

Original citation:

Zaban, H.. (2016) City of go(l)d : spatial and cultural effects of high-status Jewish immigration from Western countries on the Baka neighbourhood of Jerusalem. *Urban Studies* .
doi: 10.1177/0042098015625023

Permanent WRAP URL:

<http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/83145>

Copyright and reuse:

The Warwick Research Archive Portal (WRAP) makes this work by researchers of the University of Warwick available open access under the following conditions. Copyright © and all moral rights to the version of the paper presented here belong to the individual author(s) and/or other copyright owners. To the extent reasonable and practicable the material made available in WRAP has been checked for eligibility before being made available.

Copies of full items can be used for personal research or study, educational, or not-for profit purposes without prior permission or charge. Provided that the authors, title and full bibliographic details are credited, a hyperlink and/or URL is given for the original metadata page and the content is not changed in any way.

Publisher's statement:

The final, definitive version of this paper has been published in *Urban Studies* by SAGE Publications Ltd, All rights reserved. Urban Studies Journal Limited 2016

Published version: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0042098015625023>

A note on versions:

The version presented here may differ from the published version or, version of record, if you wish to cite this item you are advised to consult the publisher's version. Please see the 'permanent WRAP url' above for details on accessing the published version and note that access may require a subscription.

For more information, please contact the WRAP Team at: wrap@warwick.ac.uk

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 **City of Go(l)d: Spatial and Cultural Effects of High-Status Jewish Immigration**
10 **from Western Countries on the Baka Neighbourhood of Jerusalem**
11

12
13
14 **Abstract**

15 Immigration to Israel by Jews from western countries has been growing over recent
16 years. Jerusalem attracts more of these mainly religious immigrants than any other city
17 in Israel. They are a desired population by the State of Israel, and for many reasons can
18 be considered privileged immigrants. The way Diaspora Jews imagine Israel and
19 Jerusalem plays a crucial role in their decision to move there. Many of these
20 lifestyle/homecoming immigrants find their way to Baka, where they can live near other
21 expatriates and enjoy the comforts of the ethnic enclave. The paper deals with the
22 spatial and cultural implications that privileged lifestyle migration has on the space in
23 which it settles. It focuses particularly on the case-study of English- and French-
24 speaking Jewish immigrants who live in Baka and on their effects on the
25 neighbourhood's gentrification process, its real estate market and issues of consumerism
26 and belonging.
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42

43 **Keywords:** lifestyle migration, homecoming, gentrification, belonging, spatial and
44 cultural effects, migrants' imaginaries, Jerusalem, Israel.
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

Introduction

I was awaiting my turn to pay for some groceries I just bought at the neighbourhood supermarket in Bethlehem Road. It was noontime in mid-June and therefore quite empty. Two young females entered the supermarket. I could tell they were American, probably tourists or maybe on a year's Jewish studies program. 'Is this butter'? They asked the cashier in English, raising a small pack. She looked baffled and so I answered 'Yes'. 'Like for cooking'? 'Yes', I said again. 'What did they say'? Asked the cashier, an Israeli *Mizrahi*-Jew in her late twenties. 'They asked if it's butter' I explained in Hebrew. Seconds after, two young men entered. They too looked American. 'Tooth brush'? They asked in loud-voiced English without any prior introductions. 'What are they saying'? The cashier asked again. 'They want a tooth brush' I said. 'In the back, on the left' she answered in Hebrew and I translated. 'How can you work here without speaking any English'? I asked her with a smile, hoping not to offend her. 'Nobody ever said anything about that' she said 'and besides, most customers here are French anyway.'

The episode described above is one small encounter that occurred in Baka, a small Jerusalem neighbourhood undergoing a deep change in population. From a Judaised formerly Palestinian neighbourhood dominated by *Mizrahim*, Jews from Islamic countries who arrived in Israel during the 1950s, it has become, through gentrification

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 processes, one of the main enclaves of the English- and French-speaking populations of
10 Jerusalem. Businesses in the neighbourhood adjust to these changes in order to attract
11 the new population. Therefore, while the cashier found it hard to cope in foreign
12 languages, that very same supermarket offered many imported products that western
13 immigrants like to consume.
14
15
16
17
18
19

20 Baka is a case-study of a neighbourhood undergoing slow, dynamic and complex
21 processes of gentrification, combined with high-status immigration of Jews from
22 western countries, and particularly from the United States, France and Britain. My main
23 research question was how changes in Baka's population influenced and reflected
24 spatial and cultural transformations in the neighbourhood. As my ethnography reveals,
25 Baka's gentrification resulted in various spatial and cultural transformations, mostly
26 reflected in the housing market, the religious sphere, the education sphere, local
27 consumerism and patterns of public participation in neighbourhood affairs. In this
28 paper, I focus on the spatial aspect of the housing market and on the cultural field of
29 consumerism.
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42

43 Two groups of western immigrants reside in Baka: English-speakers and French-
44 speakers. English-speaking immigrants mainly come from the United States and Britain,
45 but also from Canada, Australia and other countries. In Israel, English-speakers grouped
46 together and became known as 'Anglo-Saxons', a term that never applied to them
47 before (Rapport, 1998). Similarly, French-speaking immigrants come from France,
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 Belgium, Switzerland or Quebec, but may have previously immigrated there from North
10 Africa or Eastern Europe.

11
12
13
14 This paper aims to contribute to the understanding of the effects lifestyle migration has
15 on cities, neighbourhoods and housing markets and to elaborate the understanding of
16 who lifestyle migrants are, what motivates them and how they live in their destinations.
17
18 This case-study demonstrates how lifestyle migration links with urban transformation,
19 particularly gentrification. While gentrification has more often been studied in the
20 global north (Filion, 1991; Gale, 1984; Lees, 2000; Walks and Maaranen, 2008; Zukin,
21 2010), this paper shows that neoliberal processes, like gentrification or the global flow
22 of capital and investments, are indeed much more encompassing. The neoliberal era is
23 characterised by people's search for good housing investments in up and coming
24 locations, in their own countries or elsewhere. This search links to questions of class,
25 ethnicity, cultural capital, identity and belonging, but also to migration regimes and to
26 policies regarding international property investment. This case is relevant beyond the
27 consideration of Jerusalem, particularly given the persistent role of international capital
28 in urban property markets around the world.
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44

45 While much has been written on the topic of gentrification, there is not so much on the
46 combination between gentrification and immigration, and particularly high-status
47 lifestyle migration, defined as the mobility of relatively privileged individuals in search
48 for a better quality of life (Benson and O'Reilly, 2009). Similar processes currently
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 occur in many places and therefore, the spatial politics of privileged migration and its
10 impact on cities, neighbourhoods and housing markets is a story that needs to be told.
11 Lifestyle migration has mainly been researched in the context of rural or coastal tourist
12 destinations (Benson, 2013a; King et al., 2000; Linderson, 2010; Spalding, 2013;
13 Warnes and Williams, 2006), and less in the context of cities. This urban case-study
14 therefore illuminates a somewhat blind spot of this body of literature. This case-study is
15 also unique in the sense that this is an ethnic (as well as ideological and religious)
16 migration, which is interconnected with class habits.
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26

27 Baka, located in the southern part of Jerusalem, is small both in size and population.
28 Baka's territory is less than half a square kilometre (Jerusalem in total lies on 125.2
29 square kilometres), and only an estimated number of 7,500 people inhabit it, while the
30 entire city's residents were 830 thousand in 2013. Following the unification of east and
31 west Jerusalem after the 1967 war and the annexation of vast Palestinian lands to the
32 city, Baka – formerly a borderline neighbourhood – centralised. It is in close proximity
33 to both the city centre and the old city of Jerusalem.
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42

43 Figure 1: here

44 In the following section, I will describe the methodology of this research. I will then
45 outline the history of Baka as a gentrified neighbourhood. Afterwards, I will
46 theoretically address high-status immigration in Baka in terms of lifestyle/homecoming
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 migration, and show how this immigration affects the neighbourhood. I will end with
10 some conclusions.
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19

20 **Methodology**

21
22
23 Baka had been the topic of my ethnographic research from 2008–2013. Such lengthy
24 fieldwork was possible due to my residency in the neighbourhood then. In the course of
25 my fieldwork, I have conducted 100 formal interviews (recorded and later transcribed)
26 as well as many informal conversations. In order to explain the affects that western
27 immigration had on Baka's urban transformation, I needed to include respondents with
28 different perspectives, and therefore interviewed neighbourhood residents (Israelis,
29 western immigrants and Palestinians), community leaders, religious laypeople,
30 merchants, architects, realtors, representatives of absorption organisations, local
31 politicians and neighbourhood activists. Many respondents belonged to more than one
32 category. My analysis is based on the different perspectives gathered. Forty of my
33 respondents were western immigrants: 25 from English-speaking countries (of which 17
34 were Americans) and 15 from French-speaking countries, mainly France. The numbers
35 correlate with the representation of these populations in Baka. My respondents
36 immigrated to Israel in various periods, from the 1960s until the present. In terms of
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 religiosity, the majority of immigrant respondents (33 out of 40) were Orthodox,
10 although of different backgrounds and levels of practice. My other respondents (sixty in
11 total) were more diverse: 34 were secular or traditional Jews, 21 were religious, from
12 different streams of Judaism, and four were non-Jews. Men and women were equally
13 represented among the immigrants, but men were slightly over represented among the
14 other respondents. I often found my respondents using personal networks or through the
15 ‘snow ball’ technique. I asked respondents various questions, depending on the category
16 to which they belonged. Neighbourhood residents (immigrants and others) were the
17 majority of my respondents, and I always asked them about the reasons that brought
18 them there (to Baka, to Jerusalem, to Israel) and about their everyday lives and
19 practices.
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32

33
34 In order to understand the extent of urban transformation in Baka, I conducted
35 numerous participant observations in contexts where representations of transformation
36 could be found – synagogues, neighbourhood parks, streets, supermarkets, cafés, shops,
37 schools, private homes and community institutions. While some of my observations
38 were structured (I was there for that purpose), others were spontaneous, as a part of my
39 day, and therefore difficult to quantify. Sometimes I entered the sites as a researcher,
40 but I generally gained access as a resident, parent, activist, client or friend. My
41 participation was often active – I prayed in synagogues, played in parks, did my
42 shopping, trained at the gym, handed flyers, attended neighbourhood and municipal
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 meetings (and stated my opinions occasionally), had food and drinks in cafés, sent my
10 kids to school, and visited people's homes. When I could, I would write notes while I
11 observed, in a small notebook I carried everywhere. When impossible, I did it later. As
12
13 my fieldwork was 'at home', issues of reflexivity and subjectivity, which
14 anthropologists have been debating for decades, were particularly relevant. I was not 'a
15 fly on the wall'. My own positioning as a resident of the neighbourhood, middle-class,
16 secular, native-Israeli, relatively young, mother of young children and not the owner of
17 my apartment, clearly influenced my research. Anthropologists acknowledge that
18 anthropological findings (or 'truths') can only be partial, as they are delivered by
19 individuals with unique positioning and worldviews (Clifford, 1986). Being aware of
20 that, I have done my best to include and represent as many voices as possible, in order
21 to validate my analysis.
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35

36 On top of interviews and participant observation, I also followed newspapers articles on
37 issues related to my research in nationwide and local newspapers and in French- and
38 English-speaking media in Israel. I have searched the municipality's archive and studied
39 the history of the neighbourhood since its establishment. I have also conducted online
40 netnographic research (Kozinets, 2010) that included various email correspondence,
41 Facebook discussions and new immigrants' forums. I gained access to several mailing
42 lists, sometimes as a resident and sometimes as they were accessible to all. On
43 Facebook, I only had access to what my personal contacts posted. Immigrants' forums,
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 like the *Nefesh B'Nefesh* forum (the organisation that brings most English-speaking
10 Jews to Israel nowadays) and a French Yahoo group, required special permissions to
11 access, which I got. There were other freely accessible online forums and blogs. I
12 archived much of the data on my computer and then analysed it according to the themes
13 that emerged from my interviews and observations. Much of this information correlated
14 with my 'offline' findings while adding substantial data. Moreover, the netnographic
15 research provided precious details and views that immigrants did not often share with
16 me, because of the limited length of interviews or my positioning as native-Israeli, but
17 did share with one another.
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27

28 29 **The history of Baka as a gentrified neighbourhood** 30

31
32 Baka was established in the late nineteenth century by wealthy Palestinians who were
33 forced out of the neighbourhood during the 1948 war. The abandoned Palestinian homes
34 were declared 'absentee properties' and were soon populated by new Jewish
35 immigrants, mainly lower-class *Mizrahim*, as well as by some government employees,
36 military veterans and evacuees from the Jewish neighbourhoods damaged in the war.
37 The spacious houses were divided into small units and became densely populated. The
38 rough living conditions soon turned Baka into a poor, crime-infested neighbourhood.
39 The 1967 war was a turning point for Baka as the new city borders turned it from a
40 peripheral to an inner-city neighbourhood. Moreover, a new architectural trend saw
41 value imbued in all that can be termed historic, authentic or 'with character' (Nitzan-
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 Shiftan 2005) and middle-class Israelis were re-encharmed by Palestinian homes. In fact,
10 the Palestinian homes were the 'engine' of Baka's gentrification.
11

12
13 Gentrification processes consist of several stages: first, a small group of 'pioneers'
14 enters the neighbourhood. They are mainly artists and architects with knowledge, time
15 and ability to perform the restoration, and not much wealth. This stage lasted in Baka
16 until the mid-1970s. In the second stage, homebuyers and investors enter the
17 neighbourhood, and buy properties for much higher prices. This stage occurred in Baka
18 from the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s. In the third stage, businesspersons, realtors,
19 developers and builders enter the neighbourhood and greatly increase the value of assets
20 (first sprouts of it appeared in Baka as early as the 1980s, but the main process occurred
21 in the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s) (Gale, 1984).
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32

33
34 It is impossible to say when a gentrification process is completed. As other social
35 processes, it is dynamic and has different shape and length in different places. The end
36 of gentrification is vague. It may 'end' once all or most old-time residents are replaced
37 by newcomers of higher class, it can remain in an incomplete state for decades and it
38 can develop into something new. Often enough, when the process is 'completed', it
39 turns out that the residents of high social status (reflected mainly in education) – first
40 wave gentrifiers – were partially pushed out (Filion, 1991). Walks and Maaranen (2008)
41 argue that near the end of the process, with virtually all the social and economic risk
42 eliminated, the most risk-averse bourgeois households make their home in the
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 neighbourhood. Remaining tenanted buildings are de-converted, both housing and retail
10 are re-renovated, and the neighbourhood completes its transformation into one of the
11 most 'desirable' locations in the city (Ibid: 4). Loretta Lees calls it super-gentrification;
12 when the upper-class (the super-rich) pushes out the middle-class (Lees, 2000). This
13 process has been going on in Baka since the late 1990s, while at the same time 'regular'
14 gentrification continued. 'Regular' gentrification currently continues in the poorly built
15 housing developments of the 1960s and in buildings from the 1970s and 1980s, while
16 super-gentrification refers to luxury apartments – in new buildings initially designated
17 for upper-middle class or in additions on Palestinian homes. From the onset of Baka's
18 gentrification, real estate prices increased a hundred-fold and the former 'slum' is now a
19 prestigious neighbourhood.
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32

33
34 The first wave gentrifiers included mostly young couples and families, secular,
35 educated, not particularly wealthy and on the political left, who came from the more
36 established neighbourhoods of the city. Detached homes with a garden for attractive
37 prices could also be found in the satellite neighbourhoods of Jerusalem or in the
38 suburbs, but those who came to Baka preferred the inner-city, liked the Palestinian
39 architecture and saw the potential of the neighbourhood. Amiram Gonen claims that
40 middle-class Jewish households always preferred the inner-city, and the trend of
41 suburbanisation had not really changed that. Yet, since the early 1970s, the Jewish
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 middle-class' bias against the old quarters of the lower classes has declined (Gonen,
10 2002: 728–9).

11
12
13
14 While native-Israelis initially dominated the gentrification process of Baka, it always
15 included immigrants from western countries. As early as the 1980s, these immigrants
16 constituted 30% of the neighbourhood's gentrifiers (Cohen, 1985). The 1967 war, and
17 particularly the occupation of East Jerusalem and the West Bank, sparked the
18 imagination of western Diaspora Jews and caused them to identify with Israel and adopt
19 a Zionist worldview. Those who immigrated to Israel then were mostly young, single,
20 educated and not particularly wealthy. They shared a strong Jewish identity and came
21 from secular, traditional, non-Orthodox or Orthodox backgrounds (Avruch 1981;
22 Dashefsky and Lazerwitz 1983: 266). The first western immigrants who came to Baka
23 were liberal Americans, mostly from secular, Reform or Conservative backgrounds.
24
25 Western immigrants who followed were already of different characteristics.
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38

39 While at first the main attraction to Baka was its housing options, western immigrants
40 are currently drawn to Baka because of its reputation as a good and central
41 neighbourhood with large communities of both English- and French-speakers. The
42 synagogues established by western immigrants are another point of attraction, as are the
43 schools, good services, heterogeneous population and community atmosphere.
44
45
46
47
48
49
50 Nowadays, western immigrants are the main new population to settle in Baka.
51
52
53 According to the Baka Community Council and Israel's 2008 Census, western
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 immigrants comprise about 25% of the neighbourhood's population (French-speaking
10 immigrants constitute about 10%, and English-speakers, 15%). If we include the second
11 generation of immigrants, the numbers are larger and total 30–40% (for both
12 populations) of all residents. These numbers do not include tourists and students on
13 visiting programmes, nor do they include Jewish home owners who had not officially
14 immigrated to Israel and are therefore not Israeli citizens (although they can easily
15 become ones). The dominance of western immigrants, nowadays most of which are
16 religious Orthodox Jews, intensified with the shift from gentrification to super-
17 gentrification.
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

29 **High-status immigration of the privileged in Baka**

30
31
32 Israel is an ethnic immigration country, and the only criterion for migrant selection is
33 Jewish ethnic origin (Joppke and Rosenhek, 2003). The Law of Return (1950)
34 established an open-door policy for Jews and extensive support benefits for immigrants.
35
36 Moreover, encouraging Jewish immigration to Israel is a central goal for the state
37 (Shuval, 1998; Gal, 2008). However, in recent years, the number of immigrants has
38 declined. As the source of immigrants from the Former Soviet Union and Ethiopia
39 decreased, the reservoir of potential immigrants consists of Jews from western countries
40 and Israeli expatriates.
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 The Jews residing in western countries are often quite successful in professional and
10 economic terms. They also hold a cultural capital, which is highly regarded in Israel.
11 Now, most immigrants from the west are religious and Zionist (as opposed to the large
12 numbers of non-Jews or Jews-under-question who immigrated to Israel from the FSU
13 and Ethiopia). Their financial means enable many of them not to burden the state by
14 claiming benefits (again, in opposition to other migrants), and they are perceived as
15 contributing much to the state. Therefore, this population is greatly desired by Israel.
16 Although one would not expect Israel to have a policy regarding highly-skilled migrants
17 (Shpaizman, 2013: 184), the State of Israel is actually willing, in various ways, to
18 encourage highly-skilled western migration. One such way is by giving free rein to
19 private organisations engaged in encouraging immigration from western countries
20 (Shpaizman, 2013). Another way includes financial incentives such as significant tax
21 benefits. These measures have turned Israel into a tax haven for wealthy Jews.
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36

37
38 When combined with various push-factors, such as tax reforms (in France for instance),
39 economic crises or growing anti-Semitism, these measures further enhance the
40 attraction of Diaspora Jews to Israel, and their wish to fully or partially immigrate to
41 Israel or merely invest capital. Although privileged migration to Israel is not a new
42 phenomenon, the policies that encourage such migration and facilitate investments by
43 wealthy Jews are a new trend in Zionism. The State of Israel wishes to participate in,
44 and capitalise on, the growing trend of the global upper-middle class to retire or spend
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 significant periods elsewhere. Why should Jews invest their money in the Hamptons,
10 coastal Spain or rural France and not in Israel? The western Jews residing in Baka are
11 more often permanent migrants or people whose centre of life is in Israel, even when
12 making their living overseas. This, however, is not always the case. Indeed, for many
13 western Jews it is enough to feel deeply connected to Israel by owning property there,
14 without necessarily being resident in it. Israel's migration regime and its encouraging
15 policies concerning international property investment of foreign Jews are greatly
16 affecting local housing markets. Highly desired areas, and the communities residing
17 there, are particularly affected.
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

29 While immigration to Israel has been constantly dropping, the number of western
30 immigrants is actually increasing, and stands at several thousand per year. In 2013, for
31 example, 16,884 people immigrated to Israel, and about 40% of them came from
32 western countries, more than the previous year (CBS, 2014). Immigration from France,
33 in particular, has risen. In 2014, the number of French immigrants reached a new peak –
34 almost 7,000 immigrants, and is expected to rise further in 2015, following the terrorist
35 attacks on 'Charlie Hebdo' and the Jewish kosher supermarket in Paris (Hasson et al.,
36 2015).
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47

48 Jerusalem attracts more western immigrants than any other city in Israel. In 2011, 34%
49 of all American immigrants and 27% of French immigrants chose to settle in Jerusalem
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 (CBS, 2012), while 33% of British immigrants settled in Jerusalem in 2009 (CBS,
10 2010). Many of them find their way to the Baka neighbourhood.

11
12
13
14 Migration literature usually deals with the more common phenomenon of the movement
15 of people from the developing world to the developed western countries. However,
16 there is also a growing body of literature that deals with the limited opposite
17 phenomenon, the mobility of privileged people (Amit, 2007; Croucher, 2009, 2012), by
18 choice. Such is the theoretical and empirical literature on lifestyle migration. Lifestyle
19 migration is defined the mobility of ‘relatively affluent individuals of all ages, moving
20 either part-time or full-time, to places that, for various reasons, signify, for the migrant,
21 a better quality of life... Lifestyle migration is a search, a project, rather than an act, and
22 it encompasses diverse destinations, desires and dreams’ (Benson and O’Reilly, 2009:
23 609–10). Lifestyle migrants are not driven by job opportunities or solely by economic
24 reasons that have driven much of migration throughout history (Jackiewicz, 2010: 1);
25 many of them desire a slow and more meaningful way of life (O’Reilly and Benson,
26 2009: 4). They predominantly belong to wealthy societies in the western hemisphere
27 and they choose to relocate to places with lower costs of living, thus capitalising the
28 multiple opportunities that the differences of purchase power and social and symbolic
29 power relations facilitate (Janoschka and Haas, 2013: 1–2). The reasons for lifestyle
30 migration are varied. Some people desire to live a rural lifestyle, outside the big cities
31 (Benson, 2013a). Others desire to live more cheaply where the weather is warmer,
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8 usually near the sea (Karkabi, 2013; King et al., 2000; Linderson, 2010; Warnes and
9 Williams, 2006; Spalding, 2013). Some wish to lead a more spiritual life (Korpela,
10 2010). Many retirees hope to spend their retirement years pleasantly and in financial
11 comfort (Howard, 2008; Jackiewicz and Craine, 2010; Lizárraga Morales, 2010; Rojas
12 et al., 2013). Lifestyle migrants, unlike most other immigrants, do not necessarily want
13 to raise their living standards, but their quality of life – as they perceive it.
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21

22 I suggest looking at western immigrants to Jerusalem as lifestyle migrants as they are
23 immigrants by choice, mostly motivated by the ‘pull factors’ of Israel (Kay, 2001; Amit
24 and Riss, 2007). Their motivation to immigrate usually stems from cultural imaginaries,
25 national ideology and religion (Sheleg, 2000; Cohen, 2002, 2007; Amit and Riss, 2007).
26
27 These immigrants seek a better life religiously, nationally and culturally and hope to
28 gain a sense of belonging. For this, they are willing to reduce their material quality of
29 life and face the challenges of immigration. However, their quest for a more meaningful
30 way of life does not mean total lack of interest in maintaining, at least partly, the
31 standard of living to which they are accustomed.
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42

43 While lifestyle migration usually applies to rural or coastal areas, the case of Baka is
44 closer to Michael Herzfeld’s description of processes in the Monti neighbourhood in
45 Rome. Monti attracts well-off Italians and foreigners in seek for residency in an ancient
46 neighbourhood with elegant architecture right at the core of the historic city.
47
48 ‘Cosmopolitan fashion’ writes Herzfeld, ‘now invests owning and inhabiting a piece of
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 an allegedly universal history of civilisation with irresistible appeal' (2009: 3).
10 Herzfeld's work corresponds well with the case of Baka, as much like Monti, it attracts
11 well-off newcomers for its unique architecture and central location, and its proximity to
12 the old city – the ancient spiritual centre of the Jewish world. In Baka, it is the 'Jewish
13 (rather than cosmopolitan) fashion' to own or inhabit a piece of holiness figured in a
14 property located in the holiest city for Jews, in the holy Land of Israel. Owning a
15 property in Jerusalem (or Israel) is significant for many Diaspora Jews, and it became a
16 trend and status symbol for Jews who want to show their identification with Israel. In
17 fact, more than 11,000 properties in Jerusalem, mostly in central neighbourhoods,
18 belong to foreign Jews and remain empty most year (Paz-Frenkel, 2013).
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30

31 Western immigrants to Israel are not only lifestyle migrants; they are also performing a
32 certain type of 'homecoming'. Sociologists Edna Lomsky-Feder and Tamar Rapoport
33 speak of the Jewish immigration to Israel as an 'ethno-national homecoming'. They
34 argue that this is a political-national return movement sponsored by the nation-state.
35 This 'return' is based on the naturalisation of immigrants returning from exile to the
36 historical homeland, the national home, in which their belonging to the national
37 collective is based on common ethnic ties. They further claim that what distinguishes
38 this ethno-national homecoming from other homecomings is the legal overlap between
39 citizenship and nationality. The Israeli law grants rights to ethnic community members
40 living outside the nation-state, often for many generations (Lomsky-Feder and
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 Rapoport, 2012: 2). Fran Markowitz and Anders Stefansson (2004) also refer to Jewish
10 immigration to Israel as ‘homecoming’. They argue that these people uproot themselves
11 from the only country they ever knew in order to settle in their people’s homeland
12 (Markowitz and Stefansson, 2004: 4). This ‘homecoming’ is therefore symbolic and
13 imaginary in nature. Jews hold an image of Israel as their homeland based on biblical
14 sources and practices of prayer. This image is so deeply rooted in Jewish religion and
15 culture that it is not necessary to know Israel as a real place in order to imagine it as
16 home.
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26

27 It is important to note that what defines certain immigrants as privileged is not only the
28 fact that their immigration is voluntary and that they have the resources to immigrate
29 (Amit, 2007), but also that they are citizens of powerful countries (Janoschka and Haas,
30 2013: 2). Although the global era made people incredibly mobile, nation-states
31 constantly tighten their borders in order to prevent undesirable migration (Shamir,
32 2005). Thus, the mere possibility to immigrate legally and be welcomed in one’s
33 destination country, as is the case for western Jews, is another privilege.
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42

43 Western immigrants in Israel willingly form their own enclaves and are even
44 encouraged to do so by absorption organisations. Since these are relatively powerful
45 groups, when they settle somewhere, especially en masse, they influence this place and
46 change it. Lifestyle migration of western Jews and the formation of enclave
47 communities also occur in other Israeli cities like Tel Aviv, Netanya and Ashdod (all
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 coastal cities), where real estate became tied to second home and summer apartment
10 purchases that impact local populations. The case of Baka can shed light on these other
11 places too.
12
13

14
15
16 Several studies deal with the spatial and cultural effects of lifestyle migration on the
17 places where it settles, on the relations between immigrants and locals and between
18 immigrants and the authorities. Nadeem Karkabi (2013), for example, writes about
19 Europeans in Sinai, Egypt, and their relationships with the local Bedouin population and
20 with the Egyptian authorities. In Israel, as stated, high-status Jewish immigration is
21 highly encouraged, but the relationships between western immigrants and other groups
22 are sometimes complicated. Michael Herzfeld (2009) writes about the effects of affluent
23 external and internal migration on a Rome neighbourhood and its lower-class residents,
24 who are pushed out of their homes due to external demand. The same thing happens in
25 Baka. Real estate agents and other individuals told me that they used to knock on doors
26 and make purchase offers to residents. I too, as a resident of Baka, frequently received
27 letters stating that French- and English-speaking clients would be interested to purchase
28 'my' property. Another frequent method is marketing new housing units solely in
29 English and French, and mainly overseas. Michaela Benson (2013b) and Michael
30 Janoschka (2009) refer to the effects of North-American immigration on the places
31 where it settles in Panama and Costa Rica (respectively) in terms of the housing market
32 and rising real estate prices, costs of everyday products, availability of imported food
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 products in local supermarkets, traffic and parking issues and the relations between
10 different social groups. All these effects appear in Baka too. Eva Jeppsson Grassman
11 and Annika Taghizadeh Larsson (2013) refer to the flourishing Church of Sweden and
12 the important roles it fills for Swedish immigrants and tourists across the globe, who
13 were not frequent attenders of the church back home. The religious institutions that
14 immigrants established in Baka filled a significant role in their lives too, and greatly
15 affected the neighbourhood. As Michael Janoschka and Heiko Haas argue (2013: 6–7),
16 there is need for a more critical point of view towards lifestyle migration and its
17 outcomes and implications for the places and communities in which it settles. This is
18 certainly a major goal for this paper too, and the reason for my bringing together the
19 literature on lifestyle migration with that on gentrification.
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32

33
34 In the following sections I shall refer to several affects that previous lifestyle migration
35 literature had pointed out and put it in the urban context. I will argue that while the
36 social and spatial segregation of ethnic minorities is usually connected with less affluent
37 neighbourhoods (think of the Parisian *banlieues* for example), when it comes to
38 privileged migration, we are dealing with the affluent and central parts of the city. The
39 spatial politics of privileged migration therefore clearly has a wide impact on cities,
40 neighbourhoods and housing markets. I will focus on the connections between high-
41 status immigration and gentrification and address two of the spatial-cultural effects in
42 Baka, on real estate and consumerism.
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

Why Baka?

Two interviews I conducted, with representatives of private institutions encouraging Jewish immigration and assisting its absorption, shed light on the question why Baka is so attractive for French- and English-speaking immigrants. I heard similar expressions from many western immigrants in the course of my interviews but find these ‘bird’s eye view’ quotes more enlightening and useful here.

The CEO of AMI, an organisation for French immigrants, explained why the French come to Baka:

When French immigrants come here, they build a ghetto. It did not use to be like that before. They used to go to good neighbourhoods because they were good, not because they were French. Their request is ‘if you take my community and re-build it in Jerusalem, I’ll make *Aliya*’ [immigrate to Israel]. You see ads in the local French newspaper in Baka: ‘a beautiful apartment near the synagogue’. What does it mean? Near the French synagogue, in the French street. This is their model. Living in the French neighbourhood is a minimum requirement nowadays. These are French-style Orthodox people, who like watching television, going out and eating in restaurants. They need their ‘Champs-Élysées’ nearby. They want to live in a religious area, but one that is more open to the world. This is why people who can afford the prices in Baka go there. In Baka

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 they tried to copy some of the models they knew from France – the synagogue,
10 the Torah lessons, all in French. They have no chance, desire, ability and need to
11 learn Hebrew. They have cable TV in French, Facebook and Internet and cheap
12 flights to France, and they can work in call-centres [serving French institutions
13 from Israel]. The impact is so strong that even well absorbed veteran immigrants
14 tend to stick to the French community. You have become an Israeli and suddenly
15 now, when you are fifty or sixty, you can reconnect with your past. This is the
16 new reality of the world of migration. I believe that these trends will only
17 become stronger in Baka. The French and the Americans will eventually push
18 out the Israelis.
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29

30
31 The CEO explains that veteran French immigrants affect the choices that new
32 immigrants make (where to live, where to pray), but there is also the opposite effect,
33 that the new wave of immigrants have on those that preceded it. Veteran immigrants
34 who integrated into Israeli society can suddenly ‘return to their origins’, thanks to the
35 critical mass of French-speakers. New technological possibilities are part of it too:
36 satellite TV, cheap flights and advanced communication services. These effectively
37 reduce the distance between France and Israel. For the CEO, the ‘ghetto model’ reflects
38 ‘the new reality of the world of migration’. The Jewish ghettos of middle ages Europe
39 were marked by over-crowdedness and high percentages of illness and death, but also
40 by flourishing institutions, a sense of community and social cohesion. The forced
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 isolation from the outside world provided protection (Wacquant, 2004). French
10 immigrants seek these positive aspects of ghetto life. This is the lifestyle they are
11 familiar with, as in France too they were an ethnic minority. However, the lifestyle that
12 the French-speakers in Baka adopt is that of an ethnic enclave and not a ghetto lifestyle,
13 as they are not as secluded and isolated as the term 'ghetto' suggests.
14
15
16
17
18
19

20 The education and community advisor of *Nefesh B'Nefesh*, an organisation dedicated to
21 increasing Jewish immigration from North America and the United Kingdom to Israel,
22 spoke about the voluntary segregation of English-speaking immigrants:
23
24
25
26
27

28 There is a difference between the American immigrants of today and those of
29 thirty years ago, who were less keen on being with other English-speakers. Israel
30 is also completely different and now it is more acceptable to live in an ethnic
31 community. It also affects immigrants' decisions of where to live when they feel
32 that it is fine: I do not have to be the 'new Israeli' I can be an American who
33 wants to immigrate to Israel. I want to fit in, live in Israel, work, put my children
34 in schools, but I still have values that I want to keep. I would say that 60% of
35 immigrants want to live in a place with many other English-speakers. Others
36 want to be where there are English-speakers, but not much. It is very rare that
37 people do not want to be with English-speakers at all. Baka is a place where one
38 can live with many English-speakers but also be around many native-Israelis.
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
There is the convenience of the English-speaking community, with similar

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8 values, language and culture, but on the other hand if they want to integrate,
9 they can.
10

11
12
13 Many immigrants today do not feel the need to substantially change following their
14 immigration to Israel and become ‘the new Israeli’, as the *Nefesh B’Nefesh* advisor put
15 it. They are satisfied with hyphenated identities of American/French/British-Israelis. It
16 reflects the different approach toward immigrant absorption today, which shifted from
17 the ‘melting pot’ approach to the multicultural approach. My interviewees, English- and
18 French-speakers alike, mentioned the neighbourhood’s heterogeneous population as a
19 source of attraction, but they also said they wanted to live in a place where at least some
20 people were like them. These are contradicting requests that cannot coexist forever.
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31

32 **Real estate for the rich**

33
34
35 The real estate market in Jerusalem responds quickly to every fluctuation, especially as
36 the building of new apartments fails to keep in pace with the high demand. The steep
37 rise in real estate prices is not exclusive to Jerusalem, rather a general problem reflected
38 in Israel’s current housing crisis. Jerusalem’s unique characteristics make its housing
39 market even more problematic: political issues, lack of available land, long processes of
40 building permits and high demand for particular neighbourhoods by particular
41 communities. Thus, properties in Jerusalem are the fastest in the country to sell and
42 prices keep climbing even though it is one of the poorest cities in Israel.
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 During the 1990s, there was a growing interest from wealthy western Jews in real estate
10 in Jerusalem. Local realtors, architects and designers quickly realised which way the
11 wind was blowing and started to build, plan and sell to these homebuyers. They knew
12 what would sell best: Arab-style architecture, either original or duplicate, with arches,
13 red-tiled roofs and cuckoo-windows. The inside must fit the life of a modern – usually
14 religious – Jewish family. This clientele also wanted smart-housing operational system;
15 under-floor heating; climate controlled air-conditioning system; basements; dens
16 (unfamiliar in local house planning); large dining rooms to host many people on
17 Shabbat; and well-equipped modern-style kitchens. These trends, ‘authenticity’ on the
18 one hand, and high-end modern comforts on the other, appear in the words of an
19 architect who mainly works with wealthy English-speakers, in Baka and outside it:
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32

33
34 In recent years, many Diaspora Jews seek a hold in Jerusalem, which has a deep
35 religious and cultural significance for them. Many of them earned a lot of money
36 overseas and see their future, especially after retirement, in Israel. Very few of
37 them want new modern buildings and prefer building additions on old houses or
38 new buildings that keep the same traditional, original Jerusalem spirit. It seems
39 exotic to them, authentic. It signifies Jerusalem for them. Inside their houses,
40 they want all the comforts they are used to, and they have the money for it.
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49

50 The imagining of an ‘authentic’ Jerusalem is problematic. How authentic is a former
51 Palestinian neighbourhood without its previous inhabitants? What is authentic about a
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 one-level house transformed into a three-levels totally renovated building, or the
10 architectural duplication of Palestinian styled homes? Such authenticity, it seems, is
11 only superficial. While the preservation of the outdoor stone mouldings is required, the
12 inside of the house can be utterly changed: the floor is dug, staircases are added,
13 ceilings are removed and interior walls are torn-down. It seems paradoxical that to be
14 truly at home in the Land of Israel, the interior of the home has to resemble Paris/New
15 York/London as much as possible. There is an inherent contradiction between being
16 drawn to the idealised place, which then must be remade in the image of a home left
17 behind.

18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
‘Authenticity’ and the issue of preservation therefore clearly have their limits. In her
dissertation about the Yemin Moshe neighbourhood in Jerusalem, Tamar Zandberg
(2008) touched upon similar questions and showed how preservation can be used as a
discursive tool for what is actually the transformation of a place into a gentrified luxury
neighbourhood. Ashworth and Tunbridge (2000) also ask what is authentic in houses
and monuments that are so thoroughly restored, re-built, relocated, added to or utterly
changed inside. The photos below demonstrate the ‘preservation’ of a one-level house
in Baka, by a British-Jewish family. Nothing remained from this Palestinian home,
except its façade, which is now inside the new building and cannot be seen from
outside.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

Figure 2: here.

Sharon Zukin argues that authenticity has fictional qualities that are not ‘real’, but have a real effect on our imagination of the city, and on the new cafés, stores, and gentrified places where we like to live and shop. Authenticity, she adds, is a cultural form of power over space that puts pressure on the city’s old working class and lower middle-class, who can no longer afford to live or work there (Zukin, 2010: xiii). The search for an imagined ‘authentic’ Jerusalem along with high regard of preservation (while at the same time completely transforming those ‘preserved’ houses) is certainly a form of power, with real effects on the neighbourhood space and the population inhabiting it.

Compared with other neighbourhoods in the ‘historic city’ of Jerusalem, the parts built prior to 1948, Baka mostly attracts people who wish to live there, rather than purchase a second home that would remain empty most year round. For now, Baka is still a lively neighbourhood with only 6% of ‘ghost homes’ (Leurer, 2007: 22). The demand to raise building standards (and hence, their costs) resulted in the creation of two real estate markets in Jerusalem: one for Israelis and one for western immigrants and foreigners. In neighbourhoods where there are both high demand and high land value, such as Baka, new buildings and additions to old buildings aim at the latter population. The steep rise in real estate prices slowly pushes out the less fortunate population – usually everyone who earn their living in shekels rather than foreign currencies – Israeli-born or veteran immigrants alike.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 The quest for authenticity not only includes the architecture, but the community too.
10
11 Many Baka residents, immigrants and natives alike, told me that they appreciated living
12
13 in a heterogeneous community, and that they would like it to remain this way. The
14
15 preservation of a vital and diverse community seemed no less important for many of
16
17 them than the preservation of houses. A young immigrant who came from London in
18
19 2011, said: 'I do not want to live in a neighbourhood where everyone's like me. One of
20
21 the things I like about this neighbourhood is the variety of people here'. Another, who
22
23 emigrated from Paris in 1996, told me: 'I do not want to lose the uniqueness of the
24
25 neighbourhood, which is still quite mixed, compared with other expensive Jerusalem
26
27 neighbourhoods. I have a friend whose family could afford buying a very nice house
28
29 here, but she says she is concerned that only wealthy families like hers could live in
30
31 Baka'.
32
33
34
35

36 Japonica Brown-Saracino (2002) calls the quest for an authentic and diverse community
37
38 'social preservation'. She discusses the various discourses and practices of social
39
40 preservationists, whom she differentiates from 'regular' gentrifiers. In Baka, too, the
41
42 desire to preserve the character of the neighbourhood, both architecturally and
43
44 community-wise, led many to participate in various civic and political activities. At a
45
46 public assembly of neighbourhood residents gathered in March 2010, the crowd of
47
48 about 120 people mainly comprised new and veteran Israeli gentrifiers and veteran
49
50 English-speaking immigrants. The attending residents clearly stated that they wanted
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 their neighbourhood to remain heterogeneous, with many young families and green
10 parks. They wanted affordable housing and resented the building of luxury apartments
11 and the phenomenon of ‘ghost homes’ triggered by lifestyle migration. At the same
12 time, they also opposed to building higher than three–four levels buildings. The solution
13 proposed by the planners was to keep the historic parts of the neighbourhood low-built
14 and build higher in the outskirts of Baka, mainly on top or instead of the housing
15 developments of the 1960s. This scheme is expected to enhance the processes of
16 gentrification and super-gentrification, as rejuvenation schemes would remove low and
17 mid-range apartments from the housing market, to be replaced by better quality and
18 more expensive units, while more luxury apartments would be built on top of historic
19 buildings and purchased by wealthy lifestyle migrants. This would likely encourage low
20 and middle-class residents to leave, while more affluent newcomers, native-Israelis or
21 western immigrants, would move in. These processes would further homogenise Baka’s
22 population, mainly socio-economically, but ethnically too.

23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40 Religion can also influence housing preferences. James Bielo (2011), for example,
41 wrote about young evangelical’s return to the city and their contribution to
42 gentrification processes. Baka is another example of it. The cafés on the south part of
43 Baka, that French-speakers frequent, offer the French-speakers weekly *Le P’tit Hebdo*.
44 The real estate ads often state ‘Proche Emouna’. *Emouna Chelema Biyrushalaim* (True
45 belief in Jerusalem) is the biggest and oldest synagogue of the Francophone community
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 in Baka, established in the mid-1990s by French Jews of North African origin. As
10 Orthodox Jews do not drive on Shabbat, living in close proximity to one's synagogue is
11 an important thing, with implications on the surrounding housing market.
12
13

14
15
16 The imagination of Jerusalem as a holy city makes it attractive for religious Jewish
17 immigrants. Moreover, the imagination of it as an 'authentic' space determines the
18 city's built landscape and results in various urban processes. Baka's 'authentic' homes
19 fuelled its gentrification process. Later on, additional features made it still more
20 desirable. At a certain tipping point, in the late 1990s and early 2000s, Baka became so
21 desired by French- and English-speakers and at the same time so expensive that
22 gentrification turned into super-gentrification, as the upper-class, mostly western
23 immigrants, pushed out the middle-class that preceded it.
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32

33 34 35 **Consuming and belonging to the city of go(l)d**

36
37
38 Consumerist patterns in Baka say much about the issue of belonging. Belonging is
39 always to a specific place and entails feelings for it. Place symbolises something for its
40 residents; activities – including those that are considered financial or consumer-
41 oriented, such as buying a property, making purchases in a store, or sitting in a café,
42 acquire emotional meaning and are not motivated solely by financial motives (Firey,
43 1945). Indeed, many Baka residents say that they tend to make most of their shopping in
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 the neighbourhood, not because it is cheap (it is not), but because they wish to support
10 local businesses and enjoy familiarity with the owners.

11
12
13
14 As stated, the ethnic segregation of western immigrants in Baka affects space
15 considerably. This impact partially results from immigrants' initiatives. Such is the case
16 for synagogues established by immigrants, theatre groups in their languages and various
17 classes and courses. There are also businesses and services designed to meet a need
18 arising in the community: telecommunications services, English/French speaking
19 kindergartens or service providers who are members of the community and therefore
20 appear reliable and easy to communicate. Their advertisements reveal these perceptions
21 and define their marketing strategies (such is the case for 'the British plumber' or 'the
22 American handyman'). While economic motivations are not at the core of high-status
23 Jewish immigration, most immigrants still need to earn a living. Like many other
24 lifestyle migrants worldwide, they often run small businesses, frequently in the field of
25 tourism, or provide services for other migrants. As Benson and O'Reilly argue (2009:
26 610), these businesses are usually used by such migrants as a means to an end; funding
27 their new lifestyles. Other migrants continue working overseas, thanks to current
28 technological possibilities. This had become a frequent phenomenon among western
29 immigrants in Israel. Moreover, as English language is essential in the Israeli job
30 market, many job opportunities are available for English-speakers, but less so for
31 French-speakers.
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 The impact of western lifestyle migration on the commercial sphere is also driven by
10 the response of local market forces. One business whose target population is western
11 (female and religious) immigrants – is a women-only gym and spa. It offers personal
12 trainers, training in Hebrew and English and a multi-lingual staff. Other cases are an
13 online delivery service servicing the wealthy English-speaking community; realtors and
14 asset management personnel who specialise in western clientele; foreign language
15 bookstores; cafés and restaurants aimed at western immigrants' tastes; and a variety of
16 imported products sold in local grocery stores and supermarkets. Many products are
17 imported to Israel by immigrants, but once there, also appeal to local crowds and
18 influence consumerist norms and preferences.
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29

30
31 Both types of changes, those initiated by immigrants and those generated in response to
32 them, profoundly influence space and the social and cultural trends that take place there.
33
34 These changes influence the wider society, not just immigrants and their communities.
35
36 A local religious community established by Israelis in 2006 adopted the
37 American/European style of religious communities, where a synagogue is not just a
38 house of prayer, but also a community centre and source for identity. Developments in
39 the housing market determine which populations leave Baka and enter it, and enhance
40 gentrification processes. High demands for housing in Baka affect adjacent
41 neighbourhoods too. Baka is becoming more religious. New sports appear, like baseball
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 and hockey. Local primary schools adopt models of parental involvement and try to
10 attract western immigrants.
11

12
13
14 The fact that people can sustain much of their former lifestyle post-immigration – be it
15 sipping their cappuccino in a Parisian style café or finding their favourite brand of
16 cereals in the local supermarket – enables immigrants to gain a sense of belonging and
17 attachment to place. Yet, they remain distanced from native-Israeli society. As a male
18 respondent who emigrated from New Hampshire in 1996 told me:
19
20
21
22
23

24
25
26 Baka is one of the sole neighbourhoods where Americans can have the quality of
27 life with which they are comfortable. Some people come here with a serious job,
28 with money, with high standards, with openness to the world. Baka might be the
29 most western, open and global neighbourhood in the country. They can live in
30 Israel, be Israeli and raise their family in an Israeli environment but at the same
31 time go on with their American life.
32
33
34
35
36
37
38

39
40 How exactly are Americans living in a transnational enclave ‘open to the world’? It
41 seems that they are actually trying to make the ‘world’, in this case Israel, more
42 American. The same goes for French and British immigrants, whose transnational
43 practices are similar. However, the manner in which Baka culturally adjusts to western
44 immigrants’ needs has more to do with the immigrants themselves. Israeli society as a
45 whole is undergoing fast processes of globalisation and Americanisation. In a place
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 heavily dominated by western populations, such processes are even more striking and
10 accelerated.
11

12
13 Edward Relph argues that the desire to belong to a place and participate in its traditions
14 can fuel attempts at systematic exclusion of all those who are believed not to belong
15 (Relph, 1997: 208). The issue of exclusion raises the question whose neighbourhood is
16 it? Many businesses in Baka identify their target customers. They modify themselves to
17 the status and tastes of consumers (Bourdieu, 1984) and to the potential profit inherent
18 in the place. The attempt to attract potential customers reflects how businesses perceive
19 the neighbourhood's population and identify its people and their lifestyles. Not only do
20 businesses reflect which population they identify as the most profitable, but by doing so,
21 they also contribute to the identification of that population as the owners of the physical
22 space. It both reflects the current composition of the neighbourhood's population and
23 shapes future social composition. When western immigrants recognise Baka as a place
24 that caters to their needs, it increases their belonging. The local native-Israelis, on their
25 part often express their feeling of being 'under conquest' by western immigrants and
26 resent them for pushing them out, economically and culturally. When these Israelis
27 sense that a business attracts too many English- or French-speakers, they may feel out
28 of place there and be put off by it. When *Kalo*, the most veteran café in Baka closed for
29 refurbishments, I heard local Israelis telling the owner – 'Don't make it too American'.
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

51 52 **Conclusions** 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 High-status immigration from western countries is an immigration of the privileged
10 (Croucher, 2009, 2012). This is a relatively minor field study of migration (Benson,
11 2013b: 3). This paper focuses on transformations caused by this type of immigration
12 when it settles in an urban space, and aims to bring together two bodies of literature –
13 lifestyle migration and gentrification. By doing so it contributes to lifestyle migration
14 literature by adding the urban perspective and to the gentrification literature by showing
15 how it links with privileged migration, immigrants' imaginaries regarding the receiving
16 place, migration regimes and state supported foreign property investments. The wider
17 relevance of this paper stems from the fact that other urban locales are currently dealing
18 with similar phenomena, encouraged and enabled by the neoliberal regime.
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30

31
32 As this case-study demonstrates, religious Jewish immigrants, mainly from the United
33 States, France and Britain, currently dominate the gentrification of Baka. What
34 generates this dominance is the relatively high numbers of western immigrants to Baka,
35 but more importantly – their visibility and impact. The economic power of these groups
36 make them attractive for the real estate market and for local businesses. Their highly
37 regarded culture and values affect the religious, educational and civic participation
38 spheres.
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47

48 English-speakers are more dominant in the public sphere than French-speakers. Besides
49 the fact that it is a larger group, English-speakers are dominant for other reasons too. In
50 general, they have better proficiency in Hebrew than French-speakers do, which is a key
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 for acclimatisation. At the same time, the status of English allows immigrants
10 (particularly recent ones) not to acquire Hebrew. Indeed, English is very dominant in
11 the public domain in Baka and in Jerusalem as a whole, and often causes resentment
12 from native-Israelis. Moreover, English-speaking countries enjoy a higher status in
13 Israel (and worldwide), than French-speaking countries. This is particularly true in the
14 case of the United States.
15
16
17
18
19
20
21

22 French-speaking immigrants in Baka are particularly dominant in the housing market.
23 The French-speakers are mostly Orthodox Jews and their communities mainly form
24 around synagogues. Thus, they wish to live near francophone synagogues and by doing
25 so, influence space. The recent tax reforms in France and the accumulation of anti-
26 Semitic acts there lead many wealthy French Jews to invest in real estate in Israel. This
27 trend greatly affects Baka's housing market. Apart from their impact on the housing
28 market, I found that French immigrants had only limited spatial and cultural effects on
29 the neighbourhood. They were mostly active within their own community and rarely
30 reached out to the wider population. According to my French respondents, the
31 individualistic character of the French and the common practices of Jewish communities
32 in France explain this. Their lesser impact on the public space also relates to the lesser
33 status of France and other French-speaking countries in Israel.
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 Immigrants from western countries immigrate by choice, motivated by Israel's 'pull
10 factors' and by ideological and religious reasons. They come in dribbles and drabs and
11 not in a flood. They are mostly highly-skilled and greatly desired by the state. The
12 different approach towards immigrant absorption in Israel today, due to the
13 abandonment of the 'melting pot' strategy, increases the legitimacy of a transnational
14 lifestyle for western immigrants. Their tendency to congregate is even encouraged by
15 the state and private absorption institutions. In fact, transnational lifestyle and practices
16 enable people who never considered immigrating to Israel, for employment reasons or
17 their valued ties with their home countries, to find a way to do so. In that sense, the
18 State of Israel actually profits from transnationalism.
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29

30
31 Immigrants are motivated to leave their comfortable lives behind and come to Jerusalem
32 because they desire a more meaningful way of life, which for them lies in the ability to
33 lead a fulfilling religious and cultural lifestyle in a place where Jews are the majority,
34 and gain a sense of belonging. They are nonetheless interested in preserving the formal
35 lifestyle to which they have become accustomed. Western immigrants may come to
36 Israel motivated by their imaginaries of it as the place that the Bible relates to and where
37 Jewish history formulated. They may also aspire to fulfil Zionist ideals. Yet, once there,
38 they still need to adapt to a foreign reality. As I have argued, they are more easily
39 integrated when living in an expatriate community, where space accommodates to their
40 needs. Living in an enclave does not necessarily mean disconnectedness from Israeli
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 everyday life; it is a softer, more adaptive way to experience reality. Additionally, those
10 who choose Baka, unlike western immigrants in other places, also like the
11 heterogeneous character of this neighbourhood.
12
13

14
15
16 By wanting to live in the centre of the Jewish world and in French- and English-
17 speaking communities, immigrants actively enhanced the gentrification process of
18 Baka, as their dominance and economic power caused vast changes. The real estate and
19 consumption markets responded to their needs and desires, thus causing prices to rise
20 and less well-off residents to leave. As most immigrants are religious, secular lifestyle
21 (and people) also diminished. The appealing heterogeneity of the neighbourhood, at
22 least class-wise, decreases slowly. In fact, the process of super-gentrification pushes out
23 early-stage gentrifiers and not just weaker populations. The former, on their part, are
24 calling to preserve the neighbourhood's character and slow down gentrification,
25 currently accelerated by real estate developers, who seek to capitalise on the
26 neighbourhood's character and location by building luxurious housing units for wealthy
27 western homebuyers.
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42

43 Imaginaries that high-status immigrants may have, in this case – the imagination of
44 Jerusalem as a holy place, have many implications for their places of settlement. Part of
45 the challenge for urban research, I believe, is to examine the implications that privileged
46 immigrants' imaginaries have on processes of gentrification and urban change.
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

References

Amit V (ed.) (2007) *Going First Class? New Approaches to Privileged Travel and Movement*. Berghahn Books.

Amit K and Riss I (2007) The role of social networks in the immigration decision-making process: the case of North American immigration to Israel. *Immigrants and Minorities* 25(3): 290–313.

Ashworth GJ and Tunbridge JE (2000) *The Tourist-Historic City: Retrospect and Prospect of Managing the Heritage City*. Oxford: Elsevier Science.

Avruch K (1981) *American Immigrants in Israel: Social Identities and Change*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Benson M and O'Reilly K (2009) Migration and the Search for a Better Way of Life: A Critical Exploration of Lifestyle Migration. *The Sociological Review* 57(4): 608–625.

Benson M (2013a). Living the 'real' dream in *la France profonde*? lifestyle migration, social distinction, and the authenticities of everyday life. *Anthropological Quarterly* 86(2): 501–526.

Benson M (2013b) Postcoloniality and privilege in new lifestyle flows: the case of North Americans in Panama. *Mobilities* 8(3): 313–330.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 Bielo JS (2011) City of man, city of god: the re-urbanization of American evangelicals.

10
11 *City and Society* 23(1): 2–23.

12
13
14 Bourdieu P (1979) The Kabyle house or the world reversed. In: *Algeria 1960*.

15
16 Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 133–154.

17
18
19 Brown-Saracino J (2004) Social Preservationists and the Quest for Authentic

20
21 Community. *City and Community* 3(2): 135–156.

22
23
24 CBS – Central Bureau of Statistics (2010) *Press Release from 25 February, 2009*

25
26
27 *(Regarding Immigration Data for 2008)* (in Hebrew).

28
29
30 CBS – Central Bureau of Statistics (2012) *Press Release from 29 February, 2012*

31
32
33 *(Regarding Immigration Data for 2011)* (in Hebrew).

34
35
36 CBS – Central Bureau of Statistics (2014) *Press Release from 29 April, 2014*

37
38
39 *(Regarding Immigration Data for 2013)* (in Hebrew).

40
41 Clifford J (1986) Introduction: Partial Truths. In: Clifford J and Marcus GE (eds)

42
43 *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Berkeley: University of

44
45 California Press, pp. 1–26.

46
47
48 Cohen G (1985) *The penetration of well-established population to law status*

49
50 *neighborhoods in Jerusalem*. PhD Thesis, The Hebrew University, Israel (in Hebrew).

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 Cohen Y (2002) From a country of refuge to a country of choice: changes in the
10 immigration patterns to Israel. *Israeli Sociology* 4(1): 39–60 (in Hebrew).

11
12
13
14 Cohen Y (2007) The demographic success of Zionism. *Israeli Sociology* 8(2): 355–362
15 (in Hebrew).

16
17
18
19 Croucher S (2009) *The Other Side of the Fence: American Migrants in Mexico*. Austin:
20 University of Texas Press.

21
22
23
24 Croucher S (2012) Privileged mobility in an age of globality. *Societies* 2: 1–13.

25
26
27 Dashefsky A and Lazerwitz B (1983) The Role of Religious Identification in North
28 American Migration to Israel. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 22(3): 263–
29 275.

30
31
32
33
34
35 Filion P (1991) The Gentrification – Social Structure Dialectic: A Toronto Case Study.
36
37 *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 15(4): 553–574.

38
39
40 Firey W (1945) Sentiment and symbolism as ecological variables. *American*
41
42 *Sociological Review* 10(2): 140–148.

43
44
45 Gal J (2008) Immigration and the Categorical Welfare State in Israel. *Social Service*
46
47 *Review* 82(4): 639–661.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 Gale DE (1984) *Neighborhood Revitalization and the Postindustrial City*. Lexington,
10 Mass.: Lexington Books.

11
12
13
14 Gonen A (2002) Widespread and Diverse Neighborhood Gentrification in Jerusalem.
15 *Political Geography* 21: 727–737.

16
17
18
19 Hasson N, Ravid B and Ettinger Y (2015) Evaluation: More than Ten Thousand People
20 Would Emigrate from France to Israel This Year. *Haaretz*, 10 January 2015 (in
21 Hebrew).

22
23
24
25
26 Herzfeld M (2009) *Evicted from Eternity: The Restructuring of Modern Rome*. Chicago:
27 The University of Chicago Press.

28
29
30
31
32 Howard RW (2008) Western retirees in Thailand: motives, experiences, wellbeing,
33 assimilation and future needs. *Ageing and Society* 28: 145–163.

34
35
36
37 Jackiewicz EL (2010) Introduction. *Recreation and Society in Africa, Asia and Latin*
38 *America* 1(1): 1–4.

39
40
41
42 Jackiewicz EL and Craine J (2010) Destination Panama: an examination of the
43 migration-tourism-foreign investment nexus. *Recreation and Society in Africa, Asia and*
44 *Latin America* 1(1): 5–29.
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 Janoschka M (2009) The contested spaces of lifestyle mobilities: regime analysis as a
10 tool to study political claims in Latin American retirement destinations. *Die Erde*
11 140(3): 251–274.
12
13

14
15
16 Janoschka M and Haas H (eds.) (2013) *Contested Spatialities, Lifestyle Migration and*
17 *Residential Tourism*. London and New York: Routledge.
18
19

20
21 Jeppsson Grassman E and Taghizadeh Larsson A (2013) ‘A home away from home’:
22 the role of the Church of Sweden abroad for Swedish migrants. In: *New Religiosity in*
23 *Migration*, Beer-Sheva, Israel, 27–30 May 2013.
24
25
26

27
28
29 Joppke C and Rosenhek Z (2002) Contesting Ethnic Immigration: Germany and Israel
30 Compared. *European Journal of Sociology* 43(3): 301–335.
31
32

33
34 Karkabi N (2013) Lifestyle migration in south Sinai, Egypt: nationalisation, privileged
35 citizenship and indigenous rights. *International Review of Social Research* 3(1): 49–66.
36
37

38
39 Kay A (2001) Citizen rights in flux: the influence of American immigrants to Israel on
40 modes of political activism. *Jewish Political Studies Review* 13(3-4).
41
42

43
44 King R, Warnes T and Williams A (2000) *Sunset Lives: British Retirement Migration to*
45 *the Mediterranean*. Oxford: Berg.
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 Korpela M (2010) Me, myself and I: western lifestyle migrants in search of themselves
10 in Varanasi, India. *Recreation and Society in Africa, Asia and Latin America* 1(1): 53–
11 73.
12

13
14
15 Kozinets R (2010) *Netnography: Doing Ethnographic Research Online*. London: Sage.

16
17
18
19 Lees L (2000) A reappraisal of gentrification: towards a ‘geography of gentrification’.
20
21 *Progress in Human Geography* 24(3): 389–408.
22

23
24 Linderson A (2010) To enter the kitchen door to people’s lives: a multi-method
25
26 approach in the research of transnational practices among lifestyle migrants. *Recreation*
27
28 *and Society in Africa, Asia and Latin America* 1(1): 31–52.
29

30
31
32 Lizárraga Morales O (2010) The US citizens retirement migration to Los Cabos,
33
34 Mexico: profile and social effects. *Recreation and Society in Africa, Asia and Latin*
35
36 *America* 1(1): 75–92.
37

38
39 Leurer J (2007) *Data on ghost homes in Jerusalem*. Prepared for the conference ‘who
40
41 has the right over Jerusalem’, December 2007. Jerusalem: Kiryata (in Hebrew).
42

43
44
45 Lomsky-Feder E and Rapoport T (2012) Introduction: homecoming as ethno-national
46
47 immigration. In: Lomsky-Feder E and Rapoport T (eds) *Israelis in Their Own Way:*
48
49 *Migration Stories of Young Adults from U.S.S.R.* Jerusalem: Magnes Press, pp. 1–24 (in
50
51 Hebrew).
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

Markowitz F and Stefansson AH (eds) (2004) *Homecomings: Unsettling Paths of Return*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

Nitzan-Shiftan A (2005) Capital city or spiritual center? the politics of architecture in post-1967 Jerusalem. *Cities* 22(3): 229–240.

O'Reilly K and Benson M (2009) Lifestyle migration: escaping to the good life? In: Benson M and O'Reilly K (eds) *Lifestyle Migration: Expectations, Aspirations and Experiences*. Farnham: Ashgate, pp. 1–14.

Paz-Frenkel E (2013) Finance Committee Approves: Property Tax on Ghost Apartments Will Double. *Kalkalist*, 12 September 2013 (in Hebrew).

Rapport N (1998) Coming Home to a Dream: A Study of the Immigrant Discourse of 'Anglo-Saxons' in Israel. In Rapport N and Dawson A (eds.) *Migrants of Identity: Perceptions of Home in a World of Movement*. Oxford: Berg, pp. 61–83.

Relph E (1997) Sense of place. In: Hanson S (ed) *Ten Geographic Ideas That Changed the World*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, pp. 205–226.

Rojas V, LeBlanc HP and Sunil TS (2013) US retirement migration to Mexico: understanding issues of adaptation, networking, and social integration. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, available online.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 Shamir R (2005) Without borders? notes on globalization as a mobility regime.
10
11 *Sociological Theory* 23(2): 197–217.

12
13
14 Sheleg Y (2000) *The Impact of North-American Immigration on the Orthodox life in*
15
16 *Israel*. Bar Ilan: The Shlomo Argov Center for the Study of Israel and the Jewish People
17
18 (in Hebrew).

19
20
21 Shpaizman I (2013) Load-Shedding and Reloading: Changes in Government
22
23 Responsibility–The Case of Israeli Immigration and Integration Policy 2004–10. In
24
25 Ramia G, Farnsworth K and Irving Z (eds.) *Social Policy Review 25: Analysis and*
26
27 *Debate in Social Policy, 2013*. Bristol and Chicago, IL: Policy Press, pp. 183–202.

28
29
30
31 Shuval JT (1998) Migration to Israel: The Mythology of ‘Uniqueness’. *International*
32
33 *Migration* 36(1): 3–26.

34
35
36 Spalding AK (2013) Lifestyle migration to Bocas del Toro, Panama: exploring
37
38 migration strategies and introducing local implications of the search for paradise.
39
40 *International Review of Social Research* 3(1): 67–86.

41
42
43 Wacquant L (2004) What is a ghetto? building a sociological term. *Israeli Sociology*
44
45 6(1): 151–162 (in Hebrew).

46
47
48 Walks RA and Maaranen R (2008) *The Timing, Patterning and Forms of Gentrification*
49
50 *and Neighborhood Upgrading in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver, 1961 to 2001*.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9 Research paper 211. University of Toronto: Centre for Urban and Community Studies
10 Cities Center.
11

12
13
14 Warnes AM and Williams A (2006) Older migrants in Europe: a new focus for
15 migration studies. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 32(8): 1257–1281.
16

17
18
19 Zandberg T (2008) *Critical Analysis of Urban Conservation: Yemin Moshe, Jerusalem*.
20 MA Thesis, Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Israel (in Hebrew).
21

22
23
24 Zukin S (2010) *Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Places*. Oxford:
25 Oxford University Press.
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

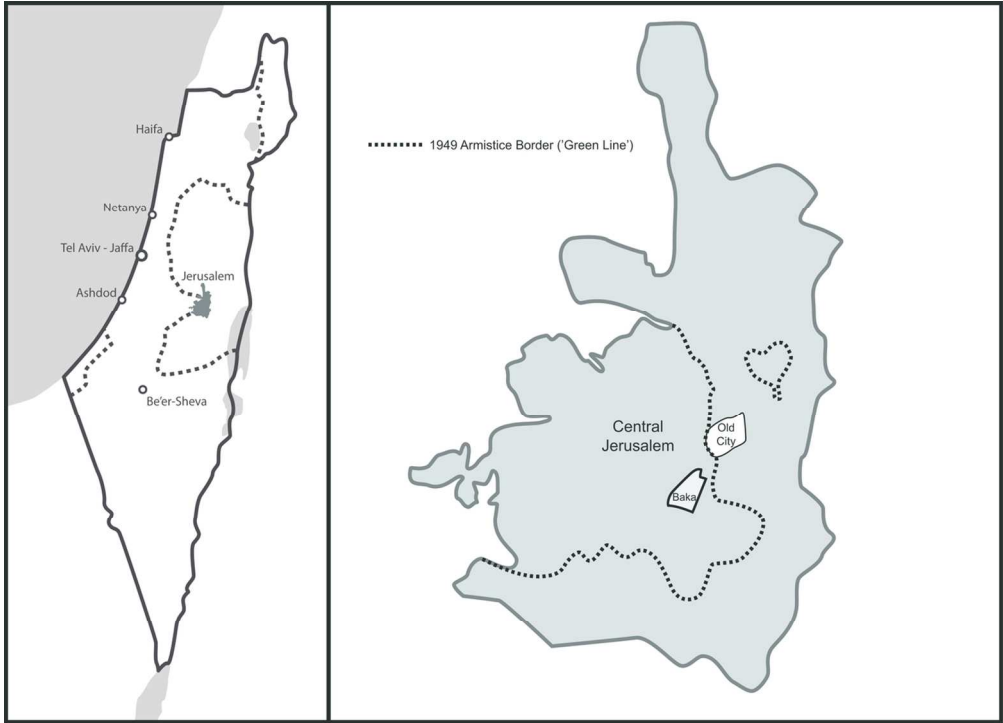
Figure legends

Figure 1: Jerusalem’s location in Israel (left), and Baka’s location in Jerusalem (right), in relation to the city centre, the old city and the ‘Green Line’ (the 1949-armistice borderline).

Figure 2: Before (right) and after (left) the ‘preservation’ of a house in Baka.



1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60



241x174mm (150 x 150 DPI)

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60



682x914mm (72 x 72 DPI)

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60



682x914mm (72 x 72 DPI)