

YA QUDS!

Academic Cultural Newsletter

Issue No. 1, January 2016



Centre for Jerusalem Studies
Al-Quds University

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قليلٌ من النور.. كثيرٌ من الوجد - من يومياتي مع المدينة

نسب أديب حسين

From the President's Desk



It is a great pleasure to write this introduction to the first issue of the Centre for Jerusalem Studies *Ya Quds!* Newsletter. So much comes to mind when I think about Jerusalem and its importance to our people and to the University. At the heart of Jerusalem is the Old City, in which I spent countless days as a young man. I know well the ancient golden walls and the cobblestoned passageways leading to one market or the other, the sounds of merchants peddling their wares, the souvenir shops with their wooden souvenirs and antiques, the Church and the Mosque, the smell of burning incense in the Christian Quarter. At the heart of Al-Quds University (AQU) is Jerusalem, the Capital and sacred city from which we derive our name and our identity. We are ever honored to maintain a presence in Jerusalem and especially in the Old City.

Jerusalem has been and will always be at the centre of Palestinian life. It is one of the most important cities in the world as it holds immense religious significance for more than half of the world's population. It is also one of the world's oldest continuously inhabited cities, with archeological evidence indicating that it was first settled perhaps as early as the mid-4th century BC. Jerusalem is an ancient and international city with a rich and unique tradition. As Palestinians we are proud of our great city, and we are proud as Al-Quds University to be the Palestinian university of the Capital.

We are the largest and most active Palestinian institution operating in Jerusalem and serving the Palestinian population of the Holy City. It would be difficult to list all the activities of Al-Quds University in Jerusalem. However, please allow me to highlight some of our facilities and activities.

- The AQU Community Action Centre in the heart of the Old City provides legal, social, educational, and gender-based services to the disadvantaged.
- The AQU Community Development Centre is dedicated to the empowerment of Palestinian women.
- The AQU Centre for Jerusalem Studies offers a multi-disciplinary master's degree in Jerusalem Studies among other important programmes.

- We also have Hind al-Husseini College for Women in Sheikh Jarrah and the Child Institute at our Beit Hanina campus.
- We are very proud of our Music Department located in Hind Al-Husseini College, the only programme of its kind in Palestine offering musical instruction at the college level.
- Also of note are the Public Library of Al-Quds University, located near the Damascus Gate, the Jerusalem Archeological Studies Unit, and the Pool of the Patriarchs, which will be developed into a cultural attraction.
- The Dual Studies Information Technology programme, a vocational-technical work-study programme, will be located in a building near Bab-I-Malik Faisal in the Old City.



Our vision for the coming years is to further strengthen our presence in Jerusalem in order to better serve the Palestinian population there, to expand our academic and extracurricular programmes, and to

further develop historical and cultural attractions in the Old City. We plan to expand our reputation as an international hub for Arabic language instruction and to continue to support research initiatives that elaborate on the rich historical, cultural, political, and religious character of the city.

In putting forth this publication, it is our intent to offer a window into Jerusalem from the perspective of the academics who serve at Al-Quds University and live in this great city, augmented by the perspectives of our colleagues from other parts of Palestine and from abroad. It is fitting and proper that the University of the Capital have important and relevant material to publish in this regard. We hope you enjoy the articles contained herein.

Prof. Dr. Imad Abu Kishek

President of Al-Quds University

Welcome Message

A warm welcome to the readers of our first issue of *Ya Quds!* Newsletter. Published by the Centre for Jerusalem Studies (CJS) of Al-Quds University, this newsletter is conceived as a forum for academic discussion and exchange of information on Jerusalem by both Palestinians living in Palestine and expatriates, as well as foreigners interested in the city of Jerusalem. Please join us in celebrating the launch of *Ya Quds!*

In this issue, we introduce CJS and its programmes. The newsletter also contains short articles and essays in English and Arabic written by academics, researchers, students, and others interested in the city and society of Jerusalem. We do not focus on a specific theme but have rather left it up to individual contributors to decide upon topics of interest to them under the general rubric of Jerusalem.

We would like to thank the President of the University, Prof. Dr. Imad Abu Kishek, for his support and introductory words presenting the various institutions of Al-Quds University in Jerusalem. We would also like to thank Dr. Safa Nassereldin, Vice President for Jerusalem Affairs for her constant support, as well as the staff of CJS for their assistance in making this issue possible. Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those who have contributed to this first issue of *Ya Quds!*

Despite the tense situation reigning today in the Old City of Jerusalem, we at CJS are committed to maintaining our presence there as an academic and cultural institution in Suq Al-Qattanin (the Cotton Market) in the Old City of Jerusalem, on the hope that *Ya Quds!* will become a forum for the many voices of the city.

We hereby send out a call for articles for the second issue of *Ya Quds!*. Articles may be in Arabic or English, should not exceed 1200 words, and should be dedicated to a topic on Jerusalem. The deadline for submission is May 20, 2016. We look forward to your contributions.

The newsletter is available online at: www.jerusalem-studies.alquds.edu

Thank you, we are pleased to have you as a reader of *Ya Quds!*

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The Centre for Jerusalem Studies (CJS) was founded in 1998, by Prof. Dr. Sari Nusseibeh and Ms. Huda Al-Imam to promote knowledge about various aspects of the city of Jerusalem: history, architecture, population, education, religion, socioeconomics, and geopolitics. In order to achieve this goal, numerous academic activities were established, including a master's programme in Jerusalem Studies, a programme of guided tours, a cultural programme and, more recently, the Jerusalem Research Programme.

The “Learn Arabic in Jerusalem” Programme was created as part of CJS in an effort to introduce the Arabic language and culture to non-native speakers of Arabic. Led by our CJS Director and assisted by an experienced Language Coordinator, 10 teachers of Arabic are employed by this programme, serving some 200 students each year for both group and private lessons, many of whom take multiple courses each semester.

Beginning this year, CJS has institutionalized a series of monthly public lectures about various topics, including Jerusalem and Palestine. Conducted in English, these lectures are well-attended by both local residents and internationals working in Jerusalem. In addition to the vibrant atmosphere that characterizes the Centre's academic activity, we welcome groups of visitors who wish to learn about the Centre and the historic building complex in which it is located, which includes two Mamluk *Hammams* (Hammam Al-Ein and Hammam Al-Shifa).



These diverse CJS activities are carried out by a small, dedicated team of individuals who devote their knowledge, expertise, and efforts on a daily basis to fulfilling the Centre's mission of disseminating accurate, informative, and useful knowledge about one of the most important cities in the world, Jerusalem. Additional information on CJS and its programmes follows in the next section.

MA in Jerusalem Studies



The Master's programme in Jerusalem Studies is a distinguished postgraduate programme offered by the CJS. Courses are taught in two tracks: Arabic and English. The programme is unique in that it combines theory and practice in the study of city and society from multi-disciplinary perspectives – including history, anthropology, urban studies, architecture, archaeology, law, and political science – while taking into consideration both the local and the global importance of the city. Students from a variety of backgrounds are welcome: social sciences, arts, architecture, and archaeology among others.

Jerusalem Research Programme (JRP)



The Jerusalem Research Programme (JRP) embodies the AQU educational mission of offering a vibrant learning environment, while creating a hub for creativity, exchange of ideas, freedom of expression, and innovation in research. JRP complements existing CJS programmes by generating knowledge and advancing interest in the city and its society as a focal point for advanced academic research on Palestine in general and on Jerusalem in particular. JRP aims to advance knowledge; to promote academic research by students, researchers, and faculty members; and to generate the growth of educational programmes with a multi-disciplinary orientation.

Learn Arabic in Jerusalem



The Centre for Jerusalem Studies offers all levels of Arabic courses, from beginning to advanced instruction, in both *Spoken* and *Modern Standard Arabic (MSA)* at locations in Ramallah and Jerusalem. The *Spoken Arabic* courses are designed to improve every aspect of the student's everyday Arabic, as well as enabling the student to handle real-life situations. The *Modern Standard Arabic* (or classical Arabic) courses are designed for those who need Arabic language skills for professional or academic purposes. Students learn the Arabic alphabet and the Arabic script; these courses place greater focus on reading and writing.

Al-Quds Tours - From a Palestinian Perspective



The Centre for Jerusalem Studies offers weekly tours for local people and internationals that aim to introduce guests to the historical and the political sites inside and outside Jerusalem. The tours include visits to other cities and villages such as Haifa, Acre, Nablus, and Hebron, to explore the beauty of Palestine and its environs. The profession-

ally guided tours take a cultural and alternative approach to exploring the hidden mosaics of Palestinian land and culture. Below are some examples of tours we have conducted.

<p>Religious Tours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Al-Haram Al-Shareef • Church of the Holy Sepulchre • Via Dolorosa • Sufi Zawayas • Churches of the Mount of Olives 	<p>Museum Tours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wjod Museum and Swayqit ʿAlloun Mosque • Jerusalem Citadel • Palestinian National Museum • Islamic Museum for Manuscripts 	<p>Tours Outside Jerusalem</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bartaʿa and the Green Line • Jericho, City of the Moon • Jaffa, the Bride of the Sea • Haifa and Acre • Churches and Shrines in Bethlehem • Edomite Kingdom and Cave Cities in the Mount of Hebron • Sebastya and Nablus • Occupied Syrian Golan Heights
<p>Political and Archaeological Tours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Silwan • Lifta • Maʿman Allah Cemetery • Western Wall Tunnels • Umayyad Palace South Al-Aqsa Mosque Wall • Colonization in the Old City • Byzantine Jerusalem • Crusader Jerusalem • Umayyad Jerusalem • Ottoman Jerusalem • The Old City Ramparts • Citadel 	<p>Quarters and Neighbourhood Tours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The African Community in the Old City • The Armenian Quarter • The Coptic and Syriac Communities in the Old City • The Old City Communities • The Austrian Hospice • Jerusalem Tour from East to West • Al-Nabi Samuel • Revisiting Jerusalem in the Footsteps of Conrad Schick • Islamic Schools and Neighbourhoods during Medieval Times 	



“Ya Makan Ya Quds” School Tours

This programme offers field tours that aim to introduce students from Jerusalem and West Bank schools, who are under 15 years of age, to religious, historical, and cultural sites of Jerusalem. This experience is an active and exciting way to engage students and strengthen their Arab identity and their affiliation to Jerusalem. In addition, it represents an opportunity for students who hold Palestinian IDs to cross the checkpoints and visit Jerusalem; particularly given that the Israeli occupation prevents them from entering Jerusalem once they reach the age of 16.



To date, this Centre Programme funded by the Welfare Association has welcomed approximately 4,000 students. These students have come from various Palestinian provinces and villages such as Jericho, Al-Ludd, Toubas, Kufur Sour, Tulkarrem, ‘Eizariyya, Bir Nabala, Nablus, Al-Bira, Ramallah, Yatta, Jenin, Beit Hanina, Qalqilia, Ajnadeen, Salfit, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Hebron, Qabatya, and Barta^{ca}.

Another approximately 800 students funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have come from Jerusalem, Al-Ram, and Salfit.

Wait and Hear, Jerusalem!

Petra Klose

Jerusalem as an Inspiration to the Music World

Jerusalem for me is and has always been connected to music. Working in the field of music for many years, I am not only fascinated by Jerusalem's many traditions, I have also always been impressed by the number of songs and compositions that have been written about, inspired by, or dedicated to this city. How much poorer would the music world be without Jerusalem!

“Al Quds fi al Bal” القدس في البال or “Jerusalem in My Heart” is the title of a famous album by the Lebanese singer Fairuz, and so many others must have experienced the same emotion when composing about Jerusalem, in their own times, in their own languages, and in their own unique styles.

When we first announced the international Al-Quds Composition Award, we were overwhelmed by the many creations we received from all corners of the world. All pieces were based on Meena Alexander's poem on today's Jerusalem entitled “Impossible Grace.” We wondered how someone in China, Australia, or South Korea might connect with Jerusalem? And they all did – through music.

The Al-Quds College of Music



Concert at the American Colony

Five years ago I began to develop the Al-Quds College of Music. The aim of the project was to connect with the immense cultural richness and musical tradition that has been a part of Jerusalem and Palestine for so many centuries. But it was clear from the beginning: we not only wanted to revive history, we also wanted to especially encourage the creation of contemporary

music in the region. The results have already taken us on many exciting artistic adventures, be it the creations we received from all around the world through our Al-Quds Composition Award or the touching creative first steps of children in schools and community centres.

Soon we were able to attract internationally renowned musicians as teachers on our permanent team, and many other famous artists have visited and supported us throughout the years. Some of our concerts take place in one of the many beautiful historic locations that Jerusalem offers, like the Patriarch's Pool, the Austrian Hospice on the Via Dolorosa, the old Baths (Hammams) at the Centre for Jerusalem Studies, or St. Anne's Basilica. Others of our concerts have taken place at our theatre hall at Hind Al-Husseini College, where the Czech Republic has donated a beautiful Petrof grand piano that came all the way from Pilsen to Jerusalem and has since then served pianists of international reputation for their recitals. We have also enjoyed festive concerts at the wonderful Pasha Room of the American Colony Hotel, as well as going on a "tango tour" through Palestine and organizing music events in Ramallah, Jericho, Bethlehem, Hebron, and Abu Dis.

Music at a Refugee Camp



Workshop with school students in Shu^ʿfat Refugee Camp

A project we are especially proud of is our outreach programme in the refugee camp of Shu^ʿfat. The head of the community centre there contacted us two years ago after reading about our project in the newspaper. Little did we know that we would soon give classes in the polka and the waltz to boys and girls from Shu^ʿfat, in addition to percussion and piano workshops and an amazing instrument-building course

developed by a Czech professor from Prague for the children of the camp. We now regularly perform in Shu^ʿfat and are happy and grateful for the warm welcome and the extraordinary commitment of the "musical community" that has developed there around us.

Music as a Human Right

Music reflects our lives, our identities, and our belief in the future. Music can make us feel at home. It can make us feel united. And if we give it a chance, it can help us to understand, to describe, and to move the world. I look at music as a human right, the right to freedom of expression in a language that can reach



Christmas Concert at St. Anne Church



UNESCO International Jazz Day at the Austrian Hospice

everyone. I, therefore, believe that music and the arts play a crucial role here in this country. They give us the chance to overcome walls and borders and to send out a powerful sign of Palestinian music and culture into the world. A recent example was the Palestinian contribution to the UNESCO International Jazz Day on April 30th this year. In the very heart of the historic Old City of Jerusalem, the Austrian Hospice on the Via Dolorosa, hundreds of people from all nations gathered to listen to legendary jazz pieces and oriental jazz improvisations. UNESCO goodwill ambassador Herbie Hancock sent a personal message to Jerusalem, stating that the participation of Palestine in this international event is “crucial to ensuring that all people continue to hear this positive message and the music behind it.”

Palestinian Music Library – Global Support for Palestinian Music Education



Morning Art Garden in Abu Dis

Jerusalem can indeed be found in the hearts of many people around the world. Whenever I tell artists or partners from other music or academic organizations about our promising students, our concert projects, and our latest artistic developments, I am overwhelmed by the enormous interest, curiosity, and will to support. This international commitment has led to spec-

tacular results, one of the most incredible of which is the establishment of a new Palestinian Music Library.

This library is an example of the power of modern social media. About a year

ago I sent an e-mail to some friends in Europe and the USA asking if they would be willing to send spare music material or instruments to Palestine. A few days later I found my e-mail shared via Facebook, Twitter, and several music platforms on the internet. Artists I never met before began to send their music scores, CDs, and instruments. Important music institutions donated whole sections of their own libraries. Among the many contributions is the highly precious heritage of the famous Austrian conductor Dietfried Bernet, which his widow, the internationally renowned actress Johanna Lonsky very generously decided to donate to the education of young musicians in Palestine. Dietfried Bernet was a celebrated artist at the most acclaimed music halls, opera houses, and orchestras around the world. We are deeply moved by the fact that the unique testimonials of so many legendary music productions will now find their new home in Jerusalem.

The Next Generation



Kick - off Concert for the Music Project

Our young singers and instrumentalists charm and captivate their concert audiences in the many unique concert venues that Jerusalem and the West Bank offer. But they also have already attained their success abroad, for example, the young singers from our academic preparation program who, accompanied by their teacher Karl Kronthaler, recently received standing ovations from

an enthusiastic audience at the Hamburg Film Festival.

There are many projects that promise a great future for our next generation of musicians in Jerusalem. One very powerful example is a group of young women who have formed the First Female Palestinian Percussion Group. Directed by their teacher Raed Said, they impress listeners with their musicality, their technique, and their breathtakingly dynamic performances. The image of a group of young Palestinian women with *darbukas* has been something unknown to the music world until today. But there are many more great musical discoveries to be made, just wait and hear Jerusalem!

Petra R. Klose is the former Director of the Al-Quds College of Music.

Photos for this article by Aipperspach

Where is the ‘There’ in Jerusalem?

Irfan Khawaja

Gertrude Stein reportedly said of Oakland, California: “There’s no ‘there’ there.” It was a nostalgic claim about the Oakland in which she’d grown up: she meant that there was no center or emotional presence to the Oakland she returned to later in life. The comment more obviously applies, though in a sense different from the one Stein had in mind, to Jerusalem. Let us examine this premise.

A recent letter to the editor of *The New York Times* makes a bitter complaint about the U.S. Supreme Court’s recent decision regarding the location of Jerusalem (*Zivotofsky vs. Kerry*), which held that Congress may not require the State Department to indicate in passports that Jerusalem is part of Israel. “Jerusalem,” the letter writer posits, “is where the Knesset is, and where Israel’s prime minister, cabinet and president have their offices and meet ... Ignoring these facts harms the prospects for peace in an increasingly violent, destabilized Middle East.”¹



Separation Wall at Ras Kubsa Junction

Here is a prior question: Where is Jerusalem? What are its city limits? Where should the eastern boundary of “Jerusalem, Israel” lie?

Intuitively, the eastern boundary of the city ought to lie on the 1949 Armistice Line, but it does not. Israel has unilaterally annexed swatches of land to the east of that line in an incremental fashion so that it is simply unclear where Israeli Jerusalem is supposed to end on its eastern side.

Now, by Israeli decree, “Jerusalem” includes the Old City, the Mount of Olives, Silwan, Ma’alot Ir David Street, the uninhabited portions of Nahal Kidron, etc. right up to the separation wall at Abu Dis and ‘Eizariyya, miles into the West Bank, and miles away from what any naive American would have regarded as the eastern border of Jerusalem. The total arbitrariness of these boundaries does not bother the Israeli government. Nor is it bothered by the fact that its de facto boundary is miles into the territory of the would-be state that it claims to regard as a partner in the so-called “two-state solution.” The American people have not quite come to grips with the fact that America’s favourite ally in the Middle East is a country whose demands are more determinate than its borders.

Predictably, though, an opportunistic Israeli city planner might decide to take things

further still. To the east of the Mount of Olives, south of Hebrew University and west of the settlement of Ma'ale Adumim lies a planning zone designated "EI." Below is how the Israeli human rights organization B'Tselem described the master plan for EI in 2009. I have italicized the key sentence:

In accordance with this conception, Israeli governments have taken measures in recent years to strengthen the spatial and functional ties between Ma'ale Adumim and Jerusalem. *The planning authorities have approved an outline plan for residential neighborhoods in EI, an area that lies within Ma'ale Adumim's city limits and borders Jerusalem's jurisdictional boundary.* ... [D]espite ... American opposition to construction in EI, Israel moved the Samaria and Judea Police District headquarters there. While constructing the police headquarters, Israel paved roads and built infrastructure to serve hundreds of housing units planned to be erected nearby.²



Herod's Gate area

So is EI "in" Jerusalem? Strictly speaking, EI is within the municipal boundary of Ma'ale Adumim, but much of the zone is closer to Jerusalem than it is to Ma'ale Adumim. The result is that it is part of "Greater Jerusalem," which is defined (or described) as follows by the Virtual Jewish Library:

The area known as "Greater" Jerusalem usually refers to an approximately 100 square mile space surrounding the Old City of Jerusalem. This area includes both West and East Jerusalem, including the adjacent neighbourhoods outside of the municipal boundaries of the city.³

Ambiguity is the essential feature of the phrase: "Greater Jerusalem" *usually* refers to an *approximately* 100 square mile space *not limited* to east Jerusalem but including unspecified adjacent neighbourhoods *outside* of the municipal boundaries of the city. So do not assume that if someone says, "Jerusalem ends *here*," it ends *there*. It ends wherever Israel wants it to end, when it wants it to end, whenever that is. Meanwhile, its supporters insist that anyone born "in it" is born in Israel.

Jerusalem, the letter writer has the audacity to tell us, is not a "negotiating pawn." No, it is a moving target conceived in such a way that the Israelis can continue annexing land to its east, putting "facts on the ground," and subverting the purpose of negotiations altogether. The Palestinians have insisted on a settlement freeze (which would not really touch any of the above), but that demand has been brusquely dismissed. The US was given the opportunity to vote against settlements at the UN in 2011, but cryptically vetoed a draft resolution condemning settlements despite the consistency of the resolution with official US policy.

Given that, I think we should be able to grasp the US State Department's very mild objection to describing "Jerusalem" as being "in" Israel. Jerusalem is only "in" Israel

in the sense that its roving eastern border is “in” the fantasies of Israel’s land-use planning authorities. The status of the city is disputed and must be resolved in final status negotiations.

The outrage expressed by the letter writer and others in the United States over the *Zivotofsky* decision is a classic case of wanting to have things all ways at once: When Israel’s defenders want to insist that Jerusalem is “in Israel,” they talk about the part of Jerusalem that is obviously in Israel, the western part. When they want to defend Israel’s expanding Jerusalem to the east, they ignore the fact that *that* “Jerusalem” is *not* in Israel – or only “in it” by Israel’s fiat. The point seems to be that our government should equate Israeli fiat with reality, and write it into the laws, policies, and passports of the United States.

As it happens, the Supreme Court’s decision is only the tiniest gesture in the reverse direction, toward reality. But just as you can lead a horse to water without making it drink, you can gesture toward reality without making anyone perceive it. The reality is that Israel is encroaching on land that is often private Palestinian property and that was supposed to be part of a Palestinian state. It is putting up a concrete barrier to make Israeli planning and development easier and Palestinian planning and development impossible, cutting neighbourhoods in two and cutting them off from one another. It is about time that Americans made the effort to see what is really going on here.

Let us return to Gertrude Stein’s statement about Oakland: “There’s no ‘there’ there.” In the case of Jerusalem, there’s no “there” there because there is nowhere for the “there” to be. This sounds convoluted because it is: it is a convoluted place ruled by a government that thrives on convolutions. But when you apply a policy of convolution to boundaries, what you get is a recipe for systematic boundary violations. That is the real status of Jerusalem today, whatever its supporters or even the US Supreme Court, may say about it.

Irfan Khawaja is Assistant Professor of Philosophy and Pre-Law Advisor at Felician College, and Director of the Felician Institute for Ethics and Public Affairs. He is also Book Review Editor of “Reason Papers: A Journal of Interdisciplinary Normative Studies”.

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Why Jerusalem, Why Separated, Why Walled?

A Call for Spatial Justice

Maha Samman



Friday Prayer in the Musrara Area

As Edward Soja wrote in 2010: “Geographies ... are consequential, not merely the background onto which our social life is projected or reflected.”¹ Both history and geography have evolving “moments” of change that pass, never to return in the same form. Just as each moment of time passes and happenings become part of history, so geography transforms in every “moment” to a newer spatial form.

Not only at this moment of history but also at this “moment” of geography is the city of Jerusalem illustrative. In Jerusalem the Israeli occupation has produced colonial geography just as it produced colonial history, leading today to a certain geopolitical spatial reality. Now, it seems, Jerusalem is one of the few cities bounded by both physical and political walls stifling its speech, yet Jerusalem nevertheless expresses itself strongly and richly. It is the expression of concern for an injustice that is spatially evident, with its impact on the city and society not only of Jerusalem but also of the surrounding villages, towns, and cities of Palestine.

Injustice can be clearly labelled in the spatial structure of Jerusalem, constructed by colonial Zionism and represented at many levels and scales. It is a system that develops an ongoing process of colonial segregation, surveillance, and boundary constructions. Although Jerusalem is filled with different kinds of boundaries, the separation wall as an actual physical structure remains a rupturing element in the physical constellation of villages and towns. It has choked the city and had an enormous impact on and around it, limiting its urban capabilities and resulting in a condensed and chaotic morphology, in some of its eastern neighbourhoods within the wall.

Before the eyes of the world, and despite the ruling of the International Court of Justice in the Hague in 2004, the separation wall has continued to be constructed on the land of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, prohibiting access of approximately four million Palestinians to Jerusalem. In Jerusalem itself tens of thousands of Palestinians, in areas such as Shu‘fat refugee camp and Kufur Aqab, are physically separated from the urban centre and must cross checkpoints to reach services they are entitled to, such as health and education.²

The separation wall has also had its impact on the socioeconomic situation of

Jerusalem's Arab population and the surrounding villages and cities in various ways. In conjunction with Israeli residency laws, the wall has affected the movement of people holding Jerusalem IDs, especially those threatened in the past several years with losing their residency rights due to having moved from the municipal boundaries of Jerusalem. Those individuals have been obliged to prove that their centre of life is in Jerusalem in order to retain their residency status.



Separation Wall in 'Eizariyya

With only 13% of land zoned for Palestinian development, when Palestinians comprise 34% of the Jerusalem population, land plots have become very expensive. Seeking a building permit is a complicated, tiresome, and highly expensive process. This has left people living in buildings without building permits, risking demolition, or in rented apartments with very high rent. Jobs have also decreased due to most non-governmental organizations having moved outside Jerusalem, especially to Ramallah. This has increased the percentage of unemployment in the city, which reached 19% in 2014.³

It is here in Jerusalem where one can find this dynamic dialectical relationship between “the spatiality of injustice and the injustice of spatiality”⁴ within an ongoing colonial process. It is an injustice that is embedded in space and created and maintained through space.⁵ And the fact that this injustice is spatial forces disadvantaged groups to act or react in an attempt to change the unjust situation. A call for spatial justice in Jerusalem is not only relevant, but also essential.



Barbed wires in the Old City

Justice, according to Soja, is not only social and historical as most social scientists would concur. It also has a geographical spatial dimension. It is “a conception of social justice in which geography matters in significant ways.”⁶ Referring to the literature on the subject, Soja further emphasizes that:

The theory of justice was given a spatial dimension through three intersecting streams of thought: one focused specifically on spatial justice as such; another focusing on the urbanization of social injustice, with both liberal and Marxist variants; and the third revolving around the right to the city.⁷

These three approaches to spatial justice can all be applied to Jerusalem. In fact, Jerusalem is in need of a comprehensive approach to spatial justice that reflects the aspirations of the Palestinian people, and that enables the speech of a city that reflects its urban capabilities. In a broader sense, this would mean reproducing spa-



Separation Wall around a refugee camp

tially a city of justice, while in parallel re-adapting ourselves to such a new spatiality. As Harvey notes, “[t]he freedom to make and remake ourselves and our cities is ... one of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights.”⁸

In this spatial approach, the oppression resulting from injustice should foster justice rather than more oppression. Thus this transformative process is essential to both people and land. No more should the city of Jerusalem be a space of struggle but rather one producing spatial and social confidence – a Jerusalem with no partitions or walls but with a right to call for spatial justice.

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