Why did the pasha give the keys of Jerusalem to the Chief Rabbi?

An Exploration of the 19th-century History of Jerusalem's City-wide Eruv

By: MEIR LOEWENBERG

Abdul Aziz I became the 32nd sultan of the Ottoman Empire on Tuesday, June 25, 1861, on the very same day that the previous sultan, his brother Abdul Mejid I, died. In an era without telegraph, telephone or internet, the news of these events that occurred in Constantinople traveled slowly and reached New York, as well as Jerusalem, only in the first week of July.

On July 4, 1861, the *New York Times* published a report with the headline "Rumored death of the Sultan." Three days later, on July 7, 1861, it reported: "The Sultan of Turkey died on the 25th of June, and was succeeded by his brother Abdul Aziz Khan." Readers of the *New York Times* may have overlooked these small reports on an inside page of the newspaper since they were much more interested in the momentous events that were taking place closer to home. Four months earlier, on March 4, 1861, Abraham Lincoln had been inaugurated as the new president of a country that was deeply divided on the question of slavery. In his inaugural address he stated that he hoped to resolve the national crisis without resorting to warfare. Toward this end he said that he had no plans to end slavery in those states where it already existed. Yet at the same time he emphasized that he could not accept secession as a solution. Lincoln's hopes were short lived. No more than five weeks later, on April 12, South Carolina militia men fired the first shots on the federal Fort Sumter, starting the Civil War. From that day on, the interest of Americans was focused on the latest news from the Civil War battle fields and not on what happened in a far-away country.

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In Jerusalem, on the other hand, the report of the change of rulers in Constantinople was important news because the city was part of the Ottoman Empire. The arrival of the news was signaled by a 21-gun salute fired from the Citadel of David. This marked the beginning of a three-day mourning period for the late Sultan. Later in the day another 21-gun salute was fired to honor the accession of their new ruler. On the same day, soon after the arrival of the news, a delegation from the Jewish community met with Pasha Surhaya, the governor of Jerusalem, to demand that he hand them the keys of Jerusalem. They claimed that this was their right whenever a new ruler was inducted.

The demand of Jerusalem's Jews in July 1861 to receive the city keys and their success in achieving what they had requested was widely reported throughout the Western world, both at the time and in subsequent decades. All reports essentially present the identical sequence of events. They do, however, differ in explaining why the keys of the city were handed over to the Jews.

The report most frequently cited comes from a book written by the Italian engineer Ermete Pierotti. In 1854 the Ottoman governor of Jerusalem appointed him as his consultant for the renovations on the Temple Mount. This appointment gave Pierotti a unique opportunity to explore many places in the city, including the Temple Mount, a site that no other non-Muslim was permitted to enter at that time. He served as consultant and later as Jerusalem city engineer until 1861. In 1864, he published in London a book on his experiences in Jerusalem. There we find a detailed description of this event:

> Now on July 8th, 1861, the day on which the news of the death of Abdul Megid and the accession of Abdul Azis arrived at Jerusalem, the Jews waited with all formalities on the governor Surraya pasha, and requested him to restore to them the keys of Jerusalem, according to a right which they claimed on the death of one sultan and the accession of another. At the same time, they brought forward such proofs of the justice of their demand, that the pasha did not refuse it, but referred it to his ordinary council, consisting of the mufti or chief officer of religion, the khadi or chief judge, and other persons of distinction, natives of the country. Their decision was in favour of the Israelites, the whole council being aware that they were the ancient owners of the country. The ceremony was accordingly performed in the following manner. Said pasha, the general of the forces, accompanied by the officers of his staff, and some members of the council, and followed by a crowd of sight-seers, went to the Jews' quarter, where he was met by a deputation of that nation and conducted to the house of the chief rabbi, who received the pasha at

> the door, and there was publicly presented with the keys. The pasha was then entertained with the utmost respect at the divan of the rabbi; refreshments, coffee, and tobacco were served, and then the rabbi (not having a garrison to defend the keys) restored them with many thanks to the general, who was escorted back by the chief men of the Jews to the governor of the city, Surraya pasha, to give an account of his mission, and shew him that none of the keys were missing. So, in 1861, the Jewish nation possessed for one hour the keys of Jerusalem, which were delivered over to them by the Arabs in consequence of the unvarying tradition which they had preserved.[1]

Explanations for this event

Handing over the city keys to Jerusalem's chief rabbi was a most unusual event, an event so strange that all those who reported it felt a need to offer an explanation. There was general agreement on what transpired in Jerusalem on that day in July 1861, but the explanations vary greatly, reflecting the background of the reporter, his/her knowledge or lack of knowledge of Jewish life in 19th century Jerusalem, and perhaps even his/her biases.

Pierotti's report (cited above) includes the phrase that the Jerusalem's Council "decision was in favour of the Israelites, the whole council being aware that they were the ancient owners of the country." Pierotti believed that this publicly expressed conviction by the Muslim religious and secular leaders of Jerusalem, functioning as the governor's ordinary council, explains everything that happened on that day.

Pierotti's account became especially popular after the 1967 Six Day War when there was a need to justify Israel's position on the new territories, areas that had been occupied for 19 years by the Jordanian army. For example, on May 7, 1968, Joseph Tekoa, Israel's UN ambassador, cited Pierotti's account at a Security Council meeting devoted to the situation in the Middle East and to the status of Jerusalem.[2] However, some years later Prof. Nini undertook a comprehensive survey of the source literature; he wrote that, except for Pierotti, he had not found even one 19th

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1 Ermete Pierotti, *Customs and Traditions of Palestine* (transl. T. G. Bonney, Cambridge: Deighton, Bell & Co. 1864), pp. 76-77. The date in Pierotti's account must be a printer's error because all other accounts give the date of these events as July 3.

2 United Nations Document S/PV 1423, para. 69, archived at http://unispal.un.org.

century Muslim, Christian or Jewish source that supported the idea that the Ottoman government, or the Muslim religious authorities, acknowledged that in ancient days the Jews were the rightful owners of the country.[3]

Other explanations

James Finn (1806–1872), the first British consul in Jerusalem during the years 1845 to 1863, published his consular diary for the years 1853–1856. In this book, which offers a detailed picture of daily life in Palestine during those years, he included a full description of the key-ceremony that he was told took place in 1839 when Sultan Abd-ul-Mejid I ascended the throne. A footnote adds that the same "ceremony was [again] duly observed in 1861, on the accession of [Abdülaziz] to the throne." Finn explained this strange ceremony as follows:

> For the exercise of this traditional custom they [the Jews of Jerusalem] make heavy presents to the local governors, who allow of a harmless practice …. It is a matter of *bakhsheesh* to them. … the Jewish feelings are gratified for their expectation of the future is refreshed, and the Jerusalem Rabbis are enabled to boast all over among their people that they suffer the Sultan of Turkey to keep possession of the Holy City.[4]

Finn's explanation does not make any reference to the historical rights of Jewish rule of Jerusalem. Rather he viewed this event as an attempt of self-glorification by the Jewish people who have suffered greatly, both in the past and in his days. He, as well as Pierotti, noted that Ottoman officials received much money (*bakhsheesh*) to go along with this "harmless practice."

Marie-Joseph, a French Franciscan monk who lived in Jerusalem in the 1860s, wrote that whenever a new sultan came to rule, the governor of Jerusalem was instructed to give the keys of Jaffa gate to the head of the Jewish community as a sign that the Jews had permission to live in Jerusalem and travel all over Palestine.[5] It is not clear where the author

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3 Yehuda Nini, "Bein heskat ha-ir Yerushalayim l'kiyum mitzvat eruv [Acquiring the city of Jerusalem and observing the eruv-mitzva: an event that occurred in 1861]," *Shalem* 4 (5744/1984), pp. 471–477 at p. 472.

4 James Finn, Stirring Times: Or Records from the Jerusalem Consular Chronicles of 1853–1856 (London, 1878}, pp. 117-118.

5 Marie-Joseph, "Peregrinations en Palestine: Ire Bethlehem de Juda vel Ephrata" (Arras, 1863), p. 10.

heard this explanation. Though this explanation appeared in a number of 19th century guide books for Christian pilgrims,[6] it was ignored by the wider public and does not appear in the subsequent literature.

Elizabeth Finn, the wife of British Consul James Finn (and the editor of his book), in an article in the missionary magazine *The Scattered Nation*, entitled "The Spanish Exiles in Jerusalem," offered another explanation for this event, an explanation that is quite different from her husband's description. Strangely, when she edited and published her husband's book after his death, she did not make any reference to these differences. This is what she wrote in 1869:

> Some of [the Jews] termed [the custom of acquiring the city keys] "hiring the city" and said that it was done in connection with the laws of Eruv, for Sabbath observances; for that when a city is thus hired as a whole—all within its walls is considered by their law to have become as one house—within which they are then free to pass on the Sabbath from dwelling to dwelling, even though bearing slight burdens, without infringing any of the laws for keeping holy the Sabbath-day.[7]

Mrs. Finn, a devout Christian, described the eruv correctly. It is a legal device by which an Orthodox Jewish community turns public areas into a private domain in order to permit carrying objects on the Sabbath, an activity that is otherwise prohibited.[8] Her observations were corroborated independently by Rabbi Eliyahu Bechor Chazan who wrote in 1875 (in Hebrew) in response to a halakhic question that the 1861 taking-possession-of-the-key event was part of the eruv ceremony.[9] What makes this statement particularly relevant is that the writer, Rabbi Eliyahu Bechor Chazan, was the grandson of (and was raised by) Rabbi Chaim David Chazan, the Jerusalem chief rabbi who received the city keys in 1861 and who had been appointed *Rishon l'Zion* (Sefardi chief rabbi of Jerusalem) only two months prior to this event.

A few years later, in 1878, the London missionary journal *Sunday at Home* printed a letter from an anonymous Jerusalem resident stating that

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6 See, for example, L. de Hamme, Guide indicateur des sanctuaries el lieux historique de la Terre-Sainte (Jerusalem, 1869).

7 Elizabeth Finn, "The Spanish Exiles in Jerusalem," *The Scattered Nation,* February 9, 1869, pp. 47-48.

8 Mishnah Shabbat 7:2 explicitly forbids carrying on the Sabbath from one domain to another.

9 Eliyahu Bechor Chazan, *Sefer Ta'alumot Lev, O.C.* (Liverno, 1879), par. 1.

the key-ceremony took place twice in 1876.[10] The writer explained that even though this ceremony has no legal significance and does not give the Jews any property rights, the Jews of Jerusalem insist on performing it and are ready to pay heavily for it in order to comply with the halahic requirements for a community-wide eruv that permits them to carry throughout the city on the Sabbath. The letter continued that the same ceremony was also conducted for the same purpose in 1861.[11]

Mrs. Finn and the anonymous Jerusalem resident were the only English-language writers who connected the ceremony of taking-possession-of-the-key with the eruv. These two reports appeared in two obscure weeklies that had only a limited circulation. Over the years the reports of Ermete Pierotti and James Finn were repeatedly cited by newspapers[12] and in history books, but the two reports connecting the key to the eruv remained unknown until Hutterer recently rediscovered them.[13] Over the years there were a number of reports that did make this connection, but these were in Hebrew-language publications that were not readily accessible to European and American scholars. For example, the publicist Lunz wrote in his 1882 book that it was customary in Jerusalem to acquire the city keys for a night as part of the eruv-lease whenever there was a change of rulers in Constantinople. He speculated that the many mistaken explanations for this custom were most probably due to the ignorance of most non-Jews about Jewish rituals.[14]

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10 Upon the death of Sultan Abd-ul-Aziz in May 1876, Murad V was installed as the new sultan. Three months later he was deposed and replaced by his brother Abd-ul-Hamid II.

11 *Sunday at Home*, London, 1878, p. 250, cited by Boaz Hutterer, "Elizabeth Finn and the Keys of Jerusalem: More about the History of the Eruv in Jerusalem in the Late Ottoman Period." *Cathedra* 135, Nisan 5775/March 2015, pp 73–100 at p. 90. [Hebrew]

12 One example of many is "The Jews and the Keys of Jerusalem," *New York Times,* November 17, 1878, p.4; this article was based on Finn's book which was cited extensively.

13 Hutterer, Boaz. *Eruv Hazterot b'Merhav Ha-ironi.* PhD dissertation (Bar Ilan University, 2013), and Hutterer, "Elizabeth Finn and the Keys of Jerusalem…"

14 A.M. Lunz, *Religious and Social Customs of our Brothers in the Holy Land* (Jerusalem, 1882, p. 59) [Hebrew]. Lunz evidently was not aware of the letters published by Mrs. Finn and the anonymous Jerusalem resident [footnotes 7 and 11].

Notes on the history of the Jerusalem eruv

This is not the place to present a complete history of the Jerusalem eruv.[15] But some notes about the different types of arrangements that have been used to establish the Jerusalem eruv over the ages are necessary to understand the taking-possession-of-the-keys ceremony that was used repeatedly in 19th-century Jerusalem.

There is a tradition that in ancient times even when Jerusalem was not a *reshus harabim* there was not a city-wide eruv in the city. Rabbi Moshe Feinstein in his *teshuva* opposing an eruv in Manhattan[16] suggests that this was instituted lest ignorant pilgrims return home and report that in Jerusalem even the most pious Jews "carry" on Shabbat, without realizing that this required an eruv. If there really was such a ruling it most probably dates from a time before the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE, a period when large numbers of pilgrims came to Jerusalem three times a year.[17] Some of the Talmudic Sages seem to suggest that in olden times Jerusalem did not need an *eruv* because the city gates were locked every night. But Rashi and Tosafot comment that the actual practice was to make an *eruv* in Jerusalem in order to avoid any *halakhic* problem.[18]

There was no need for a city-wide eruv in Jerusalem (or elsewhere) during the many centuries when Jews were prohibited from residing in the city or were restricted to living in certain areas. During those centuries Jews lived in one or two courtyards (*hazer*); each individual family dwelling faced a common yard that had only one exit to the street, an exit that was locked at night and perhaps even during the day. When all the residents of the *hazer* were Jewish it was relatively simple to establish an eruv. Two conditions were necessary to create such an eruv: (1) the area had to be physically enclosed and (2) every resident had to contribute some food to

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15 To the best of my knowledge such a history has not yet been written. Valuable contributions to such a history can be found in the doctoral dissertations of Boaz Hutterer (Bar Ilan, 2013) and Adam Mintz, "Halakhah in America: The History of City Eruvin, 1894–1962," PhD dissertation (NYU, 2011). For a general introduction to the laws of eruv, see Yosef Gavriel Bechhofer, *The Contemporary Eruv: Eruvin in Modern Metropolitan Areas,* Jerusalem–New York, Feldheim, 2002, 2nd revised ed.; and Hershel Schachter, "The Laws of Eruvin," *Halacha and Contemporary Society,* 5, 1984, pp. 131–150.

16 Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, *Iggerot Moshe, Orah Hayim,* vol. 1 (New York, 1959), 139:5.

17 Mishnah, *Eruvin* 6:2 describes the creation of an eruv in a courtyard in Jerusalem. This led later scholars to assume that in Mishnaic times Jerusalem did not have a city-wide eruv.

18 TB *Eruvin* 6b and Rashi, *ibid*., DH *Yerushalayim*; Tosafot. *Pesachim* 66a DH *Tohav*.

a communal basket. A later development was to recognize walls or natural enclosures (such as rivers or other bodies of water) as a proper eruv-enclosure around the neighborhood and, still later, around the city in which the Jews resided.

During the 16th and 17th centuries the residential distribution of the Jewish population in many of the major cities of the Ottoman Empire changed markedly. Jews were no longer confined to one Jewish section or ghetto but were now living all over these cities. This required the development of a city-wide eruv in such cities as Saloniki and Constantinople. When the Jewish population of Jerusalem began to increase rapidly in the 17th century, the city's rabbis also began to arrange for a city-wide eruv. In 1488 there were only 70 Jewish families living in Jerusalem.[19] Contrast this with the population statistics for the first decades of the 19th century, as summarized by Prof. Ruth Kark[20]:

1806	2000 Jews
1815	4000–5000 Jews
1819	3000 Jews
1832	4000 Jews

Another report mentions that there were 6,000 Jews living in the city in 1824.[21] Whatever the exact number of Jews—and there are many problems with the population statistics prior to the 20th century—Jerusalem's Jewish population was growing and Jews were now living in all parts of the walled city, wherever they could find accommodations, even in courtyards were the majority of residents were non-Jews. Now a city-wide eruv was needed to enable Jews to observe the stringent Shabbat laws.

Even when a city is surrounded by a wall, establishing such an eruv requires (among other steps) "leasing" the city from the city or country

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19 R. Obadiah m'Bartenura, "Letter to his father," in Yaari, Abraham, *Igarot Eretz Yisrael* (Tel Aviv, 1950), pp. 103–138 at 127.

20 Ruth Kark, *The Development of the Cities of Jerusalem and Jaffa,* PhD thesis, Hebrew University, 1976, p. 109. See also Ruth Kark and Michael Oren-Nordheim, *Jerusalem and its Environs* (Jerusalem, Magnes Press and Detroit, Wayne State U. Press, 2001).

21 Fisk and King, "Description of Jerusalem," in *The Christian Magazine*, Mendon Association, July 1824, p. 220. This statistic is preceded by the comment "the following estimate seems to us as probably correct as any one we have heard." The authors also noted that, "some think the Jews more numerous than the Mussulmans."

authorities (*s'chirut reshut*). The eruv-lease is entirely different from an ordinary lease since it does not involve any transfer of property rights and is effective only one day each week (Saturday).[22]

Since in the case of a city-wide eruv it is not possible to arrange for a "lease" with every single non-Jewish resident, the *halakha* specifies that it is sufficient to arrange a lease with the ruler (that is, the king, prince, or sultan) or his local civilian or army representative (the city governor or commander of the army troops stationed in the city) or, in more recent times, with the chief of police or sheriff. Originally the "lease" was for the time that the leaser (such as the ruler) was in office. After his death or removal it was necessary to negotiate a new lease. Later it became the custom to arrange the term for a period of 50 years or even longer, regardless of whether or not the original leaser was still in office or had been replaced by another ruler.[23] But in the middle of the 18th century, rabbinical authorities in Jerusalem were not entirely clear if a new eruv was necessary when a new sultan assumed power in Constantinople. The Jerusalem rabbinate asked Rabbi Avraham Meyuhas (1718–1762), the foremost halakhic authority at that time, to instruct them what to do. They noted that in previous generations the existing eruv was considered effective even after the original sultan had died. However, now there were halakhic scholars who questioned whether such an eruv was still effective after the death of the sultan. It would appear from their question that until the middle of the 18th century no one thought that it was necessary to renew an eruv whenever a king died if that eruv had been made for a stipulated number of years.[24]

Another account concerning Jerusalem's eruv appears in the writings of Rabbi Rafael ben Shemuel Meyuhas (1705–1771) who was Rishon L'zion (Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem) during the years 1756–1771. He was the brother of Rabbi Avraham Meyuhas who was cited above. He writes that when Sultan Ahmed III died in 5490 (1730) and was replaced by Sultan Mahmud III, the Jerusalem Jewish community "leased" the city without specifying the length of time for the lease. Twenty-four years later, upon the death of Mahmud III, Ozman III became sultan. At this time, Jerusalem's rabbis again "leased" the city, but now they specified that the lease was for a period of sixty years. Only three years later in 1757 Ozman III died. He was followed by Sultan Mustafa III. Meyuhas had become

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22 Mintz, "Halakhah in America …", p. 66.

23 Shulhan Aruh Orah Hayim, 382

24 Nini (1984), p. 473. See also R. Avraham Meyuhas, *S'de Ha-aretz*, vol. 3, *Orah Hayim* (Liverno, 1785) 23, pp. 13-14.

Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem only recently when Mustafa III became sultan. He writes that because of "doubts" about the validity of the existing eruv, written in 1754, he decided that a new lease should be arranged—but this time for a period of 100 years.[25]

None of the 18th century rabbinical authorities cited mention the need to take possession of the city keys (neither for an hour nor overnight) in order for the "lease" to be effective. This custom was adopted by the Jewish communities of several Mediterranean cities only at the very end of the 18th century. It was not widely followed, nor was it consistently implemented. Some of the later authorities considered this practice to be an embellishment or a *humra.*[26] Rabbi Chaim Yosef David Azulai, better known as the Chid"a (1724–1806), was among those who mentioned that in Jerusalem and Saloniki the *gabbai* took possession of the city keys overnight. Nini indicated that the Chid"a (who heard about the key-custom from his grandfather, Rabbi Yeshayahu Azulai) is the source for the Jerusalem custom of taking possession of the city keys as part of the eruv ceremony. The Jerusalem rabbinate adopted this practice during most of the 19th century, starting with the accession of Sultan Abd-ul-Mejid I in 1839 and continuing with the accession of Sultan Abd-ul-Aziz in 1861.[27]

A problem arose in 1876 when Sultan Murad V was deposed after ruling only for three months. Removed because of his efforts to implement democratic reforms in the Ottoman Empire, he was replaced by Sultan Abd-ul-Hamid II. But the acquisition of the city keys took a large sum of money for *baksheesh,* a sum too large for the poor Jerusalem Jewish community to collect twice within three months. Since the lease-contract with Murad's representative had been written for a period of fifty years, the Ashkenazi rabbinate ruled that the existing eruv continued to be valid and that no new leasing arrangement was necessary. However, the more traditional Sephardi rabbis did not accept this ruling and instead arranged to "lease" the city from a minor city official who was willing to do so for a smaller amount of money.

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25 Rafael ben Shemuel Meyuhas, *Pri Ha'adama*, vol. 4, H. Eiruvin (Saloniki,1763), p. 5.

26 Even though the Talmudic Sages often followed a lenient approach when deciding questions about the eruv (TB Eruvin 46a: הלכה כדברי המיקל בעירוב *halaha k'divrei hameikel b'eruv)*, in recent centuries many halahic authorities followed a more stringent line; among the leading *machmirim* in the 20th century were Rabbi Avrohom Yishayahu Karelitz, the Chazon Ish (Orah Hayim 112:10), and Rabbi Moshe Feinstein (*Iggerot Moshe,* Orah Hayim 139:5). The insistence on obtaining the city keys evidently is in line with this more stringent approach.

27 Nini (1984), pp. 474-475.

The halakhic status of Jerusalem as a "walled city" changed dramatically in the waning decades of the 19th century. Until the 1880s all of the city's gates were locked every night; in halakhic terms this qualified Jerusalem as a walled city. However, several new Jewish neighborhoods, including Mea She'arim, were established outside the walled city in the 1870s. Starting sometime in the early 1880s Jaffa Gate was kept open twenty-four hours every day in order to facilitate interaction between the residents of the Old City and the new neighborhoods. Within a few years this practice was also applied to all other city gates. The final blow to the halakhic status of the city wall came in 1898 when the wall near Jaffa Gate was breached permanently to permit Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany to enter the city without dismounting from his horse.

Because of these changes the practice of obtaining the city keys was no longer relevant when Sultan Abd-ul-Hamid II died in 1909 and was replaced by Sultan Mehmed V, the last of the city's Ottoman rulers. By that time other practices were followed to arrange for a city-wide eruv.[28]

A post-script to the history of the city keys (an event that was not connected to the eruv) occurred in 1917 when the Keys of Jerusalem were presented as a token of the city's surrender to General Allenby, commander of the British forces that had captured Jerusalem. The city keys that were used for the eruv ceremony during the 19th century were the actual keys used to lock Jaffa Gate; by 1917 this gate had not been locked for more than thirty years and the keys undoubtedly had disappeared. The keys used in the surrender ceremony were most probably not the actual keys of Jaffa Gate but some other old keys.

Discussion

Throughout the 20th century the Jerusalem rabbinate was careful to arrange a city-wide eruv to permit Jews to carry on Shabbat throughout the city. These arrangements did not include taking possession of the city keys, no matter whether the ruler was an Ottoman emperor, the British mandatory governor-general, or the sovereign State of Israel. As a matter of fact, the use of the city keys had been completely forgotten by the time it was necessary to expand the eruv in 1967 to include the Old City that had been under Jordanian occupation for 19 years. It was only in 1984 that Professor Nini "rediscovered" the connection between the city keys and the eruv, but his article appeared in an obscure Hebrew-language

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28 One report, appearing in a Polish Hebrew-language newspaper, noted that the "lease" of the city was arranged with Jerusalem's only Jewish policeman. *Hamizpe* (Cracow), 25, June 19, 1909, pp. 1-2. I am not aware of any other source that confirmed this arrangement.

journal and did not impact on the general public's awareness. Hebrew readers gained a greater awareness of the role of the city keys in the eruv ritual only in 2015 with the appearance of Hutterer's article.

In the meantime, Pierotti's description of the 1861 ceremony and his explanation gained wide circulation after the Six Day War because it provided support for Israel's position of annexing all parts of Jerusalem. According to Pierotti, even the Muslim religious and secular authorities agreed that the ancient Jews were the original rulers of the city. I have not been able to determine who rediscovered Pierotti's description after it had been dormant for nearly a century, but from 1968 on it appears frequently in the literature, both in Israel and in English-speaking countries. Thus, in 1969 Abraham Heschel quoted Pierotti to support Israel's claims to the newly occupied territories.[29] Prof. Harold Fish used Pierotti's description as one proof for the Jewish rights to Jerusalem.[30] Two decades later Abraham Millgram wrote about "the one hour when Jews ruled Jerusalem" by citing in full Pierotti's description.[31] Neither Heschel nor Fish nor Millgram had heard that the handing-over-the-city-keys was part of the eruv ritual. Yet there is no doubt that this is the real explanation for this unusual ceremony. ☙

29 Abaham J. Heschel, *Israel: An Echo of Eternity* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1969), pp. 170-171.

30 Harold Fisch, "On False Equations and Elegant Evasions," *The American Zionist,* 62 (1971), p. 14.

31 Abraham Ezra Millgram, *Jerusalem Curiosities* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1990), pp. 108-9.