RESEARCH ARTICLE

A lesson in urban renewal: the role of residents in designing clearance and construction policy in an Israeli neighbourhood

Paula Kabalo[1]* and Elia Etkin[2]

[1]The Ben-Gurion Research Institute for the Study of Israel and Zionism, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Sde Boker Campus 849900, Israel and [2]Azrieli Center for Israel Studies, The Ben-Gurion Research Institute for the Study of Israel and Zionism, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Sde Boker Campus 849900, Israel
*Corresponding author. Email: pkabalo@bgu.ac.il

Abstract

In January 1969, the Israeli minister of housing announced his intention of declaring a set of neighbourhoods in Jerusalem, known as Zikhronot-Nahlaot, an urban-renewal area. For the next seven years, the topic of renewal would be central in a public struggle led by two organizations of residents against a brace of establishment players. The resulting trail of documentation tells the story of a community struggle. By focusing on the role of the residents in shaping this transformation, we aim to uncover the residents' perceptions of the renewal plans, their actions to make sure their point of view would be taken into account, and the extent of their influence on policy-makers, planners and implementers. We claim that residents' ideas became part of the policy-makers' and planners' discourse. The internal discussions reveal a transformation from the 'bulldozer era' to the urban-renewal approach and then to first flickerings of equity planning.

In January 1969, the Israeli minister of housing announced his intention of declaring a set of neighbourhoods in Jerusalem, known as Zikhronot-Nahlaot, an urban-renewal area.[1] For the next seven years, the topic of renewal would be central in a public struggle led by two organizations of residents against a brace of establishment players – the Rebuild and Clear Authority (RCA), the Ministry of Housing, the municipal housing company, the Jerusalem Municipality, the Knesset (the Israeli parliament) and the government. The resulting trail of documentation tells the story of a community struggle and reveals the relations among its members and between it and multiple levels of government.

The debate among and within the different sides addresses a question that has occupied the west since the late nineteenth century and *a fortiori* after welfare-state

---

[1]Y. Schorr, 'Inhabitants of Nahlaot-Zikhronot want renewal; the government freezes it', *Al Hamishmar*, 20 Oct. 1969, 2; the minister's announcement was gazetted on 19 Jan. 1969.

ideas gained traction: what is the most appropriate and efficient way to 'eradicate' run-down neighbourhoods, which, by their very existence, are seen as failures of the modern state that these countries aspire to be?[2]

In Israel, the motivation to eliminate 'slums' comported with the state's self-image, for which the leaders toiled assiduously in order to elevate the young state in international eyes from the category of a 'new' state, i.e., a 'developing' one, to that of a modern, enlightened one that provides all conditions for personal and material prosperity and lives of justice and equality.[3] In Israel, as elsewhere, the treatment of disadvantaged neighbourhoods evoked far-reaching issues of ethnicity, political power and status, community participation and residents' struggle for their right to the city. All these aspects are examined in the study that follows.

By focusing on the role of the residents in shaping this transformation, we intend to go beyond adding one more case-study to the literature that sheds light on the changing perceptions of slum clearance. Thus, we aim to uncover the residents' perceptions of the renewal plans, their actions to make sure their point of view would be taken into account and the extent of their influence on policy-makers, planners and implementers. Tracking the stages of the struggle, its development and its dissolution – from 1969 to the conclusion of its seven-year run – we claim that residents' ideas insinuated themselves into, and became part of, the policy-makers' and planners' discourse. The internal discussions, we claim, reveal a transformation from the 'bulldozer era' to the urban-renewal approach and then to first flickerings of equity planning.[4]

Three decades after the struggle documented here, local residents and merchants, co-operating with municipalities and NGOs, turned Nahlaot into a sought-after residential district that nevertheless retained its original inhabitants; they also made the adjacent Mahane Yehuda open-air market a highly popular tourism and leisure venue. These phases of development, however, overstep the bounds of this article.[5]

To set the affair in its national and international context, we first present the development policies that affected Jerusalem as a whole in the late 1960s and the 1970s and then give an overview of the changing attitudes toward slum clearance in western cities at the time. In the second part of the article, we retrace the public struggle that the Nahlaot renewal plan triggered. We conclude by emphasizing the contribution of this struggle to shaping municipal outlooks on renewal and residents' place in it and noting the uniqueness of this affair relative to other cases in the research literature.

---

[2]P. Hall, *Cities of Tomorrow: An Intellectual History of Urban Planning and Design in the Twentieth Century*, 4th edn (Oxford, 2014), 1–48; P. Shapely, *Deprivation, State Interventions and Urban Communities in Britain, 1968–79* (Abingdon, 2017), 11–30.

[3]David Ben-Gurion, speech at the First Rehovot Conference, 15 Aug. 1960, Ben-Gurion Archive, Speeches and Articles Division.

[4]A. von Hoffman, 'Housing and planning: a century of social reform and local power', *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 75 (2009), 239; N. Carmon, 'Urban regeneration: three generations of public policy in Tel Aviv-Yafo', in D. Nachmias and G. Menachem (eds.), *Social Processes and Public Policy in Tel Aviv-Yafo*, vol. II (Tel Aviv, 1997), 105–40.

[5]A. Yelinek, 'The inner city – the situation and flickerings of change', in A. Ramon, A. Yelinek and A. Vitman (eds.), *Going Downtown: The Jerusalem Inner City, History, Situation, and Renewal Program* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 2011), 111–16; E. Levi, 'The question of self-management of inner cities and the inner city of Jerusalem', in *ibid.*, 224–6.

Nahlaot, the city centre and the development of Jerusalem after 1967 – historical context

Between the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the mid-1920s, Jerusalem underwent a process of urban growth which was manifested, among other things, in the formation of new Christian, Muslim and Jewish neighbourhoods outside the Old City walls.[6] In an inner-city section of Jerusalem that is known today as *lev ha-'ir*, the heart of the city, 32 small Jewish neighbourhoods were established during that period. They were built by Jews from the Old City who wished to improve their living conditions in the evolving western part of town and by Jewish immigrants from Middle Eastern countries. The last neighbourhoods to join this complex were founded in the early 1930s and were built with higher building standards.

Many of the houses there, built in the common manner of the time, had neither kitchens nor conveniences and a large majority of dwelling units were small and positioned close together. Contemporaries called this complex of neighbourhoods Nahlaot-Zikhronot because many neighbourhoods were titled with the prefix *nahala* (the singular of *nahlaot*, denoting an estate) and others were named in someone's honour. Hence, the term Zikhronot – memoirs or memories – refers to commemoration via the singular neighbourhood. In the broader public discourse, the more common term still in use is 'the Nahlaot'. The residents, however, distinguished between the original core neighbourhoods, each typified by a connection to a distinct community, mostly based on country of origin or a unique Jewish 'intra-ethnicity' (Hebrew: *'eda*).[7]

The neighbourhoods were positioned near the so-called 'Jerusalem triangle', an area that began to develop back in the 1920s into a modern city centre where most businesses were Jewish-owned. The development of this zone reached its peak in the first half of the 1940s. Afterwards, as security in Jerusalem deteriorated in view of growing tension between Jews and British on the eve of the establishment of the State of Israel, and all the more during the 1948 war, economic activity in the urban core lost its potency and heft. After the war, too, when the city was partitioned between the Israel-ruled western sector and the Jordanian-governed eastern portion, the Jerusalem commercial centre did not recover. The entire partitioned city faced population decline, economic distress among the large share of its population who were recent immigrants and insecurity in the frontier zone.[8]

The downtown area and the neighbourhoods adjacent to it saw a further decline following the 1967 war and its outcomes. Pursuant to the annexation of territories in the eastern part of the city and east of the city along with their Arab population, policy-makers gave priority to considerations of national security, the unification of the city and the integration of Jewish immigrants. The central government defined the parameters of urban and metropolitan growth and expected the Municipality to

---

[6]V. Lemire, *Jerusalem 1900: The Holy City in the Age of Possibilities* (Chicago, 2017).

[7]Y. Ben-Arieh, *New Jewish City of Jerusalem during the British Mandate Period: Neighbourhoods, Houses, People* (Hebrew), vol. II (Jerusalem, 2011), ch. 6.

[8]A. Ramon, 'The history of Jerusalem's downtown (1860–2000)', in A. Ramon, A. Yelinek and A. Vitman (eds.), *Downtown Jerusalem: The Story of Jerusalem's City Center and Its Regeneration* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 2011), 42–5, 50–66.

'translate' the national objectives into urban ones.[9] To bypass this deadlock, as Alona Nitzan-Shiftan demonstrated, the mayor, Teddy Kollek, promoted the geographical division of the city from the state. He invested in the areas around the Old City and developed cultural politics that emphasized Jerusalem as a world city, one of cultural diversity and spiritual beauty, 'while maintaining a lower profile vis-à-vis the state's industrious building on the outskirts of the city'.[10] Under these circumstances, the city centre 'fell between the cracks' and steadily emptied out of its long-standing inhabitants in favour of the new neighbourhoods and their more spacious and less expensive housing.[11]

Scott A. Bollens identified in Jerusalem what he calls a partisan urban strategy, an approach that 'takes sides' in municipal development and planning needs and promotes the values of the ethnic group that it prefers while rejecting the disadvantaged collective.[12] However, Bollens' analysis contrasts the preferential treatment of the Jewish group with the rejection and exclusion of the Arab one, while disregarding cultural and socio-economic groups within Jerusalem's Jewish society. In the test case we present below, we detect another group that was affected by the partisan urban strategy: the population that lived along the boundaries of the Old City centre, which, according to the 1968 master plan (formulated before the 1967 war), was designated for accelerated funding and development.[13] The tripling of municipal territory due to the results of the war sidelined the development plans for the downtown area and its surrounding neighbourhoods and affected resource allocation. Paradoxically, the new political and national centre of gravity, focusing on the establishment of new neighbourhoods, may have enabled the opponents of the Nahlaot revitalization programme – those whom we call below the 'Oppositionist Committee' – to more easily mobilize public representatives to resist the formative programme, which they perceived as a threat. From the opposite direction, residents who did wish to improve their living conditions and organized under a panel that we will call below the 'Public Committee' had to contend with a steadily shrinking pool of resources that ruled out the application of a flexible programme that would allow adequate compensation or alternative housing options inside the neighbourhood. Below, as stated, we elaborate on the dynamic that came about within the Nahlaot and between its residents and the authorities as the parties struggled to determine the kind of renewal that should take place.

Moshe Amirav identifies two stages in Jerusalem's municipal development policy. In the first stage, lasting until three years after the Six-Day War, restrained development of new neighbourhoods in the eastern part of town was still envisioned, largely to provide the Old City with a periphery and prevent it from being cut off from the unified city in the future. In this stage, the dominant perception was the 'concentric model', which entailed a limited investment of

[9]S.A. Bollens, 'Urban planning amidst ethnic conflict: Jerusalem and Johannesburg', *Urban Studies*, 35 (1998), 735; A. Nitzan-Shiftan, *Seizing Jerusalem: The Architectures of Unilateral Unification* (Minneapolis, 2017), 137.

[10]Nitzan-Shiftan, *Seizing Jerusalem*, 139–40.

[11]A. Vitman, 'The downtown regeneration policy and its principles of implementation', in Ramon, Yelinek and Vitman (eds.), *Downtown Jerusalem*, 91–2.

[12]Bollens, 'Urban planning amidst ethnic conflict', 731.

[13]Ramon, 'The history of Jerusalem's downtown', 70.

resources.[14] In the early 1970s, government policy on Jerusalem changed direction in view of an American peace initiative that spoke of establishing some form of Jordanian presence in the unified city.[15] The Israeli response, under Golda Meir's government, was to create facts on the ground in order to forestall future territorial concessions.[16] Analysing the reasons for the dearth of development in the downtown area despite the various programmes, David Kroyanker adds the problem of evictions and compensation, the high cost of both, and the development of the satellite neighbourhoods, which, he claims, crippled the structure and development of the inner city.[17] As a result of the latter, the city was transformed from a compact one, its northernmost and southernmost neighbourhoods only 7 kilometres apart, into a metropolitan city in which 16 kilometres separated the farthest quarters from each other.[18]

The changes that were under way in Jerusalem at the time of the Nahlaot residents' struggle make it clear that the local events described in this article were not dissociated from national processes that projected directly, although not overtly, onto the priorities in developing the city. These priorities, reflected in what Bollens calls the municipalization and depolitization of national and international issues,[19] brought additional variables into the neighbourhood struggle and inadvertently influenced it by shifting the centre of attention and resources to other parts of the city. This notwithstanding, our study focuses on internal processes in Nahlaot and reveals the residents' diverse attitudes toward the programmes that the authorities wished to impose on their neighbourhoods and communities. Our claim is that these attitudes steadily made inroads into policy-makers' thinking and ultimately influenced the city's overall planning outlooks.

The urban-renewal concept vs reality: Nahlaot from a comparative perspective

In the post-World War II era, American planners attempted to respond to spatial changes in America that included accelerating suburbanization and downtown urban decay.[20] At the policy level, this found expression in legislation, carried forward from the 1930s into the 1960s, by which authorities sought to contend with the problem of the country's declining cities. The concept of urban renewal first appeared in 1954 legislation that proposed to contend with the failures of an earlier policy, known as urban redevelopment, that was embodied in legislation from 1949.[21] The

---

[14]M. Amirav, *The Jerusalem Syndrome: Israel's Unification Policy Delusions 1967–2007* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 2007), 153, 158.

[15]Statement by Secretary of State Rogers, 9 Dec. 1969, www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/foreignpolicy/mfadocuments/yearbook1 (retrieved 14 Oct. 2021).

[16]*Ibid.*, 161–3.

[17]D. Kroyanker, 'The modern Herod – Teddy Kollek's contribution to the building and preservation of Jerusalem', *Eretz Israel: Archeology, Historical and Geographical Studies* (Hebrew), 28 (2007), 444.

[18]Amirav, *Jerusalem Syndrome*, 169.

[19]Bollens, 'Urban planning amidst ethnic conflict', 731.

[20]C. Klemek, *The Transatlantic Collapse of Urban Renewal: Postwar Urbanism from New York to Berlin* (Chicago, 2011), 6.

[21]A. von Hoffman. 'The lost history of urban renewal', *Journal of Urbanism*, 1 (2008), 281–2.

'urban-renewal' regime, attributed to a series of legislative and administrative initiatives in various western countries, was now promoted by policy-makers (at all levels of governance), intellectuals, designers (including architects and planners) and business interests. Ambitious urban-renewal schemes enjoyed lavish funding and evoked exalted social goals. The parts of the scheme that focused on slum clearance and housing construction were heavily influenced by European planning and design trends that are identified with 'Modernism'.[22] Urban renewal and its epitomic outcomes – modern architecture and superblock planning – mirrored their proponents' intention of improving urban life and evolved in the first four decades of the twentieth century.[23] An important instrument in the reformists' toolkit was the eviction of people from homes that were considered unfit for habitation in order to eradicate what were identified and labelled as slums.

Robert Moses, holder of multiple positions involving the management of New York City, was responsible (among other things) for everything related to public housing in the city. Pushing for the construction of massive apartment blocks, he believed that grand clear-and-rebuild projects would make Manhattan into a symbol of modernity and prosperity in that era of urban change and Cold War. The actions that Moses oversaw for this purpose included the mass eviction of inhabitants of slums in favour of parks and expressways. His programmes were heavily criticized due to their impact on the townspeople, particularly members of minority groups and lower classes.[24] His critics also charged him with excessive concentration of power and elitist, opportunistic, technocratic and anti-democratic conduct.[25] The acidic responses to the forced displacements led to the first stage of practical and ideological corrections of the urban-renewal outlook.[26] By the 1950s, urbanists, architects and planners were increasingly discomfited by the results of modern urbanism and, particularly, the loss of the human perspective.[27]

The criticism of urban renewal gained broad public resonance in 1961, when the journalist Jane Jacobs published her famous book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*.[28] Jacobs inveighed against what she considered disregard of communities and their inhabitants in the urban-renewal process. Her book drew its power from (among other factors) its origins in her own experience as a resident of the West Village, a neighbourhood earmarked for the first stage of an urban-renewal programme in New York City under a roadmap that ostensibly included elements of civic participation.[29] Jacobs became the linchpin between the professional and reformist critics of the urban-renewal process and the struggle of the West Village residents, who decried the renewal scheme and its underlying reasoning.

---

[22]Klemek, *Transatlantic Collapse*, 10.

[23]S. Zipp, *Manhattan Projects: The Rise and Fall of Urban Renewal in Cold War New York* (New York and Oxford, 2010), 12.

[24]R.B. Gratz, *The Battle for Gotham: New York in the Shadow of Robert Moses and Jane Jacobs* (New York, 2010).

[25]Zipp, *Manhattan Projects*, 5, 20.

[26]*Ibid.*, 354.

[27]Klemek, *Transatlantic Collapse*, 144–6.

[28]J. Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York, 1961).

[29]Klemek, *Transatlantic Collapse*, 145.

Many inhabitants of the West Village, outraged by the very labelling of their neighbourhood as a shabby slum worthy of renewal, suspected that the real intention behind the programme was to generate profits from future real-estate dealings. As we show below, these were also the two principal allegations that the residents of Nahlaot – proponents of the renewal project and its opponents as well – expressed. Although the authorities who dealt with the West Village promised the residents that their intention was to stabilize the neighbourhood and not to destroy it, they expressed this with a vagueness that failed to convince the residents that they would be allowed to stay in their homes.[30] In the case of Nahlaot, too, the authorities shrouded their references to the requisite extent of evictions in rhetorical mist. The oppositionist residents in the West Village established a committee to save their neighbourhood and wielded effective tools that included turning to the media, availing themselves of members of the community who had connections with City Hall, taking part in public hearings, resorting to the courts, and encouraging cultural projects that would enhance awareness of the struggle. From the other direction, another group in the very same neighbourhood favoured the renewal scheme; it, too, used the media to disseminate its stances, accusing the proponents of basing their position on personal profit considerations. This contestation was also central in the internal struggle in Nahlaot, as we will show.

It was the general strategy of the West Village Rescue Committee to prefer confrontation over reconciliation. Although their stance deterred some policy-makers, their leadership – particularly their prime leader, Jacobs – did not gain real recognition among policy-makers at large, who rejected her as a negotiating partner.[31] The Oppositionist Committee in Nahlaot took a different tack, acting to line up public personalities in support of their cause. In Harlem, too, residents organized to forestall the implementation of an eviction-based renewal scheme. There, the African-American Black Power protest movement stationed itself at the forefront of the oppositionist residents, demanding that the inhabitants be allowed to remain in their homes and their communities.[32] Brian Goldstein, tracking the movement's struggle, claims that its insistence that the associated residents be integrated into the renewal process itself eventually became foundational in the doctrine that remains valid to this day, its principles implemented worldwide: Postmodern Urbanism.[33]

Alongside residents' local organizational initiatives, the 1960s saw the formation of umbrella organizations that proposed to centralize housing-reform activity and relied on housing professionals to bolster the arguments against the proposed plans.[34] Alliances and co-operation between residents and reform-minded urban planners gradually took shape, as in the establishment of ARCH (Architects' Renewal Council) in Harlem and PEO (Planners for Equal Opportunity). Student associations also mobilized for the cause and integrated it into their anti-war protest and its struggle for civil rights.[35] The Israeli case was much different in

---

[30]*Ibid.*, 146–8.

[31]Klemek, *Transatlantic Collapse*, 151.

[32]B. Goldstein, 'The search for new forms: Black Power and the making of the postmodern city', *Journal of American History*, 103 (2016), 375–6.

[33]*Ibid.*, 377, 395.

[34]Zipp, *Manhattan Projects*, 355.

[35]Klemek, *Transatlantic Collapse*, 200–1.

this context. As we show below, those associating focused on marshalling support within the political system and believed in their ability to influence the system from within and in its wake. This makes the Nahlaot committees different in essence from the West Village Rescue Committee, which challenged the overall management of the city, and from the committee in Harlem, which sought to recalibrate race relations in New York.

What the Nahalot residents do have in common with the American cases is a key argument shared by all residents, proponents and opponents of renewal alike: protesting the labelling of the relevant neighbourhoods as irredeemable slums. The residents insisted that the value of the community life that they had constructed in the neighbourhoods and each inhabitant's basic right to remain in their home be recognized. Implicit in their messages and modus operandi was a challenge to the planners' underlying assumptions: defining poverty on the basis of physical parameters, disregarding social capital, and overlooking in practice, if not in theory, the residents' right to assume responsibility for their fate and to take part in any process affecting it by means of their representatives.

Studies about residents' struggles point to the development of a new 'language' that was supposed to offer a novel or corrective approach to the urban-renewal outlook. In Britain, the residents' assigned role in attempts to deal with inner-city slums found expression in concepts such as 'participation' and 'consultation', which seeped into the public and professional discourse. Peter Shapely, tracking the internalization of these new concepts in Manchester in the 1960s, found that they reflected abstract ideas at first but were accompanied by initiatives for residents' participation later on. This co-option, he claims, was meant to curtail resistance and did not amount to recognition of the residents' right to be involved in decision-making.[36] In Nahlaot, much as Shapely found in Manchester, a disparity between the rhetoric of 'participation' and its application on the front lines came about but steadily narrowed as residents fine-tuned their patterns of autonomous action. Furthermore, the case of Nahlaot is instructive of the different meanings that residents attributed to the notion of participation, manifesting it by speaking out and taking action in different ways. It was, contrarily, the rivalry that formed between the two local committees, one favouring the renewal project under certain conditions and the other opposing it, that abetted the 'fulfilment' of the principle of participation. This found expression in an ambit of actions, from delivering services and official membership in decision-making bodies up to advocacy operations that included mobilizing support for the revision or repeal of the plan.

In contrast to Shapely's claim in regard to the case of Manchester, that the principle of participation[37] was implemented chiefly by educating the public and co-opting it in order to secure the planning authorities' support, in Nahlaot the demand for participation came from 'the grassroots' and 'from the inside', more closely approximating the struggle in the West Village but without the confrontational and challenging patina of the latter. The policy-makers who dealt with Nahlaot, in turn, gradually adopted the participation outlook, considering it a

---

[36]Peter Shapely, 'Planning, housing and participation in Britain, 1968–1976', *Planning Perspectives*, 26 (2011), 78–9.

[37]*Ibid.*, p. 84.

way to soothe tempers and soften resistance. The claimants themselves, the neigh-bourhood residents, however, did not settle for symbolic affectations of participa-tion; instead, they demanded to see its results.

Now we proceed to reconstruct the Nahlaot affair itself, focusing on the points of encounter, friction, confrontation and participation between the residents and their representatives and the brace of authorities that had stakes in the renewal programme.

Trying to revitalize Nahlaot – round 1

When the Ministry of Housing issued its notice about intending to include Nahlaot in the Construction and Clearance Law, 5725–1965, one of the first respondents was a self-styled Public Committee for Zikhronot-Nahlaot, headed by a member of the Jerusalem Municipal Council and an activist in the National Organization of Kurdistani Jews, Haviv Shimoni. The committee members reacted suspiciously to the initiative, construing it as an attempt to evict the residents from their homes in order to free up the expensive and strategic real estate – in the centre of Jerusalem and close to the institutions of government – for prestige housing and businesses.[38]

The committee hurriedly called an assembly of those living along the streets ear-marked for renewal/demolition.[39] Assertiveness, eloquence and familiarity with the ins and outs of self-association, self-organization and advocacy would continue to typify the struggle in Nahlaot for the next six years.

The well-attended residents' assembly made its support of the programme con-ditional upon receiving alternative housing within the neighbourhoods for those who wished to remain, plus compensation for homeowners of properties that would be demolished, commensurate with the value of each property in the renewed neighbourhood.[40]

The initial response of the RCA was to assail the committee's right to represent the residents at all.[41] The committee, demurring, turned to the minister of housing, Mordechai Bentov, and to the mayor of Jerusalem, Teddy Kollek. This paved the way to a meeting between the committee and representatives of all planning authorities – seemingly the first step toward recognizing the residents' right to 'par-ticipate', if only symbolically, in the process.[42] Encouraged by these achievements, the committee's envoys continued to lobby the Ministry of Housing and the Knesset Labour Committee; concurrently, they opened a legal-advice and informa-tion bureau in the neighbourhood and invited residents to use its services.[43]

The state authorities, for their part, had also begun to make themselves heard, assuring the residents that the process would do them no harm. Zvi Tirosh, chair of the RCA, stated that most residents would be able to continue living in the

[38]Public Committee for Zikhronot-Nahlaot (hereafter Public Committee) to residents of Zikhronot-Nahlaot, Feb. 1969, Israel State Archives (hereafter ISA), Gimel-Lamed 3432/8.
[39]Public Committee, 2 Feb. 1969, *ibid.*
[40]*Ibid.*; Moshe Yair to the Nahlaot Jerusalem Renovation Area Committee, 2 Feb. 1969, *ibid.*
[41]Chair of Objections Committee to Moshe Yair (Feb. 1969), *ibid.*
[42]Schorr, 'Inhabitants of Nahlaot-Zikhronot want renewal'.
[43]Public Committee, letter 1, Mar. 1969, ISA, Gimel-Lamed 3432/8.

neighbourhood; the whole idea, he explained, was to revitalize the neighbourhood buildings 'only to the extent necessary and to demolish old buildings and replace them with new ones'.[44] The neighbourhood representatives and the Authority reportedly agreed to maintain 'continual contact'.[45] Furthermore, the inhabitants and the planning and implementing authorities agreed, for the time being, that the neighbourhood should be renewed and that this could be done without forced eviction.

Nevertheless, the government ordered the minister of housing to revise and resubmit the plan.[46] After the fact, Haim Marinov, deputy mayor of Jerusalem, traced the government's opposition, emanating from the Right flank of the coalition, to national elections (that were held 20 days after the meeting – P.K. and E.E.), insinuating that other residents were already objecting to the process at these early stages.[47]

Meeting with the minister of housing, the committee's envoys expressed 'profound disgruntlement' over the government's failure to approve the plan.[48] The rejection made it necessary to launch a new proceeding that would include all stages of approval. The delay influenced the neighbourhood residents' state of mind by tumbling them into a waiting period several years long that would directly affect their lives.

Trying to revitalize Nahlaot – round 2

In the meantime, Israel's fifteenth government was sworn in and Ze'ev Sherf took over as the minister of housing. Those were years of rapid development in Jerusalem, thousands of dwellings going up for immigrants and the well-heeled. The new Kiryat Wolfson neighbourhood, established near Nahlaot, attracted particular attention for receiving municipal and government aid although earmarked for the well-to-do. The Public Committee demanded the renewal of its neighbourhood before this new quarter would be tenanted and warned that otherwise it might lose control over the residents, some of whom were plotting to invade the new neighbourhood once completed.[49]

In the time that lapsed until the renewal initiative resumed, a new and important player entered the Israeli public arena: the Black Panthers. This movement, adopting the African American entity's name, sprouted in the Musrara neighbourhood of Jerusalem at the initiative and under the leadership of young Jewish Israelis of MENA extraction (Mizrahim) who placed the problem of ethnic discrimination and grim living conditions of the urban underclass on the national agenda.[50]

Unlike the Panthers, who represented the 1950s immigrants' children, the Public Committee spoke on behalf of a generationally older stratum whose leaders belonged to the country's non-immigrant Mizrahi population, including public

---

[44]'Professional team completes revitalisation plans for Nahlaot in the capital', *Davar*, 26 May 1969, 3.
[45]*Ibid.*
[46]'Government rejects Bentov's proposal, plan to suspend real-estate transactions in Nahlaot scrapped', *Ha'aretz*, 9 Oct. 1969.
[47]Minutes of Subcommittee [of Interior Committee] for Nahlaot Affairs, 17 Jan. 1972, ISA, Gimel-Lamed 3429/33.
[48]RCA meeting, 19 Nov. 1969, ISA, Gimel-Lamed 3425/32.
[49]Public Committee, Mar. 1971, Jerusalem Municipal Archives (JMA), 5610.
[50]D. Bernstein, 'The Black Panthers: conflict and protest in Israeli society' (Hebrew), *Megamot*, 25 (1979), 65–80.

figures in municipal bodies and the Labour party. This local leadership, driven by the deterioration of ethnic relations countrywide and concern that 'Pantherism' (a term the committee itself used) would spread and influence the young, renewed the struggle for renewal in Nahlaot. Now defining their demand for renewal in Nahlaot as a 'preventive action plan',[51] the struggle for physical renewal apparently gave way for some time to efforts at educational and social renewal and enhancing the committee's standing in the community.[52]

There is no telling whether it was the committee's actions, the Panthers' threat, or Mayor Kollek's pressure, but the Nahlaot renewal scheme began to revive. At this stage, the mayor estimated only 40 per cent of families would remain in the neighbourhood after renewal,[53] an estimate inconsistent with the undertakings to the residents that had allowed the committee to support the demarche to begin with. In contrast, the new minister of housing repeated his predecessors' commitment – 'families will not be forced to relocate' – but added those interested would be offered housing opportunities elsewhere in town and homeowners would be compensated.[54] The committee members, for their part, advised Sherf that the state must recognize all residents' right to remain in their homes and their familiar cultural and religious milieu.[55]

Now the committee's status moved up a notch; it was officially integrated into the planning proceedings and recognized by policy-makers as a partner in the process.[56] The programme was presented to the government for approval on 27 June 1971.[57]

The Oppositionist Committee makes its appearance

During this time, a soi-disant 'Nahalat Ahim and Zikhron Ahim Neighbourhood Committee' entered the fray, submitting an objection to the area's renewal.[58] Nahalat Ahim was a large neighbourhood in the Nahlaot area that had been established by the Yemenite Jewish community and built to a higher standard than the rest of the Nahlaot vicinity.[59] The separate and oppositionist associational act of the people of Nahalat Ahim and the adjacent Zikhron Ahim neighbourhood surprised the representatives of the committee, who had assumed that these neighbourhoods were included in its coalition. They attributed the separatist stance to the interests of homeowners in Nahalat Ahim who wished to extract a larger amount of compensation from the state for the sale of their properties.[60]

---

[51]Public Committee, Mar. 1971.

[52]Haviv Shimoni to Teddy Kollek, 1 Apr. 1971, and Public Committee (undated communiqué to residents), JMA, 4510.

[53]Teddy Kollek to Pinchas Sapir, 11 Apr. 1971, JMA, 5610.

[54]Haviv Shimoni, Zechariah Maliah and Arnon Ronen to residents of Zikhronot-Nahlaot (summary of meeting on 30 Apr. 1971), ISA, Gimel-Lamed 3432/8.

[55]*Ibid.*

[56]Teddy Kollek to Haviv Shimoni, 23 May 1971, JMA, 5610.

[57]Haviv Shimoni, Zechariah Maliah and Arnon Ronen, 'To residents of Zikhronot-Nahlaot', ISA, Gimel-Lamed 3432/8.

[58]Amendment to summary of first meeting of the Nahlaot Neighbourhood Affairs Subcommittee, 17 Jan. 1971, ISA, Gimel-Lamed 3429/33.

[59]Ben-Arieh, *New Jewish City of Jerusalem*, 429–33.

[60]Public Committee, letter 4, Sep. 1971, JMA, 5610.

The secessionists' committee appointed spokespersons, a chair (Aharon Saad) and a secretary (Gavriel Ratzabi), authorizing only them to represent Nahalat Ahim and Zikhron Ahim before state and municipal public entities.[61] The Public Committee, frowning on the initiative, claimed the exclusive right to represent the residents because it had been elected in an open general assembly in which representatives of all neighbourhoods, including Nahalat Ahim, had participated.[62] The new associates, however, had already girded themselves for an independent battle that would include all elements of a civil struggle – protest rallies, letters to policy-makers and, farther on, outreach to the media and political high-ups. In October 1971, residents of Nahalat Ahim and Zikhron Ahim held a protest rally that ended with a resolution calling to stop the renewal scheme in its tracks.[63]

The Public Committee, in turn, kept up its efforts to have the renewal plan renewed and launched. It accepted at face value the assurances it had received about the residents' right to stay put or, where necessary, to receive alternative housing in lieu of their current homes. In fact, however, these undertakings were vague and related to 40–60 per cent of residents, at the most, who would be able to stay.[64]

The physical and social planning of the neighbourhood, the committee emphasized (using a hybrid coinage that it now invoked in every dialogue with policy-makers), should be undertaken in conjunction with it and not with the many professionals whom the Authority had hired.[65] Turning to the residents, the committee described the fracas surrounding the renewal of their neighbourhood as resting on a broader moral foundation – a struggle for the pluralistic and accommodating face of Israeli society.[66] The committee twined particularistic rationales, such as the aspiration to preserve the neighbourhood's uniqueness and maintain the cohesion of its ethnicities and communities, with universal reasoning couched in terms of 'rights' and underscoring the residents' civil equality and its consequent entitlements.

The opposition to renewal, coupled with messages about residents' right to participate in the process, influenced the RCA's decision to turn to the residents directly and promise that, where evacuation was necessary, families would be offered appropriate alternative housing commensurate with their size and economic capacity, as well as alternative dwellings in the neighbourhood itself 'for those who so desire and to the extent possible'.[67] The policy-makers persisted in responding vaguely and non-committally to the main question that perturbed everyone: who would be allowed to stay, and who would be forcibly uprooted? By qualifying their undertaking to provide alternative housing within the neighbourhood ('to the extent possible'), they left themselves an escape hatch in the event that too many residents wanted to partake of the new apartments that would be built at

[61]Aharon Saad, Tzvia Yefet and Gavriel Ratzabi to Haviv Shimoni, 24 Sep. 1971, *ibid.*

[62]Shimoni to Aharon Saad, Tzvia Yefet and Gavriel Ratzabi, 26 Sep. 1971, ISA, Gimel-Lamed 3432/8.

[63]Nahalat Ahim and Zikhron Ahim Neighbourhood Committee, 19 Oct. 1971, *ibid.*

[64]Public Committee memorandum, 25 Oct. 1971, *ibid.*

[65]*Ibid.*, Israel Labour party, Jerusalem branch, Zikhronot sub-branch, to minister of housing, 6 Nov. 1971, *ibid.*

[66]Public Committee, letter 7, Nov. 1971, JMA, 4960–5609.

[67]Zvi Tirosh to residents of Nahlaot (public communiqué), Nov. 1971, ISA, Gimel-Lamed 3432/8.

the expense of those demolished. This ambiguity would resolve into more pointed wording later on, when budget and land constraints would dictate more relocation than the original plan had considered.

The oppositionist envoys immediately suspected that information about the intentions and boundaries of the renewal project was being concealed from them. They did not understand why their area had been singled out for renewal even though a neighbourhood to its north had a larger population in need of housing improvement. Their demand was to scrap the plan altogether and replace it with a loan fund for renovations and reconstruction.

A resident of Nahalat Ahim, Yehiel Ozeri, termed the entire affair a fraud: '[People were promised] an apartment in exchange for an apartment, but that'll cost money and people will go into debt'.[68] The chair of the Authority vehemently denied the allegation of an intent to dispossess and proposed that a downsized committee be elected to sit with the planners on the matter.[69]

The rhetoric and messages of the committees' envoys underscored a human aspect that the renewal process overlooked – an idea that would eventually crystallize into people-centred urbanism.[70] In the spirit of the message sent by the opponents of renewal in Harlem and in the West Village, the critics in Nahlaot were demanding 'sensitive reconstruction'.[71]

Now that the principle of participation was being applied to both committees, competition between the groups of residents' representatives escalated, each committee striving to maximize the visibility of its doings and bring greater pressure on public opinion and the policy-makers. The Public Committee initiated a petition in support of the June 1971 government statement of intent to 'renew' Nahlaot.[72] In conjunction with the Authority and the Ministry of Housing, its members held parlour meetings and assemblies where residents could review the plan and acquaint themselves with the committee's expanded concept of renewal.[73]

The Oppositionist Committee also upgraded its tactics in its attempt to challenge the legality of the renewal project.[74] It demanded a clear answer about a matter that both committees considered crucial: the proportion of inhabitants who would be able to remain in the neighbourhoods after renewal. Tirosh remained evasive.[75] The president of the Yemenite Jewish Community in Jerusalem, Yosef Kappah portrayed the war on renewal as an ethnic or, some would say, a racial one.[76]

---

[68]Meeting of representatives of Nahalat Ahim Neighbourhood Committee with Moshe Baram, Haim Marinov and Zvi Tirosh, 6 Dec. 1971, *ibid.*

[69]*Ibid.*

[70]Goldstein, 'The search for new forms', 390.

[71]*Ibid.*, 391.

[72]Haviv Shimoni and Avraham Baruch to prime minister and minister of housing, 30 Nov. 1971, ISA, Gimel-Lamed 3432/8.

[73]Letter 8, Nov. 1971, *ibid.*

[74]Avraham Bar-Yefet to Zvi Tirosh, 20 Dec. 1971, *ibid.*

[75]Zvi Tirosh to Gavriel Ratzabi, 17 Dec. 1971, *ibid.*

[76]Y. Kappah, 'A neighbourhood in the shadow of evacuation', *Yedioth Ahronoth*, 31 Dec. 1971; Ettie Gabison to Avraham Bar-Yefet, 31 Dec. 1971, ISA, Gimel-Lamed 3432/8.

The Public Committee responded by issuing an open letter to the residents, stressing the prevalence of poverty and neglect in the neighbourhood and accusing the opponents of renewal of personal and pecuniary motives.[77] The Oppositionist Committee's ideas also seeped into the discourse of the elected echelon when Zevulun Hammer (National Religious Party) singled out ethnic considerations as the reason for the choice of this neighbourhood over others that were in worse condition.[78]

Realizing that the opposition was undermining elected officials' confidence in the need for the programme, Haviv Shimoni recommunicated the Public Committee's stance: the decrepitude of the area was abetting morbidity, dropping out of school and juvenile delinquency. The local frustration, Shimoni warned, may erupt into 'justified resentment of society'.[79] Shimoni called 'dastardly' the opponents' claim that the location needed no renewal and urged that it be denounced because it was based on the homeowners' cold calculus.[80]

The Nahalat Ahim and Zikhron Ahim committee, however, approached the same people at the same time and with no less tenacity. Yehuda Danoch, a resident of Nahalat Ahim, made matters clear to Teddy Kollek: 'My family and I will not leave our home. No pressure on us will get any results.'[81] Kollek's Municipality continued to support the original renewal plan officially and overtly and expanded the Public Committee's participation in the various forums. Concurrently, however, it began preparing the ground for a compromise accord.[82] A document disseminated by the Municipality emphasized dialogue with residents and denied all intention of 'throwing anyone out of their home'.[83] Participation and emphasis on the human factor were now central. As Shapely notes, however, given that the various sides construed the term 'participation' differently, it rarely abetted the crystallization of an effective stance for implementation.[84]

Even as Tirosh assured the residents that buildings would be demolished 'only to the extent necessary', he raised the possibility of destroying structures 'according to essential planning requirements' that might include pushing through a street or building a high-rise to augment the neighbourhood's housing stock. Thus, the Authority still favoured flexible wording that was meant to soothe but actually left the planners with the manoeuvring room they needed.[85] The Authority's firmness on this point, backed by the minister of housing, countered the efforts of the Oppositionist Committee, which, detecting the duplicity and the opacity of the message, turned to Tirosh with a message of its own: 'It is very hard to expect the residents to co-operate when [you] are trying to impose on them a programme…that is meant, in fact and in practice, to throw them out of their

---

[77]Public Committee, letter 5, Nov. 1971, ISA, Gimel-Lamed 3432/8.

[78]Minutes of Nahlaot Affairs Subcommittee meeting, 17 Jan. 1972, ISA, Gimel-Lamed 3429/33.

[79]Haviv Shimoni, memorandum concerning urban renewal in Nahlaot-Zikhron, Jan. 1972, ISA, Gimel-Lamed 3432/8.

[80]Ibid.

[81]Yehuda Danoch to Teddy Kollek, 26 Jan. 1972, JMA, 4960–5609.

[82]Memorandum of meeting between the mayor and the Public Committee, 19 Jan. 1972, ibid.

[83]Mayor, undated and untitled document referencing meetings with the committees, ibid.

[84]Shapely, 'Planning, housing and participation', 79–80.

[85]Ibid.

homes on whatever excuse and for purposes very far from their wellbeing as human beings.'[86] Nonetheless, the RCA urged the government to make a public statement in accordance with the original 1971 plan.[87]

The two committees responded predictably. The Public Committee rushed to set the decision within the broad context of improving and empowering the neighbourhood;[88] the Oppositionist Committee continued to lobby against it.[89] The opponents concluded by asking to leave their neighbourhoods out of the renewal area: 'We do not wish to feel, as the American blacks say, that you're looking to move white people's cars through black people's bedrooms.'[90]

Once the minister of housing realized that the government would reject the programme as originally constituted, he decided not to put it to a vote until it could be revised within drawn-in boundaries,[91] triggering a discussion of principle over residents' right to bargain with policy-makers and undermine the authority of a professional entity.

The rhetoric that placed 'the resident' in the centre often left policy-makers confused. 'Who are the residents?' Marinov wondered, 'those who oppose [renewal] or those who don't?' The policy-makers appear to have stumbled into a snare of their own making: affirming their right to continue making urban-development policy while acknowledging residents' right to stand up and oppose it. After reconsidering their options, the Authority however, decided to present the government with an updated plan within downsized boundaries, and their motion was approved.[92] The revised scheme was launched on 15 May 1972[93] and the renewal process was to last three to five years.[94]

Even so, the debates over the issues of principle – residents' right to share in policy-making for their fate and living conditions, and cultural and social perceptions of poverty and distress – intensified. At a meeting of the Knesset Labour Committee, Gavriel Ratzabi criticized the planners for failing, in his judgement, to understand the socio-cultural depth of the neighbourhoods. The social fabric in Nahalat Ahim and Zikhron Ahim, he ruled, 'gives people psychological relief; they live in one community'.[95] Member of Knesset Moshe Shahal backed the committee's allegations and derided the planners' talk of 'social renewal' as pure conceit. 'Who sets the standards for a typical Israeli social fabric?', he asked in bewilderment.[96]

Addressing the Knesset panel a week later, representatives of the Public Committee expressed doubts about the viability of the project in its narrowed

---

[86] Moshe Taranto to Zvi Tirosh, 28 Feb. 1972, ISA, Gimel-Lamed 3432/8.

[87] RCA meeting, 20 Mar. 1972, *ibid.*

[88] Public Committee, letter 11, Mar. 1972, JMA, 4960–5609.

[89] Nahalat Ahim and Zikhron Ahim Neighbourhood Committee to government ministers, 11 Apr. 1972, *ibid.*

[90] *Ibid.*

[91] RCA meeting, 3 May 1972, ISA, Gimel-Lamed 3434/3.

[92] *Ibid.*

[93] Prazot Ltd – information pamphlet for residents, Jun. 1972, JMA, 4960–5609; neighbourhood renewal area, prior notice and official announcement, 15 May 1972, ISA, Gimel-Lamed 3436/3.

[94] 'Government declares Nahlaot in Jerusalem a renewal area', *Davar*, 8 May 1972, 2.

[95] Knesset Labour Committee meeting, 15 Jun. 1972, Knesset archive website (KAW).

[96] *Ibid.*

contours, noting that the alternative housing area for evicted tenants had lost two-thirds of its size in the original renewal plan. Countering the idyllic community description that the Nahalat Ahim people had served up, Shimoni ominously termed the residents' frustration 'TNT in the middle of town'. The Public Committee, Shimoni explained, had shown restraint thus far; once it would stop backing the government, however, things would blow up.[97]

Limited Implementation – the supporters back off

The designation of Nahlaot as a renewal area was gazetted in mid-May 1972. It included only four neighbourhoods out of the seven specified in the original announcement.[98] The authorities now launched into detailed planning work and sent out a proposal setting forth 'procedural principles for contact between the renewal agency and the Authority and [between those two and] the residents and their representatives'.[99] This systemization of resident involvement came in response to growing pressure from the Public Committee, which rightly feared the implications of downsizing the renewal area for residents' chances of remaining in the neighbourhoods.[100]

The document that laid out the principles of resident co-operation with the renewal authorities, eventually officialized as 'the procedures', related to four aspects: information, planning, contact with residents and representative bodies, and a broad and flexible ambit for resident involvement including regular meetings. The Public Committee, however, no longer settled for inclusionary rhetoric and symbolic gestures; it demanded a higher level of participation by conditioning its continued support on adding one of their number to the board of the executive body.[101] Thus, when Shimoni was named to the municipal housing company board and the Public Committee approved 'the procedures', the residents acquired official status in the policy-implementing agency.[102]

As it happened, the renewal work made no progress whatsoever in its first year. Cumbersome bureaucracy, budget constraints, and legal issues regarding compensation for residents created delays in government property purchases. These problems, as we indicated above, worked their way into the changes that took place in Jerusalem development policies from the early 1970s onward, as the eastward spread of the city was emphasized and the satellite neighbourhoods that crowded out the development of downtown were constructed. Prazot, the municipal housing company, prolonged the estimated duration of the project to 12 to 15 years, affecting the possibility of rehabilitating the evicted population in the area itself.[103]

---

[97]Knesset Labour Committee meeting, 22 Jun. 1972, KAW.

[98]RCA meeting, 16 Mar. 1975, ISA, Gimel-Lamed 3425/32; newsletter, neighbourhood renewal area, Jerusalem, Jun. 1972, ISA, Gimel-Lamed 3426/29.

[99]Authority operations in 1972, 18 Jan. 1973, ISA, Gimel-Lamed 3426/32.

[100]Shimoni and Ronen to Tirosh, 13 Aug. 1971, ISA, Gimel-Lamed 3426/29; Tirosh to Public Committee, 20 Aug. 1972, *ibid.*; Shimoni to Tirosh, 14 Sep. 1972, *ibid.*

[101]Procedures for contacts between the Nahlaot Renewal Project board and area residents and their representatives, 25 Aug. 1972, *ibid.*

[102]Arnon Ronen to Kollek, 2 Nov. 1972, *ibid.*

[103]'Nahlaot progress report', Sep. 1973, ISA, Gimel 6025/5.

It was then that the Public Committee began to doubt the viability of the programme.[104] After the Municipality backed down,[105] Shimoni, now a member of the Knesset and its Labour and Social Affairs Committee, marshalled his knowledge and experience as a frontline activist and a neighbourhood representative for slum-renewal policy-making. Only one year into his term in office, he presented his committee with a motion to rediscuss the Clearance and Construction Law and its viability.[106] Shimoni explained that the population that inhabited these places, albeit economically weak, had 'social glue' that should be preserved, 'it being known that nothing can replace it'.[107] By putting it this way, Shimoni endorsed the outlook that both neighbourhood committees had espoused all along despite their disagreements: stressing the community's resilience as key to understanding its revitalization potential.[108] As the project continued to lag, Shimoni eventually admitted that 'The way things have come about in Nahlaot, there's no point in going on.'[109] The head of the Authority reached the same conclusion at the time.[110]

Two additional important establishment players – the director general of the Ministry of Housing[111] and the Municipality of Jerusalem – joined the doubters.[112] Eventually, the minister of housing, now Avraham Ofer, initiated the cancellation of the project.[113] Although the government did not approve that step due to political and personal crises among those involved that culminated with change in the overall approach toward neighbourhood renewal, the revitalization of Nahlaot, which had never really begun, came to an end.

The residents' vision: from theory to practice

Like the inhabitants of many American and European inner-city neighbourhoods, those of Nahlaot found themselves at the focus of an urban-development project. Their seven-year struggle became an opportunity to formulate an urban-renewal vision centring on the area's human community and not its physical infrastructure. As shown, this vision evolved and infiltrated the discourse of establishment players and illuminates conceptual changes that occurred in positive and negative interaction with the residents themselves.

Although the two committees were bitter rivals, they chose a similar path: turning to political elements and attempting to recruit them for their cause. They avoided the 'confrontationalism' that typified their American peers, particularly in the West Village, where the opponents of renewal sought to reform municipal politics.[114] From its ethnic/racial standpoint, too, the Israeli case is different from

---

[104]Baruch Levi to Eli Mizrahi, 3 Sep. 1973, *ibid.*

[105]Sharon to Kollek, 2 Feb. 1974, ISA, Gimel-Lamed 3436/3.

[106]Knesset Labour Committee minutes, 21 Feb. 1975, KAW.

[107]*Ibid.*, 2 Jun. 1975.

[108]*Ibid.*, 18 Jun. 1975.

[109]*Ibid.*, 3 Dec. 1975.

[110]Tirosh to Weinschall, 30 May 1975, *ibid.*

[111]Weinschall to Ofer, 23 Nov. 1975, ISA, Gimel 6025/5.

[112]Knesset Labour Committee meeting, 3 Dec. 1975, KAW.

[113]Ofer to RCA, 31 May 1976, ISA, Gimel 6025/5.

[114]Klemek, *Transatlantic Collapse*, 244.

the American one, in which, says Robert A. Beaugard, 'Race eventually became the defining characteristic of the urban crisis.'[115] Although the Oppositionist Committee claimed that the very choice of Nahlaot as a target for revitalization and clearance originated in ethnic discrimination, it did not make this allegation the centrepiece of its struggle. Irrespective of their internal disagreements, both committees insisted throughout the struggle on seeing the various players in the political establishment as potential allies. The explanation for this may be traced to the Israeli method of governance, based on coalitions in which small parties as well as large ones have clout. Alternatively, it may reflect the aspiration of the people of Nahlaot, in their various neighbourhoods, to move from the fringes into the social mainstream and not to be labelled 'subversive' elements like, for example, the Black Panthers. Either way, the committees' achievements were in kind attained 'within' the political constellation and not from without.

Although the Oppositionist Committee failed to break into the policy-making circle, it did secure elected officials' support via political connections and personal acquaintance. The Public Committee, in turn, extended its representative role to the legislature itself when Shimoni was appointed to the Knesset Labour Committee, where he led the demarche that brought the Nahlaot project to a halt.

The foregoing case-study illustrates two important achievements of the residents' associative initiatives: rejection of symbolic and condescending definitions of 'participation' and adherence to an urban-development vision predicated on sustaining the tapestry of the community. Thus, it shows that the struggle for Nahlaot not only changed the residents' consciousness but also, and no less importantly, steered those tasked with policy toward the 'planning with people' outlook.[116]

---

[115]R. Beaugard, *Voices of decline: the postwar fate of US cities* (New York, 2003), 127.

[116]J. Hock, 'Bulldozers, busing, and boycotts: urban renewal and the integrationist project', *Journal of Urban History*, 39 (2013), 434.