ANTIFRAGILITY AND THE RIGHT TO THE CITY: THE REGENERATION OF AL MANSHIYA AND NEVE TZEDEK, TEL AVIV-JAFFA

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Henri Lefebvre's idea of the right to the city, as a contra to the modernistic approach, expresses the right of the citizens to be part and to take part in their city's creation. Furthermore, the chase after the efficient city lead to the formation of urban projects, which are not only alienated to their inhabitants, but that are also rigid and unable to adapt to the ever-changing nature of the city. "Inefficient" urban systems, as Jane Jacobs had shown, have proven to be efficient after all, due to their fragmented urban economy, enabling them to better adjust to unpredicted changes. Nassim Taleb called this type of behavior Antifragililty, which describes complex systems that do not only remain unaffected by unpredicted changes, but also manage to take advantage of them. Manshiya and Neve-Tzedek are two adjacent neighborhoods in Tel Aviv, built in the 19th century. In 1954, they were declared as slums and designated for deconstruction. Manshiya's redevelopment was led by large-scale corporations, which excluded the citizens from the process of urbanization, granted a minimal Right to the city and concluded in a rigid and failed megastructure. Neve-Tzedek in contrast, was regenerated due to small-scale investments led by the local community, which granted a much larger Right to the city and enabled the neighborhood to take advantage of the changes in the city, and to turn to one of Tel-Aviv's most desired areas.

Keywords

urban renewal, right to the city, flexibility, antifragilty

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INTRODUCTION

The right to the city, a term first determined by Henri Lefebvre in his 1968 book bearing the same name ("le droit a la ville"), expresses the right of the citizens to be part of and to take part in the creation of their city. Exercising this right can lead to the birth of a new urban order that is based on freedom, individualization within socialization, habitation and inhabitation, participation and appropriation. Lefebvre claimed that excluding citizens from the process of urbanization, as in the case of top-down planning, leads to the creation of alienated environments, which were created for and not by its dwellers².

Lefebvre's theoretical successors are far from being unanimous on his interpretation. One could easily identify a wide scope of interpretations from moderate ones, to more extreme ones. The main conflict between the different interpretations is whether the right to the city could be exercised in any version of the contemporary cities, or whether it could be realized only after a radical transformation in the urban order, and the achievement of an autogestion (self rule)³.

However, it is also possible to understand the right to the city as a spectrum. On one end of this spectrum stands the utopian vision of autogestion, on its other the alienated city. Between these two ends one could find different levels of the right to the city, as urban environments are located on this spectrum depending on the manner they address fundamental civic rights⁴. These milestones consist the right to live in the city⁵, the right to enjoy the city's infrastructure (the urban wealth)⁶, the right to difference⁷, the right to participate in the design of one's city⁸, the right to participate in the city's physical formation⁹.

Furthermore, the top down planning approach was not criticized merely for creating alienated environments^{10,11,12}. Other scholars claimed that this approach ignored the city's complexity, and therefore failed to adapt to the everchanging nature of the urban system¹³. Jane Jacobs, Lefebvre's American contemporary, criticized the modernistic urbanism as well. In her book *The Economy of Cities*, Jacobs challenged the top-down planning approach and its chase after the efficient urban system. She managed to show that in many cases, "efficient" urban systems; the goal of the modern planning¹⁴, have proven to be inefficient, due to their reliance on specific economic and social forces¹⁵. At the same time, the so called "inefficient" urban systems have proven to be efficient after all, due to their diffused urban economy, which relied on several small-scale economic and social forces, enabling them to better adjust to unpredicted changes¹⁶. This resembles Torsten Hägerstrand's theory on urban diffusion, which concludes that a system, which is composed of a layout of a large number of small cells (with a low number of agents per cell), has a higher probability to adopt innovations^{17,18}.

The rationalistic top-down modernist urban planning approach, best represented by le Corbusier's "City of tomorrow"¹⁹, is keen on replacing the old inefficient city by a new and efficient one²⁰. This approach relies on specific and few large-scale interventions (deconstruction, sky scrapers, large building blocks, zoning and a developed highway system), which are supposed to transform the old city to the "city of tomorrow". According to Jacobs, this urge to rationalize the city eliminates the criteria that enabled it to thrive and to be reborn along the years: the individuals living in the city, and the way they influence the daily routine²¹.

Similar to Jacob's idea of "efficient inefficiency", Nassim Taleb introduces the term antifragile, as an attribute to complex systems, which not only remain unaffected by random and unpredicted changes, but also manage to take advantage of them²². According to Taleb, the desire to rationalize complex systems, such as the case of top-down planning, tends to subdue those systems to a clear forecast that is almost never fulfilled, therefore rendering them fragile to future scenarios, which the clear forecast failed to predict.



FIGURE 1 Manshiya (high-rise buildings) and Neve Tzedek (low-rise buildings), 2016



FIGURE 2 Manshiya (left) and Neve Tzedek (right), 193027

Taleb claims, that by neglecting the chase after rationality, the systems' inherent complexity is maintained and even enhanced. In this case, the unpredicted scenarios cease to be hazardous, and could even become opportunities for the systems' further evolvement²³.

According to Taleb, the desire to rationalize the global economy, like the desire to rationalize any other complex system, suffers from Inductionism, predicting future events according to past ones²⁴. This leads to the adoption and fostering of incorrect and misleading predictions. Systems, whether being stock broking firms or urban planners, which depend on these predictions are venerable to unpredicted changes, and therefore become fragile²⁵. In order to avoid Inductionism, complex system should foster fragmentation. Only by doing so, these systems could become immune to the ever-changing reality, robust, or even gain from it, becoming antifragile.²⁶

From the above, one can assume that that if more individuals are able to take part and influence the city's creation, then their right to the city is more practiced, and the city, due to its fragmentation, is supposed to adjust better to unexpected changes.

This paper will focus on Al Manshiya and Neve Tzedek (see fig 1), two adjacent neighborhoods in central Tel Aviv, which had been declared as slums and designated for reconstruction. Both neighborhoods underwent a process of urban renewal, however, the method in which this renewal was carried out, differed. This researches main question is: was there a change in the granted right to the city between the projects, and how did it impact the projects' ability to adapt to unpredicted social, physical and economic changes?

NEVE TZEDEK AND MANSHIYA

The UN Partition Plan for Palestine that was accepted on November 29th 1947, and started the first phase of the Arab-Israeli war of 1948, included the city of Jaffa in the Arab State, while Tel Aviv would become a part of the Jewish state. An international border was to run between Arab Manshiya, and Jewish Neve Tzedek²⁸. Jewish militias occupied Jaffa in the first stages of the war, before the official end of the British mandate and the declaration on the formation of the state of Israel²⁹. During the clashes between Arab and Jewish militants in Jaffa, which started in November of 1947, the population of Jaffa decreased from 70-80 thousand to only 4000³⁰.

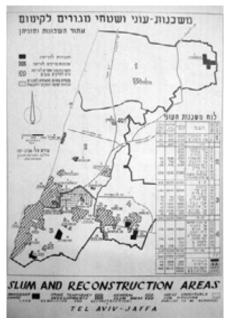


FIGURE 3 Horowitz's reconstruction plan, 1959

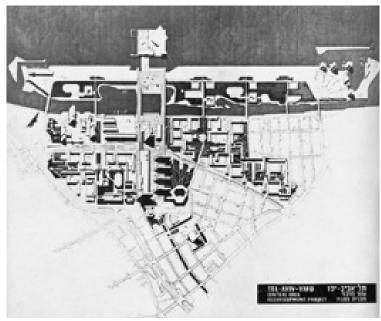


FIGURE 4 Winning entry, 1963

Tel Aviv of the 1950s was a totally different city from that of the 1940s. The aftermath of the 1948 war had left the city almost double the size³¹, with a significant amount of abandoned Arab villages and neighborhoods³² (then already populated by Jewish immigrants), undeveloped and ex-farm land previously owned by Arabs and Ma'abarot (Jewish refugee transition camps)³³. In order to deal with these issues, the municipality of Tel Aviv, led by mayor Israel Rokach, invited the American town planner Aaron Horowitz in 1951, to compose a new urban Master plan. Horowitz's plan was intended to provide a solution to the new problems the grown city had evolved, and to introduce a new urban logic for Tel Aviv³⁴.

In 1959, Horowitz released his a Slum Reconstruction Plan (see fig 3). In this plan Horowitz had declared vast areas of the city, 29 different neighborhoods, as slums, and designated them for evacuation and reconstruction. Horowitz's plan was never formally authorized and accepted by the municipality of Tel Aviv, the areas declared by him as slums however, became the target of numerous urban renewal and regeneration projects, since the 1950s and until today 35 .

In 1960 the municipality of Tel Aviv established the Ahuzot HaHof Company, which was in charge of the redevelopment of the Al Manshiya area. The company claimed that Manshiya's area, located on the city's shore and in its center, with a large percentage of public owned land, has a high potential to become a central business district, with luxury housing and shopping centers built in high rise buildings²⁶. It also claimed that in order to supply the sufficient funds needed for a project of this sort, the public authorities should seek and encourage large private investments³⁷.

Consequently an international architecture competition for the development of central Tel Aviv was declared in 1962. This competition attracted 152 submissions from 33 countries. Most of these submissions, as well as the wining (see fig 04), suggested the total deconstruction of Al Manshiya and Neve Tzedek, and the constriction of a series of mega-structures in their place.

Evacuation of the Al Manshiya 's inhabitants began in 1961, as well as the demolition of their houses. From 1961-1970, 2616 housing units were evacuated in Al Manshiya³⁸, while their inhabitants received compensation³⁹.

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Simultaneously the Tel Aviv municipality and Ahuzot Hahof company began searching for private corporations willing to construct their headquarters, offices or hotels in the future business district⁴⁰, as local architects, Niv and Reifer were commissioned to implement the competition's result into concrete planning.

The construction of the first of 8 high-rise buildings (first phase out of three) began in 1973, and the last of them were concluded only in 1998. In the meantime, The Charles Clore Park, on the other side of the new constructed multi-lane road, was built on top of the ruins of Manshiya's houses in 1974⁴¹. Along the years, Manshiya's business district became one of the least attractive office complexes in the city. Since the end of the 1990's with the construction of other, newer and better-connected business centers, the rents in Manshiya dropt significantly⁴². Consequently, the planning of the next phases in the area was halted, and the entire neighborhood stagnated⁴³.

Neve Tzedek, though being designated for reconstruction, was not part of the first phases of the Manshiya project, and therefore no concrete planning scheme was planned for the neighborhood. In the 1970's, despite its ongoing deterioration there was a growing public interest in the conditions of Neve Tzedek. Dozens of newspaper articles began to address the issues of the neighborhood's significant history, its unique architecture and its neglect^{44,45,46,47,48,49,50,51,52,53}. At the same time that Neve Tzedek's history reached public attention, a stream of young artists, seeking a unique lifestyle that could enable them to work and live in a unique environment, alongside cheap rent, began to flood the neighborhood^{54,55}. The Tel Aviv Municipality, which asked to redevelop the neighborhood as and artistic and cultural center began persuading a variety of dance and theatre ensembles, as well as painter and art galleries to relocate to Neve Tzedek^{56,57}.

In the 1980's there was a growing effort, from the Tel Aviv municipality, to inspire the renovation of the existing houses by their current dwellers by offering loans, subventions and organized joint renovations⁵⁸. Granting property owners' larger building rights and public investments in civil and cultural infrastructure then enhanced the organized renovations.

In a significantly short period of time, Neve Tzedek turned from one of Tel Aviv's major problems to one of its most desired neighborhood⁵⁹. This was felt already in the end of the 1980's when real estate prices started to ascent significantly⁶⁰, and when they continued to raise in the $1990s^{61}$, and much more significantly in the beginning of the $2000s^{62}$.

The success of the neighborhoods regeneration in the 1990's, led to further public and private investments in further renovation and conservation in the 2000's. Neve Tzedek's unique architecture and its picturesque alleys became a desired commodity for local and foreign millionaires⁶³. This led to the intervention of even larger entrepreneurs^{64,65,66,67,68}, which led to further investments in order to attract bigger and wealthier clients⁶⁹.

RIGHT TO THE CITY

In Manshiya, the right to live in the city was highly damaged by the evacuation of its residents, and by not offering the residents any alternate housing in the neighborhood or in any part of town. Furthermore, new dwelling units were not constructed at all in Manshiya, and the right to live in the city was clearly disregarded. The right to enjoy the city's infrastructure was severely limited, as the entire area included mainly high-rise private office buildings, luxury hotels, multi lane freeways and a disconnected public park. The public sphere was clearly sacrificed for the sake of the private one.

The entire reconstruction process in Manshiya was led by the economical speculations, which asked attract large-scale corporations and entrepreneurs who will fund the construction of the future central business district, hopping to reap major revenues once the redevelopment is concluded. To assure this assumption, Manshiya's

planners asked to create a clean slate from the neighborhood, upon it a functional and efficient business district will be built by attracting large-scale corporations and entrepreneurs. Consequently excluding the citizens from the process of designing their city, and from constructing it. By ignoring the existing communities, the planners ignored their lifestyles, and their right to difference.

For many years, the right to the city was in great risk, as the citizens were under the danger of evacuation, and their houses were meant to be deconstructed, in the 1980's however, it began changing. The right to live in the city was revived when the existing houses were not designated for reconstruction any more, and by the construction of new dwelling units, as the Tel Aviv municipality encouraged property owners to renovate their houses by giving them greater building rights, financed loans and large public investments in civic and cultural infrastructure. These great public investments in physical and cultural infrastructure benefited the right to enjoy the city infrastructure. The acknowledgment in the neighborhood's community and its history, as well as its unique architecture, recognized the citizens right to difference. The local community was greatly involved (still not as active planners) in the planning process, granting them a limited (but existing) right to participate in the planning of their city.

Moreover, the regeneration method chosen by the Tel Aviv saw the citizens of Neve Tzedek as active agents of innovation, as they were encouraged to take an active part in its renovation, granting them the right to take part in the physical construction of their city.

However, as property values in Neve Tzedek increased, the neighborhood began undergoing a process of gentrification. This began limiting the right to live in the neighborhood, as the real estate market was mainly focused on the construction of luxury apartments. Consequently the local businesses began being oriented to serve wealthier clients, and therefore limiting the right to enjoy the city's infrastructure. Larger entrepreneurs began investing in the neighborhood, and eventually took control over the neighborhoods renovation, thus hindering the right to construct the city. The right to participate in planning the city was also hindered, as the new entrepreneurs sought to initiate spot zoning plans, which will entitle them to larger building rights.

ANALYSES

The clear future vision for Manshiya relied on a specified urban daily routine, which included the arrival of thousands of commuters each morning by a developed road system, to the exclusive office buildings. Nevertheless, this envisioned specific daily routine was not realized, as the central business district shifted to others parts of the metropolitan and the vast freeway system was never constructed. Manshiya financial district consequently failed to continue attracting large-scale corporations, which were supposed to maintain its status. The mega structures that were the outcome of a profit minded approach, needed large investments in order to keep functioning as exclusive office buildings, which only large firms could supply. As Manshiya became less profitable, large firms began seeking offices elsewhere, and a vicious circle of physical deterioration and lack of investment was ignited. By relying almost solely on large-scale corporations' economic speculations, Manshiya's planners constructed a business complex, which was made to function only as a leading financial center.

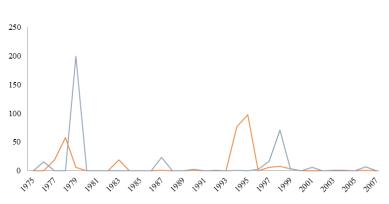
The lack of dwelling units as well as other cultural and public facilities in the neighborhood prevented the evolvement of an around the clock daily urban activity, which could have aided to the emergence of alternate urban functions once the central business district option was not realized. The construction of a multi lane freeway as well as a system of service roads created a barrier and segregated the neighborhood from other parts of the city as it obstructed the movement of pedestrians. The segregation was additionally enhanced when several buildings were constructed upon above ground parking lots, and the connection to the street level was abandoned (see fig 5). This disconnection prevented the development of random activity, which could have contributed to the adaption to the evolving urban system.







FIGURE 5 Manshiya's ground level, 2016





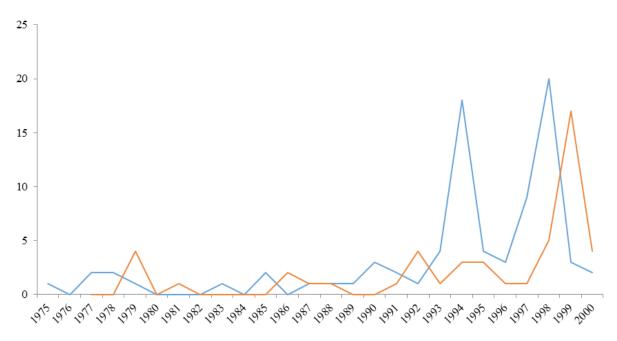
GRAPH 1 Non dwelling construction beginning and end in 1000 m2, Manshiya70

FIGURE 6 Manshiya, 2016

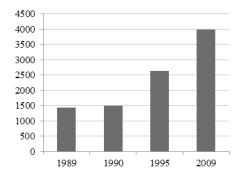
As the large entrepreneurs were preferred over the local community, The Manshiya's Phase-A area (CA 50,000 m²) was divided into 8 lots (cells). The effects of the division of Manshiya into larger cells could be seen in graph 1 regarding constructions beginnings (red) and ends (blue) in Manshiya¹¹. In this graph it is possible to notice that the work on site was conducted in large waves of concentrated construction, which spread over a long period of time. In the case where unpredicted change is introduced, such as the relocation of the CBD and the growing need for dwelling units in the city center, it is expected that the adaptation process will be conducted like the construction process: in concentrated waves over a long period of time, as far from flexibility an urban quarter could be.

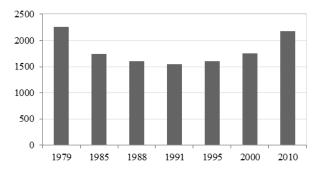
Moreover, the concentrated construction eventually introduced a significantly large amount of agents were introduced into one cell, making it harder for the neighborhood to adapt to changes. Thus, whenever a renovation process is discussed, the approval of all 100+ property owners is required 71 . Only the agreement to adapt to changes requires several years, resulting in an even greater urban inflexibility. Therefore Manshiya remains an island of deteriorating high-rise office buildings in a sea of freeways and parking lots (see fig 6).

Neve Tzedek of the 1940's and the 1950's was a deteriorating neighborhood. As part of the major Manshiya project, Neve Tzedek was aimed to be demolished in order to make place for the new central district of Tel Aviv. During the planning process the entire neighborhood was put under a construction halt, and all renovations were frozen. However, as the Manshiya project was limited to its Phase-A area, no concrete plan was issued for Neve Tzedek. This further limited all constructions in the neighborhood, drove away all potential investments and led to the neighborhood's further deterioration. Though the fruitful efforts to insert cultural institutions to the neighborhood, which did have some positive effects in the late 1970's Neve Tzedek continued to deteriorate, this tendency continued until the early 1980's.



GRAPH 2 Construction beginnings (blue) and ends (red) in Neve Tzedek (1000m2)73



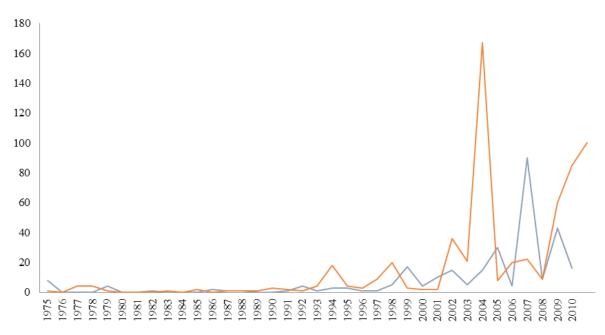


GRAPH 3 Population in Neve Tzede⁷³

GRAPH 4 Dwelling Units in Neve Tzede74

The renovation plans of the 1980's and 1990's entirely changed this situation. First, the need to introduce a uniform, efficient and rational plans for the area was neglected, as a more complex and humble point approach was chosen. The plan's objectives were to conserve the neighborhood's character, to encourage its renovation and the construction of new dwelling units⁷². Unlike earlier plans that asked to construct a new civil, business or cultural center.

In the 1980's and 1990's the complexity of the neighborhood was enhanced as a variety of small-scale cultural institutions, businesses, art galleries, cafes and restaurants began settling in Neve Tzedek. This was further enhanced as the neighborhood's connections to other parts of the city were improved, with the renovation of Shabazi St. the renovation of the old train station and other surrounding streets. Neve Tzedek was then able to become an integral part of the city, while still fashionably isolated, attracting a variety of citizens to enjoy the neighborhood's physical and cultural infrastructure.



GRAPH 5 Construction Beginning (red) and end (blue), Neve Tzedek78

Maintaining the existing urban grid and parceling divided Neve Tzedek's CA 210000 m² remained divided into 600 cells, with around 1-3 agents in each cell. This ensured the existence of the right to live in the city, and the right to participate in the physical construction of the city. The process of urban diffusion as Hägerstrand had described was therefore very likely to occur, once it became legal and profitable. This aided Neve Tzedek to adjust to the changes Tel Aviv had undergone in the 1980's. As the city began being popular again, an influx of people began seeking dwelling units in Tel Aviv. Neve Tzedek's construction boom was able to offer a growing supply of a variety of dwelling units, and therefore adapting, and taking advantage of the changes in the urban system.

In graph number 2, regarding construction beginnings and ends in Neve Tzedek⁷⁵, it is possible to notice that Neve Tzedek stagnated until the early 1980's, when a significant increase in construction beginnings is seen. The construction in Neve Tzedek was conducted in a sequence of relatively small waves, which spread over a short period of time. This points out that the neighborhood was able to transform rapidly and by small-scale construction ventures. This is compatible with the high involvement of the neighborhood's citizens and other small-scale entrepreneurs, who asked to take advantage of the changes in the city by making a good profit in a short time. This corresponds with the growing number of people living in Neve Tzedek, as its population was almost doubled in a less than a decade (see graph 3), and continued to grow significantly afterwards. The number of dwelling units increased in almost 25% between 1990-2010, as the dwelling area had increased by 240% in the same period (see graph 4).

However, since the early 2000's, we are able to notice that construction in the neighborhood began being conducted in larger waves, spreading on a longer period of time (see graph 5). This can be explained by the growing involvement of large-scale entrepreneurs, which sought to increase their profits by combining several lots, or by mainly constructing luxury apartments and villas. This correlates to the significantly high number of entrepreneur initiated spot-planning schemes $(20)^{76}$, most of which asked to increase building rights. As well as to the decrease in the population growth in the neighborhood, and to the beginning of its reduction that began in 2010^{77} .

CONCLUSIONS

From the mentioned findings and analyses, it is possible to conclude that the utilitarian profit minded urban planning approach, which sought to introduce an efficient and clean plan for Manshiya, excluded the citizens from living in the city, enjoying its infrastructure, planning and constructing it. This clearly depraved their right to the city. Furthermore, this exclusion also eliminated the chance for spontaneous urban activity, which could have contributed to the neighborhoods diffusion ability, enabling it to adopt new raising functions and adapting to the changes in the city life. It is also possible to conclude that the same variables that had made Manshiya inflexible along the years are those that have prevented the further construction on the neighborhood's yet vacated land.

One could conclude that the *right to the city* that was granted in the 1980's and 1990's Neve Tzedek contributed largely to its fragmentation. The neighborhood's fragmentation, which was considered in the 1950's, 1960's and 1970's to be one of its main weaknesses, became in the 1980's and the 1990's the key factor in the neighborhoods regeneration. This fragmentation granted the neighborhood a great flexibility, as well as a relatively great right to the city, and eventually enabling it to become *antifragile*, as it was able to take advantage from the changes in the city life. The success of Neve Tzedek's regeneration concluded in a decline in both the *right* to the city and the area's flexibility. The neighborhood began attracting larger investments and investors, neglecting its complexity, limiting the existing *right* to the city and fragmentation, and rendering it *fragile* once again. From this, it is possible to state that Neve Tzedek owed its success to its flexibility. Its success however, brought an end to its flexibility.

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