

P R E F A C E

The Harvard Jerusalem Studio consisted of a series of interdisciplinary design studios that took place at the Harvard Graduate School of Design between 1980 and 1984. The idea was to initiate a series of studios, which included students of architecture, urban design, city and regional planning, and landscape architecture, addressing the most urgent issues that faced the rapidly changing and growing city of Jerusalem. It was the outcome of my own deep involvement with the city during those years. Having come to Harvard in 1978 to head the Urban Design program, I felt that Jerusalem would be an excellent pedagogic vehicle in which the students, of all the GSD departments, could engage on every facet—from detailed design to urban policy—that affected the city.

To facilitate this, it was clear that special budgets would be needed to allow the students to travel to Jerusalem, study the city, and meet many of the responsible professionals and political and business leaders engaged in the city. Toward that end, I succeeded in obtaining a grant from the New York philanthropist Irving Schneider, whose daughter, Lynn, was studying architecture at the GSD, as Jerusalem was dear to his heart. I managed to get his support with help from the mayor of Jerusalem at the time, the incomparable Teddy Kollek.

The idea that a grant would enable Harvard students and faculty to engage in the City of Jerusalem raised legal issues for the University. “*Would this be construed as Harvard University providing design services? Is this an appropriate engagement?*”

What I came to realize, later on, was that this was the first of many so-called “sponsored studios,” now totally commonplace in the Graduate School of Design. Since this was the first overseas engagement sponsored by outside funds, the University legal counsel had to review the proposal, which they eventually approved.

Over the next five years, some 150 students and 75 advisors participated in a series of studios. We addressed sensitive areas within the Old City, as well as the urban design of areas in the New City surrounding the Old City, informing the transition between the old and the new. Other landscape and urban design studios addressed issues of the entries to the city, the urbanization edge on both the forested and desert borders of the city, and landscape policy.

At the conclusion of the program, with the help of Uri Shetrit and L. Rudolph Barton, who acted as editors, the work was collected, reviewed, and published as *The Harvard Jerusalem Studio*. It is a testimony to the creative energy, which was amplified by the magic of Jerusalem, that yielded significant projects, some of which had much influence on events in the city in later years. Project participants met with many design professionals and civic figures in Jerusalem, some of whom traveled in reverse to participate in the reviews of the student’s work at Harvard.

The publication of the book, once again, raised the concern of the Harvard University legal counsel. Could the book be titled *The Harvard Jerusalem Studio*? Was that an appropriate place for the University to have its name associated? After some deliberation, the book’s title was approved. I was personally delighted to have MIT Press publish the book. MIT was the publisher of my first book, *Beyond Habitat*, in 1970. It gives us great pleasure to have this available again thanks to the MIT Press Humanities Open Book Program.

—Moshe Safdie, December 2018

