

The Israeli Colonialist Policy in Al-Quds City and its Impact on the Judaization and Political Segregation of the City

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Abstract

Al Quds City is one of the most significant aspects of the Arab-Palestinian-Israeli conflict owing to its political, religious, economic and social importance. The city has been present in almost all of the Israeli plans of judaization (infiltration of Palestinian neighbourhoods and encirclement with Jewish population) since the British mandate. However, after the six-day war in 1967—the June War—such plans took a more violent and terrorist course towards the Palestinians and the citizens of Al Quds City with the aim of replacing them with Jews. The most recent plan is the establishment of the Israeli West Bank barrier inside and around the city to pressure the original citizens into leaving while confiscating their identity cards and replacing them with Jewish settlers. Older judaization projects continue, including the judaization of Islamic sites, urban judaization through archaeological excavations, land confiscation and building demolition to separate the city from Arab and Islamic territories, resulting in the eradication of the Arab presence in certain areas. As Jews strove to enact these aims without taking into account the spiritual and historical significance of the city to both Arabs and Muslims, they mixed the Zionist thought and philosophy with Judaism to push Jews towards settling in the city. One of these methods was the establishment of the Jewish style of living throughout the city. After drafting laws to serve these ends, the city was annexed to Israel, and the institutions and central ministries were transferred to it to enforce the principle of Al Quds as the capital of unified Israel.

Keywords: Al Quds, judaization, Zionist thought, the wall, Israeli settlements

First: Al Quds city in Zionist thought

Al Quds city is the essence of the Jewish faith and history, as it is the city that witnessed the establishment of their country and the unification of the 12 tribes. The temple of Solomon adds to the sacred nature of the city, and Jews everywhere considered it their gathering place and a symbol of the hope of their return to the Promised Land. This link to the Promised Land motivates Jews to mobilize and immigrate to Palestine. Because of the vision of the Torah regarding it, it occupies critical importance in the Zionist-Israeli thought. Zionism applies the famous slogan of "a land without a people for a people without a land," which impacted the vision regarding Palestine in general and Al Quds in particular. This is the basis from which the colonization and judaization policy stems. The Zionist philosophers of the past half-century kept assuring Jews all over the world that the aim of the Zionist movement was to occupy Al Quds and turn it into the capital of Israel. The occupation of the city was one of the most important pillars of the calls and claims directed to ordinary Jews, which led to the saying, "We thus stand in front of your gates, Al Quds, and will remain unified"¹.

The Zionist movement then used religious rhetoric, as Herzl its founder considered the colonization in Palestine as a form of exodus and the colonialist immigration as Aliyah, the immigration of the Jewish Diaspora to the land of Israel. Thus, the occupation of Al Quds City was considered "liberation" and the annexation of eastern Jerusalem "unification." Many religious names were applied to the city, including "the city of God, the city of David, the city of Yehuda, the city of Zion"². Zionist thinkers and rabbis continued to insist on the occupation of Palestine and Al Quds, such as Rabbi Tesevy Kilsher and Yehuda El Qolyay, who laid the plans for a return to Palestine. Ben Gurion, assured that the occupation of eastern Jerusalem was the enactment of Zionist principle, stated "no significance for Israel without Al Quds City and no significance for Al Quds city without the temple"³.

Second: the judaization projects of Al Quds City

With the end of the Arab-Israeli war in 1948, Israeli forces occupied 66.2% of the total area of the city, and after the June War of 1967, they occupied the whole city. The Jews used many methods and arbitrary procedures to change the nature of the city and end the Arab presence there; occupation was one of the most important methods used in the sacred city⁴.

¹ Mohamed Aql Helsa, مكانة القدس في الفكر التوراتي والصهيوني, "Jerusalem between pain and hope" conference, The Ministry of Awqaf, Gaza, 2006.

² Taher Shash, مفاوضات التسوية النهائية والدولة الفلسطينية, Dar Al-Shorok, Amman, 1999.

³ Yacobi H, Pullan W. The Geopolitics of Neighbourhood: Jerusalem's Colonial Space Revisited. *Geopolitics* [serial online]. July 2014;19(3):514-539. Available from: Academic Search Complete, Ipswich, MA. Accessed April 20, 2016.

⁴ Larkin C. In defense of Al-Aqsa : the Islamic Movement inside Israel and the battle for Jerusalem. *Middle East Journal*

After the occupation of the second half of eastern Jerusalem, the city was annexed to Israel through laws and projects adding Jewish nature to the city. Among these laws, the Knesset issued the following acts¹:

- 1- The unified city of Al Quds City is the capital of Israel
- 2- Al Quds City is the headquarters of the president, the Knesset, the government and the supreme court
- 3- The sacred places or sites will be reserved from sacrilege, damage or anything that prevents free access to the holy place
- 4- The Israeli government will supervise the development of the city and its prosperity by allocating money to the municipality of Al Quds City with the approval of the financial committee of the Knesset, and it will have priority in the activities undertaken for the city's development.

The danger in this law lies in the political content of the first and second acts, which is deemed as threatening to the Arab identity of the city. These acts add political legality to the process of annexing Al Quds City and the administrative-legal laws enacted by the Israeli government in 1967. The fourth act allows the successive Israeli governments a free hand in widening and accelerating the settlement in Al Quds to develop it in a way that attracts settlers. The real danger of this law is that it is an essential ruling that requires the approval of two-thirds of the Knesset members for adjustment. These laws mean that the final stance of the city in any future negotiations is altered concerning political control of the city. Forsaking of any part of Al Quds City is an debatable issue. This explains the strong grip of the Israeli occupation on the city and illuminates the obstacles that stand in the way of any serious political settlement through which the Palestinians may establish their state, which would include Al Quds City as its capital².

The plan of the judaization of the city is based on three parts:

The first: The projects targeting the Arab neighbourhoods in Al Quds City through painting in the Jewish existence in terms of civilization and population, with the final aim of altering the Arab lifestyle. To accomplish this, the Israeli occupiers used illegal procedures to pressure the Palestinians through demolishing their houses (between 2000 and 2007 at least 3,084 Arab homes were demolished in Israel), building fences and confiscating their identification papers³.

The second: The widening of the city through establishing streets linking it to the neighbourhoods and settlements built on the Arab and nearby occupied lands, such as the villages of Shu'afat, Al Aziziya, Beit Safafa, Sur Bahar and Al Eissawiya, in the aim of swallowing up more Arab lands, building more settlements and segregating the city of Al Quds from its neighbouring circumference and the Palestinian areas⁴.

The third: Establishing the Jewish neighbourhood in eastern Jerusalem to complete the judaization process in all of the old places of the city and control eastern Jerusalem.

Third: the aims of the occupation in Al Quds City

The number of settlers in Al-Quds City rose from 10,000 in 1918 to 95,000 in 1948 with successive waves of immigration. This demographic change grew until, in 1994, 473,000 settlers formed 73% of the total population in Al Quds City. There were 40 settlements in 2004, extending to the area of more than 100 dunams or 100,000, which is equal to 29% of the government area; developed areas form 50% of the total⁵.

In light of the previous judaization procedures the occupation forces followed regarding the city, methods of the Zionist colonization appear as follows:

- 1- Altering the Arab and Islamic places and features of the city and transforming them according to the Jewish identity. Land, citizens, administration and legal systems were all changed to achieve the Zionist claim "Al Quds is a Jewish city." The Jewish link applies to the city as a whole and not only to the sacred places, as occupation in eastern Jerusalem is considered the true return of "Zionists"⁶.
- 2- Using geographic, demographic and political fact to make it difficult to change policy regarding any just Palestinian demand of sovereignty over the city and blocking any solution that might provide the Palestinians with the right to the city of Al Quds through the de facto policy of displacement and occupation
- 3- Creating a new reality that aims at changing the Islamic identity in Al Quds City and building more settlements and Jewish neighbourhoods to increase their numbers in their lands and the surrounding areas

[serial online]. 2012;(1):31. Available from: RAMBI, Ipswich, MA. Accessed April 20, 2016.

¹ Ghazy Al-Rabaa, *العربي الإسرائيلي القدس في الصراع*, Beirut, 1995.

² Op.cit., Mohamed Aql Helsa, p.55.

³ Ghanem A. The Expanding Ethnocracy Judaization of the Public Sphere. *Israel Studies Review* [serial online]. June 2011;26(1):21-27. Available from: Academic Search Complete, Ipswich, MA. Accessed April 20, 2016.

⁴ <https://electronicintifada.net/content/israels-plan-wipe-arabic-names-map/8351>

⁵ Naeem Baroud, *مدينة القدس وإجراءات التهويد*, Al Quds Conference 2007-2009, Al Quds International Institution, Gaza, 2010.

⁶ Mamdouh Roussan, "القدس عبر العصور، القدس تحت الاحتلال الإسرائيلي 1967-2000", a trial edition, 2008.

- 4- Isolating Al Quds City from other Palestinian cities and villages that bear Jewish identity and lessening the Arab-Palestinian influence. This, in turn, is a political concept that serves the Jewish plans now and in the future¹.

Fourth: the occupation plans in Al Quds City

Jews knew the importance of geography in serving their colonial aims; they benefitted from the topography of the area by building settlements on the hills for oversight of Arab movements and for security and defence. The authorities also sought to apply the colonist policies in reality and therefore chose several factors to enforce their control over the sacred city.

The plan of building the Israeli settlements in Al Quds City takes the form of three zones:

The first zone:

The settlements were established on the ruins of the old city of Al Quds as the Moroccan Quarter, the Silsalar quarter, Bashoura quarter and the neighbouring Arab states in the aim of blockading the old city and the neighbouring Arab quarters to dissolve them and gradually evacuate the Arab citizens. This zone is composed of the Jewish quarter inside the old city in the southern area and the national garden that surrounds the city fence from the east and south. Building in the wide areas is not allowed, to preserve it for future Jewish colonization. This zone is composed of the trade centre in the old northern city that will form the next Arab quarter, as well as Herod's Gate, Damascus Gate and Sheik Jarrah quarter. These are all Arab quarters occupied by Israel in June 1967².

The second zone:

This zone lies in the borders of the municipality, according to the Israeli definition of these borders, and such settlements as Pisgat Ze'ev and Har Homa are considered as quarters of Al Quds City according to Israeli law. This follows the strategy of separating eastern Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank.

The third zone:

This project aims to annex lands ranging between 4-5000 meters square in which 250,000 Arabs live. They are citizens of the following villages and Arab countries: Ramallah and Al-Bireh Governorates, Bethlehem and Beit Jala between Sahour and the outskirts of Hebron in the south, Khan al-Ahmar in the east and Latrun in the west, in addition to 60 Arab villages. This comprises 30% of the West Bank.

The Israeli occupation is controlling Al Quds City through increasing numbers of occupation projects in a way that worries Palestinians. Laws were enacted that made the city just like any other city in Israel and made it host to many urban development projects in the aim of developing it and letting in more settlers. Building settlements in eastern Jerusalem was not random but a planned action to blockade the Arab quarters and separate them from one another and from the other Palestinian cities in the north and south. This continual building of new settlements proves the Palestinian stance that the Israeli occupation is not serious in reaching a peace process with Palestinians³.

Fifth: the Israeli West Bank barrier or wall in the circumference of Al Quds City

The Israeli government approved of building this wall around three settlements of Al Quds City⁴, namely:

- 1- Kfar Etzion settlement (40,000 people) that controls 72 km² of the southeastern part of Al Quds City
- 2- Ma'ale Adumim settlement (35,000 people) that controls 58 km² of the eastern part of the city
- 3- Gaboun settlement (15,000 people) that controls 27 km² of the northwestern area of Al Quds city

The land area swallowed by the Israeli wall comprises 2% of the total area of the West Bank and extends to more than 90,000 of the area of Al Quds city. This land is surrounded by 12 settlements of 176,000 settlers, mostly religious Jews, and according to reports, 210,000 Palestinian citizens of the neighbouring 23 villages will be affected⁵.

The wall's most important aim is to Judaize the city and confiscate the land, surrounding it with walls and settlements to separate it from Arab and Islamic areas.

The former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert declared that what is outside the wall is outside the state of Israel. This demonstrates that the wall was built not only for security reasons but is in fact a demographic, economic and political wall, as it separates 230,000 citizens of East Jerusalem and the west bank from East

¹Shafiq Ayyash, القدس في الإسلام وتأثير الحفريات والمستوطنات والجدار العازل عليها, "Jerusalem between pain and hope" conference, The Ministry of Awqaf, Gaza, 2006.

²Yousef O. Jerusalem: Palestinian Space, Behaviors and Attitudes. *Palestine-Israel Journal Of Politics, Economics & Culture* [serial online]. March 2011;17(1/2):43-53. Available from: Business Source Complete, Ipswich, MA. Accessed April 20, 2016.

³Op.Cit., Mamdouh Roussan, p.279-280.

⁴<https://electronicintifada.net/content/stranger-my-own-land-changing-map-5-6/5173>

⁵<http://www.alzaytouna.net/permalink/10527.html>

Jerusalem itself. The wall aims at annexing the Ma'ale Adumim settlement and Giv'at Ze'ev¹

All of the settlements that lie outside the municipality of Al Quds City form Greater Jerusalem.

The coverage of Al Quds City is part of an Israeli plan to build security and demographic cordons separating the city from the West Bank so that the Israeli government can develop in a way that benefits the Jews inside the city. The cordons aim at annexing the settlements surrounding the city²:

- 1- First cordon: Qaloundia Gaba, which includes Atrout and Kokhav, Ya'akov, Pisgat Ze'ev settlements
- 1- Second cordon: Gaba Anata, which includes Gush Etzion and Ma'ale Adumim settlements
- 2- Third cordon: includes Abu Ghneim Mount or Jabal Abu Ghneim Gilo and the settlements of Jabal Abu Ghneim and Gilo inside the city

According to the Israeli vision, this plan is executed through a group of procedures:

- 1- Provision of a special brigade responsible for closing the Al Quds City area
- 2- Linking the settlements built outside the municipality of Al Quds City to the quarters of settlement inside the city
- 3- Linking the colony of cordons outside the municipality with the Jewish area in western Jerusalem through tunnels and tramways
- 4- Building small colonies inside the Palestinian quarters in Al Quds City and hosting settlers there
- 5- Separating the quarters of the Palestinian lands in eastern Jerusalem from the center of the city and the old city through military barriers
- 6- Closing the official Palestinian institutions in eastern Jerusalem

The building of the wall in Al Quds City means imposing a new geography onto the Arab lands, through annexation of the eastern part of the occupied city and immigration from the southern portion. This will suffocate the city by separating it from its Arab zones in the West Bank, and the wall will slice 62% of the agricultural land and dunams from Al Quds University in Abu Dis³. The resulting map of the city has three geographical areas, each of which involves two types of obstacles and barriers that will divide 300,000 Palestinians living inside the Arab quarters. The wall planners seek to distance more than 60,000 of the population from their city and tear their social ties and economic links. They also plan to reduce the Palestinian population in the city to 22%, as their percentage now exceeds the 35% sought by the Israeli ministerial committee in 1973⁴.

Sixth: the judaization of Islamic sites in Al Quds City

From 1967 until now, the Israeli authorities have enacted arbitrary procedures aiming to erase the Arabic and Islamic identity. They have also attempted to add Jewish religious identity to the Aqsa mosque, and the mosque was burned in 1969 by Jewish settlers. The procedures were as follows:

First: The demolishing of the Moroccan quarter including the mosques, flats and waqfs in the aim of displacing the citizens. This quarter contains an Islamic waqf for the Muslims from Morocco and lies parallel to the western wall* (buraq). The Israeli forces have also demolished 3300 Palestinian houses since 1967, among them many historical and religious locations, such as the historical gate of the Moroccan quarter in the old city and 499 houses in eastern Jerusalem, which comprises 15% of all houses destroyed since 1967⁵.

Second: The excavation in the holy city is another way the Israeli occupation seeks to eradicate the old city's Islamic features in favour of Jewish ones. Excavation has led to the collapse of Islamic sites, which was the real aim of such excavations, as the historical path of Zionist excavation fell through the Moroccan quarter. The Zionist specialist Mibur bin Douk attested that these excavations thought to transform the western wall into a Jewish synagogue.

The recent excavations used to impose the Jewish version of reality on Al Quds, the old city and its surrounding area exceeds those done in the second half of the 19th century. The old city and the surrounding area make up what Israel calls "the holy basin," which includes different works: open excavations, rescue excavations, tunnels, rehabilitation, re-construction, restoration and renaming of sites, streets, lands, valleys and mountains with Hebrew and names according to the Torah⁶.

Seventh: the Israeli aggressions against Palestinians, especially the citizens of Al Quds city, and the urban judaization of the city

It is clear that the Zionist-Israeli plans of destruction in Al Quds City and its surrounding areas have taken effect

¹ Meyers A. The Encyclopedia of the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A Political, Social, and Military History. *Booklist* [serial online]. 2008:83. Available from: Literature Resource Center, Ipswich, MA. Accessed April 20, 2016.

² Op.Cit., Naem Baroud, p.61.

³ <http://mondoweiss.net/2014/11/israeli-university-academic/>

⁴ <http://www.alkalema.net/aqalia/aqalia52.htm>

⁵ Zaytuna Center for Studies and Consultations, "القدس الصمود البقاء والتنمية", 2012.

⁶ Ibid, p.58.

quickly since the city was transformed into a Jewish land through the Israeli project to change the demography in favour of the Jewish majority, neglecting the Christian and Islamic presence. Another Jewish plan is to empty eastern Jerusalem completely by 2020, using immigration policy to displace Palestinians, imposing heavy taxes and refusing to grant building licenses or permits, as well as other methods to pressure the area's inhabitants.

1) the displacement of the citizens of Al Quds by withdrawing the residence right in Al Quds City

The policy of forced immigration from Al Quds is one method used by the Israeli occupation to create a new reality in which Jews become the majority in Al Quds City. Successive governments have been stripping citizenship from families in Al Quds City since 1967. Particularly in the period from November 1995 to March 2000, Israel removed citizenship from those who were led to live outside the artificial borders of the Al Quds municipality. These citizens now cannot prove their residence in the past or the future; thus, they and their families are deprived of their rights to citizenship. A report from the PLO mentioned that the occupation forces removed more than 14,000 identity cards from Palestinian families living in Al Quds City between 1967 and 2010, including approximately 4577 identity cards between 2006 and 2008 alone; this impacted more than 20% of families¹.

- 2) The Arab part of Al Quds has doubled in size more than 10 times, and yet the sole beneficiary is the Israeli occupation force, as all lands were swallowed either by the Israeli ministry of population, ministry of finance or the so-called municipality of Al Quds City.

Settlements were therefore built to surround the Arab part of the city, and Palestinians were prohibited from building on the remaining green lands. The area confiscated by Israel reaches 40% of Al Quds City and was considered as green lands. An additional 35% of the lands was confiscated and put under the supervision of the municipality and the ministry of housing for urban development and new settlements.

- 3) the law of planning and organization

- 4) This law is unique among the city's judaization laws, and it resulted in complex administrative-legal rules and procedures for building that led to the transfer of 40% of Al Quds City's green lands. Palestinians are not allowed to build on these lands, as they are reserves for the settlements, such as Abu Ghenein. Such procedures led the Arabs to migrate from Al Quds City to the neighbouring areas because of the ease of building and low costs applying the law of the possessions of the absent people

In 1950, following the Arab-Israeli conflict in 1948, the Israeli government enacted a law known as the possessions of the absent, whose aim was to permanently strip the Arab-Palestinian landowners of their possessions within Israel and transfer them to the state of Israel. According to this law, the inheritor is entitled to confiscating the real estate holdings of absent people. This permitted the confiscation of four to five dunams of the Arab-Palestinian lands that comprise approximately 25% of the land that is now known as the state of Israel².
Conclusion:-

In light of the current reality in the city of Jerusalem from the Judaization of Urban areas with continuing operations of successive diminishing of their lands for the benefit of settlement expansion, urgent actions is required by the Palestinians, the Arab and Islamic nation in order to recognize the legitimate right of Palestinian citizens of the holy city of Al Quds/ Jerusalem.

Thus human rights institutions and International organizations need to bear their responsibility in immediate intervention to put an end to this tragedy and solve the problem of Jerusalem stopping the continuing Israeli onslaught against the citizens (Palestinians) of Al Quds/Jerusalem also to put a halt on changing its physical features by continued excavations and demolitions.

Additionally, the need for the Organization of the Islamic Conference as well as the Arab and Islamic countries intervention to stop these practices that are being held right beside Aqsa mosque an Islamic holy sites.

Last but not least there is also a need for intensifying awareness campaigns for Palestinian citizens of Jerusalem on the importance of the withstanding issue of "The Future of Jerusalem".

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¹ Abdul Qader Hammad, الاستيطان الإسرائيلي في القدس, Al Quds Conference 2007-2009, Al Quds International Institution, Gaza, 2010.

² Op.Cit., Zaytuna Center for Studies and Consultations. See also: Lehn W. Between Capital and Land: The Jewish National Fund's Finances and Land-Purchase Priorities in Palestine, 1939-45. *Journal of Palestine Studies* [serial online]. 2006:122. Available from: JSTOR Journals, Ipswich, MA. Accessed April 20, 2016.

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