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The De-Municipalization of Urban Governance

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Strategic Sectorial Development Plan for Jerusalem (2018 -2022)

Jerusalem Unit – Office of the President, State of Palestine

Jerusalem Statistical Yearbook, 2018

Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics



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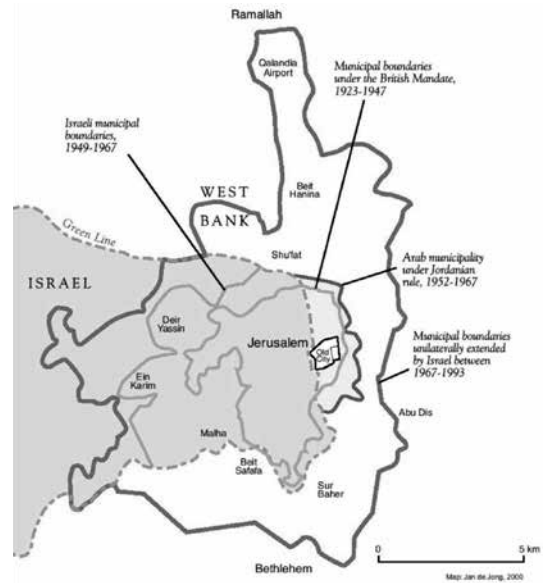


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Editorial

The Red Caravanserai and Demographic Gerrymandering



Jerusalem's extended boundaries into the West Bank (map by Jan de Yong, 2000, PASSIA).

Anyone observing the map of the expanded municipal boundary of Jerusalem, as amended in 1968 and 1980, will be struck by the odd shape of the extended Israeli boundaries in the northeastern direction (toward al-Ram, Qalandiya, Kafr 'Aqab, and al-Bireh). It is not an accidental cartographic phenomenon; successive Israeli governments planned these boundaries out of demographic concerns, and used zoning measures to maximize urban expanses, and minimize the Arab population under its municipal control. The case of the Jahalin Bedouins in Khan al-Ahmar ("the Red Caravanserai") in the southeastern corridor of the city is the latest episode in this continuous campaign, which now seeks to remove the last demographic obstacle in Area C to the merger of Ma'aleh Adumim – a large, exclusively Jewish settlement on the approaches of Nabi al-Musa and the Jericho road – with Jerusalem. The Israeli government has been targeting this area in the context of the E1 zone, an area of some

twelve square kilometers located on the eastern periphery of Jerusalem between Ma'ale Adumim and Abu Dis. In "Letter from Jerusalem" in this issue, Hanan Awad ponders the fate and long travails of the Jahalin Bedouin, forcefully moved from their homes in the Naqab into Jordanian-administered territories in the early 1950s. Since then they have been displaced several times on the claim that grazing Bedouins are not territorial, and that "absentee territory" in Area C becomes the national patrimony of the Jewish state. One of Awad's interlocutors among the Jahalin, Eid Abu Ghaliya, clearly seems to grasp the essence of land politics behind the legal obfuscations.

In 1979 the Israelis started building the Ma'ale Adumim settlement. ... They kept this strategy of displacing the Bedouins until 1993, when the eastern side became a military zone and three fourths of the land came under the domain of the Ma'ale Adumim administrative area. The Jahalin Bedouins ended up without land. The confrontations started between the settlers and the Bedouins. The Bedouins protested against the shrinking of their land. I remember living in an area called Umm al-Ghalin, in the middle of the Ma'ale Adumim. We used to have around two hundred goats; we did not need to be workers and search for jobs. Most of the Bedouins lived off of the livestock they owned. They were happy, but unfortunately, when the land started to shrink on them and the Israelis forced them to leave the area, they went to the Israeli courts, but the Israeli courts were always on the settlers' side. The courts ruled against the Bedouins and supported the displacement policy. They did offer an alternative, but what alternatives? God knows. Families who used to live on forty to fifty dunams [about forty to fifty thousand square meters] were offered an exchange of five hundred square meters of land, and next to a garbage dump.

David Shulman, professor of religion at Hebrew University, writing in the *New York Review of Books* in October 2018, examines the larger political picture behind the assault on Jahalin Bedouins at Khan al-Ahmar as part of an Israeli effort to consolidate control over E1, severing the West Bank at its middle, and further rendering the idea of a territorially contiguous Palestinian state impractical in the extreme. Shulman writes:

Lest anyone think this idea is far-fetched or impractical, settlers from nearby Alon issued a statement on October 9, when it seemed that the Bedouins would soon be gone. These settlers happily envisioned groups of "Hebrew shepherds" grazing their huge flocks of "Hebrew sheep" starting with what they expected to be the newly vacated land and extending as far east as the settlement of Mitzpe Jericho, on the outskirts of Jericho city.

But the Jahalin were not docile in the face of these incursions into their land. They have mounted a spirited campaign of resistance for the last eighteen months. While the state bulldozers began to demolish their modest huts and cabins, they mobilized thousands of international and local supporters – who saw the assault as part of the campaign to annex Area C and transform the quest for Palestinian self-determination into the deal for “autonomy plus” recently floated by Israeli prime minister Netanyahu and echoed by U.S. president Trump’s “ultimate deal.”

The case of Khan al-Ahmar should be seen today as the sharpest manifestation of the Israeli scheme for incorporating increased segments of Area C into the settlement zones, and undermining any possibility of a territorially contiguous Palestinian Authority. The most significant areas in this campaign are the Jordan Valley, where Palestinian farmers suffer daily from diminishing access to land and water, and the greater Jerusalem area, where Khan al-Ahmar is only the latest arena of battle against the efforts to seal Jerusalem off from its West Bank hinterland.

A number of different plans have emerged as part of a larger Palestinian recognition of the concerted effort required to reverse this alienation. This issue of *JQ* reproduces key sections of the most recent of these, the Strategic Sectorial Development Plan for Jerusalem (2018–22). This study was commissioned jointly by the Palestinian Authority’s Office of the President and al-Quds University, with the aim, apparently, of pre-empting Israel’s creeping annexation of Arab Jerusalem. The plan was generated from four committees that address policy making, guidance and consultation, coordination with donor partners, and implementation. Excerpts from the plan are complemented here by a contextualization and analysis by Nur Arafah. Though stressing the urgency of such a plan, Arafah notes that “since the plan lacks any information on the decision-making process in these committees, their effectiveness is uncertain.” Arafah stresses the plan’s dependency on donor aid for implementation, in an environment where limited Palestinian financial resources are already being tested by the Trump administration’s decision to defund UNRWA and East Jerusalem hospitals. Moreover, as Arafah notes, Palestinian planning must compete with Israeli plans to Judaize Jerusalem, including, for example, the Leading Change Program, which “allocates around \$125 million to the education sector, in order to urge Palestinian schools to use the Israeli curriculum, among other objectives. This is more than 2.5 times the amount allocated by the SSDP (2018–22) for the education sector.

In historical perspective, Palestinians are working to overcome not only the half-century of Israeli rule over the entire city of Jerusalem since the 1967 war, or the seven decades of Israeli planning in the western part of the city, but a century of planning divorced from local interests, initiated with the British conquest of the city in World War I. In the “De-Municipalization of Urban Governance,” Falestine Naïli examines the erosion of Jerusalem’s power during the British administration of the city. She sees this as a deliberate policy that emerged from Field Marshall Edmund Allenby’s

“blind spot” toward its Ottoman patrimony. The city’s political marginalization was accompanied by the creation of competing institutions such as the Pro-Jerusalem Society (led by Charles Ashbee) and the Town Planning Commission (controlled by military governor Ronald Storrs), in which “representatives from the main religious groups joined [a] regime of ‘experts’ imposed by the mandatory authorities.” This led, according to Naïli, to a combined control by religious leaders and the governor, which contributed to the patrimonialization of the Old City and the confessionalization of its local authority during the Mandate period.

An alternative, locally-generated understanding of the Palestinian built-environment emerges in Lana Judeh’s “Architectural Conservation in Palestine’s Central Highlands.” Judeh analyzes and critiques movements for the architectural conversation of rural communities in the central highlands in the post-Oslo period and examines measures in Palestine (and in Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon), in which emerging decentralization tendencies are challenging centralized governance and control, against “a universal idolatry of gigantism.” In contrast to neighboring regions, however, the case of Palestine suffers from a dual (and contradictory) central hegemony of Israeli colonial and Palestinian Authority regimes. In this context conservatory movements have to be wary of the politics of NGO-ization and the transitional aid industry.

This issue of *JQ* also includes two visions of ecumenical Christianity, in contrast to the confessionalism that guided the British administration. Vicken Kalbian, the veteran Jerusalem physician and local historian, draws an affectionate portrait of the late Edward Blatchford, director of relief efforts for Armenian refugees during the Mandate period, based on the latter’s unpublished memoirs. Blatchford’s main work was with orphanages in Nazareth and Jerusalem. His beneficiaries were mainly Armenian refugees, but they also included a large number of Arab war orphans in Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine. His biographic note includes Blatchford’s tragic career during the collapse of welfare services in the years leading up to the 1948 war.

“Palestinian Evangelicals and Christian Zionism” by Jonathan Kuttab examines the efforts of local Palestinian evangelical Christians to counter American Christian Zionists’ impact on U.S. policies toward the Arab-Israeli conflict, manifested most bluntly under the Trump administration. These Palestinian Arab Christian evangelicals defy the Christian Zionist interpretation of religious doctrines at the political and theological levels. From this position, an admittedly marginal one within both Palestinian society and the global evangelical movement, Palestinian evangelicals derive a particular leverage. Kuttab remarks:

What bothered Christian Zionists the most was that Palestinian evangelicals were not using the usual arguments of international law, human rights, and secular politics, but were using religious and biblical arguments that were very conservative, even fundamentalist, but which

rejected and challenged Christian Zionist dogma using the very language and concepts they had successfully used themselves to garner support for Israel and its policies.

Finally, *JQ* uses this issue to offer its respects to Ahmad Nawash, a native of (ʿAyn) Karim and an artist in exile, who died in Amman on 18 May 2018. In a review of his collective works, artist Samia Halaby recalls two interviews she conducted with Nawash in 2007 and 2011, which were never published. Here she has reconstructed their dialogue which focuses on his formative years in Jerusalem, and his early influences in Italy and France (including Paul Klee and the Surrealists), and his later involvement with resistance art.

Endnotes

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The De-Municipalization of Urban Governance

Post-Ottoman Political Space in Jerusalem

Falestin Naïli

From the end of the Ottoman period, the Near Eastern municipalities were important witnesses to, and actors in, the transformations experienced in the region over the last 150 years. The municipal scale lends itself to an analysis of the social and political space of cities over the long term. In the case of Jerusalem, the analysis of this scale permits a more nuanced understanding of the political transformations driven by the arrival of British Mandate authorities.

In line with recent research on Ottoman municipalities, and taking a cue from Michel Foucault's call to consider cities as the model of the modern state in the nineteenth century,¹ this article considers the municipality of Jerusalem as an essential laboratory of policies implemented at the local level by the Mandate.

Jerusalem's Ottoman Municipality – the Blind Spot of Allenby's Policies

In his first public address in Jerusalem at the moment of the city's occupation by the British army in December 1917, General Allenby did not mention the civic institutions of the city, including the municipality which existed already for half a century. In his speech, he emphasized the upholding of the status quo in the religious sphere and in the holy places. This reduction of Jerusalem to its sanctity is apparent in all initiatives and institutions created by the Mandatory authorities. It had important repercussions on urban governance and planning and led to gradual erosion of the power of the municipality.

Jerusalem had been one of the first cities in the Ottoman Empire to create a municipal council in the 1860s, around the time of the promulgation of the first Ottoman law calling for the establishment of municipal councils in 1867.

From the 1880s onward, the city's municipal council was composed of nine to twelve elected members (through male censitary suffrage only) for a four-year renewable mandate. The council members had to be Ottoman citizens and could not be protectees of foreign consulates. Muslims were the predominant majority on the council, but there were Christian and Jewish members always included. In addition to the elected members, there were four *ex officio* members: the municipality's engineer, doctor, veterinarian and head of police. The council's president (and mayor) was chosen from among the elected members by the imperial government.²

The establishment of the municipality occurred at a turning point in Jerusalem's history, since the second half of the nineteenth century was rife with important changes on the administrative, political, and demographic levels. In 1872–3, the sub-province (*sanjaq*) of Jerusalem became independent of the province of Damascus and began to depend directly on Istanbul as an autonomous sub-province *mutasarrifate*. Thus during that period, Jerusalem as an Ottoman provincial capital played an "interstitial role" between the imperial center and the provincial periphery.³

The other important development of this period is the demographic growth of the city: the population doubled between 1800 and 1870 and reached about 70,000 inhabitants in 1914, divided equally between the Old and the New City.⁴ At the turn of the century, municipal services such as street lighting, sweeping, and garbage collection were progressively extended to the New City. In 1895, the municipal council took office on Jaffa Street, opposite the Old City. This move was symbolic and practical: it demonstrated the municipality's will to accommodate and manage the city's development and simultaneously placed it in the heart of the new business center of the city.⁵



Figure 1. Jerusalem's municipality building, 1917, in the photo: "Last celebration of the sultan's birthday in Jerusalem," 1917 (American Colony Photo Department, Matson Collection, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, [reproduction number, LC-DIG-matpc-11593], online at www.loc.gov/pictures/item/mpc2005003229/PP/).

The municipality played an important role in the development of the new city center of Jerusalem which stretched westwards from Jaffa Gate (*Bab al-Khalil*) along Jaffa Street. There the municipality established the municipal hospital and pharmacy, the municipal park, and its own offices. It thus took an active part in urban planning by conferring a civic aspect to this new city center, which became purposefully municipal with the presence of three municipal institutions. The new heart of the city was an extension of the commercial artery located inside the old City, near Jaffa Gate, where the municipality owned many shops. In its approach to urban planning, the Ottoman municipality of Jerusalem emphasized the continuity between the Old and the New City, while allowing the new neighborhoods to differ in their form from the old heart of Jerusalem.

Jerusalem Sanctified and Divided under British Mandate

The charter of the British Mandate affirmed in articles 2, 6, and 11 the commitment of the British authorities to the creation of a “Jewish home” in Palestine and of the necessary conditions for Jewish immigration. Article 4 of the charter called for the recognition of a “Jewish agency” whose role would be to advise and collaborate with the Mandate administration in all matters linked to the establishment of a Jewish home in Palestine. The Zionist Executive began quickly to fulfill this role and became the Jewish Agency. While the British authorities would have liked to see a similar organization take shape among the Arabs, the executive committee of the Arab Congress of Palestine refused to become the counterpart of the Jewish Agency, since that would imply recognition of the Mandate’s charter and the Balfour Declaration. In 1921, the Mandate authorities established the Supreme Muslim Council to have it administer all Muslim religious affairs, including the pious foundations (*waqf*), the funds for orphans, and religious courts. This council, contrary to the Arab Congress, entailed the *de facto* exclusion of Christian Arabs.

The Mandate authorities reinforced the community bodies while curtailing the power of the municipality, which was asked to provide public services, but no longer played any role in urban planning or even in collecting tax revenues.⁶ However, since the provision of services included water supply, the municipality had significant power that made it subject to challenges. It became a theatre for and a stake in the conflict between Palestinian nationalists and the Zionist movement which militated for a stronger representation of Jews at all levels of the institution.⁷

The Municipal Corporations Ordinance of 1934 specified the composition of the municipal council as six “Arabs” and six “Jews,” according to the categorization of the population established by the Mandate. The mayor had to be a Muslim, one of the deputy mayors a Christian, and the other, a Jew.⁸ The creation of electoral districts during this period incorporated many new Jewish neighborhoods, while excluding

several Arab villages, in a “gerrymandering” effort to manipulate election results.⁹

British mandate authorities intervened repeatedly in municipal affairs, starting with the dismissal of Mayor Musa Kazim al-Husayni for participating in an anti-Zionist demonstration during the Nabi al-Musa festival in 1920.¹⁰ In 1937, the city’s mayor – Husayn Fakhri al-Khalidi (elected in 1934) – was exiled for having played an active role in the Arab Revolt that had begun in 1936. Finally, in 1945, conflicts within the municipality became so paralyzing that the British High Commissioner decided to dissolve the municipal council and appoint a municipal commission to replace it.¹¹

Long before the dissolution of the municipality, British authorities assigned its former roles in urban planning and in enforcement of building regulations to other institutions. Military governor Ronald Storrs and his advisor Charles Ashbee took charge of these fields through the establishment of the Pro-Jerusalem Society as early as 1918. This society’s objective was the preservation of the city, its archaeological and historical sites, as well as the improvement of public spaces and cultural life. The Pro-Jerusalem Society brought together the mayor of Jerusalem, foreign consuls, and religious representatives of the Christian denominations with other representatives of the Arab, Jewish, and foreign communities in the city.

The Town Planning Commission, established in 1920 under the Palestine Town Planning Ordinance, took over from the Pro-Jerusalem Society.¹² It was responsible for defining the city’s boundaries, zoning, and arranging eight new neighborhoods in the New City.¹³ This commission also retained the right to review all building permit applications submitted to the municipality.¹⁴ According to the Town Planning Ordinance of 1921, it was the only body authorized to receive complaints about urban planning.¹⁵

When Ronald Storrs called for the development of a master plan for Jerusalem in the early 1920s, one of his explicit objectives was to preserve the appearance and “atmosphere” of Jerusalem. Thus the authors of the plan worked to preserve the Old City and its view from the outside by establishing a green belt around the walls. Many houses and shops in this area were consequently demolished.¹⁶ Following the same logic of preserving the Old City as an unchanging historical monument, the clock tower on Jaffa Gate, built in 1907, was knocked down, despite protests from the municipality.¹⁷ These drastic measures illustrate the logic of opposition between the Old City and the New City that drove the British approach to urban planning. In parallel, the Old City was now presented as a complex composed of four confessional districts: Muslim, Christian, Jewish, and Armenian, whereas the last Ottoman population census at the beginning of the twentieth century documented the existence of mixed districts with names devoid of any confessional connotation.

Ultimately, these projects divided Jerusalem into a new predominantly Jewish city in the west, and an old eastern city, mainly Arab. The services offered to the Old City were mainly aimed at preserving its historical and architectural heritage character, while those offered to the New City were meant to create a modern city according

to European criteria. This approach was the opposite of the policies of the Ottoman municipality which had begun to provide lighting and cleaning services in the Old city before gradually meeting the growing needs created by the extra-mural extension. The spatial continuity between the Old and the New City, particularly around Jaffa Gate, had corresponded to the demographic, social, and administrative continuity at the end of the Ottoman era.

The municipality thus became a main locus of confessionalization as a “social and spatial process.”¹⁸ The municipality’s loss of power between the end of the Ottoman era and the Mandate period was both a consequence of this process and a colonial tool whose aim was to reduce the margins of political mobilization of the Arab population. One can therefore say that even if the municipality experienced great continuity *in form* since its foundation, *in substance*, its power was eroded during the Mandate period, particularly in the field of urban planning.

The municipality’s political marginalization was accompanied by the creation of competing institutions (the Pro-Jerusalem Society and the Town Planning Commission) in which representatives from the main religious groups joined the regime of “experts” imposed by the mandatory authorities. The urban management of Jerusalem was thus largely entrusted to “experts” chosen by the mandatory governor and religious leaders, in a dual movement of patrimonialization of the Old City and confessionalization of its local authority.

The erosion of the municipality’s power during the Mandate period gave free rein to the British administration’s plans. In this sense, Jerusalem’s de-municipalization seems to have been a deliberate choice to monopolize control of the city’s space, in both the physical and the political sense.

Falestin Naïli is a researcher at the Institut français du Proche-Orient (Ifpo) in Amman. She specializes in the social history of late Ottoman and Mandate Palestine and Jordan, but her interest in collective memory and oral history often extends her work to present-day issues. Naïli also examines the politics of heritage and folklore.

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Letter from Jerusalem

Khan al-Ahmar: The Onslaught against Jerusalem Bedouins

Hanan Awad

On the morning of 2 April 2015, I witnessed the confiscation of Bedouin land known as “Jabal West” in the West Bank. Since Jabal West is in a military-controlled zone known as Area C, the Israelis deemed it illegal for anyone to live on this land. This prohibition apparently only applies to non-Jews since a Jewish settlement had been constructed a few meters away. We spent almost an hour fruitlessly trying to convey to the soldiers that it is against international law to displace the inhabitants of the area.

Afterward, we traveled about twenty minutes west to visit Khan al-Ahmar, another Bedouin village. Khan al-Ahmar was a larger problem. Upon our arrival, I noticed a large number of Israeli soldiers and policemen with their military tanks – that meant there was unrest. The Israeli military were preventing NGOs and media from entering Khan al-Ahmar. One of the many protestors, Arik Ascherman, the director of Rabbis for Human Rights (an NGO that opposes the demolition of homes and displacement of villages) stood out from the crowd with his loud recitation of verses from the Old Testament that oppose such unlawful confiscations. The Israeli authorities used the designation of Khan al-Ahmar as Area C as an excuse to force the Bedouins off their land.

The purpose of this particular attack was to confiscate twelve solar panels that had been installed a few weeks earlier. These panels, the sole source of electricity in the community of Khan al-Ahmar, gave the small village a few hours of electricity daily. Unlike their neighbors, the Israeli settlement of Ma’ale Adumim suffers no lack of electricity or water. Comparing to these neighbors, it is very clear that Israeli policy denies the Jahalin Bedouins access to the power grid and prevents any possibility for construction.



Figure 1. Young Jahalin Bedouin girls from Jabal West community lost their homes when their families were evicted by Israeli authorities to expand settlements in the West Bank (photo by author).

The real reason behind Israeli authorities forcibly removing the Bedouins from Khan al-Ahmar and their plan to erase Khan al-Ahmar is no secret. A United Nations official protesting against the confiscation of the panels put it simply: Israel wants to expel the Bedouins from Khan al-Ahmar in order to connect the Israeli settlement Ma'ale Adumim to Jerusalem. The connection of the settlement to Jerusalem is part of what Israel calls the E1 plan, which aims to divide the West Bank into two parts. To achieve the E1 plan, twenty-three Palestinian Bedouin villages will be destroyed and some 2,300 men, women, and children will be displaced and resettled in Abu Dis next to a municipal garbage dump.

Ma'ale Adumim is the third largest illegal Israeli settlement in the West Bank, established in 1979 on confiscated land from the Palestinian village of 'Anata. According to a B'Tselem report, between 1975 and 1977 Israeli authorities confiscated more than three thousand hectares of the village lands of al-'Ayzariya, al-Tur, al-'Isawiyya, 'Anata, Abu Dis, Khan al-Ahmar, and Nabi Musa to build Ma'ale Adumim.¹ While its population consists of a mix of religious and secular Jews, Ma'ale Adumim remains a Jewish-only settlement and achieved status as a city in 1991.

Despite the presence of many NGOs, media organizations, and outside observers in Khan al-Amar during protests against the confiscation of the solar panels, the Israelis removed the panels forcibly and coerced the Bedouins to leave their small village. The community spokesperson, Eid Abu Khamis, explained that the confiscation of the solar panels would not pressure him and his family to leave his home: "My tent is my freedom and the open space is my culture. I will not leave my tent." Despite the multiple confiscation threats that Khamis faced from the Israeli authorities to demolish their homes



Figure 2. Abu Fahd, expelled from his land in Tel Arad area in the south Naqab in 1950 – now Israel – has been living for more than thirty years on Bayt Ikhsa land owned by al-Sha‘ir family. His home is now under threat to be demolished any day: “The Israeli authority began to shoot our sheep. They are not allowing us to graze and if we are caught we have to pay fines.” He considers the Palestinian Bedouins as the Native Americans of Palestine (photo by author).

and school, he and his community remained steadfast on their land. Khamis explained that he lived with his family in a place called Khirbat al-Murassas, east of al-‘Ayzariya and a few kilometers from Jerusalem. His family raised flocks and farmed the land until the establishment of the settlement Ma’ale Adumim, when, he said, “My family was displaced to a nearby site and we lost most of the land that had wells and water.” Khamis and his family were then expelled to a nearby location where the Israeli forces again began sending them demolition orders and forcing them to move once more in order to expand the settlement that is illegal under international law.

In October 2015 I again visited the Jahalin communities only to learn that Bedouin communities in the Jerusalem area face daily assaults by the Israeli army and police. I met with Eid Abu Ghaliya from al-Jahalin. He was displaced from Khan al-Ahmar and relocated to Abu Dis next to the garbage dump. Eid Abu Ghaliya summarized the predicament of the Jahalin in this area:

During the six-day war [1967], half of the Jahalin tribe moved to Jordan and the other half stayed in Khan al-Ahmar where Ma’ale Adumim now sits – the Abu Dahuk clan, the Salamat clan, and the Sarayi’a clan. They lived in areas that stretch between Jerusalem and Jericho. The clan that was affected and faced forcible displacement and pressure to leave was the Salamat clan. The Salamat clan lived in Murassas area. In 1979, the Israelis started building

the Ma'ale Adumim settlement. The Israelis began a displacement plan for individual families, to make it less obvious to the Palestinian communities and the media. They succeeded in this because the land was spacious and a small number of families lived in it. They kept this strategy of displacing the Bedouins until 1993, when the eastern side became a military zone and three fourths of the land came under the domain of the Ma'ale Adumim administrative area. The Jahalin Bedouins ended up without land.

The confrontations started between the settlers and the Bedouins. The Bedouins protested against the shrinking of their land. I remember living in an area called Umm al-Ghalin, in the middle of Ma'ale Adumim. We used to have around two hundred goats; we did not need to be workers and search for jobs. Most of the Bedouins lived off of the livestock they owned. They were happy, but unfortunately, when the land started to shrink on them and the Israelis forced them to leave the area, they went to the Israeli courts, but the Israeli courts were always on the settlers' side. The courts ruled against the Bedouins and supported the displacement policy. They did offer an alternative, but what alternatives? God knows. Families who used to live on forty to fifty dunams [about forty to fifty thousand square meters] were offered an exchange of five hundred square meters of land, and next to a garbage dump.

In 1994, the Israeli Civil Administration displaced dozens of Jahalin Bedouins from Khan al-Ahmar to a site near the municipal garbage dump where more than 1,500 tons of garbage is trucked daily, mostly from Jerusalem.² In an interview conducted in early 2018, Abu Fahd, who now lives in Bayt Ikka, explained:

The reason behind all of this is that Israel wants to empty the land from the Palestinians in order to replace them with new Jewish settlements. These sheep that you see are part of our tradition; it's part of our connection with this land. We inherited this land and this lifestyle from our grandparents and ancestors. This land was rich and it was the land of honey [*'asal*]; today it's the land of onions [*basal*], due to the occupation. The occupation aims to empty this land from villages, deserts, and cities in order for new settlements and newcomers to take over. In 1981, I built a house and it was registered and legal but the occupation demolished it. Until today I am not allowed to visit my land and to build anything. The Israeli authorities demolished it. Even the tent that I am living in now with my family is under threat to be demolished – I don't know when. But we live with the fear of not knowing what our fate is for tomorrow. I dream to go back to al-Naqab and live in a tent and stay poor all my life but with dignity and with a homeland. [Here] I feel as a stranger.



Figure 3. Jahalin children witness the confiscation of the solar system that once provided them with electricity (photo by author).

During the 1948 war the Israeli army's Negev Brigade harassed the Naqab Bedouins and carried out full-scale clearing operations in the area. This operation occurred after the demolition of the town of Bir Saba'.³ Many were expelled and left the town on foot and in busses toward Hebron, Jerusalem, and Bethlehem following repeated bombing. Immediately after the war of 1948, Israeli authorities forcibly transferred Bedouins into reservations that Israel defined as "closed military areas." The Bedouins lived under movement restrictions in order to sever them from their land by preventing them from returning to it or cultivating it.⁴

In 1953, after the displacement of the Bedouins from their land, Israeli law declared that any land unsettled or uncultivated as of 1 April 1952 would be expropriated. This law came into effect after the removal of most of the Bedouins in the Naqab from their land. Despite the Bedouin's attempts at providing ownership documents, the Israeli government enforced their new laws and classified all Bedouin land in the Naqab as state-owned land.

In March 2016, I met with Shaykh Sayih al-Turi in his village al-'Araqib. His children were playing around the rubbish and rubble of their demolished houses. I had my camera and took several pictures while Shaykh Sayih was on his phone. Shaykh Sayih explained, "We have the right to stay on this land; we own it. I have documents to show you." He pointed to the wall of the guest tent where I was welcomed to sit with him and his family. He said, "Look at all these documents on this wall. They are the legal proof showing that I am on my land and no one can take this right away from me." The documents were tax papers indicating proof of ownership of the land since the Ottoman era. Shaykh Sayih made copies and prints, filling his guest room wall with the documents as wallpaper.



Figure 4. Khadra, who was 110 years at the time the photo was taken, is originally from the Naqab. She was forcibly displaced with her family to the West Bank after the 1948 war. She died in 2016 but never gave up her dream to return to her home in the Naqab (photo by author).

After the interview, Shaykh Sayih walked with me around al-‘Araqib village and, pointing to the cemetery, said, “Look at our cemetery. It is older than the state of Israel, dating from 1914.”

The Bedouins who were forced to leave the Naqab moved into the West Bank around Jerusalem, Hebron, Bethlehem, and Jericho. The Jahalin Bedouins settled around villages such as Nabi Musa, Abu Dis, al-‘Ayzariya, and Khan al-Ahmar. These new areas were spacious and were distinguished by many pasture and water sources nearby, which allowed the Bedouins to resume their way of life. Today many Bedouin communities are scattered in al-Jib, Za‘atara, al-Za‘ayim, Jabal al-Baba, Bayt Iksa, and Nabi Samuel in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. These communities are known as ‘Arab al-Jahalin. Although the land in these areas is owned by the nearby villagers, the Bedouins settled with their tents and animals and made a home on the basis of lease agreements with local Palestinian landowners. Abu Fahd, who lives in Bayt Iksa with his family, explained to me that after al-Jahalin were expelled from Naqab they became refugees and settled on privately-owned Palestinian land. He said, “The land is owned by a Palestinian family, al-Sha‘ir family. We have an agreement with them to live on their land.” The Jahalin had open access to the markets in Jerusalem and became dependent on them to sell their products, which included meat, cheese, and yogurt.

After the occupation of the West Bank in 1967, the Jahalin Bedouins were exposed to another wave of displacement, when the occupation forces began to restrict the land



Figure 5. Young Bedouin girls from the Khan al-Ahmar community (photo by author).

inhabited by the refugee Bedouins. In 1963, former defense and foreign minister of Israel, Moshe Dayan told *Haaretz*⁵

We should transform the Bedouins into an urban proletariat – in industry, services, construction, and agriculture. Eighty-eight percent of the Israeli population are not farmers, let the Bedouin be like them. Indeed, this will be a radical move, which means that the Bedouin would not live on his land with his herds, but would become an urban person who comes home in the afternoon and puts his slippers on. His children will get used to a father who wears trousers, does not carry a Shabaria [a dagger], and does not search for vermin in public. The children will go to school with their hair properly combed. This would be a revolution, but it may be fixed within two generations. Without coercion but with governmental direction . . . this phenomenon of the Bedouins will disappear.⁶

The primary focus of Israeli colonial demographic policies was to concentrate the Bedouins in one area. Under this policy, the Bedouins suffered harsh military procedures that restricted their movements. They became unable to enter or leave their own area without army permission. They were isolated from pasture areas and their access to any water supply was totally cut off, creating a new demographic reality. For over sixty years they lived as refugees and suffered extreme poverty, food insecurity, unemployment, regular home demolitions, forced displacement, and, most importantly, loss of their



Figure 6. If the Jahalin Bedouins build any permanent homes, the Israeli authority demolishes them. Israeli construction for settlement expansion leaves no place for the Bedouins (photo by author).

customary way of life. Currently, around forty thousand Bedouins are living in occupied territory in the West Bank.⁷ Seventy years after the birth of the Israeli state, the Bedouin situation remains unresolved and Israeli policy continues to violate the indigenous rights of the Bedouins.

In May 2018, the Israeli High Court ruled against the Khan al-Ahmar and all the Bedouin communities in Area C: Khan al-Ahmar's school and homes may be demolished anytime due to the Israeli High Court rule. Khan al-Ahmar's school is famous for its construction. It is made out of mud and tires, because Palestinians are forbidden from building with cement in Area C. The school was built in 2009 with the support of an Italian nongovernmental organization, Vento di Terra. The school educates more than 160 children from Khan al-Ahmar village and from nearby Bedouin communities.

On 4 July 2018, the Israeli Civil Administration, escorted by Israeli police, attacked Khan al-Ahmar in order to pave a road to transfer the Jahalin Bedouins out of the area. During the forced transfer, eleven people from Khan al-Ahmar were arrested for resisting the demolition, and dozens of Palestinians were wounded.⁸ The Civil Administration announced plans to build a road on the land and closed the area around Khan al-Ahmar to the general public.

On 6 September 2018, the European parliament passed a resolution calling Israel's decision to demolish and displace the Jahalin Bedouins of Khan al-Ahmar a breach of international law. In addition, they demanded compensation from Israel for the destruction of European Union-funded infrastructure in Khan al-Ahmar. Nevertheless, the Israeli High Court of Justice denied a petition filed by the residents of Khan al-Ahmar and gave

the state the green light to evacuate the entire village. In mid-September 2018, Israeli bulldozers began to level the entire Bedouin village to clear the area of any Palestinian presence. Jahalin Bedouins in Khan al-Ahmar received evacuation orders informing them they must leave within a week, by 1 October 2018. The Jahalin have been forced to resettle in the village of Abu Dis next to the garbage dump. Not only will they lose their land, the forced relocation would not permit them to continue to live their traditional nomadic lifestyle. Animals cannot graze next to the garbage.

Israel is destroying the once-mobile pastoralist people's social, economic, and cultural roots, resulting in general social disintegration, increased mortality, morbidity, domestic violence, and instability. Husayn Abu Dahuk, who represents the Khan al-Ahmar Bedouin community, said,

the role of occupation is to cleanse the Bedouin culture through what they call "urbanization." The Bedouin identity will vanish with the displacement policy. If you ask me, "What is the solution?" I will tell you that the Jahalin Bedouins would want to stay in Khan al-Ahmar, or be sent back to their original homeland in al-Naqab.

"We are next," is what Atallah Mazarah of the Jahalin tribe in Jabal al-Baba told me. Similar to Khan al-Ahmar, Jabal al-Baba is located in Area C and at risk of forcible transfer. I met Atallah at his home in Jabal al-Baba on 29 March 2018. He explained that Khan al-Ahmar's struggle is their struggle:

I was in prison for five years; I was shot twice. When the Israeli army attacks our community we protest against their demolition orders and during the protest some of us get arrested, hurt, or shot. My identity is Arab Palestinian Bedouin. As Bedouin, the Palestinian cause is our cause. As a human I stand for justice regardless of who we are talking about.

I live in Jabal al-Baba which is considered Area C. The area is called Jabal al-Baba (Pope Mountain) because in 1964 the first trip of the Pope from the Vatican to Palestine took place and the Pope visited Jerusalem during that time. Jerusalem was then under Jordanian rule. The Pope visited this area because it has refugees, from Dayr Yasin village and other villages, who were expelled by the Israelis in 1948. Next to us there is an area called Dayr Aban.⁹ The Pope built a couple of houses for the refugees there. In return, King Husayn gave the Vatican a grant of thirty-six dunums, which is this land that we call Jabal al-Baba (Pope Mountain).

The Israeli plan is to displace the Bedouins in order to stretch Jerusalem to the Dead Sea. They want the Dead Sea to be the border of Jerusalem. This is a plan to achieve what they call "Greater Jerusalem" or what they call the E1 plan. In order to get their aim they want to change the demography of the region. That's why they want to expand the settlements so the Jewish

population becomes greater than the Palestinians. This area we are in is called the heart of Palestine. The connection between the north and south is Jerusalem, without the apartheid wall that was built by Israel. But today, since we have the apartheid wall, the link or the connection between the north and the south is this area. When Trump announced Jerusalem as the capital city of Israel we had a demonstration rejecting the announcement. We raised our Palestinian flag to show them that Jerusalem is Palestinian. In December we decorated a Christmas tree and the message was to say: enough demolishing, attacks, and displacement. My messages are peaceful and I want to continue this way and I try to send this message to the international communities, but I have to say that if the international voice gives up on us, and we don't get any support, I will fight until the end.

Unfortunately, at this moment, the Jahalin Bedouin's life is vanishing through displacement, leading to loss of their tradition and culture.

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Endnotes

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How Strategic is the Strategic Sectorial Development Plan for Jerusalem?

A Review of the “Strategic Sectorial Development Plan for Jerusalem (2018–2022)”

Nur Arafeh

Editor’s Note:

Excerpts of the “Strategic Sectorial Development Plan for Jerusalem: Resilience, Empowerment, Development, Independence (2018–2022)” are published on page 79.

“Jerusalem does not need another plan to be placed on the shelf”; “Jerusalem needs action”; “We have enough studies on Jerusalem, we need implementable projects”; “What we need is a political leadership in Jerusalem.”

These were some of the reactions when four years ago I conducted more than thirty interviews in Jerusalem as part of a research project I was hoping to develop with the Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute (MAS). There is undoubtedly a lot of skepticism among Palestinians in Jerusalem whenever they hear of another Palestinian plan for the city. The plans developed to date largely remained ink on paper and failed miserably in countering Israel’s heavy colonial machine that works every single day to turn its image of Jerusalem into reality.

The latest Palestinian plan for East Jerusalem was recently developed by the Jerusalem Unit of the Office of the President, in partnership with al-Quds University, and financed by the Islamic Development Bank. Entitled the “Strategic Sectorial Development Plan for Jerusalem: Resilience, Empowerment, Development, Independence (2018–2022)” [hereafter SSDP (2018–22)], the plan aims at ensuring that East Jerusalem is the capital of the State of Palestine by planning the development for fifteen sectors in the city. This article presents a critical overview of the plan, after establishing the “development limbo” in Jerusalem, characterized by socio-economic deterioration, a Palestinian leadership and institutional vacuum, and the ever-intensifying Israeli efforts to Judaize the city. Only time will tell if the SSDP (2018–22) will have the same fate as previous plans. But for Palestinians in Jerusalem – who face dire circumstances and require urgent support – already there are serious questions as to the plan’s ability to produce meaningful changes: namely, its lack

of clarity on timelines and processes for implementation, dependence on donor funding, and framing within a discredited structure introduced by the Oslo accords.

Context and Policy Framework in Jerusalem

East Jerusalem in a “Development Limbo”¹

Despite Jordan’s policy of one-sided development between 1948 and 1967,² which concentrated economic growth and investment in the East Bank, East Jerusalem maintained a distinctive character. The tourism sector was the main driver of the economy, with a steady flow of Muslim and Christian visitors to the city. The concentration of tourism and other related services in East Jerusalem helped increase the standards of living and reduce unemployment.³ However, following Israel’s occupation and illegal annexation of East Jerusalem in 1967, the city was cut off from the rest of the occupied Palestinian territories and integrated into the Israeli economy in a partial and distorted way. Since then, East Jerusalem has become increasingly dependent on the Israeli economy, and as Israeli Judaization efforts intensified in the past decade, East Jerusalem has been placed in a “development limbo.”

In 2016, 75 percent of Palestinians in Jerusalem, and 81 percent of Palestinian children, were living below the Israeli poverty line. By contrast, only 29 percent of Jews in Jerusalem and 38 percent of Jewish children were living below the poverty line in the same year.⁴ Moreover, Palestinian women in Jerusalem have a very low participation rate in the labor market (at 22 percent in 2016), compared with 80 percent for Jewish women in Jerusalem and 84 percent for Palestinian men in Jerusalem.⁵ Socio-economic conditions in Jerusalem are also characterized by: a weakened business and trade sector; disintegration of local markets; a stagnant investment environment, except for the investment boom that took place between 2008–2012; de-industrialization; loss of productive capacity of the economy; a constrained tourism sector; a depleted education sector; discrimination in service provision; housing deficiency; a lack of financial and human resources; and drug issues.

Meanwhile, it seems that East Jerusalem’s economy is heading toward further integration into the Israeli economy,⁶ as indicated by: the overdependency of Palestinians on the Israeli economy, especially its labor market, as a major source of income;⁷ dependency on the Israeli health system and educational funds from Israeli authorities; development of economic and commercial relations between East and West Jerusalem; and the recent controversial attempt by some Palestinians from East Jerusalem to participate in the 2018 municipal elections in Jerusalem.

Leadership and Institutional Vacuum

Since the death of Faisal Husseini and the closure of the Orient House (the headquarters of the Palestine Liberation Organization in Jerusalem) in 2001, Palestinians in East

Jerusalem have been enduring a leadership and institutional vacuum that has left them without meaningful political power. While a number of official entities were established to represent and serve Jerusalem,⁸ they either play a limited role on the ground or are completely inactive. Poor coordination and conflicts among these bodies have also hampered Jerusalem's representation on the national, regional, and international level. This condition is reflected in the inability of the national movement in Jerusalem to mobilize people to confront Israeli Judaization policies, giving rise to unorganized, individual acts against the occupation.

The leadership vacuum is compounded by an institutional vacuum, as Israel has expelled Palestinian institutions to undermine political activism. Since 2001, Israeli authorities have closed at least thirty-two Palestinian institutions and NGOs in Jerusalem.⁹ As a result, local neighborhood committees emerged and village councils were activated in different neighborhoods of East Jerusalem to follow up with the municipality regarding provision of social services.

Within this context, regional and international players have expanded their role in East Jerusalem. For example, both Turkey and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have provided financial assistance to Palestinian merchants in Jerusalem. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development have also been working on several projects in different sectors in Jerusalem.¹⁰ However, regional and international interventions in Jerusalem remain modest, scattered, and short-term in view of Palestinian needs and the lack of public and private Palestinian funding.

Palestinian Plans: Words without Action?

Since the establishment of the Palestinian Authority in 1993, several "development" plans have been crafted for East Jerusalem. However, a main weakness of most of these plans lies in the lack of an operational mechanism and available funding to implement them.

The first comprehensive strategic plan for Jerusalem was introduced in 1999 by Faisal Husseini and the Arab Studies Society. It was followed by another plan, published by the Welfare Association in 2002, to revive the Old City of Jerusalem. This plan aimed at preserving the architectural heritage in the Old City, developing infrastructure and services, and promoting economic development to improve living conditions of the population. One year later, the Arab Studies Society conducted a multisector review for East Jerusalem. The proposals in this review, mainly project-oriented, were updated and turned into a strategic multisector development plan for East Jerusalem in 2006. Focused on short-term projects and dependent on donor funding, the implementation of the plan was halted with the suspension of funds.

In 2007, the Jerusalem Unit at the Office of the President was established as a technical body to provide needed information and studies on East Jerusalem and to prepare development plans for the city. Accordingly, in 2010, the Jerusalem Unit published the "Strategic Multi-Sector Development Plan for East Jerusalem" (SMDP),¹¹ upon which the new SSDP (2018–22) is based. However, the SMDP lacked an executive arm and adequate funding, and was thus not implemented, leading to the apathy of many Palestinians in Jerusalem toward the usefulness of developing plans.

Making the Colonial “Dream of Jerusalem” a Reality

In contrast to Palestinian planning, one of the strengths of the Israeli planning system is rooted in the availability of funds and the presence of specific bodies to manage and ensure their top-down implementation. These bodies include the government, the National Planning and Building Board, the Regional Planning and Building Commission, the Local Planning and Building Commission, and the city engineer.

Israeli plans for Jerusalem are grounded in the colonial image of Jerusalem. As Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu once noted: “The Zionist vision is the vision of Jerusalem. It could be called ‘the dream of Jerusalem’.”¹² This dream is built on the Judaization of Jerusalem, which is at the heart of Israel’s multitude of plans for the city. These plans aim to expand Jewish demographic, political, territorial, and economic domination over Jerusalem, while further dispossessing Palestinians.¹³

Of these plans, the 2000 Master Plan has a clear articulation of the Israeli government’s long-term goals in Jerusalem. It was the first comprehensive master plan for both East and West Jerusalem since 1967 and addresses a number of areas, including urban planning, tourism, economy, education, environment, transportation, archaeology, culture, and art. The private sector also initiates plans for Jerusalem, such as the Jerusalem 5800 plan, which aims to build Jerusalem as a global destination for tourists and students.

More recently, the Israeli government developed a plan that specifically targets East Jerusalem. Entitled the “Leading Change Program,” the plan aims to invest NIS 2 billion (around \$560 million) in East Jerusalem over the next five years. The stated objective of the plan is to bridge the gap between the eastern and western parts of the city by focusing on three main areas: education, infrastructure, and female employment.¹⁴ In the area of education, one of Israel’s aims is to promote Hebrew education and urge Palestinian schools to use the Israeli curriculum. In other words, Israel is using investment in education, and “development” more generally, as a political tool to subsume Palestinians into Israeli institutions, thus thwarting Palestinian resistance to the Israeli colonial project and tightening Israeli control over Jerusalem.

It is against this background that the SSDP (2018–22) was developed.

The “Strategic Sectorial Development Plan for Jerusalem (2018–2022)”

Like the SMPD, the SSDP (2018–22) focuses on areas of Jerusalem within the separation wall, and thereby under the control of Israeli authorities. These areas include: the Old City, Shaykh Jarrah, Wadi al-Jawz, Shu‘fat, and Bayt Hanina. Areas outside the wall, such as Abu Dis, al-‘Ayzariya, and al-Ram, and which are administratively managed by the Palestinian Authority, are excluded from the plan. In line with the PA’s national policy agenda (2017–22), the primary objective of the plan is to ensure that “East Jerusalem is the eternal capital of the State of Palestine” (p. 15). More specifically, the plan aims to: enhance the resilience and living conditions of Palestinians in East Jerusalem; preserve the identity and rights of Palestinians in the city; protect Palestinian institutions and

expand their participation in society; stimulate economic growth while ensuring people's participation in and benefit from any gains from growth; and strengthen links between Jerusalem and its Palestinian environs. The plan covers fifteen sectors, organized in three groups:

1. Social protection and development (comprising education; culture and cultural heritage; social welfare; youth; health; and citizenship, civil peace, and rule of law);
2. Economic development (including economy and industry; housing; tourism; and agriculture); and
3. "Cross-sectorial sectors" (comprising environment; urban planning and local government; and three sectors not part of the SMDP – namely gender; information and advocacy; and information technology and communications).

Compared to the SMDP (2010), the SSDP (2018–22) is more specific and detailed. It identifies different targets for each sector and for each target specifies: modes of intervention; stakeholders; an estimated annual and five-year cost; and a number of indicators to ensure monitoring, follow-up, and assessment of the effect of deliverables. For example, the plan for the housing sector includes three main targets: developing a special fund to support housing sector development; improving the conditions of buildings, especially in the Old City; and meeting urgent housing needs by building new housing units. However, while several modes of intervention are identified for each target, many of them are vague. For example, modes of intervention for the three targets of the housing sector include: "Support and assist institutions that develop housing sector; support renovation and rehabilitation projects of residential buildings inside and outside and old city; assist institutions that renovate and rehabilitate buildings for housing purposes, and provide them with necessary support; find ways to reduce building costs, especially in terms of infrastructure." It is unclear what kind of "support" will be provided and how.

Ensuring Local Participation and Implementation

Given the growing apathy of Palestinians in Jerusalem toward Palestinian plans, there is a clear attempt in the SSDP (2018–22) to focus on local buy-in, implementation, and regular follow-up – at least on paper. One of the plan's assets is that it seeks to ensure local participation by involving stakeholders from the government, civil society, private sector, local and village councils, and popular committees, in addition to the Arab and international community. However, while local participation is crucial to ensure local ownership of development projects, it could be a double-edged sword. Effective local participation requires high levels of coordination among the different stakeholders to avoid duplication of efforts and ensure strong planning and implementation. Local participation thus requires institutions to train staff and build their capacity, without which Palestinian planning agencies could experience a further erosion of trust.

As of now, sector committees have been established for the three sector groups, consisting of “development experts” (p. 6) and planning stakeholders from the public sector, civil society, and other entities. However, the role of these committees and the extent to which they were involved in drafting and developing the plan is unclear.¹⁵

Local participation is crucial, too, in one of the other significant and much-needed aspects of the plan: improving data availability. The plan lists as one of its objectives to “conduct sample surveys for levels of poverty in different areas in East Jerusalem” (p. 47). It also aims at collecting data on housing needs and on Israeli urban planning, building licenses, and so forth. Given the lack of research and reliable data on East Jerusalem, data collection and knowledge production on the political, socio-economic, and cultural reality in Jerusalem is of utmost importance, especially for advocacy purposes. However, the plan does not explain how it seeks to overcome the obstacles usually faced by institutions when collecting data on East Jerusalem, especially people’s fear of sharing information.

A number of questions regarding implementation and follow-up, which are under the responsibility of the Jerusalem Unit, also remain unanswered. For example, the plan states that a geoinformatics platform will be established and will constitute the backbone of the plan. According to the plan, the platform consists of an integrated system and

is based on the evaluation of projects and their respective output against development indicators which the projects intend to realise, and their relation with the strategic plan’s indicators. Once established, the platform will help determine medium and long term development targets, help document operations, experience and knowledge, and provide feedback for regular updates and revisions of the plan (p. 154).

However, it is unclear how such a platform would work and whether it will provide an effective mechanism for monitoring and implementation.

Moreover, while the plan has several targets and modes of intervention for each sector, it does not have a timeline that sets milestones over the five-year period and indicates when each target is to be achieved. Such a timeline is of utmost importance to set priorities, ensure implementation and regular follow-up and assessment, and hold accountable those responsible for implementation. Furthermore, while Palestinian Authority ministries constitute a major part of the stakeholders for the implementation of the different targets, the plan does not explain how it aims to overcome Israeli restrictions on the involvement of any Palestinian Authority body in East Jerusalem, given Israel’s plan to ensure its complete sovereignty over the eastern and western part of the city.

As of now, the plan explains that four main committees were established for different purposes: policy making; guidance and consultation; coordination among the different partners (to meet at least once a month); and implementation and follow-up (to meet regularly). However, since the plan lacks any information on the decision-making process in these committees, their effectiveness is uncertain.

Dependency on External Funding

One of the main weaknesses of the plan is its dependency on donor aid for implementation. The total cost of the plan over five years is \$425 million, to be raised from external sources as well as available Palestinian sources. Given the paucity of Palestinian financial resources, exacerbated by the recent decline in donor aid to the occupied Palestinian territories and the U.S. administration's decision to defund UNRWA and East Jerusalem hospitals, it is questionable if adequate funds could be raised and if donor countries would commit to their pledges.

This uncertainty becomes more critical when one takes into account the amount of money Israel is investing in East Jerusalem. The Leading Change Program, mentioned above, allocates around \$125 million to the education sector, in order to urge Palestinian schools to use the Israeli curriculum, among other objectives.¹⁶ This is more than 2.5 times the amount allocated by the SSDP (2018–22) for the education sector. The urgency for Palestinian investment in the education sector in East Jerusalem to counter Israel's attempts to Israelize the education system and occupy Palestinian minds (and not only their lands) is echoed in Richard Shaull's note in the foreword to Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*:

. . . education either functions as an instrument that is used to facilitate the integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it, *or* it becomes “the practice of freedom,” the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world.¹⁷

Which Political Framework?

The SSDP (2018–22) falls within the larger political framework of the Oslo accords and the two-state solution, espoused by the Palestinian Authority since its establishment. However, the past twenty-five years have shown that the “promise” of Oslo has largely been a myth.¹⁸ The stated objectives of achieving peace and Palestinian independence and statehood were in stark contrast with Israel's actions – entrenching its colonial domination over Palestinians while preventing the establishment of a sovereign Palestinian state. Indeed, the basic elements for building a state have been thwarted by Israel's policies of enclavization of space (through the system of movement restrictions, the expansion of illegal settlements, and the administrative division of the West Bank into Areas A, B, and C), which have fragmented the West Bank and cut it off from the Gaza Strip.¹⁹

The post-Oslo period has thus shown that the main goal of the so-called peace process is not to achieve “peace” but to maintain the “process” that allows Israel to buy more time and create more facts on the ground. U.S. president Donald Trump's recent moves – recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital; moving the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem; defunding UNRWA and East Jerusalem hospitals; and closing the Palestine Liberation Organization offices in Washington, DC – are another reminder of the collapse of the myth of Oslo, undermining even the pretense of a peace process.

The future does not look bright. A recent poll by the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz* showed that 56 percent of Jewish Israelis believe that Jews are a chosen people, and three out of four right-wingers believe that Israel has a divine deed for its land.²⁰ Moreover, in Jerusalem, 85 percent of Jewish residents are religious, which means that the majority of Jews in Jerusalem are in the right wing and thus believe that their right to Israel stems from God. More surprisingly, the poll showed that “the younger the Jew, the more likely he or she is to be more religious, observant, conservative, and willing to impose his or her beliefs on others.”²¹ Hence, the next generation in Israel appears more likely to entrench Israel’s colonization.

Given all of the above, the PA’s clinging to the Oslo framework only gives Israel more time to impose its colonial project. There is thus an urgent need to think and work within a different framework, on the local, national, regional, and international level. One possible path, increasingly called for by scholars and activists, is to redefine our struggle as an anti-colonial struggle, thus moving beyond a state-building project. However, what this struggle concretely means, what it would entail, especially regarding the status of Jerusalem, and how it might be led – all these questions will hopefully be answered by a new Palestinian leadership with a new vision and project.

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“Everything Was Anti-Gigantic”

On Architectural Conservation in Palestine’s Central Highlands

Lana Judeh

For seven years, during my work at the al-Bireh-based center for architectural conservation, Riwaq, I travelled with my colleagues in the central highlands of Palestine exploring, documenting, and working on conservation and revitalization plans for the disappearing rural historic centers. We visited dozens of villages from the south to the north of the West Bank. Their historic cores were enclaves of a different lifestyle, with fragments of contemporaneity amidst the generally-perceived obsolescence. Among the threads that connected these villages together was the sprawl of their modern expansions away from their historic cores to the main roads and infrastructure, eager for access and proximity to the city. People’s quest for connectedness further emphasized the perceived image of these historic centers as pure locales, or enclaves that were historically remote and barely connected.

This image, despite some elements of truth, does not accurately illustrate the historical reality of these centers as horizontal, interdependent structures, described by historian Beshara Doumani as fluid spheres of ever-changing social and economic organization, with relative autonomy and self-governance in a decentralized political system.¹

These historic agrarian settlements in the highlands, along with the scores demolished by the Israeli state between 1948 and 1967, housed approximately 80 percent of the total population of Ottoman Palestine, with their varied histories and identities. Riwaq has worked since 1991 on the conservation and revitalization of what remains of the rural architectural heritage of historic Palestine, most of which currently lies in the West Bank and Gaza.

Palestine has a complex history of a multilayered process of political centralization. Beginning with the decline of the Ottoman

Empire, through the British, then Israeli colonization, and ending with the recent Palestinian state-building project – all have counteracted prior modes of local governance, production, and interdependence to varying degrees.

The central highlands of Palestine have been explored throughout the twentieth century by many voyagers and scholars of the occident and the orient: from the work of Gustaf Dalman, Taufiq Canaan, and Hilma Granqvist, to others who have documented its gradual erosion within this context, particularly after 1967.²

Following the Oslo Accords, the region has become the target of local and international organizations for that most sacred mission of our contemporary world: “development.” Counter to the World Bank’s notions of development, these former agrarian built-environments in contemporary Palestine can contribute to new bottom-up, collective, and sustainable socioeconomic and political systems. Riwaq was among the few that have realized the innate potentials of this network of localities, and adapted a decentralized, anti-bureaucratic, and anti-monumental approach to conserving these spaces and finding ways to bring them back to the contemporary focus in Palestine.

In addition to the problematic slogans of heritage-as-development, on one end, and heritage-as-resistance, on the other end, one should be wary of readily fitting heritage conservation within the narrow confines of the nation-state building project. I argue that heritage conservation in Palestine and its highlands should rightly be critical of international agencies’ policies which lead to what Chiara De Cesari describes as the universalization of heritage and its commodification for tourist consumption and economic profit.³ It is also important to be critical of what Salim Tamari calls the “nativist ideology,” which many Palestinian folklorists hold to prove the authenticity of Palestinian roots in the land.⁴ Yet equally worthy of critique is the reshaping of heritage conservation to one of many elements of the state-building project. Such a role implies forms of centralization, hegemony, bureaucracy, and large-scale operations which should be carefully examined in the context of Palestine.

For many who were exposed to the experience of Riwaq, the modern, elitist, Eurocentric field of conservation was re-appropriated and localized. What was a hegemonic, conservative, and highly institutionalized practice was dismantled into what Craig Konyk describes as a “progressive form of activist preservation.”⁵ It became a terrain in which conservation has been intertwined with other fields, such as art, architecture, urbanism, sociology, environmentalism, and archivism.

This essay tracks traces of historic and contemporary modes of decentralism embodied in the socioeconomic system in rural Palestine and, on a different level, the organizational framework, philosophy, and programs of Riwaq, including its biennale. The aim is not exclusive to exploring the evolution of Riwaq, but rather highlighting how the wider historic, geographic, and political context in rural Palestine has influenced the institution’s philosophy and approach. Finally, this discussion should be placed in the wider context of the recent emergence of social, economic, and cultural collectives advocating for decentralization and horizontal interdependence in Palestine and the region. Heritage conservation as a practice can play a role in the formation of new

collectives and communitarian forms of solidarity with a modest use of resources. It can also be a lens to critically view not only the concepts of localism, nationalism, and colonialism, but also the notions of citizenship, environmentalism, self-sufficiency, and anti-consumerism.

On Heritage as Eroding Homelands

In 1991, a group of local architects, archeologists, and planners embarked on the idea of Riwaq, for exploring, documenting, and protecting cultural heritage across Palestine. This cultural heritage is inclusive of “all layers, styles, and remains of all periods and civilizations that once existed in Palestine.” This heritage does not only signify the “noble architectural and religious sites, but also the valuable and varied, urban, peasant, and nomad architecture.”⁶

Riwaq’s focus on rural vernacular architectural heritage, on the other hand, was an emphasis on what Fida Touma describes as the “architecture that has shaped the landscape of Palestine for centuries and has been molded by the hands of the average person to respond to his/her needs.”⁷ Often referred to as “architecture without architects,” this common architecture prevailed in Palestine for many centuries. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it housed sophisticated systems of production, exchange, and consumption that emerged within a decentralized political structure.⁸

Anti-monumentalism in the context of Riwaq’s work embodied a belief that the architectural heritage of the villages on the fringes of Palestine’s heritage scene, whether in Nisf Jubayl, al-Naqura, Jalbun, or Bani Na‘im, is as important as Jerusalem’s and Nazareth’s architectural gems. It also meant that the deteriorated fallahin (peasant) neighborhoods in the “Throne Villages” of Dayr Ghassana, ‘Arraba, and ‘Abwayn were just as deserving of preservation as the mansions of notable shaykhs as they are an important facet of the indigenous culture.⁹

This focus on rural historic built-environments also stems from a deep conviction that they have become among the few collectively self-managed spaces which are slowing down the rapid pace of encirclement of the geography and society by the colonial and global system. While other places and spaces are suffering from vanishing heterogeneity and the flattening of different social lives into one, there is urgency to the steadfastness of eroding homelands in the local and global context.¹⁰

Today, visitors can still read the historic centers’ hesitation of being encompassed by the new realities of the village. Their residents are now perceived as “the poor” who were not able to move to the new parts of the village. Others are perceived as those eccentrics who are looking for solitude. For some, it may be the decision of not letting go of certain lifestyles and experiences that do not exist elsewhere. What remained there are not traditional forms of social and economic organization. Yet, some inheritances have survived well into the twenty-first century: there are unique

contemporary forms of strong social relations, high integration with nature, small forms of production, and modern consumerism all in one place.

The central highlands' paradigm defies the current prevailing geopolitics which separates the local built-environments from their natural canvas. Previously, they were seen as one ecosystem. In the present time, extractive economies, agribusiness, tourism, and even the construction industry are rapidly disintegrating local cultures and communities from their surrounding ecosystems worldwide. Despite fierce opposition from social movements and scholars to this economic model,¹¹ it is increasingly endorsed by international agencies as the way forward for Palestine. A 2013 World Bank report about Area C, an area that comprises almost 60 percent of the central highlands, highlights the economic benefits of specific sectors such as Dead Sea minerals exploitation, stone mining and quarrying, construction, and tourism, while disregarding the grave ramifications of these large-scale activities on the existing economic, social, and natural fabric within the area's local communities.¹²

British economist E. F. Schumacher explains how “small scale operations, no matter how numerous, are always less likely to be harmful to the natural environment than large scale ones, simply because their individual force is small in relation to the recuperative force of nature.”¹³

Re-cartography

In the more than twenty-five years since its founding, Riwaq slowly developed programs that served its goals: research and documentation; traditional know-how preservation; historic building restoration; development of legal frameworks for the protection of cultural and natural heritage in Palestine; outreach to local communities through art and cultural programs; and revitalization of rural historic centers. Key milestones in Riwaq's journey include: the publication of Riwaq's Registry of Historic Buildings in 2006;¹⁴ the Job Creation through Conservation program which began after the beginning of the second intifada; the launch of the Riwaq Biennale in 2005; and the inauguration of the long-term 50 Villages project in 2006–7.

During the time that I worked with Riwaq (2007–14), the institution shifted its heritage conservation strategy from single-building conservation to historic center revitalization. Our drawing scales shifted from 1:100 to 1:1000, 1:10000, and 1:100000. Instead of working on a single building, we started to work on one or several neighborhoods of historic centers. Often, revitalization projects would consider the natural heritage surrounding the towns and villages, or would investigate trails which historically connected villages and cities, together narrating the stories of the region.

Riwaq's registry revealed that almost 50 percent of the historic buildings in rural areas of the West Bank and Gaza are located in or around fifty villages out of the more than four hundred Palestinian localities. The 50 Villages project was seen as “a tool to reconstruct an alternative Palestinian map.” The institution describes its large-scale

project as a process which “is giving birth to new cooperative matrices and networks that are working together to stitch Palestine’s fragmented landscape.”¹⁵

One of Israel’s most destructive policies is its erasure of historic horizontal networks of governance and modes of self-sufficiency among Palestinian communities and the superimposition of new ones that serve its domination of geography and economy. Sari Hanafi uses the term “spacio-cide” to describe “the assault on the space, whether it is a built/urban area, landscape or land property.”¹⁶ Palestine’s peasants of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were active in “dozens of overlapping formal and informal networks: the political networks of urban ruling families and the rural subdistrict chiefs, the fiscal networks of sipahi [Ottoman cavalry] officers and tax farmers, and the religious networks of Sufi leaders.” For some periods in history, these horizontal networks had led to urban-rural interdependence in a balanced relation of power. By the nineteenth century, Jabal Nablus,¹⁷ for example, was the largest cotton producer and trader in the Fertile Crescent.¹⁸ Doumani traces the signs of modernization and Palestine’s integration with the world economy as due to a relative level of autonomy and self-governance in a decentralized political system. He argues that Palestine’s response in the Levant to Europe’s industrial revolution was within a bottom-up change that preceded the external forces such as the Egyptian campaign, the Ottoman Empire’s Tanzimat, the British Mandate, and Israeli colonization. This modernization was characterized by commercial agriculture, a rural money economy, differentiation within peasantry, and commoditization of land.

The main impact of Israel’s systematic eroding of the agricultural economy since 1967 has been the depopulation of the rural historic centers which were highly connected to agricultural production. Their spatial organization, compact clustering, location, and use responded to cyclic agricultural practices and merged harmoniously with its natural setting. The integration of the West Bank economy with the Israeli economy had made a rupture in the socioeconomic conditions of the village which was later reflected on its built-environment. By the end of the 1980s, the highlands had become a highly dependent terrain with an external source of income. The Oslo accords’ division of the occupied Palestinian territories and the land fragmentation of the bypass routes system divided the West Bank, according to Hanafi, into sixty-four small cantons rendering it impossible for any Palestinian national infrastructure development.¹⁹ The villages in the so-called seam zone (between the green line and the wall) such as Bayt Iksa where Riwaq has been working for several years are the best example of this devastation. Moneylending and land commoditization, which had intensified in the second half of the nineteenth century under a more centralized political system, characterize the contemporary post-Oslo economic and political realities of the West Bank. The post-Oslo economic policies have significantly eroded the remaining agricultural identity and economic and social lives of Palestinian villages, turning land into “a real-estate commodity stripped of its social meanings.”²⁰

A prime example of this erosion lies in the struggle the ‘Arab al-Rashayda are embarking on against the construction of a cement factory on three thousand dunums

of their agrarian land east of Bethlehem. In a recent discussion about community mobilization against the project, one community member explained the impact of such an extractive industry on the livestock sector in the region;²¹ the community provides a significant portion of the meat and dairy supply in the Palestinian market, and such a project may undermine domestic food production. The project moved to this region after fierce protest from the Wadi al-Sha‘ir communities in Tulkarm where the factory was first located. Both communities harbor traces of the micro-economics of the central highlands, which is ignored in the Palestinian Authority’s vision of development and sovereignty.

On Negotiation

In the course of the revitalization work in Birzeit, Dhahiriyya, Hajja, ‘Abwayn, and Dayr Ghassana,²² there were endless debates at the roundtable in Riwaq’s al-Bireh headquarters. The issues spanned independence from international funding to the constant struggle in redressing the power balance between the planners-architects-restorers and the users. We were conscious of the position of the majority of Riwaq staff as urban, middle class, NGO practitioners in the village, and how our backgrounds influenced our perception of the place and the community, and their perception of us. It was always about the two different visions of “the expert” and “the user.” The dynamics challenged us “experts” to position ourselves rather as citizens who would like to participate in moderating change and its effect upon society.

The key question of the 50 Villages project was: what does it take to rehabilitate an entire town, not only physically, but socially, culturally, and economically? Can we really bring life to these historic centers? Do we even have the capacity and agency to do this if there is no desire or expressed need by the community itself? I always thought that our focus was on the “how,” how to propose physical and non-physical interventions which attract people to re-use these spaces that are often seen as “pre-modern.” There was also some focus on the “where”: where should we start, in which villages – the ones which are threatened with losing their heritage in a few years, or the ones which have high potential because of their strong community-based organizations? There was also the “when”: when do we approach this village or the other, and for how long should we work there. And although I thought the “why” was resolved, it managed to find its way to the table a few times. I believe each Riwaq practitioner had their own personal answer for why we have to revitalize these built-environments. It had much to do with their own perception of heritage, the countryside, and their past, present, and future role in society. As for the “who” question, ongoing debates at Riwaq often led to shifts in strategies so that Riwaq changed its role from being a main actor in initiating and leading projects, to also engaging and participating in initiatives led by the communities themselves.

We would discuss the integration in global tourism, the beast of gentrification,

and the local economy of the village. Some envisioned the historic centers as places of alternative living, ways that are productive, self-sufficient, and progressive, away from the recent consumptive and highly dependent lifestyles of our cities, villages, and even refugee camps.

There was a consensus that rural historic centers have distinctive social, spatial, and architectural qualities that make them subject to inventive and open-ended appropriation. We were all searching for any small individual or collective initiative of any form of production to engage with. This is elaborated in Riwaq's description of its 50 Villages project:²³

Heritage architecture, in this sense, is a dynamic form of enacting change. The concept and definition of heritage has gradually advanced, opening up possibilities for new understandings of urban spaces, buildings, and individuals. These possibilities embrace contemporary activities, meanings, and practices that one can draw from the past to shape the future.

During those seven years I witnessed a “way of doing” that is not top-down, nor bottom-up, but somewhere in the intermediate level. This does not merely reflect the position of the organization itself in the society but also its own process of decision making within the institutional structure.

There was agreement about a decentralized system of work, whether in documenting what is left of cultural heritage in Palestine, or in producing a legal frame for protecting this heritage, or in founding an art biennale. Everything was anti-gigantic. The size of the organization must remain small. Instead of growing into a national-scale organization, the dream was always to sprout like mushrooms all over Palestine. Riwaq's registration of historic buildings, for example, was a production by the masses rather than mass production. For over thirteen years, a network of hundreds of university students and architects volunteered to document tens of thousands of historic buildings.²⁴

The organization's decentralized structure entailed several teams working on different programs – planning, restoration, biennale, community outreach, and archive. This exemplified a dynamic and horizontal middle management that was key to operating several programs simultaneously and efficiently without excessive administrative bureaucracy, yet with interwoven responsibilities and procedures.²⁵

This also entailed several teams working on revitalization projects in several villages. There was minimal formal structure, and a strong concept of delegation and responsibility-sharing. The role differentiation among different levels of management was relatively minimal. The decision-making process was inclusive and open for dialogue, though not necessarily collective. On the other hand, team members had the flexibility to make decisions that were site-specific, to respond to feedback from local stakeholders and emerging variables that affected project plans.

For example, the identification of still-existing community hubs in the historic centers frequently played a key role in the proposed revitalization strategy. We usually

started with them as lively nodes to expand for creating a larger impact. As the projects progressed, some unseen hubs could be discovered and shifts could be made to include them. Sometimes groups from the community would approach the team to offer renovation services for certain buildings they wanted to use for a particular program. This included residents who wanted to improve their historic houses within *al-‘awneh* program (reciprocity).²⁶ Such alterations may not be anticipated in the early stages of the project when architects and planners conduct surveys and map the social and economic fabric of the village. I think that we always believed in creating a snowball effect. This was not necessarily successful in all the sites where we operated, but in order to create such opportunities, there was a need for a flexible and responsive framework.

Considering the rapid destruction of cultural and natural heritage, pragmatism was another layer of anti-bureaucracy in the institution, whether on internal or external fronts. Beyond internal negotiations, team members realized that bargaining, striving for consensus, and reaching workable middle grounds, whether in dealing with built-environment or the community and their aspirations, is a central part of operations.

Horizontal networking, on the other hand, entailed interorganizational relationships, vast networks with local councils, national and community-based organizations, local contractors, craftsmen, village residents, local and international experts, and practitioners in different fields.

The most unique quality that I found at Riwaq was “looseness” as a work philosophy. By looseness I mean the opposition to static and fixed definitions and borders for concepts such as heritage, development, revitalization, and geography. Many members of Riwaq stood against defined dichotomies. The lines were blurred between so many conventional binaries: tradition and modernity, intellectualism and populism, avant-gardism and kitsch, localism and internationalism, nationalism and transnationalism, professionalism and activism, work and leisure. This could be for one simple reason – that Riwaq was a compilation of different subjectivities that were often contested and therefore entailed notions of uncertainty, spontaneity, temporariness, and sometimes conflict.

On the Biennale

In this context of looseness and internal contradictions, the Riwaq biennale emerged in 2005. The biennale drew no lines between the organization, the artist, the art project, the audience, and the exhibition. The Riwaq biennale claims to have an agenda of subverting the norms, thinking through structures, challenging monumentality, and questioning the establishment. In its five editions, it tried to redefine the vocabularies and concepts of the museum as colonial and post-colonial institution, and the biennale and art scene as “arenas for monumental spectacles.”²⁷ It made them site specific to Palestine where these concepts do not make sense in their conventional definitions.²⁸

For ten years, this biennale defied the physical and time boundaries of famous biennales. It infused itself not only in the geography of Palestine, but in its immediate

region within the same philosophy of decentralization, networking, and interdependence. For ten years, the village, the primary center of production, the old mecca for merchants, tax collectors, foreign traders, and missionaries, became the destination for a new form of production, a cultural one, that defies an imposed isolation, creating a new fleeting milieu of difference for both visitors and locals, a new lens or a portal for Palestinians and non-Palestinians to read Palestine within a different narrative.

The biennale was cyclic to some: the family of Riwaq, and the wider circle of architects, artists, and cultural practitioners. The closure event of each biennale entailed the start of the preparations for the new edition. There is something intriguing about this cyclic nature, something that resonates well with rooted practices of Palestine; the agricultural cycles, the market and its seasonal trading, seasonal festiveness and rituals, and pilgrimage. It stands in contrast not only to the accelerating path of land colonization, but also with international aid agencies and with the Palestinian Authority's notion of linear economic growth and development.

The biennale visited towns and villages; it engaged with community members whether in the preparations for the biennale events, or the making of the artworks. Some residents participated in the few art performances as in the case of artists Jumana Emil Abboud's work "Eye of the Tiger" in 'Abwayn, or Rheim Alkadhi's work "Collective Knotting Together of Hairs" in Jamma'in, but the community was primarily part of the audience as the visitors.

Perhaps the biennale was sporadic, insignificant, and transient for many of the historic center residents of Hajja, Jamma'in, 'Abwayn, and Dhahiriyya. This occurs with any cultural intervention which engineers new forms of cultural and social interaction in the village. However, there was an accumulative experience over the ten years which allowed for a stronger engagement with the communities. Two such experiences were: Socratis Socratous's installation "A Cave in Dhahiriyyeh" in the Third Riwaq Biennale as part of Qalandiya International in 2012, and Phil Collins's "Cinema Sayyara," a rooftop drive-in cinema in the fifth edition (2014–16).

For a period of two months, the Cypriot artist Socratis Socratous resided in the historic center of Dhahiriyya to create a temporary museum in a complex of subterranean caves – the site of the first human settlement in the town. Dedicated to the history of the village's community, the museum exhibits included memorabilia and family photographs, objects and artifacts donated by the villagers and included in a display which addressed the complex collective histories.²⁹

Cinema Sayyara was the latest edition of Phil Collins's "Auto-Kino!" project which was rolled out in Berlin in 2010. Cinema Sayyara was held in Bayt al-Sa'; a renovated historic house in the old town of Ramallah. The film program was collectively selected by artists, filmmakers, and Ramallah Old Town and Bayt al-Sa' neighbors. The project ran for only four weeks (18 May–16 June 2015), and offered a maximum of 21 seats per night. Neighbors living nearby could watch the program from their balcony by using a standard AM/FM frequency, and catch the soundtrack on their radio.

In the event program, the artist explains how Cinema Sayyara was an opportunity

to celebrate “the here and now” before the transformation of Bayt al-Sa‘ into a city museum run by the municipality.³⁰ To go to that historic neighborhood of Ramallah al-Tahta, climb on the rooftop of a 1910 house, and sit in a car with people you may not know to watch an unusual collection of films was for many Ramallah dwellers a new relationship – with cinema, the old neighborhoods of Ramallah and the pre-held definition of a public event. People brought their children to watch cartoons like Tom and Jerry. I personally watched *Soy Cuba* (1964) for the first time at Cinema Sayyara and it remains one of the special screenings I have ever watched. One of the residents suggested screening *Omar Mukhtar: Lion of the Desert* (1981), an iconic feature of cinema, but also a film which holds a special place for many who repeatedly enjoyed it as part of their Friday television program in the 1980s and 1990s. For a whole month, as if there was the ritual of receiving guests daily at 9:00 p.m. in one of the private neighborhoods of the city – it did not matter whether you were an artist or an accountant, a local or a foreigner – you were welcome in this outdoor/indoor unusual guestroom, to pick what you would like to watch in small moments of collectivity and togetherness.

On the Act of *Commoning*

The notion of cycle leaves room for decline, for reflection, and for possibilities of new emergences, but it is also accumulative, it sustains momentum within troubled situations, and it stands against the idea of *tabula rasa*.

During a biennale event in Beirut, Akram Za‘atari and Christine Tohme talked about how they – as cultural practitioners – started their life projects as an answer to certain cultural and political conditions at that time, and how some of the institutions came into being as a product of the failure of previous projects or initiatives.³¹ Both emphasized the importance of ending an establishment before becoming bureaucratic or hegemonic, revolving around the ones who founded them. This was in the context of the foundation of key institutions such as Ashkal Alwan and the Arab Image Foundation in Beirut, Riwaq in Ramallah and al-Bireh, al-Ma‘mal Foundation in Jerusalem, Darat al-Funun in Amman, and Townhouse Gallery in Cairo which have played important roles since the 1990s in the cultural and contemporary art scene in the region.

Some of these institutions coincided with the visions of the state official bodies. Others collided with them, and some filled a void left by almost non-existent official entities. It is possible to read the work of these institutions as part of the dichotomy of civil society versus the state, but one may need to depart from this dichotomy and to consider the rising flows, exchange, and production of knowledge, within networks of small entities in Palestine and the region, which are emphasizing the small scale while redefining a past decentralized communitarian life.

Do these entities contribute to building new forms of citizenship, a sense of belonging, and ownership to the peoples and places we live in? Do these networks

entail forms of political awareness, activism, and the engagement with vulnerable social groups? Do they foster levels of self-management, inclusiveness, and interdependence?

I believe they do, but to what extent do they pave the way to a new socio-cultural, economic or political scene? It is yet unclear. There are cultural and intellectual commons that are being built up over time. New collective movements cannot be formed without intrinsic individualism and tendency to experimentation, with individual preferences to deconstruct, redefine, and connect different inherited codes, relationships, and networks, including conceptions of the collective and the individual. I believe this is what the region is witnessing right now. It is no longer easy to ignore the growing voices within the region that are calling for new systems of governance based on principles of decentralism, self-sufficiency, communitarian forms of interdependence, and environmentalism, whether from Iraq or Syria, Lebanon, even Palestine.³²

Today, there are emerging community-based farms and craftsmanship, nature walkers, recyclers, local advocacy and voluntary groups, small educational forums, independent municipal coalitions, small research and publishing platforms, independent groups of musicians, artists, illustrators, and designers. These collectives can significantly contribute to establishing decentralized communitarian systems through active resistance to political, economic, and cultural hegemonies; standing critically against the politics of NGO-ization and the transnational aid industry;³³ and constructing oppositional knowledge which provides frameworks for mobilization and contestation.

As David Harvey explains, no real answer is available to the critical question of the possibility of having “radical decentralization without constituting some higher-order hierarchal authority.”³⁴ What was explored in this article is not a “preference of pure horizontality”; rather, it is tracing emerging decentralization tendencies that counter different layers of centralized governance and control, national or colonial, in Palestine and including other parts of our region.

Decentralization as a concept embodies smallness; however, no single answer is given to the question of scale either. Schumacher emphasizes how humanity is in need of many different structures, “both small ones and large ones, some exclusive and some comprehensive.” Yet in our current world he claims that “we suffer from an almost universal idolatry of gigantism.” I believe that in Palestine and the region, such paradoxical questions were and are still significant, and the history of Palestine’s central highlands and the field of architectural conservation are engaging gateways to look for fruitful answers.³⁵

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Endnotes

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- 3 Chiara De Cesari, “Creative Heritage: Palestinian Heritage NGOs and Defiant Arts of Government,” *American Anthropologist*, 112, no. 4 (December 2010): 625–37.
- 4 Salim Tamari, *Mountain against the Sea: Essays on Palestinian Society and Culture* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2009), 109–12.
- 5 Craig Konyk, “Palestine Fast Forward: Riwaq and the Preservation of Progress,” in *Reclaiming Space: The 50 Village Project in Rural Palestine*, ed. Khalidun Bshara and Suad Amiry (Ramallah: Riwaq, 2015), 83–92.
- 6 Farhat Muhawi and Sahar Qawasmi, *Re-Walk Heritage: Ramallah Highlands Trail* (Ramallah: Riwaq, 2012).
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- 8 Doumani, *Rediscovering Palestine*.
- 9 Throne villages (*qura al-karasi*) are twenty-four administrative domains (shaykhdoms) which emerged during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the central highlands of Palestine. These shaykhdoms were ruled by shaykhs from rich or “noble” families who served as tax collectors on behalf of the Ottoman central government. “Qura al-karasi: the throne villages of Palestine,” online at www.riwaq.org/qura-al-karasi-throne-villages-palestine (accessed 26 October 2018).
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- 20 Khalidun Bshara, “Rural Urbanization: The Commodification of Land in Post-Oslo Palestine,” in *Reclaiming Space*, ed. Bshara and Amiry, 93–103.
- 21 See Ma’an TV discussion, “Sharikat Sanad al-asmant wa ‘Arab al-Rashayida – wajah al-shabab al-halqa al-uwla” [Sanad Cement Company and ‘Arab al-Rashayida: Facing the Youth, Episode One], which aired in April 2017, online at www.youtube.com/watch?v=BnMD1tSEKfF (accessed 6 November 2018).
- 22 For an explanation of the revitalization projects in these towns and villages, see Bshara and Amiry, *Reclaiming Space*.
- 23 See online at www.riwaq.org/50-historic-centers (accessed 6 November 2018).
- 24 *Sijill Riwaq*.
- 25 For more about nonprofit organizational structure, see: C. J. Jenkins, “Nonprofit Organizations and Political Advocacy,” in *The Nonprofit Sector: A Research Handbook*, ed. W. W. Powell, and R. Steinberg, 2nd ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006).
- 26 *Al-‘awneh*, a traditional barter system of payment in kind, is seen as a social solidarity system by which neighbors and relatives help each other carry out tasks otherwise difficult to pursue individually. This traditional concept has been utilized to carry out housing schemes implemented through the 50 Villages project in which the owner provides labor while Riwaq provides building materials, design, and supervision.
- 27 See online at www.riwaq.org/riwaq-biennale-previous-editions (accessed 26 October 2018).

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The Constant Consul of Jerusalem: Edward W. Blatchford

Vicken V. Kalbian

On 11 December 1924 Jerusalem's English language publication, the *Daily News Bulletin*, reported that one hundred and sixty of the city's notable citizens attended a luncheon on 7 December 1924, hosted by Mr. Edward W. Blatchford, the director for Palestine of the Near East Relief, at the Hotellerie Notre Dame de France to celebrate the "Golden Rule Sunday," an occasion when groups of people would meet to celebrate the Golden Rule, "do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you." Who was Blatchford and how was he able to engineer this remarkable feat of bringing together such a unique and diverse group of Jerusalemites? The Golden Rule Dinner gives us a glimpse into the influential role that the American Edward W. Blatchford, a Jerusalem resident from 1922 to 1948, played in the city during the period of the British Mandate. Edward Blatchford was my father's close friend and a frequent visitor in my childhood home. His nephew, Charles Hammond Blatchford, Jr., compiled his uncle's memoirs in 1964 and distributed them to family and friends. I was included in this circle and received a copy from the nephew in 1964. I am fortunate enough to still be in possession of them and have used them as the main source of reference in this paper. These memoirs are a treasure trove for historians of Jerusalem. In this paper, I combine information from Blatchford's memoirs with my own memories of this largely unrecognized figure in Jerusalem history.

The Golden Rule Sunday Dinner

Charles V. Vickrey, general secretary of Near East Relief (NER), came up with the Golden Rule Sunday dinner as a way to advertise the plight of orphans in the Near East. His

idea was that families around the United States would eat a simple orphanage-style meal on the first Sunday in December designated as the Golden Rule day. They would then donate the money that they saved to help the orphans. The first Golden Rule Sunday was held in the United States on 2 December 1923. The *New York Times* reported that former president Woodrow Wilson had promised to dine on beans and corn grits for this occasion marking the NER taking over the aid program from the American Red Cross. President Coolidge and several members of Congress pledged to do the same. In a letter to NER on 26 October 1923, Coolidge wrote, “It is with a good deal of satisfaction that I commend your proposal to observe an International Golden Rule Dinner Sunday, on the second of December, 1923 . . . It suggests not only a practical method for help, but the highest expression of sympathy, by sharing for a time the privations of others.”¹

More than one million Americans participated in this program, which was billed not only as a way to help NER support orphans, but also a way for American families to build character by practicing self-discipline. The inaugural Sunday was such a success that Vickrey continued to promote the idea and it quickly spread outside the United States to include more than fifty countries.

The Jerusalem Luncheon

Merely a year after Vickrey’s widespread Golden Rule campaign, Blatchford hosted his own event in Jerusalem. It was a large and diverse communal gathering – one that my own parents attended. That it happened at a time when civil strife was rampant makes it even more remarkable. Fortunately, the occasion was documented by a post-luncheon group photograph, in which, despite the tensions, there seems to be a perceptible collegiality. It was a notable assembly in the early days of the British Mandate with Muslim, Christian, and Jewish dignitaries blending with high-ranking members of the British administration and religious community leaders. Blatchford succeeded in this incredibly thorny task of bringing together the divergent Jerusalem community leaders to sit at the same table, and he did so while still a fairly recent arrival to the city. He remained in Jerusalem until the eve of the 1948 war, but in many ways this luncheon was his crowning achievement. A native

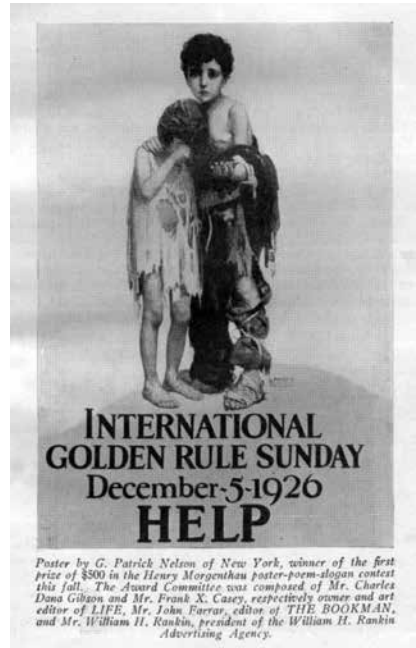


Figure 1. A 1926 poster advertising Golden Rule Sunday won first place in a competition in New York sponsored by Henry Morgenthau, online at nearcastmuseum.com/2015/10/30/charles-v-vickrey-and-the-golden-rule/ (accessed 11 November 2018).

of Chicago, Blatchford had arrived in Jerusalem in 1922 to become the representative of the NER for Palestine and Lebanon. He soon became a recognizable figure around town as a well-respected relief worker tending to the needs of several hundred suffering Armenian orphans, survivors of the mass massacre and deportations from Asia Minor by the Ottomans in 1915.

In Blatchford's memoirs, compiled by his nephew Charles Hammond Blatchford, the first notation of the luncheon is on 25 November 1924: "Call on the Hotellerie Notre Dame de France regarding Golden Rule luncheon. They finally agreed to allow me to hold it there."² This was followed by an entry on 28 November: "Working on Golden Rule Sunday luncheon with Mrs. Vester's help."³ The invitation explained the purpose of the occasion in some detail:

The refreshments that I shall offer will be exactly what the children under the care of the Near East Relief will have for their luncheon, and even the dishes from which we shall eat will be the same as those in use in the Orphanages. We shall thus be able to visualize the service that is being rendered to the helpless children of the East, not alone by the Near East Relief, but also by other organizations, Moslem, Jewish and Christian, that are caring for orphaned children. We shall also be able to join in an international celebration of Golden Rule Sunday in which, through Europe and America, people of many different nationalities and many different religious organizations, to the number of hundreds of thousands, will participate. And thus by our presence we shall show our belief in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. In short, I am asking the honor of your presence at a very simple meal where we shall meet together as believers in the fellowship of service to which God calls all His children.

The luncheon took place on 7 December. Blatchford writes that "guests began to arrive early . . . at the table of honor Sir Gilbert Clayton on my right." He concludes that "the occasion, by the blessing of God and the loyalty of my friends, was a great success."

Several days later, the *Daily News Bulletin* described the event in glowing terms: "Mr. Edward W. Blatchford, the Director for Palestine of the Near East Relief, gave a luncheon on Sunday, December 7, at the Hotellerie Notre Dame de France to about 160 friends, representing the British government and members of the various religions in Jerusalem. There was no financial appeal, and the company gathered simply in the spirit of 'do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you,' a spirit commanded by the Koran, the Torah, and the words of Jesus." In his welcoming talk Blatchford described the Palestine program of the NER: the Nazareth orphanage with 150 boys, and the three orphanages in Jerusalem with 416 boys and girls of which the NER shared the cost with the Armenian General Benevolent Union. The U.S. consul at the time, Mr. J. Rives Childs, then spoke on the subject of worldwide humanitarian work and of America's ideal of service. Sir Gilbert Clayton, on behalf of the guests, thanked Mr. Blatchford "for this opportunity to

meet together for a common object without thought of difference of race or creed and to reflect upon the great principle of brotherly love.” Judging by the letters Blatchford received, the luncheon must have been a great success. The high commissioner, Sir Herbert Samuel, was away and could not attend but later commented in a letter to Blatchford that “the luncheon had accomplished what had never been accomplished before in Jerusalem.”



Figure 2. Photo of guests at the Golden Rule luncheon, 7 December 1923 (from Blatchford’s diaries).

The Photo

In the photograph (figure 2), which is recorded in Blatchford’s memoirs, there appears to be a well-choreographed assembly flanked by the Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes held by the two consulate guards.⁴ I have had little success in identifying the majority of the guests. I do recognize in the first row, starting from the right, Mr. Noorian, secretary of the Armenian Patriarch, and his lady guest. The elderly cleric to the left with the medallion is the Armenian Patriarch Yeghishe Toorian, flanked by two Armenian priests. The notable Armenian presence was in tribute to the Armenian orphans who were the beneficiaries of the relief work. The gentleman in the center is Sir Gilbert Clayton (acting high commissioner). Next are a Greek priest, a Coptic bishop, an Ethiopian priest, and

another Greek priest. Behind Sir Gilbert are Sir Ronald Storrs, governor of Jerusalem, and his wife. Blatchford is in the center of the fifth row from the top, standing next to the mufti, Hajj Amin al-Husayni, who is wearing a white turban. Just below them is Mr. Yacoub Farraj with a handkerchief in his pocket.⁵ In the sixth row from the bottom, in the center, is the head of the Arab Greek Orthodox community, Mr. Mitri Salameh, and his wife. At the edge of the same row to the right are my parents, Dr. and Mrs. Vahan Kalbian. Noticeably the British administration was heavily represented.

Visibly missing in the gathering was the reigning Latin Patriarch Monsignor Luigi Barlassina who held that office from 1920 to 1947. Interestingly, he is also absent from yet another contemporary photo of the religious leaders in full regalia (figure 3) where they are posing with the high commissioner, Sir Herbert Samuel (seated in the center first row) and Sir Ronald Storrs, governor of Jerusalem (standing fourth from the right).



Figure 3. Heads of the British Mandate administration and of the Jerusalem churches, 1922 (Rt. Hon. Viscount Herbert Samuel, *Memoirs* (London: Cresset Press, 1945); a public domain photo (online at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jerusalem_church_leaders_1922.jpg).

The absence of the Roman Catholic hierarchy from such a ground-breaking ecumenical event is remarkable. But it is worth remembering that this was in 1923, four decades before the Second Vatican Council of 1962–65, which opened the gates for the Catholic Church to engage officially in Christian intercommunal rapport. Blatchford’s diary entry dated 21 September 1932, about the construction of the YMCA building, confirms the Vatican’s antagonism to participating in ecumenical events. He writes, “The Latin Patriarch, Barlassina, has just issued a proclamation against the YMCA which ends with the medieval pronouncement that confessors shall not give absolution to anyone who goes to, or assists, or has anything to do with the YMCA. Poor Roman Catholics!” The Catholics in Palestine, during the 1920s and 1930s, were under the strict authority of

the Franciscan Custodian of the Holy Land “whose obligation, on behalf of the Catholic Church was to protect and guide the holy sites as well as the pilgrims visiting them.”⁶ Another conspicuous and politically significant absence is that of Raghib Nashashibi, the reigning Arab mayor of Jerusalem.⁷ The luncheon took place almost three years after the bloody Nabi Musa protests, which had been initiated by the mufti in opposition to the Balfour Declaration. Arab antagonism to it was very much sentient but Nashashibi’s absence may signify the early split in the Arab front. The photo reflects a certain communal tranquility and collegiality. The spotlight of the photo appears to fall on Hajj Amin al-Husayni, the mufti, standing next to the host Mr. Blatchford, rather than on the front row dignitaries. Although in his memoirs Blatchford states that there were also Jews attending the lunch, I have been unable to identify them. It was a successful event and Blatchford then made it an annual event but on a much smaller scale, in the form of an afternoon tea (figure 4).



Figure 4. Golden Rule tea party circa 1925. Musa Kazim Pasha al-Husayni is seated in the first row second from left; Blatchford is in the center, second row, in a white suit. Armenian, Greek, Roman Catholic, Jewish, Maronite, Syriac, Coptic, and Abyssinian clerics were present (from Blatchford’s diaries).

The Host – Edward Williams Blatchford

These remarkable photos of Blatchford in the midst of various groups of religious and political dignitaries certainly confirm his status in Mandate-era Jerusalem society. Yet, who was Blatchford, and how was he able to achieve such a prominent place?

We know that he came from a long line of accomplished forebears – successful educators, ministers, industrialists, and philanthropists. The *paterfamilias*, Samuel Blatchford, was born in 1767 in Devon, England, educated at Cambridge, and ordained pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Devon. In 1795, he traveled to America to pastor a church in Bedford, New York. In 1805, he was appointed a trustee of Union College and in 1824 he became the first president of the Rensselaer School (Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute). He received an honorary master's degree from Yale University in 1798 and a doctorate of divinity from Williams College in 1808.

Samuel's grandson Eliphalet moved to Chicago in 1837 where he managed a lead and linseed oil manufacturing plant. Eliphalet had seven children, among them were two whose careers led them to the Middle East: Edward, born in 1868, and his sister Amy, born in 1862. Amy married Howard Bliss, the son of Daniel Bliss, the founder of the Syrian Protestant College in Beirut – today's American University of Beirut.

Edward grew up in Chicago. After graduating from Amherst College in 1891, he travelled at length in Europe. He returned to the United States and reluctantly joined the family business in Chicago, but later on moved to London as the resident representative of his father's firm. In 1918 after the United States joined the allies in World War I, Edward volunteered with the YMCA overseas service.⁸ He was fifty years old at the time, clearly past the draft age. His first assignment with the "Y" was to his beloved London; in February 1921, he was relocated to Copenhagen, and finally to the "Y" in Istanbul. It was there that he discovered his passion for the Middle East, which eventually led to his long sojourn in Jerusalem. He remained in Istanbul for only a few months. Upon leaving, he sailed to Beirut to visit his sister Amy, who was recently widowed; her husband Howard Bliss had been the president of the Syrian Protestant College.

It was in Beirut that Blatchford witnessed firsthand the plight of the Armenian refugees who had been resettled in Lebanon. This was a defining moment in his life. He was drawn to the surviving orphans of the Ottoman massacres of 1915. These children had been relocated to predominantly Christian Lebanon and housed in makeshift shelters in a shantytown built haphazardly in the Nahr district on the eastern edge of Beirut. At the time, they were cared for by the NER, under the leadership of Bayard Dodge, who was Amy Blatchford's son-in-law and a future president of the American University of Beirut.

U.S. involvement in the plight of the Armenian refugees dates to 1915 when U.S. ambassador Henry Morgenthau urged the establishment of the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief (ACASR) in Istanbul to raise funds for refugees in the wake of the genocide. The aid was delivered through the U.S. embassy in Constantinople and distributed mainly through Protestant missionaries. In 1919 after World War I, it was renamed the Near East Relief Committee (NER). The NER raised more than 100 million dollars (roughly 1.25 billion dollars today) between 1915 and 1930 to help Armenian, Greek, and Syrian refugees – including 132,000 orphans – from the Ottoman Empire.⁹ By 1922 it reported that it had already saved one million lives through relief in the region.¹⁰ Almost one thousand aid workers assisted in the relief efforts overseas, along with U.S.-based volunteers, to build scores of orphanages, vocational schools, and food distributions centers.

Blatchford in Jerusalem

Blatchford first arrived in Jerusalem on 12 December 1922. He went directly to the American Colony, hoping to find lodging there, and while Mr. Spafford and Mrs. Whiting welcomed him warmly, they were unable to accommodate him since the hotel was full. He then chose to stay at the Austrian Hospice, inside Damascus Gate, in an upper-floor room with access to the roof from where he could enjoy wonderful views of the Old City. At that time Monsignor Fillinger, the Catholic bishop of Jerusalem, managed the Austrian Hospice.

Blatchford was received at the U.S. consulate and without much delay initiated close relations with the various community leaders. Even before he took on the duties of overseeing the orphanages, he proceeded to introduce himself to the community leaders. With the help of the U.S. consulate dragoman, Elias T. Gellad, he met the Greek Patriarch Damianos and the Armenian Patriarch Toorian. He nurtured these introductions into very productive and close relationships which became the foundations for his rapport with the various religious leaders. Within a week of his arrival he also contacted my father, Dr. Vahan Kalbian, who had been a friend of the Blisses in Beirut during his years at the medical school and the hospital. The entry in Blatchford's diary on 18 December 1922 reads, "Evening had Dr. Kalbian at dinner. A good talk about the situation here." This was the start of a lifelong relationship both professionally and socially. He was a frequent caller at our home in Talbiyya, and my parents were regular guests at his home. In another entry dated 1934, he describes his first experience with a home radio at the Kalbian house in Talbiyya: "There was some atmospherics but still we got a good deal – England, Germany, Italy – all by just turning the dial." He would frequently chat with my three brothers and me before going into my father's library. He had an enormous talent for entertaining us with a treasure trove of limericks and magic tricks. He had an impressive face with a prominent nose and a clownish face. He was an entertainer par excellence. He would amuse us as he drummed out tunes like "Frère Jacques" from his partly open mouth by clicking his fingers on his cheeks, and at Christmas he would perform the beloved carols.

We would often accompany our parents to his home, first in Upper Talbiyya and then the so-called Nusseibeh house, across from the American Colony, next to St. George's School. He always had a pet dog that performed tricks for our amusement. One dog that stands out in my mind was a terrier named Peter who would show his displeasure by barking whenever "certain words" were spoken (figure 6). The floors of Blatchford's house were covered with precious Persian rugs and the atmosphere was reminiscent of a Damascus salon. Soon after he arrived in Jerusalem, he employed an Armenian from one of the orphanages, Bedros Balian, who became his driver, interpreter, and household manager. Blatchford soon purchased a car, which Bedros learned to drive. It was a 1930 Ford sedan with a rumble seat. In my memory, it was the first car of its kind in Jerusalem. He would invite my brothers and me to ride in



Figure 5. Blatchford with my family in front of their Talbiyya home, circa 1940 (author's personal collection). I was fifteen years old and seated in the front row, next to my younger cousin Jerry Kevorkian. Seated behind me (left to right) are Archbishop (later Patriarch) Cyril, Armenian Patriarch Mesrob, Grandma Kalbian (we called her Hajji Mama), Araxie Kevorkian (behind her, half seated), Mrs. Chakr (an Armenian philanthropist from Cairo), and my mother, Satenig. Standing in the back row are Edward Blatchford, my father Vahan, a junior U.S. consul, my brothers Adom and Torkom, Zareh Kevorkian, and Nevart Torossian.

the open backseat on summer afternoons. To this day I remember the cool afternoon breezes as we drove around the city's environs. Blatchford's staff also included a cook, the legendary 'Isa from Bayt Iksa. 'Isa would dress up like the Egyptian waiters at the King David Hotel, in a white robe, a red sash around his waist, a red fez, and serve at table with white gloves. The British had popularized male servants who were recruited from the neighboring villages. In the 1950s when I returned to live in Jerusalem, I was able to locate 'Isa and he gladly served at formal lunches at my home in full regalia.



Figure 6. Blatchford and his beloved dog Peter (from Blatchford's diaries).

Blatchford had a sturdy friendship with Hajj Amin al-Husayni who would come to his house in Shaykh Jarrah, mostly for afternoon tea usually accompanied by Ruhi Bey 'Abd al-Hadi who would act as translator, as Blatchford did not speak Arabic. Having attended the Collège des Frères, however, the mufti was conversant in French, so some of the time they would speak in French. Favored by the British, afternoon teas had become the accepted venues of entertainment particularly as some of the clergy and the majority, if not all, of the Muslim dignitaries were temperate. Blatchford's regular guests would include the Armenian and Greek patriarchs of Jerusalem.

He was devoted to the welfare of the Armenian orphans in Jerusalem and Nazareth. In 1921, the NER had located around twelve hundred orphans, mostly boys, who were found homeless in the Syrian desert region of Dayr al-Zur and around Mosul in Iraq. The NER arranged for their transport by ship via Basra, Alexandria, and Jaffa and then by train to Jerusalem. They were settled primarily in dormitories in the Armenian Convent of St. James in the Old City. Others were housed in the Greek Orthodox Monastery of the Cross, beyond Katamon, located at the foot of the modern-day Israeli Knesset, while a smaller group of orphans were housed in Nazareth. The operation was under the auspices of the Armenian patriarchate, mainly funded by the Armenian General Benevolent Union with help from NER who took on the general supervision of the endeavor. Jerusalem's Armenian community volunteered to take in some of the orphans. The boys and young

men were trained in several occupations and trades such as carpentry, plumbing, and printing, and the girls in nursing. Many of the older boys were recruited into the St. James Seminary at the Armenian convent while others were enrolled at the American University of Beirut. In fact, two of the orphans who joined the seminary ended up as future patriarchs in Jerusalem.

By 1927, most of the orphans had been rehabilitated and had found homes. The NER had to close its operation in Palestine, which meant that Blatchford no longer had a reason to remain in Jerusalem. But in his five years there, he had become passionate about Jerusalem and its inhabitants. He describes his feelings in a letter to his friend Harry J. Dunbaugh on 16 June 1928:

In March the N. Y. office of the NER cabled asking that I close up the work in Palestine and go to Beirut and take charge of the Antilyas Orphanage . . . I am in thorough sympathy with their decision regarding my work. But I have put so much of myself into this Palestine area that I cannot give up until I see it finished. I have therefore offered to start as a volunteer worker.¹¹

His love for Palestine is evident in this passage. He goes on to ask Dunbaugh to cash in some securities from his inheritance to allow him to continue his work with the Armenian orphans. Dunbaugh responds advising Blatchford not to take “quite as large a slice from your principal as you have in mind . . . while at the same time admiring the devotion and spirit which lead you to spend this money.”¹² In a wonderful gesture, a group of Blatchford’s friends in the United States and Europe collected \$4,125 and sent it to him in Jerusalem so that he would not have to spend his own money. Blatchford was moved by this outpouring of support for his continued work in Jerusalem. In a letter dated 9 December 1928, he thanks his friends for “backing this old horse. He returns to Jerusalem, not wind-broken or spavined but keen as a two-year old.”¹³

It is clear that Blatchford did not want to return to his humdrum life in Chicago and he very much wanted to stay in Jerusalem. He describes some conversations in April of 1929 with [Paul] Knabenshue, the American consul general. Also he applied for a position in the U.S. consulate in Jerusalem. Initially he was rejected, as the State Department did not hire Americans for foreign service duty without the proper applications and rigorous entry exams taken in Washington. They finally but reluctantly gave in to his request and in 1929 he was formally appointed with a newly created title of “Vice-Consul for Religious Affairs.” The appointment was initially a temporary six-month appointment, but it was made permanent in 1930. This became his official designation and he served in Jerusalem uninterrupted until he retired in 1948, an unprecedented sojourn as the standard length of a U.S. foreign service tour of duty is twenty-four months, which may be extended to forty-eight months. Blatchford described the nature of his work in a diary entry on 9 September 1929 as follows: “My special work will be to feel the pulse of the community.”¹⁴ He relished his position. He would attend all the official and formal religious events that would always be highlighted by the presence of the consular corps in their formal

attire. The two ceremonies that he would never miss were the Armenian ceremony of the washing of the feet on Maundy Thursday and the Ethiopian Holy Week ceremony that took place on the Holy Sepulcher rooftop. He also had the unique opportunity of meeting both American and European dignitaries as he would guide them around to the holy sites and introduce them to the many religious leaders.

Blatchford defies categorization. Working in philanthropy, he helped establish orphanages in Jerusalem to take care of the Armenian orphans who had survived massacres. Once settled in Jerusalem, he developed deep relationships with influential citizens and civic and religious leaders. It was these relationships that enabled him to successfully host the 1923 Golden Rule luncheon after being in Jerusalem for only one year. The confidence that the American Consulate showed by creating a position especially for him is significant. His ability to communicate with such a diversity of people helped him gain the trust of many. Another unique aspect of Blatchford's tenure in Jerusalem is that, unlike the typical foreign service officer who left after two years, Blatchford was there for twenty-five years. In that time, he was able to gather a wealth of knowledge about the complex relationships that existed between the various religious communities. Thus, while the Golden Rule lunch was one of his first Jerusalem "projects," it exemplified the very essence of his contribution to the fabric of Jerusalem's society in the British Mandate period. Blatchford left Jerusalem in 1948 as the war was breaking out. In the last few years before 1948, his diary entries become stark and urgent. One can sense his sadness as he watches a way of life under threat.

- 1946, May 2: Gave up my car, sold.
- 1946, October 30: Explosion near the American Colony.
- 1946, November 13: Explosion 6:50 PM right back of my house. One outside door blown in and 40 panes of glass.
- 1946, December 5: Heavy explosions and firing.
- 1947, March 1: Attack on the Goldsmith house.
- 1947, March 12: Attack on the Schneller orphanage.
- 1947, May 12: Two British constables shot, corner King George Avenue and Yahuda St.

In 1948, in an urgent cable sent to his friend Harry in Chicago, he writes:

Situation in quarter where I lived made it unsafe to stay. Hastily, I left my house Jan. 2 and am safely housed in less unsafe location. Reluctantly feel this chapter of my life is closed and I had better return to Chicago.

Edward Blatchford left Jerusalem on February 20, 1948. The diary entry for that day reads:

Attack near Jaffa Gate. Left Jerusalem 12 noon.

He returned to Chicago, his hometown, where he lived out his remaining years. He died on 18 May 1956.¹⁵

In the above, I have tried to draw attention to a neglected but unique resident of Jerusalem during the Mandate days. He was the quintessential humanitarian. On his desk he kept a table piece made of Palestinian pottery inscribed with an Arabic phrase, meaning: “If my origin is of dust, then the whole world is my country, and everyone in it is my kin.” His service – first to help the Armenian refugees and later his devotion and staunch support to the Palestinian cause – gives proof that his motto was fulfilled.



Figure 7. Blatchford with Armenian orphans (from Blatchford’s diaries).

Dr. Vicken V. Kalbian, a retired physician living in Winchester, Virginia, was born in Jerusalem. He has published several articles about the history of Jerusalem. The author thanks Professor Aline Kalbian for her editorial assistance.

Endnotes

- 1 Near East Foundation, online at neareastmuseum.com/2015/10/30/charles-v-vickrey-and-the-golden-rule/ (accessed 23 October 2018).
- 2 Edward William Blatchford, unpublished diaries and correspondence, ed. Charles Hammond Blatchford, 37; in author’s possession.
- 3 Mrs. Bertha Spafford Vester was the daughter of Horatio and Anna Spafford, the founders of the American Colony in Jerusalem.
- 4 The photo was probably taken by one of two Jerusalem photographers, Garabed Krikorian or Khalil Raad.
- 5 In the early part of the twentieth century, Farraj worked for the Russian consulate, then in 1920 was appointed acting president of the Arab Executive. In 1934, al-Difa’ party appointed him as their Christian leader, and Raghīb Nashashibi as the Muslim leader. Farraj was appointed deputy mayor of Jerusalem in the late 1930s.
- 6 In 1929, Palestine under the British Mandate was removed from the jurisdiction of the Apostolic Delegate to Syria and transferred to Cairo. In February 1948, the Vatican established the Apostolic Delegation in Jerusalem and Palestine, which included Israel, Jordan and Cyprus. Since 1994, the Apostolic Delegation covers only Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza. See “Apostolic Delegation in Jerusalem and Palestine,” Catholic Church of the Holy Land website, online at catholicchurch-holyland.com/?p=3203 (accessed 23 October 2018).
- 7 Nashashibi and Hajj Amin al-Husayni had been close friends. See Vicken V. Kalbian, “Reflections on Malaria in Jerusalem,” *Jerusalem Quarterly* 67 (2016): 82–96.

- 8 Blatchford diaries, 54. YMCA workers in World War I were part of a large-scale program of morale and welfare services for the military, serving almost all American military forces in Europe. They began their work from the beginning of the U.S. Civil War; online at www.asymca.org/history (accessed 11 November 2018).
- 9 “Who We Are,” www.neareast.org/who-we-are/ (accessed 11 November 2018).
- 10 “Near East Relief Has Saved One Million, Report to Congress Says Operations Have Amounted to Total of \$70,000,000,” *New York Times*, 16 July 1922, online at timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1922/07/16/112683327.pdf (accessed 11 November 2018).
- 11 Blatchford, unpublished diaries and correspondence, 44.
- 12 Blatchford, unpublished diaries and correspondence, 45.
- 13 Blatchford, unpublished diaries and correspondence, 46.
- 14 Blatchford, unpublished diaries and correspondence, 48.
- 15 “Biography of the E.W. Blatchford Family” in “Inventory of the Blatchford Family Papers, 1777–1987, Bulk 1839–1965,” website of the Newberry library, online at mms.newberry.org/xml/xml_files/Blatchford.xml (accessed 23 October 2018).

Ahmad Nawash, Painting in Exile

Samia A. Halaby

It is important for historians of art to look clearly at all that is accomplished in any one period and document for their society its creative accomplishment. The value of the arts is established over time by the many voices of those who study, write, collect, and enjoy art. As a writer and painter of long experience, I am writing about Ahmad Nawash, because I consider his work to be of high quality and thus add my voice to the many who admire his paintings. The significance of such a process lies in the need for a society to provide a view which guides new generations, be it in art or in science.

I visited and interviewed the painter Ahmad Nawash at his home in Amman twice, once in 2007 and again in 2011. He narrated a few details of his life, and later guided me to a large room where I photographed some of his works and took notes while he explained a few of them to me. Throughout both interviews, the great and ongoing tragedy of Palestine was an omnipresent theme in his discourse.

Nawash's early beginnings and mature practice as an artist took place during the years when the Palestinian liberation movement was growing in strength in politics and in art. Forward-looking artists of the time were active organizing unions, exhibitions, galleries, publications, and a museum. Together, their visual output forms a unique chapter in both the history of Palestinian art and that of twentieth-century revolutionary art – including movements such as Impressionism, Constructivism, and the Mexican Mural movement. While Nawash remained distant from the organizing activities of the Liberation artists, he nevertheless was one of them in the form and content of his work. Briefly, the form of their work was most often related to the Mexican Mural

movement, wherein space is divided in a mildly Cubist manner and the sections filled with symbolic images meaningful to the population.

Ahmad Nawash was born in the village of ‘Ayn Karim in the governorate of Jerusalem, Palestine, in 1934. Nawash died on 18 May 2017 at age eighty-three, one year after the death of his wife, Jihad Ibrahim al-Zarqa‘a. He experienced the tragedy of the expulsion from Palestine, the Nakba, at the age of fourteen – old enough to be conscious of his surroundings. The boy Ahmad, in his formative years between childhood dependence and the ambitions of adulthood, experienced this loss as an indelible stamp on his life. After the expulsion, the family traveled first to Jericho where they stayed for a month, then took a bus to Jordan where they wandered from place to place before eventually settling in Amman. During our discussions,¹ Ahmad Nawash remembered his father as a man of great dignity who protected the family and who worked with his hands all his life as a stone cutter.

When he turned to speaking about his painting, Nawash said, “I began to draw when I was in Palestine,” then added that during the first years in Jordan, “I did not study art formally but taught myself and I did not take any short courses that are typical here. I used to go to museums and often examined art books but not many because they were expensive.”

After family life became stable in Amman, Ahmad began to study art informally with an Italian painter named Armando. His admiration for his teacher instilled in him the idea of studying art in Rome. At the age of seventeen, he combined his savings and a modest gift from his father and set out for Italy. It was a memorable adventure of youth and at the time of our interview, at age seventy-nine, Ahmad retained a visual memory of his family’s farewell. In his mind’s eye, he could still see a tear slowly sliding down his father’s cheek as he gave him his blessings, advising him to “Rely on God.”²

Ahmad Nawash arrived in Rome without previously having been admitted to any school. He immediately took the entry exam for the Accademia di Belle Arti di Roma, succeeded, began five years of study, and graduated in 1964 with honors. He described his studies as a gift from the Italian government because it was the government workers who were dedicated to Arab-Italian relations who provided the needed support.³ He said that his first experience exhibiting his work was in the streets of Rome, in Via Margutta, where many students and professionals sat with their works receiving the general public’s reactions. He also exhibited his work in a cafe near Piazza del Popolo.⁴

Ahmad returned to Amman after graduation and was immediately engaged to Jihad and a year later, in 1965, they were married. Jihad was a teacher and school principal during her life and Ahmad’s number one supporter.⁵ The Palestinian liberation movement was growing stronger in Amman and because of this, Palestine was at the forefront of both his thoughts and his paintings even more so than before. On the subject, Nawash commented:

I paint about the traitors and the resulting pressure spiritually and bodily on the human being. Even when I was in Rome I painted about Palestine

but the thought deepened in 1967. Our traitorous leaders sold us out for a very cheap price.⁶

Nawash's hunger for learning was extensive, and over the following two decades, he received three more diplomas in etching, lithography, ceramics and restoration from the School of Fine Arts in Bordeaux, the National School of Fine Arts in Paris, and a short course in Florence. His stay in Paris lasted for five years from 1970 to 1975, and by the end he spoke both Italian and French fluently.

His son, Dirar Nawash, remembered his father as a man focused on his art and who seemed more high-strung than relaxed.⁷ His absorption with his work extended to late hours at the studio and continuous contemplation at home of paintings he was then working on. Dirar further remarked that his father lacked the diplomacy with which his wife was greatly endowed, and were it not for her management, Nawash might have been a solitary and isolated artist.

During the mid-1990s, tired of life in Amman, he went to Paris and began serious efforts to move his family to France. But sadly, his son Mousa's sudden death led him immediately to return home to Amman where he remained for the rest of his days.⁸

Political and arts activism were on the minds of most Palestinian artists, however Nawash remained distant from both and devoted himself to family life and to making paintings. Nonetheless, he remained the typical Palestinian refugee intimately attached to daily news of his nation's ongoing tragedies. His visual expression sprang from the depth of pain he experienced in reaction to the cruelty of Israeli oppression. The suffering he observed in Palestinian children and their reaction to events were primary subject matter. He considered that the Nakba was not a single event that ended in 1948, but rather an ongoing daily event that began in 1948. Nawash recognized that the pain he felt was shared by all Palestinians, and his tears flowed unabashedly when talking about particular events. As we sat together reminiscing, it seemed to me that his gentleness converted us to brother and sister. We agreed that Palestinians share the pain of continuous tragedy, and regardless of where or when we meet, it always makes us seem familiar to each other. Nawash was very tender towards the people around him. But as he described personalities in his paintings, it was clear that he was not indiscriminate. He applied affectionate understanding to the innocent and anger to those he saw as doing "evil."⁹

All that Ahmad Nawash knew and felt strongly about was poured into his pictures: love of his wife and family, the solid dignity of his father, and the daily tragedies Palestinians experienced. On first sight, his paintings seem childlike and the careless viewer may easily pass them by as simplistic. However, they remain in one's consciousness and compel the hasty viewer to return no matter how cursory the first look. As you contemplate his paintings, your glance moves from surprise to surprise – from the sharpness of an arm turned into a Kalashnikov, to the unexpected twists of bodies combined into simple shapes, to the compelling simplicity of facial expression, to the crisp symbols of Palestinian national life. This is how he made visible the pressure of oppression "spiritually and bodily on the human being."¹⁰

The development of Nawash's painting from his earliest student years to full maturity of an artist in his seventies was uninterrupted. One can see in his first student paintings of the early 1960s the influence of Cubism and abstraction then current in Europe. Having visited the continent so many times, Nawash had ample opportunities to see European abstraction such as that of the Jeune École de Paris¹¹ and perhaps the CoBrA Group.¹² Nawash himself never mentioned CoBrA paintings, but the formal relationship between their work and his is apparent albeit their difference in content. The CoBrA artists were looking for something to liberate them from the morass of artistic ambiance in which they lived, and thus were inspired by the drawing of children and the 'insane.' Nawash, on the other hand, was painting the tragedies of Palestinian life that he observed all around him.

The single European painter that appealed most to Nawash was Paul Klee. In an interview conducted by Nadia al-'Issa Nawash, he said about Paul Klee's artwork:

I am particularly fond of the transparency of his colors and am very much drawn to his ability to so eloquently summarize what he wishes to convey in his works.¹³

Nawash's earliest paintings are murky and brushy. It is as though he was searching for visual methods to render his subjects without illusionistic details or specific background. One might think that they see hints of Surrealism in Nawash's early paintings due to the distortions in his figures. But his later work shows that these were personifications that endure into his mature style and that he intended them as Palestinian archetypes. They are not mythical inventions. A good example of Nawash's early work is the painting *Human Rights Crucified* (figure 4), dating from 1967, representing an old man in a murky, hazy atmosphere. If one compares it to his paintings dating from the 1990s, the difference visually is clearly demonstrated.

Nawash's maturity as an artist paralleled that of the Palestine liberation movement and that of its artists. His paintings gained in formal power and clarity, as did his use of symbols. In his mature work, figures and the space in which they exist are rendered in flat color. Shapes are simplified, and often several parts are made to share one outline, as is typical of the paintings of Palestinian Liberation artists. Both the figures he represented and the symbols accompanying them were executed with great economy of means. This mature clarity is exemplified in his painting *Palestinian Situation* (1973; figure 5) and even more in his painting *Children of Sorrow* (1986; figure 6). both described below.

At the end of our interview, Nawash described a few paintings explaining his intentions and the visual story they contained. As we explored his studio, he clarified that his paintings are not about depression nor result from it; rather they are powerful weapons of Palestinian history that strengthen the determination to return and retrieve all that was criminally taken; to remove the pain and to un-erase the co-opted national history.

Following are his descriptions combined with my insights of the works we selected for the final focus of our interview:

Those to Whom Evil was Done (1966) is an early expressionist work done in painterly textures exhibiting both the form and content of later work. Though the brushy atmosphere is somewhat muddy, there are strong hints of what will become the hallmark of much of the art of the Liberation school of the 1970s and 1980s. Many shapes are fitted together, sharing one border composed of the convexities and concavities needed to clarify the identity of the subject represented. This is clearly the case in the two adjacent heads, one orange and one grey, which rise out of the central composition at the top of the painting. Careful scrutiny reveals many combined human parts, especially heads, extremities, and eyes as well as allusions to animal parts in some of the eyes and outlines. Ahmad Nawash described this painting as representing those who died, or were killed, or are still alive, who have suffered evil at the hands of others.

The painting *The Old Man and the Birds* (1967) has far clearer space than earlier paintings. Nawash distorted shapes in surprising ways for expressive purposes, using levels of light and color to differentiate areas, and using minimal shading mostly in background areas. Texture in these early paintings delineates flat areas, the outline of which carries the message. Ahmad described this as a picture of an old Palestinian man unable to move because the cares of the world are on his back: “The birds on his shoulder are worries that he cannot shoo away.”¹⁴



Figure 1. *Those to Whom Evil Was Done*, 1966, oil on canvas 100 x 83 cm.



Figure 2. *The Old Man and the Birds*, 1967, oil on canvas, 88 x 62 cm.

Palestine (1967) is one of the largest paintings executed by Ahmad Nawash. He considered it very important in his career. It possesses minimal details in his typical less-is-more manner, leaving viewers to plummet its depth based on their own knowledge and experience. The mother and child at the center can easily be read as the embodiment of Palestinian hope with the child's head looking something like a key – a symbol of the right of return. On the right is a child suckling a cow, which represents Palestine as a suckling child of the Arab world. The rat on the left represents Israel, while the two figures in the upper left corner above the rat are walking back to back, disagreeing. They represent the Palestinian cause with all of its contradictions. The horizon, Ahmad described, is the border that is dark and uncertain. The symbolist intent paralleled with the deliberate refusal to be explicit remains an attribute of Nawash's work throughout his career.



Figure 3. *Palestine*, 1967, oil on canvas, 100 x 120 cm.

Crucifixion (1967) is a recurrent theme in Palestinian painting of the Liberation school. This is a theme that deserves special treatment, as does the theme of the martyr. What is interesting is the theme of death by crucifixion as part of the history of Palestine, dramatized by the biblical narrative. It is an image that has permeated the human race as an archetype of suffering due to injustice. This theme is not limited to Christian or Muslim artists,

and is practiced with a naturalness that seems all but unaware of the biblical crucifixion. In this painting, *Human Rights Crucified*, Ahmad described the crucified figure as representing human rights. Above the main figure is a second head, which he described as perhaps a partner or an alternate consciousness. More importantly behind the crucified figure and to his left is another standing figure, the upper torso of which seems to peer through a large window into a red-hot atmosphere. Ahmad described this other figure as the fighter in all Palestinians: “This is the one who struggles and is still alive and whose body is half hidden behind a curtain of darkness. He is like all of us who were exiled and scattered.”¹⁵



Figure 4. *Human Rights Crucified*, 1967, oil on canvas, 88 x 62 cm.

Palestinian Situation (1973) reflects Ahmad Nawash's more mature style, though clarity of color and flatness of shape are not yet completely present. A dimly delineated background is a space without identity in which distributed figures exist in relation to one another, telling their story through gesture and symbol. The floating lady, looking somewhat like an overblown balloon in the upper left of the painting, represents Golda Meir. Ahmad pointed out that if you look closely at her features you will recognize her. He added that life wins against Golda's will, and that life is exemplified by the young girl on the extreme right. Even though the girl has no arms, which means she has no power, she has a strong will of defense. Some stand nearby, sad for the girl. The Palestinian flag stretched horizontally, he said, can be recognized as the “stretcher-of-death” for wounded victims and martyrs.



Figure 5. *Palestinian Situation*, 1973, oil on canvas, 90 x 60 cm.

With *Children of Sorrow* (1986), painted more than twenty-five years into his career, Nawash has fully arrived at his powerful style. His color has grown richer, and his expressive shapes carry their message while interweaving with elegance and ease. A group of children in their various ages and sizes huddle with toys and pets and with worried facial expressions. Nawash told me that a great whale, perhaps a great burden, rests on the back of the tallest boy, its body curved downwards to share the shape of its head with that of a smaller boy hugged by, or hugging, the bigger one.



Figure 6. *Children of Sorrow*, 1986, oil on canvas, 50 x 60 cm.

Shapes interchange in meaning and are fitted together like pieces in a puzzle without the use of negative space between them. The only negative shape is the space of the background, which has grown light, yet contains expressive color delineation.

In *Challenge and Children* (1990), one boy seems to occupy one body with duplicate parts. He faces forward, having a recognizable recurrent face of a boy, one that lives in many Nawash paintings. To the side of his head, a three-quarter view of another boy's similar head emerges. A Kalashnikov replaces the right arm of this main figure of a boy facing the viewer. Another figure is nested under his other arm, a figure that Ahmad described as having "a powerful gaze of challenge looking at distant perspectives while the child that is facing forward leans and rests on him or her. It is about how Palestinian children have to deal with the challenge presented by Israeli oppression."¹⁶

Weapons Talk (1990) represents a young family with father, mother, and child. The young father is a fighter looking forward at the viewer; his arm pointing diagonally upwards is converted to a Kalashnikov. The wife's gestures exhibit the associated anguish. A small child is nested adjacent to her leg and sharing one straight boundary with her. This is a painting of simple, modest means and an economy of symbols, a clear and beautiful presentation holding a powerful message of hope and determination.



Figure 7. *Challenge and Children*, 1990, oil on canvas, 50 x 39 cm.



Figure 8. *Weapons Talk*, 1990, oil on canvas, 50 x 40 cm.

In conclusion, I wish that this were not such a modest narrative based on only two interviews. Ahmad Nawash has not been sufficiently studied or valued. With time, his importance will grow as the special qualities of his oeuvre have time to be noticed. Scholarship on Arab art in general – and Palestinian art in particular – is insufficient at present, but its growth will certainly place Ahmad Nawash in global art historical consciousness.

Jerusalemite Samia Halaby, an active painter for over four decades, continues to explore abstraction and its relationship to reality. She has exhibited throughout the U.S., Europe, Asia, and South America and her work can be found in private and public collections around the world, including the Guggenheim and the Institut du Monde Arabe. Also a writer and activist, Halaby has authored Liberation Art of Palestine (H.T.T.B. Publishers, 2001), Drawing the Kafr Qasem Massacre (Schilt Publishing, 2016), and Growing Shapes: Aesthetic Insights of an Abstract Painter (Palestine Books, 2016).

Endnotes

- 1 Ahmad Nawash, personal interview, 30 April 2007.
- 2 Ahmad Nawash, personal interview, 30 April 2007.
- 3 Ahmad Nawash, personal interview, 30 April 2007.
- 4 Ahmad Nawash, personal interview, 21 November 2011.
- 5 Dirar Nawash, personal interview, 28 June 2007. The interview was conducted through Suha Lallas, by telephone; Suha Lallas recorded and transcribed Dirar Nawash's Arabic responses to the author's questions, and sent them to the author who translated them into English.
- 6 Ahmad Nawash, personal interview, 30 April 2007.
- 7 Dirar Nawash, personal interview 28 June 2007, by phone with assistance from Suha Lallas.
- 8 Dirar Nawash, personal interview 28 June 2007 by phone, with assistance from Suha Lallas.
- 9 Ahmad Nawash, personal interview, 21 November 2011.
- 10 Ahmad Nawash, personal interview, 30 April 2007.
- 11 In the years before Abstract Expressionism, a school of painters known at the Jeune École de Paris (Young School of Paris) thrived in Europe. Pierre Soulages and Hans Hartung were two of the best known of the group.
- 12 The CoBrA artists created highly gestural paintings that were not abstract but were based on surrealist ideas and the naïve paintings of children and the insane. They were active for a short period from 1948 to 1951.
- 13 Ahmad Nawash, catalog of Darat al-Funun, Amman, 2008, 75.
- 14 Ahmad Nawash, personal interview, 21 November 2011.
- 15 Ahmad Nawash, personal interview, 21 November 2011.
- 16 Ahmad Nawash, personal interview, 21 November 2011.

Palestinian Evangelicals and Christian Zionism

Jonathan Kuttab

The recent step by U.S. president Donald Trump to move the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem and his total support for the most extreme demands of Zionism, according to most observers, demonstrate his desire – and that of his vice president, Mike Pence – to satisfy Christian Zionists, particularly evangelicals, in his base. The demand to move the embassy had not been a priority for Israel, or even for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), the Jewish Zionist lobby in the United States.¹ Indeed, it was traditional wisdom that such an inflammatory move would yield little or nothing of benefit to the United States, or even to the State of Israel, while its negative consequences would likely hurt and embarrass the United States and its allies in the Arab world. The embassy move had been standard election rhetoric, mandated overwhelmingly by Congress decades ago, yet every U.S. president for thirty years had dutifully and routinely signed the requisite six-month waiver to delay this step, with little dispute from anyone.² However, it is now clear that American evangelicals, who pushed for and obtained its implementation, wield considerable power when it comes to Israel and the issue of Palestine, and that such power is used destructively when it comes to any attempt at even a rational – much less a just – policy toward the Israeli–Palestinian problem.

Those who are interested in the Palestinian issue may not even know that Palestinian evangelicals do in fact exist. It is therefore useful to learn about the views of Palestinian evangelicals and their position toward Christian Zionism, both to do this group justice, and to recognize their important role in combating the phenomenon of Christian Zionism among evangelicals.

Part of the reason for this lack of information is that Palestinian evangelicals are a numerically tiny minority of a minority within the Palestinian community, while evangelicals in the United States number over sixty million, and are influential on significant issues such as the Middle East far beyond their numbers.³ Their influence has been expanded through televangelists and Christian radio broadcasters who propagate their message to Christians who are not members of evangelical churches, but who belong to Catholic or mainline protestant churches, such as Methodists, Presbyterians, or Episcopalians.

It may be difficult to define “evangelicals” since some of their core beliefs are readily shared and claimed by all Christians, yet for our purposes we can recognize at least two major elements that distinguish evangelicals, both in the United States and in Palestine, as well as throughout the world, from other Christians: their reliance on scripture as literal truth, and the absence of a formal religious hierarchy.

Evangelicals support an extreme emphasis on Holy Scripture and a reliance on the Bible in the most literal sense as the sole arbiter for faith and practice, as opposed to reliance on the institution of the church itself, apostolic tradition, or ecclesiastical history and traditions. It is not mere coincidence that the rise of modern evangelicals coincided with the invention of the printing press and the translation of Holy Scripture, which had previously been available almost solely in Latin, into the vernacular languages of Europe. This development allowed the “Word of God” to become accessible to ordinary believers who could read it for themselves and find in it a guide for life and faith. The intervention of a professionally educated clergy speaking with the authority of the church was no longer necessary. Evangelizing and “spreading the Word” became the duty of every believer, who needed no further authority than scripture itself. For evangelicals, this meant also a greater emphasis on personal piety and individual salvation as a sign of being a “true Christian.”

The second distinguishing element of evangelical Christianity was the absence of a formal hierarchic structure that controlled the behavior, positions, and teachings of the members of that denomination. In Palestine, and in the rest of the Middle East, most Christian churches, such as the Greek Orthodox and the Latin church, are formally recognized by the state and represented by an established clergy with the patriarch, the pope, or an archbishop at the head, speaking authoritatively in the name of all believers in his denomination on spiritual, and often also on temporal, matters. Since the Bible was the sole authority for evangelicals, however, church authority was diffuse, and any person could read and interpret the Bible as they saw fit. This feature led to a vast and bewildering variety of teachings and positions among the churches classified under the label “evangelical.” In fact, the evangelical church is splintered into thousands of churches and denominations that enjoy a high degree of independence and self-government, not only in temporal, organizational, financial, and material matters, but also in matters of faith and teachings, including differing positions on relevant issues. Thus, it is difficult to speak of an “evangelical position”

toward any issue, including issues such as peace and war, justice, equality – or the Israeli/Palestinian issue.

Historically, these evangelical ideas spread from Europe to the United States and later to the Middle East through missionary activities. Missionaries in Palestine set up a number of local churches which drew most of their members from among followers of the traditional historic churches. Members were often attracted by the spiritual and pietistic teachings of the missionaries, as well as by the schools, hospitals, and other social institutions they set up. Among these local churches were the Baptist churches (with their various branches), the Nazarene Church, the Church of God, Assemblies of God, Alliance Church, and other small churches, each of which enjoyed a high degree of separateness and independence, while maintaining close financial, spiritual, and social contacts with the “mother churches” and their headquarters in Europe and the United States.

The number of believers in these churches, sometimes referred to as the “born again” churches or *mutajadidin*, remained quite small compared with the historic churches. Recently, evangelicals in Palestine tried to organize themselves into a loose federation under the name of Synod of Evangelical Churches, but the constituent members remained administratively and financially distinct; the synod has not yet succeeded in obtaining official recognition as a separate and distinct denomination in Palestine. Some members of the evangelical churches continued to nominally “belong” to their original churches, whose administrative services (for inheritance and related matters) were often required since evangelicals did not have their own recognized ecclesiastical courts to administer such services.

Most demographic studies usually add the numbers of members of these evangelical churches to the numbers of “protestants” (officially, members of the Lutheran Church and the Episcopal Church) who are among the smallest of the Christian denominations in Palestine. The real influence of Palestinian evangelicals, if it exists at all, is not based on their numbers, which are miniscule, but on the institutions that they operate and on their contacts and connections in the West, where evangelicals do constitute an effective force, once they unite around a particular issue.

Christian Zionism was never a fundamental or integral element in evangelical thinking. It was a peripheral movement which grew among some evangelicals, but also other Christians in Europe during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Among its luminaries are Reverend John Darby and Cyrus Scofield. The publication of the Scofield Bible, which included commentary in the margins that reflected the teachings of Christian Zionism, contributed to its popularity among Christians, including evangelicals. This movement had distinct teachings concerning the end of the world and the “War of Gog and Magog,” and taught that certain prophecies will be fulfilled during the End Times, before the “Second Coming” of Jesus. It taught that there will be an “ingathering of Jews” from all over the world to Palestine at the “End of Days,” when most of them will be killed as the Nations of the World under the leadership

of the Antichrist will rise against the Jewish people in an apocalyptic war (called Armageddon). The only survivors will be 144,000 Jews (twelve thousand from each tribe), who will recognize Jesus as their Messiah, and convert to Christianity before the Second Coming of Christ takes place, ushering in a golden age referred to as the Millennium: a “Thousand-Year Reign.” Obscure references from different books of both the Old and New Testament were woven into an end-of-the-world drama. Over the years, different rulers and regimes were labeled “Antichrist” and woven into the different and ever changing narratives.

Most of these ideas found little currency among Christians until the creation of Israel in 1948, which was viewed as heralding the start of the End of the World drama prophesized in the Bible. These ideas grew tremendously popular after Israel’s crushing military victory in 1967, which was viewed by many Christians in the West as a result of divine intervention on Israel’s behalf, and an indication that the End of the World and the Second Coming of Christ was near. They also saw in it a vindication of their faith in the truth of the Bible, and its ability to predict the future and to impact events in the world at large.

The Middle East events created a great opportunity for the secular Zionist movement to take advantage of this particular Christian interest to garner support for its political program. They did this by advancing a number of ideas such as the idea that it is a Christian’s duty to support the State of Israel, which God Himself was supporting, and that such support would result in speeding up the Second Coming of Jesus, which true believers were eager to see. Biblical verses taken out of context and applied to the modern State of Israel were standard features of this approach. For example, the Bible is quoted as teaching that God “blesses those who bless thee [Israel] and curses those who curse thee.” And that “he who touches you [Israel] touches the apple of God’s eye.” Also put forward was the assertion that God’s promises to Abraham applied to the current State of Israel, and therefore that gave the entire land of Palestine to the Jewish people; that what is happening today is a mere fulfillment of promises God made and predictions given through his prophets thousands of years ago; and that these events are clear indicators of the End Times. These colorful views were further popularized in a series of “Christian fiction” books called the *Left Behind* series by conservative author Tim LaHaye, which sold millions of copies in America.

While most Christian churches and theologians rejected these ideas, and even scoffed at those who tried to link biblical prophecies to current events, the Zionist movement made deliberate use of these ideas (which Jewish Zionists rejected on rational and theological grounds) as a tool for political pressure by a Christian Zionist movement actively working in the halls of government and Congress. It did so to procure massive military and financial aid to the State of Israel and to give this aid religious and moral support, as being the proper and true Christian position toward events in the Middle East. In fact, some observers believe that the power of AIPAC

came not only from its financial resources and campaign contributions but also from its ability to marshal the support of millions of Christian Zionists for its agenda.

Most of the thinking of Christian Zionism grew in Europe in an atmosphere of imperialism and colonialism: the desire of European colonialists to expand their influence at the expense of Third World peoples in total ignorance of the reality on the ground, including acceptance of the fantasy that Palestine was an empty wilderness – a “land without a people for a people without a land.” It therefore found a listening ear among colonialists in England, including Lord Balfour. After the Holocaust, there was also the sympathy of others who felt guilty for not standing with Jews against Nazi persecution and anti-Semitism. In this way, Christian Zionism found a home among many Christians, even those who were themselves anti-Semitic. Reverend John Hagee, the pastor of a megachurch and another of the luminaries of Christian Zionism, who once declared that “God does not answer the prayers of Jews” and that Jews would all go to hell if they did not accept Jesus as their Messiah, staunchly supports the state of Israel and opposes any compromise that would cede away “their God-given land.”

For Palestinian evangelicals and other Christians, these influences were very far from their thinking. They fully saw Zionism as a political movement supported by the colonial West and totally inimical to their own rights and aspirations – a movement that wanted to colonize and settle their land and which would eventually subjugate or evict them from it. They experienced as did their Muslim countrymen confiscation of land and denial of rights. They saw that they had a vital role to play in fighting the Zionist movement and in informing their co-religionists in the West of the truth about the situation in Palestine. There is no doubt that there was great embarrassment among Palestinian evangelicals when the heads of evangelical churches in the West took public positions supporting Israel and the Zionist movement. This was compounded when these leaders justified their support for Zionism by quoting biblical verses (usually taken out of context), which gave such political opinions and positions the status of religious dogma.

At first, most Palestinian evangelicals preferred to distance themselves as much as possible from taking any political position. In this they relied on Christ’s commandment to “Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar’s and to God that which is God’s,” and his teaching that “My Kingdom is not of this world.” Politics was a worldly affair, and Palestinian evangelicals were more concerned with spiritual issues. Such neutrality was not easy, since Christian Zionism considered that God gave the land to the Jews, “God’s Chosen People,” and therefore the very presence of any Palestinian there (Muslim or Christian, evangelical or otherwise) was considered a problem and a danger to the Jewish state and to “God’s plan” for the End Times. So neutrality was not really possible.

It is also true that the influence of Christian Zionism on their “mother churches” in the West was also reflected back on some of the local evangelical churches,

particularly in light of their financial, spiritual, and ideological connections with such churches, whose members often came on pilgrimage to the Holy Land, having been fully indoctrinated with Christian Zionist ideas. Yet the reality of life for Palestinian evangelicals was totally the opposite of these expectations, and local Palestinian evangelicals found themselves forced to take on the role of instructor, educator, and corrector for their Western brethren, opening their eyes, clarifying to them the situation, and introducing them to totally new perspectives, both theologically and politically. All of this was done under the threat of severing relations and funding when Palestinian evangelicals took positions too divergent from the positions of the “mother churches” in the West.

The reaction of Palestinian evangelicals to Christian Zionism fell along two distinct lines: The first was to join with other Christian denominations in Palestine and take with them a unified stand against Christian Zionism, the occupation and settlement policies of the State of Israel, and its violations of human rights, and in favor of the accepted and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and its national aspirations. This position was both political and theological. The second path was to develop their own distinctive evangelical response based on scripture and a theological interpretation of the Bible, with a clear mission to communicate that view to evangelicals in the West.

Palestinian Christian church leaders have, in fact, taken clear and public positions and signed numerous petitions regarding the occupation and its practices, which rejected Christian Zionism. Evangelical Palestinians have generally and consistently affirmed and joined such efforts and participated in taking clear positions along with the other Palestinian Christians and contrary to the positions of Western Christians. In addition to signing and validating such petitions, Palestinian evangelicals have also joined relevant ecumenical institutions, such as al-Sabeel Ecumenical Center for Palestinian Liberation Theology, which the author helped establish together with Reverend Naim Ateek of the Episcopalian Anglican Church.⁴ This organization includes Christian Palestinians from different denominations, including evangelicals. Al-Sabeel maintains contacts with Christians from all over the world; holds a number of international conferences; publishes books, leaflets, and newsletters; and routinely meets with pilgrim groups, most often with a view to explaining the Palestinian Christian position and countering and deconstructing the claims of Christian Zionism. Al-Sabeel has also set up a number of Friends of Sabeel organizations abroad to carry out a similar function and initiate activities, including a weekly “wave of prayer” to inform their extensive contacts of ongoing concerns for Palestinians and call on them to pray for and act on behalf of such concerns.

One of the most significant of these Palestinian ecumenical activities is the publication of the Kairos Palestine document, modeled after the South African Kairos document, which offered a theological critique of Apartheid from a Christian perspective and called on Christians everywhere to denounce it as a sin.⁵ Palestinian

evangelical theologians, such as Dr. Yohanna Katanachu, were instrumental in drafting the Kairos Palestine document. This Christian theological position paper is aimed at Christians abroad and presents a critique of the occupation and human rights violations, calling for a peaceful resolution based on justice and equality. It rejects the claims of Christian Zionism and calls on Christians abroad to take specific concrete actions within the framework of BDS (Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions) to resist ongoing oppression and to support legitimate Palestinian rights. This document was signed by the heads of all the churches in Palestine and is a useful expression of the position of Palestinian Christians in contrast to the positions often taken by Western churches.

In addition to such ecumenical efforts, Palestinian evangelicals have also taken upon themselves the task of addressing Christian Zionism among evangelicals in the West, specifically from the perspective of their biblical understanding. Many Palestinian evangelicals had grown up hearing the most extreme Christian Zionist views as espoused by missionaries and were profoundly uncomfortable with the political implications of such interpretations. In true evangelical fashion, they went to the Bible to see if it did in fact support these views; quickly they found that such views were often the result of “cherry-picking” verses out of context, with little regard to the current realities on the ground, or the general message of Christ, which clearly rejected particularism and racism and preached a universal message of love, nonviolence, and salvation open to all regardless of race and ethnicity, in contrast to the teachings of Christian Zionism.

Among the most important activists in this effort was Reverend Alex Awad, a Palestinian American Baptist minister who grew up in a conservative evangelical family in Bethlehem and who initially avoided all political involvement. As pastor of the East Jerusalem Baptist church, he was forced to deal with the racism of Israel, which cancelled his identity card after he left to study theology in the United States and then refused to grant him the necessary visas to stay and pastor his church in Jerusalem. His lengthy attempts to obtain that visa forced him to deal with the theological basis for Christian Zionism, which he included in his book *Palestinian Memories: The Story of a Palestinian Mother and Her People*.⁶ In this book, he not only chronicled his own family history, but also the biblical basis in the Old and New Testaments of concepts commonly used by Christian Zionists, including God’s Chosen People, the Promised Land, the Holy Temple, Jerusalem, and sacrifice. Reverend Awad showed how these concepts were altered by Jesus in the New Testament, giving them a new meaning that differed from the narrow ethnic political interpretations given by Christian Zionists.⁷ The novelty of this approach is that it is fully grounded in a deep faith in and reliance on biblical positions, rather than a political polemic against Christian Zionism.

In addition to the writings and preaching of Reverend Alex Awad and others like him, the Bethlehem Bible College, the largest evangelical institution in Palestine

today, addresses these same issues in international conferences held biennially in Bethlehem since 2010. At each of these conferences, titled “Christ at the Checkpoint,” a group of evangelical theologians and others discussed issues relating to Jerusalem, Christian Zionism, and Biblical interpretations and hermeneutics. The conferences deliberately placed these discussions in the context of the present political reality. The campus of the Bethlehem Bible College lies literally a few hundred meters from the apartheid separation wall surrounding Bethlehem; attendees can visit the wall, enter the checkpoint with Palestinian workers in the morning, and observe the practices of the occupation as they discuss different texts and seek to apply them to the present reality.

The college also took the bold and unusual approach of inviting to its conferences theologians from other countries who hold opposing views, including prominent Christian Zionists and Messianic Jews, who were invited to discuss their views with Palestinian evangelicals in light of the realities they faced. The results were startling: in many cases, individuals had a total change of mind, while others proclaimed that they were no longer comfortable with political positions that were one-sided or supported Israel while ignoring Palestinian rights.⁸ Others reacted vehemently, denouncing Bethlehem Bible College, calling on their friends to cut off donations to the Bible College, advocating boycott of its conference and activities, and vilifying those who agreed to attend. This was accompanied by a wide campaign in Western media and social networks accusing the college of anti-Semitism, of supporting terrorism, and of submitting to pressures from the Palestinian Authority and Hamas.⁹

Another important effort, one of many undertaken by Palestinian evangelicals in the Galilee, is the popular website “Come and See,” run by Boutros Mansour, the principal of the Baptist School in Nazareth.¹⁰ This site posts items of interest to evangelicals about the situation of Palestinian citizens of Israel, who suffer systematic discrimination and privations from the Jewish state. They challenge their evangelical brothers and sisters to see the reality of their lives and not to accept uncritically the claims of Christian Zionists. It is aimed at Western Christians, many of whom confuse biblical references to Israel with the modern state by that name, and often think of the Palestinians as a modern extension of the Philistines that Joshua fought in Old Testament times. For many of their viewers, it is a revelation to discover that there are Palestinian Christians, and even evangelicals who sing the same hymns and worship in a way that is similar to their own.

What bothered Christian Zionists the most was that Palestinian evangelicals were not using the usual arguments of international law, human rights, and secular politics, but were using religious and biblical arguments that were conservative, even fundamentalist, but which rejected and challenged Christian Zionist dogma using the very language and concepts they themselves had successfully used to garner support for Israel and its policies.¹¹ The ultimate goal of these activities, assisted by evangelical Christians, is to show that the Bible carries a message of Good News, peace, and nonviolence, and that Christians should be concerned about justice, rather

than uncritically supporting any political state or ideology. This message carries weight, especially among young evangelicals. At a minimum, it shows that Christian Zionism is not, as it had been portrayed, an essential or basic tenet of evangelical thought and teachings.

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Endnotes

- 1 The American Israel Public Affairs Committee website, at www.aipac.org (accessed 22 October 2018).
- 2 See, for example, Ahmad Jamil Azem, "Moving the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem: A Chronic Unfulfilled Promise," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 70 (Summer 2017): 7–21.
- 3 According to the Pew Survey's "Religious Landscape Study," 25.4 percent of Americans identified as evangelical Christians, making it the largest religious denomination in the United States; see online at pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study (accessed 13 November 2018).
- 4 See al-Sabeel Ecumenical Center for Palestinian Liberation Theology, online at sabeel.org (accessed 22 October 2018).
- 5 See online at www.kairos-palestine.ps/index.php/about-us/kairos-palestine-document (accessed 13 November 2018).
- 6 Alex Awad, *Palestinian Memories: The Story of a Palestinian Mother and Her People* (Bethlehem: Bethlehem Bible College, 2008).
- 7 See Awad, *Palestinian Memories*, chap. 10.
- 8 Based on author's personal conversations with attendees at the conferences.
- 9 See, for example: Hannah Weiss, "The Controversial 'Christ at the Checkpoint': A Beginner's Factual Guide," *Kehila News Israel*, 7 March 2016, online at kehilanews.com/2016/03/07/the-controversial-christ-at-the-checkpoint-a-beginners-factual-guide/ (accessed 13 November 2018); and "Christ at the Checkpoint," *NGO Monitor*, online at www.ngo-monitor.org/ngos/christ_at_the_checkpoint/ (accessed 13 November 2018), among others.
- 10 Online at comeandsee.com (accessed 22 October 2018).
- 11 Other non-Palestinian evangelical writers have also critiqued Christian Zionism. Prominent among them is Reverend Don Wagner, *Anxious for Armageddon: A Call to Partnership for Middle Eastern and Western Christians* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1995) and Reverend Steven Sizer, *Zion's Christian Soldiers? The Bible, Israel, and the Church* (Westmont, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007).

Strategic Sectorial Development Plan for Jerusalem (2018–2022)

Excerpts

The Holy City of Jerusalem (al-Quds al-Sharif) is a city with a long and rich history, the cradle of the three monotheistic religions, a destination for pilgrims and tourists from all around the world, home to hundreds of thousands of Palestinian Muslims and Christians, and the national capital for millions more. Since 1967, East Jerusalem has been under an Israeli military occupation which has sought to isolate and annex the city from its Palestinian environs. The occupation must be brought to an end and East Jerusalem returned to full Palestinian sovereignty, in accordance with international law. Until such a time, Jerusalem is in urgent need of support, in order to maintain the resilience and steadfastness of its people and allow them to live a decent life, while giving them the opportunity to shape the development of the city, as the capital of the State of Palestine.

Work on the first comprehensive strategic plan for Jerusalem was initiated in 1999 by the late Faisal el-Husseini, through the Arab Studies Society (the Orient House). The plan included an assessment of the various needs in different sectors, in order to prepare East Jerusalem to be the capital of the State of Palestine. Based on previous plans, the Strategic Sectorial Development Plan for East Jerusalem (2018–2022) (hereafter “strategic plan”) determines the general framework of official Palestinian policy in different vital sectors, within the context of a web of policies adopted by Israeli occupation authorities aiming to displace Palestinians from the city while undermining their social, economic, and political structures.

The general framework set by this plan regulates development programs for East Jerusalem. The updating of the strategic plan has been carried out under the direct

Editor’s Note:

The following has been excerpted from the Strategic Sectorial Development Plan for Jerusalem (2018–22), and published with the permission of the Jerusalem Unit, Office of the President, State of Palestine. The full 186-page document, available in Arabic and in English, can be obtained on request from: jerusalemunit@presidency.ps.

auspices of the Office of the President and in full partnership with the public sector, the private sector, and civil society. It is based on the Strategic Sectorial Development Plan for East Jerusalem (2010–2013), financed at that time by the European Union.

The strategic plan (2018–2022) will be the main reference that reflects the vision and ambition for Jerusalem during this period. Sectorial development indicators are provided as an additional element of the strategic plan. These specific, measurable, qualitative, and quantitative indicators will be the basic tool used to study and evaluate the impact of deliverables completed as part of the plan, and may also serve as a guide for anyone invested in the future of the holy city and the destiny of its people.

The estimated cost of this strategic plan reflects sustainable development trends to enforce proposed interventions and bring about the desired results, in order to enhance the resilience of people in Jerusalem, empower them on their own land, stimulate economic recovery and growth, and ensure that the people can participate in and benefit from returns of this growth. This will enable them to stand firm in challenging the occupation policies that intend to remove them from their city.

The budget outlined in this plan is unrelated to the current budgets allocated by the official entities or competent entities in Jerusalem; it represents additional finances required to achieve the collective goal.

In order to enhance networking, facilitate implementation of projects, maintain oversight, and measure performance, the strategic plan is supported by a geo-informatics platform, which provides information to help make decisions regarding finance orientation and project priorities. The goal is to achieve the desired impact through an integrated system for project management, finance, assessment, and follow-up, with a geographical link to a geo-informatics system that tangibly reflects the influence of the project in multiple ways, with meaningful statistics. The platform will be described in detail later in this document, as it forms the spine of the plan in terms of implementation, follow-up, and evaluation.

Keen to give everyone the credit they deserve, we, at the Office of the President of the State of Palestine – who are working according to directives from H.E. President Mahmoud Abbas – would like to extend due appreciation to all the individuals and institutions involved for their collective input and hard work. The Office also extends appreciation to the various units and departments, and especially the Head of the Office of the President, for their attention and efforts toward making this document a reality. Appreciation is also extended to al-Quds University, with all of its professors and experts on the sectorial development committees, for their effort and experience, and to other experts, institutions, and individuals who contributed to the strategic plan at various levels. Last but not least, special appreciation and gratitude shall be extended to the Islamic Development Bank for its continuous support in order to empower our people in Jerusalem.

**Jerusalem Unit
Office of the President**

Strategic Sectorial Development Strategic Plan for East Jerusalem (2018–22)

This document summarizes the Palestinian strategic plan for Jerusalem (2018–22), with a wider vision to development sectors, adding new sectors which were not taken into account by previous plans. The document also includes summaries of the basic conditions and challenges in each sector, expected results until 2022, and proposed interventions to realize the desired results. Tools and programs that should be introduced and/or implemented are also included.

The sectorial trends have been updated based on the strategic plan (2010–13), in addition to studies conducted by several local and international development organizations for the development of Jerusalem. With release of the development agenda plan (2030),¹ it is reiterated that the development of the Jerusalem district, like any other district, must include the three integrated dimensions – environmental, economic, and social. The strength of development lies in the overlap of these dimensions: social policies that enhance dynamic economics, enable protection of the environment, and support human rights, equality, and sustainability. Response to all targets will be carried out as an integrated and coherent whole, which is vital to achieve the desired changes on a wider scale. There are fifteen sectors, with some sectors overlapping, classified into three development groups: Social Security and Development (Education, Culture, and Heritage; Social Welfare; Youth; Health; Citizenship, Civil Peace, and Rule of Law), Economic Development (Economy; Housing; Agriculture; Tourism and Antiquities), and Cross-sectorial (Environment, Advocacy and Information, Urban Development and Local Government, Gender, Information Technology).

The Palestinian Vision of East Jerusalem

“Jerusalem is an Arab global city with Palestinian identity, which is proud of its history, heritage, and spiritual importance for the three monotheistic religions. Jerusalem is an active and vivid city, which contributes to human development and cultural diversity on local, Arab, and international levels. East Jerusalem is an attractive place for life, work, and investment, due to the special and sustainable institutional, economic, social, health, educational, cultural, touristic, and entertainment infrastructure, which fits its status as capital of the State of Palestine.”

Primary Objective of the Strategic Plan

“East Jerusalem is the eternal capital of the State of Palestine, with all its life and work attracting political, social and economic components.”

Targets of the Strategic Plan

In line with the Palestinian vision and targets above, the strategic plan intends to achieve the following objectives:

- enhance resilience of the Palestinians in East Jerusalem;
- improve living conditions of Palestinians in the city;
- protect the rights and identity of the Palestinians in Jerusalem;
- revive and improve the Palestinian economy in Jerusalem;
- protect the national institutions operating in Jerusalem, empower them, and expand their participation in society; and
- enhance bonds between Jerusalem and its Palestinian environs.

Phases of the Strategic Plan Update

The strategic plan has been updated based on analysis, evaluation and partnership between all planning and implementing stakeholders. Accordingly, a large number of meetings and workshops have been held in order to reach an agreed strategic framework, which acts as a baseline of the strategic plan and a guide to implementation. Development projects and interventions will be initiated in order to meet targets of the plan. Below are the phases for updating this strategic plan (2018–22):

1. Set a document for the strategic plan update.
2. Form a sectorial expert team.
3. Revise general conditions and existing situation of sectors.
4. Analyze general conditions and existing situation of sectors.
5. Determine strategic issues and priorities.
6. Determine targets, interventions, and indicators.
7. Measure necessary cost to achieve each target.
8. Set implementation, follow up, and evaluation plan.
9. Draft the final strategic plan for East Jerusalem (2018–22).

Work has also begun, alongside updating the plan, to set a geo-informatics platform to be the main tool to determine projects, raise funds and follow up on implementation, which will be used in the future for regular updates and decision-making relating to the plan.

Policy Framework of the Strategic Plan

The policy framework includes principles that regulate the strategic plan from political, legal, institutional, regulatory, development, and financial aspects.

Political Aspects

- Jerusalem is the capital of the State of Palestine and an integral part of the territories occupied in 1967. Any interventions should, at the strategic level, correspond with the need to create an empowering environment in line with this principle, and should not contradict or impede Palestinian state-building efforts.
- The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) is the political reference with relation to any action in Jerusalem.
- The Arab Palestinian identity of Jerusalem must be preserved and enhanced, through material and moral support to the people of the city.
- Given the religious and spiritual importance of Jerusalem to the three monotheistic religions, it is important to preserve the Islamic and Christian trust (waqf) properties as an integral part of the city's Palestinian identity, and reintroduce the correct historical, archaeological, and scientific narrative that represents a true reflection of the Arab characteristics of the Holy City.
- Efforts must be made to support the resilience of Palestinians in Jerusalem, resist attempts to reduce Palestinian presence in the city, and to protect Palestinian properties, which constitute Arab features of the city.
- Focus should move from reactions to proactive steps supporting resilience and liberation, to encompass all political, economic, social and institutional aspects, and to mobilize Palestinian, Arab, and international support.
- Arab and international institutions including consulates, representative offices, international organizations, and UN agencies should be encouraged to establish headquarters in Jerusalem and hold political meetings in the city, on the basis and principle that the city is the capital of the future State of Palestine.
- It must be consistently reiterated that any changes to the 4 June 1967 borders – which include East Jerusalem – will not be recognized, and key resolutions issued by the UN and UN bodies, such as UNESCO should be reemphasized.

Legal Aspects

- East Jerusalem is an occupied territory, where all international laws and agreements regarding occupied territories apply to the city and its residents. All legal, legislative, and administrative measures taken by occupation authorities to change the geographic and demographic status through land confiscation and annexation, settlement construction, and forced displacement or transfer are null and void and do not have any legal effect.
- As an occupied territory, international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL) apply to Jerusalem. The Israeli authorities, as an occupying power, are responsible for service provision in the occupied Palestinian territories. International support to the Palestinian people does not

relieve the occupation authorities of their legal obligations and should be viewed within a humanitarian context, regardless of whether the aid is directed toward supporting services or toward meeting basic needs.

- International resolutions regarding occupied Palestinian land must be upheld, especially Jerusalem.
- Legal support to defend the people and their land is a top priority.
- All Israeli violations should be documented and be exposed in all forums and at all levels, and cases taken to competent international entities.
- It must be reiterated that Israeli settlements built on Palestinian lands occupied since 1967 which includes East Jerusalem, are illegal according to international law.

Financial Aspects

- Sufficient funds for Jerusalem should be allocated in the general budget, as well as from external aid in a manner that corresponds with the size of the population in Jerusalem and the status of Jerusalem as a capital city.
- Mechanisms should be established for raising funds locally and determining the role of the public and private sectors in this regard.
- Effective procedures should be established for coordinating with donors regarding funds for Jerusalem, and the roles of the Office of the President and Palestinian governmental institutions in the funding process should be determined, especially the Ministry of Finance and Planning.
- Transparency and equity regarding the distribution of financial resources related to assistance in Jerusalem should be enhanced, using necessary monitoring mechanisms.
- Financial procedures should be developed that take into account political and legal complexities of Jerusalem.
- A streamlined process to meet urgent needs regarding the resilience of people of Jerusalem should be established, through channels approved by the Office of the President and the Jerusalem Unit.

Institutional and Regulatory Aspects

- It is necessary to ensure an effective institutional system with clear and specific roles and tasks of all stakeholders, and at all levels, including the various departments of the PLO, and ministries and entities of the State of Palestine. Mandates and responsibilities should be set to ensure reliability and non-conflict, so that planning, control, and executive tasks and powers are separated.
- Effective and complementary coordination and cooperation should be promoted among stakeholders at all levels, through determination of the roles played by different sectors (public, private, and civil) and a continuous and sustainable

basis of action, together with as many partnerships within sectors as possible. Sectorial coalitions and networks are to be encouraged in order to focus on maintaining, activating and empowering the institutions of Jerusalem, in addition to enhancing voluntary work and actions of popular committees, which includes specific methods for exchange of knowledge and experience.

- An effective internal administrative system for stakeholders should be developed, which facilitates quick decision-making at all levels, whether intra-institutional or inter-institutional.
- Community participation in decision-making [should be promoted], to observe development operations and to encourage interested entities to take part in implementation.
- The Jerusalem Policy Committee should be institutionalized, in order to ensure sustained action as a means of supporting resilience, establishing the status of Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Palestine, and opening channels of communication between this committee and the people and institutions of Jerusalem.
- Relations with foreign institutions operating in Jerusalem should be enhanced through joint coordination, planning, and enforcement, in order to help preserve Palestinian presence in Jerusalem.
- Local institutions of Jerusalem should be supported to carry out sustained action, new institutions should be opened, and those forcibly closed by Israeli occupation authorities should be reopened (particularly the Orient House), in order to maintain the Arab Palestinian identity of East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine.
- The role of research centers should be enhanced in order to publish information material, [carry out] historical and cultural studies, and hold conferences and seminars about Jerusalem to highlight the city in international arenas.

Development Aspects

- Development inside the separation wall should be prioritized as part of an integrated strategy for areas both inside and outside the wall, considering that the wall is an illegal and temporary structure, and that areas inside the wall have strong links with the direct areas outside the wall and the wider environs (the rest of the occupied Palestinian territories).
- Efforts should be made to disengage from Israeli occupation institutions as much as possible, while locating and empowering effective Palestinian alternatives.
- The national policy agenda of the Palestinian government (2017–22) should be approved as the regulating reference of the strategic plan in Jerusalem.
- The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) “2030” should be approved and function as the development reference of the strategic plan.
- Strategies for resilience, steadfastness, and development should be supported

consistently to mitigate against the burdens imposed on Palestinians in Jerusalem and to empower and maintain the institutions of Jerusalem toward ending the occupation and preparing Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine.

- The strategic partnership between the PLO, civil society, and the private sector should be enhanced in order to encourage community participation and establish accountability and transparency at all levels.
- Striking a balance between humanitarian aid and development interventions is required to provide sustainable solutions that support the marginalized, vulnerable and poor segments of society, as well as to address poverty and unemployment. Greater focus must be placed on economic issues, supporting and enabling the private sector, to assume its role as the driving force behind economic revival, especially in sectors that are critical to economic growth, such as tourism, commerce, and services.
- Activating the role played by the youth, attending to their concerns, and investing in their potential are crucial, so that they may initiate and contribute to development in Jerusalem.
- Jerusalem-specific plans, priorities, and interventions must be included in all Palestinian national sectorial and cross-sectorial plans.
- Gender policies should be incorporated in all sectors, with gender equality and sensitivity assured during strategic planning of all sectors.

Challenges were identified as:

1. Multiple regulating entities and development of interventions without consolidated vision.
2. Multiple plans and programs implemented in Jerusalem.
3. Inadequate mechanisms of supervision, follow-up, and coordination for donor-funded projects and programs.
4. Failure to set priorities, which has disbursed effort and brought duplication and repetition of work without tangible achievements.
5. Lack of a clear framework for regular evaluation and updates, which reduces the capacity to modify policies and strategies.

In order to facilitate the monitoring of these components, and in response to the need to provide tools that facilitate financial management and distribution and assess impact, the Office of the President has begun drafting a comprehensive plan for a geo-informatics platform. The concept is based on the evaluation of projects, their respective output against development indicators which the projects intend to realize, and their relation with the strategic plan's indicators. Once established, the platform will help determine medium and long term development targets, help document operations, experience, and knowledge, and provide feedback for regular updates and revisions of the plan.

The platform will be available to all relevant stakeholders and will ensure collection and analysis of necessary qualitative and quantitative information associated with inputs, activities, outputs, findings and impacts of the strategic plan. This will be complemented with specialized studies, researches and surveys to monitor internal and external changes to the development context. This information will be added to routine information that will be collected through field studies, where all stakeholders will be involved in the supervision and evaluation effort, in addition to feeding the platform with necessary information and data.

The following groups will benefit from the platform:

Group 1. Palestinian Decision-Makers. Actual data and indicators that support decision-making will be available.

Group 2. Official Palestinian Entities. The platform will provide adequate information that helps donors determine their intervention priorities and financing priorities, in agreement with priorities of the local community in Jerusalem.

Group 3. Civil Society Organizations. They will be guided by outputs and findings of the platform, in order to develop their projects as per needs suggested by the indicators.

Group 4. Donors. The platform will provide information about international funds available, with types and time periods, in order to help CSOs raise funds to undertake activities within strategic plan.

1 See *United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Palestinian National Voluntary Review on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda* (June 2018), online at sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/20024VNR2018PalestineNEWYORK.pdf (accessed 6 November 2018).

Jerusalem Statistical Yearbook, 2018

Summary

Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics

Reflecting the fragmented situation in Palestine, PCBS divides its Jerusalem data into two areas, as follows:

- *Area J1 comprises those parts of Jerusalem which were annexed forcibly by Israel following its occupation of the West Bank in 1967, including: Bayt Hanina, Bayt Safafa, al-'Isawiyya, Jabal al-Mukabbir, Jerusalem (comprising Bab al-Sahira, Ras al-'Amud, Shaykh Jarrah, al-Shayyah, al-Suwwana, al-Tur, and Wadi al-Jawz), al-Sawahira alGharbiyya, Sharafat, Shu'fat, Shu'fat refugee camp, Silwan, Sur Bahir, al-Thawri, and Umm Tuba.*
- *Area J2 comprises the remaining parts of the governorate, namely: Abu Dis, 'Anata, 'Arab al-Jahalin, Bayt 'Anan, Bayt Duqqu, Bayt Hanina al-Balad, Bayt Ijza, Bayt Iksa, Bayt Surik, Biddu, Bir Nabala, Hizma, al-'Ayzariyya, Jaba', Jaba' (Tajammu' Badawi), al-Ka'abina (Tajammu' Badawi), Kafr 'Aqab, Kharayib Umm al-Lahim, Mikhmas, al-Nabi Samwil, Qalandiya, Qalandiya refugee camp, Qatanna, al-Qubayba, Rafat, al-Ram and Dahiyat al-Barid, al-Sawahira al-Sharqiyya, and al-Za'ayim.*

Editor's Note:

The following represents a summary statistical survey of the Jerusalem governorate produced annually by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS). *JQ* thanks PCBS for providing this key document to *JQ* readers. *JQ* published material from the PCBS statistical yearbook for 2017 in issue 71. The full statistical yearbook for 2018 can be found online at www.pcbs.gov.ps.

Population

- The total population of Jerusalem governorate on the midnight of 30/11–1/12/2017 is 435,753 people including 225,909 males and 209,844 females; it includes population actually counted, and also includes the uncounted population estimates according to post enumeration survey. The population in Jerusalem governorate constitutes 9.1 percent of

the total population of Palestine and 15.1 percent of the population of the West Bank as population census 2017.

- The sex ratio of Jerusalem governorate was 107.7 males per 100 females.

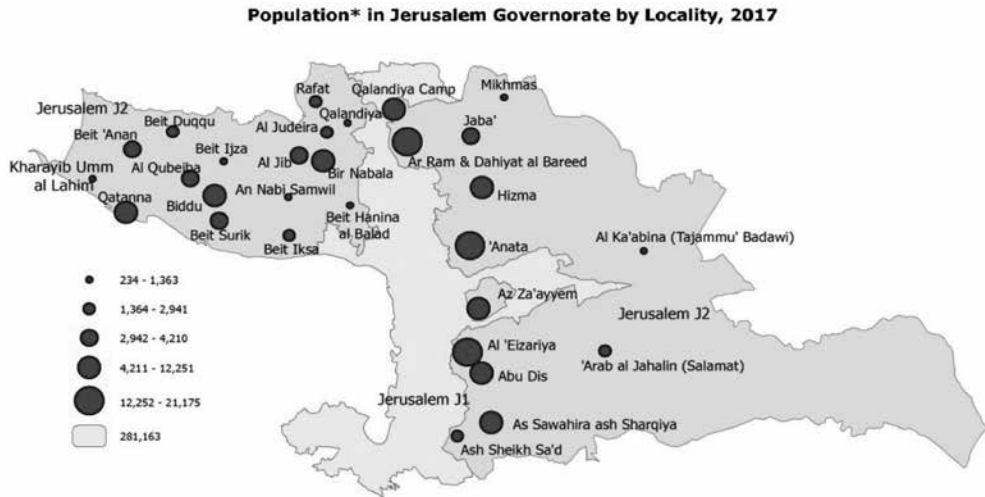


Figure 1. Estimated Population in Jerusalem Governorate by Locality, 2017.

Vital Statistics

- The number of registered live births in Jerusalem governorate with Palestinian ID cards was 3,239 in 2015, 3,475 in 2014, 3,453 in 2013, and 3,532 in 2012. Registered deaths for the same years were 318, 309, 327, and 286 respectively.
- 3,363 marriage contracts were signed in shari'a courts and in churches in Jerusalem governorate in 2017.
- There were 635 divorce cases in shari'a courts in Jerusalem governorate in 2017.

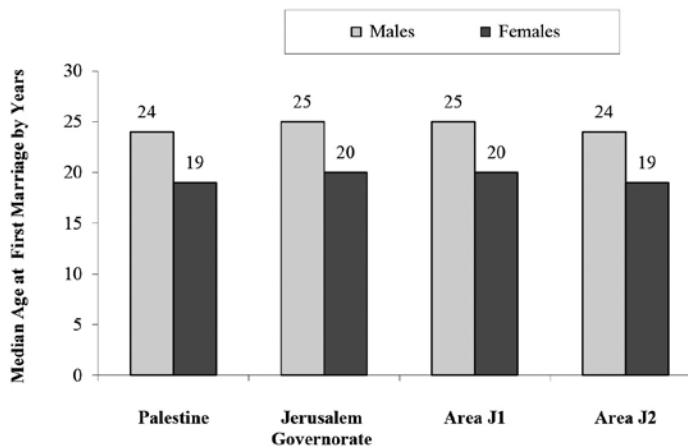


Figure 2. Median Age at First Marriage in Jerusalem Governorate by Sex, 2017.

Health

- In 2017, 79.7 percent of individuals in Jerusalem governorate (J2) reported having health insurance.
- Percentage of Palestinian population with disabilities in Jerusalem governorate (J2) was 1.8 percent in 2017.
- There were 7 hospitals in Jerusalem governorate with 714 beds in 2017.
- The total number of discharges from Jerusalem hospitals was 64,838 in 2017.
- The total number of hospitalization days in Jerusalem hospitals was 230,979 in 2017.
- The bed occupancy rate in Jerusalem hospitals was 88.6 percent in 2017.

Labor Force

- The labor force participation rate of individuals aged 15 years and above in Jerusalem governorate was 30.4 percent in 2017: 56.4 percent for males and 6.7 percent for females.
- Employment rate in Jerusalem governorate was 88.4 percent in 2017.
- The unemployment rate in Jerusalem governorate of individuals aged 15 years and above was 11.6 percent in 2017.
- Employed individuals in Jerusalem governorate distributed by employment status in 2017 were as follows; 4.9 percent employer, 13.8 percent self-employed, 80.5 percent wage employee and 0.8 percent unpaid family member.

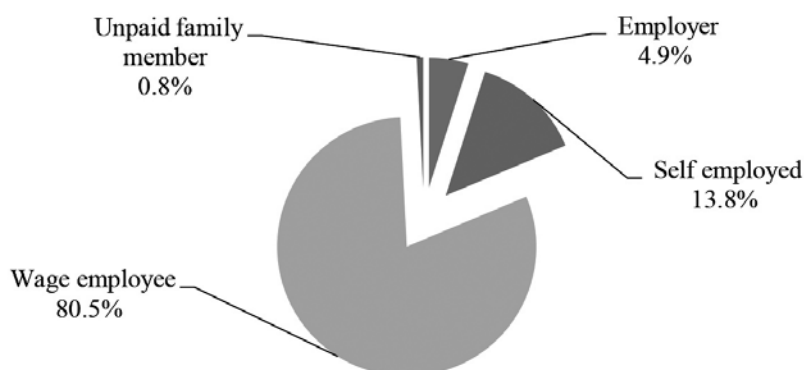


Figure 3. Distribution of Employed Individuals from Jerusalem Governorate by Employment Status, 2017.

Education

1. Schools

- In scholastic year 2017/2018, there were 250 schools.
- In scholastic year 2017/2018, there were 70,547 school students: 33,650 males and 36,897 females.
- In scholastic year 2017/2018, the average number of students per teacher was 17.0 in government schools, 22.2 in UNRWA schools and 18.7 in private schools.
- In scholastic year 2017/2018, the average number of students per class was 22.9 in government schools, 29.9 in UNRWA schools and 23.8 in private schools.

2. Higher Education

- In scholastic year 2016/2017, there were 12,805 university students: 5,561 males and 7,244 females.
- In scholastic year 2016/2017, there were 317 college students: 45 males and 272 females.
- In scholastic year 2015/2016, there were 2,873 university graduates: 1,224 males and 1,649 females.
- In scholastic year 2015/2016, there were 149 college graduates: 66 males and 83 females.

Culture

- In 2017, there were 50 licensed cultural centers operating in Jerusalem governorate.
- In 2017, there were 4 museums operating in Jerusalem governorate.
- In 2017, there were 2 theaters operating in Jerusalem governorate.
- In 2016, there were 109 mosques operating in Jerusalem governorate.

Housing and Housing Conditions

- In 2017, the average number of rooms per housing unit in Jerusalem governorate was 3.3 rooms.
- In 2017, the average housing density in Jerusalem governorate was 1.4 persons per room.

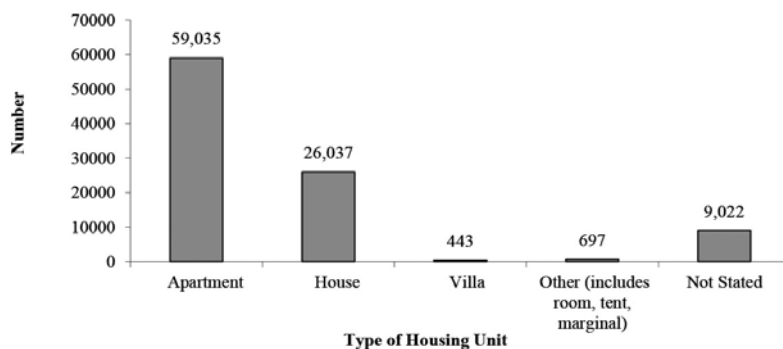


Figure 4. Households in Jerusalem Governorate by Type of Housing Unit, 2017.

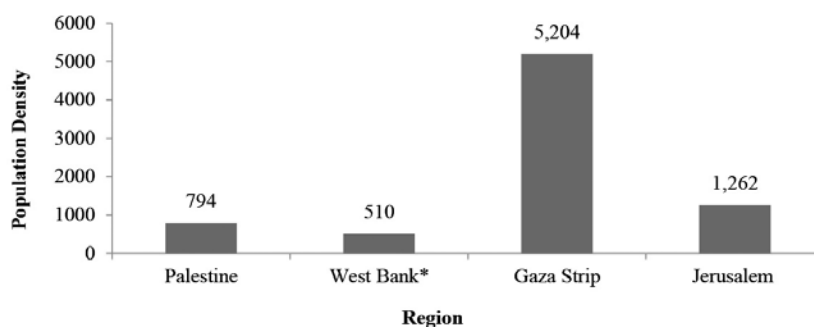
Agriculture and Land Use

1. Agriculture

- 8.6 percent of households in Jerusalem governorate had a garden as on 24/03/2015.
- 98.2 percent of households with a garden in Jerusalem governorate utilized it for agricultural activities during agricultural year 2013/2014.
- 3.5 percent of households in Jerusalem governorate reared livestock (domestic) as on 24/03/2015.

2. Population Density

- The total area of Jerusalem governorate is 345 km².
- The population density in Jerusalem governorate was 1,262 (capita/km²) at year 2017.



* West Bank data include Jerusalem Governorate.

Figure 5. Population Density (capita/km²) by Region, Mid-Year 2017.

3. Olive Presses

- There were 4 operating olive presses in Jerusalem governorate with 26 employees in 2017.
- The output value of those presses was USD 262.1 thousand.
- The value added realized by the olive presses sector was USD 232.7 thousand.

Environment and Natural Resources

1. Water

- 22,476 households in Jerusalem governorate (J2) are supplied with drinking water through the public water network, 466 households are supplied with drinking water through bottled water, and 136 households use rainwater to supply water during 2017.

2. Electricity

- During the year 2017, the number of housing units in Jerusalem governorate (J2), which were supplied with electricity through a public electricity network, was about 22,974 housing units, 315 housing units through a special generator, 22 housing units without electricity, and 9,031 housing units with non-stated source of electricity.

3. Solid Waste

- 21,721 housing units in Jerusalem governorate (J2) during the year 2017 disposed of solid waste by throwing it in the nearest container, 1,488 housing units disposed of solid waste by burning, and 87 housing units by throwing them randomly.

4. Type of Toilet Facility Used by the Household

- 8,928 housing units in Jerusalem governorate (J2) use flush to piped sewer system in 2017, and 7,954 use flush to septic porous tank, while 6,097 of the inhabited housing units use flush to septic tight tank.

National Accounts

- In Jerusalem governorate (J1), the gross value added at current prices was USD 1,295.7 million for 2016 compared with USD 1,230.2 million in 2015.

Note: Value added within national accounts includes all value added incurred from all economic sectors including the informal sector.

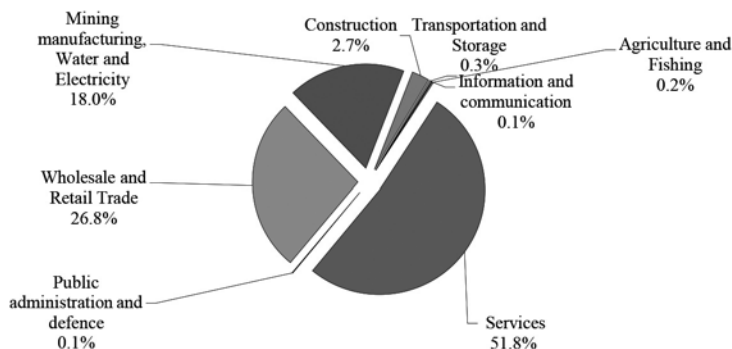


Figure 6. Percentage Distribution of Value Added in Jerusalem Governorate (J1) by Economic Activity, 2016.

Consumer Prices

- The consumer price index in Jerusalem governorate (J1) increased by 2.18 percent in 2017 compared with 2016, while it decreased by 0.96 percent in 2016 compared with 2015.

Transportation Sector

1. Transportation Outside Establishments

- There were 118 vehicles engaged in this sector in Jerusalem governorate with 118 employees in 2017.
- The output value of those vehicles was USD 5.6 million in 2017.
- The value added realized by the transportation outside establishments was USD 3.3 million in 2017.

2. Transportation and Storage

- There were 177 establishments operating in Jerusalem governorate in 2017.
- There were 590 employees in this sector in Jerusalem governorate in 2016.
- The output value in Jerusalem governorate was USD 11.8 million in 2016.
- The value added realized by the transportation and storage was USD 6.3 million in 2016.

Information and Communication Sector

- In 2017, there were 54 establishments operating in Jerusalem governorate.
- In 2016, there were 80 employees in this sector in Jerusalem governorate.
- In 2016, the output value in Jerusalem governorate was USD 2.9 million.
- In 2016, the value added realized by the information and communication activities was USD 2.1 million.

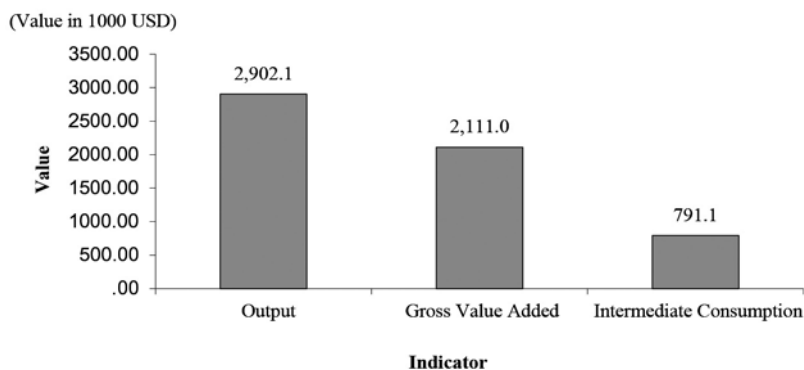


Figure 7. Main Economic Indicators for Information and Communication Activities in Jerusalem Governorate, 2016.

Construction Sector

- In 2017, there were 34 establishments operating in Jerusalem governorate.
- In 2017, 100 building licenses were issued for residential buildings in Jerusalem governorate (J2) with an area of 66 thousand m².
- There were 14 licenses issued for non-residential purposes in Jerusalem governorate (J2) with an area of 11.5 thousand m² in 2017.
- There were 122 employees in construction activities in Jerusalem governorate in 2016.
- The output value in construction activities in Jerusalem governorate was USD 11.4 million in 2016.
- The value added realized by the construction activities was USD 9.0 million in 2016.

Industrial Sector

- In 2017, there were 1,264 establishments operating in Jerusalem governorate.
- There were 5,183 employees in 2016.
- The output value of those enterprises was USD 488.4 million in 2016.
- The value added realized by the industrial sector was USD 345.3million in 2016.

Tourism Sector

- There were 20 hotels in operation responded to the hotel survey at the end of the year 2017 with 1,480 rooms and 3,242 beds in Jerusalem governorate.
- Average number of employees in Jerusalem governorate hotels was 836 in 2017.

Services Sector

- There were 3,277 establishments operating in Jerusalem governorate in 2017.
- There were 14,133 employees in this sector in Jerusalem governorate in 2016.
- The output value in Jerusalem governorate was USD 706.6 million in 2016.
- The value added realized by the services sector was USD 595.3 million in 2016.

Internal Trade

- There were 5,326 establishments operating in Jerusalem governorate in 2017.
- There were 11,318 employees in this activity in Jerusalem governorate in 2016.
- The output value in Jerusalem governorate was USD 569.7 million in 2016.
- The value added realized by internal trade activities was USD 433.5 million in 2016.

Registered Foreign Trade

- The total value of registered imports of goods to Jerusalem governorate slightly decreased in 2016 by 0.8 percent compared to 2015 and reached USD 340.5 million.
- The total value of registered exports of goods from Jerusalem governorate increased in 2016 by 7.9 percent compared to 2015 and reached USD 59.9 million.

Israeli Violations

- 26 settlements were constructed on confiscated land in Jerusalem governorate and 16 of them were in (J1) in 2016.

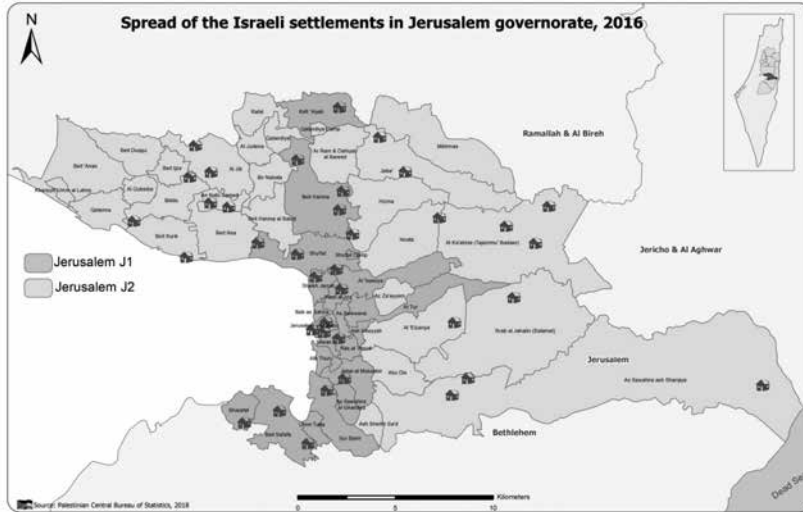
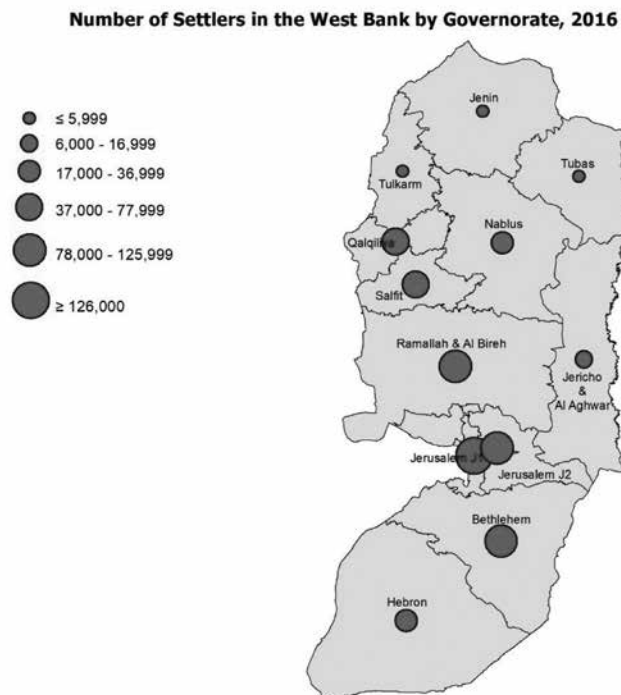


Figure 8. Settlements Established in the Jerusalem Governorate in 2016.

- In 2016, around 302,188 settlers lived in the settlements in Jerusalem governorate and 222,325 of them were in (J1).
- 14,635 Jerusalem ID cards were confiscated between 1967 and 31/08/2017, 17 of them in 2017.
- During 2017, the Israeli authorities demolished 61 buildings in Jerusalem governorate.





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