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Urban ethnocracy: ethnicization and the production of space in an Israeli 'mixed city'

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Abstract. In this paper we offer a critical analysis of ethnic relations in an Israeli 'mixed city'. Similar to other sites shaped by the logics of settling ethnonationalism and capitalism, the 'mixed city' is characterized by stark patterns of segregation between a dominant majority and a subordinate minority, as well as by ethnoclass fragmentation within each group. 'Mixed' spaces are both exceptional and involuntary, often resulting from the process of *ethnicization* prevalent in contested urban spaces. We theorize this setting as an '*urban ethnocracy*', where a dominant group appropriates the city apparatus to buttress its domination and expansion. In such settings, conspicuous tensions accompany the interaction between the city's economic and ethnoterritorial logics, producing sites of conflict and instability, and essentializing group identities and ethnic geographies. Empirically, the paper focuses on the city of Lod or Lydda, Israel, where the production of contested urban space has been linked to the construction of an exclusionary Israeli-Jewish national identity and to the establishment of hierarchical ethnic citizenship. Like other previously Arab cities, Lod has been the target of a concerted strategy of *Judaization*, which has formed the city's central planning goal since the late 1940s. We analyze in detail various aspects and sites of the Judaization process, and of the ensuing urban conflicts. We point to the chronic instability of urban ethnocracies, and to the need of planning to rise above narrow ethnocentric considerations in order for the 'mixed city' to prosper as the home for all communities.

Introduction

> "... neither cities nor places in them are unordered, unplanned; the question is only whose order, whose planning, for what purpose ... ."
>
> Marcuse (1995, page 244)

The term 'mixed cities' is widely used in Israel, describing an urban situation in which Jewish and Arab communities occupy the same urban jurisdiction.[1] However, the critical perspective we propose in this paper attempts to 'dig below' such terminology, which raises images of integration and mutual membership. The Israeli urban reality, as demonstrated in the following pages, is far less benign. A clear spatial and mental segregation exists between Arabs and Jews in Israel, and hence the occurrence of 'mixed' urban spaces—where Jews and Arabs reside within the same city—is generally both exceptional and involuntary. Rather, it has resulted from a historical process during which the Israeli territory, including previously Arab cities, has been profoundly Judaized. In this process, the Palestinian community remaining in Israel after the 1948 war has become a marginalized and dispossessed minority.

Accordingly, we suggest that the production of urban space in Israeli mixed cities stems from the exclusionary Israeli-Jewish national identity, which works to essentialize and segregate Arabs and Jews. Hence, we examine here the interactions between hegemonic oppression and minority reaction, which 'produce' the evolving urban

[1] Generally speaking, three main types of 'mixed cities' can be identified in Israel: (a) pre-1948—cities such as Haifa where Jews and Arabs lived under the same municipality prior to 1948; (b) Judaized—Palestinian cities prior to 1948, such as Ramla, Acre, Yaffa, and Lydda, which became dominated by a Jewish majority; (c) recently mixed—Jewish-Israeli new towns accommodating Arab migration such as Upper Nazareth and Carmiel.

landscapes of multiethnic cities. Further, we intend to analyze the tension between nationalizing/ethnicizing and urbanizing/capitalist forces, and their impact on the making of the city. This tension, and often 'clash', can be found in most contemporary cities, in varying intensities and forms.

However, within the limits of one paper, we shall focus on one type—*the ethnocratic city*—which is likely to bring into sharp relief the simultaneous workings of these two major societal forces. We argue that mixed cities in Israel are better described as 'ethnocratic cities', which are subject to a persistent Israeli policy of deliberate Judaization, to Arab resistance, and are hence sites of constant ethnic conflict and instability.

Our argument will be framed by two conceptual fields: the first relates to the contested meaning of citizenship in multiethnic societies, and the second relates to the theoretical urban critique. These debates will be examined through a wider theoretical framework of settler societies (Stasiulis and Yuval-Davis, 1995). By contextualizing this discussion in relation to the mixed city of Lod or Lydda,[(2)] we aim to contribute to the development of a critical and comprehensive theory of contested urban spaces in general, and to the study of ethnocratic cities in particular.

At this early stage we should clarify some of our terminology, without entering the controversy over terms (which is beyond the scope of this paper). 'Arab' and 'Palestinian' are interchangeable terms in the paper, denoting residents of Israel/Palestine who belong to the Arab culture. There is a political distinction between Arab citizens of Israel and Arabs residing in the Occupied Territories, but the ethnonational identity of both is Palestinian-Arab. 'Israel' is the area within the internationally recognized pre-1967 borders. 'Israel/Palestine' denotes the entire area under present Israeli control (between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea). 'Ashkenazi' Jews (Ashkenazim in plural) are those originating from Europe or North America, whereas Mizrahi Jews (Mizrahim in plural) hail from the Arab and Muslim countries. 'Russian' Jews are immigrants possessing the Russian culture who have arrived in Israel since the early 1990s.

Urbanism, nationalism, and the struggle for the city

During the last few decades, rich and diverse bodies of scholarly knowledge have developed to account for two fundamental forces shaping contemporary human society: urbanization and nationalism. The literature on modern urbanization has relied on seminal texts of Karl Marx, Max Weber, Lewis Mumford, and Herbert Gans, and later on those of David Harvey, Manuel Castells, and Doreen Massey, to name but a few. Key issues here have been the restructuring economic and political orders associated with modernity, and their impact on urbanization, production, and politics (Hall, 1988). Another central branch of this literature deals with the close links between urbanization and civil governance, and in particular between liberalism and democracy.

For these writers, the city is the heart of enlightenment, modernization, and progress, and of politics itself (Dahl, 1982; Lindblom, 1977). Held (1990) traces the idea of democracy to the setting of an urban community, stretching back to ancient Athens, through medieval Florence, and to the recent flourishing industrial cities of the West. Katznelson (1995), in turn, develops the links between urbanism and liberalism, and finds that the actual city space, with its typical density, diversity size, and flows, has been an essential platform for the translation of liberal ideas to actual practices and regulations:

[(2)] Lydda is the Arabic name of Lod.

> "Cities were more porous, open to flows of people, capital, communication and ideas. Without this dynamism, liberalism's insistence on human autonomy and choice would have been merely speculative... . Liberalism and the city... have been deeply intertwined for centuries. Liberalism was inconceivable... without the urbanization of early modern Europe... which became the location for political emancipation and free citizenship" (page 57).

This observation illustrates the promise of the city and its potential to provide enabling geographical–political sites for the dissolution of hierarchical ethnic and class boundaries. Liberalism, which provides a conceptual basis for equal civil society (and hence for the possibility of alleviating ethnic discrimination), requires an open, porous residential space. But, as we shall see later, in ethnocratic cities this is far from being the case.

In recent years a new wave of studies has begun to dominate scholarship on cities, increasingly incorporating issues of economic and cultural globalization and the ever-quickening movement of capital and immigrants as key factors in understanding the urban regions of today. This body of writing has examined critically the material and oppressive consequences of urbanization and the opportunities it has created not only for freedom and liberalism, but also for exploitation and structural stratification. The recent works of Friedmann (1996), Marcuse and van Kempen (2000), Sassen (1998), and Taylor (2000) are but a few examples of this fast-growing field of inquiry. As shown below, mixed cities in Israel have also been exposed to the pressure of globalizing forces, most notably by receiving an influx of international and internal immigrants fleeing from regions of economic decline.

In parallel, an equally impressive body of scholarship has evolved over the phenomenon of nationalism. Here, too, a seminal first wave includes works now considered classical, such as Anderson (1983) and Gellner (1983), and forms the basis for illuminating new approaches, with recent valuable additions by Billig (1995), Brubaker (1996), Canovan (1996), Connor (1994), and Greenfeld (1992). But, despite the importance of their attempts to propose grand accounts of nationalism, these theories have often treated 'the nation' as relatively uniform. They have often collapsed nation and state, and thereby 'flattened' the diverse and often oppressive history, geography, and internal divisions of nation and state. This angle of social analysis has tended to ignore the ethnoclass interests behind the national project. Quite often, under the very rhetoric of 'national goals' and 'patriotic unity', the state's leading ethnoclasses (a term explained later) have enhanced their material and political position, hence sharpening the disparities and tensions between the 'nation and its fragments' (Chatterjee, 1996; Penrose, 2000).

Most literature on nationalism has also overlooked the central role of cities and urban planning in facilitating nation and state building, and in maintaining national consciousness and identity. This oversight of the city–nation connection has also amplified the tendency of most scholarship on nationalism to downplay the impact of internal divisions on the ethnonational project. A firmer inclusion of 'the urban' (and especially the 'globalizing urban') in the analysis of 'the national' would focus attention on the disparities and tensions between ethnic collectivities, which are often revealed in their sharpest at the urban levels. The seminal works of Boal (1987), Bollens (1999), Gurr and King (1987), and Sibley (1996) provide notable illustrations of the powerful, and often explosive, links between the drive for ethnic control over national space and the conflictual reality of ethnically mixed cities.

Yet, the city is where ethnic communities tend to congregate and generate intellectual, political, and economic elites. The city often plays host to key symbolic and cultural resources. Hence, conflicts between ethnoclasses regularly occur on urban turf, with major consequences for the shaping of nations and states. Here, planning—that is, the public

production of urban habitat—has played a key role in molding spatiopolitical relations between ethnic groups. This has been clear in diverse and distant cities, such as Montreal, Brussels, Jerusalem, Istanbul, Johannesburg, Kuala Lumpur, or Colombo. In this context Sibley (1996) articulates well the contradictions between national xenophobia and the exigencies of capitalist developments:

> "The built environment is ... implicated in the construction of otherness and deviancy. Pure space exposes difference and facilitates the policing of boundaries .... This xenophobia is based ... on a purified national identity; (it) sits uneasily with economic flows and cultural fusions, which are generated by global capitalism. The myth of cultural homogeneity is needed to sustain the nation-state .... It is convenient to have an alien other hovering on the margins" (pages 86, 107 – 108).

In a similar vein, a recent, more critical, wave of nationalism studies has emerged, with scholars such as Comaroff (1998), Comaroff and Comaroff (2000), Jackson and Penrose (1993), Lustick (1993), Mann (2000), and Yuval-Davis (2000) critically unpacking the myths, histories, and spaces constructed as 'naturally' national. These works, which represent but a small sample, have exposed the multilayered, politically contested, and socially constructed entity called 'the nation-state', and stressed the need to treat it as contingent, and not as 'a given', in order to understand fully its impact on intergroup politics, economy, and geography.

But the new horizons thrown open by the two major areas of scholarship have remained almost totally detached. There has been very little attempt to engage seriously with the tensions and relations associated with the structural forces shaping both contemporary cities and ethnonational collectivities. Even the important recent work on cities within ethnonational conflicts (Benvenisti, 1996; Bollens, 1999; Dumper, 1996) has tended to privilege issues of national control and territory, and not engage seriously enough with the urban dynamics concealed beneath the more visible national surface. Similarly, recent novel work on urban diversity and difference vis-à-vis the onset of globalization and neoliberalism (Fincher and Jacobs, 1998; Sandercock, 1998) has rarely incorporated issues of ethnonationalism into the heart of analyses, overlooking the ever-present nature of this force in shaping contemporary urban regions.

But such an engagement is sorely needed, because, as argued by AlSayyad (1996), and Castells (1997), neither body of knowledge is complete or credible without the other. That is, no discussion of the emergence of nationalism and the management of ethnic relations in modern nation-states can ignore the pivotal role of cities for both generating and challenging the ethnonational order. Likewise, no serious historical account of urbanization, or discussion of contemporary globalizing cities, can overlook the central role of ethnonationalism in shaping urban living and political space, and the constant surfacing of noneconomic, ethnocratic logic in the political agendas of cities and urbanizing regions.

Cities and citizenship

Indeed, on the one hand, cities are considered to be the locus of establishing—historically, politically, and legally—the notion of citizenship (Lefebvre, 1996; Shafir, 1998). On the other hand, urban spatial and social landscapes are characterized by being polarized and exclusionary, whereas in major cities between 40% and 70% of the population are living in what has been defined as 'illegal conditions'. In those cities people have to step outside the law in order to gain access to basic citizens' rights (Fernandes and Varley, 1998).

Our proposal is to link these claims to the body of knowledge that questions the notion of citizenship—in itself of course a contested concept, subject to ongoing struggles over exclusion and inclusion (Kymlicka 1995; Young, 1997; Yuval-Davis, 2000). Lefebvre's (1996)

concept of the 'right to the city' is highly relevant here. Similar to the ideas of other urban analysts such as Castells (1983) the concept engages class analysis with wider aspects of power relations including ethnicity, location, and migration. The broader, integrative approach is also evident in Young's thesis that recent emancipatory social movements are mobilized around issues of collective identity rather than exclusively around class or economic interests (1998). The changes that have occurred after the process of globalization increased the relevance of this approach: major cities in the highly developed world have become the locus of contested space, with growing numbers of disadvantaged populations (Sassen, 1994). However, these marginalized people—or as Castells (1996) defined them "structurally irrelevant people"—are now claiming their rights to the city as well.

Beyond the specific circumstances resulting from regional, national, and historical contexts, it is possible to generalize the different urban situations. Conditions linked with urban poverty, violence, and immigration are often spatially expressed in urban enclaves. These are frequently omitted from formal city maps and are categorized by the authorities as 'illegal' or 'unauthorized' settlements. If we follow Sibley (1996), these places can be treated as signifiers of the socially constructed and demonized image of the 'other'. This view enables us to question the use of the term 'illegal' in relation to what have been referred to in the literature as 'spontaneous settlements' or 'shanty towns'. All these, we would propose, are the result of colonial legacy, ethnonational antagonism, and social exclusion, which have pushed citizens and residents to act 'illegally' and by so doing attempt to achieve their 'right to the city'.

Here lies an important key to the creation and preservation of urban ethnic divisions: powerful groups, often linked to the state or urban regime, are able to 'plan' the city so as to exclude and/or segregate minorities (Marcuse, 1995). In such a process the new geographies of exclusion work to essentialize both collective identities and the hierarchies of urban citizenship. In other words, the process of marking an urban place as 'ethnic' and simultaneously classifying it as 'illegal' reproduces patterns of segregation and inequality. The making of urban space, therefore, is inseparable from the ongoing contestation between social and ethnic groups. In this context, planning policies, land policies, and development policies, despite their common representation as 'technocratic' or 'neutral', are central tools with which dominant ethnic and social groups work to preserve their urban dominance (Fenster, 2002; Kallus and Law-Yone, 2000). The use of 'planning as control' is particularly rife in settler societies, to which we now turn.

Settling the (urban) frontiers

We will introduce an additional analytical concept, that of *settler society*, which is a complementary analytical concept (Stasiulis and Yuval-Davis, 1995). Such a society is based on a project of settling newcomers in contested (regional and urban) 'frontiers' in order to achieve political control and access to key resources. It is premised on the colonial legacy in which Europeans immigrated to other territories, and often categorized the new lands as *terra nullius*—that is, a land under no formal ownership, to be seized and used by the modern, advanced nations of the world (Said, 1993). Settler societies may be 'external' or 'internal'. External settler societies are organized movements of people across borders, and often into other continents, as in the period of European colonialism. Internal settler societies involve the planned ethnicization of 'internal frontiers', in which the state manipulates the local ethnic geography to further the interests of a dominant ethnic group (McGarry, 1998; Yiftachel, 1996). Both processes produce uneven patterns of ethnic and class segregation, as exemplified in the case of Lod below.

Israel exhibits many of the social and spatial patterns that characterize the settler-society model (Yiftachel and Kedar, 2000). In such societies, as mentioned above, several broad 'ethnoclass' categories tend to form over time—the 'founders', the 'immigrants', the 'locals', and most recently also the 'foreigners' (Stasiulis and Yuval-Davis, 1995). The ethnoclasses are created by the geographical process of expansion and settlement and by the associated flows of resources and development, which are determined by and hence reflect the power relations between ethnic groups. This creates structural economic and political stratification, where ethnic origins and class affiliation largely overlap.

In such settings, the founding (or 'charter') group gains the dominant political, cultural, and economic status during the critical formative period of the new state. In Israel, this group is mainly composed of Ashkenazi Jews, the 'founders' of Zionism and of the state. The second group is comprises various non-Ashkenazi 'immigrants', most notably the Mizrahi ethnoclass, and recently also Russian and Ethiopian Jews—who have joined the 'founders' in the national settlement project, albeit from an inferior economic and cultural position (Kimmerling, 2001).[3]

The third group—the indigenous Palestinian-Arabs—has resided on the land for generations prior to the arrival of settlers. These people are largely excluded from the process of constructing the new nation, and are generally 'trapped' in their inferior ethnoclass status. The Palestinian-Arabs in Israel have indeed suffered from discrimination in a wide range of fields, including economic, legal, and cultural (Adalah, 1998; Sikkuy, 2000). This three-tier model—though schematic—will be used in the following section as 'scaffolding' that assists in accounting for the making of urban space in Lod.

Judaizing the contested land

"There is no form without content. There is no content without form."

Lefebvre (1996, page 135)

Urban processes and spatial dynamics do not occur in a vacuum; rather, they are the tangible reality shaped by, and in turn shaping, the wider political discourses. In this section we aim to explore the tensions within the Israeli political system, which presents itself as democratic, while at the same time legally, spatially, and culturally *ethnicizing* a variety of public and civil spheres. In order to understand the inherent nexus between the 'form'—that is the Israeli political regime—and the 'content'—the Israeli-produced spatial reality—we will use the concept of 'ethnocracy' (Yiftachel, 1997; 1999). This concept—which we will detail later in the paper—is used to analyze the Israeli regime, which supports the expansion of the Jewish national group within a binational and contested territory.

Within the context of Israeli territorial politics, we note that these politics often reflect wider ethnonational tensions and conflicts. Local politics usually revolve around struggle for space, economic resources, and political power, most commonly along the ethnonational lines. But these cities never fully replicate the dynamics of the wider conflict, mainly because the urban arena is governed by a different combination of powers, regulations, and forces to the ones prevailing in nonurban regions. In many respects, cities within ethnocratic societies can be analyzed as 'urban regimes', in which the city itself (that is, its political and economic elites) is a key actor in the determination of local conflicts and resources allocation (Fainstein, 1995; Lauria, 1997). Yet, the powerful forces operating in the larger political fields bind it, especially by the discourses of ethnicization and development.

[3] For a comprehensive discussion about the differences and the relationships between the Mizrahim immigrants and the ex-Soviet Union immigrants see Tzfadia (2000).

In this context, there are two main characteristics of the urban arena. First, in terms of sheer territory, urban areas are quite small, and for this reason national movements have generally emphasized control over the vast tracts of rural lands as a symbol of sovereignty, rather than control over the streets of contested cities. Second, exclusion and segregation of minorities is less feasible or even desirable in urban areas than in rural areas. In rural areas, the state (on behalf of the dominant ethnoclass) can 'legally' and effectively marginalize and exclude members of ethnic minorities. This is commonly achieved through the allocation of large tracts of land on the basis of ethnic affiliation, the implementation of ethnically biased programs and policies, the manipulation of municipal boundaries, or the activities of special (ethnic) rural arms of the ethnic state. Such policies are common in most ethnic states—especially during the formative years, when patterns of ethnic dominance over rural space are formed, as has been the case in Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Estonia, and Israel. The effect has been the prevention of ethnic minorities from owning and controlling rural land.

However, given the representation and legitimacy of most ethnic states as 'democratic', the prevalence of a relatively open and increasingly liberalizing market system, and the need for cheap labor in proximity to major industrial and service centers, the urban areas in such states are more open and accessible. The need to ensure, at least on a formal level, the free flow of commerce and population in these urban systems opens up cracks and contradictions in the grids of ethnic control.

Israel, we propose, is a specific case of ethnic regime, which enables, assists, and promotes the central Zionist project of Judaizing Israel/Palestine. The ethnonational struggle over land and state control has been the major determining factor in the evolution of Jewish–Palestinian relations, as well as the major factor in relations between ethnic groups within these two nations (Yiftachel, 1999). The Judaization project is driven by the Zionist premise that Israel is a territory and a state that 'belongs' to, and only to, the Jewish people. It was hence constructed as an ideological and moral project that implements the Jewish 'right' to the land and strives to fill it with a majority of Jewish people, thereby offering a solution to the history of anti-Semitism in the diaspora.

The Judaization strategy is at the heart of Israel's ethnic regime. It has its roots in pre-1948 Jewish settlement methods, which attempted to create contiguous 'blocks' and 'chains' of segregated Jewish localities, mainly along the coastal plains and northern valleys. But the project swung into full force only after 1948, backed by the legal and planning aparatuses, as well as violent force of an internationally recognized state. A range of strategies was employed in the Judaization and de-Arabization of space which followed the flight and eviction of Palestinian refugees in 1948. These strategies included the prevention of the right of return, and the destruction of some 400 Arab villages, and the expropriation of some 50–60% of the land owned by Arabs who remained in Israel (Kedar, 1998).

Historical context is crucial here to explain the pivotal events of the 1948 war. In the brief space available here it should be noted that in 1948 the Palestinians, aided by several Arabs states, attacked Israel with an aim of destroying the Zionist project. Israeli-Jews, many of whom were recent refugees from Europe, used their superior forces to extend the land allocated to them by the United Nations by 40%. The hostilities towards Israel continued after 1948 (Morris, 2000), providing fertile grounds for anti-Arab sentiments, discourses, and practices among Israeli-Jews (Kimmerling, 2001).

What made the powerful Judaization project possible? Clearly, military force, violent imposition of state rule, and international political clout played their part—as did the toughness and resilience of Zionism, resulting from the horrors of the Nazi holocaust and from intensifying Arab hostilities. But here we also need to

account for a powerful process of cultural construction, which enabled Jewish leaders to proceed with the dispossessing project, while presenting it, internally and externally, as moral, necessary, and as deriving from the necessities of modern planning. As noted in Israel's first national plan:

> "Modern nations all over the world attempt to decentralize their population, so they do not become dependent on central congested cities.... In Israel this task is more urgent but also easier.... Urgent, because Israel holds the world record with 82 percent of the population in three main cities.... Easy, because unlike Britain, we do not require to move existing populations, but simply settle new immigrants in the country's empty regions" (National Planning Team, 1952, pages 3 – 7).

Indeed, the planning and implementation of frontier settlement is considered one of the highest achievements of the state of Israel and in some respects the entire country (within whatever borders) became a frontier. Significantly, 'the frontier' was also alive in Israel's mixed Arab-Jewish cities—especially in the planning discourse, which commonly spoke about 'the need' to build Jewish housing on, or immediately adjacent to, Arab urban neighborhoods. In the plans of most 'mixed cities', specific goals appear about 'keeping the Jewish character', about combating the 'danger' of increasing Arab population which might create a 'demographic threat' to the city (City of Akko, 1988; City of Lod, 2000).

This planning rationale received stark physical expression in mixed urban areas such as Akko, Haifa, Jaffa, Ramla, and Lod, where high-density Jewish neighborhoods were rapidly constructed around the small Arab enclaves, left in what were previously Arab cities (for details see Golan, 2001). The treatment of urban Arab neighborhoods as 'internal frontiers', into which Jewish presence should expand, turned all mixed Arab – Jewish cities in Israel into urban ethnocracies. Arab presence was thus delegitimized, and constantly portrayed as a 'danger', causing deep patterns of planning discrimination. This has spawned the emergence of various degrees of urban 'illegality', from whole neighborhoods 'unseen' by urban authorities to recognized neighborhoods, which nevertheless receive inferior levels of services and planning and whose residents are often excluded from the city's communal life and policymaking.

The combined discourses of nationalism, modernity, and professional planning, shaped an exclusive form of Jewish territoriality during the late 1940s and 1950s, aiming to 'indigenize' immigrant Jews quickly, and to conceal, trivialize, or marginalize the prior existence of Palestinian-Arabs. Jewish hegemony within the national territory is spatially expressed in the production of purified spaces (Bashir, 1999; Falah, 1996), and uses the settlement projects as efficient means to that end (Benvenisti, 2001).

The 'mixing' of Lydda or Lod

> "... [Lod] has changed from a neglected and undeveloped Arab city into a city of 16,000 [Jewish] inhabitants.... Lod, with its clean streets and plantings and its organized management ... is a living example of the dynamic power of the Jewish people." City of Lod (1952)

The city of Lod is located at the edge of the coastal plain of Israel (see figure 1), and has developed around a junction of routes leading from west to east (Jaffa – Jerusalem) and from south to north (Egypt – Syria – Lebanon). There is historical evidence of intensive commercial activities in this area, and the first railway line to Lod was constructed in 1892. The British occupied the city in 1917, and invested intensively in urban development, including the construction of the train station, the renovation of rail tracks, and the establishment of an international airport. In 1920 Lod was declared a regional city (Kadish et al, 2000; Vacart, 1977).

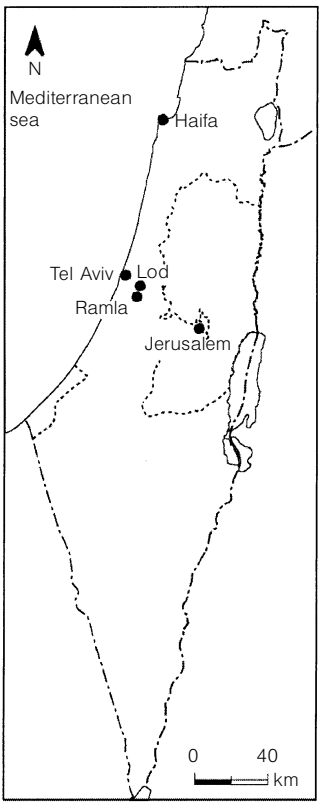

Figure 1. Location of the city of Lod.

In 1922 the British Mandate Department of Statistics reported 8103 inhabitants (7166 Muslims, 926 Christians, and 11 Jews). In 1944 the Anglo-American committee counted 16 780 inhabitants (2000 Christians) (Vacart, 1977). Beyond the demographic and economic developments, some changes had occurred in the administrative and municipal levels since the Ottoman rule. In 1934 a new law was passed concerning the municipal elections, and some families gained dominance in the city. These changes affected the city's spatial development beyond the borders of the old city, according to a new urban scheme initiated by the Mandate regime and designed by the British planner Clifford Holliday (Holliday, 1933).

As in other Palestinian cities and villages, 1948 was the turning point in the history of Lod. The Israeli army occupied[4] the city in 'Operation Dani' (Kadish et al, 2000; Morris, 2000): 250 Palestinians were killed, and about 20 000 inhabitants escaped or were driven out by the Israeli army. However, the need for labor and specific professionals, such as railway workers, in Lod was the main reason for allowing 1030 Palestinians to stay in their city.[5]

The establishment of the Israeli State and the 1948 war created a new reality in the city. As a first step, the Israeli military administration moved the Palestinians to the central mosque and to the church of St George—both in the central-city area, which was enclosed by a wire fence. This act, we would suggest, in relation to the

[4] According to the 1947 UN Partition Plan, Lod and its surrounding villages were part of the Arab state.

[5] Military administration report, 10 October 1948, IDF (Israeli Defence Force) Archive, Ramat-Gan, 1860\50 – 31. For all archive references, contact Haim Yacobi for copies: yappan@zahav.net.il.

Foucauldian approach (Foucault, 1977), symbolizes a first physical move towards a policy of urban panopticism. This was used as a means for consistent surveillance—through direct and indirect mechanisms of control—over the Palestinians, who were perceived as 'enemies'.

The Israeli public discourse at that time supported the construction of the image of the 'other': Israel's legendary Prime Minister Ben-Gurion accused the Arabs who remained in Israel of supporting the surrounding hostile countries, and President Ben-Zvi claimed that their secret aim was to complete Hitler's project (Benziman and Mansour, 1992, pages 16–20). Further, as shown by Bishara (1993), Israel's security forces acted at the time as the main body to shape relations between the Palestinian-Arabs and the state. They tightly controlled the minority conduct in a fashion resembling the panoptic setting. Palestinian-Arabs under the Israeli military administration[6] were controlled in different aspects of their daily life, including movement, housing, and work. In order to gain their rights, 'proper' political behavior of the Arab inhabitants towards the Israeli governance was necessary.[7]

In April 1949 the military administration regime in Lod ended, but there was still a wide agreement concerning the necessity to control the Arab population in the city. Thus, every aspect of this population's life was under surveillance including education, social services, and spatial planning. The Palestinian-Arabs in Lod were dominated by Jewish immigrants, who embodied the project of 'demographic engineering' (McGarry, 1998) by settling in the 'abandoned'[8] Arab houses.[9] This process reflects the social construction of both actors—the (Arab) 'enemies' and the (Jewish immigrant) 'agents':

> "On one hand, state authorities move 'agents', that is groups which are intended to perform a function on behalf of the state. State agents are normally *settled*... [in] peripheral parts of the state occupied by minorities. On the other hand, the authorities move 'enemies', that is, groups, which in their present location pose a problem for the authorities.... 'Enemy' status need not correspond with anti-state activity on the part of targeted groups" (McGarry, 1998, pages 614–615).

However, the 'enemies' in Lod, as in other former Palestinian cities, were a fragmented society that could not endanger the Jewish hegemony.[10] Rather, the Palestinians who remained under the Israeli rule became powerless while their urban culture, their collective identity, and leadership were undermined (Bishara, 1993).

Finally, in reference to our earlier theoretical discussion, we also suggest that Lod became an 'internal frontier'. In the first period after the war, Palestinian refugees tried to return to, and resettle in, their vacant houses in Lod, while the authority's reaction included military acts against such 'infiltration',[11] as well as a massive settlement of

[6] The military administration controlled the Arab dominant areas within the borders of Israel after the 1948 war.

[7] For details of the military government in Lod, see IDF Archive, 1860\50–31; 1860\50–32.

[8] One of the efficient means of control over the Palestinians was the massive expropriation of their land and houses, and the transformation of them into Jewish State property through legislation (Kedar, 1998). In Lod, for instance, all properties and land were listed under the name of the Trustee of Absentee's Property and the Development Authorities, which financed the renovation, subdivision, and adjustment of Arab houses and rented them out very cheaply to Jewish migrants.

[9] Ben-Gurion Archive, Ben-Gurion Center, Sdeh-Bokker, 11075-21\4\49; military administration report, 2 June 1948, 23 December 1948, IDF Archive, 1860\50–31.

[10] As explained even in military administration report, 10 October 1948, IDF Archive, 1860\50–31.

[11] See description in military administration reports, 23 December 1948, 28 December 1948, 11 January 1949, IDF Archive, 1860\50–31.

Figure 2. The modern urban landscape of Lod (estimated date of photograph: mid-1960s) (source: Lod Municipality Archive, Lod).

Jewish immigrants, mainly Mizrahim.[12] From the foundation of the Israeli state up to 1949, of the 190 000 Jewish immigrants who arrived in Israel 126 000 (66%) were settled in the empty Palestinian houses in the 'mixed cities', including Lod (Morris, 2000, page 263). Furthermore, from the mid-1950s the city of Lod witnessed a massive construction of modernistic housing blocks, infrastructure, and public services in the name of modernity (see figure 2), while the Arab urban fabric became subject to intensive demolition by the authorities.

The spatial dimension of ethnicity

"Thank God! What really saved us demographically was the mass immigration of 15 000 or 16 000 new immigrants who arrived in Lod from the former USSR."

Interview with a Lod municipality spokesman (20 November 2000)

Despite the Israeli efforts to control the balance in numbers between the Jewish and Arab populations, an ongoing process of internal migration and natural growth has influenced this ethnic balance, as table 1 (see over) demonstrates. These data show that during recent decades the Arab population has increased from 9%

[12] In 1969, for instance, it is reported that 50% of the total Jewish population were immigrants from North Africa, 18% from other Middle Eastern countries, 24% from Europe, and 8% Arabs (Hashimshoni, 1969).

Table 1. Ethnic balance between the Jewish and Arab populations (the data are based on Central Bureau of Statistics, 1995; 1999).

Year	Jewish population		Arab population	
	number	%	number	%
1944[a]	0		16 780	100
Post 1948 war[b]	0		1 030	100
1950	11 000	91.0	1 100	9.0
1961	17 600	92.7	1 400	7.3
1972	27 600	90.2	3 000	9.8
1989	32 900	79.0	8 700	21.0
1995	41 600	79.6	10 700	20.4
2000[c]	53 597	78.6	14 593	21.4

[a] The data in this row are from the Anglo American Committee (in Vacart, 1977).
[b] The data in this row are based on military administration report, 10 October 1948, IDF Archive, 1860\50 – 31.
[c] The data in this row are based on the *Lod Municipality Report* (City of Lod, 2000).

to over 20%, whereas the Jewish population correspondingly decreased from 91% to less than 80%. This process, as demonstrated below, is a result of forces which now undermine the Judaization project.

In addition to the Palestinians that remained in Lod after 1948, Arab internal refugees have settled in the city since the 1950s from Majdal (Askelon)[13] as well as from villages in the Sharon region. Internal refugees from the Sharon region—whose original land was confiscated—were compensated by a new plot, 10 – 15% of the size of their original property.[14] This area in the western part of Lod is known as Pardess-Shanir and was originally owned by a Palestinian family that fled the city during the war. Yet, the case of these families is unique as, unlike most other Arabs in the city, they are the owners of their land.

During the 1960s, a wave of Bedouin migrants from the southern Negev settled in the city. According to Cohen (2000) the policy towards this group was to resettle them in existing Arab villages, towns, and 'mixed cities'. In Lod, they were settled in the northern part, the 'railway district', and were integrated into the Jewish economy as cheap labor. Also, the location of Lod, close to Metropolitan Tel Aviv, has attracted other groups of Arab internal migrants. Some of them have illegally occupied vacant and often half-demolished houses in the city. Another group of Palestinians who were resettled by the authorities is the 'collaborators',[15] these are Palestinians that cooperated with the Israeli security authorities and are therefore viewed by other Palestinians as 'traitors'. The authorities have moved these families from their original villages and cities, mainly from the Gaza district where their lives were endangered, and have compensated them with housing in Lod.

As figure 3 demonstrates[16] two areas in Lod are dominated by Arabs: one block includes Pardess-Shanir (statistical area 44), the Old City (statistical area 13), Ramat-Eshkol

[13] "The evacuation of Majdal from its Arab inhabitants, 14/11/1949", IDF Archive 32\50\1860.
[14] This information is from a legal declaration given to lawyer Nicola Sabah, 15 January 1999 (copy available from Haim Yacobi).
[15] This group includes Palestinians from the territories occupied by Israel in 1967 (the Gaza strip and the Judea and Sameria).
[16] Based on the 1995 Census and on the Master Plan of Lod (1997).

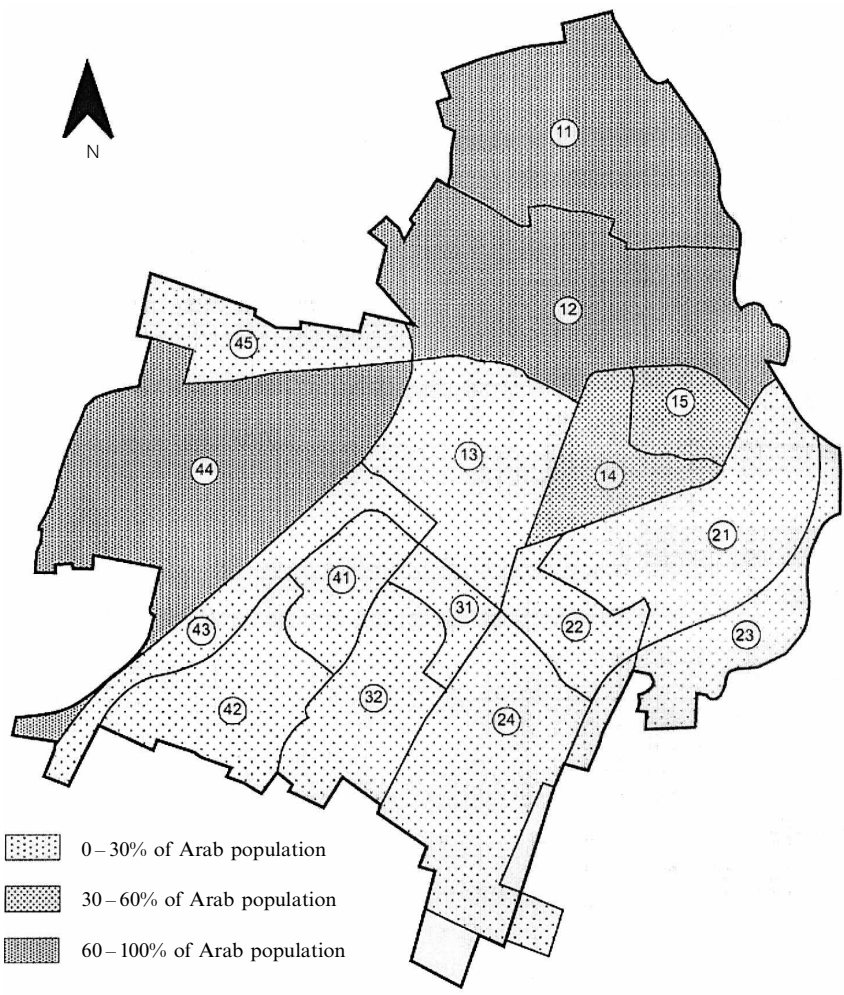

Figure 3. Arabs in Lod's districts (source: Yacobi, 2003).

(statistical area 14), and part of the city center (statistical area 42); the other includes the northern part of the city (statistical area 11). These segregated districts are the locus of the Arabs' daily lives, and they reflect the debate concerning city space and citizenship as theoretically discussed. These places lack basic infrastructure (and are characterized by massive unauthorized construction). According to our findings, 60% of the Arab population in the city live in 'illegal' structures, forming the largest unauthorized construction activity within non-Arab cities in Israel (City of Lod, 2000).[17]

The physical form of 'Arab places' in Lod became a signifier that shapes the image of the 'other' socially. The Arabs in Lod are presented in the media not just as the 'Arab enemy' (*Ma'ariv* newspaper, 4 October 1988; 14 September 1990), but as a 'social hazard' and a source of illegal activities, crime, and drug dealing, as noted, for instance, in the municipality report:

[17] The report informs us that 60% of Palestinian families live in "inappropriate conditions"—that is, in high-density or in illegally constructed houses (see also *Ha'aretz* daily newspaper, 12 May 2000).

"Minorities in Lod form 20 percent of the population, while their involvement in criminal activities in the city reach 60 percent" (City of Lod, 2000).

Some clarifications must be made in relation to the above data. First, the report counts illegal construction as the leading criminal act. However, it does not mention that this is a result of the 'demographic engineering' policy, which does not respond to the Arab housing needs. Second, Lod has indeed become a center for drug dealing. Yet, in a meeting held with representatives of the Arab neighborhoods in Lod (11 April 2000), it was argued that this was a result of policies encouraging the concentration of drug dealing in Lod, as it was a more convenient setup for the police (see also *Ha'aretz* daily newspaper, 17 July 2000; 3 December 2000; *Globes* newspaper, 31 December 2000).

Despite minor improvements, the policy towards the Arab citizens of Lod has not changed qualitatively over the years. They are still the 'enemies', subject to spatial and demographic oppression. In the last two decades a new flow of Jewish immigrants has arrived in Lod—mainly from the former Soviet Union—who now form 25% of the city's population; they are the second generation of 'agents'. Our argument is supported by the municipality report (City of Lod, 2000), which treats the demographic characteristics of the city as a fundamental problem.

Nonetheless, at this point it is important to note that not all newcomers in the city are religiously Jewish. By virtue of Israel's amended 'Law of Return', the mass immigration to Israel in the last decade has included around 30% non-Jews (those with at least one Jewish grandparent, but themselves falling outside the religious definition of a Jew).[18] In this context Lustick (1999) argues that, despite the contradiction between the Jewish nature of Israel and the non-Jewish immigrant agents, this migration serves the goal of demographic engineering and hence the shaping of Israel as a 'non-Arab State'.

The road in-between

"Lod is not my city; I am just a formal inhabitant here. I physically exist but I do not really live here. Everything here is done only for part of the population; the Arabs are still oppressed in their Ghettos."

Interview with K, an Arab resident (25 August 2000)

Let us move now to the case of the local neighborhood of Pardess-Shanir. As already mentioned, this area accommodates mainly landowning Arab families. However, local planning policies prevent them from transferring the land from agricultural use to housing. Given the difficulties Arabs in Lod experience in residential mobility, this planning policy generated a widespread phenomenon of unauthorized dwelling construction:

"Hundreds of illegal structures were built in the past few years... the construction is irresponsible and unrestrained. Parts of these structures are built on private land and part on state land. They do not comply with urban development including infrastructure, roads, public buildings, etc" (City of Lod, 2000, page 12).

Yet, the above description is partial as, unlike other 'illegal' districts, Pardess-Shanir projects an established look, being composed of large houses of three to five floors, built from solid materials on each family plot. A narrow asphalt road paved

[18] The Law of Return declares the right of every Jew (defined as a person with at least one Jewish grandparent) to settle in Israel and receive full citizenship rights. However, the religious (Halachic) establishment defines a Jew as either born to a Jewish mother, or converted according to the orthodox rule. Based on this law Jewish newcomers have the right to financial and housing support (see http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/go.asp?MFAH00kp0).

by the inhabitants surrounds this area, partly on land owned by the nearby Jewish agricultural village (Moshav) of Nir-Zvi, and the sewerage has been connected to the city system—an additional project initiated and carried out by the people 'from below'.

Indeed, the common portrayal of the Pardess-Shanir community in the local press and public discourse as 'irresponsible and unrestrained' is questionable. The community has elected (unofficial, yet recognized) local leadership, attempting to fill the vacuum created by the ethnic urban regime—which ignores their needs. The new body has the political support of religious leaders and respectable members of the community. In an interview with one of the activists, we heard the following statement, which obviates the need of local residents for alternative municipal leadership:

> "... I am trapped within two circles of discrimination. The first is the national circle that relates to me as a 'problem'. The second is the municipal circle, and here the situation is worse since it affects my daily life—discrimination on this level is total and deep. My basic rights are abused, my right to housing, my right to have proper schooling for the children. These services are supplied on the municipal level, and we are struggling to achieve them. My point is that there are no planning initiatives for Arabs in Lod. Maybe it is our luck, since if there was some degree of planning, we would not be able to rise against it, and the authorities could claim that they plan for us ... . This total withdrawal, this total ignoring of our needs motivates us" (interview with A, 4 November 2000).

The large scale of unauthorized housing in Pardess-Shanir raises questions regarding the degree of illegality tolerated by the authorities. A clue may lie in the concept developed by Fernandes and Varley (1998)—the 'degrees of illegality'. In our local case, some forms of illegality tend to be more 'acceptable', by both authorities and public opinion, particularly those occurring on land with documented Arab ownership. Unacceptable acts are those endangering the state's control over its land, through 'invasion' and 'illegal' settlement. This is conspicuous in several other Lod locations, notably the 'railway neighborhood'.

However, in 1999 just before the general elections in Israel the authorities initiated a new urban scheme aimed at changing land use from agriculture to housing. The proposed plan will enable the construction of 2500 housing units: "But the *semi-pastoral image* of the area will be kept" (City of Lod, 2000, page 17). It seems that such a shift towards the illegal neighborhood is an achievement, denoting official recognition by city authorities. But the invisible subtext is equally important. A 'semi-pastoral image' means limited building rights and low density, especially when compared to Ganey-Aviv—the new Jewish neighborhood immediately across the road. This road is a central axis of a distorted mirror image, reflecting a stark spatial inequality between the 'indigenous enemies' and the 'immigrant agents', and representing the way in which planning serves the ethnicization of Lod and the essentialization of ethnicities.

As figure 4 (see over) shows, on the southern side of the road lies the Arab 'illegal' district—now to become a semirural neighborhood—while on the northern side stands the Jewish neighborhood, which enjoys the full services of the municipality.[19] The Jewish neighborhood is characterized by high-density zoning, and was populated from the mid-1990s mainly by Russian immigrants.[20]

[19] According to the municipality report (City of Lod, 2000, pages 4–8) the neglected services will be supplied as part of the new municipality program.
[20] There are 15 000 inhabitants, and 70% are migrants (City of Lod, 2000, page 4).

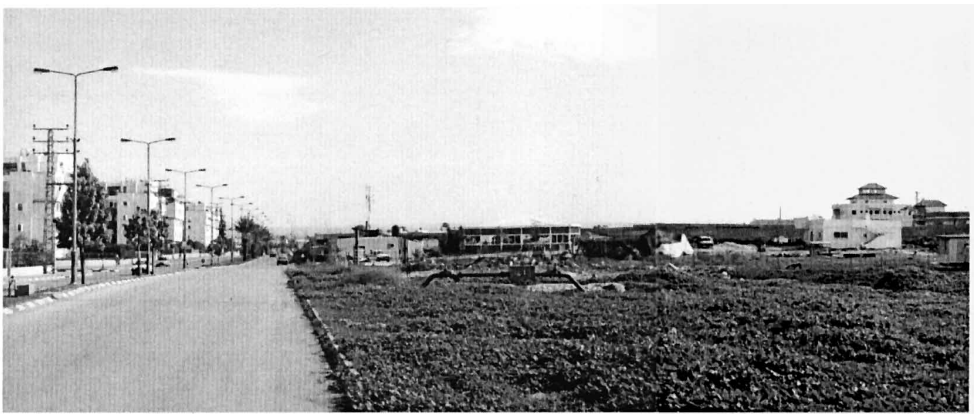

Figure 4. A view over the Jewish neighborhood Ganey-Aviv (on the left) and the Arab neighborhood Pardess-Shanir.

But the proximity of the two neighborhoods 'endangered' the Jewish character of the new area because it attracted the young generation of Arabs in the city. Yet, buying or renting a flat in the Jewish neighborhood is practically impossible; the developers and the housing company have restricted Arabs from this neighborhood. This has caused obvious frustration:

"After all we were born here and we do not have any other alternative to house ourselves. Ganey-Aviv offers a big stock of flats and it is also very close to some of the existing Arab districts; so, why shouldn't I live there?" (interview with K, 25 August 2000).

These sentiments illustrate the tension between the city's promise to become an open arena for its inhabitants and the contradictory ethnic logic of segregation and control. For the Palestinian-Arabs in Lod the road in-between the 'Jewish neighbourhood' and the 'Arab neighbourhood' is thus akin to a sealed wall.

The practices producing this segregated reality are telling. For example, an 'innocent' newspaper advertisement for flats in Ganey-Aviv in the seemingly 'free market' states:

"Despite the tempting conditions offered to potential clients in Ganey-Aviv, do not think that we accept every one here.... [T]here is a special committee in charge of upholding the standard of living and maintaining the social status of the inhabitants. By doing so we aim to avoid conflicts" (*Kol Ha-Ir* newspaper, 4 August 2000).

Furthermore, in the purchasing contract the above is legally formalized:

"In order to control the [social] level of the neighborhoods' population, the Management Company has formed a committee that will categorize the requests to buy flats.... Every sale or renting of flats, *must receive the approval of the committee*.... A warning, formulated according to this clause will be written in the Land Registrar and in the Condominium Order..." (Clause 22, emphasis added).[21]

In the settings of an Israeli mixed city, we would suggest that the purpose of this committee is to keep this neighborhood 'purified' and to control the 'infiltration' of Arab inhabitants. Our claim is based on the virtual lack of Arabs in the Ganey-Aviv neighborhood, on the persistent opinions voiced by local residents, and especially on the case of K—a young Palestinian-Arab dentist, whose request to buy a flat in Ganey-Aviv was turned down (see also Galili and Nir in *Ha'aretz* daily newspaper,

[21] Copy available from Haim Yacobi.

3 December 2000). Despite offering the highest bid in an 'open' tender, the housing company refused to sell the flat to K (interview with K, 25 August 2000; State Attorney's Office, Jerusalem, execution file 01-97332-98-8).

Discussion: towards a theory of urban ethnocracy

> "We need to see our city as the locus of citizenship and to recognize multiple levels of citizenship as well as multiple levels of common destiny, from the city to the nation to transnational citizenship possibilities. We need to see our city and its multiple communities as spaces where we connect with the cultural other who is now our neighbor."
>
> Sandercock (1998, page 183)

We have accounted above for the production of an ethnic urban landscape. This involves forceful seizure, formal legislation, cultural discourse, and invisible apparatuses of control, rooted in specific and local historical circumstances framed by the powerful logics of ethnic dominance and capital accumulation. These forces ostensibly enable, but practically undermine, the promise of the city to become a democratic arena for all citizens.

The specific case of Lod demonstrates the ambiguity concerning the relations between city and citizenship, as well as the way in which planning is used as a tool of oppression in the name of modernity. Within the context of a Jewish settler society, the Arabs of Lod are both discriminated against as Palestinians in a Jewish state, and excluded as residents in their own city, which declares itself 'mixed'. This setting is common to settler societies, where conflict with the indigenous population is constructed as a pivotal axis for the formation of essentialized collective identities and geographies.

However, oppression generates reaction in the form of Arab initiatives, grassroots mobilization, and unauthorized practices. These aim to fill the governance gap created by the ethnic regime, and are subject to in-depth analysis elsewhere (Yacobi, 2002). A common planning response here is allowing, condoning, and even facilitating urban illegality. Whole communities are thus left out of the planning process, or overlooked by the content of urban policies. Typically, such populations are defined as 'a problem', but their undocumented, unlawful, or even fugitive existence allows most authorities to ignore their full planning rights as local citizens and landowners.

In other words, policymakers define urban illegality as an indirect and inexpensive rule over the 'ungovernable'. The tactic is avoidance and distant containment; but the result is the condemnation of large communities to unserviced, deprived, and stigmatized urban fringes. As a result, urban illegality emerges as an ethnocratic planning approach; it allows the urban elites to represent urban government as equal, civil, and democratic, while at the same time denying some urban residents basic rights and services in the locations into which they were forced. City and state elites draw legitimacy from this partial and distorted representation of planning as 'professional', while allowing the material production of essentialized and uneven segregation 'on the ground'. This enables the preservation of their privileged ethnoclass position, and a precarious maintenance of the ethnocratic system.

Let us return at this stage to a more conceptual level and revisit the notion of ethnocratic regimes, which may operate on both a state-wide and urban scale—with clear links between the two. Ethnocracy is a distinct regime type established to enhance the expansion and control of a dominant ethnonation in multiethnic territories. In such regimes, ethnicity, and not citizenship, forms the main criteria for distributing power and resources. As a result, they typically display high levels of uneven ethnic segregation, and a process of polarizing ethnic politics. Ethnocratic regimes can be found in states

such as Sri Lanka (Little, 1994), Estonia, Latvia, Serbia (Shafir, 1995), apartheid South Africa (Smith, 1991), 19th-century Australia (Jacobs, 1996), and Israel/Palestine. They combines a degree of political openness and formal democratic representation with political structures that facilitate the seizure of contested territory by a dominant ethnonation. During this process, the dominant group appropriates the state apparatus and control over capital flows, and marginalizes peripheral ethnic and national minorities.

Within the larger context of an ethnocratic state, urban ethnocracies emerge as key sites of contestation. Based on that context, and on the details of the case study, we can draw some of the characteristics of the urban ethnocracy into a tentative theoretical model. This could function as a conceptual scheme to be examined, refined, or challenged in future studies. Our model outlines several key propositions:

(a) The ethnocratic city is classified and represented as 'mixed', but dominated by one ethnonational group; urban citizenship is unequal, with resources and services allocated on the basis of ethnicity, not residency.
(b) Urban politics are ethnicized, with a gradual process of ethnopolitical polarization, primarily along ethnonational lines but also according to ethnoclass fragmentation. In this process, ethnic identities are essentialized.
(c) Housing and employment markets are officially 'open', yet marked by deep patterns of ethnic segregation.
(d) Planning and development strategies reflect deep ethnocratic logic, couched in 'professional', 'civil', and 'economic' reasoning.
(e) Land and housing are allocated so as to minimize the control of minority members over urban resources.
(f) Urban resistance is generated and politicized, with constant minority challenge to the prevailing order.
(g) Urban illegality emerges as a permanent component of the city, and becomes a central component of the strategies of both ruling authorities and resisting, peripheral groups.

Finally, and with these suggestive propositions in mind, we can note that urban ethnocracy is likely to become increasingly conspicuous in the landscapes of future cities. Structural tensions are embedded in the powerful city-shaping forces described earlier—urbanization, globalization, commodification, and liberalization, and nationalism, ethnicization, and the containment of 'rights to the city' exercised by peripheral ethnonational groups. The struggles emanating from the interaction of these forces, and the grids of powers and identities they reflect and produce, are set to continue and to shape most cities well into the 21st century.

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