

Daily Life in Lod: On Power, Identity, and Spatial Protest in A Mixed City

Haim Yacobi

In this article I analyze the production of space in the 'mixed city' of Lod. I argue that daily life in this city, as in other 'mixed cities' in Israel, is based on an ethnic logic of space. This logic controls and anchors the demographic, cultural and symbolic dominance of the Jewish majority over the Arab minority. My argument is informed by Henri Lefebvre's model of the interrelations between perceived space, conceived space and lived space as three vectors that explain the production of space in its tangible, professional and symbolic levels. In the article I discuss the contribution of demographic dynamics in Lod to the segregated spatial pattern of the city. I later critically outline the planning discourse that shaped the urban landscape of the city since 1948. I conclude with a study of the symbolic meaning of space in the narratives of the city's Arab inhabitants.

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'The More the Vision Increases, the More the Expression Decreases': Muslim Mysticism between Experience, Language and Translation

Reuven Snir

The point of departure of the present article is a review of Sufi literature translated into Hebrew (Sara Sviri, *The Sufis – An Anthology*, Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2008). Due to methodological and other substantial issues which the anthology evokes, the article also deals with the nature of the mystical experience as an internal, personal, emotional, direct and irrational event which blurs the distinction between subject and object. The article discusses issues such as the connections between mysticism and institutionalized religion, ascetic practices as a preparation for the mystical experience, the stations (Maqāmāt) and states (Ahwāl) in the path toward the unification with the divine essence and the use of symbol of human love and wine parties to describe the mystical union. In order to clarify some mystical phenomena the article draws on philosophical and psychological conceptions of the human mind by addressing two basic Aristotelian terms, the 'potential' and the 'actual', and issues concerning the place of human language in the spiritual processes relating to the mystical experience. The article refers to views which consider language as the most ancient of apparatuses – one in which a primate inadvertently let himself to be captured in times immemorial, probably without realizing the consequences that he was about to face. Lastly, the article deals with the topic of silence as a refuge from the prison of language, the issue of poetry as a medium for expressing mystical states as well as the issue of translation of poetry from Arabic to Hebrew.

'With a Piano, Belly-Dancing is Impossible': Representations of the Ottoman Empire in Israeli Realms of Memory

Noga Rotem

Despite the Ottoman Empire's four hundred-year rule over the 'Land of Israel' (Eretz Yisr'ael), its position in Jewish-Israeli collective memory has been negligible at best, and an object of oblivion, or even denigration, at worst. This article analyzes images and representations of Ottoman rule over the 'Land of Israel' as articulated in four major 'realms of memory': preservation of Ottoman buildings, school textbooks, children's literature, and museums. The article suggests that historical omissions of the Ottoman Empire are not the result of a 'natural' erosion of memory, rather, a consistent construction, embedded in three intricately linked political contexts: The Zionist incorporation of the Orientalist dichotomy of east and west; the denial of Palestinian history and nationhood; and the Zionist Movement's self-attributed sense of primordial nationalism. The article moves on to discuss a number of new historical studies which shed light on Ottoman history in general and the Ottoman past of the State of Israel in particular. These studies, apart from their significant role in rehabilitating the Ottoman past, also demonstrate the dramatic fractures underlying the relationship between 'history' and 'memory'.

English Abstracts

Protecting the Wife's Rights in Marriage as Reflected in Prenuptials and Marriage Contracts from the Cairo Genizah and Parallel Arabic Sources

Amir Ashur

The Cairo Genizah Collection contains marriage contracts, ketubot, gittin and divorce agreements, as well as a considerable amount of Halachic materials, relating to different aspects of marriage life. These rich, extremely rare materials, are unique sources for the study of Jewish family life in Medieval Egypt. Genizah society would compose prenuptial agreements containing the conditions that would apply to wedded couples during their marriage. This article deals with prenuptial agreements found among the Genizah documents, from which we can learn about the measures taken by the Genizah society to protect women from the inappropriate behavior of their husbands. The article particularly focuses on agreements that include distinct conditions aimed at protecting the rights of women within the nuclear family (ways of conduct, monogamy, living arrangements, and restrictions of freedom of movement of the couple). The Genizah documents further provide an important source for the study of the daily life of Muslims among which Jews had lived. The article compares Jewish marriage agreements with equivalent Arab agreements (Muslims and Coptic), mainly from the 11th to the 13th centuries. Both societies – Jewish and Arab – faced similar problems regarding women's roles within the family. A comparison of the sources points to the ways in which each society coped with these problems. Hence, it allows one to discern the similarities and differences regarding their attitudes to marriage and the role of women.