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Unravelling the Story

A Photo Documentary of the City of Ramla, 2018

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The JDOCU photo documentary of the city of Ramla

We entered Ramla on tiptoe: We knew that we were treading on paths with millennia of history, a history of war, uprooting, settlement, the gathering of the Jewish diaspora, an almost impossible existence from which a new, modern Israel emerged which is trying to keep the traditions of the past alive and to cope with living together – in the synagogue, in the mosque, on the market, in the street and at school.

As we stood on the market, everything appeared in flash for a moment: A large crowd flowed in front of us, with every person carrying a unique and moving story while all together were part of the same massif – whose name is Ramla.

Observation through the camera lens was like traveling through many different continents at once: You are listening to the different languages, sense new smells and taste from the memories of others. This is what happened also to us when we mingled with the large crowd attending the annual events of the town's Jewish community, during the events of the Bolivian community and those of the Ethiopian community or at Eid el-Adha in the Great Mosque of Ramla.

The variety exceeded everything we had experienced in the past - an entire world in one town in Israel - and every picture that was taken intensified the feeling that the journey is right, thoughtful and embracing.

Ramla is not only a crossroads: It is also a milestone on the road of thousands towards becoming Israelis, while they change right in front of us, all of Israel is changing its face. They do not turn their back on the town's magnificent past but adopt it because they are open to the challenge of Jewish-Arab coexistence and are therefore a source of hope and chance in Israel as of 2018.

