations of encounter can do much to foster conviviality. Geographer Valentine Gail has questioned this optimism, showing that daily contact between different social groups alone is not sufficient to produce higher levels of respect or understanding.<sup>53</sup> Clearly it was not simply corridor conversations with his Arab colleagues that propelled Frumkin to adopt a critical approach to Zionist policies on the Arab question. His daily experience was embedded in his personal trajectory and life history. The connection between his family and elite Arab families; his command of the Arabic language and Islamic law; his childhood in a predominantly Muslim part of the Old City; his studies in Istanbul, alongside Arab students—all these experiences shaped Frumkin’s willingness to engage with Arab Palestinians and to be receptive to their ideas and thoughts. This engagement did not stop at small talk and instances of civility, but rather involved continuous professional activities of intellectual production in the Supreme Court.

The work of the court demanded that Frumkin and his colleagues maintain continual and daily professional conversation. In some cases, ethno-national identity appeared to have played a role in legalistic differences and disagree-

49 Frumkin, *Derekh Shofet Beyerushalaim*, 323.

50 Yosef Eliyahu Chelouche, *Parashat Hayay 1870–1930* (Tel Aviv: Babel, 2005).

51 Elie Eliachar, *Living with Jews* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1983).

52 Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London: Sage, 2005).

53 G. Valentine, “Living with Difference: Reflections on Geographies of Encounter,” *Progress in Human Geography* 32, no. 3 (2008): 323–337.

ments between himself and the Arab judges.<sup>54</sup> And yet there is ample evidence of opposite examples, in which Frumkin and his colleagues collaborated closely. One such crucial case was the 1922 ruling by Frumkin and Justice ‘Alī Jārallāh to deny US citizens an extra-territorial status. Jārallāh and Frumkin, ruling against the opinion of the British judge, effectively terminated the Ottoman system of privileges (Capitulations) that allowed western nationals impunity from the local legal system.<sup>55</sup> Frumkin was personally close to Jārallāh, and recalls with nostalgia their walks home from the courts, down Prophets Street to Frumkin’s house in the Musrara neighborhood. The short walk lasted for long minutes as the two men stopped every few steps, engrossed in their discussions. “I used to call it ‘conversing our way home,’ rather than walking home,” he writes.<sup>56</sup> Indeed, Frumkin’s encounters did not end within the court premises, and developed into social relations and friendships. No doubt his earlier ties with the Arab elite, through his father’s involvement in publishing and local Jewish affairs, were the basis of these close relations. Various social and official functions brought Frumkin into contact with prominent members of the Arab elite, and he entertained his Arab colleagues for dinners at his home. His house was a meeting point for Arabs and Zionist officials.<sup>57</sup> He was the only Zionist figure to have direct personal contact with the grand mufti, Hajj Amīn al-Ḥusaynī, who emerged as the political leader of Arab Palestinians. Frumkin’s daughter’s wedding in the King David Hotel in 1936 was attended by a large number of distinguished Arab guests (image 2), including Aḥmad Samīḥ al-Khālīdī, educator and head of the Arab College, Justice Muṣṭafā l-Khālīdī (Supreme Court, later Jerusalem mayor 1938–1944); the mayor of Jerusalem Ḥusayn Fakhri l-Khālīdī; and Mūsā l-‘Alamī, crown prosecutor and private secretary to the high commissioner. This was only a month before the outbreak of the Great Arab Revolt (1936–1939) directed against pro-Zionist British policies in Palestine.

54 In 1942, Frumkin ruled against an appeal by the Ashkenazi community to recognize it as a separate religious community; he asserted instead that there is a single Jewish community in Palestine. His Arab colleague, Justice Francis Khayyat, argued that Jews make up several separate congregations. Supreme court 42/109, 1942, in Frumkin, *Pesakim nivharim shel Gad Frumkin shofet be-vet ha-mishpat ha-elyon le-Erets-Yisra’el, 1920–1948*.

55 *Ibid.*, 32–57.

56 Frumkin, *Derekh Shofet Beyerushalaim*, 241.

57 See the meeting between Chaim Arlozorov, head of the political department in the Jewish Agency, with supreme justices Khayyat, Khalidi, and Jarrallah, 16 February 1932. Arlozorov, *Yoman Yerushalayim*, available online: [http://benyehuda.org/arlosoroff/jj\\_feb1932.html](http://benyehuda.org/arlosoroff/jj_feb1932.html) (February 2014).



FIGURE 8.2 *Photographer: Tzvi Oron 10 March 1936. "The Frumkin-Broida wedding", King David Hotel, Jerusalem. Left: Ahmad Samih al-Khalidi, (head of the Arab College); Third from left, Daniel Auster; (deputy Mayor of Jerusalem, General Zionists party); Fifth from left, Justice Mustafa al-Khalidi (Palestine Supreme Court Judge, Jerusalem mayor 1938–1944); Third from right: Husayn Fakhri al-Khalidi (Mayor of Jerusalem 1934–1937); Second from right: Musa al-Alami (Crown prosecutor and private secretary to the High Commissioner). Central Zionist Archives, NZO/636156. Curtsey of the Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem, Israel.*

These professional and social encounters were formative for Frumkin's political outlook; the special environment of the court, as a mixed work space, and the close and daily engagements with his Arab colleagues, propelled him to embark on a political initiative. In the early 1930s, against the background of growing tensions between Arabs and Zionists, Frumkin held a series of talks with Mūsā l-'Alamī, state prosecutor, an advisor to the high commissioner. Al-'Alamī, a Cambridge graduate and a member of the Arab aristocracy, was close to the leading Ḥusaynī family. Frumkin held al-'Alamī in high regard, and was impressed by his professional and unbiased attitudes in the court. The two discussed a bi-national framework that could accommodate the national desires of Arabs and Jews. Significantly, their discussions included not only the issues of immigration and legislative institutions, but also emphasized cultural and economic integration, and called for language classes in Arabic and Hebrew, and open labor markets in both sectors. These principles stood against official Zionist policies of cultural and economic isolation. In 1936, after the outbreak of the general Arab strike, Frumkin embarked on a peace initiative in

which he enlisted to his cause four other leading Zionist figures from Jewish industry, agriculture, and the academic world. In meetings with al-‘Alamī, they developed a detailed work plan to stop the escalating conflict. This was probably the most serious attempt of this kind during the British Mandate. Loyal to the Zionist leadership, Frumkin informed the Jewish Agency executive on the initiative, and allowed the negotiations to be taken over by Moshe Shertok (Sharet), head of the political department. As Gershon Shafir has argued, the model of “capitalist bi-nationalism” advocated by Frumkin’s group ran against the model of national and economic segregation championed by the Labor Settlement Movement.<sup>58</sup> The dominant Zionist labor party rejected the agreement, objecting strongly to restrictions on immigration and to the opening-up of labor markets. Shertok was left with no choice but to effectively terminate the negotiations.<sup>59</sup> Soon afterwards, Frumkin’s confidant, Mūsā l-‘Alamī, joined the preparations for an Arab armed revolt and negotiated the supply of arms from the Italian fascist regime.<sup>60</sup> Frumkin himself remained loyal to the Zionist leadership, but decided to refrain from further political intervention, as he realized that his efforts did not reflect the wishes of the Jewish Agency. This extraordinary episode, which became known as the “initiative of the five,” remains understudied today.<sup>61</sup>

The Supreme Court served as a common work environment of intellectual labor, where Arabs and Jews met each other as peers. While in many ways it was exceptional in British Mandate Palestine, the experience of a shared work and trade environment was certainly not exceptional, especially in Jerusalem. Labor and commerce served as prime reasons for bringing people together till

58 G. Shafir, “Capitalist Bi-nationalism in Mandatory Palestine,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 43, no. 4 (2011): 611–633.

59 Yizhak Herzog, “Contacts between the Jewish Agency and the Palestinians, the Arab Side: 1936–1938,” in *Arabs and Jews during the British Mandate: A New Approach to Historical Research*, ed. Ilan Pappé (Giv’at-Haviva: Peace Study Centre, 1995), 11–42.

60 Nir Arielli, “Italian Involvement in the Arab Revolt in Palestine, 1936–1939,” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 35 (2008): 187–204.

61 The scholarship on bi-nationalist ideas in the Zionist Yishuv has largely focused on the Brith Shalom, a group of European immigrant intellectuals with limited experience and knowledge of Palestine. Frumkin’s initiative is mentioned in this context, although Frumkin was careful to distance himself from Brith Shalom in his autobiography. On this issue see Susan Rolef, *The Bi-National Idea in Palestine during Mandatory Times* ([Haifa]: Shikmona Publishing Co., 1970); Avraham Sela, “Sihot ve-Maga’im beyn Manhigim Aravim Falastininim le-veyn Manhigim Tsonim 1933–1939,” *Ha-Mizrach Ha-Hadash* 22–23 (1972–1973): 401–423, 1–21; Joseph Heller, *Mi-Berit shalom le-Ihud: Yehudah Layb Magnes yehama’avaḳ li-medinah du-le’umit* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2003).

the very end of the British Mandate. The new market for fruit and vegetables, Mahne Yehuda, located at the heart of Jewish neighborhoods was co-owned by an Arab villager from Silwan, and depended almost entirely on produce from nearby Arab villages sold by women villagers.<sup>62</sup> Arab traders continued to come to the market until the end of November 1947, when the civil war broke out.<sup>63</sup> Despite attempts from the two national leaderships to minimize economic contact between the two sides, economic relations persisted and in Jerusalem they were probably stronger than in other places. While residential patterns clearly moved in the direction of segregation, commerce and labor continued to bring Arabs and Jews together and create sites of encounter throughout the city. However, it is noteworthy that the strong everyday trade and commerce relations did not acquire a political dimension similar to Frumkin's initiative. Only in rare cases did Arab-Jewish social and economic ties translate into joint political action. In most cases, they proved insufficient against violent extremism. For example, the Mahne Yehuda market, a site of common and daily Arab-Jewish interaction, was also a stronghold for the extreme Zionist militias—the Irgun and Stern Gang.<sup>64</sup> These militias frequently targeted Arab civilians and were involved in planting bombs in Arab markets and cafes. All this strengthens Valentine Gail's caution regarding the political potential of daily contact between different groups.

With the escalation of hostilities in 1946–1948, the courts' area, the Russian Compound, became a fortified zone, to which a special pass was required. Arab-Jewish tensions ran high even inside the protected area of the courts, and some Jewish solicitors refused to attend hearings in fear of being attacked. Frumkin, who received death threats signed by a militant Arab group, traveled to the court directly by car and would have his driver waiting for him outside, in case of any eventuality. How different was this environment from the early 1920s walks of Frumkin and Judge Jārallāh down Prophets Street to their houses in the mixed neighborhood of the Abyssinians and Musrara. The space for random interaction and chance encounters through movement in the city was closing down, leading to the partition of the city into two parts in 1948.

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62 N. Shrem, *Shuk ha-Bazar Mahne Yehuda 1929* (Jerusalem: Zionist Library, 2009).

63 Dan Michaeli, *"Native" of Jerusalem in Health and Defence systems* (Tel Aviv: Ministry of Defence, 2006).

64 Shrem, *Shuk ha-Bazar Mahne Yehuda 1929*.



### Conclusion: Urban Encounters, Urban Movement

Through the eyes of one remarkable resident, Justice Gad Frumkin, this chapter challenges the perception of as Jerusalem an age-old segregated city of ethnic enclaves. His detailed accounts of the Ashkenazi community in the al-Wad area contradict the dominant paradigm of the four confessional quarters. In contrast to the common image of Jerusalem as a “mosaic city,” in which confessional groups resided in segregated enclaves, it is clear that residential patterns of late Ottoman Jerusalem involved high levels of mixing, while the development of the new city led to greater segregation, especially during the late Mandate period. Yet in order to assess the dynamics of encounter in urban space, one has to move away from the focus on residential patterns and a static understanding of the city. I examined civic spaces and workplaces as sites of encounter that did not conform to a territorial parceling of the city into “Arab” and “Jewish” parts. Civic spaces such as the municipal gardens, which emerged in the late nineteenth century, presented new places of interaction that were closely related to an inclusive Ottoman identity. These spaces allowed Jews and Christians to think of themselves as equal members of an Ottoman political community alongside Muslim citizens. These abstract notions were embodied in events such as celebrations, concerts, and political demonstrations that took place in the late Ottoman town center. With the demise of the Ottoman empire and the establishment of the British Mandate, these civic spaces lost their common appeal, as the political horizons they represented no longer existed.

Spaces of commerce and work are also key to an understanding of Arab-Jewish interaction. Frumkin's own work place, the Mandatory courts in the Russian Compound, provided one example of a shared work environment in which members of different groups met daily and cooperated. Frumkin's negotiations with Arab colleagues over a bi-national framework prove that sustained interaction can open up political possibilities. The courts were unusual in that they provided a shared arena for intellectual discussion, and yet work relations between Arabs and Jews were commonplace in Jerusalem, as we know from other accounts and places, such as the Mahne Yehuda fruit and vegetable market.

An investigation of the dynamics of sharing space must take into account the different social relationships and dynamics existing in the same space, and the diverse uses of space. The Frumkin's house in the Old City, for example, housed not only the family but also a small synagogue and the Frumkin's print shop. The family's social relations with their neighbors and landlords, the Ḥusaynī family, extended into political issues and business dealings. Socio-

spatial networks of different scales joined in creating the different meanings of space.

No less important is the question of movement in analyzing cross-ethnic encounters. Discussions of urban polarization often neglect patterns of flow through the city. Urban movement is transitory and ephemeral, and yet it plays an important part in the daily reproduction of the urban experience. These movements inevitably bring together people from different groups, thus creating a far more complex picture than simple dichotomies. Movement through the city is rarely random, but is rather predicated on a set of conditions—from urban layout to economic opportunities and political rights. Within this given framework, motion can nonetheless create new possibilities in space and society: it can open new routes, both literally and metaphorically.

Movement through the city plays a key role in Frumkin's description of Jerusalem; it was chance encounters that shaped his perception of the city and of himself. As his memoirs illustrate, it was impossible to walk through the Old City without encountering members of other ethnic groups and this illustrates how reductive it is to perceive the city as a flat and static mosaic. After moving to Reḥov Haḥabashim ("Abyssinian Quarter"), outside the walls, repeated encounters with young Jewish students increased Frumkin's fascination with Zionism, while his daily walks through the modern city center attracted him to the possibilities of the Ottoman system. Frumkin's walks with the Arab judge, Jārallāh, down Prophets Street are perhaps the best symbol of the everyday possibilities of ethnic diversity in work and residential areas, and stand in sharp contrast to the segregated and fortified city of the late 1940s.

As I argue in this chapter, close urban proximity, and frequent and amicable contacts between different groups, do not necessarily lead to social integration or joint political alliances. Frumkin's case proves that places and conditions of proximity can facilitate political dialogue. Nevertheless, contact and familiarity in themselves are not sufficient: in Frumkin's case, his entire life trajectory and social position as a member of the Jerusalem elite was no less significant to the formation of his political horizons.

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