

**THE FLOERSHEIMER INSTITUTE FOR POLICY STUDIES**

**The Struggle for Hegemony in Jerusalem  
Secular and Ultra-Orthodox Urban Politics**

**Shlomo Hasson**

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### **About the Author**

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### **About the Research**

This book reviews the struggle for hegemony in Jerusalem between secular and ultra-orthodox (haredi) Jews. It examines the democratic deficit in urban politics formed by the rise of the haredi minority to power, and proposes ways to rectify this deficit. The study addresses the following questions: What are the characteristics of the urban democratic deficit? How did the haredi minority become a leading political force in the city? What are the implications of the democratic deficit from the perspective of the various cultural groups? What can be done in view of the fact that the non-haredi population is not only under-represented but also feels threatened and prejudiced by urban politics initiated by the city council?

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# Introduction

The year 1993 marked the end of an era in Jerusalem's urban politics. The representatives of the secular population, who, for close to 40 years, had led the municipal system and shaped the character of the city, lost their hegemony. The representatives of the Haredi and religious parties ascended to the central positions of power that gained them influence and control in important areas of municipal life.

The purpose of this book is to describe the process of this political change as well as its consequence: a deficit in urban democracy. The study focuses on the Jewish population of Jerusalem and on the democratic deficit resulting from political and cultural processes associated with the Haredi-secular relations in the city. The issue of local democracy in view of the relations between Arabs and Jews, which is not dealt with in this inquiry, merits separate examination. The deficit in local democracy is reflected in the following ways: composition of the City Council, which does not represent the cultural make-up of the city; in the decision processes of the City Council in central issues such as the allocation of public land and the reductions in municipal taxes, procedures favoring one group over others; in the absence of genuine dialogue between elected representatives and organizations which represent the public; in the lack of transparency and accountability; and in the feelings of dissatisfaction of traditionalist and secular groups with municipal policy and services.

This book reviews the unfolding of the political relations between the Haredi and secular communities in Jerusalem, examines the municipal democratic deficit and suggests ways of dealing with this deficit. The purpose is to paint a broad picture of the local democratic deficit and of the political processes that brought it about. The book attempts to answer the following questions: What

are the characteristics of a local democratic deficit? How did the political change in Jerusalem come about wherein the Haredim became the leading force? What is the meaning of the local democratic deficit from the viewpoint of the various cultural groups in the city? What can be done in view of the fact that the non-Haredi population is not represented on the City Council according to its weight, and, furthermore, that this population feels threatened and discriminated against because of the municipal policy determined by the Council?

The book comprises four parts. The first chapter describes and analyzes the nature of the local democratic deficit. This part is based on data from the Central Bureau of Statistics, as well as on various polls, on decisions of the High Court of Justice, and on reports of the municipal comptroller. The second part (Chapters 2-6) describes and explains the political change that took place in Jerusalem. This part rests on the analyses of archival documents, the press, data of the Central Bureau of Statistics, and of the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, and on academic research. The third part (Chapter 7) presents the way different groups of the population interpret the political change. This part of the study relies on the press, on interviews and on publications by policy makers.

The fourth part (Chapter 8) proposes several recommendations for dealing with the problems created in Jerusalem and in particular with the democratic deficit that characterizes the municipal system in the city, as these pages are being written.



# 1 The Local Democratic Deficit

## **The Loss of the Secular Hegemony in the Municipal Elections of 1993**

The municipal elections of 1993 brought about a substantial change in the local political system. Teddy Kollek, the city mayor for 28 years, and his coalition of center and leftist parties lost the elections. Ehud Olmert, a Likud member of Knesset (Parliament), who had served as Minister of Health, came to power leaning on a right-wing coalition and supported to an unprecedented extent by the Haredi population. Following these changes, the representatives of the Haredi population moved to the center of the political stage and received key positions in municipal politics. The United Torah Judaism Party (UTJ) and the National Religious Party (NRP) attained senior positions in the municipality which granted them far-reaching control over the municipal system.

In this chapter, I shall present the way I see the political change that took place in Jerusalem. My main contention is that the 1993 elections and all the more so the 1998 elections created a real local democratic deficit. In these elections a City Council was democratically elected which does not represent the Jerusalem public and the variety of its demographic and social characteristics. Moreover, the local government in Jerusalem discriminates against the non-Haredi public in particular areas such as allocation of land and reductions in local taxation. It fails to maintain genuine dialogue with the representatives of local organizations, is deficient in reporting to the public, and fails to adequately fulfill the needs of non-Haredi groups.

## The Main Questions

In the municipal elections of 1993 and 1998, a City Council and a mayor were elected democratically, that is, in free, general, majority, secret, and equal elections. The question is whether meeting the formal conditions for democratic elections indeed guarantees the existence of a democratic regime in the city. This is a difficult question and entails a number of questions relating to the very essence of urban democracy in Jerusalem. These questions are meant to examine if fulfilling the formal procedures of democratic elections actually brings about a genuine local democracy.

The questions raised are the following: To what extent does the Council represent the composition of the population? To what extent is the Council attentive and responsive to the needs and the values of heterogeneous and diverse groups? Are its procedures fair and transparent? Is the public involved – and to what extent – in the decision-making processes and does it receive accounts of the proceedings of the Council? To what degree does the majority rule guarantee individual and minority rights including the rights of the Arab minority, most of whom refrained from voting?

The ensuing answers to these questions show that meeting the formal conditions of democracy - a free, general, majority, secret and equal vote does not suffice to guarantee a genuine democratic regime. Essentially, a democratic regime must also display certain content and values, incorporating transparency, fairness, involvement of residents, public accountability and defending individual and minority rights from the arbitrariness of the majority (Held, 1987:1993). In this connection, Shapiro notes that “an ongoing dialogue between the politicians making up the supreme political institutions of the state and other independent organized groups of citizens is what ensures the responsiveness of the elected to their constituency” (Shapiro, 1977:191-192). The purpose of this part of the book is to enquire as to whether the political regime in Jerusalem today is indeed democratic in its inner essence and not just in the external, formal dimension of the elections. To be able to answer this question, one must define urban democracy and in the light of the definition examine the significance of the local democratic deficit.

## Urban Democracy

The definition given here of urban democracy rests on four components: representation, decision-making processes, tax collection and services, and respect for individual and minority rights. Each of these components assigns the citizens and the elected officials definite tasks and makes certain demands on them. In other words, each component has a double meaning reflecting the constraints, the duties and the rights of both residents and those elected. The double meaning of each component is now specified.

***Representation:*** From the viewpoint of the citizen voter, the meaning of democratic representation is that the Council is elected in free, general, secret, majority elections, where every citizen has equal weight and the elected delegates represent the voters in the Council. From the perspective of those elected, representation means representing the interests and needs of the various groups in the city.

***Decision-Making:*** From the citizen's standpoint, decision-making processes ought to be open to the public and transparent. Such processes must not take place behind closed doors, far from the public eye and from criticism. Furthermore, the day-to-day realizing of urban democracy means the citizens' participation in decision-making, particularly of those issues affecting their own life. For their part, the elected are required to observe strictly due process in decision-making and to ensure transparency and public accountability.

***Tax Collection and Services:*** From the citizen's point of view, a resident is a client whose duties as a taxpayer and whose rights as a consumer of services must be treated with fairness, efficiency and sensitivity. For those elected, democracy requires fair taxation and allocation of resources and refraining from favoring one sector over others.

***Individual and Minority Rights:*** The component of rights is reflected through international treaties, legislation at the national and local (through municipal by-laws) levels and through the activity of civil society whose purpose is the enhancement of individual and minority rights. The courts may review and even criticize the legislation and frequently do so. (The issue of individual rights in the religious domain and the courts' influence on the shaping thereof will be examined in a separate study.)

According to this definition, democracy has to withstand not only the electoral process test, but also the day-to-day test of realizing democracy. In a democratic regime, the citizen does not disappear once he has voted. On the contrary, he or she continues to act after the election as well. He or she makes demands, participates in decision-making that affects him or her, voices his or her opinion on the quality of the services and sometimes acts to promote individual and minority rights. Fully realizing urban democracy lays many tasks on the elected. They are supposed to represent the diversity of needs and interests of the citizens, to maintain proper and transparent processes and to report on their activity to the public. They are also expected to allocate and divide resources fairly among different groups, to shape the environment with the values and feelings of the inhabitants in mind, and to protect and advance individual and minority rights by legislation and by setting proper norms. Table 1 summarizes the components of urban democracy and the parameters for assessing them from the standpoints of the citizens and the elected representatives.

**Table 1: Definition of Urban Democracy**

<b>Components of Urban Democracy</b>				
<b>Participants</b>	<b>Representation</b>	<b>Decision-making Process</b>	<b>Tax Collection and Services</b>	<b>Individual and Minority Rights</b>
<b>Representatives</b>	Representation of public interests and needs	Due processes, transparency, and accountability	Allocation of resources, shaping of the environment according to law and accepted norms	Legislation protecting individual and minority rights
<b>Citizens</b>	Free, general, secret, majority and equal elections	Participation in decision-making; feedback	Degree of satisfaction with quality of services and environment	Civil activity to advance individual and minority rights

Close scrutiny of each of the components and the parameters of urban democracy (appearing in Table 1) is essential in order to answer the question whether the regime in Jerusalem is democratic not merely in the formal sense, but also in the informal sense of its inner essence.

### ***Representation***

There is indication of a number of weak points concerning representation in the urban democracy of Jerusalem. Chief among these points is that most of the public does not participate in the elections. The Arab population refrained from voting because of pressure and threats. It systematically avoids the elections and its rate of voting is exceedingly low: 7 percent in the 1993 elections and 6 percent in that of 1998.

In the 1998 elections, a very high degree of non-participation of Jews was recorded. The rate of participation of the Jewish population in the municipal elections has gradually diminished over the years: from 54.9 percent in the 1973 elections to 42 percent in those of 1998 (Choshen and Shachar, 1996; 1998).

The low rate of voting in Jerusalem is only in part because of the low participation of the Arabs of East Jerusalem. A calculation disregarding the Arab votes increases the participation rate of Jews in the 1998 elections by very little. Thus, the dramatic drop in the degree of participation in Jerusalem still remains even if only the percentage of Jewish voters is taken into account.

Does the low rate of voting in the non-Haredi constituency testify to a general revulsion against the political process of election? The answer is no. An inspection of the rates of participation of Jerusalemites in the Knesset elections over a long period shows a merely slight decrease: from 77 percent in 1981 to 75.1 percent in 1999. The rate of participation in Jerusalem in the general election for the Knesset was just a little lower than the national average, which in 1999 was 78.7 percent, and it was higher than the rate in Tel Aviv (71.1 percent) and in Haifa (71.6 percent). It seems that Jerusalemites' frustration with the political process did not manifest itself in the elections for the Knesset but in those for the Municipality (Choshen and Shachar, 1999).

The decline in voting rates varies with the population sector. Thus, for example, in the 1998 election, very high rates of participation were recorded in

the Haredi population: close to 90 percent; low to medium rates were recorded in the affluent neighborhoods: between 50-70 percent; and low rates of participation in the disadvantaged neighborhoods, chiefly populated by traditionalists of eastern origins: close to 30 percent.

The ratio between the potential voting population and its representation in the City Council reveals a discrepancy between the demographic-cultural make-up of the Jewish population in Jerusalem and its representation in the Council (See Table 2). The Haredim have been recorded to be increasingly over-represented through the years, whereas the religious, traditionalist, and secular populations are under-represented. In the City Council elected in 1998, the Haredim constituted 39 percent of Council members, the NRP 10 percent, and the secular members only 51 percent. A survey made at the end of 1996 of the entire Jewish population over age 18 in Jerusalem sheds light on the demographic-cultural structure of the Jewish population in Jerusalem. The distribution of the interviewees was as follows: secular and traditionalist, 63.3 percent; religious, 18.2 percent; and Haredi, 18.5 percent. In other words, the Haredim, the dominant group in the Jerusalem municipal system, formed only one-fifth of the electorate in 1996 (Choshen and Shahar, 1997). The disparity between the distribution of power in the City Council and the demographic-cultural structures indicates a deficit in representation of the city majority that is mostly traditionalist and secular. In other words, democratic elections brought about a local democratic deficit in Jerusalem.

Beyond the existing situation of under-representation of the non-Haredi public, demographic data indicates that in the future there will be a Haredi majority in town. This projection is based on the numbers of pupils in the schools. Registered in Jerusalem in 1998/1999 were 162,000 pupils of whom 68,000 were Haredi. The number of pupils in the Hebrew non-Haredi education was 67,000 and in the Arab education, 27,000. The distribution of pupils that year was 58 percent in the general education and 42 percent in the Haredi education. If one considers only the Jewish pupils, the ratio between the two groups is that of equality – about 50 percent each. Nevertheless, as the ages of the pupils go down, the proportion of Haredi pupils rises: 35 percent in high school, 56 percent in elementary school, and 60 percent in the kindergartens (Choshen and Shahar, 2000). The implication of these findings is that if

everything else remains equal, the Haredim will form the Jewish majority in the city in a matter of 10 to 15 years.

Such data and their interpretation call for added circumspection. The projection into the future may prove correct and the Haredim would actually constitute the majority. Today, however, they are not yet a majority, but rather a minority. One ought to take into account the trends of out-migration of the Jewish population from the city, which has not bypassed the Haredi population. In large measure, the out-migrants are young people in their fertile years. These migration movements have already affected the age structure and in recent years a halt in the growth and even a reduction of the number of children in the Haredi kindergartens were recorded. Thus, for example, the number of children in Haredi kindergartens rose until 1996-1997, reaching a total of 16,046 pupils. Yet in the three years between 1996-1997 and 1999-2000, their number went down to 15,672 (a 2.3 percent decrease). During the same period, a moderate decrease was recorded in the number of children in the state schools and in the religious state schools (a decrease of 0.7 percent). In 1999-2000, for the first time, the number of elementary school pupils in Haredi education decreased (a decline of 2.5 percent relative to the previous year).

In that same period, there was a larger decrease (4.4 percent) in the number of pupils in the elementary state and religious state schools (Choshen and Shahar, 2000; Choshen and Shahar, 2001).

I would like to remark that presenting these facts does not amount to a value judgment; it is rather an examination of the quantitative ratios between the various cultural groups and their variance over time. The survey findings presented do not contradict the proposition that, for the time being, the Haredim constitute a minority. The findings raise doubts as to any prospective change in the demographic balance in the next 10-15 years. The data confirm the statement that in Jerusalem there is today a democratic deficit, since the Haredim are represented on the City Council way beyond their weight in the electorate.

The distribution of the positions of power in the Council aggravates the local democratic deficit (Table 2). Not only is the electoral representation in the

Council incompatible with the make-up of the population in the city, the distribution of positions of power still reinforces the hegemony of the minority. This can be inferred from the distribution of positions of power and influence among the municipal lists in the Council.

**Table 2: The Potential Jewish Electorate, the Representation and the Distribution of Power in the City Council According to Cultural Groups (Percentages)**

The Electorate, the Representation and Power Distribution	Cultural Groups		
	Haredi	National Religious	Secular & Traditionalist
Potential Electorate 1996	18.5	18.2	63.3
Representation in the Council, 1989-1993	29.1	9.7	61.3
Representation in the Council, 1993-1998	29.0	12.9	58.1
Representation in the Council, 1998-2003	38.7	9.7	51.6
Portfolio Holders, 1989-1993	23.1	7.7	69.2
Portfolio Holders, 1993-1998	39.0	22.0	39.0
Portfolio Holders, 1998-2003	40.0	15.0	45.0
Committee Chairpersons, 1989-1993	13.6	9.1	77.3
Committee Chairpersons, 1993-1998	25.0	35.0	40.0
Committee Chairpersons, 1998-2003	45.0	20.0	35.0

**Source:** Hasson & Gonen, 1997; Jerusalem Municipality data for various years

The major upheaval, as Table 2 clearly indicates, occurred in the transition from Teddy Kollek's last term as city mayor (1989-1993) to that of Ehud Olmert (1993-1998). The Haredim had equal representation in both Councils. Secular representation changed only slightly, while that of the National Religious rose to a relatively large degree, yet their weight in the Council remained low (about 1/8 of the Council members). Despite the equal representational structure of both Councils, there occurs a substantial change in the Council's power structure. The percentage of portfolios held by secular members diminishes by almost half: from 69.2 percent in Teddy Kollek's last term to 39 percent in Ehud Olmert's first term of office. By contrast, the proportion of portfolios held by Haredim rose from 23.1 percent to 39 percent,



and that of portfolios in National Religious hands rose from 7.7 percent to 22 percent. A similar trend was recorded concerning heads of Council committees. Here too a significant decline is recorded in the power of the secular members, a doubling of Haredi power and a staggering, more than triple rise in the national religious position.

In the period 1993-1998, the conspicuous phenomenon is national religious control of central positions of power in the Council. The Haredim also achieved a larger share in positions of power than the proportion of their representation in the Council. Conversely the secular and traditionalist representatives were underrepresented. Even though their weight within the Council was 58 percent of the members, they held only 39 percent of the portfolios and 40 percent of the committee chairs.

It is evident that the coalition formed by Ehud Olmert in 1993 did not reflect the results of the election, but rather handed the hegemony to the minority. The mayor could have formed a different coalition in which the parties would take positions in proportion to their representational weight vis-a-vis the electorate and in the Council. But he preferred the coalition with the national religious and the Haredim, thereby granting them hegemony in the Council. This state of affairs continued with certain alterations in the Council elected in 1998. The Haredi parties received 55 percent of the portfolios and 65 percent of the committee chairs. As in the previous Council, they determine the policy in the central domains of municipal life (Table 3).

The quantitative changes reflect a substantial change in the power structure of the Jerusalem municipality. In the 1993 election the national religious and the Haredim attained most of the positions of power in the local administration (Tables 3 and 4). The finance portfolio passed from the secular One Jerusalem party to the National Religious Party. The planning and building portfolio passed from One Jerusalem to the Haredi party of the United Torah Judaism, and the engineering and transport portfolio passed from the hands of Meretz to those of United Torah Judaism. A Haredi education portfolio and a Torah culture portfolio were instituted alongside the general education and culture portfolio. The Haredi education administration and the department of Torah education all were entrusted to United Torah Judaism.

The political turnover is also reflected through the heads of the committees. The secular representatives who chaired the main committees in the 1989 Council surrendered their positions in 1993 to representatives of the national religious and Haredi public. The committees that passed from secular to Haredi hands were: the committee for planning and building, the appropriations committee, the tenders committee, and the committee for the preservation of historic sites. Further committees were passed from secular hands to the national religious: the finance committee, development and economics, and the sports committee. Control over the finance committee and the finance portfolio enabled the Haredi representatives to shape the character of Jerusalem in many domains. Further influence was exerted by a strong presence in: the planning and building portfolio, the city improvement and beautification committee, the engineering and transport sector, the control over the site allocations committee (which allocates public lands) and the committee for the exemption from local taxes. All of the above enable the Haredim to shape the quality of life of all city residents and to shape the character of the residential areas.

In the 1998 election, the trend of strengthening the representation of the Haredi and religious public in the municipality continued. The United Torah Judaism party received seven mandates and became the largest in the Council. The Shas Party rose from two to five representatives and the NRP lost one seat. Following these changes the number of religious and Haredi representatives in the Council rose to 15, one step away from a majority. The secular majority, on the other hand, contracted to a mere 16. One Jerusalem, which was the dominant party in the Council between 1965 and 1993, was almost wiped off the political map and survived in the Council with only two representatives.

Following the 1998 elections, the Haredim and the religious achieved control over the main committees and portfolios in the municipality. Six of the eight deputy mayors are Haredi or National Religious. This fact affords them control of the main municipal departments and enables them, unlike Council members who work on a voluntary basis, to devote all their time to municipal activity. Rabbi Uri Lupliansky was reappointed in charge of the city planning department. Rabbi Uri Maklev received the public buildings portfolio. Rabbi

Haim Miller was put in charge of the city improvement and beautification department.

The three rabbis (Lupliansky, Maklev, and Miller) are members of United Torah Judaism. Shmuel Shkedi of the NRP was put in charge of the Educational Administration in Jerusalem. Rabbi Eli Simhayoff was appointed head of the treasury, and Rabbi Shlomo Atias was assigned to head the welfare department and the unit for the advancement of youth and young people. Both rabbis are members of Shas. A representative of Shas also serves as chairman of the site allocations committee, a position this party held already before the 1993 turnover. Simultaneously, with the strengthening of the Haredi position in the municipality, there was a significant decline of the secular parties. In 1993, they still held the general education portfolio, but in 1998 it was transferred to the NRP. The weakening of the secular parties was also reflected in the substitution of the secular chairpersons by the Haredi and National Religious in the committees for emergency administration, transport, firefighting, security and purchasing. Portfolios that remained in secular hands were those of general education, tourism and foreign relations, immigration and absorption, sports, municipal supervision, and sanitation.

These are momentous changes relative to the City Council of 1989-1993 under the rule of Teddy Kollek, when most of the positions of power in the Council were held by the secular and traditionalist public. Together with driving the secular representatives out of positions of power, there was a decline of the NRP in Shas's favor. In the 1998 elections the Shas representatives took over the finance portfolio from the NRP and the tax exemption portfolio from United Torah Judaism, and substituted the NRP representatives as the heads of the finance and exemption from local tax committees. As this work is being written, the chief municipal portfolios in the economic sphere and in city planning and development as well as education and social services are in the hands of the Haredim and the National Religious (Table 4). Admittedly, in each of these spheres, there is a specific portfolio in the hands of a secular party, such as the culture or engineering and transport portfolios. Yet these positions cannot obscure the clear fact of Haredi hegemony in the municipality. The secular public is represented mainly in maintenance and in some of the welfare services.

**Table 3: Committee Chairmen in the City Councils  
1989-1993, 1993-1998, 1998-2003, by Party List**

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Council 1989-1993</b>	<b>Council 1993-1998</b>	<b>Council 1998 - onward</b>
<b>Administration</b>	Executive Management	One Jerusalem	Unified Jerusalem	Unified Jerusalem
			United Torah Judaism	Unified Jerusalem
<b>Economics</b>	Resource Allocations	One Jerusalem	United Torah Judaism	Unified Jerusalem
	Tenders	One Jerusalem	United Torah Judaism	Shas
	Finance	One Jerusalem	NRP (Mafdal)	Shas
	Exemption from Local Taxes	Shas	NRP	Shas
	Economic and Tourist Development	One Jerusalem	NRP	One Jerusalem
<b>Education and Culture</b>	Education	NRP	NRP	NRP
	Youth	NRP	NRP	No appointment
	Advancement of the Status of Women	Meretz	NRP	NRP
	Culture	Meretz	Unified Jerusalem	No appointment
	Sports	One Jerusalem	NRP	No appointment
<b>Social Affairs and Welfare</b>	Absorption	One Jerusalem	Representative of the public	No appointment

**Table 3: Committee Chairmen in the City Councils  
1989-1993, 1993-1998, 1998-2003, by Party List (continued)**

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Council 1989-1993</b>	<b>Council 1993-1998</b>	<b>Council 1998 - onward</b>
<b>Planning and Development</b>	Siting	Shas	Shas	Shas
	Sites Allocation	Shas	Shas	Shas
	Planning and Building	One Jerusalem	United Torah Judaism	United Torah Judaism
	Preservation of Sites	One Jerusalem	United Torah Judaism	United Torah Judaism
	Handing out Planning Projects			United Torah Judaism
	Transportation	Herut Liberals	Unified Jerusalem	United Torah Judaism
<b>Maintenance, Security and Control</b>	Emergency services (Melach)	One Jerusalem	Unified Jerusalem	NRP
	Fire Department	Herut Liberals	Unified Jerusalem	NRP
	Security	Herut Liberals	Unified Jerusalem	NRP
	Purchasing committee	Herut Liberals	Unified Jerusalem	United Torah Judaism
	Control	United Torah Judaism	Meretz	Jerusalem Now
	Street-naming	Representative of the public	Representative of the public	Unified Jerusalem

**Table 4: Portfolios in the City Councils  
1989-1993, 1993-1998, 1998-2003, by Party**

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Council 1989-1993</b>	<b>Council 1993-1998</b>	<b>Council 1998 - onward</b>
<b>Economics</b>	Finance	One Jerusalem	NRP	Shas
	Tax Exemptions	Shas	United Torah Judaism	Shas
	Economic Development and Tourism	---	NRP	One Jerusalem
<b>Planning and Development</b>	Planning and Building	One Jerusalem	United Torah Judaism	United Torah Judaism
	City Beautification	United Torah Judaism	United Torah Judaism	United Torah Judaism
	Engineering and Transportation	Meretz	NRP	There's a Future in Jerusalem
<b>Education and Culture</b>	Haredi Education	---	United Torah Judaism	United Torah Judaism
	Torah Culture	---	United Torah Judaism	United Torah Judaism
	General Education	One Jerusalem	Unified Jerusalem	NRP
	Culture	Meretz	Unified Jerusalem	I am a Jerusalemite
	Sports Authority	One Jerusalem	Unified Jerusalem	Unified Jerusalem
<b>Social Affairs and Welfare</b>	Social Affairs, Community and Welfare	United Torah Judaism	Shas	Shas
	Public Health Services	NRP	United Torah Judaism	United Torah Judaism

**Table 4: Portfolios in the City Councils  
1989-1993, 1993-1998, 1998-2003, by Party (continued)**

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Council 1989-1993</b>	<b>Council 1993-1998</b>	<b>Council 1998 - onward</b>
	International Relations and the Jewish People	---	NRP	Communities for Jerusalem
	Immigration and Absorption	One Jerusalem	Unified Jerusalem	Unified Jerusalem
	Society and Youth	---	Unified Jerusalem	No appointment
<b>Maintenance Services</b>	Security, Firemen, Municipal Supervision and Enforcement	Herut Liberals	Unified Jerusalem	NRP Unified Jerusalem
	Sanitation	Herut Liberals	Unified Jerusalem	Unified Jerusalem

The result is a Council whose composition and distribution of power fail to represent the Jerusalem population culturally and socially. This political reality causes tensions and fears within the non-Haredi public. The tension is provoked by the salient fact that Jerusalem is being run by people to whom the secular or traditionalist way of life is foreign and abhorrent. Scathing remarks by Haredi representatives condemning secular people and their values deepen the tension and the fears.

***Representation and Democracy in the Haredi View***

The Haredi over-representation in the municipal elections resulted from a number of processes that took place in the city. Part of the Sephardic-traditionalist population that previously tended to vote for secular parties now voted for Shas, and so this Sephardic Haredi party received great support from a constituency that does not define itself as Haredi. This support together with the lively participation of the Ashkenazic Haredi public and a drop in the

voting of the secular and traditionalist public is one of the causes of the over-representation of the Haredim in the Jerusalem City Council.

It may seem as if these processes attest to an internalization of the democratic process by the Haredim. In order to find out whether this really is the case, one should inquire what significance the Haredim attach to participation in the elections. This is a difficult question. There are no surveys or works of research that clarify this issue in depth. However, publications and pamphlets published by Haredi circles, including rabbis, political leaders and media people, reveal a remarkable difference between the secular conception of the democratic process of elections and the way it is regarded by the Haredim. In the Haredi view, the individual's participation in the elections is not conceived as the realization of a basic civil right to choose freely. On the contrary, participation in the elections is understood as the religious duty of the individual to obey the representatives of Halachic authority.

“Just as during severe illness,” it is written in the daily *Hamodia* (“The Announcer”), “the patient needs the advice of a medical specialist who prescribes for him what medications to take and in what dosage... so in the issue of elections the Haredi Jew exercises his own mind in every sense of the word. His own mind tells him that he needs consultation and the guidance of an expert, so as not to be led astray by some campaign or other” (*Hamodia*, November 3, 1993). And how is the bridge erected between one's own independent mind and unwavering obedience to an external command, i.e. the call of the Torah Sages? The explanation given in the Haredi weekly *Mishpacha* (“Family”) is: “Precisely the Haredi voter is of independent mind. In his mind and in his reason, he knows that he cannot blindly trust his politicians who might be biased by key positions that this side or that offers them. He mindfully and reasonably entrusts his right to vote to the experts, the objective Torah Sages, who examine the full facts thoroughly, who restrain the politicians' personal ambitions – they manage to produce a balanced and sensible decision in the light of changing circumstances (*Mishpacha*, Torah portion of Toldot 5754, Oct./Nov. 1993). Obedience to the command of the Torah Sages is presented as a call to fulfill a sacred duty and a “mitzvah” consisting in “thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall shew thee” (*Hamodia*, November 3, 1993).



The application of the injunction “thou shalt not decline” laid upon the children of Israel in the Torah (*Deuteronomy* 17:11) leads to the question of the authority of the rabbis in matters that are not specifically Halachic. The Haredi view of politics, as developed in the beginning of the 20th century by the Agudat Yisrael movement, was that the opinion of Torah Sages on whatever matter, not only on religious questions but also on economic, social and political matters, is the authoritative opinion binding on all Aguda members. The rationale of this attitude is the vast learning of the Torah Sages, encompassing the substance and the spirit of the Jewish tradition and a total absence of bias. The principle underlying this notion of rabbinical authority, as Bacon makes clear, “resides in the idea of ‘Da’at Torah’ (the word of the Torah)... in its original context ‘Da’at Torah’ means a clear opinion that can instruct the public” (Bacon, 1993: 500).

On this point there is a trenchant dispute not just between the secular and the Haredi but also between Haredim and religious Zionists, who are apprehensive of excessive rabbinical involvement – an involvement whose most conspicuous expression is in “Da’at Torah.” In the latter’s view, the demand that a religious person unquestioningly obey his rabbi’s command in non-Halachic matters – political issues – poses a severe obstacle to the joining of Judaism to democracy (Geiger, 2000). And so writes Joseph Ahituv:

*In our democratic modern world, the concepts ‘Da’at Torah’ and ‘Emunat Hakhamim’ (belief of the sages) fundamentally challenge the right to criticize which is considered a basic right of every citizen in Western society. This right to criticize draws on the equality of all citizens on the one hand, and on the right to know on the other. Among other things, the concepts ‘Da’at Torah’ and ‘Emunat Hakhamim’ impede, if not completely prevent, the internalization of the democratic-egalitarian standpoint fundamental to modern society and culture. The right of criticism also suffers because the set of considerations behind positions and propositions defined as ‘Da’at Torah’ are not necessarily transparent, and not always can the public at large exercise the right reserved to any litigant vis a vis his judge, the right to demand to be told the rationale of their decision (Ahituv, 1997: 58).*

The non-Haredi public, aware of its rights and obligations on the civil level, treats the right of free choice as a supreme expression of democracy. The Haredi voter, by contrast, is not regarded by Haredi circles as autonomous and able to weigh and examine and independently reach a choice, but as a soldier in a holy war on the character of Jerusalem and its holiness. Civil concepts, centering on freedom of choice and of conscience, acquire among the Haredi a binding religious meaning. What appears to be the exercising of a democratic right has turned in the Haredi code into a “mitzvah to act,” to “consecrate the name of God,” to another norm of performing the commandments of religion which are imposed upon the individual. The individual’s “independent opinion” amounts to entrusting his or her right to decide to the “experts” who represent “Da’at Torah.” The newspaper *Yom Le’Yom* (“Day to Day”), the Shas movement organ, explains: “The elections for us are not a political thing. They are Judaism, they are Torah” (*Yom Le’Yom*, November 5, 1998).

### ***Decision-Making Processes***

Urban democracy is tested not only by representation but also by the propriety of processes, by decision-making and by the dialogue held with the public. The city comptroller’s reports point at irregular processes in many domains of the City Council’s activity, including political appointments, land allocations, etc.

The issue of political appointments, for example, illustrates the improper management of the municipality by the representatives. In 1994, a deputy director was appointed – inappropriately – for the department of Haredi education. The city comptroller who examined the appointment wrote that he regarded “this appointment as a political one imposed on the municipality by the Shas party.” The comptroller reached this conclusion on the basis of the following facts. According to him, “the creation of a fictitious post, not really needed, the position was created in addition to the already existing post of a department deputy director... it is thus a question of an additional budgetary expenditure of NIS 240,000 annually...the comptroller’s office feels that this is a needless expense... the choice of a candidate with no proven experience relevant to his assignment” (Municipality of Jerusalem, 1997: 266).

The gravity of the findings in the comptroller's report notwithstanding, the director general of the municipality did not accept the comptroller's charges. In the director general's view, it is "the privilege and the duty of the municipality to determine those sectors of education which it feels are in need of development and advancement and to allocate to them the requisite resources for adequate functioning..." The comptroller remarked in response that "control does not concur with such a position" and it believes that creating the post and filling it at the cost of NIS 240,000 annually constitutes an additional deplorable waste of public monies that is bound to increase the municipal budgetary deficit" (Municipality of Jerusalem, 1997: 266).

Breaking the law and violating the rules of proper administration with the connivance of public representatives was particularly conspicuous in the case of the use of educational facilities in the Haredi sector. In the course of 1996, the comptroller's office exposed a widespread phenomenon of running entertainment halls in Haredi educational institutions without a business license and without paying the local business taxes due. One example of such an infringement of the law is the Haredi educational institution KHI. The comptroller found in his inspection of the site that an entertainment hall of 520 sq.m. was being operated in that institution. The comptroller found that the hall was being run without a license and that the institution within which the hall operates enjoys an exemption from local tax of 83 percent, standard for educational institutions. The association administering the institution took advantage of the tax-exemption to run an entertainment hall, which is legally liable to local tax. At the time of the inspection, the accumulated debt was estimated at some NIS 500,000. In spite of this violation, the Haredi education department requested that the finance committee approve the payment of \$57,600 toward rent for the school operating in that institution. The city comptroller noted the impropriety of the procedures and the cynicism involved in paying the law breaker and stated expressly: "If the finance committee and the City Council decide to pay, the entire sum should be offset against the debt of the institution to the municipality" (Municipality of Jerusalem, 1997: 241).

There were similar findings in the B.A. Yeshiva founded for Torah learning. Despite the declared purpose, they operated an entertainment hall in the institution that profited from the 67 percent tax exemption granted the Yeshiva. Following the comptroller's warnings and the treasury's requests that

the debt be paid, a request was filed for a business license for a “B.A. Nursery and Garden for Social Gatherings.” In defiance of the comptroller’s warnings, the treasury did not act efficiently towards collecting the debt. Except for warnings, the debt was not consigned for collection and handling by lawyers (Municipality of Jerusalem, 1997). Similar transgressions were revealed by Shilhav in his research on Bene Beraq where there was also a deliberate effort to circumvent the law and avoid paying local taxes (Shilhav, 1997).

### ***Failure to Involve the Public in Decision-Making***

The democratic deficit formed in the City Council as a result of the elections and of coalition considerations could be partially mitigated by promoting the involvement of residents. In Jerusalem there is a system of neighborhood administrations established primarily for the furtherance of local democracy. The local administration system was founded in the early 1980s through public initiative and with Mayor Teddy Kollek’s support, with a view to involving the public in decision-making processes and in order to promote devolving powers to the public. Through the administrations it was hoped it would be possible to tighten the connection between the municipality and the public, to report to the residents and to render the political and administrative procedures more transparent. This did not happen. The city chieftains did not succeed in realizing the potential inherent in the local administrations. This was particularly salient in Ehud Olmert’s term when the gap widened between the demographic-cultural make-up of the city and the electoral representation in the Council.

In October 1999, critical remarks by four directors of the neighborhood administrations appeared in the local newspaper *Zman Ha’bira* concerning the involvement of the residents in the decision-making processes in the city. Three out of four of these directors claimed “the municipality is turning us into their stooges and does not maintain a dialogue with us.” The director of the Ramot local administration said: “In my opinion, Teddy, who founded the administrations, wanted to achieve a decentralization of the municipal system so that the city residents may be closer to the system through these administrations. Judging by the municipal policy of the last two years, maybe the municipality does not like the way the local administrations in the city operate” (*Zman Ha’bira*, October 28, 1999). The director of the French Hill

administration criticized what he defined as a destructive centralization process and warned that if residents are not enabled to participate, some of them will leave Jerusalem. Criticizing Mayor Olmert's policy, the French Hill director said:

*In order to manage the complex city system, in order to develop communal centers including genuine dialogue rather than a policy of "I decide and you do what you are told," one needs incredible greatness, which Teddy Kollek had. Teddy Kollek had the ability to come to the residents and say, "let's have a real dialogue." I regret to say that the situation today is that there is no dialogue at all, and this is reflected in there being no money. (Zman Ha'bira, October 28, 1999).*

The director of the Beit Safafa neighborhood administration pointed out the enormous gap between the eastern [Arab] and western parts of the city.

*I am speaking also about the eastern part of the city. We are an integral part of the city, not only geographically. Of this there is no doubt. We do not enjoy any privilege that exists in the western part. There is a difference, but regarding budgets we lag behind the other administrations. I feel deprived vis-a-vis the neighboring administration of Gilo... there is a vast gap in every sense, in education, at the physical level, and in the full array of issues that the neighborhood administration deals with. (Zman Ha'bira, October 28, 1999).*

In 1999, the relations worsened between the neighborhood administrations and the mayor, and an attempt was made to cut their budgets. The relations reached a low when five administrations – Pisgat Ze'ev, Gilo, Ramot, East Talpiot, and Shmuel Hanavi – convened, intending to petition the High Court of Justice demanding the appointment of a "nominative committee" for the city.

In reaction to the coordination among the neighborhood administrations, the mayor threatened: "I have a long-standing account with you and now I have time to close it... you pretend to represent residents, but I don't need you for contact with the residents. I know residents who think differently than you... I don't intend to give you further authority, I am not interested in your being strong."

The head of the Shmuel Hanavi administration exclaimed in reply to the mayor: “You are pushing us to burn tires” (*Kol Ha’ir*, October 24, 1999).

In November 1999, Council member Roni Aloni, with the head of the neighborhood administration of Pisgat Ze’ev, Eli Ben-Hammo, and his deputy Danny Friedman, appealed to the Minister of the Interior, Natan Sharansky, demanding the appointment of a nominative council for Jerusalem or else they would petition the High Court of Justice. The three contended that a nominative committee is needed because of the financial collapse of the municipality: a deficit of NIS 538 million, debts to suppliers of NIS 611 million, and to banks of NIS 1.24 billion. In the request that a nominative committee be appointed for Jerusalem, much was said about the functioning of the municipality, including these words: “The municipality is not fulfilling its statutory functions in the present, and it is incapable of fulfilling them in the foreseeable future...while one of the municipality’s hands is tight-fisted in current matters, its other hand is open and wasting much money on deputies whose necessity is highly dubious.” In the sequel the hope is expressed that a nominative committee “would extract the municipality out of its state of dysfunction and mismanagement and usher it to a new era in which the capital would be a flourishing authority, offering proper services to its residents” (*Kol Ha’ir*, November 26, 1999). The appellants reminded the Minister of the Interior that a nominative committee for Jerusalem had been appointed in 1955 by the then Interior Minister Yisrael Rokach.

It seems that one can no longer cover the municipal democratic deficit resulting from the under-representation of wide sectors of the public. The tense relations between the mayor and the neighborhood administrations have created distance, alienation and hostility. Thus, for example, it was remarked in the appeal for a nominative committee that “one of the sources of the municipality’s problem is Ehud Olmert, who spends many days abroad, more than 80 days in his second term of office (within a year since the beginning of the term, S.H.), and devotes no small amount of time to the enhancement of his position in the Likud party instead of taking care of the municipality and its problems. It appears that Ehud Olmert has lost all interest in the public office to which he was elected” (*Kol Ha’ir*, November 26, 1999).

### *Tax Collection and Services*

Being under-represented in the demographic and cultural sense does not necessarily mean the non-representation of the interests and values of the different cultural groups in Jerusalem. The question is rather whether the Haredi and religious representatives in the Council are attentive to the needs and values of other constituencies and are willing to cater to them. In Jerusalem it has become clear that Haredi councilors care chiefly for the Haredi public and tend to ignore the needs of the general public.

The local committee for planning and building, for instance, headed by Uri Lupliansky of the United Torah Judaism, works systematically toward allocating land for religious services all over the city: ritual baths, synagogues and religious schools. This is done in several stages. In the first stage, the committee's chairman acts to have large areas in all parts of the city allocated for public use – an endeavor seemingly for the benefit of the public at-large. In the second stage, the site allocations committee, also headed by a Haredi, designates the public areas for different uses, such as clubs and religious schools. Most of the public land that has been designated in recent years was earmarked for religious services: synagogues, ritual baths, religious schools and Yeshivas. In the third stage, the resources are mobilized for the realization of the designated purpose. The seizing of the land is a necessary step but it is not sufficient for bringing about the desired goal. To achieve this there is a need to fund-raise from public sources. This is taken care of by the Knesset members of the Haredi parties. The result is the “insertion of pegs” – the placing of Haredi institutions in neighborhoods whose residents are non-Haredi in preparation for future Haredi expansion into these areas. Such decisions of the City Council have sparked a long series of neighborhood and legal disputes.

The Haredi leaders present this process as a redressing of an ongoing deprivation. Thus, for example, the Shas organ *Yom Le'Yom* contended that as Chairman of the site allocations committee on behalf of Shas, Rabbi Nissim Zeev saved “the lands from being turned into clubs for depraved culture or sports facilities for the secular residents, while the religious public is suffering terrible deprivations in the distribution of land for public use, and that this way the allocation of lands is intended to somewhat counterbalance the distribution

of land in the city... a point given special notice was the designation of lots for synagogues and religious facilities” (*Yom Le’Yom*, November 2, 1993). The chairman of the site allocations committee, the Shas representative, saw to the allocation of areas for the establishment of religious schools (Talmudei Torah). In the Ramat Eshkol neighborhood, for example, an area was designated for a religious school although there is no Haredi population of a size that would warrant this. In order for the school to operate, pupils were transported from other parts of the city.

An examination of the allocation of land for public use in Jerusalem between 1993-1996 reveals that most of the land was allocated to the Haredi population. In this period, which begins with Ehud Olmert’s assuming the office of mayor, 92,355 sq.m. were assigned to public uses. Of this, 90,655 sq.m., that is 98 percent, were granted to the Haredi and religious public which constitutes some 46 percent of the city population and the remainder, 2 percent, went to the secular and traditionalist public which forms about 54 percent of the population.

The allocation of land to Haredi educational institutions is a complex issue. It seems that there is a point to allocating more land to the Haredim than their proportion in the population, since the Jerusalem Municipality allocates plots of land via the planning apparatus to schools in the state and state religious educational systems, but not to the recognized but unofficial Haredi schools (namely, the Independent Education which is primarily an Ashkenazi educational system, and the Shas Maayan Ha’Hinuch Ha’Torani network) and not to the exempt institutions which are neither recognized nor official (which are affiliated to the above-mentioned networks). The condition of the exempt institutions is very bad compared to those of the state education, but the poor conditions are the result of a decision made by Haredi parents to establish independent educational frameworks. Any group of parents can get together and set up a school regardless of the number of children and the size of the classes.

The allocation of land to Haredi groups burdens the public resources heavily – and the city residents have no control over this. Criteria ought to be set that would prevent the excessive handing over of land from the public reservoir to the Haredi sector, and a balance should be created between Haredi needs for land for education and the non-Haredi needs for land for public use.



The solution arrived at in Teddy Kollek's time was to set a high priority to the needs of the Haredi sector, while allocating public land to the non-Haredi residents as well. This balance was disturbed in Ehud Olmert's term of office. In Teddy Kollek's time, the Haredim received 65 percent of the land allocated, whereas in Ehud Olmert's, they received 98 percent.

The discrimination in land allocation was made evident by the Sephardic Haredim in the case of the Beit Yaacov "Geula School," which belongs to the SephardicHaredi educational stream. The following was the sequence of events: between the years 1965-1977, the Geula School sought to receive a plot of municipal land on which to expand. Its request was refused. The "Belz" hassidic institutions, in contrast, received 7,000 sq.m. of public land in 1982 to build a school and other educational institutions. The Belz organization built the other institutions but not the school. The city comptroller reacted to this, writing: "Instead of reacting severely to the non-fulfillment of their obligation, a request was made to the site allocations committee to allocate further land to the Belz organization on which to build a school" (Jerusalem Municipality, 1997: 296). While the Geula School was still demanding a plot of municipal land, the site allocations committee decided in 1996 to assign the lot adjacent to the Geula School to the Belz institutions, the very lot the school had requested for its expansion. Concomitantly the site allocations committee decided to take the school's request off the agenda. In reaction to this decision, the principal of the Geula School filed a complaint against the portfolio bearer of the department for Haredi education, the deputy and acting mayor, and against the director of the Haredi education department, for catering to the Ashkenazic institution's interest while ignoring the Sephardic ones and discriminating against them. In substantiation, he described in detail the site allocations committee meeting of November 13, 1996. In that meeting, both of them strongly objected to allocating land for a Sephardic school. In his letter, the principal expresses complete non-confidence in the Haredi education department and in the portfolio bearer and he requested immediate confirmation of his institution's leaving this department and returning to "Manhi" (the general education administration that serves the non-Haredi population).

The city comptroller examined the complaint and concluded that "the decision to put land at the disposal of the Belz organization in addition to the 7,000

sq.m. already assigned to them, before finding an adequate solution to the housing distress of the Sephardic Beit Yaacov Geula School, caused a justifiable sense of discrimination.” The comptroller added that “the facts and findings of the comptroller indicate discrimination against the Beit Yaacov Geula School in favor of the Belz institutions (Jerusalem Municipality, 1997, 296). This complaint and the comptroller’s findings support the contention of Shas that in Ehud Olmert’s first term, the Ashkenazic Haredim were treated preferentially to the Sephardic Haredim. The findings reinforce the feeling of lack of fair treatment of the Sephardic Community by elected public representatives.

It was rather in connection to the municipality of Rehovot that the use of the site allocations committee for the purpose of allocating public land to religious institutions reached the High Court of Justice in the petition of Amnon Blumenthal et al. against the Rehovot municipality. The court addressed the general phenomenon of the allocation of public land by local authorities, and the court’s words apply to Jerusalem as well: “Most surprisingly, there are no rules of procedure concerning the implementation of the powers of a municipality regarding the allocation of its land... yet this lacuna does not leave the local authority in a void. As an elective authority it must exercise its power according to the public interest and the general good, which are the ‘pillar of fire’ guiding all authorities” (HCJ 3638/99 Amnon Blumenthal et al. v. Rehovot municipality).

The High Court of Justice recommended that the Attorney General formulate such procedures and stated that allocation should be made according to “rules and criteria that are fair, egalitarian, clear, impartial and overt, and according to considerations that are relevant, reasonable and measured.” The court also stated what the allocation procedure should be like. It rules that an administrative decision should be based on a solid factual foundation enabling the authority to weigh all the interests in play against each other. The High Court also specified that the allocation process requires publicizing and hearings, and giving the affected residents an opportunity to voice their opinion about the decision. In the case of Rehovot, the court determined that the municipality failed to follow the procedures and the criteria and annulled the allocation.

The High Court's instruction to the Attorney General is relevant to all local authorities including the Jerusalem municipality. It means that the Attorney General must formulate procedures that are fair, egalitarian and overt for the allocation of public land. So long as such procedures have not been formulated and approved, there is fear that the site allocations committee, including that of Jerusalem, might continue allocating public land in a way that is improper and that was invalidated by the High Court.

The Jerusalem municipality site allocations committee is not the only one endeavoring to allocate public land without clear procedures and criteria. The chairman of the local planning and building committee attempted to situate two large synagogues in the Abu Tor neighborhood, over and above the local needs, apparently for the good of the residents and according to their will. In actuality, the Abu Tor residents objected to building the synagogues and thwarted this attempt. Additional synagogues and ritual baths were designated for secular neighborhoods like Ramat Danya, new Manhat, and Ramat Sharrett. In all these neighborhoods, the residents have taken action to prevent the decision's implementation. It should be noted that the residents' objection is not to the building of a synagogue for the needs of the residents. The objection is to the dimensions of the designated areas and to their prospective uses: the creation of Haredi educational facilities resulting in residential emigration and in a change in the neighborhood's demographic and cultural character.

The Haredi education administration also attempted to obtain buildings which are situated in mixed or secular neighborhoods. Not only are the Haredim setting up their educational institutions in other neighborhoods, they are also striving to block secular educational institutions in mixed areas. In Stern Street in Kiryat HaYovel, for instance, they attempted to halt the establishment of a secular kindergarten, proposing to channel the children to religious education. With the intervention of the mayor, this attempt was thwarted and today two kindergartens are operating there. These examples testify to a clear global strategy of allocating lands for public use and subsequently designating them for religious purposes while ignoring the values and needs of the non-religious population.

It seems that some of the Haredi representatives use the City Council as an instrument for furthering sectoral interests. This instrumental attitude to democracy is reinforced through the weakness of the secular parties. In the local planning and building committee, it is mainly two councilors who are working against the Haredi tendency toward expanding into secular neighborhoods. In the site allocations committee, there is no strong lobby pressing for the establishment of clubs for the secular population. Although the mayor has frozen the activity of the site allocations committee, the chairman of the planning and building committee has continued to work toward the further expansion of religious functions into secular and mixed neighborhoods.

The secular residents' distress is mounting also because of the municipality policy concerning local tax exemption. The issue has reached the High Court of Justice through the petition of Ornan Yekutieli and the Am Hofshi association against the Minister of the Interior and the Jerusalem municipality, in which they complained of local tax reductions granted unlawfully and illegally by the Jerusalem municipality to particular population categories. The categories are those of young married Haredim "whose learning is their vocation" and large families (of four children and more). The High Court of Justice in a panel of three judges – Mishael Cheshin, Itzhak Zamir and Dorit Beinisch – questioned the considerations and prudence brought to bear on this decision. Their criticism was aimed at the by-laws laid down by the Minister of the Interior. One such by-law authorized the municipality to grant exemption from local tax of up to 70 percent to whoever is entitled to "payment in order to secure minimum income from the Ministry for Religious Affairs" (i.e. to Yeshiva students). A second regulation states that in calculating the income for purposes of an exemption from local tax, the children's allowance granted by the National Insurance to families of four or more children should not be taken into account. The two regulations unjustly discriminate against other sectors, according to the High Court of Justice. They discriminate in favor of Yeshiva students as against students in higher education in the same economic bracket who receive no allowance from the Religious Affairs Ministry. They also discriminate against poor small families (High Court of Justice, 6741/99 Ornan Yekutieli v. Jerusalem municipality). In other words instead of granting the exemptions on an equal basis for reasons of financial need, the Ministry of Interior and the Jerusalem municipality adopted a discriminatory attitude. In view of this, the High Court of Justice

declared these two by-laws flawed, discriminatory and unreasonable and therefore void.

Even though the main criticism was leveled at the Minister of the Interior who had issued them, the Jerusalem municipality did not emerge blameless. Thus did Justice Mishael Cheshin write:

*The exemption by-laws laid down by the Minister of the Interior are solely for authorization purposes. As said, in the absence of by-laws, a local authority can and may resort to an authorization given to it and to grant exemptions to some residents in its jurisdiction, or others, and it may not refer to the authorization given to it and not grant exemptions conforming to the by-laws. As for the Jerusalem municipality, it not only decided to use the authority given to it in the exemption by-laws but also fixed the exemption at the maximal rate it was authorized to grant... the Jerusalem municipality which – as we have learned from its Council – bears a constant heavy deficit could have mitigated the blow to its income from local taxation, being its principal source of income if it only decreased the exemptions it had decided to grant, but its leaders chose to grant the maximal exemptions warranted by the by-laws, and thereby the municipality added an omission to the omission of the Minister of the Interior in issuing the by-laws in their present form (High Court of Justice 6741/99, 38, in Hebrew).*

The High Court ruling is directed against the discriminatory by-laws decreed by the Minister of the Interior and against their application, without discretion, examination or restrictions, by the elected members of the Jerusalem municipality. In Jerusalem the residents who are not Haredi bear the main tax burden (see the author's report to the public committee for formulating recommendations concerning a global policy of traffic on Saturday on Bar Ilan Street, in all of Jerusalem, and outside it, 1997:113). It is possible that egalitarian criteria based on income rates of Yeshiva students and of per capita income in families of four children or more would not substantially change the picture of reality, but the Ministry of the Interior and the Jerusalem municipality did not set this standard for granting exemptions.

The way the Jerusalem municipality adopted the discriminatory by-laws made by the Minister of the Interior raises many questions about the discretion exercised by the city's leaders and about their attitude to the different publics in the city. Why did they not object to the discriminatory by-laws? Why did the municipality, suffering from such a large deficit, not restrict the rate of the exemptions? It would seem that in the tax exemptions affair, as in that of the allocation of public land to Haredi institutions, a discriminatory policy was exposed, favoring certain sectors over others. Such a policy attests to a basic local democratic deficit. The power structure in the Jerusalem municipality not only fails to represent the population and the relative size of the parties represented in the Council, but also fails to treat city residents equally and practices favoritism.

#### *Divergence Between Municipal Actions and the Residents' Will*

Since 1993, there has been a clear tendency of divergence between the municipality's policy and the will of the residents in Jerusalem. This is particularly evident in the fields of planning and urban design. In this respect, decisions have been made that are bound to change the character of the city drastically. The rift between the residents and the municipality and the residents' dissatisfaction with the decision-making process in the City Council manifested themselves in many struggles over the character and the appearance of the city. In the main, secular residents struggled against decisions to designate land for construction that affects the quality of life. The struggles were over the Jerusalem Forest, the Holyland area, the entertainment area in the southwest of the city, the character of the Ein Kerem neighborhood and Ha'neviim (Prophets) Street, over multi-story buildings, chiefly on the Mount of Evil Council, in the French Hill neighborhood, in the Mapai zone, and in the Saidoff houses on Jaffa Road.

It seems that there has never been a period in the city's history in which so many environmental struggles have raged. The city coalition for the most part ignored the residents' demands. The local committee for planning and building, headed by Uri Luplianski of the UTJ, acts out of considerations that give preference to the Haredi sector. The committee refused the residents' request to voice their objections concerning the building in the Holyland area. The same chairman put off the discussion on building on Ha'neviim Street

when a decision was taken not to his liking and renewed it only upon securing a majority in favor of building on that street. The Haredi interest in Ha'neviim Street derives from its location within Haredi territory. All along the street there are entertainment places serving the secular population on the Sabbath and holidays. The building planned in the area will lead to the cessation of activities in these places of entertainment because the land will be designated for other purposes.

Another example of disregarding the needs of the secular public on the part of the elected officials, and particularly the Haredi officials, was the attempt to change the land designation in the Nahal Tsofim area, bordering on the Ramat Eshkol neighborhood, from an area designated for public use to a residential area. This initiative was led by Meir Porush, a UTJ Knesset member, when he served as deputy Minister of Housing, and Uri Luplianski, a UTJ member of the Jerusalem City Council who serves as chairman of the local planning and building committee as well as deputy mayor. At their initiative, a plan was devised of turning the area designated for public use (for community centers, sports grounds, etc.) in Nahal Tsofim into an area designated for residence. The upgrading of the land was meant to enable the municipality to indemnify the Israel Land Authority for building for Haredim in the Shneller Army Base area. The secular residents of Ramat Eshkol appealed to the mayor requesting that he halt the plan, but, according to them, he blamed them, saying that they are responsible for the area's not being used for its original purpose.

The Ramat Eshkol residents felt cheated both because the Nahal Tsofim deal would bring into the neighborhood Haredim from surrounding neighborhoods and because the upgrading revenue was not designated for their area but for the funding of a residential zone for Haredim in the Shneller Army Base area. The deal was kept secret from the Ramat Eshkol residents and was first exposed by the Globes newspaper. In view of the mounting criticism following the exposure and the mayor's role in the affair, the mayor changed his position. In March 2000, he proposed that the apartments to be built in the Nahal Tsofim area should be large and expensive. This was meant to prevent the entry of Haredi residents into the area.

*Satisfaction with City Services*

The secular and traditionalist population in the city is very dissatisfied with municipal services. In a 1998 survey of the degree of satisfaction with municipal services, the highest degree of satisfaction was found among the Haredi and the religious. The traditionalist residents were less satisfied and the most dissatisfied were the secular residents. Only a minority of the latter were pleased with municipal services whereas the majority, about 70 percent, were not pleased (Table 5).

**Table 5: Satisfaction with Municipal Services, By Cultural Group (Percentages)**

Satisfaction	Cultural Groups			
	Haredim	Religious	Traditional	Secular
<b>Total</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Satisfied</b>	64.8	63.5	41.8	28.9
<b>Not so satisfied</b>	25.7	23.4	31.3	32.4
<b>Not satisfied</b>	9.5	13.1	26.9	38.7

**Source:** Survey conducted by the Tazpit Institute in August 1998 for the “There is a Future in Jerusalem” Movement

Precisely the strong population in the city, the population needed for the continued consolidation of the city economically and socially, feels dissatisfaction with the municipal services. Little wonder, therefore, that among the more prosperous, the highest rate was recorded of those who feel that five years hence they would no longer live in Jerusalem (Table 6). This survey suggests that the more secular the population is, the less it is willing to continue living in Jerusalem.



Another survey made among city residents reveals that the main reasons for the desire to leave are the relations between Haredi and secular residents and the deterioration of the quality of life (Hasson and Gonen, 1997).

**Table 6: Where Jerusalemites Wish to Live Five Years Hence, By Cultural Group (Percentages)**

<b>Satisfaction</b>	<b>Cultural Groups</b>			
	<b>Haredim</b>	<b>Religious</b>	<b>Traditional</b>	<b>Secular</b>
<b>Total</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Jerusalem</b>	97.9	95.3	76.9	57.8
<b>Out of Jerusalem</b>	2.1	1.9	20.1	38.7
<b>Do Not Know</b>	---	2.8	3.0	3.5

**Source:** Survey conducted by the Tazpit Institute in August 1998 for the “There is a Future in Jerusalem” Movement

### **The Criticism of the Municipal Democratic Deficit Thesis and the Rebuttal**

Beside those perturbed by the local democratic deficit and its implications, there are others who claim that these fears are unfounded. They argue that the secular residents have succeeded through the years in shaping the public space of Jerusalem according to their values. By way of proof they point out the opening of movie houses, pubs, coffee houses and restaurants on the Sabbath and on holidays. Also the fact that the municipal administration in Jerusalem is mostly secular and the municipality operates in universal and rational organizational modes bears this out.

This argument requires an answer. The opening of movie houses and pubs in Jerusalem does not contradict the statement that the positions of power have slipped out of secular hands. Ironically it testifies to a division of labor where the decisions concerning the planning of the town, land allocation, finances

and education, pass on to Haredi and religious hands, while the secular public contents itself with pubs and movies houses being open on the Sabbath. As for the municipal executive, indeed it is mostly secular but its influence on shaping the city is slight. The officials must implement the policy of the statutory committees, most of which (certainly the key ones) are headed by Haredi representatives. Thus, for instance, the chairman of the local committee for planning and building has great influence on the choice of the city engineer and naturally – as one councilor put it – “he will prefer someone who appreciates the rules of the game.” To this should be added the fact that most of the senior executives do not reside in Jerusalem and hence their involvement in everyday life and their perception of the city differs from that of the residents.

A different argument de-emphasizes the importance of the role of municipal politics in shaping life in the city. This argument, which relies on developments external to the municipal system, points at the changes that have occurred in recent years in municipal politics in various cities around the world that consist mainly of the shift from local government to urban governance. Globalization processes and the increasing competition between cities over attracting capital and employment opportunities have caused a decline in the power of the local government as a guiding and steering factor. Its place has been inherited by partnerships with the private sector, sometimes with the voluntary sector and with environmental organizations. It is these partnerships that make the crucial decisions in the developmental spheres, and they comprise politicians, executives, entrepreneurs, representatives of social organizations, environmental movements and professionals (Kearns and Paddison, Clark: 2000). For these reasons, one could argue, the composition of the Council should not be ascribed much importance. This argument too is unconvincing in the case of Jerusalem. In this city, there have not yet sprung up any noteworthy partnerships with the private sector. There do exist partnerships with the central government, the most prominent among them the governmental-municipal corporation “The Authority for the Development of Jerusalem” and beside it, “The Association for the Restoration of the Jewish Quarter,” and “The Association for Centers and Communal Administrations in Jerusalem.” These examples make it plain, indeed, that not all city affairs lie in the hands of the local government and that the Haredi and religious political dominance in the municipality is limited; but it seems that all this cannot

alleviate the growing sense within the non-Haredi public that the era of secular political hegemony for the city has ended.

In my view, even in an age of global economics, competition between cities and transition from local government to urban governance, the character of the local authority is still very important (Judd, 2000). Citizens still assess the local administration by social, political and economic criteria. They examine the degree of openness of the local authority toward different groups, the extent to which they are represented in its activities and the involvement of the public in decision-making. The residents scrutinize the soundness of the processes in the local government, its fairness, its efficiency in tax collection and expenditure of tax money. Therefore, great importance is attached to the representation of the various population groups in the municipal system. This is according to their proportion in the constituency or at least in the reflection of the interests and needs of the various groups in the City Council.

In conclusion, in this chapter I have briefly presented data indicating that a substantial local democratic deficit has been formed in Jerusalem. This deficit manifests itself at three levels: the composition of the Council, the distribution of positions of power, and the decision-making procedures. The political make-up of the Jerusalem City Council does not reflect the demographic composition of the city's population. The power structure (distribution of portfolios and posts of committees chairpersons) is discordant with the political make-up of the council. The decision processes are partial to one public at the expense of others. The Haredi public forms a minority in the city but its representatives hold the crucial positions of power, mainly in planning and finances. Some of these representatives use these positions in order to give preference to the sector to which they belong.

Despite the low rate of secular voting, this group is still the majority in the Council. Although this majority is constantly dwindling – it is still a majority. And it is here that the non-representative structure of the City Council is revealed. Even with the secular majority in the Council, both the one elected in 1993 and the one of 1998, most of the municipal positions of power are filled by representatives of the various Haredi and national religious parties.

The transfer of positions of power to the Haredim and the religious occurred following the municipal elections of 1993. The composition of the Council did not change as a result of these elections but the distribution of portfolios and of positions of power changed significantly. It seems that the new mayor was compelled to consign portfolios and positions of influence to his partners in the Haredi and national religious parties in order to gain stature. He therefore curtailed considerably the power of the secular parties in the Council. This tendency strengthened in the 1998 elections.

In a governing body like a municipality, great importance is attached to representatives' reflecting the demographic and cultural composition of the city. This all the more so in a city like Jerusalem where the representation has great significance both practically and symbolically. In the absence of representation in the City Council of all cultural groups, much importance attaches to the degree to which the government reflects, in its decisions and its actions, the needs and values of the various groups. Herein lies one of the greatest weaknesses of the present administration. An examination of the decision processes in essential areas such as allocation of public land and exemptions from local tax reveals that some of the Haredi representatives, particularly those dealing with planning and building, with land allocations through the site allocations committee, and with tax exemptions, do not act in response to public needs, but tend to prefer the interests and needs of the public which sent them to the City Council. Evidence presented in this chapter, from High Court decisions and comptroller reports, points to decisions biased in favor of the Haredi population with disregard for apparent illegalities.

The objective findings indicative of discrimination in favor of one group and against another are further confirmed by subjective feelings. Various surveys show a large gap in the degree of satisfaction with municipal services between the Haredi and national religious population and the secular and traditionalist population. Whereas the bulk of the Haredi and the national religious public is satisfied with the services, most of the secular public is not. These surveys show that the municipal government in Jerusalem not only fails to reflect its cultural and demographic structure, it also fails to reflect the needs and values of all population groups.

This situation must be rectified. One way of amending it is the creation of dialogue between the politicians and the representatives of local organizations. Thus, for example, one might have expected the strengthening of the neighborhood administrations in Jerusalem. These organizations are close to the residents in the neighborhoods, are intimately familiar with local problems and therefore capable of serving as a remedial factor regarding the flaws revealed in the local democracy. The facts show rather that the neighborhood administrations were not promoted by the present regime and, more than once, the relations between them and the mayor were marred.

In Chapter 8, I shall propose ways for dealing with this situation. But before I turn to a detailed analysis of the local democratic deficit and to proposing remedies, the question arises of why and how the political change in Jerusalem occurred. How did it happen that a city which for close to 40 years was dominated by the secular residents turns into a city whose political hegemony is in the hands of the Haredim. In order to answer this question, I shall panoramically survey the political change that took place in the city and, in Chapters 3-6, I will give a detailed description of the sequence of events leading to the present situation.

## 2 Urban politics in Jerusalem in the Period 1950-1998

### **The Jerusalem Paradox: A Left-Wing City Council in a Right-Wing and Religious City**

The strengthening of the religious and Haredi camp and the ousting of the secular representatives should seemingly be unsurprising. On the contrary, the interesting question is how did it happen that precisely in Jerusalem, where the bulk of the population traditionally votes for the right-wing and religious parties, there were secular mayors affiliated to the left, like Gershon Agron, Mordechai Ish-Shalom, and Teddy Kollek? Furthermore, how is it that in a city with such a clear right-wing and religious tendency, there was such a strong and enduring support for parties that either officially or covertly belonged to the left?

Against the background of the demographic and social structure of Jerusalem, and its pattern of voting for the Knesset, it seems that one could interpret Ehud Olmert's election to the mayoralty in 1993 as a historic correction restoring the accord between cultural orientation and political representation. After a 40-year delay, it would seem that the Jerusalem municipality received the right-wing, religious feature characteristic of the city's population. But things are more complex than that. In contrast to what people think, the strengthening of the Haredim derives mostly from the rise of the Shas movement and it is different in nature from the right-wing – national religious coalition typical of Jerusalem in the 1950s (Table 7).

**Table 7: Jerusalem Councilors by Main Camps in the Elections Between 1950-1998**

Year	Total	Left 1	Right 2	National Religious 3	Ashkenazi Haredim 4	Sephardi Haredim 5	Local Lists
<i>Absolute Numbers</i>							
1950	21	6	8	4	1		2
1955	21	7	7	3	3		1
1959	21	9	5	3	3		1
1965	21	11	4	2	4		
1969	31	16	6	3	5		1
1973	31	14	8	4	4		1
1978	31	16	5	5	5		
1983	31	17	4	2	5	3	
1989	31	15	4	3	6	3	
1993	31	10	7	4	7	2	1
1998	31	9	3	3	7	5	4
<i>Percentages</i>							
1950	100.0	28.6	42.9	14.3	9.5		4.8
1955	100.0	33.3	33.3	14.3	14.3		4.8
1959	100.0	42.9	23.8	14.3	14.3		4.8
1965	100.0	52.4	19.0	9.5	19.0		
1969	100.0	51.6	19.4	9.7	16.1		3.2
1973	100.0	45.2	38.1	12.9	12.9		3.2
1978	100.0	51.6	16.1	16.1	16.1		
1983	100.0	54.8	12.9	6.5	16.1	9.7	
1989	100.0	48.4	12.9	9.7	19.4	9.7	
1993	100.0	32.3	22.6	12.9	22.6	6.5	3.2
1998	100.0	29.0	9.7	9.7	22.6	16.1	12.9

**Source:** Choshen and Shahar 1999, Diskin 1999

- 1 Including Mapai and Mapam. In 1973, the name changes to “Maarach – the Israel Labor Party and United Workers Party.” In 1965, it includes the Rafi party, in 1978 the name changes to “One Jerusalem,” and then to the Teddy list in 1998.
- 2 Includes Herut, General Zionists and Progressives. From 1965 the Herut-Liberal Bloc, in 1993 it includes Yerushalayim Melukedet (Unified Jerusalem) headed by Ehud Olmert, as well as the Tzomet party.
- 3 Comprises one party whose name changes over the years: at first, the Mizrachi and Hapoel-Hamizrachi, then Mafdal, Hapoel-Hamizrachi, Mizrachi. From 1989 it is called Mafdal: the National Religious Party (NRP).
- 4 Includes: Agudat Yisrael and Poalei Agudat Yisrael. From 1969 includes Yahadut Hatorah (Torah Judasim) and Agudat Yisrael and the Torah Center Poalei Agudat Yisrael.
- 5 The Shas movement.

Contrary to the elections for the Knesset, in which the Jerusalem constituency tends traditionally to vote for the right-wing and religious parties, the left-wing succeeded for 38 years, between 1955-1993, in holding the reins of power in Jerusalem itself. Moreover, for some 30 years, between 1959-1989, the left comprised about half of the Council members. This success may be attributed not least of all to the leaders from the left, and particularly to Teddy Kollek, who in his heyday could have (although he did not) run the city without coalition partners.

In the first elections in 1950, the right-wing led with 42.9 percent of the Council members. In the second election, in 1955, there was a draw of 33.3 percent between the two camps. In the subsequent elections, the left was in the lead – until the 1998 election. The left was at the peak of its power in 1983: 54.8 percent of the Council members. Even in 1993, when the right reached its highest achievement since 1950, its weight in the Council did not exceed a quarter of the total representation.

In the 1998 elections, both camps lost their power and the religious and Haredi representatives seized center stage. The left descended to 29 percent, the right to 9.7 percent, whereas the national religious and Haredim reached 48.4 percent of the Council members. The decline of the right in Jerusalem points to the abandonment of this camp by its traditional voters who now shifted their support to the Shas movement.

### **A Slow Increase in the Ashkenazic-Haredi Representation**

In the 18 years between 1955-1973, the relative weight of the religious and Haredi sectors dropped. In 1955, these sectors had six members of the twenty one forming the Council (29 percent), and in 1973, eight representatives out of the thirty one councilors (26 percent), i.e. there was a decrease of 3 percent compared to 1955. In the elections of 1978 and 1983, there was a moderate growth of the representation of the religious and Haredi sectors to 32 percent of the Council members, although the Shas movement had appeared in the 1983 elections. In 1989, the religious and Haredi ascended to 39 percent, in 1993, to 42 percent and in 1998, to 48 percent. The impressive rise in the representation of the national religious and the Haredim in the Jerusalem City Council in the years 1989-1998 did not result from a dramatic increase of the



weight of the national religious and the Ashkenazic Haredim in the Council. The weight of the national religious came down from 14 percent during the years between the elections of 1950-1969 to 10 percent in the 1998 elections. The weight of the Ashkenazic Haredi parties rose only slightly through the years: 14 percent in the 1955 elections, 16 percent in those of 1969-1983, 19 percent in the 1989 elections and 22 percent in those of 1993 and 1998. But the growth was slow: only 8 percent between 1955 and 1998. The source of the increase in the weight of the national religious and the Haredim in the council was different: the ascent of Shas. This list appeared for the first time in the municipal arena in 1983 and altered the balance of power in Jerusalem. Upon its appearance this party won 10 percent of the Council; by the 1998 elections they reached 16 percent of Council members.

The demographic growth of the Ashkenazic-Haredi population, which is characterized by high fertility rates, did not fully manifest itself in the voting for the municipality. It seems that until the 1970s, the fertility rate of Haredi families did not reach its present characteristic height. The fertility rate of Haredi Ashkenazic women who were married before 1955 and bore children until 1970 was 2.8 in contrast to 2.3 among non-Haredi Ashkenazic women, 5.2 among eastern non-Haredi women and 3.1 among Israeli-born women. After 1970, the fertility rate rose and reached 5.9 among Ashkenazic Haredi women who got married between 1970-1980, in contrast to 2.9 among non-Haredi Ashkenazic women, 3.5 among non-Haredi eastern women, and 3.1 among the Israeli-born (Meishar and Mansky, 2000).

It appears that the growth in the fertility of Ashkenazic Haredi women was partly cancelled out by the large in-migration to Jerusalem of non-Haredi people through the 1970s and 1980s. Those were years of accelerated growth in Jerusalem that resulted from building new neighborhoods for the general public, mainly in the eastern part of the city. Consequently the relative weight of the Haredi did not increase significantly and the Ashkenazic Haredi representation in the municipality did not considerably rise. Since the 1990s, a new migratory trend began in Jerusalem: an excess of those leaving over those entering the city. In large part, the out-migrants affecting the negative migratory balance are secular. This trend, along with the high fertility rates of the Haredim, causes the rise of the Haredi weight in Jerusalem. This was manifested in the recent elections for the Council. This trend is still incipient

and has not yet fully impressed itself on the city. A corroborating fact is that between 1955-1998, the weight of the national religious and the Ashkenazic Haredi in the Council did not considerably rise. The weight of this bloc within the Council was 29 percent in the elections of 1955 and 1959 and it rose to 32 percent in 1998. In other words, the weight in the City Council of the representatives of the national religious sector and the Ashkenazic Haredi sector rose by only 3 percent in the 43 years between 1955-1998. The crucial factor in the strengthening of the Haredi sector is the ascent of Shas.

### **The Shas Movement as a Crucial Factor in the Political Overturn in Jerusalem**

At this point the question arises: what is the Shas movement's source of strength? Haredim is an Ashkenazic phenomenon foreign to the Sephardic Jews. The strongholds of Shas are the neighborhoods of the Sephardic communities. This population generally regards itself as traditionalist or religious but not necessarily as Haredi, and it is typically very tolerant about all that has to do with observance and behavior in public. It appears that support given to Shas by the neighborhoods of the Sephardic communities in Jerusalem does not derive from the population's turning Haredi. The explanation of their support, in my view, lies rather in the cultural value system of this population and in the profound link between Shas's social activity and this system. Shas lends legitimacy to the religious-traditionalist lifestyle and thereby it openly opposes modernism, which challenges deeply-rooted values such as religion, tradition, community and family. Shas also successfully combined the spiritual demand for "restoring previous glory" to Halachic rulings on the one hand with social complaints about social deprivation and marginalization and with a right-wing political orientation on the other. This combination was well received by the Sephardic community. On the political level, Shas created a system of mobilization that leans on communally respected figures, rabbis, synagogue managers, and other religious functionaries. The only tension on the political level is that between Rabbi Ovadia Yosef's characteristic moderation and the natural inclination of the Shas voting public to support the right-wing. And in fact Shas was punished in the 1993 municipality election, decreasing from three representatives to two, for having supported the labor government nationally.

The national Shas movement learned its lesson and made sure, since then, to support the candidates of the right on the national and local levels.

In the cultural sphere, Shas set up an educational network for inculcating the Sephardi Haredi Jewish values, the Maayan Ha'chinuch Ha'torani – “The Fountain of Torah Education.” The combination of demands in the spiritual domain with material demands made Shas quite attractive to part of the Sephardic public in the disadvantaged neighborhoods of Jerusalem. Jerusalem did not dramatically turn Haredi. What changed was the political affiliation of part of the Sephardic communities in the city, and it was this change that brought about the ascent of the Haredim.

There is some resemblance between the Shas movement and other local social movements that sprung up in Jerusalem: the “Black Panthers” who appeared on the public scene in 1971 and the Ohalim – “Tents” – movement which achieved public notice in the years 1979-1980. All these movements brought up the issue of the discrimination against and the deprivation of the Sephardic communities and worked to reduce these. But here the resemblance of Shas to the protest movement ends. The differences between them are pronounced. The leaders of the social movements preceding Shas came from marginal social circles and applied strategies of protest and confrontation with the state, thereby incurring feelings of awkwardness and reservations among parts of the Sephardic community. Furthermore, the leadership of the protest movements was closely linked to intellectuals of the radical left, of which the Sephardic public generally disapproved (Hasson, 1993). Shas acted in the opposite way: it presented a respectable political façade of integrating into the establishment by presenting a local list from 1983 on, and then by forming a national party. Shas leaned on the leadership of Rabbi Ovadia Yosef together with rabbis who received their education in Haredi Yeshivas in the Diaspora. This leadership attained prestige and eminence (Horowitz, 2000; Lufo, 2000). Unlike the protest movements, Shas succeeded in integrating into the establishment, stressing its affiliation with the right and obtaining resources through which it developed its educational system for the socialization of the younger generation. All these choices made Shas a movement with popular roots and lent it strength and survivability, which had been beyond the reach of the social movements of the 1970s and early 1980s.

Despite its political success, the Shas movement, that affected the change in the municipality, did not reap its fruits. Those who profited from the change were mainly the national religious and the UTJ, which is an Ashkenazic Haredi movement. The representatives of these parties held, and still hold as this study is being written, the key positions and, in Olmert's first term, they also enjoyed great resources for educational purposes. Shas was left far behind.

Who was harmed by Shas's ascent? The data in Table 7 suggest that at first Shas gained mainly from the national religious, from the Ashkenazic Haredi lists and even from the Likud. In time, there was an improvement in the religious parties but a further drop in the Likud and One Jerusalem. It seems that Shas thrived not only at the expense of religious parties but also at that of secular parties, particularly of the right. This is a clear expression of the change taking place within the Sephardic public of Jerusalem, a large part of which abandoned the parties for which they had traditionally voted and started voting for the Haredi Sephardic party. These changes explain the character of the coalition existing today in the Jerusalem Municipality. Although the mayor is a secular Likud man, the municipal coalition upon which he depends is substantially religious-Haredi.

The change in Jerusalem did not occur suddenly. It formed gradually, feeding on deep processes that have not yet been thoroughly examined. In the following chapters, I will describe the political change and analyze its causes.

### **3 The Political System in Jerusalem in the 1950s**

#### **A Short-Lived Coalition Between the Right and the Religious in the Early 1950s**

At first, the municipal political system in Jerusalem was marked by the dominance of the right and the national religious. In the first municipal election, in 1950, the city was run by a coalition of twelve: the parties of the right, the Sephardic Zionist party (affiliated to the General Zionists) and the national religious. The mayor was Shlomo Zalman Shragai of the Mizrachi movement, representative of the Religious Front. Shragai served for two years and after he resigned in 1952, the mayoralty passed on to Yitzhak Kariv, also of the Religious Front.

The ascendance of the religious parties in Jerusalem was because of national level party considerations. The Sephardic Zionist party won four delegates in the first election for the Jerusalem City Council and held the balance between the religious and the right on the one hand and the left on the other. The head of this party Eliahu Elyachar proposed to Ben Gurion that his party would join the left-wing delegates in voting for Yitzhak Ben Zvi for mayor in return for Mapai's supporting Shabetai Levi, who headed a counterpart list to that of the Sephardic Zionists, for the Haifa mayoralty. According to Elyachar, 'All the parties then, as they do now, used to link municipal issues with national party politics...before the election, we obtained from Ben Gurion a letter pledging that if Shabetai Levi is elected to the municipality, even if alone, he and his Mapai party would do everything for him to resume his post as mayor' (Elyachar, 1980: 440). It turned out that after the elections David Ben Gurion and the left-wing delegates in Haifa were unable to fulfill their part of the

political deal and Knesset member Abba Khoushy, who was the absolute ruler of the Haifa Histadrut (the workers' union), was elected mayor. In this state of affairs, as Elyachar put it, "There prevailed among the General Zionists...the tendency to transfer the rule of the city (of Jerusalem - S.H) to a coalition made up of the religious, Herut and our party (Elyachar, 1980: 441).

Elyachar's words are interesting against the backdrop of the international struggle raging at the time over the status of Jerusalem. The United Nations was then debating the implementation of the Partition Resolution of 1947 regarding the internationalization of Jerusalem. The Israeli government, and mainly the Prime Minister's office and the Foreign Office made great efforts to thwart the UN resolution. This was the background for the decision to grant Jerusalem the status of capital and to transfer the government offices from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

The great interest in the international status of the city as opposed to the meager interest in its municipal politics reflected a traditional Mapai attitude to the city. Jerusalem as a symbol stood at the focus of the national struggle while Jerusalem, the earthly poor city whose inhabitants needed employment, local services and an effective municipal management was left in the corner. The gap between the two attitudes became all the more pronounced in view of the burgeoning population of Jerusalem with the arrival of new immigrants of scant means who joined the poor multi-communal society distinctive of Jerusalem.

At the beginning of the 1930s, there began a large out-migration from the city and many of its residents wandered to the coastal towns where there was the beginning of prosperity (Rabinowitz, 1962). The employment market in Jerusalem was in dire straits already in the years preceding the establishment of the State, the variety of livelihoods was limited, and there was a multitude of despondent laborers. The severe social condition worsened because of the decision in the early 1950s to direct many immigrants to Jerusalem, most of whom came from eastern countries. The immigrants were first accommodated in transit camps and subsequently in public tenements and they needed services and employment.

The Haredi population then was a defensive minority vis-a-vis what was perceived as the secular threat. The chief spatial struggles concerned the preservation of the religious character of residential neighborhoods, and especially the quality of the Sabbath (see Map 1). The focuses of the struggle were the Mandelbaum Gate area, the Mea Shearim neighborhood, and Kikar HaShabbat – the Sabbath Square. The Haredim see Jerusalem as the synagogue of the Jewish people. This view extended the struggles over the character of the Sabbath toward Jaffa Street, the main traffic artery in town. Moshe Baram, the Jerusalem district secretary of the Histadrut at the time, wrote that the political leadership showed little interest in the social and economic problems of the city and did not attach much importance to local struggles and to the local government of Jerusalem. According to Baram, the heads of Mapai, the party of ex-laborers, did not attach much importance to Jerusalem as a city in its everyday sense. The then Israeli Prime Minister, David Ben Gurion, thought that the development of Jerusalem will be taken care of through the activity of the government, as was done in Washington, the Capital of the United States. The Histadrut, by contrast, ever since the 1930s showed great interest in labor conditions in Jerusalem. It penetrated into various worker groups, including the builders and laborers from the neighborhoods and entrenched itself within those circles (Rabinowitz, 1962; Baram, 1981). It is against this background that one can understand the readiness of the national Mapai leadership in those years to leave the municipal hegemony in the hands of the religious and the right-wing as well as the resistance of the local chapter of Mapai to this move.

The ones who played a key role in bringing together a coalition of the right-wing and the religious were the General Zionists. As Elyachar made clear: “For the General Zionists the question of the Tel Aviv mayoralty was linked with the coalition with the religious parties and Jerusalem was secondary to them” (Elyachar, 1980: 440). Elyachar thought that an authoritative and effective management of the municipality would meet with difficulties without the cooperation of the Histadrut representatives. He even estimated that “a religious mayor might severely harm the character of Jerusalem because of religious pressure to introduce restrictions that most of the Jerusalem public would not be able to abide by” (Elyachar, 1980: 440).

Map 1:



And indeed the coalition of the religious and the right encountered many difficulties presented by the local Mapai forces, mainly the workers' council of the Histadrut. The municipal workers' committee was subordinate to the orders of the Histadrut, which was acting against the ruling coalition. With much anger, Elyachar wrote the following: "Our brethren from central and eastern Europe brought with them the principle that the good of the party, its interests and needs, precede everything... their concern is not the general good of the nation and state, and not the good of the population in Jerusalem and Israel that was mostly made up of the Sephardic communities" (Elyachar, 1980: 445). The mayor Shlomo Zalman Shragai was closer to Mapai, according to Elyachar, than to the rest of the coalition members and to his colleagues from the Mizrahi: "His connections in the Jewish Agency when he was representative of Hapoel Ha'Mizrachi and his continued partnership in the National Council and in the Jewish Agency with Mapai caused him not to work for the coalition that made him mayor but rather look forward to an opportunity to dismantle it and form a left-wing coalition headed by him" (Elyachar, 1980: 443).

In view of the deteriorating situation in the municipality – the ever-growing financial deficit, structural problems regarding services and building supervision, political struggles leading to the break-up of the coalition, labor disputes and personal disputes – the opposition in the Jerusalem Municipality appealed to the Minister of the Interior Israel Rokach asking him to appoint an investigation committee under Justice S.Z. Cheshin as chairman, to look into the situation of the Jerusalem Municipality. The committee commenced working in February 1953, and upon its conclusion, recommended dispersing the Council and having new elections. The government accepted this recommendation and decided on March 18, 1955 to dissolve the Council.

In his letter of April 3, 1955 to Jerusalem mayor Yitzhak Kariv, Interior Minister Israel Rokach wrote among other things: "I hereby inform you that the government in its meeting today (April 3, 1955) approved the proposal of appointing a nominative committee for Jerusalem affairs. I very much regret that it had to come to this, but I hereby request that you hand over all city affairs that are in your hands to Mr. S. B. Yeshaya, who has been appointed chairman of the said committee" (City Archives, nominative committee file). The appointment was for a period of four months until the new Council was

elected and entered office. S. B. Yeshaya, who was the District Commissioner for Jerusalem on behalf of the Ministry of the Interior, served as chairman of the committee to the end of its activity on October 9, 1955.

The nominative committee (which included members from the dissolved Council) managed to alleviate the tensions in the municipality and to forge normal labor relations with the department directors. Among other acts of the committee one can list the abolition of the reduction of the price of water for the Jerusalem corridor villages, the diminishing of the illegal building in Jerusalem and the intensification of local tax collection. In an interview to the *Jerusalem Post*, the former mayor Yitzhak Kariv was bitter, attributing the dissolution of the Council to the opposition's influence on the government. Under the opposition's influence, the government refrained from giving aid to the city. Referring to the coalition crisis, Kariv placed the blame on the General Zionists and mainly on their leader Eliahu Elyachar who, because of personal ambition, caused a perpetual crisis in the Council (*Jerusalem Post*, April 5, 1955).

### **Mapai at the Head of the Local Government**

In the elections for the second Council in 1955, the representative of Mapai, Gershon Agron, was elected mayor. Gershon Agron had been head of the press department of the Zionist Executive in Jerusalem and since 1931 was the first editor of the *Palestine Post* which, following the establishment of the State, became the *Jerusalem Post*. His election for the mayoralty was made possibly through a pre-agreement between the representatives of Mapai in Jerusalem and the religious parties. According to this agreement, Gershon Agron was elected mayor and Rabbi Moshe Porush, the Agudat Yisrael representative, was to be the first deputy and acting mayor. In these elections too it transpired that the Jerusalem Municipality was not at the top of the agenda of Mapai, the ruling party of those days. For this reason, Ben Gurion and Golda Meir also objected to the efforts of the local leadership, headed by the Jerusalem Histadrut district secretary in the 1950s, Moshe Baram, to transfer the government of Jerusalem to Mapai. And this is how Moshe Baram described the 1955 elections for the City Council:

*Mapai had a national agreement with the NRP on the division of zones of influence in the country. The heads of Mapai demanded the Tel Aviv mayoralty for Golda Meir and that of Haifa for Abba Khoushy. Immediately after the elections, David Ben Gurion publicly summarized the election results when addressing party activities. He said that in Tel Aviv and in Haifa, he sees the representatives of Mapai at the top, whereas in Jerusalem – the NRP man (Baram, 1981: 116).*

The dissolving of the council did not affect any fundamental change in the political “division of labor” between Mapai and the religious in the local authorities. Toward the second election to the City Council in 1955, Baram testifies, the leaders of Mapai exerted great pressure on the Jerusalem leadership in the strict demand to comply with the agreements with the NRP. The resistance of the local leadership to dictates from above is what finally paved the way for Gershon Agron’s nomination for mayor of Jerusalem. Baram notes that “no one at the top of Mapai found it proper to congratulate Agron on his election” (Baram, 1981: 119). The activity of the Jerusalem workers’ council brings to light an exciting chapter of urban politics. It shows that local branches broke the pattern of political agreements between the parties on division of influence areas at the national level. The workers’ council of Jerusalem, which accumulated much power since the 1930s, acted against the party leaders, thwarted inter-party agreements and finally imposed its polity on the national leadership.

The election of Gershon Agron for mayor ushered in a new and long era in Jerusalem's politics. From 1955 to 1993, a mayor and a list that were connected with Mapai and later with the Labor Party led the Jerusalem Municipality. Through deals with the leaders of the NRP and those of Agudat Yisrael, Mapai succeeded in securing its rule in the city from the 1950s to the mid-1960s. Gershon Agron served as mayor until his death in 1959. Between 1959-1965, Mordechai Ish-Shalom served as mayor of Jerusalem. Mordechai Ish-Shalom was a member of the “Labor Corps,” and worked in the Jerusalem regiment of the Labor Corps. He served as city councilor for Mapai and was deputy to Mayor Agron. And this was his own testimony about himself: “Once they wrote about me in one of the newspapers that Ish-Shalom was a gray mayor. And indeed it is so, since the work of a mayor is to a large extent gray

work... it is gray work without which there is no quality of life” (Ish-Shalom, 1989: 330).

The years of the mayoralty of Gershon Agron and Mordechai Ish-Shalom were rife with struggles with the Haredim over the character of the public space and over the observance of the Sabbath. The Sabbath demonstrations, which began on Malchei Yisrael Street and the adjoining streets, spilled over to the city center. In the course of the Sabbath demonstrations, which shook the city in September 1956, a 60-year-old Haredi, Pinhas Segalov, was killed by the police and he became, to Haredi circles, a symbol of the struggle for keeping the Sabbath. The secular population regarded these actions as an attempt to impose on it a foreign way of life and some of its members founded the League for the Prevention of Religious Coercion. In 1958, the Netorei Karta (an extreme group within the Haredi population) launched a campaign against the building of a co-ed swimming pool. In Ish-Shalom’s period, the process of closing down streets on Saturdays began, prohibiting vehicular traffic, and thus a main traffic artery passing by the Yeshurun and Hechal Shlomo synagogues was closed to vehicles on Saturday. As Ish-Shalom wrote: “My attitude and that of the late Gershon Agron was that insofar as possible one should be considerate of the religious population, and this without affecting the freedom and ability of the secular citizens to reach any desired destination” (Ish-Shalom, 1989: 314). In Ish-Shalom’s view: “Teddy Kollek went further than I did in compromising in some matters with the religious. He closed down more streets than I agreed to” (Ish-Shalom, 1989: 314).

Teddy Kollek, who began as mayor in 1965, was also connected to Mapai. He was among the founders of Kibbutz Ein Gev and, in David Ben Gurion’s last term, he served as director general of the Prime Minister’s office. In 1965, he was elected mayor on the ticket of Rafi, a splinter from Mapai. According to Kollek, he did not believe he had had the slimmest chance of winning the elections “vis a vis the strong Mapai machine in Jerusalem that always turned out winning” (Kollek, 1979: 188). He described his struggle as that of “a single person against a party machine... I did not achieve a sweeping victory, but it was the first time that the Mapai party machine was defeated” (Kollek, 1979: 189). He included the religious parties in the coalition he formed and, for the first time in the history of the relations between the left and the right in the city, he invited the representatives of the Herut movement to join the

coalition. In the course of his long tenure, he succeeded in achieving a stately image removed from the national parties. For this purpose he created the “One Jerusalem” list: he appointed some of its members and Mapai, later the Labor Party, the others.

In conclusion, the local power machine of Mapai dominated the Jerusalem political system of the 1950s and early 1960s. Through this machine, the right-wing and religious tendencies of the Jerusalemites were neutralized and left-wing candidates were elected as mayors. The religious and Haredi sector attained a relatively small number of delegates who were incapable of influencing the character of the Council. The right failed to put forth a candidate who would unite the city right-wing public. Against this background, a vacuum was created of which the power machine of Mapai and the Hisradrut in Jerusalem, headed by Moshe Baram, took advantage. Gershon Agron was supported by Moshe Baram against the will of the national leadership. Mordechai Ish-Shalom succeeded in forging patterns of cooperation with the Haredi and religious public because of his cultural background, but the cardinal positions of power were mostly in the hands of the Mapai councilors. Teddy Kollek built his municipal image by seemingly struggling against the Mapai machine. He was elected mayor as a member of Rafi, the party founded by David Ben Gurion upon leaving Mapai. In contrast to his predecessors, Teddy Kollek appealed to the whole public of Jerusalem, including those of the disadvantaged neighborhoods, and he built up an image of someone who is not part of the establishment. Actually he rejoined Mapai after Rafi disbanded and cooperated closely with it appointing the Council's members of his “One Jerusalem” list.

## 4 The Political System in Jerusalem in Teddy Kollek's Period, 1965-1993

### Teddy Kollek's Days of Glory: 1965-1989

The era of Teddy Kollek's rule in Jerusalem is considered a golden age in the city's history. The first two years did not portend what was to come. Teddy Kollek himself testifies that initially he had no great respect for the mayors in the country or in Jerusalem. "Many of us in the service of the government believed that an appointed executive is capable of running the towns much better than the elected mayors and, with the exception of Abba Khoushy in Haifa, it did not seem that the mayors were doing a particularly good job" (Kollek, 1979: 189). About his predecessor Mordechai Ish-Shalom, who had come to David Ben Gurion, the Prime Minister, for help against the Haredi Jews who were throwing stones in the Mandelbaum Gate area, Kollek wrote: "It seemed that Ish-Shalom and his colleagues lacked any drive or fighting spirit" (Kollek, 1979: 188). Kollek attests that towards the end of his first year, he considered abandoning the position at the end of his term (Kollek and Goldstein, 1994). The unification of Jerusalem, following the Six Day War, inspired and enlivened the city and Teddy Kollek. In his words: "The unification of the city marked the beginning of the most exciting time in my life" (Kollek, 1979: 213). Ish-Shalom related to Kollek and said: "One must note that Teddy Kollek succeeded in two domains. He knows how to "sell" Jerusalem... Something happened to Jerusalem in his time. The city was reunited and there was a renewed international interest in Jerusalem... Here Teddy Kollek found himself like a fish in water. He knew how to sell the city, succeeded greatly and contributed to its development and to its ennoblement" (Ish-Shalom, 1989: 330).

The unification of the city brought about a renewal of building and an increase in the number of traditionalist and secular residents. In a period in which Tel Aviv, the largest city in Israel, suffered from out-migration and population decline, Jerusalem achieved accelerated growth. The number of residents rose at an impressive pace and it became the largest of Israeli cities. Between 1967 and 1993, the Jewish population grew by 105.6 percent, the Arab population by 134.4 percent (Choshen and Shahar, 1999). The building surge subsided in the late 1980s, and from the early 1990s negative migration balances were recorded.

Among the neighborhoods built in the eastern part of the city for the Jewish population, none were designated for the Haredi population. The Haredi neighborhoods in the north of the city were surrounded by a circle of secular neighborhoods, and as Menahem Porush wrote, "In this overall planning, not even one street, one building, was assigned to the Haredi population" (Porush, 1998: 20). In the absence of public housing, the Haredi population spilled over to the old neighborhoods around Mea Shearim: Geula, Kerem Avraham, Zichron Moshe, the Bucharian Quarter, Makor Baruch, Shmuel Hanavi, Upper Romema, and Givat Shaul. The established residents of these older neighborhoods moved to new ones of higher socio-economic status (Gonen, 1995; Shilhav and Friedman, 1985: 22).

The surge of building in the city, the rapid demographic growth it experienced and the diversified socio-cultural make-up lent Jerusalem a new image and conferred a special aura on the person heading it. The enchantment of the unification and Teddy Kollek's charisma combined to make Jerusalem a national focus and symbol of the first order.

The Local Authorities Law of 1975 that stated that the head of the municipal authority is to be elected in personal, general, direct, equal and secret elections enhanced Teddy Kollek's standing. He stood out in the local municipal system as a figure of national and international stature, connected with the wealthy of the world, who is capable of raising money and prestige and putting them at the disposal of the city. His popularity manifested itself in the results of the mayoral election: about 63 percent. The right-wing and Haredi candidates were no real rivals. For the sake of comparison, the rate of votes for Meir

Porush, who was a Haredi mayoral candidate, was 14 percent in 1983 and 11 percent in 1989 (Diskin, 1999).

In the course of Teddy Kollek's tenure, great effort was invested in the expansion of the city and its beautification. During this period the Jewish Quarter in the Old City was restored, parts of the Old City were renovated, a plan was made for the development of the Old City, and residential neighborhoods were built for Jews in East Jerusalem. Kollek's attitude towards the Arab residents was ambivalent: on the one hand he kept them out of local politics and on the other hand, he maintained good connections with traditional centers of power and acted to alleviate tensions. In the inner city outside the wall, great efforts were also made to improve the character of the city, including the establishment of cultural and art institutions, parks, clubs and community centers. Teddy Kollek showed little interest in the economic development of the city and only towards the end of his term, the Jerusalem Development Authority was founded for the economic development of the city. The consequences of this policy, that elevated culture over economic development, were discernable later, with the out-migration of residents from the city, mainly for employment and housing reasons (Kaplan, Kimhi, Choshen, 2000).

Teddy Kollek was born in Vienna when it was a "world city" and a multinational cultural center, and he aspired to effect a similar process in Jerusalem: to shape a city of modern culture, of tolerance, versatility and openness, right within the stronghold of the old community. Teddy Kollek wrote about Vienna and Jerusalem:

*The education I received in Vienna – a city about which they said had more Czechs than in Prague, and more Hungarians than in Budapest, and this on top of the Poles, the Croats, and the Jews – qualified me, apparently, for life, in a multi-lingual and heterogeneous city. Vienna, even after the revolution of 1918, was a very devoutly Catholic city. Therefore, when Jerusalem was united in 1967 and suddenly we had to be in contact with heads of the clergy, I had a certain advantage over my colleagues (Kollek, 1979: 229-230).*



Kollek included the Haredim and the NRP in his coalition. According to him, he realized that no local government in Jerusalem could last without the close cooperation of the Agudat Yisrael party. And in fact Rabbi Menachem Porush, the leader of this party, served for years as deputy mayor. Nevertheless, Kollek restricted the Haredi scope of influence to the social sphere in which he had little interest. Against this background, one can understand his inclination to let the religious and Haredi circles have influence in the poor neighborhoods, and his attempt to limit the power of the secular community workers in those neighborhoods. This attempt provoked tumult among the community workers and consequently social unrest in the neighborhoods and clubs that were supposed to come under Haredi municipal control. The “Black Panther” movement that arose in 1971 reflected not only the social gap, but also the struggle of the community workers against coalitional deals between Kollek and the Haredi politicians concerning the division of spheres of influence (Hasson, 1993).

Teddy Kollek’s conception of culture was remote from the world of religions: “I was raised to a large extent on anti-religious sentiments, both in the socialist youth movement and in a socialist state” (Kollek, 1979: 193). However, he gradually came to understand “that adherence to religious precepts is not a transitional phase in Jewish history. It is a fundamental means of preservation of the Jewish people – and to me is a basic value in itself “ (Kollek, 1979: 193). In actuality, Kollek endeavored to apply cultural pluralism in Jerusalem, and to enhance mutual understanding and greater tolerance between the religious and secular publics. Teddy Kollek’s own testimony is that he did much for the Haredi population: “Many more synagogues and religious schools were built during my tenure than in any other period in the city’s history; more streets in Haredi neighborhoods were closed to traffic on Saturday, and incidents of provocative, deliberate driving through Haredi neighborhoods on Saturday stopped” (Kollek, 1979: 193-194).

The paradox presented by Kollek’s rule in Jerusalem is no smaller than that of Mapai’s dominance of the City Council. Kollek personified values that were contrary to those of the majority of Jerusalemites: a person from an assimilated home, of anti-religious orientation, affiliated to the left. Resolving the paradox was effected through personal charm and an image fostered by Kollek with the cooperation of the media of a multi-cultural world metropolis to which world

leaders and key figures make pilgrimage. In this city, Kollek fostered numerous cultural institutions: the Israel Museum (Kollek was among its founders when serving as director general of the Prime Minister's office), the Jerusalem Theater, Cinematheque, Mishkenot Sha'ananim, the Haas Promenade, the Stadium, the technological park, parks, gardens, playgrounds and clubs all over the city.

The Haredim disapproved of Kollek and his urban conduct. "Teddy's Jerusalem" was described by Menachem Porush, the Jerusalem Agudat Yisrael leader, as an endeavor to turn Jerusalem into a capital of foreign customs, into Paris, into New York, Tokyo and Berlin. Agudat Yisrael opposed this inclination and fought for Jerusalem, the Capital of the Jews, for the Holy City and the Temple (Porush, 1998: 16). Kollek was attacked by them physically and verbally and was disparagingly called "Herod."

One of the greater successes of the Haredim in their struggle "for the Holy City and the Temple" was preventing the building of the stadium in the northern section of the city and creating the Haredi neighborhood Ramat Shlomo in its stead. Further actions in preservation of Jerusalem's character as the Holy City were: the obstructing of Saturday traffic on the Ramot Road that is in proximity to Haredi neighborhoods, objection to road number one that connects the northern and southern sections of Jerusalem and passes by Haredi neighborhoods, and fights against the archaeological digs on the slope of the City of David.

In the late 1980s, the Haredim extended their struggle over the character of the city and the observance of the Sabbath, trying to close cafes, restaurants and movie houses that operated on Sabbath. They also set fire to bus stops, which displayed advertisements not to their liking. Despite their successes, Haredi influence was confined to their residential areas. In the rest of Jerusalem, Teddy Kollek was able to realize most of his plans and achieve many cultural projects such as the Jerusalem Theater, the Jerusalem Music Center, and Mishkenot Sha'ananim. For some time it seemed that Teddy Kollek was succeeding in calming Jerusalem, in alleviating tensions and in giving the city a modern touch. It seemed as if his rule in Jerusalem would be eternal.

The first Palestinian intifada that broke out in 1987 created cracks in the image of a united city. The mayor, bearing the marks of the passage of time, declared on the eve of the 1993 elections that he himself would not give his vote to an old man. Despite this statement, Teddy Kollek was convinced to proceed and stand for election as mayor in 1993.

### **The Rise of the Shas Movement in Urban politics**

The growth of the Shas movement (Sephardic Observers of Tradition), which was about to affect local and national politics heavily, began in the shadow of Teddy Kollek's impressive victory in 1983. The Shas movement formed against the background of the accumulated frustration and bitterness among the members of the Sephardic community and the crisis in Agudat Yisrael in the 1980s. The initiative to create the movement came from Sephardic Torah scholars who had studied in "Lithuanian" Yeshivas and who saw the elections as an opportunity to create a political force. In the summer of 1983, leaflets appeared in the centers of the Haredi public on behalf of the Sephardic Union of Torah Keepers. They proclaimed, among other things, that there has been a decision about "creating an independent municipal list which will represent religious Jewry in general and Sephardic religious Jewry in particular" (Friedman, 1981: 179). The origination of the list and later the formation of Shas were influenced by three factors: discrimination felt by Sephardic Torah scholars, the evolution of a Sephardic spiritual elite capable of leadership, and the existence of a broad social base that would provide the movement with supporters and voters.

The feelings of discrimination experienced by Sephardic Torah scholars surfaced in the summer of 1983 because of what was perceived as a continuous discrimination in the allocation of specific funds by Agudat Yisrael and primarily by its leader in Jerusalem, Menachem Porush. Since the formation of the Likud government, in which Agudat Yisrael participated, the party functionaries transferred funds to Torah scholars, to NGO's and to Yeshivas. The last in line, as the founders of Shas in Jerusalem said, were the Sephardic Torah scholars. This discrimination in the allocation of funds by Agudat Yisrael joined a long list of discriminatory acts towards the Sephardic public. This included the low regard in which Sephardic Torah scholars were

held in the Ashkenazic Haredi Yeshivas, the contempt for rabbis of eastern origins and the discrimination against girls of eastern origin in the Beit Yaacov institutions (Friedman, 1991: 179).

A sense of discrimination and concern for the communities of eastern origin caused Rabbi Ovadia Yosef to support this political initiative as well. His removal from the seat of Chief Rabbi through the cooperation of the NRP and Agudat Yisrael left Rabbi Yosef with a deep scar and led him to the conclusion that only a political movement could improve the condition and the status of the communities of eastern origin (Dayan, 1999: 183-186). The list in Jerusalem was closely connected to Rabbi Yosef but he was not its official and only sponsor (Dayan, 1999: 87). Lithuanian Rabbi Schach, who at the time quarreled with the Hassidim of Agudat Yisrael, was aware of the Sephardic distress and supported their organizational efforts. With the backing of Rabbi Schach, the patron of Sephardim who studied in Lithuanian Yeshivas, three Sephardic lists were put forward for the coming municipal elections in Jerusalem, Bene Beraq, and Tiberias (Dayan, 1999: 89).

Rabbi Ovadia Yosef found the residents of the Jerusalem neighborhoods of the communities of eastern origin to be supporters of his aspiration “to return the crown to its former glory” and to restore the dignity of these communities. These residents were accustomed to voting for Herut and subsequently the Likud. A small part of them voted for the NRP. Among the residents of these neighborhoods there was a widespread sense of deprivation owing to their mode of absorption as immigrants and the wide social gap. Rabbi Ovadia Yosef and the Shas list also gained the support of some of the traditionalist Sephardic population outside these neighborhoods. Rabbi Ovadia Yosef succeeded in creating new symbols of identity and identification fusing the religious and the communal motifs. An example of this is his 'holy call' to the Jerusalem public in a leaflet published by Shas towards the municipal elections in 1989:

*To all Torah scholars and all dear activists: 'It is time to act for God for they have violated your teaching' and it is the holy duty of each and every one to come to the aid of God among the warriors and to act and vote and do everything in one's power for the success of the Shas list for the Jerusalem City Council and this in view of the*

*clamorous discrimination against the Sephardic Torah schools in Jerusalem, which are collapsing under the heavy burden in the absence of adequate learning places and severe budgetary problems and so that we should be able with God's help, Blessed be He, to be strengthened for the Torah and assist the setting up of educational institutions in the spirit of Traditional Israel for our sons and daughters and also to bring closer the distant and to return the hearts of our brothers the Children of Israel to their father in heaven, and to return the crown to its former glory.*

Education was the paramount concern of the Shas movement. Success in the national political arena enabled the party's strong man Aryeh Deri (while serving as director general of the Ministry of the Interior and subsequently as Minister of the Interior) to tap many resources for the educational institutions of the movement in various places in the country including Jerusalem (Schiffer, 1998). Investigations by Yediot Aharonot and by Kol Ha'ir cast suspicions of apparently illegal transfer of funds by Aryeh Deri to the educational institutions of the movement through the mediation of the Jerusalem Municipality (*Kol Ha'ir*, June 8, 1990). These investigations indicated that the illegal transfers from the Ministry of the Interior to the educational institutions began already at the end of 1985. Inter alia these investigations showed that the Interior Ministry transferred much money to the Municipality. Shortly before the elections, the City Council passed on the money to Sephardic Haredi Torah schools for building purposes, even though they were not registered as NGO's, and the municipality was not entitled to give them money. These Torah schools that were supposed to use this money for building contravened the instructions of the State Comptroller and transferred the money to the network of the Shas Torah schools that was being run by a relative of Deri's in the Jerusalem district. According to one theory, the money was used for funding the Shas election campaign (*Kol Ha'ir*, July 27, 1990).

The same investigations suggest that the municipality passed on the money illegally, without the approval of the finance committee and the City Council, and that the Jerusalem finance committee served as a conduit for the transfer of funds from Aryeh Deri in the Interior office to the Shas institutions and to

Deri's clique. Thus, the committee transferred a sum of NIS 3,000,000 from the Interior office to Haredi Torah schools.

The influence of the Shas movement on local politics grew gradually during those years. On the surface one could not tell the extent of Shas's involvement in urban politics because of the massive support for the secular bloc led by Teddy Kollek. Only later, with the weakening of this bloc and the deep split in the Council, did it transpire to what extent the Council headed by Teddy Kollek assisted the rise of the Shas movement in Jerusalem.

Simultaneously with the strengthening of Shas, tension gradually mounted between Shas and the Ashkenazic Haredim and their party Torah Judaism. Although in public the façade of unity was kept, below the surface there were deep cracks. Thus, Aryeh Deri wrote in the movement organ *Yom Le'Yom* that "there will be cooperation between us and Torah Judaism, after all we are in the same boat and we will have to collaborate in all the years to come. For the secular people we are both dangerous..." (*Yom Le'Yom*, November 19, 1993). In reality the tension between Yahadut Hatorah and Shas gradually intensified and the complaints increased of Sephardic deprivation by the Ashkenazic Haredim.

The tension between Shas and Torah Judaism was revealed in its full acuteness right before the municipal election campaigns. Leaflets distributed by Shas specified the discrimination in Ashkenazic educational institutions against Sephardic pupils in kindergartens and of Sephardic girls in the Beit Yaacov schools. "(And) therefore we shall all say to our brothers on election day – no more! You separated in the kindergartens and in the schools, you separated in the Yeshivas, you separated in the seminaries, we must separate in the polls." Another leaflet written as an epistle to a Sephardic Torah scholar says:

*Have you ever tried to send your son to an Ashkenazic "heder" or a Torah school: What was their answer to you? What was their reaction? Have you ever tried to get your daughter accepted into an Ashkenazic seminary? Have you ever tried to get your son into a Yeshiva called Ashkenazic? What was the answer? The quota is full? Did your gifted wife or daughter who finished her studies with distinction get a job, even the most partial one, or is it that all the*

*jobs were created for the relatives of the directors general and their aides? Are you easily accepted to Ashkenazic kollel (Yeshiva for married Haredi men)? Do you ever expect to get a rabbinical position in one of their Yeshivas or Torah schools? It is time you opened your eyes. It is time to protest the bitter and painful reality!!*

Unlike Shas, the UTJ chose to stress the message of unity and togetherness, covering up manifestations of sectarianism and communal labels. One of the published bulletins of the UTJ said, “It is possible to be a proud Sephardic without feelings of inferiority and without feelings of superiority, not feeling different.” Such a Sephardic sees himself as part of the general Haredi public and is not interested in labels.

*I don't want ghettos, no social ghetto, no educational ghetto, and no political ghetto. I want to live together like everybody – together with everybody. Not to isolate myself, not to splinter off... I shall do everything to prevent separations and will not have a hand in erecting communal partitions. I do not agree that even within a hundred years my grandchildren and great-grandchildren should feel that they are a different people, God forbid, secluding itself from the community and withdrawing from the public. I will not give my hand to the perpetuation of communal schism, who wish to politically capitalize on separating ideological brothers.*

### **The End of Teddy Kollek's Rule 1989-1993**

Teddy Kollek's electoral decline was slow. His popularity reached its height in the 1983 municipal elections when he achieved a majority of 63.8 percent as compared to his 62.7 percent in the 1978 elections. The municipal list “One Jerusalem” that Teddy Kollek headed won 48.5 percent of the votes in 1983, compared to 47.4 percent and 43.6 percent in the years 1978 and 1973 respectively (Choshen and Shahar, 1995). Following the electoral success of the 1983 election, “One Jerusalem” had 17 of the total 31 Council members and Teddy Kollek could have, had he so wished, managed the city without any partners. For political and symbolic reasons, Teddy Kollek preferred to set up a coalition with the religious parties and to present the appearance of a city being run on a broad basis of agreement.

The 1989 elections were a turning point in municipal electoral politics. For the first time since Teddy Kollek entered the mayoralty, his power decreased. He still gained the support of most of the public – 54 percent of the votes – but his list “One Jerusalem” lost six seats, thereby losing its majority in the City Council. The 1989 elections were colored by the cultural struggle over the character of the public space. The Ratz party that played a central role in the struggle for opening cinemas and entertainment facilities on the Sabbath presented a clear anti-Haredi platform. One of Ratz’s notices showed a map of the Haredi centers. The map stunned parts of the secular public who were shocked by the extent of the Haredi expansion. In the election, the Meretz party, a combined list of Ratz and Shinui, won four seats in the City Council and thus equaled the Likud.

The Haredi and religious parties did not gain much power, but Teddy Kollek lost the majority he had in the Council. Under these circumstances, Teddy Kollek preferred a wall-to-wall coalition comprising representations of all the parties in the Council: One Jerusalem, Degel Ha’Torah, Agudat Yisrael, Shas, Meretz, NRP, Emuna and Likud. The committees, the portfolios and the representation in the municipal companies were divided among all the parties. In this way, the religious and Haredi parties attained a significant influence on the running of the city.

In the elections of 1993, Teddy Kollek failed. He won only 35.7 percent of the votes for the mayoralty whereas his rival Ehud Olmert achieved 59.4 percent. The “One Jerusalem” list lost about half its power in the Council and remained with only six members. Ehud Olmert’s “Unified Jerusalem” list which replaced the Likud did not achieve an impressive success, attaining only five seats. The religious and Haredi parties improved their position somewhat: they won 10 seats in 1978 and 1983, went up to 12 in 1989, and reached 13 seats of 31 in the 1993 elections.

The religious and Haredi votes were insufficient to secure Ehud Olmert’s election as mayor. A crucial factor contributing to his victory was the electoral split that occurred in Teddy Kollek’s traditional power base. One of the main causes of Teddy Kollek’s success between 1965 and 1988 was his ability to overcome the rift between the left and the right in Jerusalem and to create a wide electoral base made up of different social groups.



Among his supporters were Sephardim and Ashkenazim, residents of higher and lower social status, left wingers and right wingers. Above all Teddy Kollek attained the support of the residents of the neighborhoods and the tenements that habitually voted for the right, giving the right an urban majority in the election for the Knesset.

In the general elections for the Knesset of 1989, for example, 30.5 percent of the voters supported the Likud and only 19.8 percent voted Labor. The parties of the right achieved altogether 38.6 percent of the votes, those of the left 27.1 percent, and the religious and Haredi parties, 28 percent (Choshen, 1990). This brings out the magnitude of Teddy Kollek's success in the 1989 elections, for despite the fact that his "One Jerusalem" list was affiliated with the Labor Party (half of its representatives were selected by Labor), Teddy Kollek received about half of the votes. Teddy Kollek's achievement lay principally in his ability to beat his rivals in the strongholds of the right, i.e. in the neighborhoods and tenements of the low and middle classes. Teddy Kollek received much support in Kiryat Menachem and in Ir Ganim, in southern Kiryat Hayovel, in the Katamon quarters, and in the Pat Quarter. In other words, until the municipal elections of 1989, Teddy Kollek was able to mobilize the variety of social groups in Jerusalem and create a broad power base for himself and his list. So long as this power base lasted, the Haredi population remained marginal to the political system in the city.

The 1993 elections marked an upset in the political system. The power base on which Teddy Kollek leaned throughout his tenure split asunder as a result of which he lost his solid majority within the non-Haredi public. The voters in established neighborhoods like Rehavia, Beit Hakerem, Nayot, Ramat Sharett, northern Kiryat Hayovel, Old Katamon and Baqaa reduced their support of Teddy Kollek but still preferred him to Ehud Olmert. In contrast, the voters of the lower-middle and lower class neighborhoods, who live in the tenements of the 1950s and 1960s and in the new neighborhoods on the periphery of the city, transferred their support from Teddy Kollek to Ehud Olmert (the Central Bureau of Statistics, 1994).

If not for the votes of the Haredi and religious neighborhoods, there would have been a draw between Teddy Kollek and Ehud Olmert. Teddy Kollek received 54,000 votes and Ehud Olmert received 52,000 votes in the non-

Haredi/religious areas. In other words, the support for Ehud Olmert outside the religious and Haredi neighborhoods almost equaled Teddy Kollek's. In a state of near equality in the non-Haredi areas, what tipped the balance in Ehud Olmert's favor was the vote of the Haredi population. For the first time in the political history of the city, the Haredi community came to hold the political balance of power, a role it has played thus far (together with the NRP) in national politics.

The secular population showed great indifference throughout the elections. Ornan Yekutieli, the head of the Meretz party in the municipality, devoted much effort in trying to mobilize the secular public for the struggle. He pointed out the preference given in the allocation of land to the Haredim and argued against the "total sell-out of city land to Haredi parties and their favorites" (*Kol Ha'ir*, October 15, 1993). He warned that if the Haredim become stronger, they will demand the closing of Bar Ilan Street and all the other streets in which they have the 80 percent majority required for the closing of streets. Indeed this warning came true and Ornan Yekutieli was to head the camp struggling against the closing of the street. Using illustrations and maps, Ornan Yekutieli presented a menacing picture of the Haredi expansion in the city. But the arguments and warnings left the secular population indifferent. Reacting to the secular indifference, Yekutieli said: "The Haredim fulfilled their part in the deal with Ehud Olmert. The secular public did not fulfill their part of the deal with the parties representing it. If even after the headlines in this morning's paper they did not go out to vote, then we have a problem (*Kol Ha'ir*, November 5, 1993).

## 5 The Rise of the Political Power of the Haredim from 1993

The Haredi population gave its full support to Ehud Olmert, thereby securing his convincing victory over Teddy Kollek and establishing its own position as a principal political force. The great achievement of the Haredi parties derived from their ability to mobilize their constituency and from their sweeping support of the candidate chosen by the rabbis – Ehud Olmert. Underlying the massive mobilization of the Haredi population for the vote were spiritual and material concerns. Spiritually, they stressed the importance of the struggle over the image and character of Jerusalem. The Degel Ha'Torah organ *Yated Ne'eman* warned in its editorial that it is a question of a “struggle that will determine whether Jerusalem will become a metropolis like Paris, London, or New York, or whether it will retain its Jewish character and singularity” (*Yated Ne'eman*, November 3, 1993).

From a material point of view, at issue were financial allocations for education and welfare, exemption from local taxes and a deep sense of deprivation in respect to services. One Haredi representative in the municipality said in an interview:

*Towards the elections we finished with Teddy. Why? Because he deprived us in the areas of education, in buildings and in equipment. The ferment reached the top. It was clear that there must be a change. The Haredi public was frantic when it reached the voting booths, it was in such pain, and the situation was so unfair. Those who were content stayed home, those in pain ran frantically to vote, 75-80 percent is a full mobilization. The pain was great and strong. And the success was as great as the need.*

This should be read with caution. The representatives of the Haredi population made exhaustive efforts at bargaining with Teddy Kollek before the elections and were willing to continue supporting him were he to accept their demands. Only upon realizing that there was no chance of an agreement did they turn their backs on him and support his rival Ehud Olmert.

The Haredi lists enlisted their rabbis to the campaign and they put out calls to the Haredi public in newspapers and on notice boards to come and vote for the Haredi parties. The senior politicians held great rallies in which they dwelled on the spiritual as well as the material issues. Special emphasis was laid on mobilizing the voters on election day. In order to get them to the polls, their party headquarters spread thousands of activists in every neighborhood and close to the polls. The UTJ employed more than 4,000 workers for the various headquarters and a fleet of 500 vehicles, both volunteers and paid. Special headquarters were set up for bringing new immigrants and separate ones for driving the elderly and the sickly to the polls. One headquarters strenuously endeavored to bring those voters residing out of town to Jerusalem (*Yated Ne'eman*, November 3, 1993).

The marshalling of the voters and the work on election day justified itself by the high voting rates of the Haredi population. The political weight of the Haredi population (in terms of the percentage of voters in the Haredi neighborhoods from the city electorate) was 25 percent higher than its demographic weight (in terms of the percentage of the franchised within the Haredi neighborhoods from the electorate). The Haredi rate of participation ranged between 75-80 percent and was considerably higher than the secular rate (about 60 percent).

Another cause of the Haredi success was their ability to guarantee the election of the candidate to whom they committed themselves. In the religious and Haredi sections, the rate of support for Ehud Olmert was 60-90 percent of the total votes (Central Bureau of Statistics, 1994). Yet one should remember that the impressive support on the part of the religious and Haredi population would not have brought Ehud Olmert to power if not for the split in Teddy Kollek's electoral base. It was the social rift within the non-Haredi constituency that turned the Haredi community into the holders of the balance of power in Jerusalem politics. That is why the Haredi politicians were able to

impose conditions on the mayoral candidate in return for their support, namely that they be given positions of power in the local authority and influence municipal policy.

### **The Political Deal Between Ehud Olmert and the Haredim on the Eve of the 1993 Elections**

Ehud Olmert understood the spirit of the times. He discerned early on that the Haredi population was the political power on the rise in town and was prepared to offer its leaders (the Admor of Gur, Rabbi Elyashiv and Rabbi Auerbach) a political deal. In return for the political support of the Haredi community, Ehud Olmert was willing to offer it political power and financial resources: a Haredi education portfolio – separate from the general one – a Torah culture portfolio, the building and planning portfolio, the city improvement and beautification portfolio, as well as equating all the Haredi budgets to the general budget, including development budgets, and two posts of deputy mayors to members of UTJ. The deal's main clause was the creation of two Haredi divisions in the local authority: the Haredi educational division and the Torah culture division. In addition, Ehud Olmert was willing to grant the Haredim and the national religious many positions and resources and allow them much influence in determining municipal policy. In return the Haredi mayoral candidate Meir Porush resigned his candidacy. Rabbi Schach, Rabbi Elyashiv and the Admor of Gur came out with a call to vote for Ehud Olmert as mayor and this call was publicized on election day in the Haredi press. The day before the elections, loudspeakers were used to call on the Haredi public to vote for Ehud Olmert.

Ehud Olmert was not the only one to discern the impending political changes. Some Council members of Teddy Kollek's list were aware of what was happening and they quickly developed good relations with Haredi political leaders. One of the most prominent among them was Amos Mar-Haim, Teddy Kollek's deputy and his candidate for mayor. The Haredi council members had preferred to continue their coalition with Teddy Kollek provided he met their demands and matched Ehud Olmert's offers. Three weeks prior to the elections, the Haredi councilors reported to Teddy Kollek about their talks with Ehud Olmert. They proposed that he appoint Amos Mar-Haim as his

substitute and enable him to run the city through the new Council to be formed after the elections. They also demanded that he relinquish one of the senior portfolios in favor of Meir Porush.

Three days later the Haredim came back to Teddy Kollek and told him that Ehud Olmert is prepared to give them a Haredi education portfolio and a further senior portfolio. But, as they explained, the rabbis were willing to retract if Teddy Kollek offered them the same terms. The day before the elections the heads of Yahadut Hatorah came back to Teddy Kollek's office for another attempt to persuade him, but to no avail. They reported this to the Admor of Gur and to Rabbi Elyashiv. Agudat Yisrael's Rabbi Miller's urgings to place Amos Mar-Haim as number two in the "One Jerusalem" list were also rejected. About those talks, Meir Porush attested: We were negotiating with Kollek's "One Jerusalem" as well. We presented a few sharp questions. We demanded answers. Our demands were not met. "One Jerusalem" delayed answering, did not reply. Ehud Olmert answered all the questions and met all the demands (*Yated Ne'eman*, November 5, 1993). Only upon the exhaustion of all the attempts to convince Teddy Kollek to reconsider a deal with the Haredi representatives did the Haredi leaders decide to finalize the deal with Ehud Olmert.

It is possible that had Amos Mar-Haim been allowed to exploit his contacts, the Haredi population would have voted otherwise. But a few months prior to the elections, Teddy Kollek abandoned his intention of appointing Amos Mar-Haim as his successor. As a result of pressure put on him by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and by politicians who were involved in urban affairs, Teddy Kollek again presented his candidacy for mayor, deposed Amos Mar-Haim from succeeding him, and replaced him with Nachman Shai, a well-liked media person although lacking in political experience. This development marginalized the main person in Teddy Kollek's camp capable of bridging the gap with the Haredi camp. Meir Porush's resigning his candidacy and the Haredi mobilization for Ehud Olmert gave the latter a highly valuable opportunity, which he did not miss.

## **6 The Political System in Jerusalem in the Era of Ehud Olmert**

### **The Change in the Political Power Structure After 1993**

Ehud Olmert's ascent to the mayoralty marked the beginning of a radical change in the stature of the Haredi parties in the Council. For the first time since the establishment of the State of Israel, they became a leading and very influential element in the City Council. Although only 13 of the 31 councilors elected in 1993 were connected with the religious or Haredi lists, these numbers did not mean very much. What was important was the political support the Haredi population had given Ehud Olmert in the mayoral elections. Because of this support, much political power was concentrated in religious and Haredi hands, well beyond their weight in the Council. In the 1993 elected Council, the Haredim and the national religious chaired nine out of the twenty-two permanent committees (41 percent), in contrast to only five committees (24 percent) in the Council of 1988. The Haredim and NRP held eleven of eighteen portfolios (60 percent), compared to only four portfolios (30 percent) in the 1988 Council. Despite the fact that the weight of the Haredim and the national religious in the Council had not changed upon Ehud Olmert's becoming mayor, their representation in Council positions of power doubled.

### **Representation in the City Council: The Haredi View**

Why was it so important for the Haredim to reach the positions of power in the City Council: Why did they mobilize, without precedent, to help Ehud Olmert? It seems that the explanation lies outside politics – in the demographic and economic domains. The growth of the Ashkenazic Haredi population, the

bulk of which does not work, caused an increase in needs and hence in the amount of resources required for the survival of the community. This increase compelled the political leadership to penetrate deeper into Israeli politics and marshal resources for the Haredi public and primarily for the society of learners. The first success was in the general election for the Knesset and in having the Haredi and religious parties hold the balance of power in national politics. But that was not enough. Without representation in the local authority, the Knesset delegates could not act to provide the needed resources and this point was clear to all who were familiar with the connection between local and national politics. The municipal committee of the Yahadut Hatorah faction addressed this issue.

*The supreme municipal committee stressed that in the absence of a strong local representation in all the cities, it will not be possible to aid the senior representatives in the Knesset. This is because in recent years, the budgets of the interior, of welfare, and of education are passed on through the local authorities. Consequently it is vital that there be a strong representation of Yahadut Hatorah that will realize and implement the work of the Knesset representatives and will stand guard to prevent any deliberate and tendentious action related to all the religious needs in the cities and also prevent any attempt at anti-religious legislation changes in connection with municipal by-laws and in budgetary matters.*

*(Hamodia, October 4, 1998).*

It is evident that the Haredi leadership adopted a new strategy of acting within the municipal political system intended on the one hand “to increase the Glory of Heaven, to stand guard over what is holy to Israel” and on the other hand “to take care of and represent their public and its needs” (Hamodia, October 9, 1998).

### **The 1998 Elections and the Further Strengthening of the Haredim**

The 1998 municipal elections in Jerusalem were marked by the increasing polarization between Haredi and secular residents. One of the causes of the intensified polarization lies in the lengthy struggle between the two camps over driving on the Sabbath and holidays on Bar Ilan Street, a main traffic



artery passing through the Haredi neighborhoods. In July 1997, and following extensive public and legal strife, the government decided to close down Bar Ilan Street to traffic during the times of prayers. The secular public interpreted this decision as surrender to the Haredim.

Diskin contends “this cleft in the Jewish public was the chief factor dictating its vote” (Diskin, 1999: 1). The representatives of the secular parties mostly adopted a militant attitude, calling on the public to rally against the Haredi takeover of the city. The head of the “One Jerusalem” faction, Shimon Shetreet, called on the public to refrain from supporting Ehud Olmert who “sold the city to the Haredim” and to “save Jerusalem” from Olmert and the Haredim. Ornan Yekutieli, who had left the Meretz faction because of a dispute with its leadership over who should be on the list, set up a new list called “Jerusalem Now,” whose central message was “war now” with the Haredim over the character of Jerusalem. Another slogan exploited was “Jerusalem fears Olmert [the Hebrew “fears” being of the same root as “Haredi” which means god-fearing]. The Haredim by contrast used an ambiguous slogan: “Fearing [Haredim] for our Future.” In an attempt to check the widening polarization, the “There is a Future in Jerusalem” list was formed which was composed of secular and religious (the Meimad Party) people. This list called for reconciliation and communication between the two camps. (The author was among the founders of this list.)

The Haredi camp and particularly the Shas activists mobilized without precedent for the 1998 municipal elections. The enlisting of the Haredi public was effected through striking positive and negative chords. The positive note explained the necessity of voting in order to attain political strength and thereby resources for the Haredi population. The Haredi politicians accentuated how important it was to strengthen the party functionaries in the municipality because otherwise the representatives of the government could not function. Partaking in the elections was justified by the need to protect the Haredi public’s rights, to protect the achievements in city improvement, in culture and in education. In an election speech, Aryeh Deri emphasized the great importance of voting for the municipality and said: “In the election for the Knesset, the battle is about laws, ministries – but from experience, we know that even if you control all the ministries, if you have no representatives in the field, in the municipality, who have the power, it is as if you sow and

sow and there is nobody to reap” (*Yom Le’Yom*, October 22, 1998). Another reason used for mobilizing the Haredim was the preservation of the city’s character.

The negative note sounded in the listing of the dangers imminent in a secular return to power. The Haredi-secular struggle was described as a confrontation between “preserving the way of the fathers against a hostile street imbued with the spirit of heresy – haters of God who wish to obliterate the Torah, obliterate Judaism” (*Hamodia*, November 12, 1998). Secular people were described scathingly as “haters of God,” “haters of Judaism,” “Hellenists,” “heretics.” Thus, for example, the struggle between the religious and Meretz was portrayed as that between “the other side [the Devil] and the holy side – Meretz against the religious” (*Hamodia*, November 13, 1998). The enemies were somberly depicted as those who scheme against the religious and wish to “check the development of Haredi Judaism in Jerusalem... wish to dispossess us of the city and of the municipality” (*Hamodia*, October 23, 1998). In one of his reports in *Hamodia*, Yaacov Schoenfeld described the secular public:

*These people are not all alike. A large part of them, especially the young, are babes in captivity, never having learned what Judaism was, and all their spiritual nourishment comes from the secular-heretic education and from the media that paints the Haredi not very differently from the way “the Strumer” in Germany painted the Jews...There is also a hard core of riffraff, people who are real “Klipah” (a defiling power in Kabbalah - S.H), whose hatred of the Torah and the precepts is chronic, and they are the filthiest of the souls generation by generation, and they are pure dross and with them there should be the war (Hamodia, December 4, 1998).*

This depiction presents two attitudes to the secular public: on the one hand, a patronizing haughtiness towards those who are considered “babes in captivity,” stemming from the “superiority of the Haredim” over secular people whose heresy results from the poor perception produced by their education. On the other hand, unrestricted war against the secular people who are “riffraff” [alluding to the “mixed multitude” of Exodus 12:38], that is, not Jews in the full sense, as evidenced by their deeds, and they are also “real Klipah” (i.e. a defiling power).

Rare are the publications in which one finds expressions such as “gratuitous love” or “all Israel are guarantors of one another.” An exception in this report is the interview with Rabbi Asher Weiss in the weekly *Mishpacha*, where he says:

*We must not change an iota in our sense of responsibility for the entirety of Israel. What else? We ought to be somewhat more modest, a bit more humble in political life...In our practice we did not always add to the love of heaven. If we showed more kindness and friendly love, many things in the country would look different.* (*Mishpacha*, September 28, 2000, eve of the Jewish New Year)

### **Criticism of the Media and of the Courts**

In the 1998 municipal elections, the Haredi attacks on the media and on the courts became more extreme. “Indeed the anti-religious voice uses official and semi-official vehicles, including the media, the press, the youth centers, and even a High Court of Justice” (*Hamodia*, November 12, 1998). Again: “The High Court of Justice and the courts are the two chief agents in the campaign against Haredi Judaism, they are the bitterest enemies of Judaism, and they are leading towards a terrible state of a total breach with the Jewish people” (*Hamodia*, December 4, 1998).

The enemies were clearly identified: the secular people, the High Court of Justice and the media. The newspaper of the Belz Hassidim, *Hamachane Haharedi* (the Haredi camp), wrote: “Now the powers of darkness in the media and in the police, in the District Attorney’s office and in the courts will focus on persecuting the Haredi representatives. Even if they are found innocent, at least they will fear to act on behalf of the senders. This is the epitome of dictatorship. That is how they paralyzed Rabbi Deri and Shas for several years” (*Hamachane Haharedi*, November 19, 1998). In the Ashkenazic Haredi press, there is almost no mention of the need to talk, to maintain a dialogue, to promote friendliness. There is no reference to the values of friendliness and avoidance of strife. On the contrary, the expressions used are those of combat and struggle with heretics and Hellenists.

The Sephardic Haredi press was more moderate than its Ashkenazic counterpart: “The task of Shas in the whole election campaign is to bring more and more brothers closer.” The leftists are presented as brothers, still sitting in the dark. But “in every Jew wherever he may be there is a Jewish spark. One has only to peel off the rind and it is revealed in all its splendor and glory” (*Yom Le’Yom*, November 5, 1998). The Shas movement devoted much effort to the election campaign, appealing to the traditionalist public of eastern descent. In the course of the campaign there were rallies and meetings, with rabbis and poets; bottles of oil and prayer books were distributed, all in order to ensure the support of the traditionalist voters.

### Characteristics of the 1998 Election

The 1998 elections had four main characteristics: the indifference of the non-Haredi public, support of militant anti-Haredi campaign by the established secular public, an impressive growth of the strength of Shas, and the failure of the incumbent mayor Ehud Olmert to expand support for his list.

*The indifference of the non-Haredi public* showed itself in low voting rates. The general rate of participation was 41.7 percent (Choshen and Korach, 1999). Particularly low voting rates were recorded in the poor neighborhoods inhabited mainly by people of eastern descent. In these neighborhoods, the rate was between 30-40 percent. A great effort was invested by various institutions such as the Jerusalem Community Center Association to motivate the non-Haredi public to vote. The mayor joined the effort and so did a private high-tech entrepreneur who financed the public campaign. Despite the great effort, a large part of the public remained indifferent.

*Public indifference* was no novel phenomenon. Diskin (1999) points out that the municipal voting rate has decreased continually throughout the years. In the first four elections, the rate was more than 70 percent. In 1969, with the addition of the East Jerusalem population, which mostly refrained from voting, the rate dropped considerably. A further drop was recorded since 1978, apparently because of the separation of the elections for the Knesset from those for the local authorities, and because of the direct election of mayors. Since then the voting rate did not exceed 48.3 percent. The rate in the 1998 elections was the lowest ever: 42.3 percent.

***Wide support by the established secular public of a militant anti-Haredi attitude*** was led by Ornan Yekutieli. This approach was very successful: Yekutieli's new list, "Jerusalem Now," has four representatives. Meretz avoided attacking the Haredim but was identified with the struggle against them. This faction obtained three seats and on the whole the weight of the rivals of the Haredim rose from four to seven seats.

The achievements of these lists exceeded those run by the mayoral candidates: "One Jerusalem," headed by Shimon Shetreet, won two seats and "Unified Jerusalem," headed by Ehud Olmert, won three. This was evidence that the secular public is undergoing a process of becoming more extreme and joining the lists representing the struggle with the Haredim. This extremism augured the general extremist turn of the secular public that manifested itself in the 1999 general election to the Knesset.

***There was an impressive growth of the Shas faction*** following the elections, from two representatives to five. The United Torah Judaism (Agudat Yisrael and Degel Hatorah) rose from six representatives to seven. This growth, from 13 to 15 representatives, gave the Haredi and religious parties the power to block any political move.

The rise of Shas resulted from great support given to the movement in areas populated by residents of eastern descent. Much support was recorded especially in the neighborhoods and tenements of the immigrants of the 1950s in the south and north of the city (Chosen and Korach, 1999).

***The mayor in office did not sweep the public.*** His list, "Unified Jerusalem" won only 6.6 percent of the votes and three seats in the Council instead of five in the previous one. Yet through the support of the Haredim and the residents of the less established neighborhoods, Ehud Olmert beat his rival and was elected for another term by a majority of 61 percent of the votes. The drop from five to three Council seats indicates the mayor's inability to create a power base for himself among the voters, particularly those close to the right wing. Lacking a supportive rear, the mayor encountered difficulties in negotiating with the Haredi and religious parties and had to negotiate from a weak position.

A precondition for a coalition in which Ehud Olmert's municipal list would be a strong participant is the support of the right-wing voters. This Ehud Olmert has been unable to achieve as mayor. It seems rather that the right-wing camp has crumbled and its voters have wandered to the Haredi lists and to the left-wing extremes. The result is a blow to the mayor's standing. Thus, for example, the organ of the Belz Hassidim Hamachane Haharedi gave the election results the caption "a head without a town" ("head of town" is Hebrew for mayor). The newspaper noted Olmert's dependence on the Haredi parties and his scant interest in city affairs (*Hamachane Haharedi*, November 12, 1998).

### **The Process of Forming the Coalition after the 1998 Elections**

The 1998 elections produced a ruptured political map. On the two sides of the political scene were two ideologically opposed groups: the religious Haredi group on the one side and the anti-religious group on the other. Because of the changes in the political make-up of the Council, the forming of a coalition became an extremely exhausting process in which the Haredi factions were active and initiatory. Although the non-religious lists won 16 seats, the mayor did not form a wide coalition with all the factions, nor did he threaten to form a non-Haredi coalition in order to exert pressure on the Haredim. On the contrary, immediately upon his election, he announced that he would form a coalition without Shetreet ("One Jerusalem") and without Meretz. This announcement instantly made the Haredim and the religious a veto bloc in the planned coalition since they constituted a majority on the Council (15 of 26). Simultaneously the mayor tried to keep his promise to Ornan Yekutieli, head of "Jerusalem Now," and include him in the coalition but the Haredim and the religious strongly objected to this and exploited their majority by using a veto bloc.

Rendering the Haredim and the religious a veto bloc was not Ehud Olmert's only mistake in the course of forming the coalition. In order to reduce the Haredi-religious objection to Ornan Yekutieli's entry into the coalition, Olmert deliberately delayed the forming of the coalition. In the three months between his election and the formation of the coalition, he traveled abroad twice, believing that by not appointing – mainly Haredi – deputies, he would mitigate

the Haredi objections. In reality the opposite occurred. Deputy Mayor Uri Luplianski summoned two secular factions, “Ani Yerushalmi” (I am a Jerusalemite) headed by Yehoram Gaon and “Kehilot Yisrael” (Israel Communities) led by Larissa Gerstein, and threatened to set up an adversarial council with them. (Yehoram Gaon and Larissa Gerstein acted this way in the hope of attaining portfolios for which they yearned: Gaon aspired to the culture portfolio and Gerstein to the absorption portfolio.) Relying on the veto bloc, Uri Luplianski announced that the adversarial council would appoint deputies, would activate committees and would restrict the mayor.

As against the threat of the Haredim, who clearly showed in whose hands lay municipal power, the mayor retracted his objection to including Shetreet and Meretz in the coalition, believing that through them he could impose the addition of Yekutieli to the coalition. But he was too late. The Haredim with the help of the two secular factions had formed a veto bloc and barred this move. During the entire process Aryeh Deri, head of Shas, acted behind the scenes in the interests of the Sephardic Haredim in the municipality and Knesset Member Yitzhak Levi acted behind the scenes in favor of the NRP representatives. The mayor drew the inevitable conclusion: he accepted the Haredi demands and abandoned the inclusion of Yekutieli in the coalition. In reaction, Meretz decided not to join. In contrast, Shimon Shetreet, whose campaign was based on the plea to save Jerusalem from Ehud Olmert and the Haredim joined the coalition as “acting mayor.” The crisis ended with a clear Haredi victory upon which they also attained the finance portfolio.

The process of constituting the coalition makes it plain that in the 1998 elections, the political power structure in Jerusalem was definitely and unequivocally determined. It was not the mayor who determined how the coalition in Jerusalem would look but rather the heads of the Haredi and religious parties. It became clear to the mayor that unlike Teddy Kollek in his time, he is not free to put together a coalition of his choosing and he must obey the dictates of the Haredi factions. Meretz in fact drew the lesson and refrained from joining the coalition but this gesture, which amounted to a moral protest, could not alter realities. Jerusalem entered a new era in which the Haredim and the religious are those who set the tone politically.

## **The Period After the 1998 Elections**

Not only did the secular public in Jerusalem feel threatened by the election results, but also the mayor. It is possible that he felt that the deal he had concocted with the Haredim turned against him to the possible detriment of his standing as mayor. Already during the election campaign, the mayor tried to motivate the secular residents to participate and he backed the campaign of the Community Center Association and of the Jerusalem Foundation to get secular people out to vote. It seems that Ehud Olmert felt threatened by the Haredim, realized that things are getting out of hand, and therefore wanted to free himself in the 1998 elections from his dependence on the Haredim. The proceedings of the City Council between 1999 and 2000 were marked by the foundering of Ehud Olmert's pact with the Haredim. Whereas in his first term the mayor preferred the elected personnel to the executives, in his second term he changed his mind and preferred the executives. It seems that Ehud Olmert concluded that the executives are professional, objective and responsive to the needs and values of the entire population. The change in Ehud Olmert's approach caused tension with the Haredi representatives and especially with those of Shas. In the years 1998 to 2000, the mayor prevented the convening of the site allocations committee, chaired by a Shas representative, and there was much friction between the director general of the municipality and the chairman of the finance committee, also of Shas.

The friction between Olmert and the Haredim is also discernible through the position taken by the Haredi representatives towards the new plans advanced by the mayor. These representatives piled up difficulties for the approval of plans that Olmert was promoting including those for the creation of a municipal company for renovating the city center. In reaction Olmert acted towards slowing down the flow of money to Haredi institutions. The Haredim and the religious objected to the recovery plan supported by the mayor and absented themselves from the session in August 2000 in which the issue was to be decided. In response Olmert formed a secular coalition which approved the plan. Are these events intimations of a new, though belated, collaboration of the secular representatives in the municipality who wish to form a counter-bloc to the Haredi-religious one? Time will tell.



The main conflict over public space evolving in this period is that between the north of the city, where there is the great concentration of the Haredi population, and the southwest, the large concentration of secular and traditionalist residents. The representatives of the Haredi lists and the Jerusalem Development Authority are pushing all the troublesome public facilities to the southwest: the stadium, the sports arena, the mass entertainment site, and the bus terminal. The existing facilities are already harming the nearby residents: they increase the traffic volume, create heavy parking competition, and create noise and environmental pollution in the area. Under the existing political conditions, there is little likelihood that the municipality will be responsive to the distress of the secular residents of this area. On the contrary, these days the municipality is busy transferring the planned arena from the entry to the city to the Malha area in the southwest. The consequences are ever-growing conflicts between residents of the southwest on the one hand and the mayor with his Haredi deputy in charge of planning and building in the city on the other.

## 7 The Elections as Seen by Culture Groups

The Haredim and secular residents interpreted the loss of the secular hegemony in the 1993 elections very precisely, but each side attaches its own significance to it. These interpretations are very important because they are the ones constituting the city image, giving the city its character in the view of the people. In the long run, such images could shape the behavior of residents by influencing their inclination to stay in the city or leave, to invest in the city or not.

### The Ashkenazic Haredi Press

The Haredi press described the political change in the Jerusalem City Council in 1993 with expressions of emotion and great hope. *Hamodia*, the Agudat Yisrael organ, wrote: “Jerusalem, city of our splendor, indeed woke up with the help of heaven to a morning more luminous and joyful,” “the victory is brilliant and there is a special sense of fulfillment and contentment” (*Hamodia*, November 5, 1993). Knesset member Avraham Ravitz of Yahadut Hatorah said: “Undoubtedly we have succeeded in putting our stamp on Jerusalem, but this success is not only local but influential throughout the country, let us fly our flag in the whole country. Our victory heralds the first stage of the deliverance of Israel from the claws of heresy” (*Yated Ne’eman*, November 14, 1993).

The message of the Haredim was clear: tens of thousands of Jerusalemites put an end to the gloomy and oppressive past. The rule of Teddy Kollek and his secular colleagues, which according to the Haredim offended and harmed them ended and with it ended “the Hellenistic heretic culture.” Among the

Haredim there could be discerned a clear sense of liberation and relief. “Beforehand there were daily fears of offenses against the holiness of the Sabbath and against the rights of the Haredi public,” whereas “now there began a new era in Jerusalem history. We have pledged to preserve the holiness of Jerusalem and Please God we shall do that. We have undertaken to obtain land for synagogues, Torah education institutions, and public institutions, to equalize the conditions for the maintenance of educational institutions, and to be full partners on the City Council” (*Hamodia*, November 8, 1993). These words suggest not only a sense of victory but also a great hope for parity between Haredim and non-Haredim in the spheres of education and political influence.

There is a clear message in them: the Haredim are participating in political life in order to protect the values and the rights of the Haredi public in town. Councilor Rabbi Uri Maklev said: “The election of the mayor and the shared management of the city obliged Ehud Olmert to look at things with Haredi eyes so that the city is led in a style befitting the singularity of Jerusalem, the holy city” (*Mishpacha*, Beshalach 5754, No. 126).

The 1993 municipal campaign was described in the Haredi media with warlike images. The elections were depicted as “the battle for the holy city of Jerusalem” (*Hamodia*, November 2, 1993). The voters were described as “dedicated soldiers” and also “as one embattled family in the war for the honor of Jerusalem” (*Hamodia*, November 4, 1993). The municipal election results were defined as a reversal and a dramatic change. The day after the elections, Councilor Meir Porush, senior representative of Yahadut Hatorah who headed the Haredi education division, congratulated Ehud Olmert and wished him the privilege of preserving the holiness and unity of Jerusalem.

A reporter who, in Teddy Kollek’s time, had served in the council recalled the horrors of former times “when we had to bury inside the rage at Mayor Teddy Kollek who was intoxicated by his victory, his ‘One Jerusalem’ having won an absolute majority in the Council which he intended to exploit to try to blur and pervert, God forbid, the character of Jerusalem by bringing in Greek culture” (*Hamodia*, November 4, 1993).

According to the Haredim, the attitude towards them in Teddy Kollek's days was narrow and instrumental: one identified religious needs and fulfilled them. The religious and Haredim were not included in the decision-making of general urban significance, and their influence outside the domain of the population they represented was marginal. Furthermore, according to the Haredim, Teddy Kollek's term was characterized by sheer disregard for and even severe harm to Haredi values. One report describes Teddy Kollek thus:

*Although in his 28 years in office Kollek built Jerusalem, he ruined its spiritual character. There were those who compared him this week to King Herod, whose reign was distinguished by splendid architectonic enterprises in Jerusalem, but it was the same Herod who executed all the Sages of Israel. To everyone of intelligence it was clear that at the first given opportunity any Jew who acknowledges the holiness of Jerusalem would see to the deposition of the man who disfavored the blessed growth of the Haredi public (Yated Hashavua, November 5, 1993).*

All of this changed, according to the Haredim, with Ehud Olmert's election. In contrast to what happened in Teddy Kollek's period very important affairs relating to the entire population were now entrusted to the Haredim, starting with the determination of municipal budgets to the planning of the city and its improvement and beautification. "Great responsibility rests on our shoulders," said Haredi representative Uri Luplianski who was just appointed deputy mayor and chairman of planning and building.

This is how Hamodia described the two periods:

*Before 1993 and Ehud Olmert's election, Jerusalem was in frequent turmoil over day to day fears of infringements on the holiness of the Sabbath and the rights of the Haredi public, over the building of the Mormon Center...All these were stopped following the agreement between the Haredim and Ehud Olmert and after Yahadut Hatorah became the largest faction in the City Council and its members were active in the most important committees in the municipality and guarded the rights of the Haredi public in the city of holiness and the temple, and fought for the holiness of Jerusalem and for the walls of the Sabbath against any breaches (Hamodia, November 8, 1993).*

These words reflect a post-election euphoria. They ignore the fact that many streets were closed to traffic on the Sabbath in Kollek's time and that he tried to maintain the status quo in the city by preventing the opening of entertainment places in the center of town on Saturdays and holidays. He did this in places that Haredi Jews pass on their way back from prayers at the Western Wall, for instance, and in residential areas. It was rather the court that enabled changes during Teddy Kollek's time and specifically the ruling of Justice Ayala Procaccia of 1988 to the effect that the municipality had exceeded its authority in applying a municipal by-law to close down entertainment places on Saturdays and holidays.

The columnists praised the mobilization of the Haredi public and openly mocked the secular public for failing to mobilize. Thus, for example, they wrote about "that Israeli faction that hoped to succeed and be protected by a foreign nation, instead of a young generation not there to fulfill its expectations... how many children and grandchildren does that losing faction have that would vote for fathers and grandfathers and continue in their steps?" (*Hamodia*, November 5, 1993). In these words there is a clear sense of superiority and an exploitation of the secular argument concerning the growth of the Haredi population. Nevertheless the columnists warned against euphoria. "Ehud Olmert will not dare to close down even one cinema even if he wants to. And whoever believes that the new coalition could close one further alley in Jerusalem is deluding himself. Even after all this, one must feel as 'in exile among Jews' that would be the worst of exiles" (*Hamodia*, October 23, 1998).

Unlike the 1993 elections, the Ashkenazi Haredim showed a high degree of self-confidence in the course of the 1998 elections. They no longer presented themselves as a persecuted minority, but as a ruling majority whose representatives in the municipality had concrete achievements. Deputy Mayor Uri Luplianski reported with great satisfaction on the enormous reversal that occurred in the last term in planning and building, in the Haredi education division, and in the Torah culture division, and he pointed out the thousands of permits for succah balconies, the hundreds of classrooms built, and the thousands of classrooms that were renovated and repaired. He ended his report saying: "The public will surely appreciate this in comparison to Teddy Kollek's period" (*Hamodia*, October 23, 1998).

Jerusalem was no longer described as a secular heretic city where the Haredim form a minority but as a “city whose vast and decisive majority is religious and Haredi. A city the majority of whose residents spurn the secular heretical entity and wish to keep away from the Tel Avivian atmosphere which should not ascend and come to the city of holiness and the temple.” Although there are in Jerusalem non-Haredi residents, but as the columnists untiringly explained, “This population certainly wishes to live in the shadow of religious Jewry and alongside it” (*Hamodia*, December 4, 1998). Jerusalem of 1998 was presented as a “Jewish city of distinctive religious character in which a secular minority dwells... there is not and could not be an argument over Jerusalem’s religiosity” (*Hamodia*, December 4, 1998). The Hamachane Haharedi treated the non-Haredi Jews thus: “The tens of thousands of Jerusalem residents that are not defined as religious favor tradition, love the city, are not interested in the ‘Wars of the Jews,’ they understandingly accept the closing of a street on Saturdays where there is a high concentration of Sabbath observers... And they are also sure that any administration of the city, be it even completely Haredi and religious, would not deprive them or discriminate against them” (*Hamachane Haharedi*, November 19, 1998).

For the first time statements are made indicating that the Haredim can already see the day when the city will be run by a Haredi majority. In the period between 1993 and 1998 under Ehud Olmert’s leadership, Jerusalem altered its character, according to them, and became a city most of whose residents are religious and Haredi.

### **The Sephardic Haredi Press**

The Sephardic Haredi press waved the banner, in the 1988 elections, of the restoration of Sephardic dignity. *Yom Le’Yom*, the Shas organ said, “Whoever expected that there would be a movement whose leaders are Sephardic of eastern descent, who are faithful to the Torah exponents and who would effect within one decade such a mighty revolution? (*Yom Le’Yom*, November 26, 1993). Whereas the Ashkenazic Haredi press addressed the deprivation of the entire Haredi sector, Shas’s *Yom LeYom* dealt directly with the discrimination of the Sephardim and distinguished between the “Ashkenazic Jewish voter in town” and “the voters of Sephardic Jewry.” The

reports and the columns in the paper were about one central topic: the return of the crown to its former glory and the restoration of Sephardic dignity. The goal Shas set for the municipal elections in Jerusalem was defined in this paper as: “To restore the crown to its former glory and to raise the prestige of the Torah in the city” (*Yom LeYom*, October 15, 1993). And further: “Shas retrieved the dignity of the people of eastern descent, after being robbed of the cultural heritage of eastern Jewry” (*Yom Le’Yom*, November 26, 1993).

In the 1998 elections, Shas celebrated its impressive victory and transmitted a message of confidence and entrenchment. “Despite the High Court of Justice, secular incitement and the halting of the distribution of the amulets, the oil and the prayer books,” said the Shas paper, “the movement achieved a great victory. This is a sign that the prayer book is simply more convincing to the people of Israel than all the papers, the televisions and the brain-washing” (*Yom Le’Yom*, November 5, 1998).

Alongside the Haredi sense of victory there remained among the Sephardic Haredim a feeling of deprivation. Ehud Olmert’s first term did not do them enough good, they said. Although Ehud Olmert improved the Haredi condition in education, the improvement, according to them, was directed at the Ashkenazic Haredim, while the Sephardic deprivation remained. “In his tenure, 426 classrooms were given to the Haredi sector. This is commendable. It is a situation that did not exist previously. Out of these 426 classrooms we were promised, but have not yet received, 20 classrooms. Is this the proportion?” (*Yom Le’Yom*, October 22, 1998).

The lesson drawn by the Sephardic Haredim from this reality was that Shas should not expect help from Ashkenazic Haredim or from Ehud Olmert but can lean only on its own strength. “In the previous elections,” said Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, “we got only two mandates as compared to our Ashkenazic brothers who got seven mandates. Therefore they were given the Haredi education division. The Jerusalem municipality gave out hundreds of rooms for religious Torah schools and we received fewer than ten rooms. We must not expect pity neither from Agudat Yisrael nor from Ehud Olmert. One should face them with much strength, with a large number of mandates and then they will show us consideration and give us our due” (*Yom Le’Yom*, October 9, 1998).

A proclamation Shas publicized shortly before the 1998 elections says:

*Yahadut Hatorah did nothing for the Sephardim... 428 classrooms were approved by the Jerusalem municipality for Torah teaching. Miller (the Yahadut Hatorah representative) gave the Sephardim two classes. Rabbi Ovadia Yosef called Miller to him and said: "Give me a few classrooms that I can open in Ir Ganim, in the Katamons, we will save souls. The classrooms you have are for Kaminitz, Gur, they are all in any case Haredim. It is all a matter of salaries for Hassidim. With us it is a matter of saving souls. Pupils, instead of going to secular schools and becoming burglars, thieves, rapists, robbers, we save them and make human beings out of them." Rabbi Ovadia begged Miller, "Give me an address in Ir Ganim – save souls!" but he gave only two classrooms out of 428. Note this shocking discrimination!!*

This is how the Shas press summarized Ehud Olmert's first term of office: "Our hands are tied. The ruling circle objects... five years of humiliation, of exasperation, of missed Torah lessons, one's heart aches for the children we could have saved in Gilo, Ir Ganim, Pisgat Ze'ev, Kiryat Hayovel, if we had the facilities" (*Yom Le'Yom*, October 22, 1998).

Ehud Olmert's "double standard" led to a rift with Rabbi Ovadia Yosef. The Sephardic-Haredi message was clear: Shas's rivalry is not only with the secular public but also with the Ashkenazic who benefit from the mayor's partiality and therefore the members of the communities of eastern descent must unite under the leadership of Shas and fight the battle of the deprived. "It is the holy duty of every man of Israel to act openly to influence and support the holy Shas movement in the coming elections," since this movement straightened the back of the glorious Sephardi Jewry, when for forty years we were under the rule of our Ashkenazic brothers who saw to it that we were deprived and discriminated against... the actions of Shas are for the entire people of Israel, for the indigent classes and for the Yeshiva world" (*Yom Le'Yom*, November 5, 1998).



## The National Religious Press

Hatzofe, the NRP paper, regarded Ehud Olmert's victory in 1993 as a move that "returns Jerusalem to the early 1950s, when the municipality was ruled by a right-wing coalition headed by religious mayors: S.Z. Shragai and Y. Kariv, both of the Mizrachi. This time there will be a coalition headed by the Likud with all the religious parties" (*Hatzofe*, November 3, 1993). Although Hatzofe praises former mayor Teddy Kollek for having beautified the city, the paper bothers to note that a new era has opened in Jerusalem's history where the new management regards the city as "not only a city that needs beautiful architecture, but as a city that must be given a national religious content" (*Hatzofe*, November 3, 1993).

The victory of the right was described as a victory of national values over the left and the Oslo accord.

*The people said no to Rabin... the Jerusalem voters stated unambiguously, not only in the mayoral vote but also in the election for the City Council, that they are no longer prepared to identify with the policy of retreat and backing down of Rabin's government. In a nutshell, one may say, the election results in Jerusalem show that it is the Jewish nation that won. All the votes that Faisal Hussein donated to Teddy Kollek were of no avail to him in trying to prevent the right from overtaking the city...and indeed before us is a great reversal that has political significance far beyond the local affairs of Jerusalem and therein lies its importance to the people of Israel and to the State of Israel (Hatzofe, November 3, 1993).*

Unlike the Haredi press characterized by religious and mystical enthusiasm, Hatzofe accentuates the nationalistic conception. The reversal that occurred in the municipal elections was conceived as having significance transcending local affairs and as a signal of a future political change of national significance.

As opposed to the euphoria that marked the national religious party's reactions to the 1993 elections, the reactions to those of 1998 convey disappointment, fears and self-reproach. The NRP lost some of its strength in Jerusalem as well as in other places. As a result there was internal criticism and anxiety over the

strengthening of the Shas movement. The reports turn on Shas's growing strength in the neighborhoods, on its great appeal to the public of eastern descent, and on NRP's inability to compete with the means deployed by Shas.

*... and concerning democracy, the Shas movement made it clear to us again that on its way to conquering another position and another community all means are acceptable. It massively distributed a 'charm and remedy kit' among naïve residents who promised, and sometimes swore, to vote Shas for the municipalities. Nobody is claiming that there is anything wrong with accepting a book of remedies or a bottle of oil blessed by the eldest kabbalist Rabbi Itzhak Cadouri. The NRP rightly saw the need to head the opposition to the distribution of the charms, and the Halachic ruling by Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu against the use of amulets and bottles of oil to obtain votes was effective in many towns and villages (Hatsofe, November 11, 1998).*

The reaction in the National Religious camp to the 1998 elections indicates the beginning of an awakening from the hope of imbuing Jerusalem with religious content. Instead anxieties are surfacing about the strengthening of the Haredim and of Shas in particular. Disappointment is voiced in the press about the failure to achieve a similar mobilization of the national religious public.

### **The Secular Press: From Fear to Defensive Coping**

On the opposite side to the Haredi joyous and optimistic response to the 1993 elections one could sense the great fear of the secular population. In the local weekly 'Kol Hair' that promotes a secular approach and opinions close to the left, the change was described in completely different colors: "[they will] destroy, close down, sabotage, [thus] will agitate, liquidate" (*Kol Hair*, November 5, 1993). The weekly "Yerushalayim" came out with a large front page headline: "A Haredi Coalition" and the subhead read: "The Likud, NRP and Agudat Yisrael are the great victors, the secular residents voted with their feet, alarm in city hall". A further title was "a divided city, the Haredim conquered the City Council" (*Yerushalayim*, November 5, 1993).

The reports portrayed great distress. The catch phrase of Ehud Olmert's selling the town to the Haredim was repeated again and again. In the supplement of the weekly 'Kol Hair' that was devoted to the election results there appeared a full page picture of the head of Yahadut Hatorah, Meir Porush under the title: "The Next Mayor". One of the reports said: "Meir Porush, not Ehud Olmert deposed Teddy Kollek, Meir Porush crowned Ehud Olmert." Haredi power as manifested in the 1993 elections was greatly respected. "It makes one envious. Not because of the demographic strength of the Haredim, but because of the rabbis' ability to mobilize them for political action. This too is the nature of democracy" (*Kol Hair*, November 5, 1993). The criticism was directed at the secular voters who, with their indifference, scored a "self-goal". The analysis pointed to the existence of a political vacuum that Ehud Olmert and the Haredim penetrated.

In the weekly 'Yerushalayim' Yael Admoni summarized the elections thus:

*Jerusalem is not a city of change. Its right wing majority remained a right wing majority, the Haredi blackmail remained Haredi blackmail... Jerusalem stretches between its extremities already many decades... Jerusalem got this week the mayor it deserves. Kollek was the rustling and shiny wrapping that hid the bad taste of the local extremism. Olmert is the bitter taste itself, without cellophane... and here comes the crushing victory of political conservatism, of political obstinacy, of the digging in of thought (Yerushalayim, November 5, 1993).*

The secular fears caused anxiety in Haredi circles. In the Haredi weekly 'Mishpacha' a report appeared that said: "This is part of a continuous battle of fostering the fear of Haredim [Hebrew for fearers (of God)]" and there was the worry lest the elections be annulled on the pretext of forgeries. "Because to return half the city to the Arabs is acceptable to them 'for it is impossible to rule over a people against its will' but to return the city to the Haredim? Are you kidding?" (*Mishpacha*, Oct.-Nov. 1993).

The secular response to the 1998 municipal results was relatively moderate. Public opinion had become resigned to the strengthening of the Haredim. Still there were complaints about the non-participation of the secular constituency

and fears were raised of a possible flight of residents, of entrepreneurs, and of enterprises from the city, and of the continued fading of the city center. The claim was also heard that the allure of the city, which in the past attracted academics and young people, has dissipated “under the impression of an oppressive Haredi hegemony” (*Kol Hair*, November 20, 1993).

The main criticism was not leveled at the Haredim but rather at the mayor, because of the pact he made with his Haredi partners. He was branded as “the idol of the Haredim: they will turn a blind eye to his violations of the Sabbath in the Teddy Stadium, and when they feel deprived they forgive him turning their wrath toward their representatives in the municipality.” (*Kol Hair*, October 30, 1998).

Regarding entertainment places there was unanimity that “there is no room for concern. Not yet. The mayor will try hard not to close down entertainment places, because that will give secular people a good feeling that things are not changing” (*Kol Hair*, November 20, 1998).

In conclusion, the interpretations given to the election results reveal the way the changes were perceived by the different culture groups. The Ashkenazic Haredim, who had interpreted the 1993 election results as a political reversal and as the end of their oppression, internalized the reversal by the 1998 elections and projected the image of a majority confident of its hegemony in Jerusalem. The Shas movement that in 1993 emphasized the restoration of the Sephardic dignity chose in the 1998 elections to accentuate the persistent discrimination against its councilors, and against its voters, not only by the secular public but also by the Ashkenazic Haredi leaders of the municipality. The euphoria of the national-religious, who saw the 1993 elections as a victory of national values over the left, disappeared after the 1998 elections. Like the secular camp, the national religious expressed fear of the augmentation of the Haredi Camp, and especially of the growth of Shas. The secular camp, which had been worried and fearful in the face of the rise of the Haredim in 1993, adapted and internalized the change by the 1998 elections. Its chief concern now was the preservation of the special privileges of the group such as the continued operation of entertainment places on Saturday.

These interpretations are the images enveloping the city and lending it its distinctiveness in the eyes of the public. All the images that evolved since 1993 are the very opposite of the image that Teddy Kollek as mayor tried to confer on the city. Teddy Kollek tried throughout his tenure to create for Jerusalem the image of a multi-cultural city and to present it as a center to which world figures made pilgrimage. The city was not presented as a battlefield between nations and cultures, but as a multi-lingual and a multi-cultural city like the Vienna of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The likening of Jerusalem to a cultural mosaic was a part of this effort. Upon Teddy Kollek's stepping down from the mayoralty the image switched almost instantly. The Haredi media portrayed Jerusalem as a place in which spirit overcame matter, in which Hellenistic culture was rejected and the image of Jerusalem as the city of Holiness and the Temple was reinstated. The national-religious media clothed Jerusalem with a national image connoting the defeat of the political heritage of Rabin by those that opposed the Oslo accord, and the return to Jerusalem of the national-religious content that characterized it in the fifties. Whether knowingly or not, the secular media cooperated in the changing of the image. It bemoaned the change without offering any alternative. If indeed the outcome of the political battles is decided in the theatre of the media, it seems that the cultural character of Jerusalem in the future has already been determined.

## 8 Ways of Strengthening Democracy in Jerusalem

Jerusalem is presently run by a City Council that has been democratically elected, but in substance it far from meets the criteria of a local democracy. This situation reflects a local democratic deficit. The question thus presents itself: What can be done in order to amend the situation and to increase the symmetry between the demographic-cultural make-up of the city and the needs of those living in it on the one hand, and the way it is being run on the other.

There are a number of ways of dealing with the local democratic deficit: Dissolution of the council, political resignation and outward migration, division of the political power among the various groups, and participatory democracy.

### **Dissolution of the Council and Setting Up a Nominative Committee**

Due to the local democratic deficit, the large budgetary deficit and the growth of the municipal debt, the central government could intervene by dissolving the city council and appointing a nominative committee that would manage the city in a professional, orderly and fair manner. It seems though that as long as Ehud Olmert is Mayor, the Israeli government will not move to dissolve the council. Yet this could change should Ehud Olmert decide to resign and turn to national politics.

## **Political Resignation and Outward Migration**

Political resignation means despair of the possibility of changing the political reality. The remaining option to the secular public is that of leaving the city. According to this outlook, the loss of secular hegemony in Jerusalem is irrevocable. There is no point in a strategy of fighting and crying out. All that is left to the secular public is to leave. The Haredi public would also move out, mainly because of the costliness of housing. But its relative weight would rise due to its high rate of natural growth. The result of a secular flight would be the accelerated Haredification of the city with an increasing degree of symmetry between the make-up of the population and the composition of the Council (Hasson, 1999). Jerusalem would thus follow in the steps of Bene Beraq. The outcome would be a drastic decline in the status of Jerusalem. The city would become poorer and lose its national and international importance.

## **Division of Power**

This approach holds that one needs to change the political system so as to enable the division of power amongst the various cultural groups in the city. The change of the political system could be effected in one of these two ways:

1. Switching from general to regional elections.
2. Autonomy for the various population groups in town on a regional basis.

This would redress the representational distortion in the city council, and each section of the public would attain its proper representation and the degree of influence entailed thereby. The management of the city on the basis of regions having a measure of autonomy would enable each group to fashion its residential space according to its world-view. In the following I shall present these two ways:

### ***Regional Elections on the Model of the Ward System in the US and Britain***

The Jerusalem public feels alienated from its delegates. It does not know them and in any event finds it difficult to reach them and connect through them with

the political processes. Furthermore, it seems that the public in Jerusalem, as in other places, is not interested in urban issues. What concerns it primarily is the quality of life in its residential vicinity. Quality of life is measured by various specifics of physical and social infrastructure, namely, the availability of parking, sound physical infrastructure, clearing of garbage, clubs and activities, health centers, libraries, and also a sense of security regarding the cultural character of one's residential area based on confidence in the public representatives and in the municipal apparatus.

Dividing the city into electoral districts in which candidates would compete for public favor through catering to local needs might reduce the alienation and enable a more direct and closer contact between the public and their representatives. In order to implement this proposal the city would be divided into electoral zones, and the elections would be regional rather than general.

A regional organization of the elections in Jerusalem is justified and necessary given the cultural differences and the substantial differences in voting rates among the various cultural groups. Such elections would enable the installing of a council whose composition is more adequate to the make up of the city's population. Alongside the setting up of an adequately representative council, one should promote the autonomy of the various groups. The decentralization of authority to the community councils by legislation would constitute an important step in this direction.

### ***Autonomy: The Decentralization of Powers to the Neighborhood Administrations by Legislation***

It appears that the public is not interested in overall urban politics but is very interested in what is happening in its residential vicinity. It is therefore necessary to establish a link between the range of political activity of the representative and the sphere of interest of the urban resident. Such a correspondence would be achieved through legislation that would divide the municipal space into regional spaces. Such a division would enable the election of community councils at the regional level. To achieve this goal, one could use the model of the existing neighborhood administrations in the city. According to this proposal some thirty neighborhood administrations should be specified and operated in the city. The neighborhood administrations would



be grouped in seven communal councils (except the old city, which ought to be discussed separately because of the political sensitivity involved), which would receive statutory standing. The powers of all the community councils would be equal, and they would apply in the following spheres: planning and development at the local level, dealing with community neighborhood issues, involving the residents and seeing to their welfare. The representatives in the communal councils would be chosen in the elections that would take place on a regional basis, i.e., according to the districts of the neighborhood administrations incorporated within the community councils. The Jerusalem municipality would constitute a “super-municipality” and the seven community councils would be represented in the municipality through a special committee that would be instituted for this purpose.

### **Participatory Democracy**

The proposed changes are for the long-term, and meanwhile the composition of the present council might intensify the tendency of non-Haredim – particularly the young – to out-migrate. There is therefore need for immediate action in the fight over the character of the city. Such action would contribute to the boosting of public involvement in decision-making, to correcting irregular procedures, to increasing accountability, to a fair allocation of resources and to a fashioning of the environment according to the values of the entire population. There is need for a more vigorous participatory democracy engaging non-governmental organizations, community councils, environmental organizations, neighborhood organizations and various sectoral agencies.

The main obstacle preventing social organization is financial. Other obstructions are the lack of leadership and the absence of a culture of social activity. Nevertheless, these are promising beginnings, such as the forum of the chairpersons of the neighborhood administrations, the planners’ forum for the future of Jerusalem, the Sustainable-Jerusalem a coalition of environmental organizations, and the Society for the Preservation of Nature. Also the Jewish world that is interested in Jerusalem the capital of Israel ought to mobilize for this task and support the local activity in Jerusalem.

## Conclusion

In 1993 the representatives of the secular lists lost their position of supremacy in Jerusalem's urban politics. The Haredi lists held the stage: first the Ashkenazic United Torah Judaism and then, in 1998, the Sephardic Haredi Shas list.

Haredi hegemony was evidenced by their receiving the central positions of power in finance, building and planning, improvement and beautification, local tax exemptions, siting of buildings and society and welfare. In addition, two divisions were set up to minister to Haredi cultural and educational needs, thereby acknowledging their apartness from the rest of the city. Even the general education portfolio, which was usually held by the Mayor's list, was passed on in 1998 to the NRP. All that was left in secular hands were secondary portfolios such as sewage and infrastructure.

Seemingly this is not surprising. A glance at fifty years of politics in Jerusalem shows that the city was ruled by a religious-right wing coalition when the state was established and in the first years it had a national religious mayor. Furthermore, in the elections for the Knesset in Jerusalem, the lists of the right and the religious were always stronger than those of the left. The change of 1993 therefore, seems like a rectification of the poor fit between the demographic structure and political inclinations of Jerusalemites and the composition of the council. One could stretch out the parallel and argue that the coalition of the religious and the right in the 1990s was characterized by the same administrative patterns and conduct and caused exactly the same deterioration as that in the early fifties. Against this background, the demand made in 1999 to set up a nominative committee looks much like a repetition of the dissolution of the council in 1955.

These arguments about the repetition of history seem to me wrong. One should bear in mind that those who attained power in the 1993 council were not the right wing and national religious lists that made up the coalition in the 1950s, but rather the Haredi lists whose weight in the first council was negligible. The right in Jerusalem crumbled. Ehud Olmert did not succeed in creating for his list a right wing backing among the citizens. A good part of the residents in the housing projects, who tend to vote for the right refrained from voting and a considerable part voted for Shas. It is the crumbling of the right, more than the weakness of the left, that is responsible for the rise to power in town of the Haredim and for the strengthening of Shas. In contrast to what happened in the fifties, the Haredi parties rather than the national religious achieved the main power positions in Jerusalem.

One can distinguish a few stages in the rise of the Haredim and in their relation to the national religious. In the 1993 elections, the Haredim and the national religious ousted the secular representatives from the main power positions. In the 1998 elections the Haredim pushed out not only the secular delegates but also the national-religious ones. In my view, the possibility has been opened to the Haredim to carry out the third stage, namely to elect a Haredi Mayor and create a Haredi-national religious coalition.

Given these processes it seems to me that the political upheaval that occurred through the 1993 elections was without precedent in the political history of the city. The significance of the overturn has not yet transpired for a number of reasons. At the head of the municipality there is a secular person who enjoys nation-wide prestige. What is more important: backing him is an administrative apparatus most of which is still secular, and this apparatus operates on the basis of professional considerations.

A number of factors joined to effect the political change in Jerusalem. The first was the failure of the 'One Jerusalem' list affiliated to Mapai and its descendents to unite under its leadership the divided Jerusalem public. For a long period between 1965 and 1993, Teddy Kollek succeeded in bringing together under his rule the poor and affluent of Jerusalem, the supporters of the left many of whom reside in the established parts of town, and the supporters of the right who for the most part live in less established neighborhoods.

In 1993 Teddy Kollek's power base split asunder. Consequently the Haredim and the religious took hold of the balance of power in local politics, even as they had long succeeded in doing at the national level. The leaders of the left failed to read the political map, forfeited the opportunity of reaching an understanding with the Haredim and abandoned the arena to Ehud Olmert of the right wing. Even as the former leaders of the left, Ehud Olmert succeeded in making a pact with the Haredim thereby putting an end to the rule of Teddy Kollek.

A second cause of the change of the political map was the rise of Shas at the municipal level. So long as Teddy Kollek was able to bring together the various extremes in the city, little significance was attached to the rise of Shas. Yet following the split of Teddy Kollek's support base, the influence of Shas increased, and it is Shas that brought about the dramatic gain in power of the Haredi and religious parties in the city. For although the largest Haredi faction is that of the United Torah Judaism, with seven seats, without the five seats of Shas, the Haredim would not have achieved such a powerful force in the council. Surprisingly, both Shas and the entire public were not sufficiently aware of the new power that came into being. The principal profiteers from the 1993 change, were the Ashkenazic Haredi parties and the NRP. The Shas movement remained behind with less important portfolios and with a growing sense of discrimination. The exciting phenomenon, both politically and culturally, was that those who enabled the Ashkenazic Haredim to reap the fruits of the political reversal were for the most part traditionalists of Eastern descent who inhabit the poorer sections of Jerusalem, and to whom the Ashkenazic Haredi way of life is foreign.

A third cause of the change in Jerusalem was the increased political involvement of the Ashkenazic Haredi public. The growth of this public and its need of resources for maintaining the systems of education, welfare and housing intensified their political involvement. The increasing involvement was supervised by rabbis, Admors, heads of Yeshivas and political leaders. The Haredim were called upon to vote en masse in order to help the representatives secure the financial resources.

Another reason for the political mobilization of the Ashkenazic Haredi public was the struggle over the character of the city. Participating in the elections

was presented as crucial to their cause. The conception of Jerusalem as a holy city and spiritual center was set in opposition to a Hellenized Jerusalem of heretic culture. They did not see voting as an expression of individual autonomy, but as the fulfillment of a holy duty, an injunction laid upon the public by experts (the rabbis).

A fourth cause of the reversal in Jerusalem was the indifference of the secular public. The general rate of voting dropped from some 70 percent in the first four elections, to about 40 percent in those of 1998. The decrease was not uniform in the different groups. Whereas the voting rate of the traditionalist and secular residents persistently decreased, the Haredi rate was extremely high, about 90 percent.

It is curious that the loss of secular political hegemony in Jerusalem occurred when the Haredi constituency was a minority within the city population, about a fifth of the electorate in the 1998 municipal elections. Contrary to all impressions, some of which are tendentious and inaccurate, the secular and traditionalist public still constitutes a majority among Jerusalem voters. Yet this majority is not adequately represented in the city council due to differences in voting rates.

The traditionalist and secular majority, which for various reasons chose to remain silent, is not represented according to its weight and its influence is slight. Therefore, although the administration formed in Ehud Olmert's time was elected and constituted democratically, it does not properly represent the entire public and does not duly reflect this public's needs and values. As a result of the change, a local democratic deficit was created in Jerusalem. This deficit manifests itself on three levels: The composition of the council, which does not represent the demographic and cultural structure of the city, the power structure within the council, i.e. the distribution of portfolios and committee chairmanships that do not represent the make-up of the council, and the decision processes that accord preference to the Haredi sector over others. Inherent in such a situation is the danger of disregarding the needs of residents together with increasing alienation and dissociation between the public and its delegates.

Indications of the existence of such a danger revealed themselves through irregular decision processes, through many disputes between residents and the municipality over the character of the city, through cases of residents of secular neighborhoods defending themselves against the penetration into their area of land designations for the use of the Haredi public, and the dissatisfaction of non-Haredim with municipal services. In land allocations a marked tendency appeared of preference of Haredi interests over those of the secular public; thus, most of the allocations of public land were to religious and Haredi institutions. Also in exemptions from local tax, a clear pattern transpired of preference given to married Torah students and large families. Lack of adequate representation of non-Haredi residents and discriminatory decision processes both have a bearing on the public's sense of satisfaction with municipal activity and on the willingness to continue living in the city and raising children in it.

Given the democratic deficit one might expect that an effort would be made to promote the dialogue with the public via the neighborhood administrations . Precisely in the places of low voting rates one ought to amend the situation by increasing the dialogue with the residents, by engaging the public in decision-making processes, and even by delegating powers to the neighborhoods and to local organizations.

In Jerusalem precisely the opposite occurred. The neighborhood administrations originally instituted in order to advance the dialogue between the local authority and the residents were pushed aside. The relations between these councils and the Mayor reached an unprecedented low. Those who were intended to effect a new partnership with the municipality, to receive powers from it and to create a new pattern of participatory democracy feel that the Mayor is alienating and constricting them (see Chapter 1). The public, as is evidenced through the activity of local and environmental organizations, senses that the local planning committee headed by a Haredi representative, ignores it, refuses to hear objections, is busy changing the character of residential areas but refuses to divulge any intentions. With this background of a breach of communication between the city hall captains and the general public struggles have abounded over the cultural character of residential areas, environmental issues, and many of the planned projects in the city have become arenas of dispute and struggle.

The inevitable question is whether the Haredim will get to dominate the city council completely and present a mayoral candidate of their own in the next elections. Thus far it seems that the answer is negative. For the Haredim, it has been argued, it is convenient to stand in the shade and not hazard a confrontation with the non-Haredi public. But it is doubtful whether this attitude will persist in a period in which the Haredim see Jerusalem as a city of mostly Haredi and religious people. It seems that gradually the Haredi media are creating for themselves an unrealistic image of their having a majority in town.

The image of Jerusalem as a Haredi city is diametrically opposed to the multi-cultural and international image that former mayor Teddy Kollek tried to attach to the city. There is no doubt that Teddy Kollek was aware of the sensitive and problematic nature of the social fabric of Jerusalem, but he saw clearly that the way to deal with these problems is to camouflage them under a unifying image. Kollek presented the extremism, the tension and the complex relations between the religious and national communities living in the city as a multi-lingual and religiously pluralistic reality, like that of end of 19th century Vienna. Prominent figures in culture, art and science that he brought over helped lend Jerusalem an international status raising it to the level of other western capitals.

One of the great successes of the Haredi public in the struggle over the character of the city is the change of image Teddy Kollek tried to shape for the city. The image of a multi-cultural and tolerant capital of international luster was transformed in one fell swoop into the image of a bastion of religion, nationalism and extremism. It is possible that herein lies one of the worst failures of the present rule. The municipal image of a religious and nationalistic city and the political dominance of the Haredim in the council could very well lead to the Haredim putting forth a Mayoral candidate in the next elections. Should the non-Haredi public internalize the new image and fail to produce an alternative to it, the tendency might grow of secular and traditionalist residents to leave the city. Indeed, today those leaving the city are doing so chiefly for reasons of employment and housing, but, as opinion polls among Jerusalem residents indicate, the main motive for a future exodus would be secular-Haredi relations (Hasson & Gonen, 1997). Should this come to pass, one will be able to say that the coalition formed by Ehud Olmert with

the Haredim ultimately handed the government of Jerusalem over to a Haredi minority.

The realization of the scenario of a Haredi mayor might heighten the tendency of secular and traditionalist people to out-migrate. The likelihood of this scenario's coming true is reflected in the Haredi effort to train a cadre of managers and professionals who are expected to fill senior positions in public administrations, and also in the municipality (see, regarding the development of this and other scenarios, in Hasson, 1999).

These processes make the need all the keener of intervention that would compensate for the local democratic deficit in Jerusalem. Such compensation should be based on strengthening participatory democracy (through local bodies) and direct democracy (through public opinion polling) alongside the existing structure of representational democracy.

How does one compensate for the local democratic deficit? The answers to this question might help in alleviating the alienation between the voters and the elected, and in my opinion, might contribute to reducing out-migration from the city. One must work towards strengthening participatory democracy by empowering the neighborhood administrations, and institutionalizing them by legislation. In this way the public will be able to manage its affairs even without adequate representation in the city council. Such a solution is particularly important in a city in which a large public, the majority, is being run by a minority that became a majority in the council.

Parallel to instituting the neighborhood administrations by legislation one must strengthen representational democracy in the city by switching from general to regional elections. This way a representation more in tune with the demographic and cultural fabric of the city could be achieved. Also the connection between voter and delegate could be tightened, and one could secure accountability and current reporting of municipal activity.

Past experience shows that the Israeli Government has little interest in Jerusalem and its troubles. There is a wide gap between the concern for the "unity of the city and its integrity" and the caring for everyday life in it, for society and economics. There is need of strenuous social activity on the part of residents towards bringing about political and social changes. One should also



call upon the government to give its attention to the condition of the municipality of Jerusalem and to its population. The government must address the deficiencies in local democracy in Jerusalem, the way the city is managed and the future implications of these. The government should take initiative regarding the social system of Jerusalem. It is suggested that the government act through the housing apparatuses towards diversifying the city population. In practice, one should set up neighborhoods for young couples of different cultural groups. One should also endeavor to improve the quality of life of the older and more established population in order to check growing rates of out-migration within this category in recent years. The government ought to enact a law instituting elections in Jerusalem on the basis of quarters and to take measures to transfer powers to the neighborhood administrations. In this way, the government will empower representational democracy and strengthen participatory democracy. The question policy makers must pose to themselves is what is the Jerusalem one should strive for, and what kind of city will it be when the yearned-for peace arrives. Is the quality of the city measured only by the areas falling within its jurisdiction, or also by the composition of its population, by the quality of its society, and by the character of its government? In my opinion the struggle for Jerusalem is not confined only to the contest between Israelis and Palestinians, but it is also the struggle over the character of the society and the quality of government in the city.

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