

**Deanship of Graduated Studies**

**Al-Quds University**

**Old City as a Part of Present Day Dynamic Reality**

**The Case of Ramallah Old Town**

**Shaden Safi Qasem**

**M.A. Thesis**

**2006**

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By

Shaden Safi Qasem

B.Sc.: Architectural Engineering (University) Birzeit University (Country) Palestine

A thesis Submitted in Partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of Master of  
Architectural Conservation, Higher Institute of Islamic Archeology

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Deanship of Graduate Studies

Old City as a Part of Present Day Dynamic Reality

The Case of Ramallah Old Town

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Al-Quds University

## **Declaration**

I certify that this thesis submitted for the degree of Master is the result of my own research, except where otherwise acknowledged, and that this thesis (or any part of the same) has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

Shaden Safi Qasem

Signed: .....

Date: June, 2006

# ΑΧΚΝΟΩΛΕΔΓΕΜΕΝΤ

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Ι ωουλδ λικε το εξπρεσσ μψ γρατιτυδε το αλλ τησε ωηο γαπε με τηε ποσσιβιλιτ ψ το χομπλετε τηισ τηεσις.

Ι ωαντ το τηανκ μψ υπερπισορ Δρ. Σηαδι Γηαδβαν ωηοσε ηελπ, στιμυλατινγ σ υγγεστιονσ ανδ ενχουραγεμεντ ηελπεδ με ιν τηε τιμε οφ ρεσεαρχη ανδ ωριτινγ οφ τηισ τηεσις. Ι ωουλδ αλσο λικε το τηανκ αλλ τηε σταφφ μεμβερσ ατ τηε Ηιγηερ Ι νστιτυτε οφ Ισλαμιχ Αρχηολογψ φορ τηειρ χοοπερατιον, ρεμαρκαβλε ηελπ ανδ εφφορτσ.

Ι αμ δεεπλψ ινδεβετεδ το μψ δεαρεστ μοτηερ ανδ φατηερ φορ τηειρ ενχουραγεμεντ ανδ συππορτ. Ι αμ γρατεφυλ το μψ σιστερσ ανδ βροτηερσ φορ ρενδερινγ με τηε σ ενσε ανδ τηε παλυε οφ βροτηερηοοδ.

**Τηανκ ψου αλλ**

## **Abstract**

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Old cities considered as a main component of cultural heritage since according to (Lori Anglin, 1997) old cities present the past possessing buildings, monuments, lanes and parks. They resonate with memory and tradition, the scale of their elements is inviting, and by walking through them one can discover history in the smallest details, and they give us the vision of another time.

The thesis aims to maintain a strategy to recognize the old city potentials and utilize them to safeguard its values, livability and compatibility to present day dynamic reality. To achieve this goal the thesis followed an integrated approach, as a result the thesis contains two main parts: theoretical and practical. The theoretical part concentrates on reviewing the concepts of old city, cultural heritage, and the old city rehabilitation and planning theories. While the practical part concentrates on analyzing the case of the old town of Ramallah to justify the theoretical part.

Through reviewing the old city rehabilitation and planning theories the thesis founded that conservation versus development is a longstanding debate in both academic and professional literature. Determining the appropriate balance between conservation and development is a key issue now as it has been throughout the history of modern planning.

This thesis revealed that the conservation of the old city should be re-conceptualized as an integral part of a city-wide urban regeneration strategy, rather than as specialized and often rather isolated sub-set of traditional master planning and urban design.

Ramallah summarizes an important period of the Palestinian modern history besides that it expresses the Palestinians peasants' style of life, nowadays Ramallah old town fabric is suffering from neglect and day after day it misses its traditional spirit, its economical and social values, and turns to be uncomfortable and crowded. So there is a need for a comprehensive regeneration plan to safeguard the old city physical structures and environmental relationships and rise up with its economical and social value.

## الملخص

تعتبر المدن القديمة من أهم مكونات الموروث الثقافي، حيث أنها بما تحتويه من مباني و معالم و فراغات تعكس ماضي الأجداد في الحاضر فهي مرآة الماضي في واقعنا الحالي. إن المدينة لم تعد كنتاج معماري مادي لتفاعل الإنسان مع البيئة بل أكبر من ذلك بكثير في أنها تعبير ذهني و إجتماعي و فكري لمجتمعات هذه المدن و بالتالي فإن التعامل معها سواء بالتخطيط أم بالحفاظ يجب أن يكون بوعي لحساسية العلاقة و أهمية ذات المخزون، فلا بد من نظرة شاملة يتم من خلالها التعامل مع المدينة التاريخية، و ذلك بمراعاة عاملي أساسيين:

- التراكم و التغير و التطور للمدينة التاريخية عبر الزمن.
- الخصوصية المرتبطة بلحظة من الزمن و تتعلق بتلك اللحظة فقط.

تهدف هذه الرسالة إلى إيجاد إستراتيجية للتعامل مع مقومات المدينة القديمة و حيويتها إضافة إلى تلائمها مع متطلبات الحياة المعاصرة. و من أجل الوصول إلى هذا الهدف اتبعت الرسالة أسلوب البحث المتكامل و بناءً على ذلك تحتوي هذه الرسالة على جزئين أساسيين : الجزء النظري و الجزء العملي.

لطالما تعرضت عمليات إنقاذ المدن التاريخية لعلاقة جدلية ما بين عملية التنمية و عملية الحفاظ، و من أجل ضمان عملية حفاظ فعالة و دائمة لا بد من أن يكون الحفاظ العمراني جزءاً من عملية تنموية متكاملة تعزى بالإهتمام بالمدينة من الناحية الفيزيائية و الإقتصادية و الإجتماعية و هذا لا يتأتى إلا من خلال إستراتيجية إحياء شاملة تنفذ من خلال خطة شاملة.

لمدينة رام الله خصوصية عالية ، كونها تمثل إنعكاساً لمراحل هامة من التاريخ الفلسطيني المعاصر، و كونها أيضاً مثلاً و شاهداً حياً على العمارة القليدية الفلاحية في فلسطين، و التي تعرضت لمتغيرات العصر الحديث، مما تسبب في تردي القيمة الإجتماعية و الإقتصادية للمدينة ، فكان لا بد من سياسة إحياء شاملة تعنى بإنقاذ البلدة القديمة لرام الله و رفع قيمتها الإقتصادية و الإجتماعية و إعدادها لتقديم حياة مثلى لسكانها من خلال إعداد إستراتيجية إحياء شاملة.

# Contents

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<b>Title</b>	<b>Page</b>
Declaration	I
Acknowledgement	II
Abstract in Arabic	III
Abstract in English	IV
Contents	VI
List of Tables	X
List of Figures	XI
List of Appendices	XIV
<b>Chapter One: Introduction</b>	1
1.1 Background	2
1.2 Goals of the Study	4
1.3 Hypotheses of the Study	5
1.4 Methodology of the Study	5
1.5 Expected Output	7
<b>Chapter Two: Old City Definition and Concepts</b>	8
2.1 Historical Development of Cities	10
2.2 Cultural Heritage concept and Definitions	19
2.2.1 UNESCO Definition by the World Heritage Convention	20
2.2.2 ICOMOS Definition "The Charter of the Conservation of Historic Buildings, Towns and Urban Areas"	22
2.2.3 The Local Palestinian Definition	22
2.3 Old City Concepts	23
2.4 Old City Values	24
2.5 Threats to Old Cities	27

<b>Chapter Three: Old City Rehabilitation and Planning Theories</b>	32
3.1 Old City Rehabilitation Theories and Strategies	33
3.1.1 Development of Historical Preservation Movements	33
3.1.2 Trends in Practice	38
3.2 Old City Planning Theories	43
3.2.1 Clashes between Modernity and Tradition	45
3.2.2 Old City Planning Methodologies	47
3.2.3 Urban Regeneration	48
3.2.4 Conclusion	50
<b>Chapter Four: Case Studies</b>	52
4.1 Introduction	53
4.2 Urban Regeneration in the Old City of Aleppo, Syria	54
4.2.1 Historical Development of Aleppo	55
4.2.2 Urban Development of Aleppo	56
4.2.3 Regeneration Project of the Old City of Aleppo	60
4.2.3.1 Project Goals and Methodology	62
4.2.3.2 Rehabilitation Process Objectives	63
4.2.3.3 Economic Development	66
4.2.3.4 Participation	69
4.2.3.5 Institutional Setup	72
4.2.4 Conclusion	74
4.3 Al-Kairouan Rehabilitation Project-Tunis	76
4.3.1 Urban Development of Al-Kairouan	76
4.3.1 Rehabilitation Project of Al-Kairouan	81
4.3.2.1 Project Goals and Methodology	83
4.3.2.2 Rehabilitation Process Objectives	84
4.3.2.3 Economical Development	86
4.3.2.4 Institutional Setup	87
4.3.3 Conclusion	89
4.4 General Conclusion on Case Studies	90

<b>Chapter Five : Ramallah Old Town</b>	91
5.1 Introduction	92
5.1.1 Historical Background of Ramallah	93
5.1.2 The Importance of Ramallah Old Town	98
5.1.3 Urban Development of Ramallah	100
5.2 Analysis of Existing Conditions in Ramallah Old Town	106
5.2.1 Analysis of Physical Factors	109
5.2.1.1 Ramallah Old Town Morphological Analysis	109
5.2.1.2 Ramallah Old Town Infrastructure Analysis	136
5.2.1.3 Ramallah Old Town Physical Study Findings	141
5.2.2 Ramallah Old Town Socio-economical Analysis	142
5.2.2.1 General Information Analysis	144
5.2.2.2 Neighborhood Physical Situation Analysis	146
5.2.2.3 House Physical Situation Analysis	147
5.2.2.4 Neighborhood Social Services Analysis	149
5.2.2.5 Neighborhood Economical Situation Analysis	150
5.2.2.6 Socio-economical Survey Results	151
 <b>Chapter Six: Regeneration Approach for Ramallah Old Town</b>	 153
6.1 Major Hypothesis of the Study	154

6.2 Testing the Minor Hypothesis	155
6.3 Minor Hypothesis Testing Conclusion	158
6.4 Regeneration Approach for Ramallah Old Town	159
6.4.1 Introduction	159
6.4.2 Ramallah Regeneration Approach Vision	160
6.4.3 General Strategy for Ramallah Old Town Regeneration	161
6.4.3.1 Planning Strategies	162
6.4.3.2 Rehabilitation Strategies	165
6.4.3.3 Social Development Strategies	167
6.4.3.4 Economic Development Strategies	168
6.5 Conclusions	169
References	172

## List of Tables

---

	<b>Title</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>Chapter Five</b>		
5.1	Origin of Tenants Among the Old Town of Ramallah	132
5.2	The Household Gender	145
5.3	The Educational Level	146
5.4	Profession	146
5.5	Income Level	147
5.6	Neighborhood Physical Conditions	148
5.7	Reason for Leaving the Old Town	149
5.8	Ownership	149
5.9	Evaluation of the Housing Unit Physical Situation	150
5.10	Housing Unit Physical Situation	150
5.11	Suggested Solutions for Economical Obstacles	151
5.12	Leaving the House	151
5.13	Kind of Consumption	151
5.14	Reasons for not Leaving the House	152
5.15	Social Services in the Neighborhood	152
5.16	Social Problems in the Neighborhood	153
5.17	Factors Affecting the Old Town Economy	154
5.18	New Economical Activities	154
<b>Chapter Six</b>		
6.1	Chi-Square Test, Hypothesis One	159
6.2	Chi-Square Test, Hypothesis Two	160
6.3	Chi-Square Test, Hypothesis Three	161

## List of Figures

---

	Title	Page
<b>Chapter One</b>		
1.1	General View Showing Susa, Tunis	3
1.2	Diagram Showing the Main and Sub Goals of the Study	4
1.3	Diagram Showing the Tools of the Study	6
<b>Chapter Two</b>		
2.1	Nahal Oren, West Flank of Carmel Range, Occupied Palestine, Eighth Millineum, B.C.E., Small Pre-Pottery Neolithic Setteltment	11
2.2	The General Plan of the Greek City of Miletus as Excavated by Von Gerken, Showing the Rectangular Grid-Block	13
2.3	The General Plan of the Roman City of Timgad as Excavated by the Direction des Antiquites, Gouvernement General de l' Algerie Showing the Most Regular Example of Imperial Gridiron	14
2.4	Part of Rome Showing the Piazza del Popolo and the Three Main Routes South into the Centre of the City, from the Nolli Plan of 1748	15
2.5	General Plan of Riyadh in 1918 Showing the Compact Nature of this City, the Great Mosque and the Central Suq Complex, besides its encircling Palm Grove Oasis Gardens	16
2.6	Damascus city, Syria	27
2.7	View of a house in Ramallah old town shows the new additions	28
2.8	Damascus: samples of urban development showing typological and dimensional changes in the urban fabric	29

over time	
2.9 Jenin City: a view toward the old city	30

### **Chapter Three**

3.1 Plan of the transformation of Paris through Haussmann's Project Showing the New Streets and New Residential Areas Instead of Historical Ones	35
3.2 urban development plan for Cairo under the Khedive Ismail, around 1870 (after J. Abulughod). Hatching marks is Showing the old Fatimid nucleus	36
3.3 Typical cyclic Model for Old City Planning Process	48

### **Chapter Four**

4.1 The Citadel of Aleppo	54
4.2 The upper is showing the proposed plan by G.Bonshaya 1974, the lower is the existing conditions in 1983 showing the new road in the north	57
4.3 Aleppo city master plan Around 1930, In Black the Traditional City Centre Around the Umayyad Mosque and the Covered Suqs, in Darck Grey the new Service Centre from the early 20th Century	59
4.4 Planning and Implementation Scheme	67
4.5 Al-Kairouan in the Fifth Century after Hijra	79
4.6 Al-Kairouan Markets	80
4.7 Master Plan of Al-Kairouan Showing Different Zones Including UA1,UA2	85

### **Chapter Five**

5.1 A Map Showing the West Bank	92
5.2 The Old Town of Ramallah Showing the Distribution of Ramallah Original Families	95
5.3 Old Peasants' House in the Old Town of Ramallah Called Moghanam House from the year 1924	99
5.4 Urban Fabric of the Old Town of Ramallah	100
5.5 The Number of Registered Houses in Rmallah (1900-1945) Showing the Urban Development	104
5.6 The master plan of Ramallah city 1971 showing the old city borders	107
5.7 The Historic Fabric of the Old Town of Ramallah	108
5.8 The Land use Classification of the Old Town of	113

	Ramallah	
5.9	The Sky Line of the Old Town of Ramallah	114
5.10	Historic Urban Fabric of the Old Town of Ramallah, Showing the Occupied Houses	115
5.11	The Compact Historic Urban Fabric of the Old Town of Ramallah, Showing the Relation between Buildings and Green and Public Spaces	116
5.12	Historic Urban Fabric of the Old Town of Ramallah, Showing the Street's Network	118
5.13	Historic Urban Fabric of the Old Town of Ramallah, Showing the Different Arrangements of Houses	119
5.14	Hanania Commercial Stores	120
5.15	The Ottoman Court Building	121
5.16	The Ottoman Court Building After Rehabilitation	122
5.17	The Old Municipality Building	123
5.18	Historic Urban Fabric of the Old Town of Ramallah, Showing Public Ownership	124
5.19	The Tri-interior Divisions' Peasants House and Olive Mil Adjacent to it, Hosh Dar Jerias	126
5.20	The Simple Unit of the Peasant House, Dar As'ad Sam'an Ziadeh	127
5.21	The Two Units House, the Ground and First Level of Dar Ibrahim Salem Issa	127
5.22	The Villa House Style, Hosh Dar Al-Derbas(1902)	129
5.23	Commercial Stores, Al-Kundargiah Street	130
5.24	A View Toward Al-Kundargiah Street, Ramallah	130
5.25	Historic Urban Fabric of the Old Town of Ramallah, Showing the Occupied Houses	133
5.26	Closed Commercial Stores Near to Police Station in the Heart of the Old Town	135
5.27	Historic Urban Fabric of the Old Town of Ramallah, Showing the Economic Activities	136
5.28	View of Al-Kdera Street in Front of Kundargiah Street showing the Difference in Width.	137
5.29	Historic Urban Fabric of the Old Town of Ramallah, Showing the Road System	138
5.30	Water Network	139
5.31	Electricity Network	140

5.32	Sewage Network	141
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## **Chapter Six**

6.1	Diagram Explains the Three Derivatives of Regeneration Plan	161
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## **List of Appendices**

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Appendix I	Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage
Appendix II	Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas (Washington Charter 1987)
Appendix III	Questionnaire

# **Chapter One**

## **Introduction**

**1:1Background**

In the fragmented reality of our modern civilization, old cities constitute a major physical repository of identity. But old cities are threatened by the high rate of change in their urban fabric, social, and economical values, especially in the developing countries. Among the numerous causes of this change are the human activities, which have to be accommodated within their urban fabric, besides the neglecting of their maintenance and compatibility to modern life needs.

In the Arab World as everywhere else attitudes toward the historical old cities have been changed, and these changes have left their impacts on the urban fabric. On the one hand, the pattern and dimensions of the new buildings are so different from the old, and these structures are to be linked by new streets with no concern to the old cities as a whole or the traditional dwellings within them, that changed the architectural character of the cityscape, also shopping patterns have changed whereas there is no maintenance or encouragement for the commercial activities that go inside the old cities, which affected the inhabitants' living standards badly. On the other hand, old city backward image, lack of public services and poor accessibility caused the exodus of the local bourgeoisie and the formation of urban slum area. Consequently, the value of these areas is deteriorated, no many people want to live there, and their inhabitants wish to leave and have their own modern flats if they can afford for that, so all of our cities are suffering from inhabitant immigration, which threatens the historical structures and causes their degradation. Yet the main questions that this study is trying to answer are:

**What are the values and potentials that the old cities have and how to regenerate these cities with respect to the inhabitants' social and economical reality?**

This topic is so important for the revival of the old city since the continuity of life is essential to protect the historical fabric. Feilden and Jokilehto ( 1998, P.77) states that: “a well maintained historic urban center has many advantages for its citizens, it is intimate and human in scale and often rich in diverse activities, compared with some recently planned cities, it can be extremely convenient for residential use, special public functions, appropriately scaled services, shopping and entertainment.” The old city of Susa is one of these cities which prove the ability of old structures to grasp the needs of modern life as figure (1.1) shows.



Figure (1.1): General View Showing Susa, Tunis.

Source: Researcher, August, 2003.

## 1:2 Goals of the Study

This study intends to maintain a strategy to realize the old city potentials and utilize them to safeguard its values, livability and compatibility to present day dynamic reality, which

implies that the goals of this study can be translated to this flow chart, which presents the main goal and the sub goals:

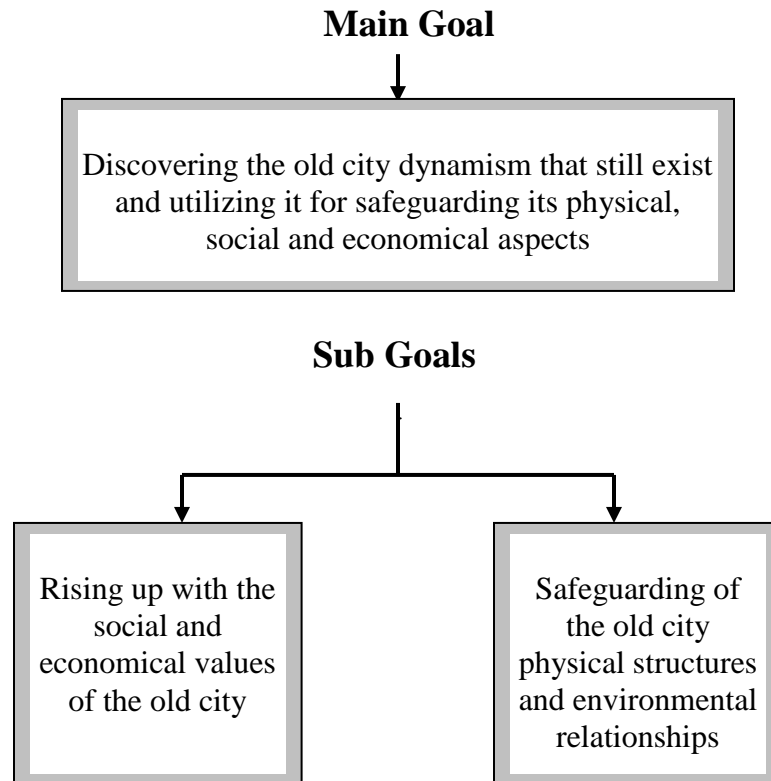


Figure (1.2): Diagram Showing the Main and Sub Goals of the Study

Source: Researcher

### 1:3 Hypotheses of the Study

Two hypotheses will be tested to find out the appropriate approach to deal with the old city, and to determine how this city can be regenerated with respecting to the needs of the residents and the values of the old city. These two hypotheses are:

- Safeguarding the old city is more than a traditional conservation process of the physical structures, but it is a combination of a regeneration plan that deals with the physical, social and economical aspects.
- Safeguarding the old city physical structures considering its values is the main goal of any development process that deals with the old city, while advancement of the social and economical aspects is considered as a result of this process.

### **1:4 Methodology of the Study**

To achieve the goals of the study there is a need for an integrated approach, which implies reconciling rehabilitation requirements and town planning tools by considering the values of the old urban fabric and the needs of the citizens as the following flow chart explains.

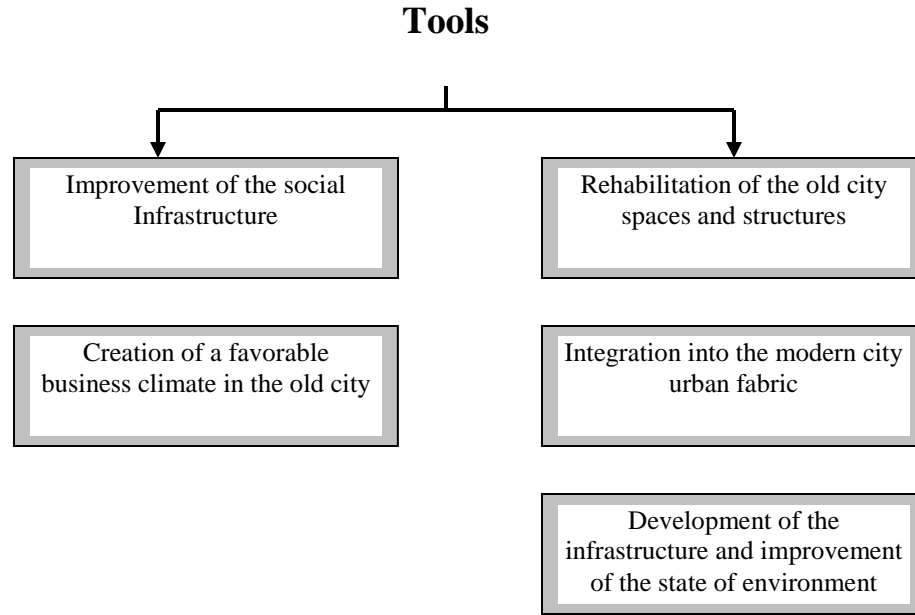


Figure (1.3): Diagram Showing the Tools of the Study

Source: Researcher

According to this the research will be of two main parts: theoretical and practical. The theoretical part will concentrate on defining the old city and cultural heritage concepts, besides a brief background about the development of old city rehabilitation and planning theories that are focusing on discussing major issues such as the clash between modernity and tradition, people's retrain from living in the old city and what are the living standards they want and the services which they are looking for? Finally an analysis of two case studies of recent projects will be provided, in order to explore the main approach and assess the outcomes of each project.

The practical part will help for the justification of the theoretical part by identifying a case study of Ramallah old town, which is located in the heart of Ramallah city, 15 km to

the north of Jerusalem, on the top of a mountainous plateau, with a unique architectural image that represents the impact of the Palestinian political and demographical conditions on the development of the architecture and the urban expansion. An integrated plan for this old city will be prepared following three main steps:

- Identifying the problems and data collection (statistical data, maps, questionnaires, interviews).
- Analyzing of the data.
- Developing goals and scenarios.

### **1:5 Expected Output**

The expected output of this study is:

- Developing a vision for safeguarding Ramallah old town.
- Determining general Strategy for safeguarding Ramallah old town.
- Proposing for implementation strategies for safeguarding Ramallah old town.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Old City Definition and Concepts**

An important part of the definition of the old city concerns its historical development, cultural heritage concepts as well as the international movements for environmental sustainable development that allows us to make a more clear exploration of old cities concepts.

To define a city there is a need for a theory based on a very broad sample and not only based on high design tradition, besides concentration on the work of planners and designers and the environments that were created by folk or popular tradition .The existing theories tend to be based on the western tradition, neglecting the many other cultures, while the eldest cities in the world are oriental cities mainly Jericho in Palestine and Catal Huyuk in Turkey.

Rapaport (1979, P.33) explained that one of the classic definitions of the city is "relatively large dense and permanent settlement of socially heterogeneous individuals" this definition was put by Louis Wirth in 1938, and it shows an ethnocentric approach of city based on the modern Western city. Rapaport also mentioned that Gordon Childe listed the criteria of urbanism as: "a concentration of large numbers of people, craft specialization, a redistributive economic mode, monumental public architecture developed social stratification, the use of writing, exact and predictive sciences, naturalistic art, foreign trade and group membership based on residence rather than kinship."

This definition has led to major arguments, since in different cultures there are different elements that have been used as the minimum necessary for a settlement to qualify as a city. For example in the Hellenistic world this includes: a theatre, gymnasium and prytaneion, in medieval Islam: a Friday mosque, permanent market and public bath, and in Europe: fortifications, market, and a court enforcing its own laws and autonomy. In fact the more difficult is to apply the definition derived from western forms , where " a settlement can be

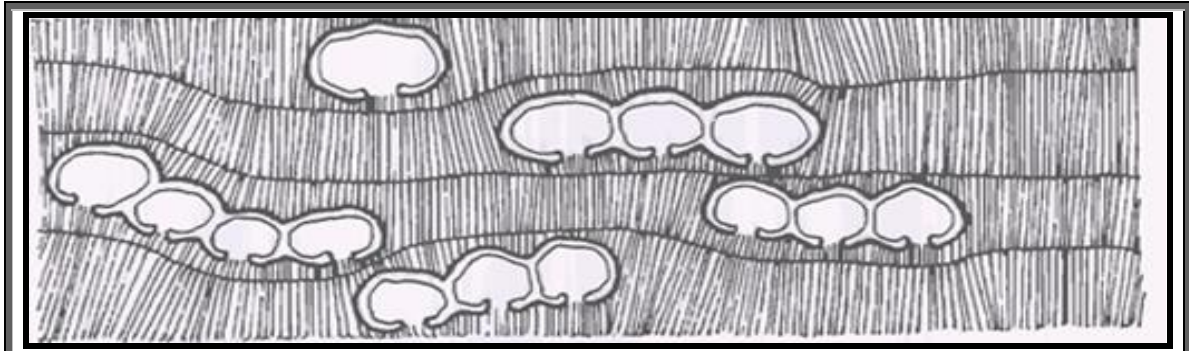
defined as a city not in terms of particular morphological features , or even collections of features but in terms of a particular function that of organizing a region and creating effective space " (Rapoport , 1979, P.33 ) . This definition seems to be generally more accepted, since any definition of the city has to cross- cultural significance.

Cities are varied according to their size, historical period and services. There are small cities, metropolitan cities, old cities and modern cities. As a result of the Contemporary movement of preserving cultural heritage, old city term is used to differ between the old fabrics and the modern one. What this term means? How is it related to cultural heritage? And when it can be used, will be clarified in part 2:3.

## **2:1 Historical Developments of Cities**

Cities didn't suddenly spring up. There was no urban revolution they developed gradually as settlements extended their organizing functions out wards. There is a progression from the house settlement system to the settlement – settlement and settlement region system (Rapoport, 1979, P.34). Religion, agriculture and trade were diagnosed as main reasons to cause these new human communities development.

Historically and archeologically, house development was studied and documented. Structures built mainly of perishable materials were known in Africa, Asia and Europe since the middle Paleolithic. Hut dwellings with their lower parts dug into the loess have been discovered in eastern and central Europe and dated to the late Paleolithic. In Palestine, post holes indicate some form of roofing and underground pits for storing food from the end of the upper Pleistocene were the first evidence of dwellings. According to Kempinski (1992), the clearest archeological evidence seems to be the remains of kebaran and geometric kebaran huts at the sites near En Gedi ( Jericho).



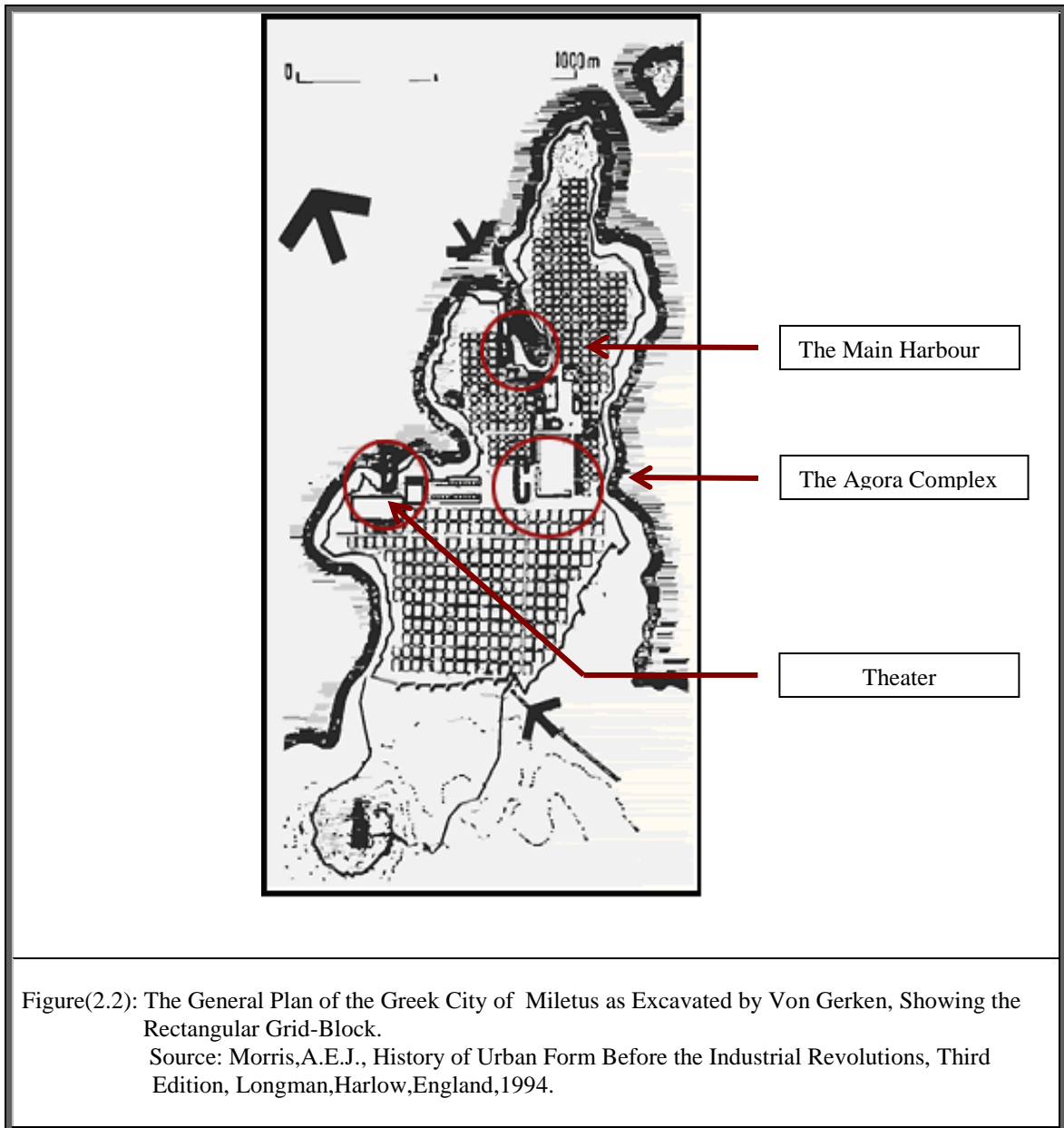
Figure(2.1): Nahal Oren, West Flank of Carmel Range, Occupied Palestine, Eighth Millennium, B.C.E., Small Pre-Pottery Neolithic Settlement.  
 Source: Rapoport, Amos, On the Cultural Origins of Settlements, Introduction to Urban Planning, Edited by Catanese, Anthony and James C. Snyder, McGrawHill Company, 1979.

Development of mankind's ability in controlling his life has affected his needs and aims, which find its impacts on his dwelling and environment. In Palestine, according to Kempinski (1992), the earliest evidence of public buildings is the walls and tower of Jericho referring to the Pre -Pottery Neolithic Period, their presence led their excavator Katharine Kenyon to suggest that they were part of the defense system of an urban settlement. Referring to Catanese ( 1979, P.4) , during the Calcolithic period around 4,000 B.C. in the fertile crescent - corresponding roughly to the Nile valley and Tigris and Euphrates alluvial plain - civilization began , since the Sumerians of Assyria have developed the concept of city - kingdoms . These cities were planned cities, as both fortresses and market places for the agricultural products of the surrounding lands. Also there was light manufacturing and craft making which is typical of the Bronze Age. One of the earliest of these cities was Babylon.

According to Catanese (1979, Pp.5-6), western civilization began on the islands of the Aegean Sea and grew with the settlement of Greece by northern peoples mingling with southerners. During the fifth century B.C., Pericles led the establishment of a moral and

political form of citizenship that was called democracy. The temple of Athens becomes a meeting place of the people and it was the center of the city rather than the ruler's palace. As democracy grew the houses and facilities of the community became more important elements of the city plan. Edgar (1996) states that the Greek people had developed their own vision for city; they appear to have had a notion which provided not merely for habitation, but for all the attendant functions of men and these can be summarized as containing the following: temples, gymnasia, stoa, and agora. Catanese (1979, P.6) explained that, with this increasing sense toward civilization, there emerged a person who might be considered the first city planner Hippodamus, who developed the first philosophical basis for physical planning in cities. He theorized the need for a rectangular street system to give a geometric form to urban spaces gridiron pattern, and also he developed the concept of an agora in which the business of the city was conducted.





As the Roman Empire (27 B.C. - 324 A.D.), grew in power and wealth, the population of Rome increased, and severe housing shortages and transportation problems arose. Rome also suffered from inadequate water supply, which led to the construction of massive aqueducts to bring in fresh water. Despite these conditions every new emperor built a

forum grander than the last, which served as the centers for the political and business life of the city.

The Romans built a number of military cities, Catanese (1979, Pp.9-10) describes that, most of them followed a master plan that varied only slightly and enabled rapid construction. Built in virtually as a square pattern, these colonial cities were dominated by civic buildings at the intersection of the two main roads (cardo and decumanos). Housing was predominantly small apartments with atrium –style houses for wealthy.

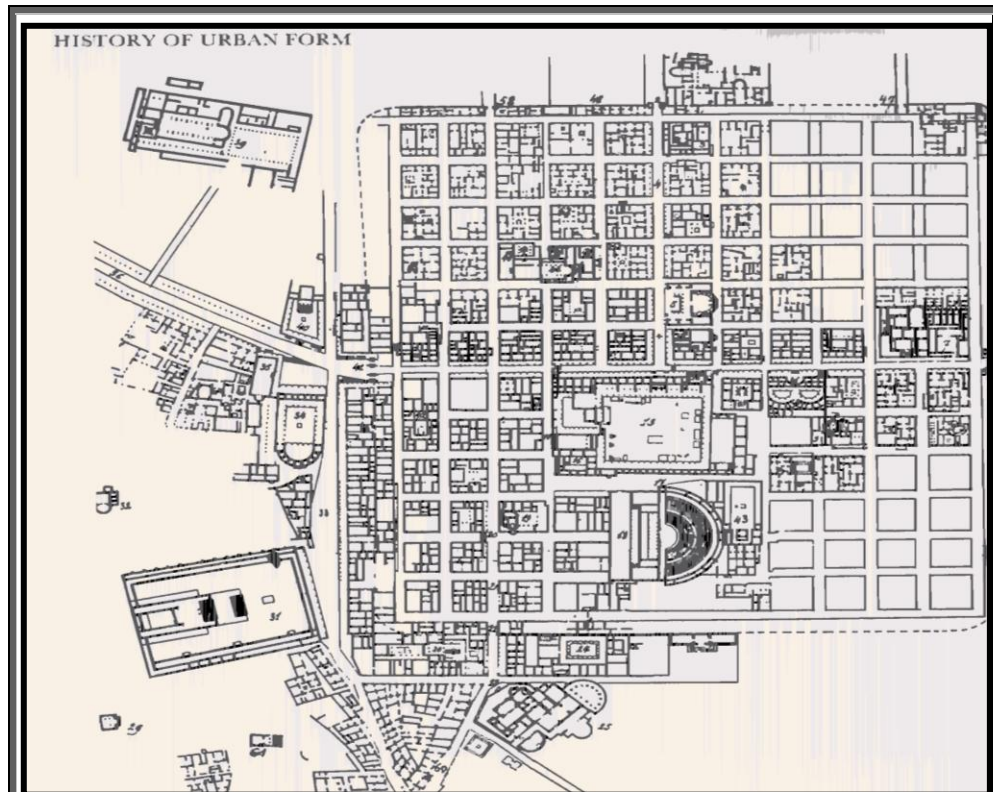


Figure (2.3): The General Plan of the Roman City of Timgad as Excavated by the Direction des Antiquites, Gouvernement General de l' Algerie, Showing the Most Regular Example of Imperial Gridiron.  
Source: Morris, A.E.J., History of Urban Form Before the Industrial Revolutions, Third Edition, Longman, Harlow, England, 1994.

In renaissance, many town plans were devised, and there was more concern for beauty. Palaces, churches and public buildings had to be monuments of great beauty and some important concepts of urban planning emerged during this period. According to Catanese (1979, P.13) the axis style of city design was foremost and it meant that urban form now had an organized centerline, besides the use of formal piazzas or squares that were fostered by Michelangelo, Bernini and others.

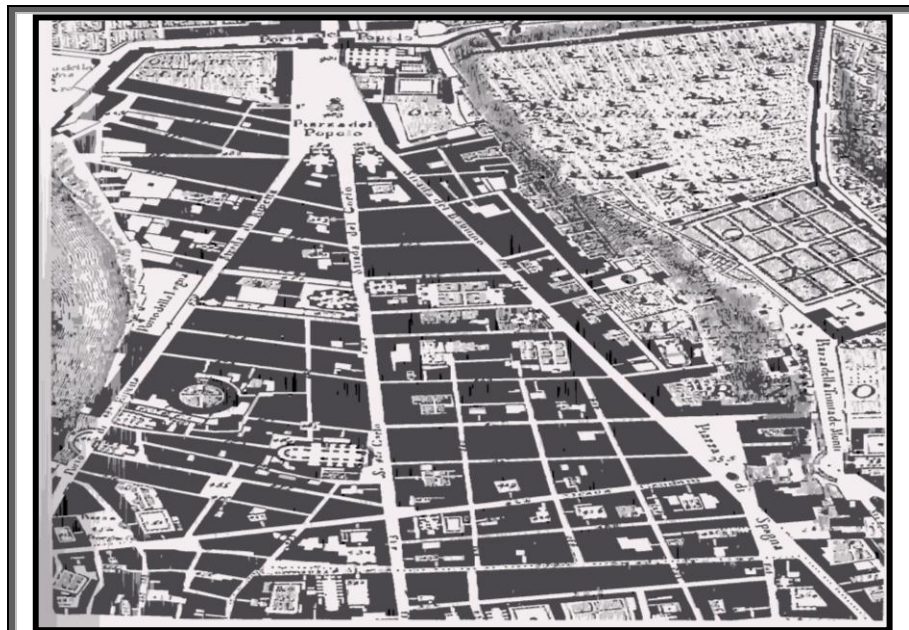


Figure (2.4): Part of Rome Showing the Piazza del Popolo and the Three Main Routes South into the Centre of the City, from the Nolli Plan of 1748.

Source: Morris, A.E.J., History of Urban Form Before the Industrial Revolutions, Third Edition, Longman, Harlow, England, 1994.

Islamic- Arab cities were planned to achieve the Arab Muslims needs and aims, so they have much in common. According to Bianca (2000, P.52), the first Arab city foundations in Basra and Kufa in Iraq, and Fustat in Egypt occurred within one decade after the death of the Prophet, which were carried out with the objective of sedentarizing the immigrant

troops and their families. Architecture was very primitive in the beginning, probably consisting of tents, simple reeds and mud structures. The organizational pattern of these settlements (related by the early historian al-Baladhuri and al Ya'qubi) was to become significant, if not typical for later Muslim cities: The foremost act of city planning was the marking and enclosing of the common meeting and prayer place, which was to serve as the integrating factor for the various tribes, fulfilling both religious and political purposes. Close to this meeting place was "dar al-imara" the seat of the government. In the open space around the mosque there were markets, which developed spontaneously around the most densely used public space.

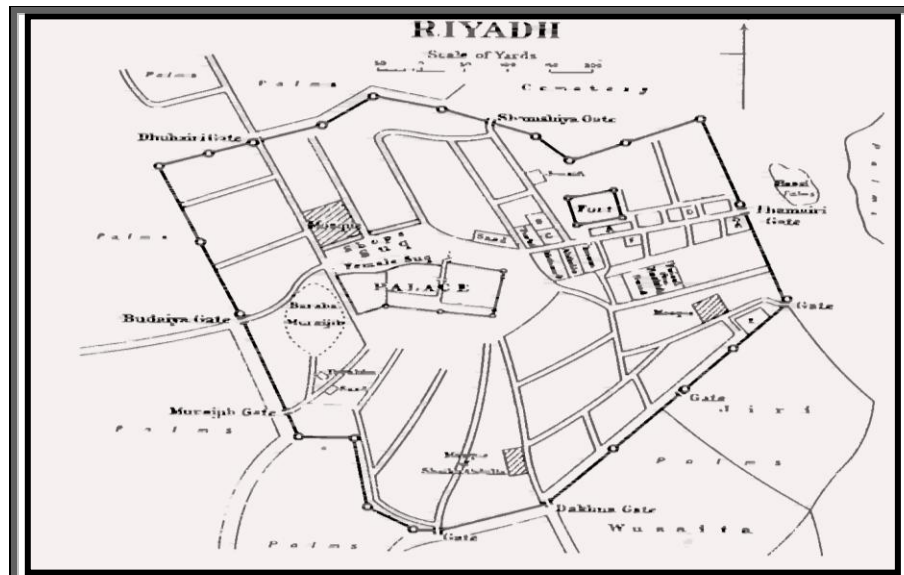


Figure (2.5): General Plan of Riyadh in 1918 Showing the Compact Nature of this City, the Great Mosque and the Central Suq Complex, besides its encircling Palm Grove Oasis Gardens.

Source: Morris, A.E.J., History of Urban Form Before the Industrial Revolutions, Third Edition, Longman, Harlow, England, 1994.

During the period 1500 – 1700 A.D., cities throughout the world grew and gradually changed. But the basic pattern of cities and city life remained much the same until the

1700's and early 1800's, when a period of rapid industrialization called the Industrial Revolution took place. During this time, many cities in Europe and North America changed greatly. These communities, called industrial cities, became centers of large-scale manufacturing, resulted mainly from the invention of steam engines and new machines. The Industrial Revolution caused dramatic changes in city life. According to Kostof (1985) the factories, the abrupt increase in production, the industrial system in general, played fast and loose with long-established patterns of human intercourse. A lower death rate- a result of improved food, hygiene, and medical care- vastly swelled the population of Europe. Peasants abandoning the land in numbers crowded into the big cities.

Factories, warehouses, and railroad yards stood near the center of an industrial city. Nearby, poor people lived in cheap houses and apartment buildings. The poor had no means of transportation, and so they needed to live within walking distance of their jobs. As cities grew, the central areas became crowded and unhealthful. Many wealthy merchants and factory owners built big houses in the outer sections of the city. They used horse-drawn carriages for travel to the central area. In the 1800's, some people began to move to communities just outside the city, called suburbs. They rode to work on railroads or streetcars.

According to Catanese (1979, P.15), the patterns of urban flight and suburban sprawl were so characteristic of contemporary American cities. In the late 1800s, model housing units were built by the rulers of England, France and Germany. Germany, Austria and the United States began experiments with zoning to control land uses and building heights in cities. It became quite clear by the beginning of the twentieth century that the infrastructure of

cities, water supply, transit, and streets as well as health and sanitation services, would have to be planned and built by the governments themselves.

Catanese (1979, P.15) added that somewhat romantic precursors of urban planning evolved in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The titans of the industrial revolution, perhaps out of guilt or noblesse oblige, or perhaps out of societal concerns, created a number of new towns. One of the famous was Sir Titus Salt's town, named Saltaire, built in England in 1852 to house 3,000 workers from his textile mill.

Ebenezer Howard (1850-1929) solidified the concept of new towns as an urban planning movement. In 1898 he published a book entitled *To-Morrow: A Peaceful Path to Social Reform*, in which he proposed the garden city as a solution to urban planning problems. According to Catanese (1979, P.17) in 1899, the Garden City Association was founded, and in 1903 it formed a unique limited-dividend company to build Letch worth ( the first garden city located 33 miles of London).

The Scottish contemporary of Howard was Patrick Geddes, who theorized that physical planning could not improve urban living conditions unless it were integrated with social and economic planning in a context of environment concern. This integration should occur at a regional scale including both the city and its surrounding hinterland.

Also International Congress of Modern Architecture (CIAM) was found by twenty-four architects at La Sarraz, Switzerland in 1928. The La Sarraz Declaration asserted that architecture could no longer exist in an isolated state separate from governments and politics, but that economic and social conditions would fundamentally affect the buildings of the future. The Declaration also asserted that as society became more industrialized, it was vital that architects and the construction industry rationalize their methods, embrace

new technologies and strive for greater efficiency. Le Corbusier, one of the movement's founders, often liked to compare the standardized efficiency of the motor industry with the inefficiency of the building trade (www.open2.net, 2005).

One of the most important actions of the movement is the fourth CIAM Congress in 1933 with a theme of: "The Functional City" which consisted of an analysis of thirty-four cities and proposed solutions to urban problems. The conclusions were published as "The Athens Charter". This document remains one of the most controversial ever produced by CIAM. The charter effectively committed CIAM to rigid functional cities, with citizens to be housed in high, widely-spaced apartment blocks. Green belts would separate each zone of the city. The Charter was not actually published until 1943, and its influence would be profound on public authorities in post-war Europe.

Even though not all the cities have enjoyed historical continuity these were the most important stages that the city form passed through before the industrial revolution, that produce the different elements of urban fabric, and effect cities environment until now.

## **2:2 Cultural Heritage Concept and Definitions**

Referring to Feilden et al (1998, P.11), the present –day concept of cultural heritage is a result of the process related to the development of contemporary society, its values, its interests and its requirements. In the past, attention was given mainly to particular works of art or to major monuments. Massive destruction caused by the world wars and disasters besides the escalating industrial development have made people realize that their lives are closely related to the environment, in which they live and work, it provides

the basis for their cultural identity and a mental and spiritual reference for a balance quality of life.

Characterization of cultural heritage and definition of its values are referred to in various literature reviews and international documents. The Academic American Encyclopedia (p.384) defines culture as: "Human culture in the technical sense includes the insignificant and mundane behavior traits, as well as the refined arts of a society ".It is difficult to make much distinction between culture and cultural heritage since culture is by definition inherited. Cultural heritage was defined by international documents of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and other international committees, and a series of recommendations and conventions. But there are two main definitions by the world heritage convention and the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) charter that will be clarified in the next part besides the local Palestinian definition.

### **2:2:1 UNESCO Definition by the World Heritage Convention**

In 1972, the concern resulting from increased threats to cultural and natural heritage world wide, and the desire to provide organized international support for the protection of world heritage sites and values prompted the General Conference of UNESCO to adopt a special convention concerning the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage.

The aim of this convention is to protect sites that present "out standing universal value". The world heritage list, which was established and maintained on the basis of this convention, identifies sites in different states parties that are recognized as resources of international significance.

For the purposes of the convention cultural heritage include monuments, group of buildings or sites and these are defined as (see Appendix I):

- Monuments: architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science.
- Groups of buildings: groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape, are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science.
- Sites: works of man or the combined works of nature and man, and areas including archaeological sites which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view.

Since monuments and historic buildings are only part of the larger ensemble of the heritage resources, historic areas required special attention, so the UNESCO recommendation concerning safeguarding and contemporary role of historic areas that formulated in Nairobi in 1976 provides the following guideline (General Principles, II, 2):

"Every historic areas and its surroundings should be considered in their totality as a coherent whole whose balance and specific nature depend on the fusion of the parts of which it is composed and which include human activities as much as the building, the spatial organization and the surroundings, all valid elements, including human

activities, however modest thus have a significance in relation to the whole which must not be disregarded".

### **2:2:2 ICOMOS Definition “the charter of the conservation of historic buildings, towns and urban areas”**

This document was adopted at October, 1987 meeting of ICOMOS General Assembly in Washington DC, and is commonly known as " Washington Charter". According to this charter there is a number of important preamble and definitions that include (see Appendix II):

- All urban communities, whether they have developed over time or have been created deliberately are an expression of the diversity of societies through out history.
- This charter concerns historic urban areas large and small including cities, towns and historic centers or quarters, together with their natural and man made environments, beyond their role as historical documents, these areas embody the values of traditional urban cultures .Today many such areas are being threatened, physically degraded, damaged or even destroyed by the urban development that follows industrialization in societies everywhere.

### **2:2:3 The Local Palestinian Definition**

In the case of Palestine there is no cultural heritage law .The cultural heritage law in West Bank is based on the Jordanian law from the year 1966 and in Gaza is based on the British mandate law of antiquities number 51 for the year 1926.

The Jordanian law, Act 2 defines the Cultural heritage as:

1. "Any unmovable historical evidence, that was structured, formed, builds, produced or modified by man before 1700 A.D., including any addition or rebuilt after that date.
2. Anthropological and animal remains dated to 600 A.D. and before.
3. Any unmovable or movable evidence dated after 1700 A.D., but nominated by the minister as historical evidence."

This law lack to tackle crucial issues regarding the definition of the historic towns and their protection.

Since cultural heritage consists of different types of properties which are related to a variety of settings they include not only important monuments, historic areas and gardens, but the man made environment as a whole, cultural heritage resources may be associated with different values depending on their context so their treatment may differ from case to case.

### **2:3 Old City Concepts**

Lori Anglin wrote in the Getty Conservation Institute Newsletter (1997, V.12, N.1), "old cities present the past possessing buildings, monuments, lanes and parks. They resonate with memory and tradition, the scale of their elements is inviting, and by walking through them one can discover history in the smallest details, and they give us the vision of another time".

A well maintained old urban center has many advantages for its citizens .It is a meeting place, a buying place and an open landmark for its residents. It is warm with human scale

and often rich in diverse activities compared with some modern planned cities. It can be awfully convenient for residential use, special public functions, appropriately scaled services, shopping and entertainment. Thus, old cities must be seen as priceless assets, making their recycling not a sentimental exercise but an economical and social necessity, which leads to an international movement toward cultural heritage preservation.

Examples of old cities in Palestine are: the old city of Jerusalem, Nablus and Hebron, which are physically link to the past, but people live and work within their old structures.

## **2:4 Old City Values**

Heritage conservation is placed in direct confrontation with values and practical management issues related to economics and community development. According to Feilden et al (1998, P.78) the value of a historic town is embodied in the material testimony of its stones and its structure and often lies beneath their visible surface.

The whole of historic areas is valuable; its value should not be considered in relation to its architectural frame work. It should include the human values related to its social and economic context. So when dealing with the old cities, considerations of both their cultural values and contemporary socio – economical values should be studied. Depending on Bernard Feilden and Jukka Jokilehto (1998) and Steven Tiesdell (1996) old city values can be set as:

### **1- Cultural Values**

According to Feilden et al (1998, P.18), cultural values that are associated with historic cities and their relationship to present day observers are necessary

subjective. These assessments will determine the degree of general interest in the object and cultural values can be classified as:

- Identity value: old city is a live and visible evidence of the past, which contribute to the cultural identity and memory of a certain group of people, giving a meaning to their present.
- Technical value: old city may not be only beautiful place to live in, its value comes also from the techniques that were used in its buildings and the authenticity of its construction procedures.
- Rarity value: old cities are valuable because of their unique designs and forms that are scarce in such a world of rapid change.
- Architectural value: the aesthetic appeal of old city that comes from the combination of many buildings rather than the individual merits of an individual building.

## 2- Contemporary Socio –Economic Values

From the most important benefits that arising from preserving and adopting old cities are economic and social benefits, since according to Feilden et al ( 1998, P.19 ) use values are related to present-day society and its socio-economic and political infrastructure. Contemporary socio – economic values can be classified as:

- Economic value: old city afford a unique opportunity for tourism and commerce that depend on it to develop side by side with the utilizing and

reuse of its buildings and spaces as an aspect of the sustainable development movement.

- Functional value: that is related to the economic value as it involves the continuity of the original function of the old city, which offer a diverse range of different spaces and buildings that enables a mix of uses, besides that old city may present lower rents that encourage economically and socially important activities to have a place in its fabric.
- Social value: old city plays an important role in establishing social and cultural identity by preserving its traditional social activities and being combatable to present day - use.

### 3- Educational Values

Old city educational value includes its potential for cultural tourism and the public awareness of cultural resources. In addition, when visual appreciation and first hand experience play a decisive role in education, it is essential to keep alive the evidence of different periods and their achievements, which provides a wealthy material for explaining and comparing forms and styles, and their applications.

### 4- Political Values

Political value is related to specific events in the history of the old city that affect the present –day significance of it .It links us to the past , as we live in an age of frightening communication and other technological abilities, as well as in an area of increasing cultural homogeneity .

## 2:5 Threats to Old Cities

The global trend of development aiming to increase and modernize accommodations, as well as to capitalize in investment return, has contributed to an extraordinary loss of historical fabric. Among the numerous causes of this loss are:

- 1- Population growth, which push and pull towards rapid urban overcrowding leading to overuse and dilapidation, since many of the residents try to add new structures to their old houses, which change the architectural character of the buildings and of the cityscape as new materials, new proportions and quite different styles are introduced in them. This can be observed clearly in many Arab old cities such as Damascus in Syria and in our local old cities and towns such as Ramallah old town.



Figure (2 .7): View of a house in Ramallah old town shows the new additions.

Source: Researcher (2005)

- 2- High rise buildings that threat historic centers by changing the microclimate and affecting the inner environment of the old city badly.
- 3- The old city religious rules, social habits and construction practices combined to maintain privacy and greatly contributed to the homogeneity of the old traditional fabrics are no longer applied since the new buildings regulations either tend to exclude them or they are no longer enforced.
- 4- The contemporary style of transportation systems that cause an increasing use of motor transport with consequent penetration leading to pollution and vibration .As a result of the pattern and dimensions of the new streets a major change of the old city urban fabric has been occurred, below samples of urban development from

Damascus showing the impact of the modern transportation system on the urban fabric.

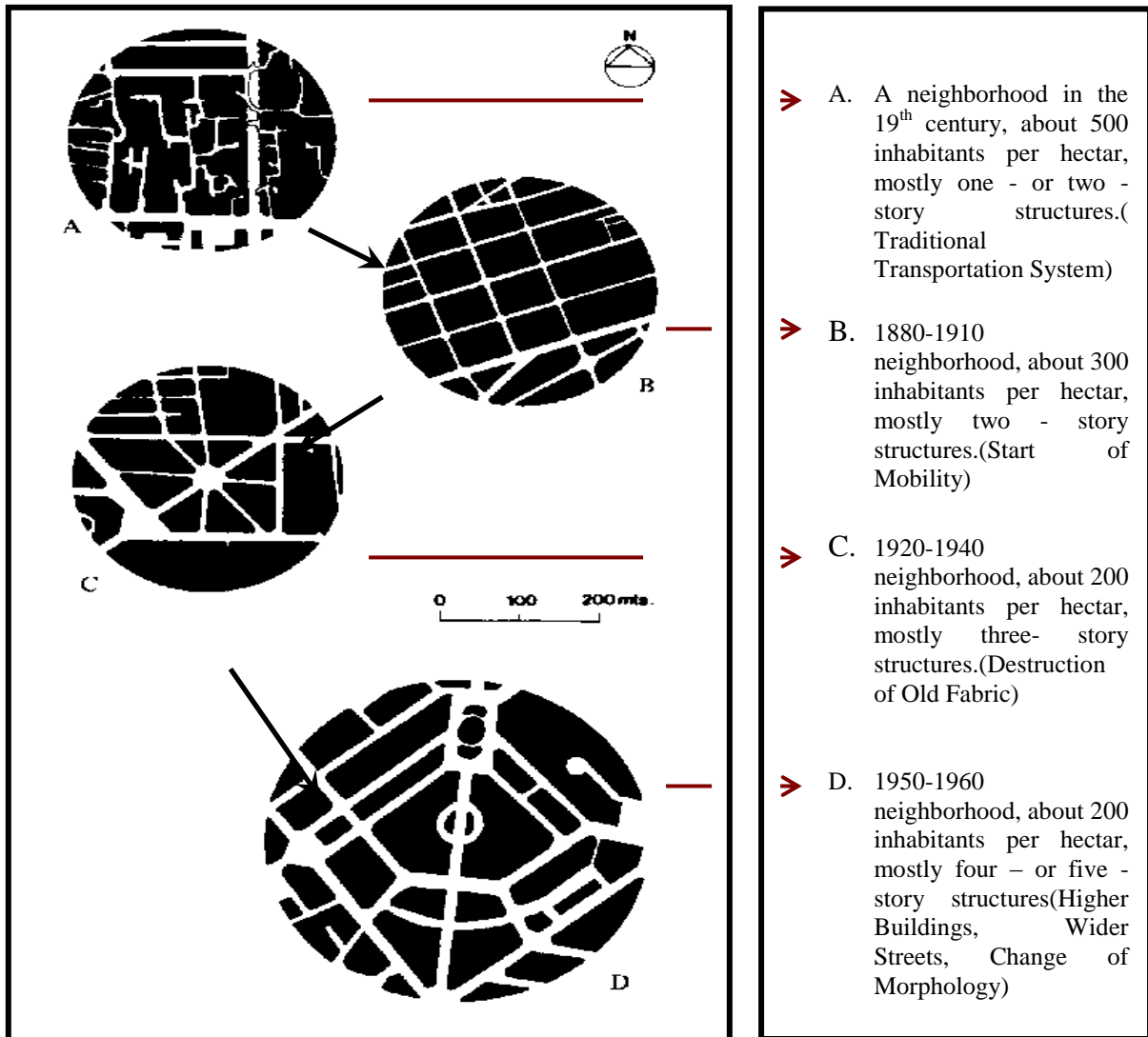


Figure (2.8): Damascus: samples of urban development showing typological and dimensional changes in the urban fabric over time.

Source: Adaptive Reuse, The Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture (1983)

5- The change of commercial and industrial activities due to use of new methods and scale of operations from craft production to mass production.

- 6- Introduction of modern facilities and services to replace traditional infrastructure that doesn't fit within the new industrialization movement.
- 7- Lack of maintenance of old buildings combined with lack of awareness and understanding of their cultural and functional value. Some of the old city residents are trying to improve their dwellings by using new materials and adding new openings and structures." They see these changes as improvement but in the process of making them they are destroying the harmony of the whole"(The Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, 1983). In fig (2.9) an example from Jenin old city shows the new materials added to the old structures such as the antenna and plastic pipes.



Figure (2.9): Jenin City: A view from the old city

Source: Researcher (1996)

- 8- Increasing decay and collapse, with no public policy to protect the old city buildings and maintain them.
- 9- Migration of the old city original inhabitants, because of the deterioration of its urban social and economical values. For example, the old city of Nablus has faced migration of its original residents due to the deterioration of the physical conditions and the deterioration of the social and economical values, and as a result new comers with relatively poor social and cultural standards occupy the vacuity. Another clear example of the immigration impact is found in Ramallah since the beginning of the twentieth century, when the first immigration to the United States occurred, many of Ramallah citizens left their houses in the old town and new inhabitants came to occupied them from Hebron area.
- 10- Planning policies and visions towards old cities, since it stands between two contradicting sides; traditional old city concepts and modern planning methods. For example: vehicles and traffic blow up the old city physical shell, whereas markets have to be supported by a supply system, which has to respond to the changed means of transportation.
- 11- Absence of Laws and regulations, since in many of the developing countries including Palestine, there is no laws or regulations that preserve the old city and organize its fabric within the modern city.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Old City Rehabilitation and Planning Theories**

### **3:1 Old city rehabilitation theories and strategies**

Old city rehabilitation concepts are a reflection of the development of historical properties preservation trends that has begun after the French revolution and the industrial revolution in the eighteenth century. The earliest attempt to produce an organized conservation effort in Europe dates in 1798 A.D., when the first committee for preservation of national monuments in France was formed as a reaction to the destruction of castles and churches during and after the French revolution in 1789 A.D.. These efforts were supported by many writers and artists in Europe since there was a clear impact of consciousness movement toward the significance of historic properties in the society.

Contemporary dialogue on conservation reached the international level in 1931 with the establishment of The Athens Charter for the Restoration of Historic Monuments which was declared in Athens.

A specific attention toward historical areas rehabilitation and revitalization was developed in the 1950s after the World War II, as a result of the progress of traditional continuity trend that has been started at the nineteenth century.

#### **3:1:1 Development of historical preservation movements**

Because of the industrial revolution in the eighteenth century, economy begins to depend on industry instead of agriculture. New social, cultural, and economical values rose up, that caused a high rate of change in European cities and towns, including the new demographic structure and concentration, combined with the accumulation of capital and with new industrial technologies.

According to Bianca (2000, P.164) city grew from a few hundred thousand to several million within a few decades. Conventional war and defense techniques had become absolute, which led to the demolition of the walled city concept. Besides, the social cleavage between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat was expressed in distinct land use pattern. The lower class and rural immigrants occupied the declining quarters of the medieval city centers or settled in industrial suburbs while the upper class started major urban redevelopment projects. New boulevards were constructed to separate the upper class district from the lower class neglected district within the medieval city, often these boulevards were cut into the historic fabric. All of that caused old city degradation and an urgent need to its preservation, so special attention was given to historic preservation, especially historic cities and historic buildings preservation.

Paris was a good example of the transformation of the European city. Victor Hugo refused the destruction of historical quarters that Paris faced 1853-1860 A.D. Due to the new urban planning project (fig 3.1), prepared by Baron Haussmann during the period 1853-1869 A.D. that included the construction of new residential areas and new streets (boulevards) instead of historical ones. In his book “Gurra ai demolitori” which means “War against Demolishers” he denied that project and rejected old quarter’s destruction.

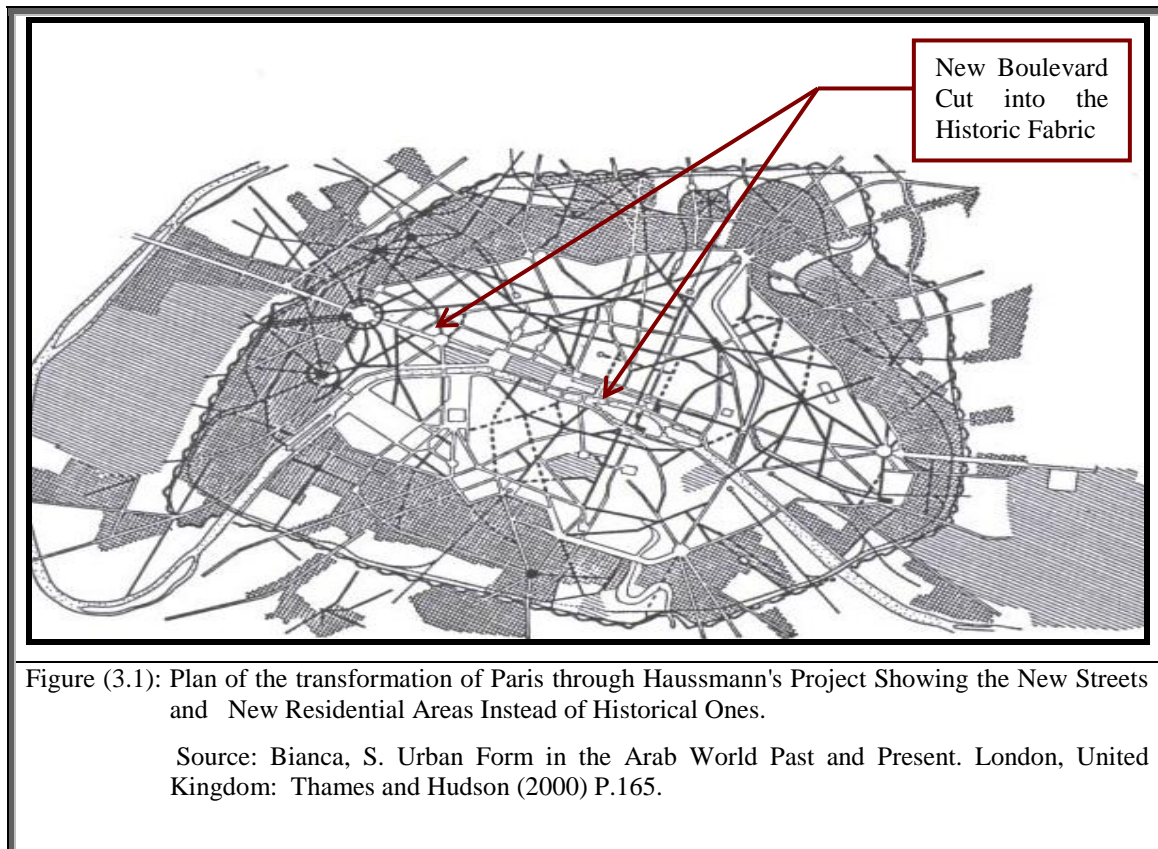
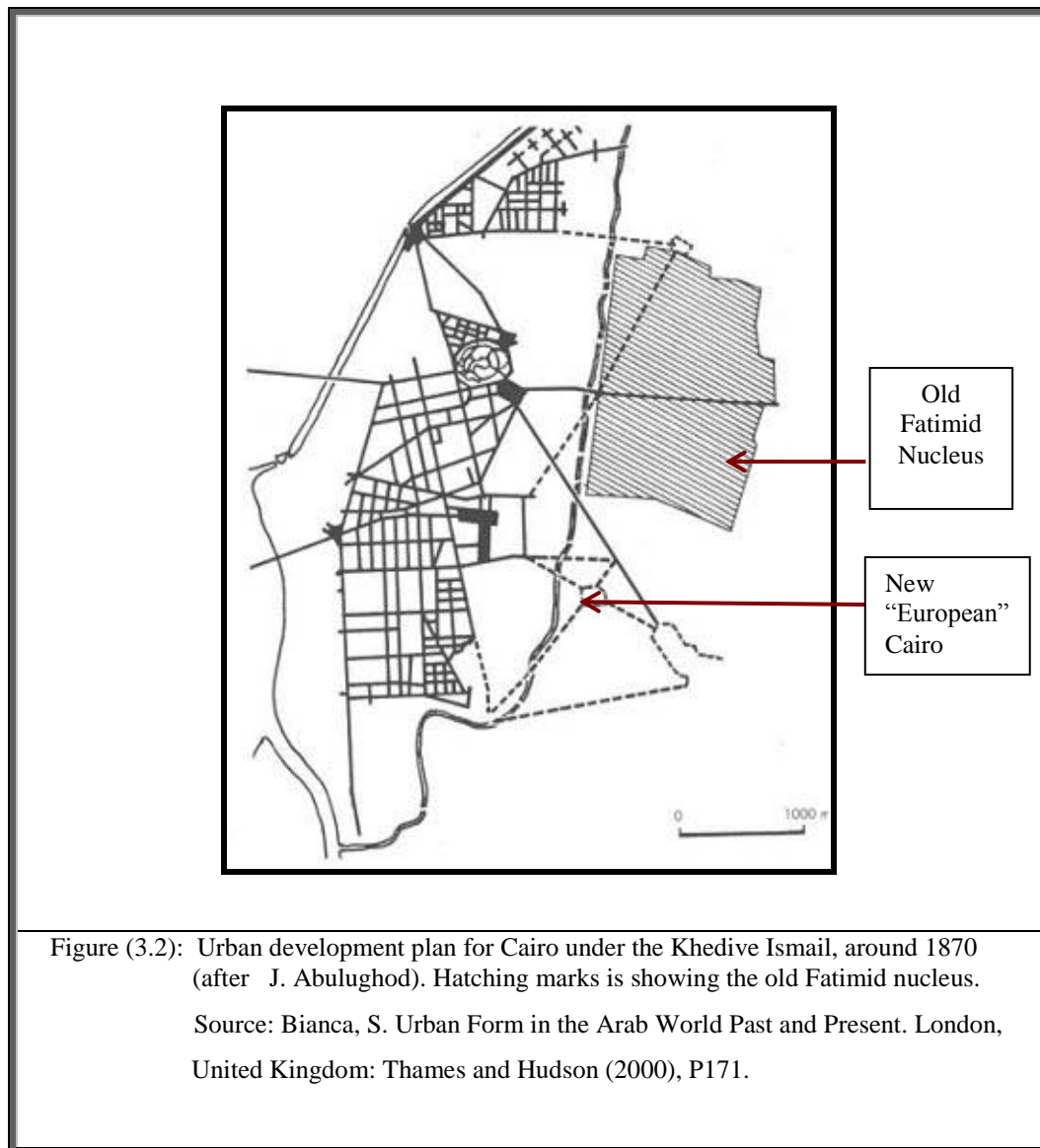


Figure (3.1): Plan of the transformation of Paris through Haussmann's Project Showing the New Streets and New Residential Areas Instead of Historical Ones.

Source: Bianca, S. Urban Form in the Arab World Past and Present. London, United Kingdom: Thames and Hudson (2000) P.165.

Western impact on the Arab world was transmitted through Ottomans without much local creativity. The most interesting example is the development project of Cairo city in 1867 A.D., when Khedive Ismail visited Paris and adopted its new transformation project and this was the origin of the "European" part of Cairo that was built southwest of the old Fatimid and Mamluk city (fig. 3.2). This scheme was a small scale replica of Hussmann's scheme for Paris with several axes extending from the new city into the old city and thus cutting the historic fabric. "It is interesting to note that a contemporary European critic -Arthur Rhone- commented rather sarcastically on this redevelopment scheme, especially concerning its impact on the historic fabric"(Bianca, 2000, P.172).



After that, the consciousness of the significance of historic properties caused a variety of different influences on conservation movement in Europe beginning with the inventive "restoration" of Viollet Le Duc. He called for more careful, discrete and scientific techniques and from conservation of isolated monuments to the consideration of the physical context, culmination in the idea of protected historic districts began to be implemented towards the mid twentieth century and gained increasing momentum during the seventies and eighties.

Viollet Le Duc, John Ruskin, Alois Riegl, and Cesare Brandi were the masters of that influences, which can be grouped under four principal headings (Jokilehto, 1999):

- 1- Monuments as memorials.
- 2- Stylistic restoration.
- 3- Modern conservation.
- 4- Traditional continuity.

These four influences have evolved practically in parallel since the nineteenth century, and have come to form an essential part of the vast scenario of current safeguarding policies and recommendations. Each of the four trends of influence should be understood as a complex assembly of different ideas and policies, and the practice can be a result of the combination of several of them.

All of that led to a major international movement toward organizing the restoration of historic monuments. The Athens Charter for the Restoration of Historic Monuments which was declared in Athens in 1931 is considered the first charter. The following seven main resolutions were adopted at this Congress and called "Carta Del Restauro":

1. International organizations for Restoration on operational and advisory levels are to be established.
2. Proposed Restoration projects are to be subjected to knowledgeable criticism to prevent mistakes which will cause loss of character and historical values to the structures.

3. Problems of preservation of historic sites are to be solved by legislation at national level for all countries.
4. Excavated sites which are not subject to immediate restoration should be reburied for protection.
5. Modern techniques and materials may be used in restoration work.
6. Historical sites are to be given strict custodial protection.
7. Attention should be given to the protection of areas surrounding historic sites.

The second international charter was Venice charter when the Second International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments, was held at Venice in 1964. This charter stated that: it is essential the principles guiding the preservation and restoration of ancient buildings should be agreed and be laid down on an international basis, with each country being responsible for applying the plan within the framework of its own culture and traditions. These charters (Athens and Venice) were concentrated on the restoration of monuments but there were no mention for the conservation of the historical cities which started to take place after the World War II, during the 1950's.

### **3:1:2 Trends in Practice**

There is a gap between theoretical intent and practical execution and there is no receipt for a successful intervention. Since there are diverse influences, which certainly add to the difficulty of interpreting conservation policies in practice,

international charters and recommendations put the elementary basics and concepts for any intervention operation.

Since referring to practice there is often confusion when concepts are used beyond their specifically defined limits, attempts have been made to define terms in international charters and recommendations (e.g. UNESCO, ICOMOS, the Council of Europe). Other difficulties are also caused due to differences between languages, countries and between the various disciplines. For example, according to Wayne O. Attoe (1979), "the term historic preservation is typically used in United States as an umbrella expression encompassing a wide variety of strategies for dealing with existing buildings and urban settings, while in Britain conservation is the umbrella term and historic preservation refers more specifically to historic significant buildings". An additional example the use of the term authenticity , since authenticity is a basic concept in modern conservation but using the word in different contexts can cause confusion, so some conservation specialists tend to look for other expressions to avoid using the word authentic, such as identity or integrity.

Intervention strategies range from cyclic or routine maintenance to varying degrees of consolidation, reinforcement, restoration, preservation, protection, rehabilitation and revitalization. Definitions of the most commonly used terms are coated from Feilden et al (1998):

1- Protection:

Protection is understood in legal terms as the action required providing the conditions for a monument, site or historic area to survive.

2- Preservation:

Preservation aims to take the measures necessary to keep the site in its existing state.

3- Conservation:

Conservation implies keeping in safety or preserving the existing state of a heritage resource from destruction or change, (The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary).

4- Consolidation:

Consolidation is the physical addition or application of adhesive or supportive materials to the actual fabric of the cultural property in order to ensure its continued durability or structural integrity.

5- Restoration:

Restoration has had several meanings in the past, linguistically to restore means:" to bring back to the original state" (Ibid).So the most commonly accepted definition was to return to an object its lost form or appearance.

Today, restoration has been given a specific definition as expressed in articles 9-13 of the Venice charter. The aim of restoration is not only to conserve the integrity of the resource, but also to reveal its cultural values and to improve the legibility of its original design.

6- Reconstruction:

Reconstruction means building a new (Ibid).The term may be used in reference to work executed, using modern or old material, or both with the aim of rebuilding dismembered or destroyed elements or parts of them.

7- Revitalization:

Revitalization means the planning measures that are necessary to improve the social and economic activities of an historic area or an historic town, which has lost its original functional vitality, and as a consequence historic buildings and urban spaces, has become redundant and dilapidated. The aim of revitalization shall be an appropriate balance between conservation and development.

#### 8- Rehabilitation:

Rehabilitation means the physical improvements that are necessary in order to provide an appropriate use to an empty or inappropriately utilized structure. Rehabilitation shall always involve a use as close as possible to the original function so as to ensure a minimum intervention and minimum loss of cultural values, this also makes sense economically.

Thus the revitalization is the planning measures that are essential to improve the social and economic activities of an historic area, and the revitalization process may require the rehabilitation of a large number of buildings. Attoe (1979) explains that the theory behind rehabbing acknowledges that standards of living and patterns of housing, commerce, and work change, and therefore, buildings must be adapted to the society. According to this, rehabilitation is a major feature in planning the future of historic urban area, also it involves other intervention strategies, i.e. to reuse a building you have to protect it, preserve its fabric, conserve its structural elements, consolidate its stones, reconstruct some of its parts, and restore the others. So the term rehabilitation will be used in this study as an umbrella term for different physical intervention strategies.

But it is so different when dealing with a city rather than dealing with a building or a complex. It isn't enough to rehabilitate the old structures in order to rise up and bring life to the old city. Do its' inhabitants just need a suitable place to live in? Or what they really need is: suitable environments to live, work, study, recreate and raise children in as others. So how to reach such an integrated policy that provides the inhabitants needs and rehabilitate the old city fabric?

Kocabaş (2004) stated that conservation- an umbrella expression used in Britain to encompass wide variety of strategies for dealing with buildings and urban settings- versus development is a longstanding debate in both academic and professional literature. Determining the appropriate balance between conservation and development is a key issue now as it has been throughout the history of modern planning.

Moreover, Kocabaş (2000a) argued that an evaluation of the impact of conservation planning should assess outcomes against three objectives:

- Physically: is the historic built environment preserved?
- Socially: have the needs of existing residents been met during the process of upgrading the quality of the historic built environment?
- Economically: is the conservation economically viable?

Also determining the relation between modernity and tradition is so important, in order to decide what potentials do the old city has, and how could it be contemporary by its livability.

### **3:2 Old City Planning Theories**

Any planning process affecting old cities must imply cultural heritage conservation requirements side by side with the town planning objectives, which is called in some references such as Feilden et al (1998) "integrated conservation". That involves the conservation and rehabilitation of historic fabric and the provision of appropriate public services that apply the citizens' needs and the cultural and historical values of the area.

Many of the old cities planning theories were developed by western specialists and deal with the western model of life. Arab old cities weren't the core of these studies and theories. While it can't be denied that the Arab traditional concepts are different from the modern western planning methods, since they have different concepts of development, economy, community structures and institutions, planning, land use, circulation, urban form, architectural form and aesthetics.

As Bianca (2000) explained, the physical development of most Arab old cities over the past 50 – 80 years was predicated on the approach chosen by the colonial powers in setting their new towns, where two extreme solutions were found:

- 1- Superimposing the new city on the old historic fabric by cutting out new roads and sites for major public buildings such as Baghdad, Cairo, and Nablus.
  
- 2- Setting up new colonial cities on virgin land, without interface with the old fabric such as Jerusalem and Sfax.

A median solution was developed by French colonial, which is to create twin or parallel cities allowing them to co –exist at a little distance, such as Fez, Aleppo and Tunis. This kind of solution was temporary for a period of time while the population increase later pushed toward joining the two centers.

These different approaches caused many obstacles and threats to the Arab old city, and open the door for discussing the realistic solutions to absorb the changes that took place in the old Arab city and to meet the modernity needs. So there is a need to follow up planning theories that are compatible to the Arab model. Thus, the western theories must be filtrated in order to rise up with the old city as a part of the modern reality and local identity.

According to Feilden et al (1998), in the case of historic cities and towns of World heritage status, the normal urban planning techniques- such as studies of demographic trends, population movements, traffic and transport (including growth in motor-car ownership) and proposals for zoning of activities and allocation of space for new development and improved traffic circulation are often too rigid and generally inadequate.

The concept of zoning- the limiting of an area to a specific category of use- is contrary to the cultural richness and social diversity of a thriving historic centre. Statistics based on zoning will not provide sufficiently accurate information on specific properties. There is also a risk in the application of standards without due consideration of the existing historic reality, which could result in the destruction of the existing scale and urban texture.

Feilden et al (1998) added that the social problem in historic areas will require full study using methodologies appropriate to the local conditions. The pattern of ownership and effect of the State Party's tradition and legal practices require careful consideration.

### **3:2:1 Clashes between Modernity and Tradition**

It would be valuable to discuss the clashes between modernity and tradition in order to decide what is modern and what is traditional and how it can be transformed to a modern element. According to Fathy (1992), at any stage of a city's growth we should be able to see if any one element is lagging behind the others in development, if we find such an element this leads us to the conclusion that there are two kinds of anachronism. One is the visible and flagrant anachronism about which there is no doubt and no argument. The other seems to be anachronistic, but proves to be contemporary from the view point of time. As an example Cairo, which is a group of juxtaposed administrative districts without a centre giving that conceptual unity which might make the whole something more than the sum of its parts. In fact, all the juxtaposition ads are increased congestion, discomfort in dwelling, circulation and function, premature obsolescence of buildings and unstable land values caused by the faulty configuration and lack of provision in the design for a growing unity of concept.

So city like Cairo has grown over a long period and carry the weight of its past with it. Fathy (1992) added the past is past and we cannot change it, therefore it is not anachronistic in this sense of the world. But once we come to improve the city, we accept the responsibility for the future, if we try to renew the city plot by plot, we

shall not have enough freedom to make it contemporary, where as if we take it sector by sector, we immediately have the opportunity of making the sector contemporary. If we fall short, then our work will be anachronistic in both ways, and justly condemned. However, even if we succeed in satisfying the conditions of contemporaneity within the sector, we shall be left with the whole city, with all of its problems. Thus it will take a considerable time from the moment when a comprehensive and dynamic town-plan is adopted to make the city wholly contemporary.

But at the same time making the old city contemporary doesn't mean neglecting its identity. Lynch (1981) defines identity as "the extent to which a person can recognize or recall a place as being distinct from other places". Like individuals, cities should have character and distinctions. The identity of city is related to the neighborhood and public urban space. The neighborhood identity grows from the continuous relationship between the place and its residents, the neighborhood is expected to become its residents' cultural creation and at the same time a means for the preservation of the cultural continuity of the city. From a distance, we see a city as a skyline, the shapes are most of what we see and provide much of the information by which we characterize the locale. As the public domain extends from the streets, square, and parks of a town or city into the buildings which enclose them, it makes the most important part of our towns and cities (Madanipour, 1996). Accordingly, the quality of urban public spaces, mainly that of the street and the square, has a significant role in making the identity of a city.

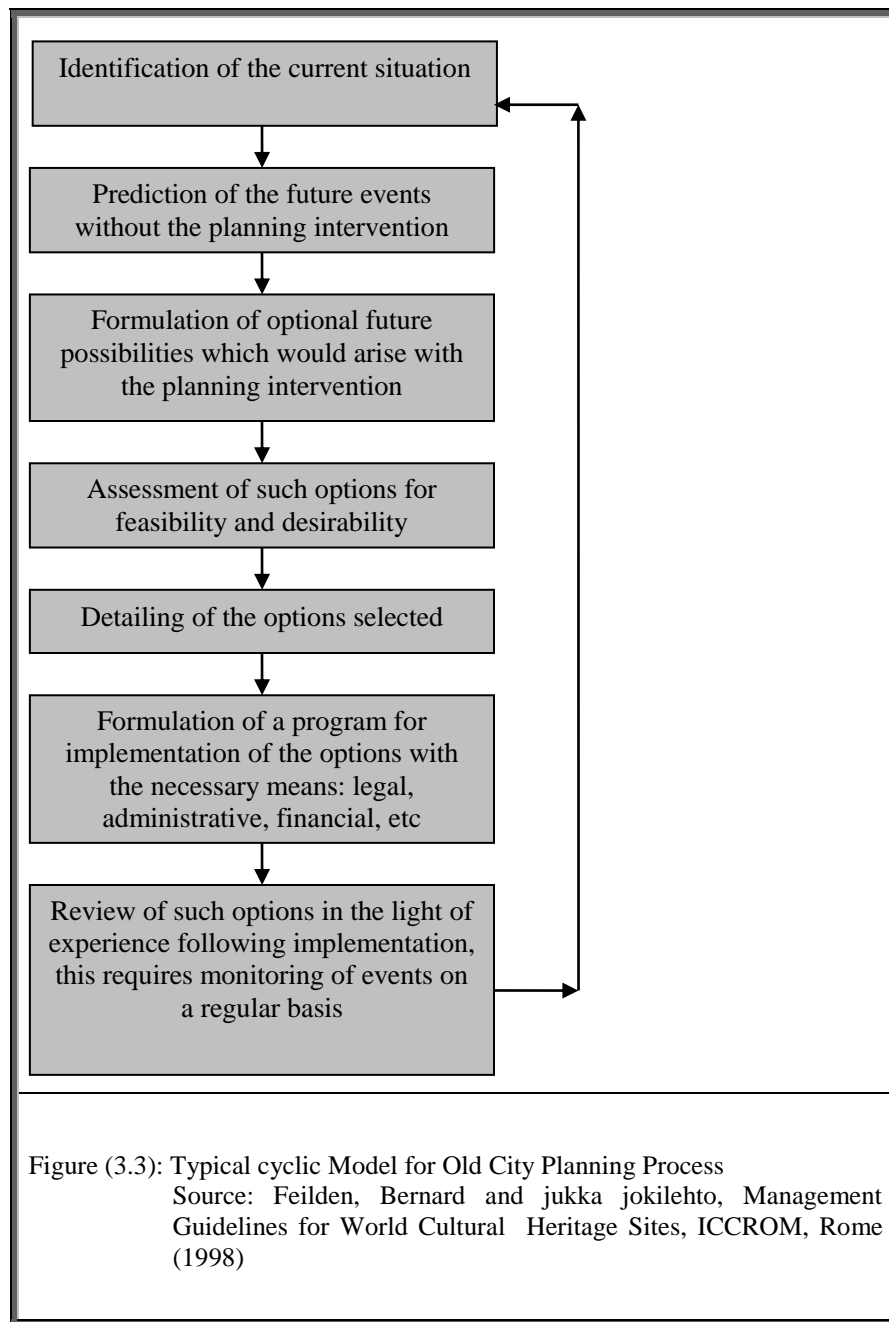
Feilden et al (1998) explained, in world heritage towns, the preservation of the fabric by beneficial use is the prime objective. On an urban scale, conservation involves not only cultural and historic values but also their inherent economic and social implications. The historic town or city raises conservation problems stemming from the political and economic approach rather than from any physical aspect. The town is the product of several historical periods and of specific social, cultural, anthropological, geographical and economic relationships.

The historic centre is a constituent of a larger whole and should be studied as part of the present-day dynamic reality, but not as a static object of contemplation and tourist attraction. Our problem today is how to reach wise control of the continuing wealth that can be generated in a town where private uses at times have to be changed to collective ones.

### **3:2:2 Old City Planning Methodologies**

In old cities planning studies, it is essential to identify objectives of the planning process before developing solutions, and it is clear that the main goal is to safeguard the old city by preserving its livability.

According to Feilden et al (1998), a cyclic model for town planning process has been adopted throughout the world, which starts with the identification of the current situation and ends by monitoring the implemented solution in order to preserve the sustainability of the planning process and returns again for the identification stage in any problematic case. Thus with some differences from one case to another this model involves Figure (3.3):



### 3:2:3 Urban Regeneration

To manage the physical and historical aspects in collaboration with the socio – economical and modernity aspects of the old city, urban regeneration has become an

important concern in urban planning and design studies from the economic, cultural, technological and physical points of view. According to Kormaz (1997), by regenerate, we mean re-investment in the social, economic, cultural and physical structure of existing built areas. He added that regeneration of a city may not mean just attempting to revitalize urban areas for serving needs and interests in urban structure, but also means the management and maintaining of the existing built areas.

To convince people of living in the old city, an urban regeneration strategy will be useful, since according to Kormaz (1997), Couch (1990) describes it as, "seeking to bring back investment, employment and consumption, and enhance the quality of life within urban areas", and according to Cockburn(1996) Leeds development corporation defines urban regeneration as: "The economic, physical and social revitalization of areas have seen a withdrawal of investment, a deterioration of the physical fabric and a loss of community". So the regeneration of an historic area may require the rehabilitation of a large number of typical dwellings as well as of obsolete buildings such as redundant churches, convents, and warehouses.

Urban regeneration as an aspect of urban planning occurs at a variety of scales and in varied conditions, since it is not always to talk about of urban regeneration in relation to historical neighborhoods. Towns, villages, districts streetscapes, skylines, and single buildings are also significant environments and ingredients of urban regeneration projects, which aim to encourage the redevelopment of the old city and to counter the out-migration and depopulation of it.

Different cases from the Arab world should be studied and analyzed to develop a general idea, where they succeed and where they fail, and how can their experience take part in developing better solutions.

### **3:2:4 Conclusion**

According to this summarized review of the old city rehabilitation and planning theories, it is important to concentrate on developing a strategy to safeguard the old city considering its physical, social, economical aspects, and also emphasizing the old city identity by preserving its neighborhoods and public spaces diversity, thus these elements should be taken into consideration with their own specific sets of functions. So any framework for development and growth of the old city built environment must be sensitive to the local contexts and sympathetic to people's needs. If this is neglected it will be the primary reason for the lack of a long term sustainable solution to problems regarding the quality of city. According to Kocabaş (2004) more will be achieved if traditional urban conservation planning is re-conceptualized as a component of sustainable urban regeneration, which can be considered as an integrated solution that combines three main derivations: the physical, the social and the economical. Therefore it is concluded that there is an urgent need for a comprehensive and dynamic town plan that make the whole city contemporary as Fathy (1992) had mentioned.

Yet it is important here to clarify some useful notions that must be taken into considerations in the planning process in the Arab old city, since modern ways of

town planning don't fit with the Arab old city structural composition, these notions are:

- 1- A certain degree of centrality will support the attractiveness of the old center, while too high degree of centrality will burden it with tasks that its architectural fabric can not absorb, if it is to retain its specific character and qualities.
- 2- Privacy of residential units, human scale, physical and social integration, interaction between housing, markets, social facilities are essential assets of the Arab old city, which need to be carefully balanced against the advantages of better vehicular accessibility.
- 3- Encouraging the flexibility and trying to keep balance between the users' needs and the services provided.
- 4- Keeping in mind that the concept of zoning is contrary to cultural richness and social diversity.
- 5- Always relate planning to local conditions with realistic management guidelines depending on sustainable development of existing cultural resources.

# **Chapter Four**

## **Case Studies**

## 4:1 Introduction

Case study research excels at bringing us to an understanding of a complex issue or object, extending experience or adding strength to what is already known through previous research. Case studies emphasize detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their relationships. Researchers have used the case study research method for many years across a variety of disciplines. Social scientists, in particular, have made wide use of this qualitative research method to examine contemporary real-life situations and provide the basis for the application of ideas and extension of methods. Yin (1984, p. 23) defines the case study research method as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used.

In this chapter two case studies will be illustrated: urban regeneration in the old city of Aleppo / Syria and Al- Kairouan rehabilitation project in Tunis. Through the analysis of these two cases intends to show whether they apply or not the three derivations: physical, social and economical by answering the following questions:

- How do these projects deal with protection of the old city physical fabric in parallel to historical, social and economical factors?
- Do these projects respect the citizens' present day dynamic reality needs? and
- Do these projects succeed in safeguarding the old city livability?

## 4.2 Urban Regeneration in the Old City of Aleppo, Syria:

The Old city of Aleppo is one of the oldest continuously inhabited settlements in the world. Located at the crossroads of several trade routes from the 2nd millennium B.C. Aleppo was ruled successively by the Hittites, Assyrians, Arabs, Mongols, Mamelukes and Ottomans. Its uniqueness becomes from that it's one of the most outstanding urban monuments of the Islamic domain. Its site dominates by a steep hill dominating the city (Figure (4.1)).

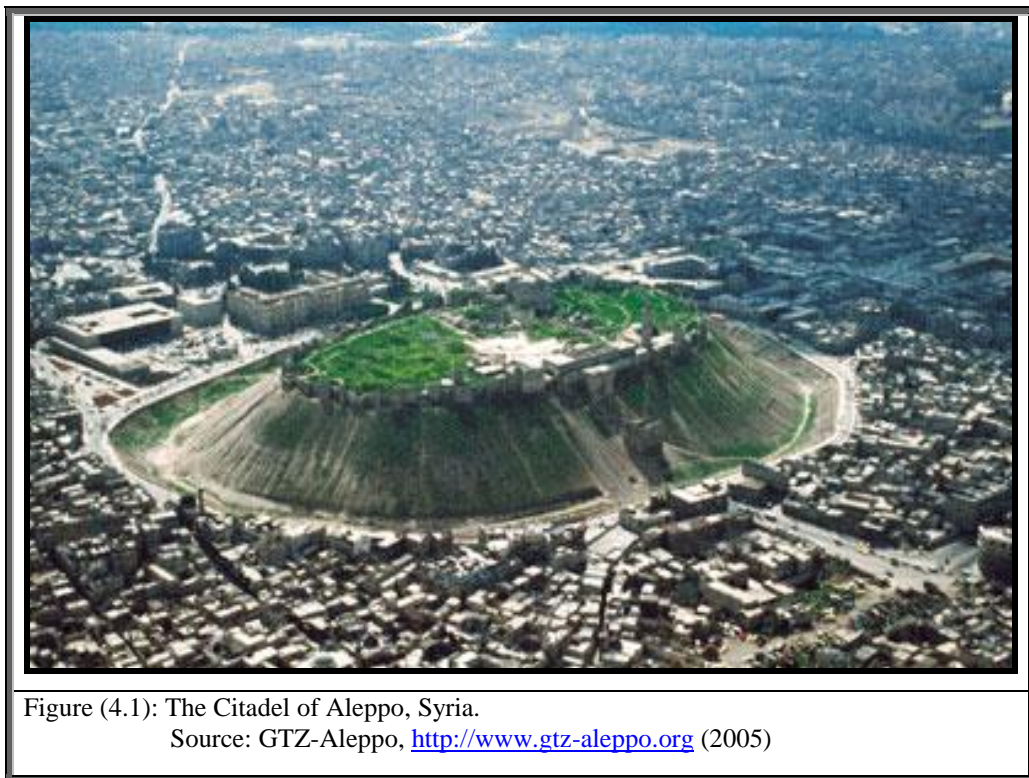


Figure (4.1): The Citadel of Aleppo, Syria.

Source: GTZ-Aleppo, <http://www.gtz-aleppo.org> (2005)

The Old City of Aleppo is a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage site, a living town of 110 thousand inhabitants residing in thousands of historical courtyard houses and an important commercial center. Now the city is a subject of an internationally recognized

rehabilitation scheme (Qudsi, 2003), and it is difficult to discuss the current project for the rehabilitation of old Aleppo without reviewing the events that lead to its initiation.

#### **4.2.1 Historical Development of Aleppo**

According to Bianca (2000, Pp.303-304) in the Roman-Hellenistic and Byzantine period, the town came to be known as Befoe. A straight main avenue linking the western gate with the foot of the citadel hill defined its structure. A large rectangular forum was attached to this avenue.

The Islamic city structure was built on a rectilinear Roman-Hellenistic framework, which since the Umayyad period was gradually transformed to the needs of the new occupants, without losing the evidence of its previous pattern especially in the central district of the walled city.

Suburbs developed from the 15th / 16th centuries onwards show the usual non-planned urban structure based on the direction of pedestrian traffic flows and location of markets. The citadel was built during the early middle ages as an outstanding example of Islamic military architecture, with a remarkable structural and decorative use of stone masonry. The domestic architecture of Aleppo perpetuated many features of Seljuk and Ayyubid architecture up to the 18th /19th centuries.

During the Ottoman period, Aleppo was an important trade center. In 1900 A.D. it included approximately 100,000 inhabitants, including the suburbs that were developed outside the main gates after 16th centuries. After the French mandate, its old rival, in terms of political and economic importance, Aleppo was overshadowed.

#### **4.2.2 Urban Development of Aleppo**

The beginnings of Aleppo new city were dated to 1868, when Ottomans established a Western style city administration in the newly constructed serial building beneath the citadel. Ottomans started developing a number of new residential districts to the northwest of the old city, which early reflected contemporary European town planning influences.

According to Bianca (2000,Pp.305-306), another urban intervention was the filling of the old moats and the creation of vehicular carriageways to the north and west of the walled city around the year 1900.This new spine became a major west-east connection between the old city and the rapidly growing new town. A north-south spine tangential to the western walls was developed; the intersection formed an important node on the north-western corner of the old city, so two cities were living side by side: the modern and the traditional. The fifties the French planner Andre Gutton proposed a somewhat utopian master plan. This project depended on constructing two highways cutting through the historical city south and north the citadel and destructing the western suburbs and replaces them by modern center. Minor elements of this project were implemented most of western suburbs gradually demolished replaced by large markets, bus terminal without the planned center.

In 1974 the Japanese planner G.Banshoya prepared a new master plan for Aleppo. This master plan followed the master plan established for Damascus. It included the idea of two high ways in north and south (Figure 4.2). Lack of fund and administrative problems prevented full implementation .The northern axis was built

only up to the citadel; in addition a perpendicular road was constructed leading to the entrance of the Umayyad mosque. The southern axis was stopped out of the old city and causing no physical damage.

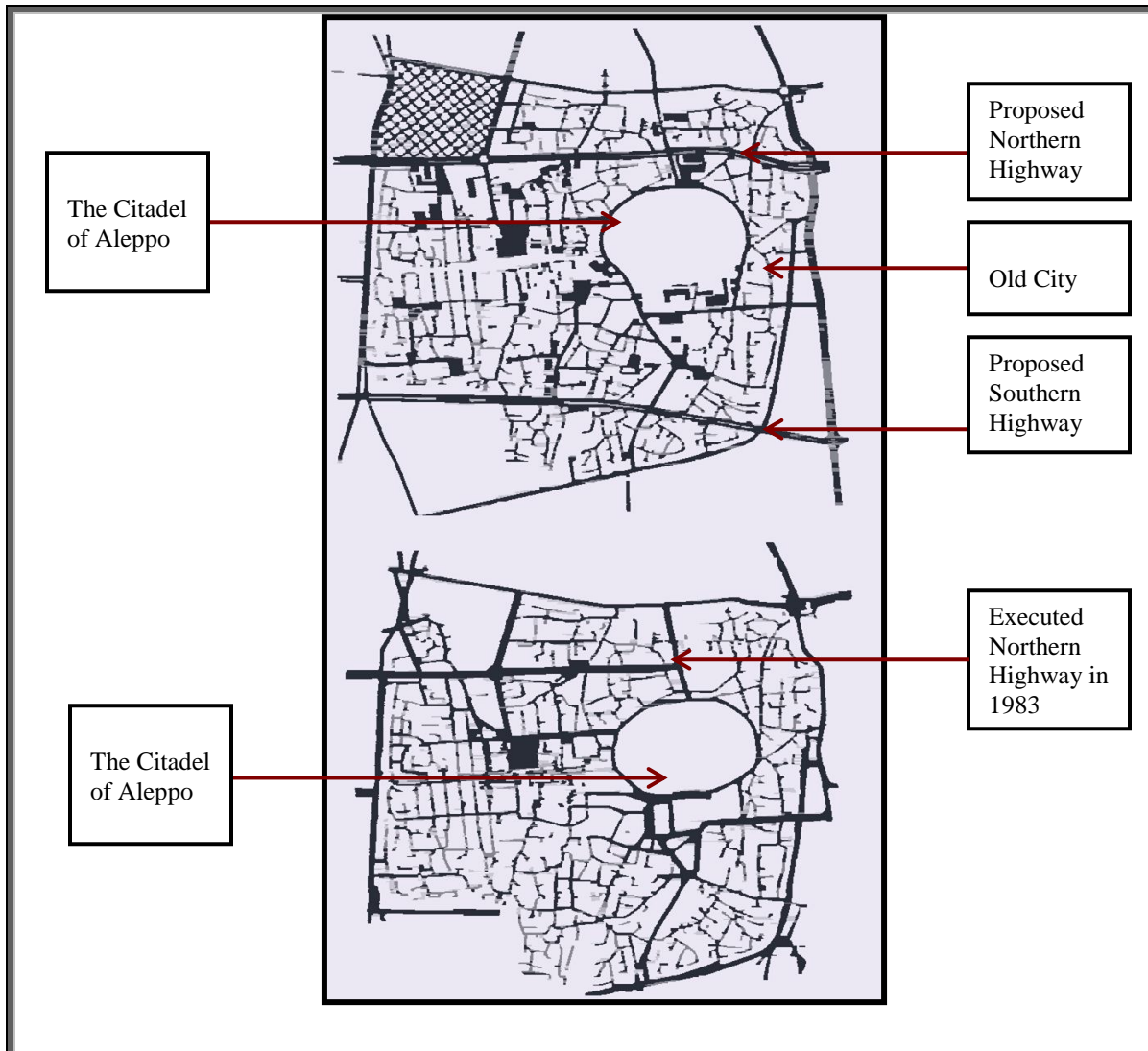
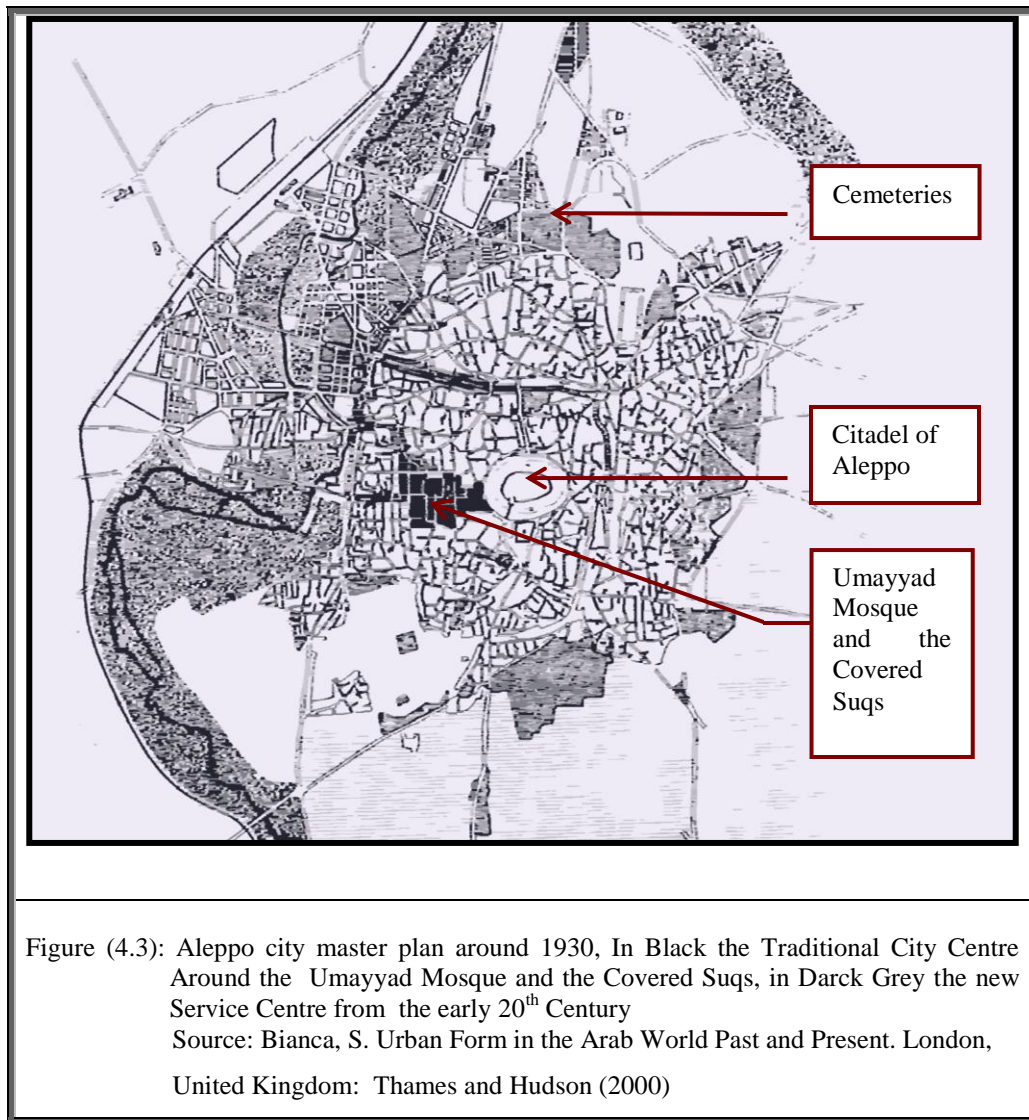


Figure (4.2): The upper is showing the proposed plan by G. Bonshaya 1974, the lower is the existing conditions in 1983 showing the new road in the north.

Source: Bianca, S. Urban Form in the Arab World Past and Present. London, United Kingdom: Thames and Hudson (2000).

Bianca (2000) explained that the execution of portions of the roads of the master plan destroyed considerable sections of the historic fabric and accelerated the exodus of its residents. The high-rise buildings that were erected along the wide development strips planned on both sides of the road channels deprived the adjacent courtyard houses of privacy, sunshine and clean air. Large sections of the remaining fabric were isolated from the rest of the old city and became subject to speedy decline (Figure 4.3). Many important houses lost their residents and became industrial workshops, warehouses or were totally abandoned to neglect and decay. Clusters of courtyard houses representing effective and coherent social living spaces were being infected with harmful commercial and industrial functions.



The 1980s witnessed a consolidation of conservation measures in all their forms. The master plan for the old city was officially abandoned. A high-rise commercial project in the northwest corner of the old city was halted even after the execution of parts of its foundations. It was then totally revised in favor of a low-density service oriented scheme. An old city office was initiated within the city administration. The historical suburbs extra-mural were included in the zones protected by registration. Old Aleppo was listed

as an UNESCO World Heritage Site. And finally a special code for restoration and rebuilding was developed and officially adopted.

The consequences of all these measures were mainly positive. Almost all destruction of the courtyard houses that constitute the fabric was halted. Public awareness of the social and cultural value of the old city increased. The city and other administrations awarded more attention to old city matters. On the negative side however the measures taken were not enough to slow down the deterioration of the overall environment of the historic fabric. The rate of the exodus of the residents continued to increase and the population decreased from over 180 thousand in the early 1950s to below 125 thousand in 1990, (Qudsi, 2003).

#### **4.2.3 Regeneration project of the old city of Aleppo**

According to (Qudsi, 2003), the need for a new formula for regeneration of old Aleppo was so fundamental. In the past, state authorities presented very little in the form of general public services. The main concern of such authorities was the provision of religious or administrative monumental structures. Although now and then every ruler or potent would restore and upgrade whole sections of the fabric, the major burden of its social and physical continuity lay on the residents. This process was clear, evolved slowly and naturally and did not require any special definition over the ages.

The pressures of “modernization” changed all that. Immediate, untested new social and economic factors were difficult to accommodate within this natural process of revitalization. The residents who could afford to leave the old city did so and this

created an economic imbalance in favor of poverty and further dilapidation of the homes and fabric. It became obvious that what came naturally before should be redefined now. The new city grew very rapidly but without the benefit of sufficient administrative and commercial outlets. The old city now served as the principal city center. This imposed great pressures on the old city in its new role. Consequently, problems of traffic congestion, pollution, the increase of industrial and commercial functions etc. added to the deterioration of the living environment within the old city.

The first move was done in 1989 when a pilot project paper, which summarizing existing conditions in the old city and advancing a scheme for rehabilitation coupled, was submitted for authorities.

The proposed project would start with a physical, social and economic survey of the historic fabric. The results would then be used for the development of a comprehensive rehabilitation scheme. Simultaneously expanded studies and physical rehabilitation of a pilot area would be studied and rehabilitated to test and support the general rehabilitation planning. Such a pilot project would then serve as models for future activities.

In summary the proposed strategy was based on the following (Qudsi, 2003):

- Comprehensive planning,
- Pilot project detailed planning with execution,
- Resident and user participation.

The paper received the approval of the city of Aleppo and the old city committee. Adli Qudsi as a member of the old city committee was delegated to approach different international sources for support and participation. Initial contacts with the

German government (BMZ) were made. The same paper was presented to officials in the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development in Kuwait who showed great interest and willingness to consider a grant. The Syrian Government presented the official requests and both the German government and the Arab Fund responded favorably. So the project was started in 1992, and the city of Aleppo created a special section within its technical directorate to implement the project.

#### **4.2.3.1 Project Goals and Methodology**

The overall goal of the project was set as: “Preserve the valuable and unique fabric of the Old city and slow down the deterioration of its residential zones”.

Realizing that isolated measures are not effective enough, the integrated approach of simultaneous planning, implementation and evaluation is adopted as a basic policy. The principal elements of this approach are (Qudsi, 2003):

1. Take immediate steps to address the urgent needs of the inhabitants such as emergency home repair for the lower income families and commence restoration of dilapidated public infrastructure. The residents will take the process seriously and become more willing to participate.
2. Commence a rehabilitation study based on a physical, social and economic survey to create a land use plan and a development scheme. Set the priorities for implementation based on necessity, availability of funds and support by the public and private sectors of the economy.
3. Suggest an institutional setup with a good measure of independence capable of taking charge of all municipal matters and development in the

Old City. Upgrade the rules and regulations of administration and train the necessary staff towards sustainability.

4. Seek the involvement of all the relevant local and international institutions and expand the sources of funding.
5. Start of the implementation during the planning stage and evaluate results to adapt the ongoing planning process accordingly.

Consequently, these principal elements don't contain any mention for the modern city or relation between the old and modern centers. While a comprehensive town plan is essential to make the whole city contemporary.

#### **4.2.3.2 Rehabilitation Process Objectives**

In general, the city of Aleppo has been committed to planning and motivated to act. However, the given time span limited financial resources and most importantly, the ongoing development trend that have to be considered. The overall objective is not to swim against the mainstream i.e. the development trend, but to try to alter its course and harness the energy for change towards the rehabilitation of the old city. Within the given overall environment the sub-objectives are stated as follows (Qudsi, 2003):

The Comprehensive Leitmotif is: Change and Preservation.

<b>The Comprehensive Leitmotif</b>	
<b>a-Change</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To upgrade the living conditions of the Old Cities Citizens where deteriorated.</li> </ul>
<b>b-Preservation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To preserve the social variety and economic diversity where valuable.</li> </ul>

Strategic Elements: Planning Framework and Human activity.

<b>Strategic Elements</b>	
<b>a- Planning Framework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish an institutional and financial framework for the rehabilitation.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a new Development Plan.</li> </ul>
<b>b- Human Activity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare and implement Action Area Plans for rehabilitation measures.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mobilize inhabitants to share the rehabilitation efforts.</li> </ul>

Central Functions: World Heritage and Key to Syrian Culture.

<b>Central Functions</b>	
<b>a- World Heritage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safeguard the Old City's urban fabric at international standards.</li> </ul>
<b>b- Syrian Culture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the Old City's role as a national and world cultural center.</li> </ul>

Planning Principles: Planning and Implementation

The old city's planning approach combines the 'top-down principle' with the 'bottom-up principle'. The existing setting is shown in the following figure:

<b>PLANNING PRINCIPAL</b>	<b>LEVEL</b>	<b>REALIZING PRINCIPAL</b>
<b>TOP DOWN</b>		
	<b>NATION</b>	<b>BUDGET</b>
<b>MASTER PLAN</b>	<b>CITY</b>	<b>INTERNATIONAL. FUNDS</b>
<b>DEVELOPMENT PLAN</b>	<b>OLD CITY</b>	<b>EMERGENCY FUND</b>
<b>ACTION AREA PLANS</b>	<b>LOCAL</b>	<b>INFRASTRUCTURE FUND</b>
<b>ACTION PROJECTS</b>	<b>LOCAL</b>	<b>REHABILITATION FUND</b>
		<b>ACTION PROJECTS</b>
		<b>BOTTOM UP</b>

Figure (4.4): Planning and Implementation Scheme

Source: Qudsi, A. (2003), Urban Regeneration in the Old City of Aleppo, Syria, pap – the coast center, <http://www.pap-thecoastcentre.org> (2005)

#### Institution and Organization: Sustainability and Lean Administration

<b>Institution and Organization</b>	
<b>a- Sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish an independent supervisory board at international level.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create an independent rehabilitation body.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish and manage own budget.</li> </ul>
<b>b- Lean administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organize an effective Substructure based on subsidiary principles.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specify tasks to be carried out through private bureaus (Out- sourcing).</li> </ul>

After 10 years of the beginning of this project the evaluation of these objectives leads to:

1. These objectives didn't include the creation of rehabilitation and infill standards in different sections of the old city, according to its historical and cultural value.
2. Also these objectives didn't include any mention for maintenance program to provide sustainability for the project.
3. According to the point included in strategic elements that explains the mobilizing of inhabitants to share the rehabilitation, realistic execution prove that inhabitants' participation failed.
4. According to sustainability point that aims to create an independent rehabilitation body and establish their own budget, Syrian laws and governmental bureaucracy prevented their success.

#### **4.2.3.3 Economic Development**

Of course the ultimate guarantee that the Old city will be completely rehabilitated and revitalized is to insure that the resident are economically capable and interested in taking over such a process. It is also necessary to create the atmosphere for investors, users and institutions to participate in this process towards achieving economic gains.

The Development Plan laid out objectives and strategies for achieving such goals (Qudsi, 2003):

These objectives are directed to modernize the city's business and to stabilize the city's function as a center for jobs at all levels of quality. In general this allows

new functions to complete the city's variety of commercial and service sector activities.

In more details the objectives are:

1. Identify stable business, which contributes positively to the Old City's financial recovery and redevelopment.
2. Analyze and define business, which require space outside the Old City and should be relocated.
3. Develop new professional opportunities for the tourist industry.
4. Establish adequate indirect measures (infrastructure) and direct tools to encourage economic growth according to realistic spatial and economic objectives.
5. Elaborate an overall Subject Plan 'Urban Economy' which can give detailed reasons for adequate measures and tools.

The following strategies are of extremely preliminary nature, since the Subject Plan Urban Economy and information on financial demand and budget requirements according to the city's capacity are not yet available. Under this pre-condition, the following strategies have to be implemented:

#### **A. Indirect Measures of Influence**

The main shortages and bottlenecks are related to commercial infrastructure. State of the art economic activities have to be supported through public infrastructure provision of:

- a:1 Adequate parking space in acceptable distance from shops and businesses.
- a: 2 Sufficient public services (integrated solid waste and street cleaning system) to ensure clean environment along the main business axes.
- a:3 Links to the Internet and other information services through “better communication net.
- a: 4 Adequate zoning for commercial activities inside and outside the Old City.
- a: 5 A Business Center and “Incubation Center” to support four commercial activities:
- Advanced information management and information broking.
  - Career guidance and help in starting business for young entrepreneurs.
  - Financial aid consultancy.
  - A market study offer for specific groups of entrepreneurs or businesses.

The Center shall be established in one or two Khans of the Old City.

## **B. Direct Measures of Influence**

It should be clear, that soft 'Mini-Loans' are not disbursed in order to influence the investment decisions of entrepreneurs. Since the loans have to be paid back, the market forces are not intensively touched. But for a specific time,

the investment decisions can be stimulated with concern to the time of decision and the location of the investment.

Soft loans shall be provided for:

- b: 1 Environmental protection measures.
- b: 2 Relocation of disruptive commercial activities.
- b: 3 Market and feasibility studies.
- b: 4 Young entrepreneurs 'Incubation function'.
- b: 5 Women in job activities.

These strategies didn't deal with tax reductions or reductions of other costs due to public sector since they are not of temporary nature. So far no business funds have been advanced by the Project, and the plan urban economy is not ready.

#### **4.2.3.4 Participation**

However there was no accepted mechanism in the City administration and past experiences for such participation. The Development Plan defined the process of and laid out a system for participation. This system could become a guideline for similar processes in planning and implementation for projects throughout the whole city and possibly other locals in Syria in the future. The participatory need's assessment meetings work with the residents to set priorities and insure the relevance of the provided social services to the actual needs of the community. The development Plan characterized target groups and the participation activities as follows:

- A. Primary target groups are those women and men who live or work. The ‘residential’ primary target groups are of primary concern to the project because the quality of the living environment in the Old City is on the decline as the wealthier segments of the original population of the Old City moved out. The business primary target groups that are the economically active are those working or employing staff. These target groups are on the increase in the Old City.
- B. The secondary target groups are the institutions and organizations that have access to or represent the primary target groups, such as the Women's Union, the Chamber of Commerce, and the neighborhood committees.
- C. Tertiary target group are the administrative institutions that are involved in implementing planning at action area- and development plan level form.

The current procedures of participation in urban planning can be illustrated as follows:

Currently law fixes participation for purposes of urban planning. Thereby, the plan is announced in the newspaper and opened to the public for one month at the City Hall. Basically, this is a process to inform the beneficiaries on the plan.

The Project carried out several informational meetings with citizens in Action Area 1 and organized a great number of meetings with various institutions. The lessons learned are:

- The citizens prefer to have individual meetings in their own houses.
- The institutions want to get involved if something is planned and are ready for implementation.

- The tertiary target groups are willing to cooperate throughout the whole planning process. However, the subject must be defined precisely and must be of concrete and 'hands on' character.

In general, an early stage and intensive participation and/or integration into a planning process as a whole are not yet fully experienced.

Thus, in all Action Areas and at Old City level the Project for the Rehabilitation of the Old City of Aleppo has adapted its strategy to the above mentioned reality:

- The primary target groups: participation takes place at the end of the planning process at a stage not far from any kind of (Plan) implementation.
- The primary target groups are involved mainly at individual level or at small group level. The groups are very often formed and initiated by the Project. They vary and differ according to the purpose of the participatory action.
- A more intensive participation takes place with the secondary target groups (institutions).
- The most intensive participation takes place with the tertiary target group. Due to the lack of 'bottom up' planning process in Syria, the cooperation with this target group is actually the sole and most effective kind of participation.

It can also be noted that the method in planning which was inherited from the French period does not facilitate the adoption of inhabitants' participation in the planning process.

The project developed strategy for participation as follows:

- Participation in the rehabilitation process of the Old City is meaningful in the fields of planning, monitoring and also during implementation processes.
- The areas for participation are the Action Areas. There, the primary target groups should be involved in the planning process of the detailed urban plan and regularly informed on implementation processes.

Participation should be introduced at the following levels:

1. Personal level by opening local project offices and conducting house visits to give individuals the chance to address project implementers directly (finished in Action Area 1)
2. Action set level, where groups are prepared to enter into a dialogue with the project staff for detailed planning and monitoring purposes for specific projects,
3. The level of the entire action area for general planning.

This kind of participation strategy is new here. Therefore, awareness among the secondary and tertiary target groups concerning the value of participation has to be raised through public awareness campaigns.

#### **4.2.3.5 Institutional Setup**

On the institutional side the City created a special administration for the project directly related to the Mayor and his Executive Committee to handle almost all the municipal affairs of the Old City including the Project. This move dramatically decreased the bureaucracy .Training took place in the project by the

international and the experienced local experts. The objectives and goals set by Development Plan are aiming for sustainability in administration and funding for the project. They are articulated as follows (Qudsi, 2003):

- Create an independent rehabilitation management institution.
- Integrate all 'committees' responsible for permissions.
- Integrate in all committees, representatives of the Syndicate of Syrian Engineers and residents.
- Provide the institution with sufficient funds and a separate budget.
- Supply the management institution with the necessary full time trained professionals.
- Assign independent local and international experts for special jobs.
- Locate the Institutions offices in the middle of the Old City.
- Supply the offices with adequate and sufficient technical equipment.
- Build adequate departments for effective job fulfillment.
- Establish an independent supervisory board at international level.

Further aims are to:

- Define responsibilities of the institution and the overall administrative setting, and specify tasks to be carried out through private offices. Formalize approval procedures for the Development, Subject and Local Plans.

- Besides that, the Project and its Development Plan have produced strategies for dealing with many other problems and implemented some of their aspects such as:
  - Protection of Historical Architectural heritage
  - Land-Use
  - Traffic
  - Environment.

#### **4.2.4 Conclusion**

Not all is as well as it sounds. There are still many problems and difficulties to be surmounted. The most important thing in such a project is how to integrate the old center with the new center which is not clear in planning neither in economy development and participation part nor by reviewing the development plan this aspect is still absent other major aspects that need attention and improvement are:

- A better and more independent organizational set up must be adopted, in order to decrease bureaucracy and provide project sustainability.
- Improving the planning law is a necessity to activate the role of participation of citizens in rehabilitation process.
- Participation should be intensified and institutionalized specially in the primary group level.
- Preparing the plan urban economy is so important for the success of the project.

- Awareness campaigns on city and country levels should be widened and increased on the levels of schools, universities, public and private institutions and the media.
- Funding of course is a subject of great importance in its own right. Although the commitments so far have been substantial in relation to previous allocations but they seem miniscule in relation to the tasks at hand.
- The complete full cycle of rehabilitation will last about 40 years. Maintenance work will have to be budgeted simultaneously to insure the sustainability of the process over the long run.

### 4.3 Al- Kairouan Rehabilitation Project -Tunis

Al- Kairouan is considered as the first Arab city in Maghreb, and was founded in 670 A.D. by Uqba bin Nafi, the Arab Muslim conqueror, as a military base for Muslims. According to Al-Radi et al (1992) Al -Kairouan lies in land approximately 160 km south of Carthage on a flat and arid plateau in the center of Tunis in a key position midway between the coast threatened by the return of the Byzantine fleets and the mountains controlled by the Berbers. The city's beginnings were difficult due to Berber irredentism. The Arabs, however, never disputed the important status accorded Sidi Oqba's settlement, so it remained the chief city of Africa, the seat of the governor representing the authority of the Umayyad caliphs in Damascus and later the Abbassid caliphs in Baghdad.

Al-kairouan became the capital of the Aghlabids in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries when it was transformed into a brilliant town and center for research during the next centuries. Its prosperity dimensioned through the Fatimid period since 909 A.D. because of religious and political problems. After the 10<sup>th</sup> century, Kairouan no longer directly participated in the major events shaping world history, since Tunis had been a capital city during the Hafside dynasty (1230-1574), but it never succeeded in stripping Kairouan of its status as the holy city of the Maghreb, a position it still enjoys throughout the Islamic world.

#### 4.3.1 Urban Development of Al-Kairouan

Uqba bin Nafi planned the city depending on the following principals:

- The great mosque is one of the most important monuments in this city.

- Dar Al Imara (the ruler's residence) was founded near to the great mosque in the southern side at Uqba time.
- Uqba ordered the people to build their residences inside a border with 7.5 kilometers and every tribe or family has its own neighborhood. This was combined with planning residential structures side to side with roads, alley ways and markets to apply the citizen's needs and determine locations for Al-Dawaween (governmental administrative offices).

At the beginning building type was simple with clay as the basic building material besides some stone from the quarries in the mountains area near to Al- Kairouan. The main urban elements of the city were developed as follows:

- Walls,

Al Kairouan walls were constructed later during the Abbasids period. It took two years to be finished during the period (144-146) after al –Hijra, with a depth of 5 meters, there were seven gates for the city .The existing walls of Kairouan were built in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, roughly following the contours of the adobe walls of the 11th century foundations that are shown in (Fig 4.5).

- Markets,

During the first decade the markets were concentrated along the road that connect the great mosque with Bab Abo Al-Rabee', from east to west until 156 after al Hijra, when Yazeed bin Hatem Al –Muhlabi organized each market according to its function and specialization .He made the less pollutant markets near the great mosque and the most pollutant far from it.

- Khans and Caravans,

Al –Khanat was founded in different markets to serve the foreigners needs for a place to rest, sleep and eat.

- Al-Hammamat,

A hammam was located in every neighborhood, since public services were provided for every single quarter and concentrated near the mosque.

- Houses and residences,

Al-Kairouan houses were simple. In some cases houses exterior facades were decorated. While the rich owners add a special structure on their roofs through it openings women could watch the street. The houses were oriented toward al-qibla for religious reasons and environmental reasons as well.

- Graveyards,

Each quarter has its own graveyard out side the city walls.

- Water Basins and channels,

The water was an important element in planning the city, since it is located in a valley surrounded by mountains. Each ruler build and construct water basins the most important are the Aghlabids basins which were built in 9<sup>th</sup> century by Abu Ibrahim Ahmad, they were 15 basins with an occupancy of 57,000 m<sup>3</sup> .Also every house included a well in it to collect the rain water.



Figure (4.5): Al-Kairouan in the Fifth Century after Hijra  
 Source: National Institute of Protection, Tunis (2003)

Al –Kairouan became a true capital city, during the Aghlabid period. The Great mosque was rebuilt by the Emir Ziyadat Allah I in 836 A.D. and again in 862-863 A.D. by the Emir Abou Ibrahim Ahmad, who also carried out certain spectacular urban projects that included the basin of the Aghlabids. During this period the Aghlabids relinquished the governor’s palace and emirs had residences built several kilometers south of Kairouan at Al-Abbassiya and Raqqada in A.D..

In December 909 A.D. the Fatimid Obaid Allah achieved his victory over the Aghlabid forces .In 947-948, the third caliph, Al-Mansour founded the new city of Sabra Al-Mansouria located 1.5 km south of Al-Kairouan, it was a circular walled area of approximately 100 hectares.

Al-Ramahi (2003) explained that during the Fatimide period al-Kairouan was deteriorated economically and culturally. This left a major impact on the urban development of al-Kairouan, and its population was decreased from 100 thousands to few thousands, and it started to depend on Bedwin tribes surrounded it.

Al-Kairouan nowadays is a medina protected by walls with a network of narrow, winding streets, mosques, blind alleys and white washed buildings, imposing portals, minarets and cupolas. The building of this traditional urban town is built almost exclusively of brick, bonded by a lime and earth mortar (Figure 4.6).



Figure (4.6): Al-Kairouan Markets  
Source: National Institute of Protection, Tunis (2003)

#### **4.3.2 Rehabilitation Project of Al-Kairouan**

According to Al-Ramahi (2003) from the period 1891-1933, a number of decisions were made to register some monuments as national cultural heritage site. These monuments are: The Aghlabids Basins, The Great Mosque, Mausoleum of Sidi Sahib and the markets. This means that any change in these sites must be in reference to the specialized authority.

After the independence, the attitude toward traditional buildings was changed; and new techniques of construction and building materials were introduced. A new life style with more complicated social and economical needs was extended. So during 1960s many of Al-Kairouan old city inhabitants left their houses to modern units out side. Besides that, during 1960s some interventions started to conserve the Great Mosque, the basins, Mausoleums and some small mosques. But no attention was given to the urban fabric as a whole.

Nationally there was a serious movement toward conserving the cultural heritage, and the National Institute of Cultural Heritage was established in 1976. After that in 1977 the Association for Safeguarding Al-Kairouan City was established and the town was in a serious state of neglect. Important monuments were in imminent danger of collapsing or had been converted into makeshift houses. So an extensive restoration and rehabilitation program was initiated with important monuments taking to priority. This association was responsible to manage the financial fund for protecting the city. The major part of income was offered through the Tourists' Guiding Association. Al-Kairouan was included in the world heritage list in 1988, since it apply five criteria out of six, that are:

- It includes one of the major monuments of Islam and it is an architectural masterpiece, (The Great Mosque).
- The Great Mosque serve as a model for several other Maghreban mosques, also the mosque of the three doors is the oldest known Islamic mosque with a sculpted façade.
- Kairouan bears exceptional witness to the civilization of the first centuries of the Hijra in Africa.
- Protected by its walls, Al-Kairouan has preserved its network of winding streets and courtyard houses. This traditional architecture, having become vulnerable through the impact of socio-economic changes, constitutes a valuable heritage which must be protected in its entirety.
- Kairouan is one of the holy cities and spiritual capitals of Islam.

In 1994, a new law on cultural heritage was enacted by the Government of Tunis. The National Institute of Archeology, responsible for cultural heritage, has been transformed from a research institution to a National Institute of Protection, an agency capable of protection, management and presentation of Tunisian heritage. In 1997, a new agency was created, Cultural Heritage Improvement and Development Agency, with the objective of enhancing historic and archaeological sites for tourism development. Site and museum entry revenues were transferred from the municipalities to this agency, thus reducing involvement and ownership of local governments in cultural heritage management and decreasing local ownership and benefit. So in Al- Kairouan the revenues were increased to around one million,

400,000\$ of them was transferred for the benefit of the Association for Safeguarding of Al-Kairouan.

#### **4.3.2.1 Project Goals and Methodology**

The Kairouan project is one of a number of sites included in the cultural heritage project that was launched in 2001, and funded by the World Bank. These project objectives are (World Bank Report, 2001):

- Enhance the legal framework, develop policies, and strengthen capacity to enable efficient management of the country's cultural assets. This will include:
  - Adapting and implementing the legislation on cultural heritage (Code du Patrimoine).
  - Creating a comprehensive museum policy.
  - Strengthening the capacity of the institutions responsible for the management of the country's cultural assets through reorganization, recruitment, and training.
- Develop and market cultural products, including promotion and communication programs.
- Improve infrastructure and management at a representative sample of six archaeological and historic sites to increase their appeal and tourism potential (Al-Kairouan) is one of these sites (World Bank Report, 2001).

#### 4.3.2.2 Rehabilitation Process Objectives

The local team working in Al-Kairouan from 1977 till now developed a local policy for the rehabilitation project, this deepened on cooperation between the Association for Safeguarding Al-Kairouan and the National Institute of protection. The objectives of the rehabilitation depending on Dr.Murad Al-Ramahi the chairman of the National Institute in Al-Kairouan are:

- Restoring and conserving Al-Kairouan Monuments and rehabilitating the public buildings such as Al-Madares, Al-Maqamat, etc.
- Conserving the real estate assets in the old city and rehabilitating Al-Kairouan residential quarters. Every year 10-15 residents are rehabilitated,
- Maintaining and developing the infrastructure including (streets network, water supply, sewerage, etc.
- Conserving the traditional building techniques and crafts.

Surveys and studies of Al-Kairouan old city were conducted, to prepare a master plan that show the state of every building, also the whole city master plan was developed and the city was divided to different zones (Fig. 4.7), the old city inside the walls (UA1) and in the area surrounding the walls (UA2) were determined. A booklet of terms of references was made to organize any intervention in different zones, to conserve the old city and integrate it to the whole city. This master plan is considered the reference for any intervention.

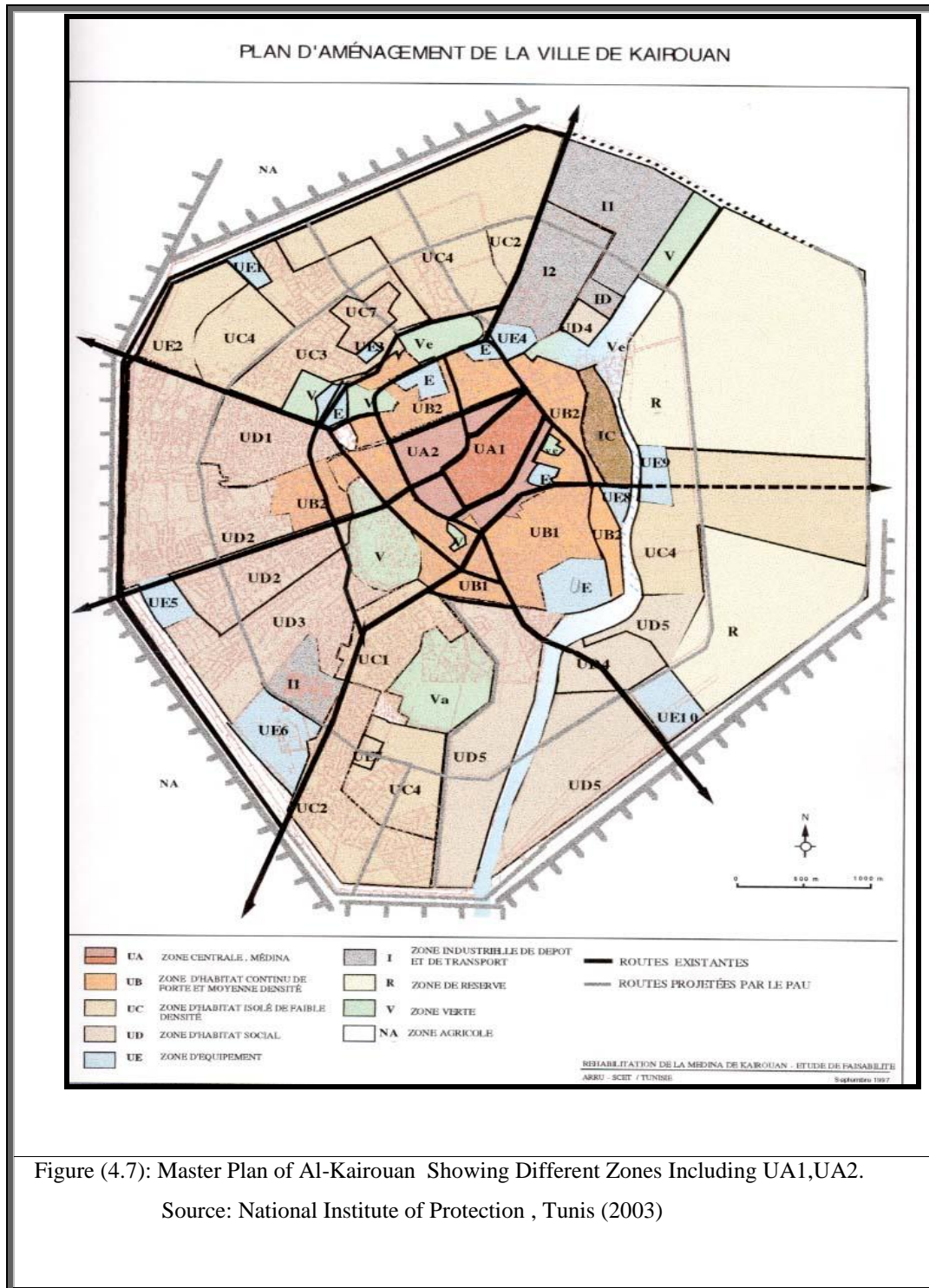


Figure (4.7): Master Plan of Al-Kairouan Showing Different Zones Including UA1,UA2.

Source: National Institute of Protection , Tunis (2003)

Accordingly, the world heritage project of Al-Kairouan was built by accomplishments of the local team which are (World Bank Report, 2001):

- Creating a presentation space for the mosque and the medina;

- Developing a circuit for visitors;
- Creating the framework for a fund to support inhabitants in improving the facades of their houses;
- Strengthening relations with local partners, the Association for Safeguarding Al-Kairouan, and professional organizations.

So according to the World Bank Report (2001) in the case of the Kairouan medina, a conservation plan is being prepared with the objective of long-term planning, mixing conservation and restoration of monuments with economic development through services and businesses, as well as management of tourism flow. This pilot case will demonstrate the need for historic city planning and could provide guidance for other medinas.

#### **4.3.2.3 Economical Development**

Tourism is Tunisia's major source of foreign exchange and an important employer, providing an estimated 70,000 jobs directly and 200,000 indirectly (World Bank Report, 2001). Success in developing cultural tourism will require improved and environmentally sustainable conservation, management, and presentation of sites and museums. But practically there are no direct actions that the cultural heritage project takes for economical development. Although through my visit to Al-Kairouan I found that the rehabilitation program intended to improve the citizen's economical conditions depending on two ways:

- Increasing the tourist's number and creating a suitable atmosphere for tourism through conserving Al-Kairouan monuments and urban fabric.

- Creating a suitable atmosphere for different economical activities in the old city that are concentrated on the touristic activities.

On site only some indirect Measures of Influence were conducted, such as providing sufficient public services (integrated solid waste and street cleaning system) to ensure clean environment. But there is no any economical development plan taking place in Al-Kairouan old city at the present, there is no studies to introduce new activities in the old city and integrating its economy with the whole city. Direct measures of influence such as loan systems weren't developed, so no business funds have been advanced by the Project.

#### **4.3.2.4 Institutional Setup**

On the institutional level, the management of the rehabilitation project depend on the co-operation of three sides: the municipality, the Association for Save Guarding Al-Kairouan and the National Institute of protection. Engineer Abd Al-Latif Al-Gheelani, the licensing director explained to us that the licensing of any project depends on:

- The law on cultural heritage, which cover the national cultural heritage sites.
- The term of references that organizes the intervention in different old city and the surrounding areas next to the wall.

The licensing process includes several steps that are:

- The file is sent to the municipality.
- The municipality transfers it to the National Institute of Protection for studying, this file, which must contain:

- The citizen request.
- The property documents.
- Full drawings for the present state and the proposed state, but without any details.

The file is studied by the Department according to the law and the term of references for the project zone, a site visit must be done then the specialized Department for licensing takes its decision. Some times further details are needed, and in some cases the request is not accepted. After that the file will sent back to the municipality and the final decision will be taken. Referring to the terms of reference mainly the licensing conditions include:

- Restriction on some kinds of land uses (industrial activities that have no relation with traditional crafts, dump sites, service stations).
- Alleyways must be conserved as they are.
- Each new structure must be connected to infrastructure (water supply and sewerage).
- Continuity of Buildings and in case of un-continuity the distance between buildings must be more than 4 meters.
- Only 80% of the parcel must be used in case of one floor, 75% in case of more than one floor.
- The highest building must not exceed 7 meters.
- New Building structures such as walls must respect the Arab Islamic style in their appearance and decoration.

It's important to add that in case of any change in these regulations there must be an approval from the Institute and the Municipality. The licensing process in case of monumental buildings must take place through higher levels such as the chairman of the National Institute of Protection and the Ministry of Cultural Heritage.

Each citizen must sign a commitment to apply the drawings in all its details. In case of any breach to this commitment the Institute must alarm the municipality, since it is the responsible body. If the municipality didn't respond, the Institute in Al-Kairouan will inform the Institute in Tunis, and then a case can be conducted if the site is included in the national cultural heritage sites.

#### **4.3.3 Conclusion**

Regarding the cultural heritage project a number of goals were achieved with cooperation of the local team, so a good presentation for the mosque is created, which help in attracting tourists and visitors. A well conserved track for visitors was developed. Inhabitants started to rehabilitate and improve their houses under the local committee supervision and a very well co-operation between different institutions in different levels was achieved.

Nevertheless the great efforts done by the local team of Al- Kairouan, it's important to mention that Al-Kairouan rehabilitation program concentrates on the physical aspect and neglects the economical and social aspects which are important for successful conservation of the old city livability. Therefore, Al-Kairouan at night time is empty and only few persons could be seen in its streets. So preparing the plan

urban economy is so important for the success of the project. Participation should be intensified and institutionalized specially through the old city citizens because they are the primary target group of the process. All of that leads us to that the rehabilitation is not the only aspect that is needed to keep the livability of the old city. The social aspect and the economical aspect are vital too for the development of the old city.

Also, it is important to develop a better and more independent organizational set up, in order to decrease bureaucracy and provide project sustainability. So the decisions related to Al-Kairouan will be made without the need to refer to the central body of the National Institute of Protection in Tunis.

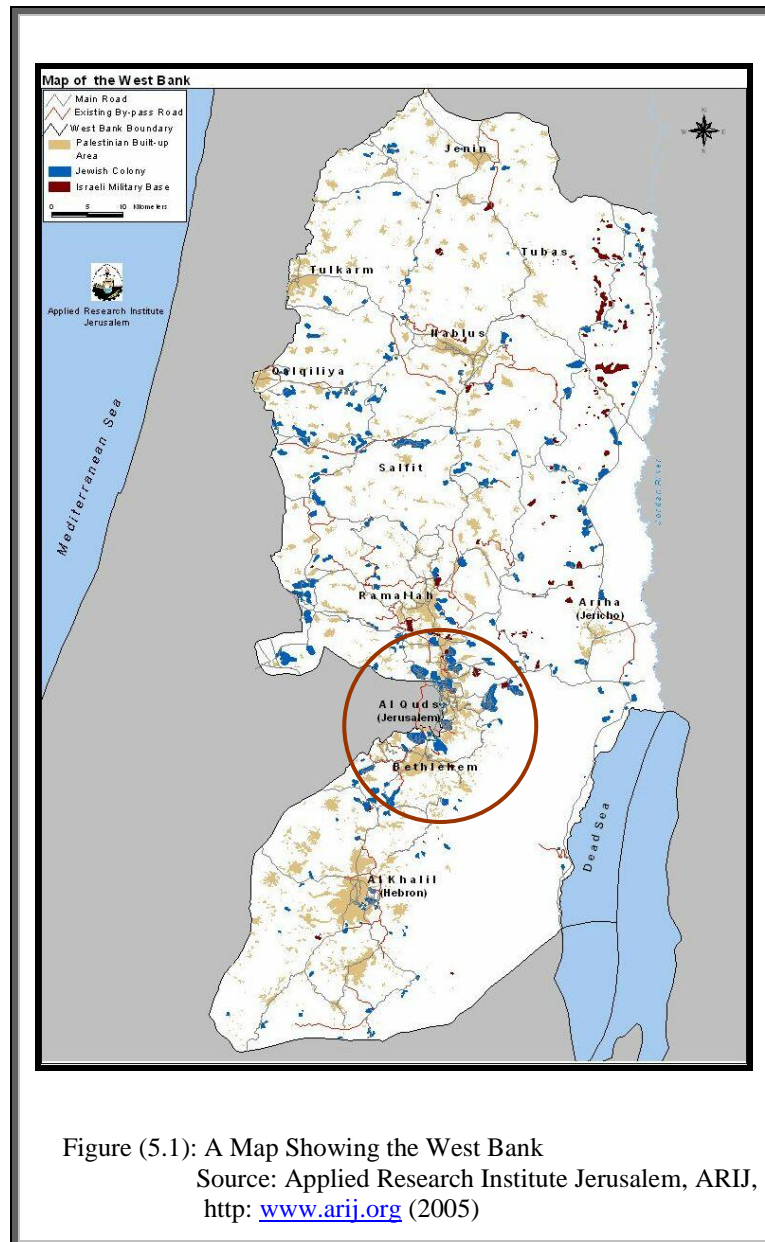
#### 4.4 General Conclusion on Case Studies

After studying the two cases it is clear that the main difference between them depends on that in the old city of Aleppo project the urban regeneration approach, which deals with physical, social, and economical factors forms the base for the safeguarding process, while in Al-Kairouan project the urban conservation approach that concentrates on the physical factor forms the base for the safeguarding process. According to the results of the two projects it is concluded that the regeneration approach is preferable to reach the development goals in the physical, social, and economical aspects in order to ensure the old city livability and sustainability.

**Chapter Five**  
**Ramallah Old Town**

## 5.1 Introduction

Ramallah is a clean, tidy and beautiful city located in the heart of Palestine, 15 km to the north of Jerusalem, on the top of a mountainous plateau and surrounded by magnificent landscape.



There is more than one story about the present name of Ramallah. One story attribute the derivation of the name to that Ramallah is built on a place called “Ramtaem Sofeem” mentioned in the Old Testament where Prophet Samuel is born. Another story says that the name Ramallah is composed of Ram- an Aramaic word meaning hill or high place, and Allah- the Arabic word for God. Therefore, the name of Ramallah was originally either Ram or Rama, which lasted until the time of Muslim conquest in the seventh century. When Arabs came to Rama, they seem to have added Allah to either Ram or Rama, and the site became known as Ramallah (Arij, 1996).

### **5.1.1 Historical Background of Ramallah**

Arij (1996) explained that: Ramallah was probably first settled by Aramaic speaking people prior to 640 A.D. So, it seems that prior to the Muslim conquest, Ramallah served as an important crossroad in the ancient times and was temporarily settled from time to time throughout the centuries by inhabitants who lived there a while and then left.

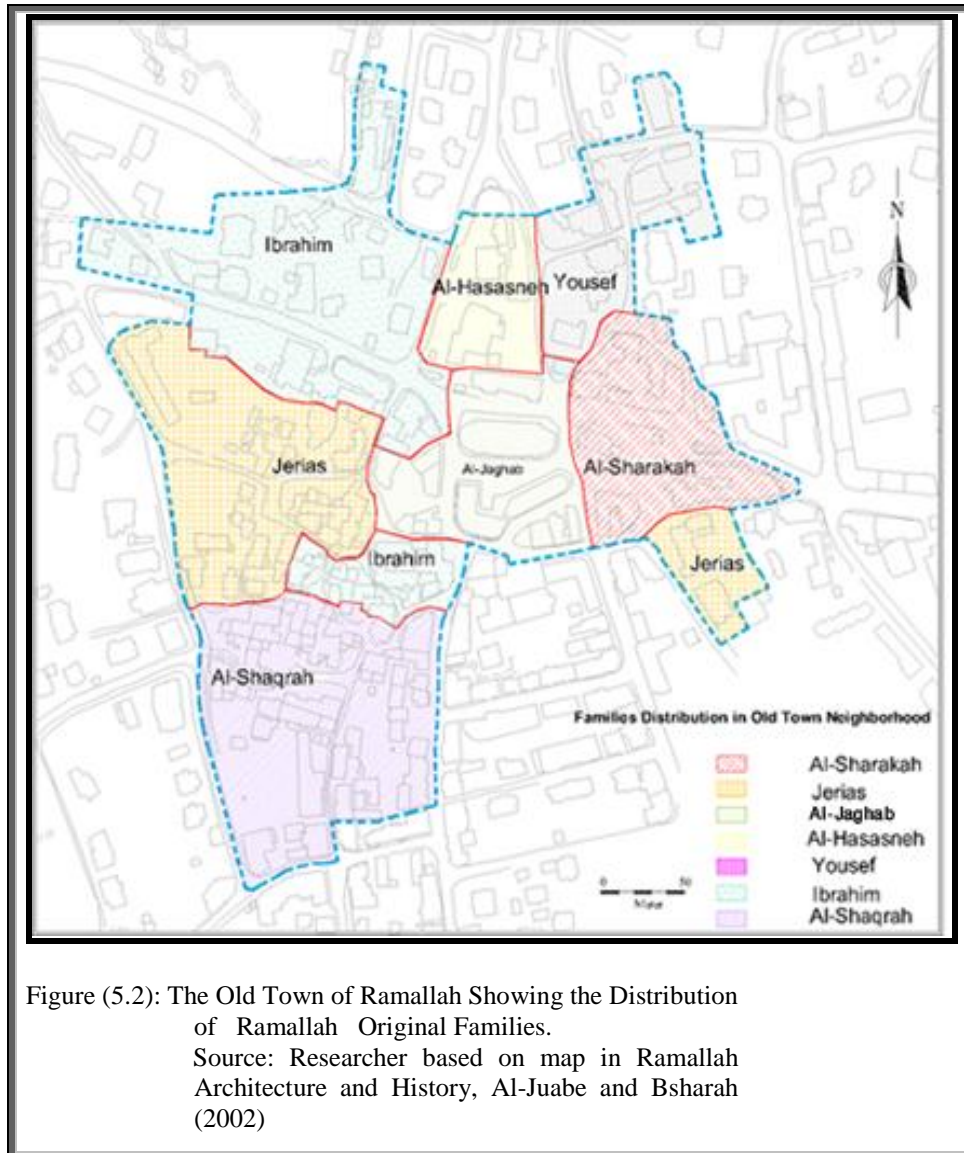
According to Al-Juabeh and Bsharah (2002), Ramallah starting was during the Crusaders period, it was no more than a military settlement or a military farm. Then when the crusaders were defeated Ramallah was abandoned again. The Crusader tower, that was for a near period in Al-Shaqrah neighborhood, and Maqam Al-Khaleel that was in Al-Masjed (the mosque) site nowadays in the center of the old town of Ramallah are from that remains.

From the crusaders time till 1596 A.D. there was no documented history about Ramallah. Since it was mentioned in the Ottoman registration for the year 1596 A.D.,

and according to the registration, Ramallah was consisted of 71 Christian families and 9 Muslim families, its population was around 400 and its agricultural production was from serials, olive and vines. So it was a small village at that time.

According to the oral history Al-Haddadeen clan was immigrated from east of Jordan to Palestine because of tribal struggle and settled in Ramallah during the 16th or the 17th century, the site they have settled on is a hilly area near El-Bireh City with an orientation toward west, and this site is known now as the old town of Ramallah, (Shaheen,1982).

Al-Haddadeen is a Christian clan that consisted of seven families: Dar Yousef, Al-Shaqrah, Dar Awad, Dar Ibrahim, Dar Jerias, Al-Sharaqah, and Dar-Jughub, each family of them has its own quarter in the old town of Ramallah these days as shown in the Figure (5.2) that clarify each family neighborhood except Dar Awad that was replaced by Al-Hasasneh family. Hence Ramallah started to be an attracting place for Christian families coming either from Palestine or from east Jordan.



Ramallah location was preferential because of water springs in the area which is important for any human settlement, such springs are : Ein-Al-Balad that was found near Al-Arabi bank location, Ein Musbah on the north, Ein Munjed, Ein Muzrab and Ein Abo-Al korzom (Shaheen,1982). Also Ramallah has a suitable weather conditions for human settlement. It has an average amount of rain that is around (400mm) and

fertility which make it appropriate for cultivating olives, vines, figs also raising animals.

During Ibrahim Basha (1831-1840) ruling of Palestine the western culture and the Christian predicator mission have a good chance to penetrate to Palestine. This relation effected Ramallah development besides all other Palestinian cities such as Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Beit –Jala, Jaffa...etc, so during the second half of the 19th century a few public buildings starting to be found in Ramallah.

The immigration for North and South America has its effects on the social, economical, cultural and architectural development. The immigration movement accelerated during the beginning of the 20th century. The main reason for it was the bad economical and political situation in Palestine. According to Aziz Shaheen (1982) the number of immigrants till 1946 was 1500; while in 1953 it was 2580. This shows us the relation between the immigration and the 1948 war. Besides the immigration movement, Ramallah original citizens longing to work in the British mandates institutions and the public institutions that the Christian predicator mission founded. All this caused a demographical change in Ramallah old town, since the need for workers especially in agriculture made Ramallah attractive for foreigners specially those who came from Hebron area villages.

Because of the economical and social change that happened for Ramallah original citizens, they started to build new houses in the surrounding areas. This caused neglect of the old town, and the new immigrants from Hebron area were settled in the old town of Ramallah. The most dramatic demographical change happened in 1948, when the refugees from occupied part of Palestine in 1948 settled in Ramallah,

and most of them came from Al-Ramleh, Al-Lod, Jaffa and their villages. Because of nature as a Christian city, its economical conditions, availability of work opportunities, its nearness to the Palestinian coast and the founded charities, this place became an attractive location for the refugees from these areas. According to Al-Juabeh et al (2002) the number of refugees who come to Ramallah was 8500, while its citizens including those who came from Hebron area was 4500. This change caused a non-planned construction movement and misused of the old city that exceeded its ability to absorb the change. Because of this Ramallah extended in all- directions especially toward Al-Birah in the east, Birzeit in the north and Rafat in the south, Beetonia in the southern west, while extension toward west was more difficult because of topography.

After 1967 war and the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem and the West Bank, Ramallah as other Palestinian cities was under occupation. The Israelis control any planning or development operation. According to Coon (1995), there were more than 31 military orders in planning and zoning during the occupation period in the West Bank and Jerusalem, in order the Israelis to have power over the Palestinians urban extension. This caused degradation in the construction and economical development of Ramallah that caused deterioration in housing conditions in the old town.

After the peace process in 1993 new demographical change happened. Besides the foundation of the Palestinian institutions and ministries, many of Palestinian investors return to start their business in Palestine .So many of those who are looking to found a job opportunity immigrate to Ramallah city from other parts of Palestine. This cause an increase of population that reached 17781 in 1997 according to Palestinian Central

Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) and 21348 in 2001. This increase caused extension in Ramallah since 1994-1999, and 50% of the city buildings were constructed (Al-Juabeh et al, 2002).

### **5.1.2 The Importance of Ramallah Old Town**

The fact that Ramallah was developed as any other Palestinian village couldn't make it easy for researchers to understand the components of its urban fabric. Actually, it can't be named the old city of Ramallah, so in this study it will be named as the Old Town of Ramallah because it expresses the Palestinians peasants' style of life more than the Palestinian urban style of life (see Figure 5.3), which started to rise lately in Ramallah after the entry of the Christian predatory missions in the beginning of the twentieth century and the British Mandate in 1917.

As Al-Juabeh et al (2002) explained, the importance of Ramallah came from its spatiality as a town that summarized the time and geography, and integrated the past cultures and entered the clash with modernity through two centuries of time, which explained the existence of the peasants' houses from the Ottoman period side by side to the architectural details from the European classic architecture as an impact of the Christian predatory.



Figure (5.3): Old Peasants' House in the Old Town of Ramallah Called Moghanam House from the year 1924.  
Source: Al-Juabeh and Bsharah, Ramallah Architecture and History (2002)

Also we can't forget that Ramallah is a clear example which reflects the impact of Christian predication through the Palestinian history. The role that the Christian predication did has left its impact through the urban development, the rise of public buildings, the architectural style, the education process and the health in Palestine.

Beside that, Ramallah is considered as an administrative, cultural, social and economical center, because of its nearness to Jerusalem, its location in the center of the country and its climatic advantages.

Nowadays Ramallah old town is facing major challenge in accommodating the new situation of the town as an administrative and service center. While the traditional and

functional whole of old town is often threatened, its' old fabric is suffering from neglect and day after day it misses its traditional spirit and turns to be uncomfortable and crowded as (Figure 5.4 ) shows. The following analysis is concentrated on studying this area and pointing out the reasons of its degradation.

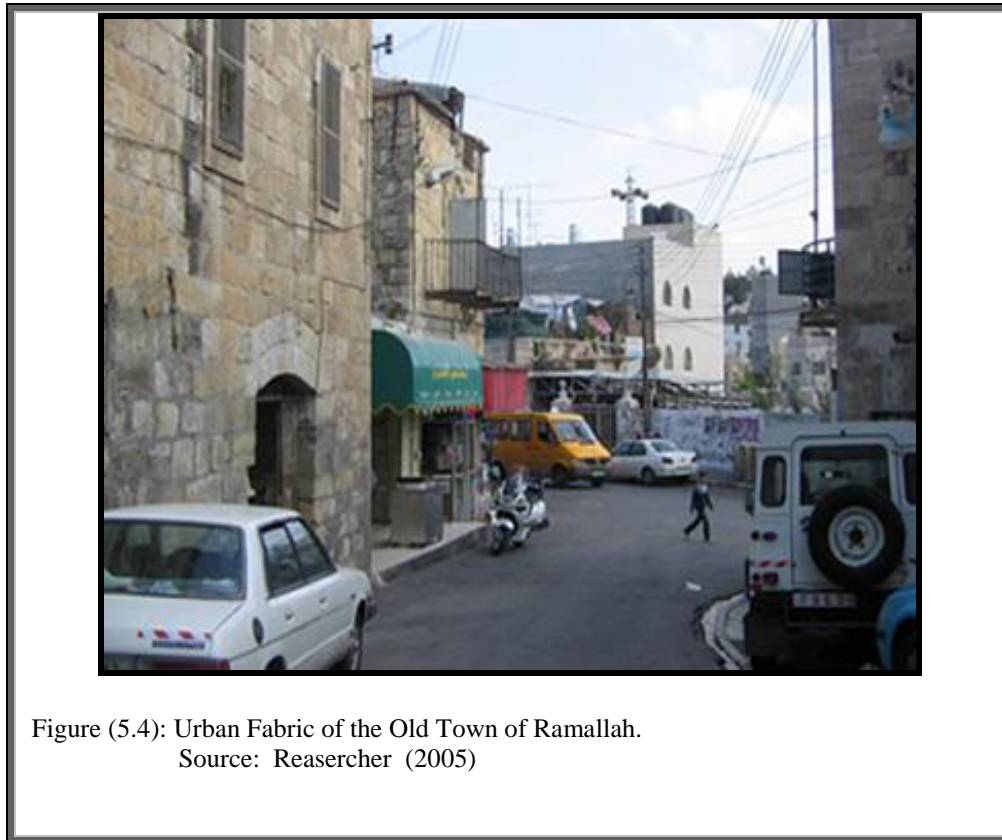


Figure (5.4): Urban Fabric of the Old Town of Ramallah.  
Source: Reasercher (2005)

### **5.1.3 Urban Development of Ramallah**

Ramallah has developed like any typical Palestinian agricultural village with a compact traditional spatial structure, accompanied by a unique and particular architectural fabric that is manifested through the fabric structural elements, shape and the integration of both. This fabric is composed of a number of adjacent yards that are in harmony with the rocky curved environment, and they functioned as semi

private plazas used mainly by women and children, since they are located in the heart of the residential area. Usually the demarcations between the private court yard in front of the house and the public plaza is often a low gravity rubble stone wall (sinsila) (Riwaq, 1998).The old buildings were expanding around narrow paths (Qasabah).The growth of construction was random and depended on family relations and ties, which gather around the small yards of the old quarter of the town.

After 1900, The City of Ramallah passed through different turns, which left its footprints and features until our recent days. The main causes of these turns appertain with the political and economical situations the country passed through in the last century (Shaheen, 2000):

- The first turn was in the beginning of the twentieth century, when the first immigration to the United States occurred .The savings of these immigrants lead to a growth and development in the construction activities. Ramallah started to take a different dimension when the Ottomans assigned the city to be an administrative center for thirty surrounding villages. Besides the entry of the Christian predatory missions, which came to the city and participated in establishing and building churches and schools in the fringes of the old core such as the Friends, Latin and Catholic sectarian schools. This causes the city to expand towards them and scattered buildings started appearing outside the borders of the old quarter.
- The second turn occurred when the British Mandate started in Palestine in 1917. It provided improvement of the sustenance conditions by creating new jobs in the police, railway, education and citrus trade. Consequently, that

induced a new constructional progress in the city with a new distinctive architecture exemplified in the new fashion of villa houses surrounded by well treated gardens, many of them still kept until these days, and they clearly distinguished the image of the townscape.

The first structural plan for Ramallah was finished in 1940, but it took several years later until it was implemented. The government of the British Mandate in cooperation with Ramallah municipality in 1943 worked on a proposal for city regulations, and suggested to allocate a piece of land to be public wood, in addition to a public plaza, city park and children playground. This proposal did not see the light because of the regression in the country political conditions.

In this phase of development Ramallah was distinguished by its spacious horizontal layout, integrity between the surrounding natural and cultivated belt, visual unity, variety, amenity, shade, shelter pleasant microclimates and therefore a better living environment. All this provided “breathing” space for residents, potential pedestrians, buffers to natural habitats, and pollutants are known to disperse over open spaces (Shaheen, 2000). This development corresponded with the definition of Howard (1965) for the Garden City, achieved by maintaining and extending environments and vegetation types, which complement this image.

Depending on that many of the old town original residents left their houses, and build new houses in the new prestige’s neighborhoods. So many of the houses in the old town were abandoned because of the immigration

movement, and also because the change in the life style and economy that started to depend on commerce and employment in public institutions instead of agriculture.

- The third turn the city of Ramallah passed through was in 1948, when the Palestinians from the coastal cities immigrated to the mountainous areas due to the establishment of Israel. Because of the population increase, Ramallah grown from a small town into a city (see Figure 5.5). The need for new houses and public facilities allowed the city expansion to spread in all directions in the town, especially on the way that connects the town of Ramallah with the town of El-Bireh. On this line new commercial buildings were constructed in addition to some public buildings such as the police station, the Hashemite School and the radio station. This juncture created new architectural style in the residential buildings to serve the low-income population (Shaheen, 2000).

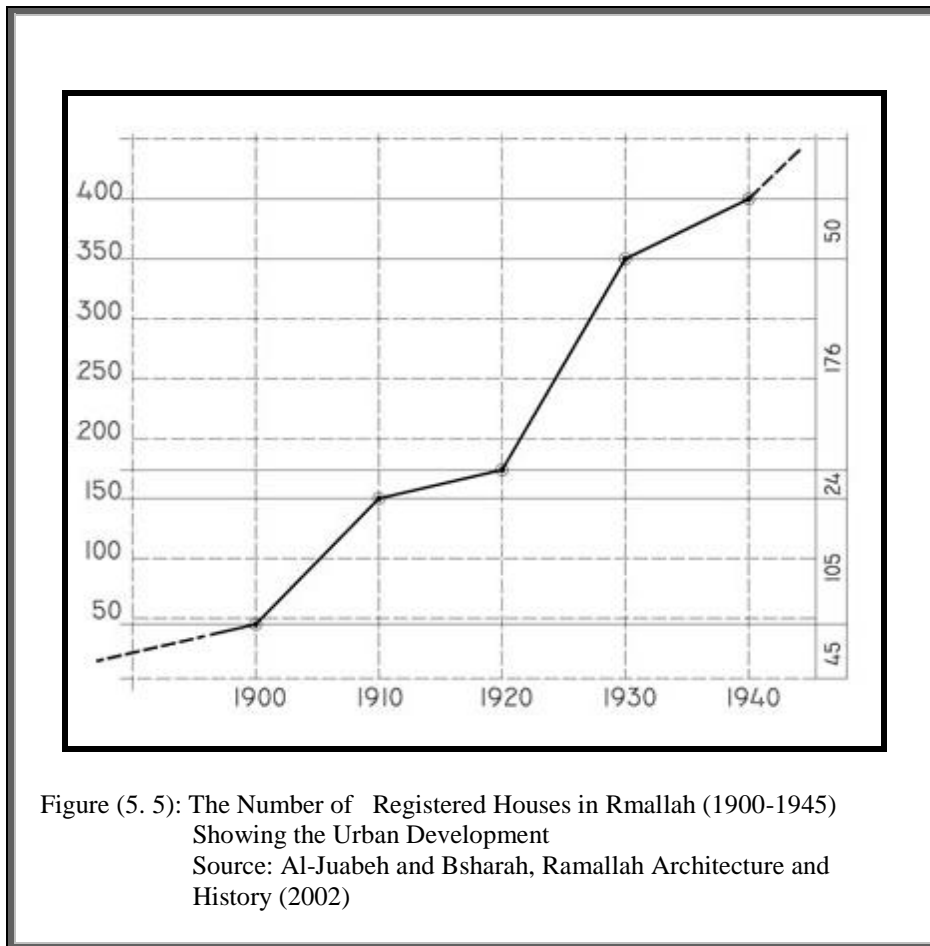


Figure (5. 5): The Number of Registered Houses in Ramallah (1900-1945) Showing the Urban Development  
 Source: Al-Juabeh and Bsharah, Ramallah Architecture and History (2002)

The large number of refugees who came to Ramallah founded their shelters through the abandoned houses in the old town of Ramallah. This dramatic change caused a misused of the old town since it exceeded the old fabric ability to absorb the new comers.

Because of 1948 war a deterioration of the economical situation occurred, so many people immigrated to the neighboring Arab countries, specially the Gulf countries. The money that came from these immigrants helped in developing the living conditions, and participated in the city development. Ramallah

entered a prosperity period, which made Ramallah a touristic center that attracted people from different Arab countries to come and spend the summer in its mild weather.

After the 1967 war, and the Israeli occupation for the rest of Palestine, the borders were closed and large restrictions on the municipalities and on building permits obstructed the city development. The construction process continued but not in a high impetus, and some infrastructure projects were also executed. In that period also many farmers left their lands and went to work in Israel because of the bad economical situation resulting from the occupation.

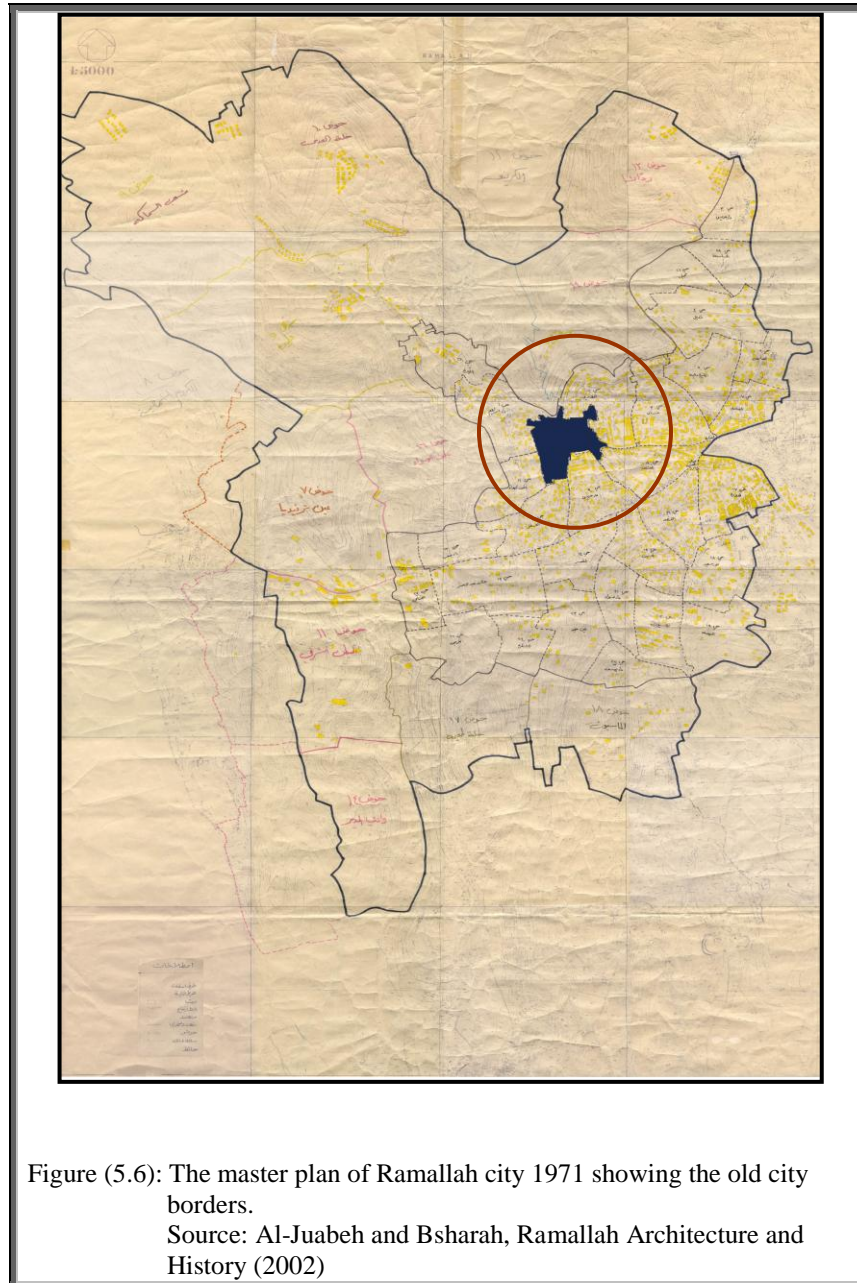
- The fourth turn of city development came after the Oslo peace accord between the Palestinians and the Israelis in 1994, and coming of the Palestinian authority. According to these political changes and the entry of part of the returnees to their home lands, a huge constructional movement was activated and encouraged the investments in the city, besides the donations that came from the world community to support establishing the Palestinian state. Because of Ramallah location at the center of the West Bank and its nearness to Jerusalem it became to be a governmental center. Large buildings were erected to serve the needs of investors and the increasing number of residents , so the townscape of the Old core of Ramallah was affected badly, and the micro climate of the area was changed.

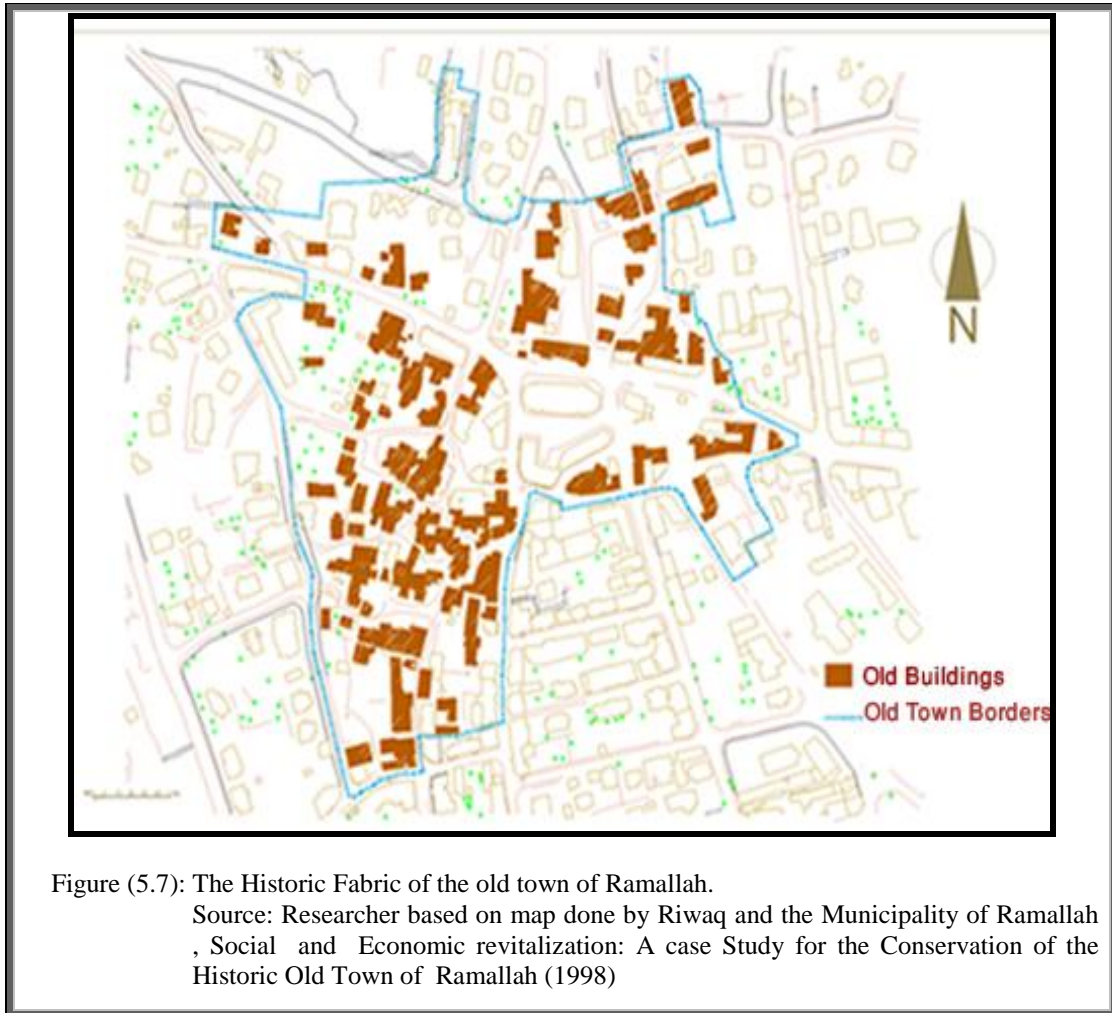
Nowadays Ramallah consists of four main parts (Shaheen, 2000): old core, neighborhoods, fringes and open land beyond fringes. The old core of Ramallah is now a part of the city's cultural heritage, with its architecturally distinguished old houses and shops that still keeping the same old functions and crafts. Nevertheless, its old image has been changed through the time, and all green yards between the harmonious stone houses are almost vanished and replaced either by new expansions for the old buildings, or become neglected left over areas full with rubbish. The narrow paths and plazas are missing their traditional spirit, and the place turned to be uncomfortable and crowded. Recently, there has been a good study for the old town done in cooperation between Riwaq Center and the Municipality of Ramallah and some restoration and rehabilitation projects already have been executed for a few buildings, which are considered distinguished historically or culturally. But still the concern is directed only toward the buildings and no clear interest is shown in the urban fabric and or the social and economical conditions as a whole.

## **5.2 Analysis of Existing Conditions in Ramallah Old Town**

This analysis is trying to present a profile of the physical, social and economical conditions of Ramallah old town based on documentary evidence, interviews, and field research, in order to identify the old town problems and potentials and to establish a concrete base for the safeguarding plan of Ramallah old town. The area of study is determined according to Ramallah Municipality definition for the Old Town in the master plan of Ramallah city from 1971 that is clear in the map below (Figure 5.6), and Riwaq Center definition for the historical buildings in the proposed national registration that

started in 1994 which depend on define the old buildings as the buildings that were built before 1945, knowing that the existing number of old buildings is considered small because of the earthquake in 1927 and the destruction of many of these buildings , these old buildings are shown in the map that was done by Riwaq and the Municipality of Ramallah (Figure 5.7).





The analysis of each factor (physical, social and economical) will include:

- Description of the existing conditions.
- Assessment based on study findings and consequences of lack of intervention to improve existing conditions
- Identifying main problems and defining priorities.

### **5.2.1 Analysis of Physical Factors**

The old town is a multi-functional organism with residential, social, economical and political activities. Since this is an essence of the urban organism, the historic area should be properly defined, and these aspects adequately considered and administrated. The next two parts focus and elaborate on the morphological aspect, and the infrastructural aspect of the old town.

Regarding the morphological aspect, a brief description of the factors that affected the morphological structure is essential in order to clarify the morphological development of the old town, then an assessment of its different features is conducted including: the land use classification, the sky line, the urban structure, the typology of the buildings, the use and occupancy and the economic causes of growth and decay.

The infrastructural aspect is also an important factor of the analysis, different features of the old town infrastructure including: the mobility, the water supply system, the electricity network and the sewage system are described depending on an updated maps done by the particular institutions in 1998.

#### **5.2.1.1 Ramallah Old Town Morphological Analysis**

The morphological structure of the old town of Ramallah was affected by endogenous factors that included: the religion, the social structure, political system and the economical pattern. There are also exogenous factors that included: different periods of occupation that Palestine passed through, the immigration movement, and the migration movement.

The primary social profile that marks Ramallah society is the existence of Christian Community. This factor effects the morphology of Ramallah by the existing of churches and schools in the fringes of the old town such as the Friends Girls School, the Latin and the Catholic sectarian schools, which causes the city to expand towards them and scattered buildings started appearing outside the borders of the old quarter.

Besides the religious factor, the social structure in Ramallah was shaped by tribalism and cosmopolitanism. As a physical reflection, Ramallah is consisted of seven main clans, where each has its own quarter in the old town. So the old town of Ramallah consisted of seven main quarters. Each quarter is consisted of a number of Ahwash (yards) that are defined as: a complex of single houses, or attached ones with a height of one or two floors, beside Al-Iliah (a small room on the roof of the house) that are organized around a court that is reached by a narrow path. This court is used for different activities such as cooking, laundry and also as a meeting place.

Referring to Al-Juabeh et al (2002) the total number of the complexes or Ahwash is 17, usually each complex was inhabited by an extended family. These complexes were different in some how from each others, these differences were not of social classification or cultural reasons, but were brought about because of different tastes and periods of development. These complexes also were organized around plazas and open spaces that were used as a public space for religious celebrations and social meetings for example the plaza in front of the Rome Orthodox church and Al-Shaqra plaza in front of Iliat Dar Khalaf.

The politics also left its impact on the structure of Ramallah, since Ramallah was involved in the struggle between Al-Qais and Al-Yaman tribes (two main Arab tribes). Al-Qais originated from Saudi Arabia and Al-Yaman originated from Yemen, and fell into a struggle to control the Palestinian mountainous area in during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which concentrated in the middle mountain area. Thus Ramallah families were a part of Al-Qais side except Al-Shaqra family that was from Al-Yaman side. So, for a safety reasons the houses were attached to each other in a compact structure in order to facilitate the defensive operation of the town. The architectural style of the housing unit itself was also affected by security need, Shaheen (1982) explains that the houses were of stone huts attached to each others and each house was of one large room with small and high windows to keep the enemies away.

The impact of the subsistence economy which consisted mainly of agriculture and animal raising is also evident in the morphology of the town. Houses were mainly reflecting the Palestinian “peasants’ house” style as in most of Palestine villages, in which there is a place for animals in the lower level.

In the absence of external forces, growth in traditional settlements was mostly derived by the daily needs of users and mechanisms that emerged from a symbiosis between the religious doctrine and Urf (customs, social norms) (Besim, 1994; Akbar, 1988). Exogenous factors started to affect Ramallah old town from 1900, since the City of Ramallah passed through different turns, which left its footprints and features on its morphological structure and was explained by the four turns mentioned before.

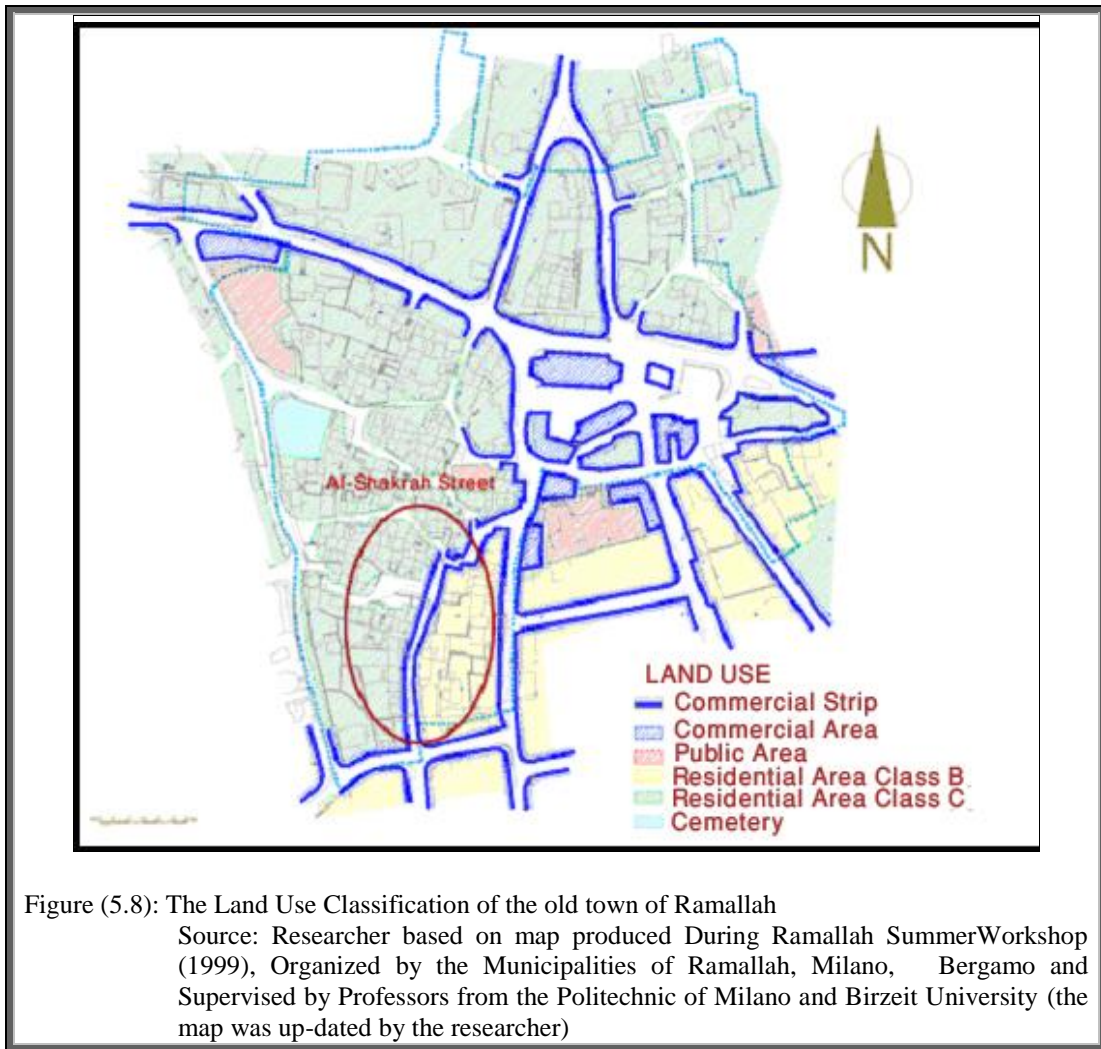
This analysis leads to studying the existing conditions of Ramallah old town concentrating on the land use classification, the old town sky line, the old town structure, the typology of the buildings including the architectural style and the function, use and occupancy and the economic causes of growth and decay, in order to follow up the impact of the mentioned endogenous and exogenous factors on the old town morphology.

- **Land Use Classification,**

As Figure (5.8) illustrates, the study area includes the following classification of activities depending on the Ramallah detailed plan from 1962:

- A commercial classification of most of prime focal points as well as some of the branch focal points.
- A residential classification (B).
- A residential classification (C).
- Public areas: church, school, mosque, etc.
- Cemetery.

Through this classification it is found that Al-Shakrah street in the heart of the old town is classified as a commercial street as shown in Figure (5.8), which implies the Municipality's indirect approval of demolishing the present houses and allowing the construction of commercial and residential towers.



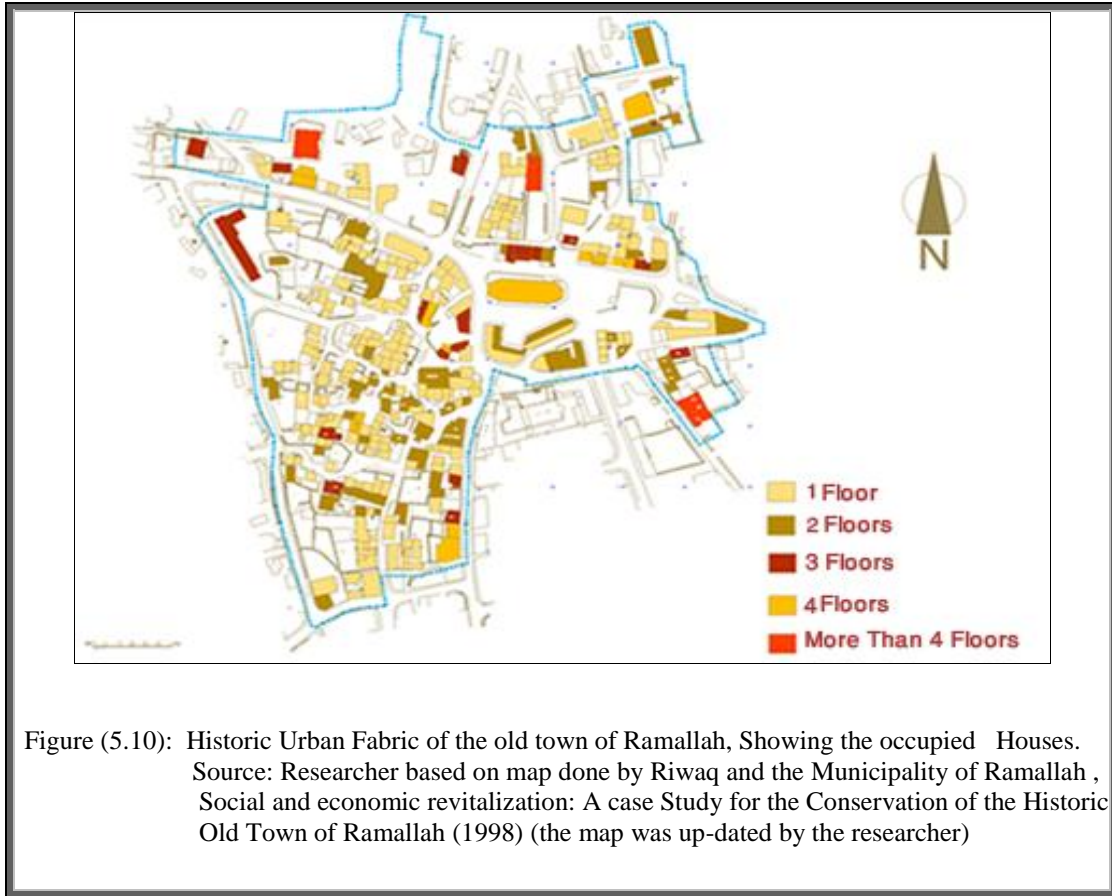
- **Old town sky line,**

The height of buildings in Ramallah old town is linked to the material used in construction. The heights of old houses do not exceed three stories, but most of them are made up of one or two levels. With the development of construction methods, technologies and materials including the reinforced concrete to buildings, the height and sizes of buildings have risen, and started in turn affecting the sky line and human scale (Figure 5.9).



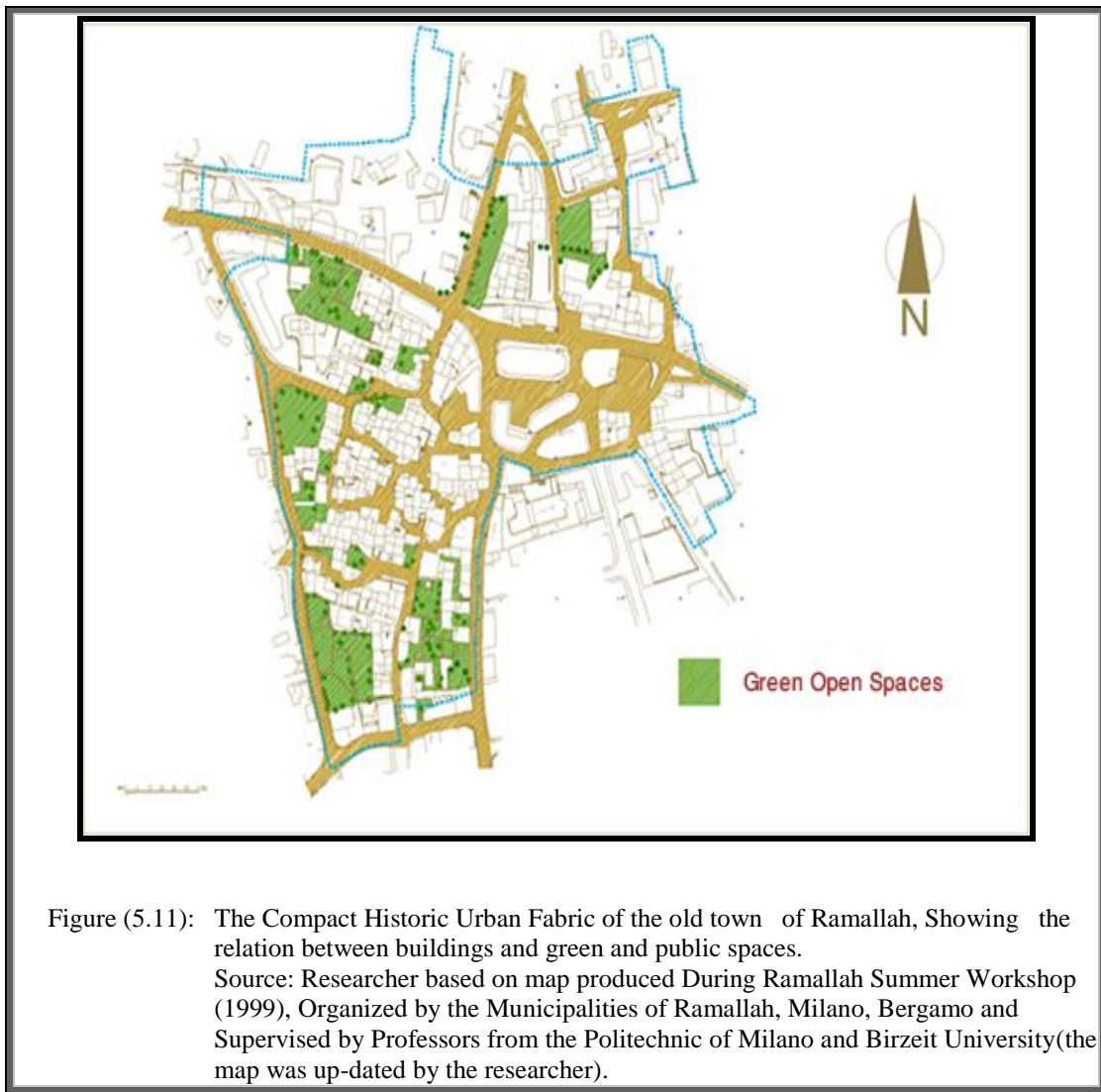
Figure (5.9): The Sky Line of the Old Town of Ramallah  
Source: Researcher.

It is important here to explain that the situation is still under control since as figure (5.10) illustrates most of the buildings inside the old town are consisted of one or two floors, while the most affected areas are at the boundaries.



- **Old Town Structure,**

The urban structure of the old town of Ramallah can be described as a compact urban structure, since according to (Jenks et al., 1996) the compact urban areas are characterized by the close juxtaposition of buildings and roads with limited interstitial space to insert greenery, mixed land use and a union of form and function. These all can be characterized in Ramallah old town, the buildings are attached or close to each others with narrow roads through to facilitate movement, the mixed land use is obvious as the workshops, the commercial activities and public areas can be found through the residential quarters (Figure 5.11).

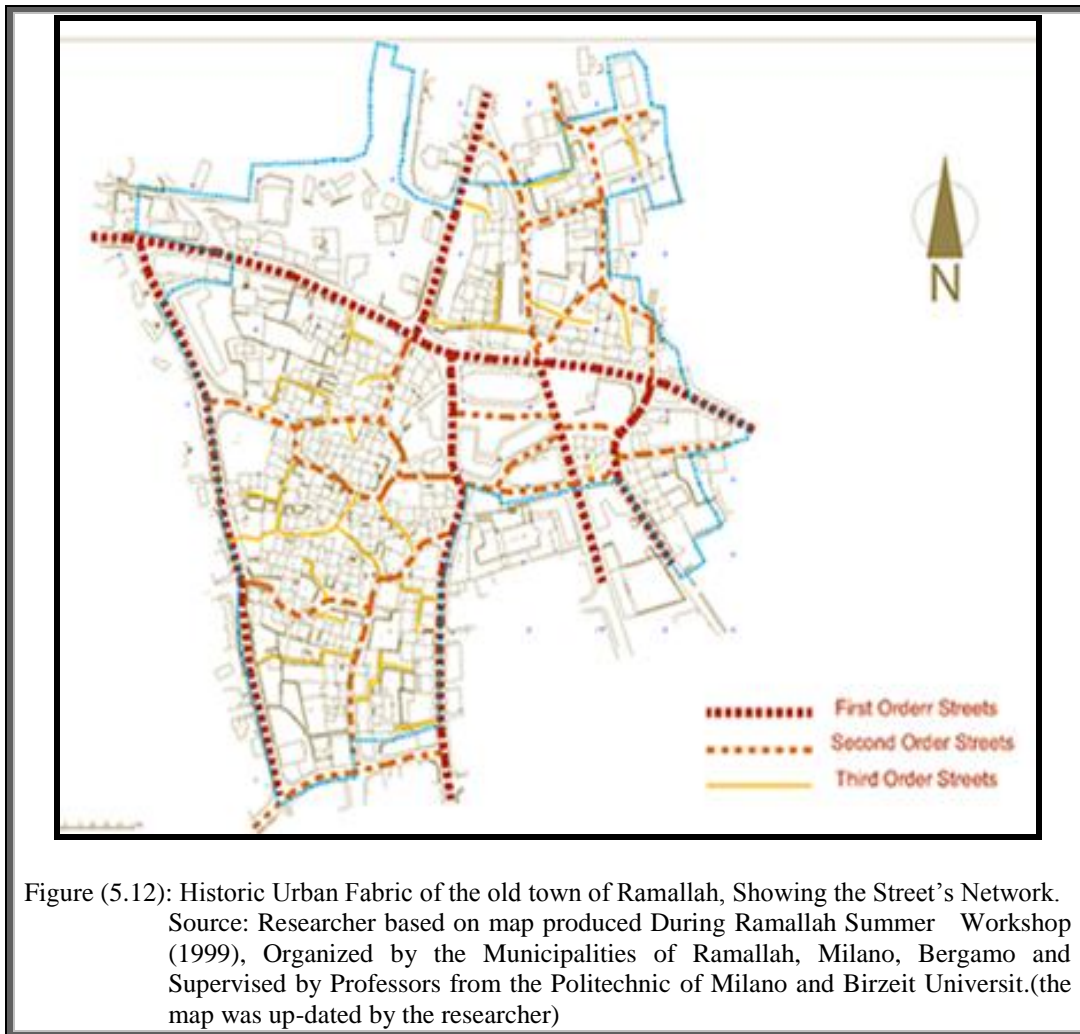


The main components of the old town structure are: the street network, urban elements and building types. They form together the urban fabric of the area, and can be described by the following method:

- **The streets system** consists of two major elements: public thoroughfares and private alleys.

1- The network of public thoroughfares is composed of:

- a) First-order streets, which make up the backbone of the system and connect all major town entrances.
  - b) Secondary streets, which could be identified as major quarter streets that connect between the primary streets and are the main access routes within and between adjacent quarters.
  - c) Third-order streets, which could be identified as minor quarter streets. They provide access and linkages to areas within quarters, which are not serviced by the secondary streets. Usually, they are used by people belonging to the quarter or others who require frequent contacts there.
- 2- The private alleys system or private paths, which can be defined as private property owned and shared by its users. There is no specific pattern of linkage to the hierarchy of through streets and could be connected to any of the three types.

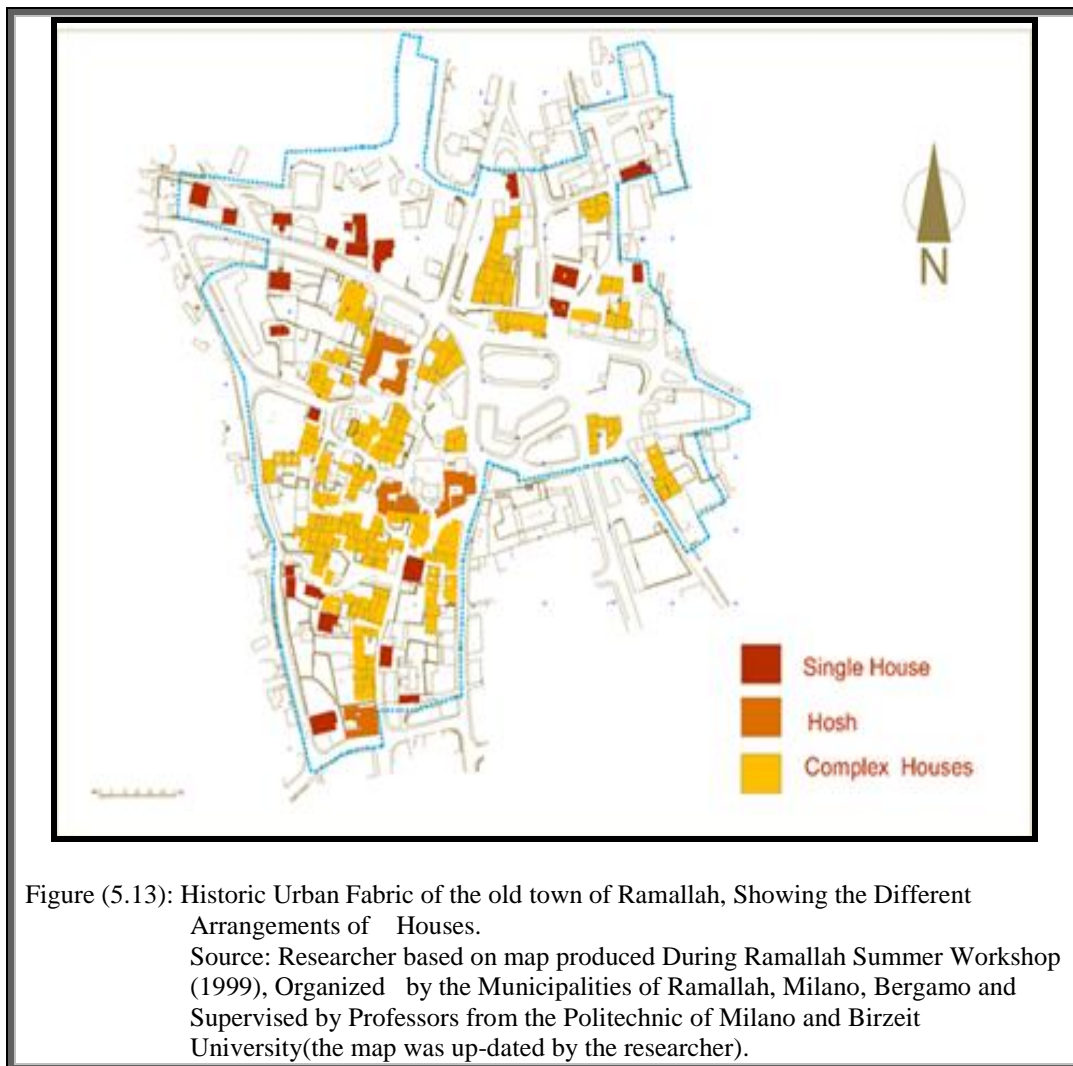


- The old urban fabric that consists of **old urban elements** and buildings that form Ramallah old town, which are:

1- Traditional housing units are basic components, and they may be found as:

- a) A single unit surrounded by an open space,
- b) A complex of units attached to each other,
- c) A court system when units are organized around an open space (hosh system).

One of the major interpretations that damage this fabric is the Arab Bank building which was constructed in the old bus station location.



2- The Market area (vegetable market) is located at the eastern boundaries of the old town in front of the Rome Catholic Church and not included in the borders of the old town that the municipality defined. This market was founded for serving Ramallah citizens and the villages in the Northern West of Ramallah because of the bus station old location next to it and the linear continuous or semi

continuous markets at the main roads. According to Al-Juabeh and Bsharah (2002), the first document evidence for commercial stores are particularly the stores in front of the Rome Orthodox Church, which date to 1890.



Figure (5.14): Hanania Commercial Stores, Ramallah.  
Source: Al-Juabeh and Bsharah, Ramallah Architecture and History (2002)

### 3-The public buildings:

a) Al-Khan or the Ottoman Court (Dar Al-Habash and Qasees), it is located at the eastern boundaries of the old town in the Al-Friends street (Figure 5.15). The studies and analysis of this two storey building illustrated that it was originally found as a residential building and during the med of the nineteenth century it was transformed to be used as a Khan for

accommodating traveling businessmen from south to north. The building is also named by the citizens as the Ottoman Court, since the Ottoman ruler used it as his office. In 1883 the building was used as a healthcare center. After 1948 war the ground level of the building was used as an olive mil but there is no much information about this period. According to Al-Juabeh et al (2002), this building is considered as the only public building with a style similar to the peasants' "architectural style" and it is located at one of the important commercial areas in the eastern side of the old town. Nowadays this building was rehabilitated by Riwaq and is in use as a cultural center.

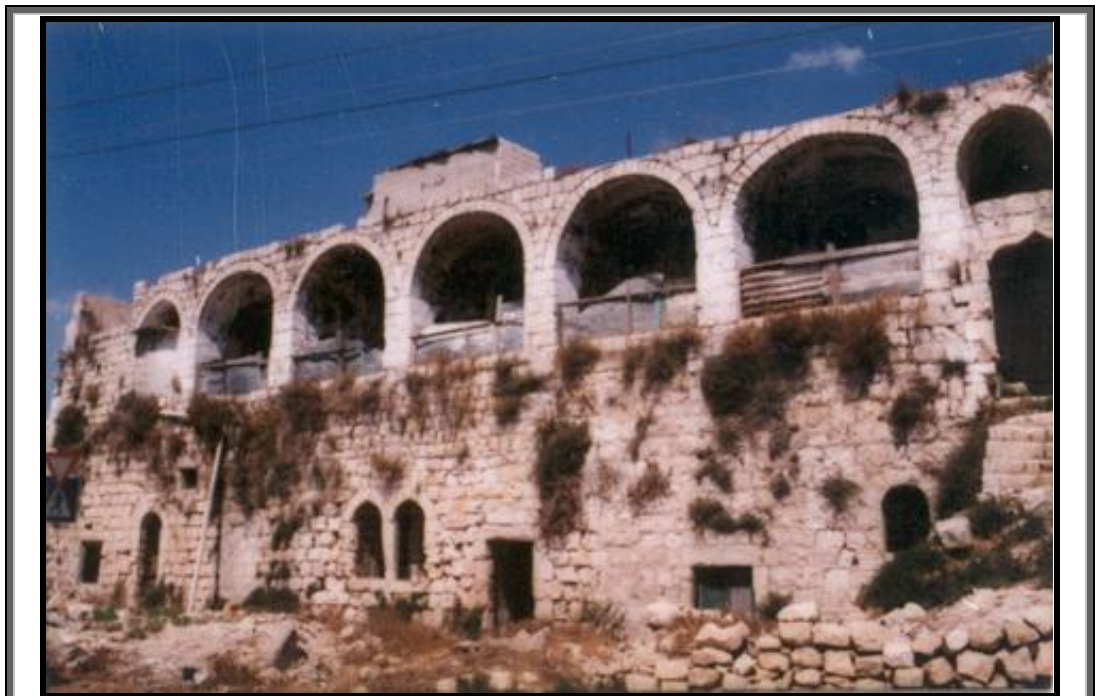


Figure (5.15): The Ottoman Court Building before Rehabilitation.

Source: Al-Juabeh and Bsharah, Ramallah Architecture and History, (2002)



Figure (5.16): The Ottoman Court Building After Rehabilitation  
Source: Researcher

b) The Rome Orthodox Church, it is a major component that affecting the old town structures as a Christian town. This church is located at the boundaries of the old town and not at its center. According to the borders of the old town defined by the Municipality of Ramallah, this church is out of the old town boundaries. Al-Juabeh et al (2002) assumed that it is the oldest documented building in the old town of Ramallah dating to 1850.

c) The Old Municipality Building (Figure 5.17), it was built during the fourth decade in the twentieth century at the middle of

the old town. The lower level was used as a vegetable market. This building is important not only at the social and historical level, but also as a new public building that respects the old urban fabric and the architectural image of Ramallah. This is evident by its form that respects the junction of two main streets in the old town.

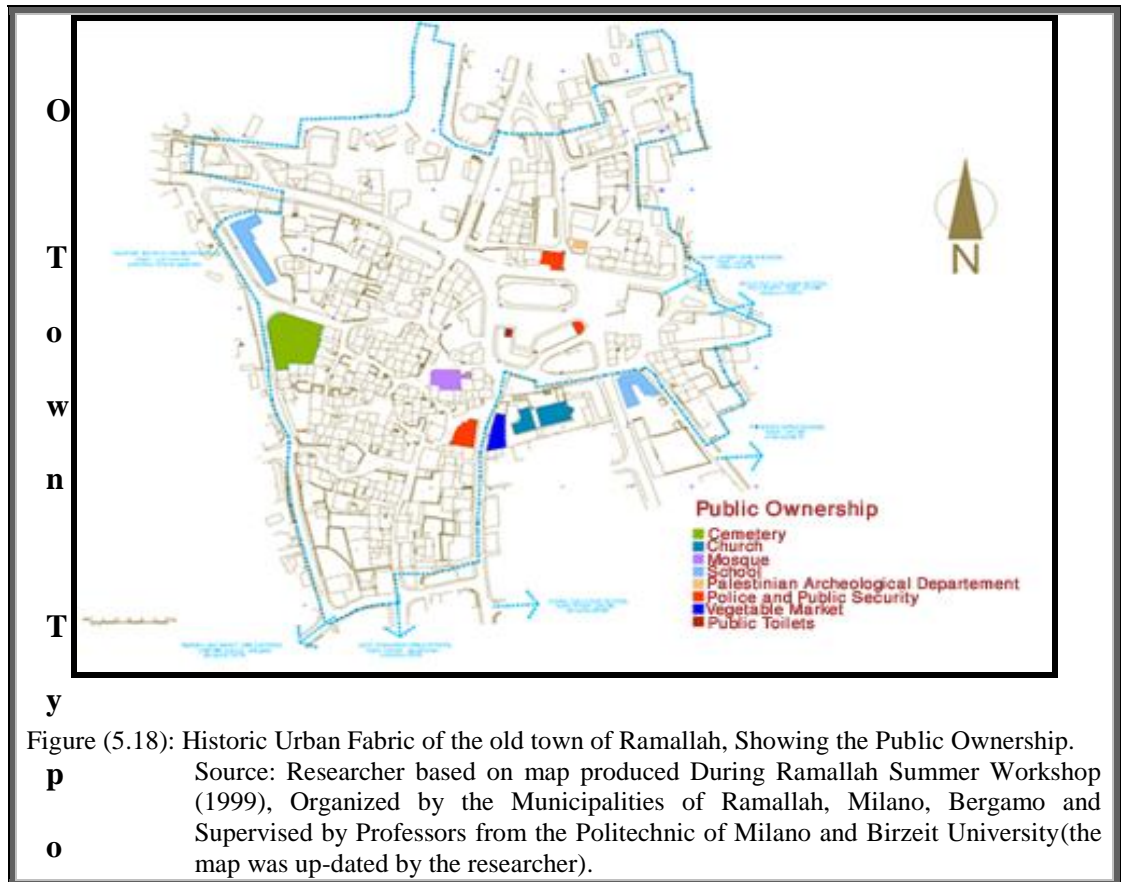


Figure(5.17): The Old Municipality Building  
Source: Al-Juabeh and Bsharah, Ramallah Architecture and History (2002)

d) Olive Mills (Al-Bad), they are located through the residential quarters since Riwaq documented three olive mills in the old town in 1998, one of them is found at Al-Khan.

4- The public cemetery for Christians, it is located at the western boundaries of the old town.

It is important to mention that Ramallah old town also contains other public services that occupied old buildings or new buildings such as: the mosque, police station, school, the Archeology Department and public toilets (Figure 5.18).



- **Old Town Typological Analysis,**

The typological study shall include an analysis of the architectural style and functional organization of the buildings that form the urban tissue of the old town. The main components of Ramallah old town is the traditional Palestinian housing unit, the commercial stores and the public buildings.

The Palestinian traditional house is not only a residue of an obsolete form of habitat, but as a historic and cultural specimen this house denoted the continuity of settlements in this area. Architecturally there are two kinds of houses in the old town of Ramallah: the peasants' house system and the villa house system.

- **The peasants' house system** (Figure 5.19): this house has a basic model unit that is called the tri- interior division's house style as Canaan (1932) clarified. The peasants' house is of square or rectangular shape with one door and one or two small windows, built of stone and lime and roofed by a cross vault system over a span that reached seven meters in some times. This peasant house is divided into three levels that reflects the peasant style of life:
  - a) The lower level (Qaa' Al Bait) that is used for animals and to store the agriculture tools.
  - b) The middle level (Al-Mastabeh) that is used for family living and divided by Al-Khawabi that are weed storages look like cupboards.
  - c) The higher level (Al-Rawieh) that is used to store the food and as an extra place for sleeping.

There are sub models of the peasants' house that can be found in Ramallah, which are:

- a) The simple style of peasant house that was consisted of one level and roofed by a cross-vault, while there was a place for animals in the house court (Figure 5.20).
- b) The two units house, which consisted of two basic models units that share one wall (Figure 5.21).

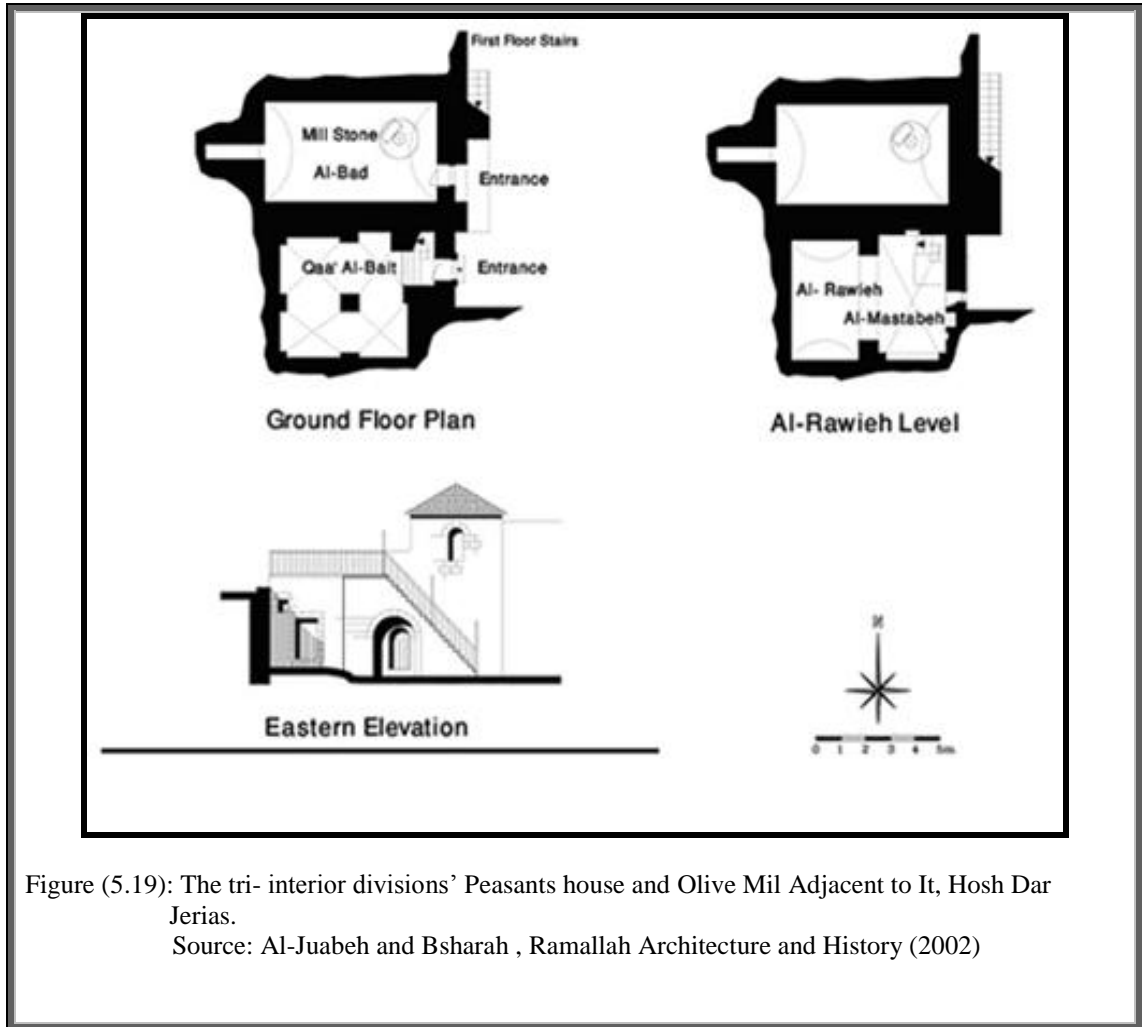
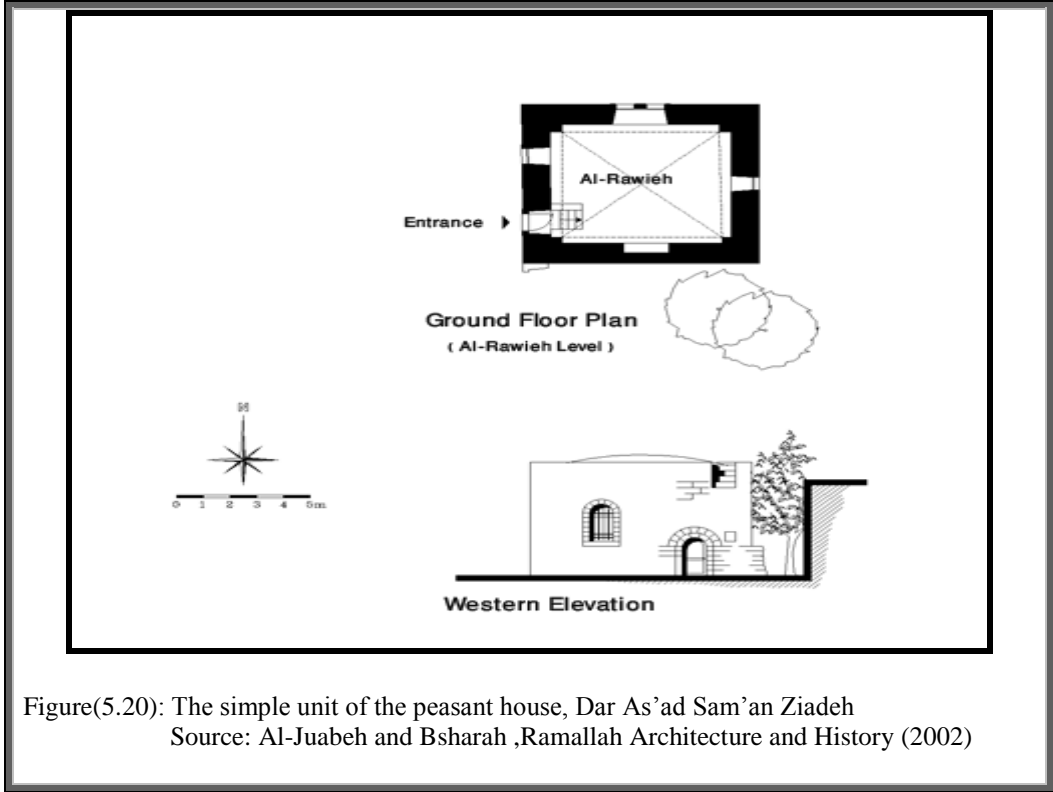
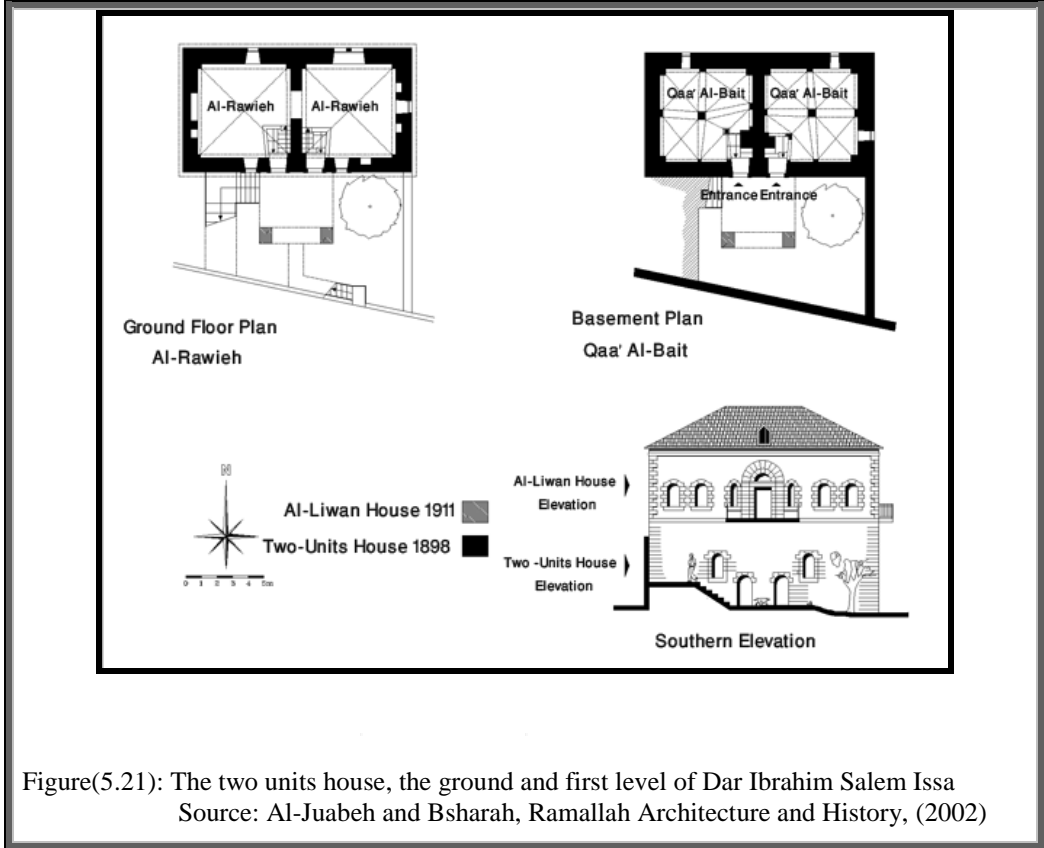


Figure (5.19): The tri- interior divisions' Peasants house and Olive Mil Adjacent to It, Hosh Dar Jerias.

Source: Al-Juabeh and Bsharah , Ramallah Architecture and History (2002)



Figure(5.20): The simple unit of the peasant house, Dar As'ad Sam'an Ziadeh  
 Source: Al-Juabeh and Bsharah ,Ramallah Architecture and History (2002)



Figure(5.21): The two units house, the ground and first level of Dar Ibrahim Salem Issa  
 Source: Al-Juabeh and Bsharah, Ramallah Architecture and History, (2002)

- **The villa house style:** this style was introduced around the beginning of the twentieth century (Figure 5.22). Different models were developed of this style that are: the Liwan house model and the Iwan house model, in which the house started to be composed of more than one room. The new methods of construction, the new technologies and the introduction of new structural and architectural elements left their impacts on this style. Accordingly, the most important criteria that distinguish this style are:

- 1- The development of new architectural elements such as balconies, arcades and staircases.
- 2- The involvement of kitchen, bath and staircase inside the house itself.
- 3- The house started to be of two floors.
- 4- The traditional system of roofing started to be used in the lower level and the I-beam steel system roofing in the upper level.
- 5- Al-Iliah started to be one of the beauty requests of the house and it reflected the income level of the owner of the house.
- 6- The doors begin to be higher and ended with an arch that forms a window above the door.
- 7- The number of windows were increased and getting bigger with a more complicated and rich architectural details.

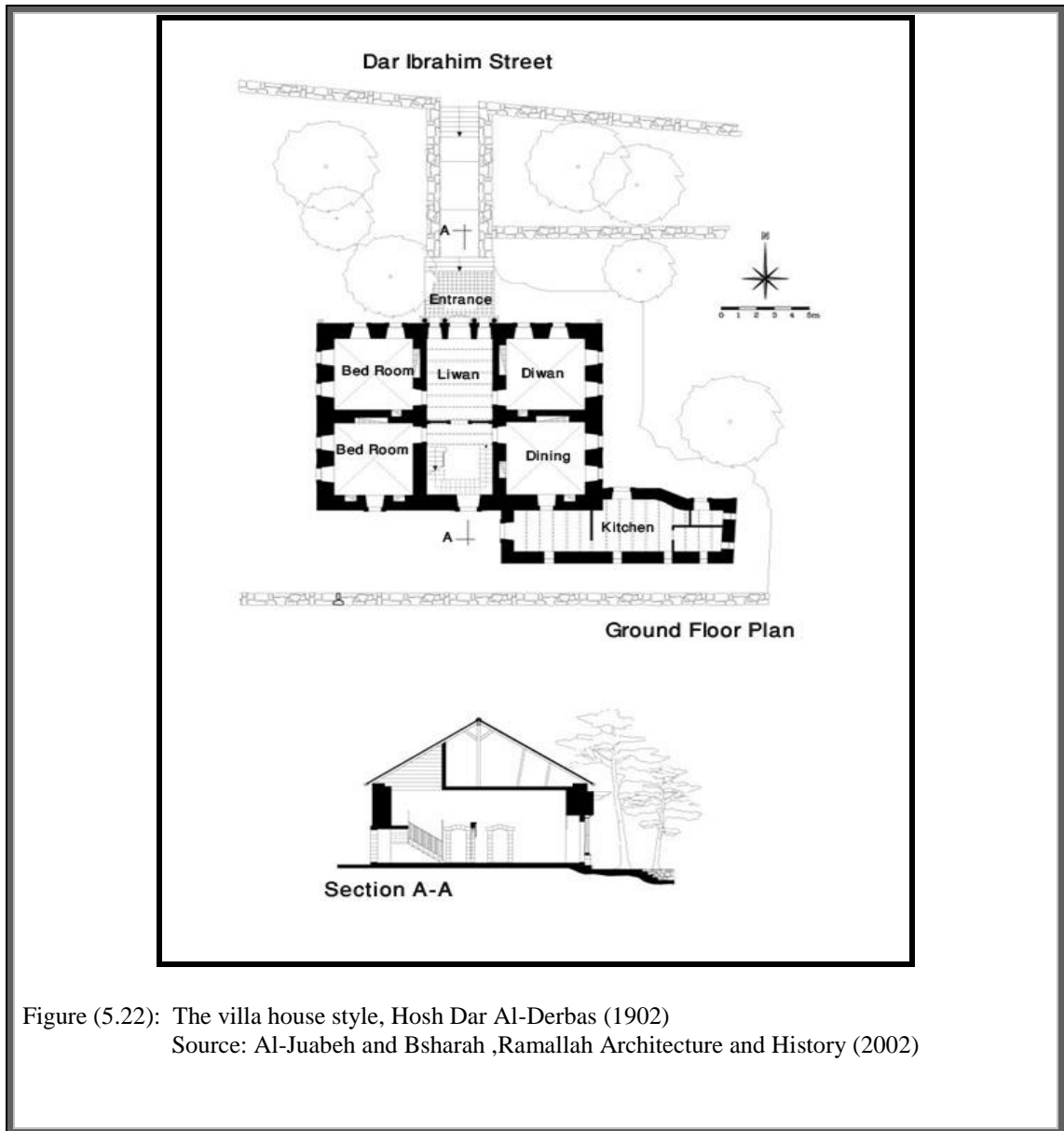


Figure (5.22): The villa house style, Hosh Dar Al-Derbas (1902)  
 Source: Al-Juabeh and Bsharah ,Ramallah Architecture and History (2002)

- **The commercial stores** (Figure 5.23): they are of two basic styles the market system and the linear stores system and characterized by:
  - 1- The wide door that opens directly to the street
  - 2- The door opening ends by a segmental arch (Figure 5.24).

3- They are roofed by a cross vault system.

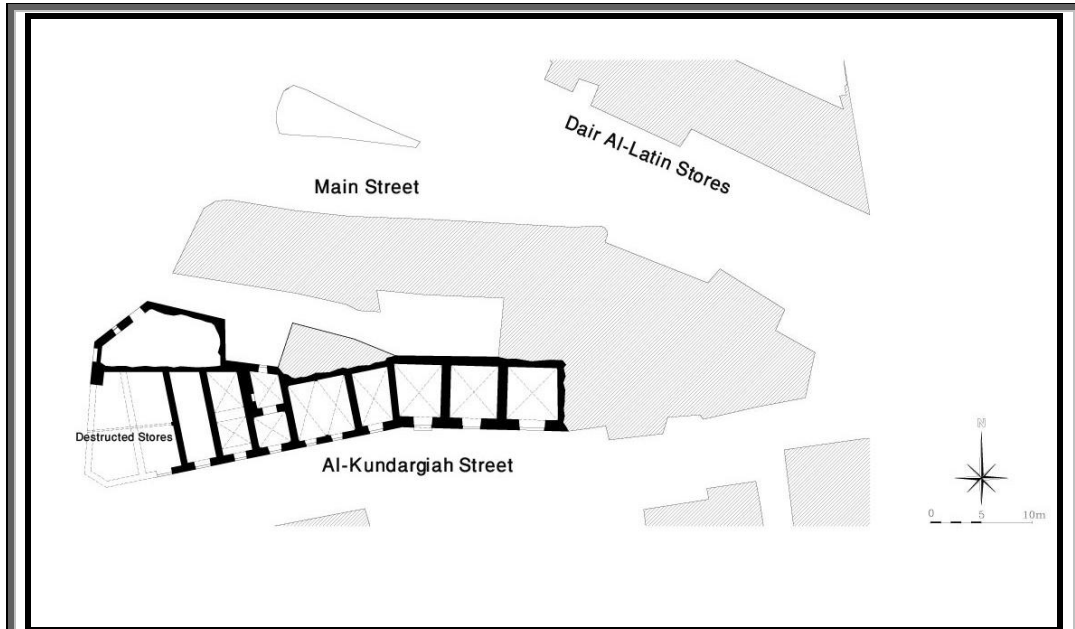


Figure (5.23): Commercial Stores, Al-Kundargiah Street, Ramallah.

Source: Al-Juabeh and Bsharah , Ramallah Architecture and History (2002)



Figure (5.24): A View Toward Al-Kundargiah Street, Ramallah.  
Source: Researcher (2005)

**The public buildings** that started to be found during the second half of the nineteenth century can be classified according to their architecture into two styles:

- A new style that is affected by the European classical architecture and different from the usual architectural style of Ramallah peasants' houses. The main examples of this style are: the Rome Orthodox Church and the old Municipality. These public buildings are showing luxury in building style that is clear in its huge and smooth stones, wide openings that are closed by glass and different decorative details.
- The other style is similar to Ramallah peasants' houses, the main examples of this style are: Al-Khan and the Olive Mills

- **Ownership and occupancy,**

According to Riwaq (1998), because of the circumstances that Ramallah has gone through, more than half of the old buildings are rented by residents who originally come from the Mount of Hebron with a percentage of 41.3%, or by refugees from the occupied Palestinian Mediterranean coast with a percentage of 20.6%, while only 10.1% of the old town residents are originated from Ramallah (Table 5.1).

Table (5.1): Origin of Tenants among the Old Town of Ramallah

<b>Place of Origin</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Ramallah	10.1%
Coast Refugees	20.6%
Hebron	41.3%
Other West Bank Areas	21.8%
Gaza	0.8%
Other 48 Refugees	3.2%
Others	2.2%

Source: Social and economic revitalization: A case Study for the Conservation of the Historic Old Town of Ramallah, Riwaq and the Municipality of Ramallah (1998)

Unfortunately, some of the old buildings are totally deserted. According to Riwaq (1998) the research showed 50 deserted houses, this phenomena resulted from the owners' need for vacant houses in case they decide to return from Diaspora, and of the owners fear of tenants due to the existing British Laws of Rent in Palestine which give the tenants a semi–absolute protection.

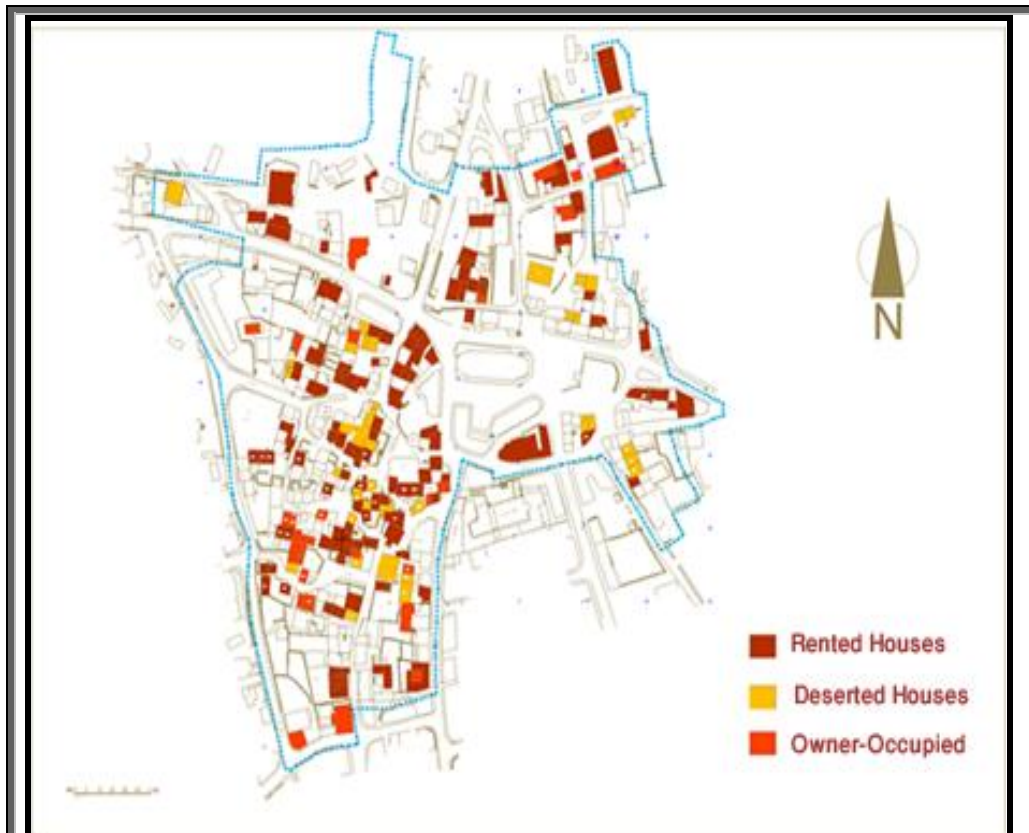


Figure (5.25): Historic Urban Fabric of the old town of Ramallah, Showing the occupied Houses.

Source: Researcher based on map done by Riwaq and the Municipality of Ramallah, Social and Economic revitalization: A case Study for the Conservation of the Historic Old Town of Ramallah, (1998) (the map was up-dated by the researcher)

It is worth to add that the Municipality of Ramallah owns a number of houses and a number of huge commercial buildings that were built on properties purchased from original inhabitants.

- **The economic causes of growth and decay**

Due to the agricultural origin of Ramallah, its prosperity and development can be traced back to the simple crafts and industries that served as assisting factors for farmers and agriculture. Hence; Ramallah became a

center of simple industry activity that attracted the attention of farmers from Ramallah, and the surrounding neighboring villages. Such industries were: manufacture of agricultural and farming equipment, carpentry, blacksmith and ironwork of doors and old traditional windows.

Besides that, traditional olive mills were established in the old town of Ramallah. According to Riwaq (1998) the first is in the heart of the old town (Dar Jaghab), the second is in hosh Dar Jerias which still contains the old olive grinding stones while the third is located near the Ramallah Court Hall (Al-Khan). The mills are indicative of the prosperous agricultural activity and light industries in the surrounding villages and territories. Also there had been available several old traditional bakeries in the old town (Figure 5.27).

In Ramallah old town the commercial and crafts stores are distributed in linear paths. Examples are El- Kandarjeh Street (shoe repair stores) that is adjacent to hosh Shinarah in Al-Shakrah neighborhood and the Roman Convent Street in Dar Jaghab neighborhood. Other examples are St. Joseph Rosaries in Al-Qderah, the old vegetable market, and Al Zeebaq and Al-Ankar storage stores in the heart of Al-Shakrah neighborhood.

The study conducted by Riwaq (1998) stated that the old town and the surrounding neighborhoods contained (384) commercial stores distributed according to the following categories:

- 1- Nutrition and food stores (142 stores)
- 2- Light industries and crafts (55 stores)

3- Consumption material (49 stores)

4- Closed stores (116 stores)

5- Restaurant and places of entertainment (5 stores)

6- Public services (17 stores)

This huge number of closed stores in the old town reflects the deteriorated economic situation of the area. For example the commercial street that is situated in the middle of the old town contains 45 stores, 20 of which are closed as Figure (5.26) shows.



Figure (5.26): Closed Commercial Stores Near to Police Station in the Heart of the Old Town  
Source: Researcher (2005)

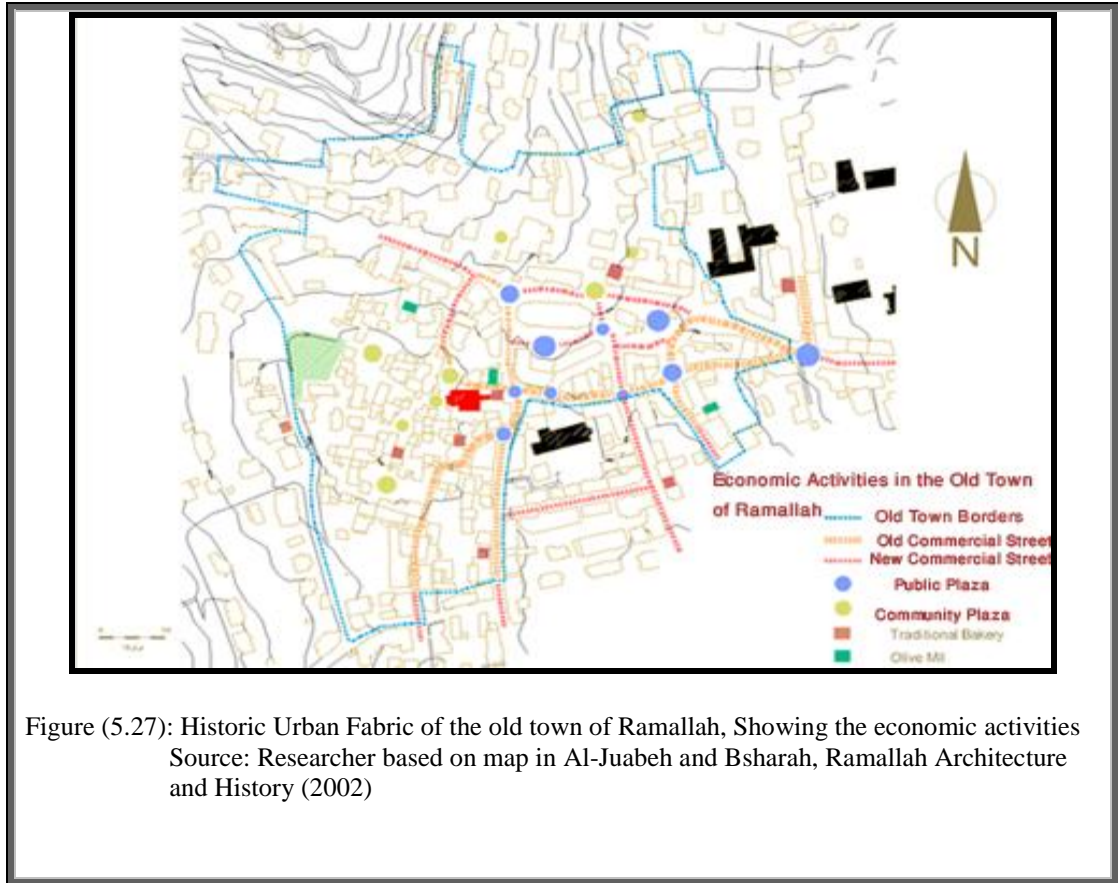


Figure (5.27): Historic Urban Fabric of the old town of Ramallah, Showing the economic activities  
 Source: Researcher based on map in Al-Juabeh and Bsharah, Ramallah Architecture and History (2002)

### 5.2.1.2 Ramallah Old Town Infrastructure Analysis

Infrastructure is an integral part of the development of the old town. It is about providing basic services that people need for everyday life: water, sanitation, modern energy, roads and other aspects of transport, and access to modern information communications technology. The development of the Infrastructure of the old town of Ramallah has passed many obstacles because of the different turns that Ramallah passed through during the last century, as a result of the political and economical inconsistent conditions.

This part is concerned of exploring the infrastructure conditions in the old town of Ramallah including: mobility, water supply system, and electricity network and sewage system.

- **Mobility,**

The prime reason behind the present roads and streets system of the old town can be traced back to the architectural formation of the area, where the compacted structure have created narrow curved paths between the houses. The width of a street is proportional to the level of surrounding activities. For example, the width of a path does not exceed three meters in the heart of the old town, but it expands in front of the vegetable market, Roman Orthodox Church, Kundargiah Street for the purpose of absorbing the commercial and social activities.



Figure (5.28): View of Al-Kdera Street in Front of Kundargiah Street Showing the Difference in Width.  
Source: Researcher, 2005.

It can be noticed that there still exists narrow paths and confined streets that were designed by old construction despite the widening of streets in other areas such as the Municipality Street, Dar Ibrahim Street, Ein Musbah Street and Al-Sahl Street (Figure 5.29).

The commercial development, manifested by the need for commercial streets lined up by commercial storage areas, has positively reflected on the organizational structure of the area. But when studying each street individually the grave deficiencies in the sidewalks, green spots, parking lots, street furniture, and street furniture become apparent.

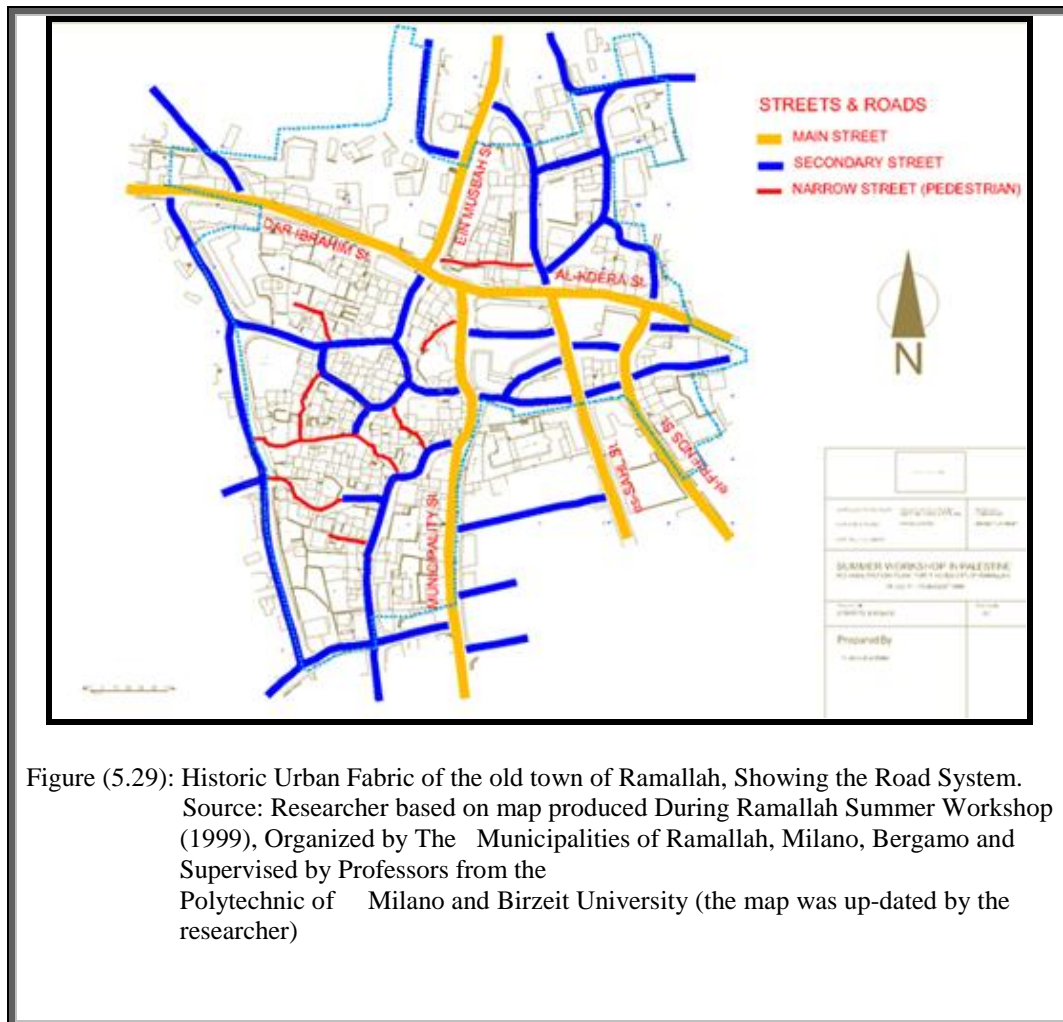
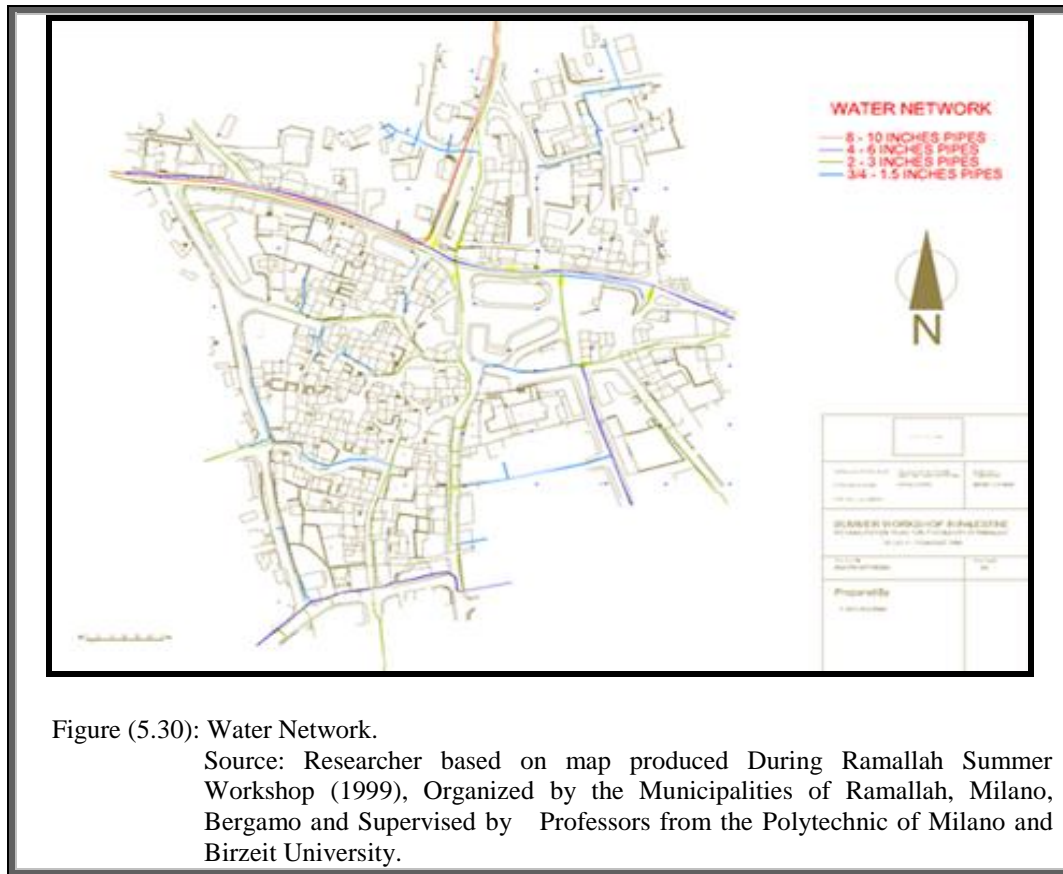


Figure (5.29): Historic Urban Fabric of the old town of Ramallah, Showing the Road System.  
 Source: Researcher based on map produced During Ramallah Summer Workshop (1999), Organized by The Municipalities of Ramallah, Milano, Bergamo and Supervised by Professors from the Polytechnic of Milano and Birzeit University (the map was up-dated by the researcher)

- **Water supply system,**

The 1998 up-dated water network map that was done with the cooperation of Ramallah Undertake Water Corporation shows that the water supply network is provided for the whole of the old city (Figure 5.30)



- **Electricity Network,**

The up-dated map for the electricity network of the old town of Ramallah that was done with the cooperation of the Jerusalem Electricity Corporation assigned that there is an electrical transformer in front of the Arab Bank building, which providing the whole of the old town with electricity (Figure 5.31).

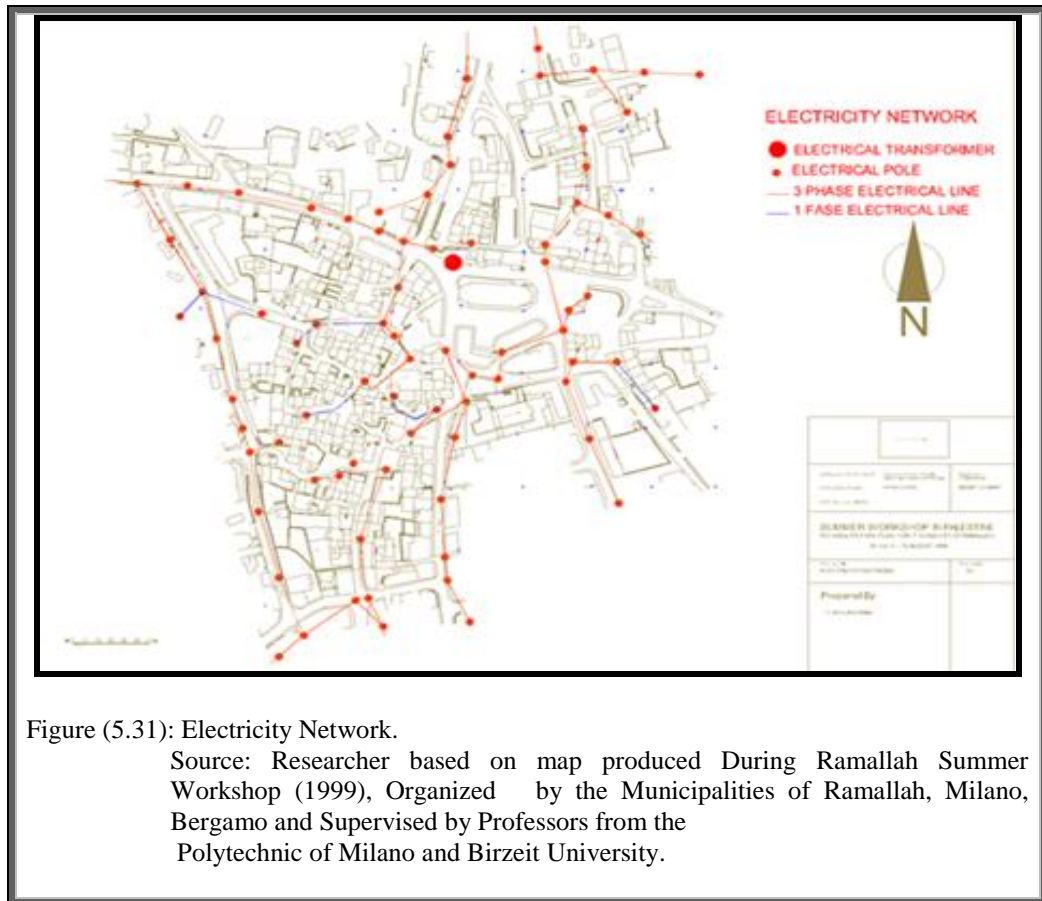


Figure (5.31): Electricity Network.

Source: Researcher based on map produced During Ramallah Summer Workshop (1999), Organized by the Municipalities of Ramallah, Milano, Bergamo and Supervised by Professors from the Polytechnic of Milano and Birzeit University.

- **Sewage System,**

The updated sewage network map done by Riwaq in 1998 based on the Ramallah Municipality sewage network plan shows that: the sewerage network is covering the whole of the old city, while most of the manholes are located on divisions' borders, and covered with asphalt. Also the manholes level are lower than the asphalt which causes damage to cars and damage to manholes because of water concentration in the manhole that causes rust. Besides that the sewage lines and water disposal lines are the same (Figure 5.32).



- Presence of deserted houses that can be rehabilitated.
- Presence of a number of houses and commercial buildings owned by the Municipality of Ramallah.
- Private gardens that surrounding the old town were planted by fruit trees and vineyards. Unlike newly constructed neighborhoods in Ramallah the old town was green.
- Necessity of green spots within the housing neighborhoods and commercial streets.
- No children play grounds.
- Most of the residents of Ramallah old town are not the original owners.
- Necessity for maintenance of many of the houses.
- Presence of some high buildings like the Arab Bank building which disturb Ramallah Old Town sky line that was formed by the human scale of one or two story buildings.
- No character of commercial streets, different shop canopies, signs and doors.
- A huge number of closed stores.
- The rain water drainage and sewage are collected together.
- Bad garbage collective system.
- Traffic congestion in the main streets namely in Dar Ibrahim Street, Al- Sahl Street and the Municipality Street because of car parking alongside the main roads.
- The existing Gas station located in the main plaza contributes negatively to the environment and traffic in the area.
- Lack of side walks in the commercial areas.
- Necessity for parking lots.

### **5.2.2 Ramallah Old Town Socio –Economical Analysis**

During the past decades the old town has witnessed radical changes in its social and economic structure as well as a change in the status and relationship between various social groups and different ownership forms and characteristics.

The socio-economical study of Ramallah old town depends mainly on the field survey. So questionnaire has been prepared to explore the old town citizens' opinion about the existing urban planning situation in the old town and their attitude toward the old city development (Appendix III). Also three hypotheses will be tested in the questionnaire to find out whether the regeneration approach is suitable to be used in Ramallah old town or not? Discovering the relation between socio-economical factors and the physical situation of the old town shall help in defining the potentials of the old town of Ramallah and how it can be developed with respecting to the old town social and economical reality.

The questionnaire was designed for a sample of 50 units knowing that the sample unit is the family and the respondent is the household.

The questionnaire consists of five main parts:

- General information about the sample unit as gender, educational level, family members, income level....
- Questions related to the neighborhood physical situation,
- Questions related to the housing unit physical situation,
- Questions related to the social situation,
- Questions related to economical situation.

The survey was distributed by using the systematic random sample method to represent the old town citizens. The number of responses collected was 50 out of 50, since the questionnaire form was filled by the researcher himself.

Data in the questionnaire was analyzed using the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software which represents different kinds of analysis, which are:

- The simple analysis concerning the frequencies, response to the questions and percentages of the inhabitants' answers.

- The Cross tabulated analysis which is another type of analysis connecting questions related to each other and the type of response in these combined relationships.

The responses were analyzed, the findings were presented in different tables and figures and the hypothesis were tested by using the chi-square test (The non-parametric test often used when comparing two or more groups, using nominal level data). All these findings are explained in the following parts.

### 5.2.2.1 General Information Analysis

The general analysis presents respondent’s answers towards gender, educational level, marital status, family size, profession, income level and the neighborhood name in relation to Ramallah original families.

The respondents’ gender distribution was between 92% male and 8% female (Table 5.2). The educational level of the sample shows that 68% didn’t have their high school Diploma (Table 5.3). The respondents are in 82% married and the family size differs from 1-11 members, the highest percentage is between 6-8 members. The household profession is in most cases craft man (Table 5.4), while the Income of the sample in 78% is less than 2000 shekel (Table 5.5), knowing that the average household monthly expenditure is 535 JD (Jordanian Dinar, around 3250 shekel) for a household consisting of about 7 persons (PCBS, 2004).

Table (5.2): The Household Gender

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	92 %
Female	8 %
Total	100.0

Source: Researcher

Table (5.3): The Educational Level

<b>Education Level</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Less than High school	68%
High School	18%
High Diploma	10%
Bachelor	2%
Masters	2%
Total	100.0

Source: Researcher

Table (5.4): Profession

<b>Profession</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Carpenter	3
Police man	1
Dental technician	1
Municipality officer	3
Office keeper	2
Street sailors	2
Construction worker	6
Trade man	6
Governmental officer	4
Driver	3
Chief man	1
Free Business	1
Steel worker	1
Plumber	1
Baker	1
Tailor	1

Source: Researcher

Table (5.5): Income Level

<b>Income (Shekel)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
0	4%
400	2%
500	8%
1,000	14%
1,200	4%
1,500	28%
2,000	18%
2,500	6%
3,000	12%
5,000	2%
6,000	2%
Total	100.0

Source: Researcher

#### **5.2.2.2 Neighborhood Physical Situation Analysis**

A summary of the evaluation of the neighborhood physical situation is demonstrated in (Table 5.6). It shows that excluding the traffic congestion in the old town, the infrastructure conditions are good according to the citizens' opinion, but the main physical problems are concentrated on the unavailability of open spaces, gardens and trees besides the problems of a high percentage of destructed and abandoned buildings in the old town.

Table (5.6): Neighborhood Physical Conditions

Physical Condition	Availability	
	Yes	No
Open Spaces	24%	76%
Gardens	24%	76%
Paved Streets	90%	10%
Destructed Buildings	40%	60%
Abandoned Buildings	70%	30%
Trees on Street Sides	30%	70%
Street Lighting	98%	2%
Traffic Congestion	50%	50%
Daily needs	100%	0%
Electricity	98%	2%
Water Supply System	98%	2%
Sewage	92%	8%
Telephone Network	100%	0%

Source: Researcher

The survey showed that 84% evaluate the physical situation of the old town neighborhood to be moderate, 54% were not satisfied of the old town visual appearance, 48% were not satisfied of the public services level of the old town of Ramallah, and 52% want to leave the old town. The reasons for the respondents' desire for leaving the old town are explained in the following table (Table 5.7), from which we can see that 72% of the respondents clarify that the unsuitable environment for children is the major reason for their desire to leave.

Table (5.7): Reason for Leaving the Old Town

<b>Reason for Leaving the Old Town</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Bad Infrastructure Condition	36%
Abandoned Buildings	56%
Unsuitable Environment for kids	72%
Narrow Streets	60%
Unavailable Commercial Services	12%
Traffic Congestion	32%
Unavailable Social Services	56%

Source: Researcher

### 5.2.2.3 House Physical Situation Analysis

The physical situation of the residential units of the old town of Ramallah was analyzed in the third part of the questionnaire .One of the most important information is the ownership type, which showed that 76% of the respondents rent their housing units (Table 5.8). Also it is important to know that 70% of the respondents live in houses built before 1948.

Table (5.8): Ownership

<b>Ownership Type</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Owner	22 %
Tenant	76%
No money	2%

Source: Researcher

The respondents' evaluation for the physical situation of their houses shows that 38% of the houses are in moderate situation and 22% are in bad situation, as shown in (Table 5.9). A summery of the housing unit conditions is demonstrated in (Table 5.10).

Table (5.9): Evaluation of the housing unit physical situation

<b>Physical Situation</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Excellent	4 %
Good	36%
Moderate	38%
Bad	22%

Source: Researcher

Table (5.10): Housing Unit Physical Situation

<b>Housing Unit Condition</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
No Enough Area for Family	58%
Additions and Extensions	56%
No Bathroom inside	20 %
No Kitchen inside	16 %
Poor Ventilation	38 %
Humidity Problems	72 %
Poor Lighting	22 %
No Place for Parking	40%
No Garden	88%
No Place for Children to play	66%

Source: Researcher

80% of the respondents want to restore their houses. The reasons why they didn't restore them is different but 92% of them prioritized that the most effective reason the economical obstacles (Table 5.11) shows the suggested solutions for resolving the economical obstacles.

Table (5.11): Suggested Solutions for Economical Obstacles

<b>Suggested Solution</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Bank Financial Loan	27%
Relative Financial help	8.1%
Municipality Help	35.1%
Governmental organizations Help	29.7%
Non-Governmental Organizations Help	29.7%

Source: Researcher

56% of the respondents want to leave their houses (Table 5.12), and they want to be compensated for that either financially, physically or other kinds of compensations (Table 5.13). For those who don't want to leave their houses the reasons is explained in (Table 5.14).

Table (5.12): leaving the House

<b>Do you want to leave your house?</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	56%
No	44%

Source: Researcher

Table (5.13): Kind of Compensation

<b>Compensation</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
No compensation	0%
Financial Compensation	35.7%
Physical Compensation	39.3%
Other	25%

Source: Researcher

Table (5.14): Reasons for not leaving the House

<b>Reason for not Leaving</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Owning the House	27.3%
Relative in the Neighborhood	54.5%
Nearness to the Place of Work	45.5%
The House in Good Physical Situation	68.2%
Other Reasons	57.1%

Source: Researcher

#### 5.2.2.4 Neighborhood Social Services Analysis

The evaluation of the social services in the neighborhood consists of two parts the first is concerned with the social services that are available in the area as (Table 5.15) presents; the second is concerned about the social problems in the neighborhood as (Table 5.16) presents.

Table (5.15): Social Services in the Neighborhood

<b>Social Services</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Christian Worship Houses	90%
Muslim Worship Houses	96%
Clinic	26.5%
Nursery	67.3%
Governmental Elementary School	92%
Special Elementary School	58%
Youth Center	68%
Gardens for Adults and Kids	26%
Sport Center and Playgrounds	16%
Aged Center	4%

Source: Researcher

Table (5.16): Social Problems in the Neighborhood

<b>Social Problems</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Disabled	44.9%
Family Problems	57.1%
Un-employment	26.5%
Chronic Diseases	67.3%
School Ditching	92%

Source: Researcher

About the respondents' evaluation of the social situation in the neighborhood 58% said that they are satisfied while 42% are not satisfied, 64% think that the physical situation of the neighborhood influence the social conditions of the residents.

#### **5.2.2.5 Neighborhood Economical Situation Analysis**

Concerning the economical situation in Ramallah old town neighborhoods, 48% of the respondents are working in the old town. The economical situation is evaluated by the respondents to be moderate in 44% and bad in 46%, and according to their opinion the factors affecting the economy in the old town varies. (Table 5.17) is showing these factors.

Table (5.17): Factors Affecting the Old Town Economy

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
The Existing of Vegetable Market will Enhance the Economy	30%
Relocation of the Bus Station will diminish the Economy	88%
Investment in the old town will be useful	82%
Encouraging the Investment will improve the social services	84%
Encouraging the Investment will improve the Economy	84%
Encouraging the Investment will increase The job opportunities	90%
Loan System will encourage Investors to Found New Investments	74%

Source: Researcher

94% of the respondents agree to create new and modern economical activities in the old town. These new activities are varied from computer companies to restaurants and cinema houses (Table 5.18).

Table (5.18): New Economical Activities

<b>New Economical Activities</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Computer Companies	94%
Touristic Companies	92%
Media Companies	84%
Publishing Companies	92%
Insurance Companies	90%
Restaurants	86%
Cinema	42%

Source: Researcher

### 5.2.2.6 Socio-economical Survey Results

The findings of the survey can be summarized as:

- The ownership type is connected to the physical situation of the house since most of the residents are not the original owners.
- Bad visual appearance in the old town.
- Deterioration of housing conditions and overpopulation.
- High percentage of abandoned and destructed buildings.
- Emigration from the old town.
- The main reasons for leaving the old town are because of unsuitable environment for children, narrow streets, Necessity of social services and abandoned buildings.
- Lack of gardens and open spaces.
- Shortage of youth services.
- Shortage of recreational facilities for children.
- Lack of centers for the aged.
- High incidence of truancy and school dropouts.
- Family problems and disintegration.
- High percentage of disabled and sick people.
- Low income level regarding to the average household monthly expenditure.
- Lack of any development or regeneration plans for the commercial sector.
- Limited investment in the old town of Ramallah.
- Lack of employment opportunities.

## **Chapter Six**

# **Regeneration Approach for Ramallah Old Town**

## **6.1 Major Hypothesis of the Study**

According to Kocabaş (2004) when developing a strategy to safeguard the old city considering its values, more will be achieved if traditional urban conservation planning is re-conceptualised as a component of sustainable urban regeneration, which integrated three main aspects of the old city: the physical, the social and the economical. Besides, any framework for development and growth of the old city built environment must be sensitive to the local contexts and sympathetic to people's needs.

This is approved through studying and analyzing the cases of the urban regeneration project in the old city of Aleppo/ Syria and Al- Kairouan rehabilitation project in Tunis. In Aleppo old city the main approach of the project is the urban regeneration and in Al-Kairouan rehabilitation project the urban conservation is the main approach. While Aleppo project leads to a more livable and sustainable old city, Al-Kairouan rehabilitation project leads to conserve the urban fabric of the old city and not to conserve its economy and social life, which doesn't serve the old city livability and sustainability.

So the first hypothesis of the study which stated that: "Safeguarding the old city is more than a traditional conservation process of the physical structures, but it is a combination of a regeneration plan that deals with the physical, social and economical aspects" is accepted.

Focusing on the study case of Ramallah old town, it is important to determine whether the regeneration approach is useful to safeguard the old town and appropriate to its' social and economical potentials or not. So three minor hypotheses are stated and tested through the questionnaire results.

## 6.2 Testing the Minor Hypothesis

The questionnaire main objective is to find out whether the regeneration approach is suitable to be used in Ramallah old town or not? So the following null hypothesis ( $H^{\circ}$ ) and alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) are stated:

- **Hypotheses One**

$H1^{\circ}$ : There is no relation between the physical situations of the neighborhood and the social situation.

$H1_a$ : There is a relation between the physical situation of the neighborhood and the social situation.

- **Hypotheses Two**

$H2^{\circ}$ : There is no relation between the physical situations of the neighborhood and the economical situation.

$H2_a$ : There is a relation between the physical situation of the neighborhood and the economical situation.

- **Hypotheses Three**

$H3^{\circ}$ : There is no relation between the ownership type and the physical situation of the housing unit.

$H3_a$ : There is a relation between the ownership type and the physical situation of the housing unit.

Hypothesis one is tested by using the chi-square test (The non-parametric test often used when comparing two or more groups, using nominal level data), and results show that there is no significant statistical relation between the two values since the level of significance  $(P) = 0.404 > 0.05$  (The standard level of significance used to justify a claim of a statistically significant effect which means that the probability of mistakenly rejecting the null hypothesis is only 5%) as (Table 6.1) shows, so the null hypothesis is accepted, there is no relation between the physical situations of the neighborhood and the social situation.

This result can be explained by that the respondents' perception of the question "how do you evaluate the social situation of the neighborhood?" was related to the residents' social level and not related to the social services.

Table (6.1): Chi-Square Test, Hypothesis One

<b>Chi-Square Tests</b>			
	Value	Degrees of Freedom	Asymp. Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.814	2	0.404
Likelihood Ratio	1.798	2	0.407
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.913	1	0.339
N of Valid Cases	50		
a. 4 cells (66.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .84.			

Source: Researcher

Note:

- Value: Test statistics
- Degrees of Freedom: the number of values in the final calculation of a statistic that are free to vary.
- Asymp. Significance (2-sided): Significance Level (the probability of obtaining wrong when rejecting the null.
- Pearson Chi-Square: the most common type of chi-square significance test.

- Likelihood Ratio: Alternative procedure to test the hypothesis.
- Linear-by-Linear Association: an ordinal measure of significance.
- N of Valid Cases: number of the sample.

Hypothesis two also is tested by using the chi-square test, the results show that there is a significant statistical relation between the two values since  $P=0.00 < 0.05$  as (Table 6.2) illustrates, so the alternative hypothesis is accepted which stated that there is relation between the physical situation of the neighborhood and the economical situation.

Table (6.2): Chi-Square Test, Hypothesis Two

<b>Chi-Square Tests</b>			
	Value	Degrees of Freedom	Asymp. Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	22.213	4	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	14.013	4	0.007
Linear-by-Linear Association	9.165	1	0.002
N of Valid Cases	50		
a. 7 cells (77.8%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .20.			

Source: Researcher

Hypothesis three, which concentrates on the relation between the ownership type and the physical conditions of the house is tested by the chi-square test as (Table 6.3) shows, since  $P=0.022 < 0.05$ , there is a significant statistical relation between the two values, so the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis that stated there is relation between the ownership type and the physical situation of the housing unit is accepted.

Table (6.3): Chi-Square Test, Hypothesis Three

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Degrees of Freedom	Asymp. Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.798	6	0.022
Likelihood Ratio	16.646	6	0.011
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.552	1	0.010
N of Valid Cases	50		
a. 9 cells (75.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .04.			

Source: Researcher

### 6.3 Minor Hypothesis Testing Conclusion

So the test shows that:

- The residents' of Ramallah old town don't agree with the relation between the social situation and the physical situation of the old town.
- The residents' of Ramallah old town agreed that there is a relation between the economical situation of the area and the physical situation of it.
- This can be explained by the term social situation was not clear to them, their perception of the term leads to the social ranking of the residents, and they respond with no relation between the two values which means whether the physical situation of the area is bad or good they are a social group that deserve good and appropriate living conditions, thus it is approved that they will accept a plan which improve the physical aspect to gain an economical development and better social services.
- The residents' of Ramallah old town approve the relation between the ownership type and the physical situation of the housing unit, which leads to that there is a

need to restructuring the ownership system in the old town of Ramallah in order to improve its physical appearance.

All of that approve the need to an urban regeneration plan that develops the old town physically, socially and economically.

## 6.4 Regeneration approach for Ramallah Old Town

### 6.4.1 Introduction

According to the findings and hypothesis' testing the main conclusions can be translated to that the old town of Ramallah is facing a real challenge in protecting its identity and accomplishing the present day modern needs which causes a disturbing in the visual appearance of the old town. As in the case of Aleppo old city the new social and economic factors were difficult to accommodate within the natural process of revitalization, so it become obvious that what came naturally before should be redefined now.

As well, the findings of the questionnaire shows that 52% of the residences want to leave the old town, the main reasons for such a desire are:

- The unsuitable environment for children.
- The shortage of green open spaces.
- The abandoned buildings.

This approves the need to advance the physical structure of the old town and improves the social services.

The minor hypothesis' testing shows that there is an exchange relationship between the physical situation of the old town and the social and economical situation. So there is a need for an approach that deal with these three derivations (Fig 6.1).

Emphasizing that the regeneration approach is a strategy that safeguards the old city, considering its physical, social and economical aspects as it was conducted in the case of Aleppo project.

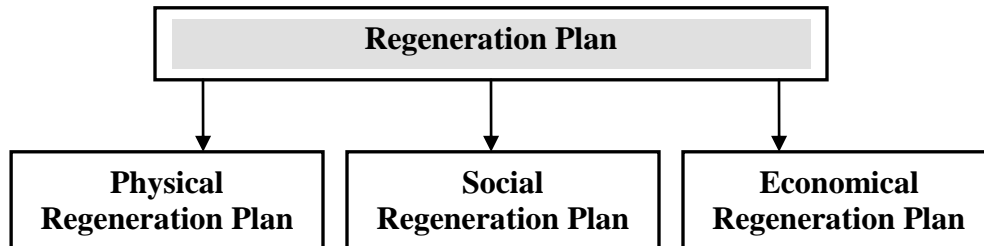


Figure (6.1): Diagram Explains the Three Derivatives of Regeneration Plan  
Source: Researcher

Concerning the main goal of the study which is longing to discover the old city dynamism that still exist and utilize it for safeguarding, as well as the results of the analysis of the existing physical and socio-economical conditions of the old town of Ramallah, it is important to point out the vision and strategies to accomplish the study goals.

#### **6.4.2 Ramallah Regeneration Approach Vision**

The proposed vision generated from the spirit of the time and place, aims to realize the plan's strategies and achieve a balance between the old town's components and its objectives. The vision can be summarized thus:

“The Old Town of Ramallah is a living town that summarizing the time and geography, integrating the past cultures and enters the clash with modernity combining the originality and modernity and engenders a sense of tranquility and serenity”

### **6.4.3 General Strategy for Ramallah Old Town Regeneration**

The regeneration plan's main objectives are: safeguarding of the old town traditional structures and environmental relationships and rising up with the social and economical values of the old town. The general strategy to realize the plan's objectives can be implemented through adopting strategies for the various sectors, since Fathy (1992) explained that if we try to renew the city plot by plot, we shall not have enough freedom to make it contemporary, where as if we take it sector by sector, we immediately have the opportunity of making the sector contemporary. These strategies which concerned with the planning, rehabilitation, social and economical sectors will be described later.

The suggested general implementation strategies for the regeneration of the old town can be summarized as follows:

- 1- Activating the Municipality of Ramallah role in safeguarding the old town. Through providing maintenance for buildings and sites of special cultural, historic and architectural significance, and developing term of references that organizes the intervention in different old town neighborhoods and the surrounding areas.
- 2- Creating local and international awareness of the importance of regenerating Ramallah old town, highlighting its character and identity.
- 3- Implementing the international laws and regulations for protection of the cultural heritage.
- 4- Providing financial resources to attract residents and investors.

- 5- Providing adequate infrastructure and services to attract investment and economic activities compatible with old town needs and priorities.
- 6- Securing suitable living conditions for the old town residents through recognizing the individual as the main axis for the development and regeneration process and provision of the necessary services and infrastructure needed for the natural development.
- 7- Integrating with the general context of Ramallah city.
- 8- Encouraging movement of population and economic, functional and cultural activities to the old town.
- 9- Protecting the peasants' character of the old town and ensuring the existence of the original owners in it.

Under these general strategies important detailed strategies related to the different sectors are recommended as follows:

#### **6.4.3.1 Planning Strategies**

This is based on directing the urban development process by:

- 1- Preparing a new detailed master plan for the old town of Ramallah.
- 2- Taking the initiative to prepare detailed plans that allow for development and construction in unplanned areas in the old town.
- 3- Exploring the means, which the Municipality of Ramallah can use to respond to the benefit of the old town residents and provide their needs.

The proposed recommendations need a detailed plan consisting of four components:

A) Dealing with current planning concepts and adapting them to be utilized for the regeneration plan. This could be done by reviewing plans approved by Ramallah municipality to assess their contents, objectives and implementation tools. This information can be utilized in the rehabilitation process to guide investors when housing, service and economic projects are developed.

B) Providing financial and human resources for planning and development:

- Establishing companies or co-operatives, which can provide resources for private initiatives and institutions active in fields relevant to the regeneration process by establishing a programme in an existing bank to offer easy credit for economic regeneration projects or housing rehabilitation.
- Establishing a mechanism for compensating the residents of the houses and re-occupy them by their original owners.
- Establishing development projects for buildings owned by the municipality based on design studies to adapt them to modern uses relevant to regeneration plan.
- Developing the proper mechanism for settling problems of partner ownership for the benefit of partners.
- Providing means for using uncultivated land inside and outside the old town to implement economical and landscape projects.

C) Dealing with building and land ownership and using it in different ways .in this regard, it is important to undertake the following:

- Encourage landlords to rehabilitate their buildings according to their needs and capabilities.
- Encourage local institutions in Ramallah to be actively involved in the regeneration process of the old town.
- Establish companies or institutions for housing and rehabilitation and finding a mechanism for cooperation and partnership between the landlords and these institutions.
- Encourage the re-use of private abandoned buildings to create economic and service projects after rehabilitation.

D) Preparing an institutional public framework to create a suitable environment for development and investment in Ramallah through:

- Cooperation with residents and selected social and political groups in the old town.
- Cooperation with municipal or public institutions in Ramallah such as First Ramallah Group, the Islamic Club...etc.
- Coordination with institutions and organizations with a development and social role. This includes:
  - Holding seminars and meetings to examine the property and ownership issues and their impact on the regeneration project.
  - Supporting institutions and the organizations that initiate public and economic activities in the old town.

- Encouraging establishment of investment companies between owners and beneficiaries based on partnership in property ownership.

#### **6.4.3.2 Rehabilitation Strategies**

The preservation of cultural heritage and the rehabilitation of housing are the main objectives of the regeneration approach, since according to Madannipour (1996) the identity of city is related to the neighborhood and the public urban space. This involves:

- 1- Physical rehabilitation of houses and attempts to stop random construction and unprofessional restoration works that could be hazardous to public health and safety.
- 2- Securing basic health and environmental conditions for families of all social and economic backgrounds by specific and different types of intervention according to the needs of each building.

The regeneration approach also seeks to achieve a balance between housing rehabilitation and the protection of cultural heritage using proper conservation techniques based on the following:

- Preparing a conservation plan for specific buildings based on building type and architectural style. The conservation process includes the building's physical survey and historic documentation.

- Using traditional building materials and methods, where possible, and avoiding modern materials that could be harmful to the original historic structure and its distinctive style.
- Raising public awareness of the importance of protecting the historic buildings and monuments and encouraging the public to participate in the regeneration process.
- Classifying the buildings in the old town, which were examined during the national registration according to the geographical location, architectural style, ornamentation, distinctive architectural features, historical significance and physical conditions.
- Providing regular and continued maintenance of the restored buildings to ensure the sustainability of the work.
- Preparing a simplified manual with instructions for rehabilitation and maintenance of historic buildings that can be easily used by residents and technicians based on the cultural and architectural value of these buildings.

Establishing specific intervention mechanisms for each category that has been classified based on the individual inspection of each building and beginning the implementation according to the following proposed priorities:

- 1-Ease of intervention based on clear legal status such as availability of documents for ownership, protected tenure, and approval of landlord or user.

- 2- Type of intervention (planning, guiding, implementing, supervising, funding and educating).It could be one or more types.
- 3- Importance of intervention, based on the critical nature of the building's physical and structural condition, and / or risks of takeover by extreme settler groups.
- 4- The economic and social needs of the user.
- 5- Possibility of public and institutional participation in the intervention process.

#### **6.4.3.3 Social Development Strategies**

Social development is one of the main components of the plan. It includes raising living standards, increasing awareness of the physical part of the regeneration process its social importance by contributing to the consolidation of family and social ties as well as to social activities in the old town.

Emphasizing the role of public in the regeneration process is a key issue that should be implemented through local institutions, landlords and beneficiaries targeted by the plan without whom the plan cannot be realized.

Improving the social services in the old town is so important, which includes providing public open spaces, green spaces and gardens, playgrounds, elderly house...etc, side by side to providing a safe and balanced social environment at home, in the howsh and the neighborhood. This strategy can be realized through programmes that include protective as well as curative measures.

#### **6.4.3.4 Economic Development Strategies**

The suggested approach aims to implement a strategy for regeneration of the old town economic base by attempting to transform it to a livable commercial and services center. The objectives of this strategy are directed to modernize the town's business and to increase the job opportunities at all levels of quality. This will be realized through organizing economic, social, cultural and marketing activities, in addition to providing financial support to encourage investment and establishing a partnership between private and public sectors as well as with the local institutions.

The strategy should also aim to integrate with areas surrounding the old town specially the modern commercial center of Ramallah. This will strengthen the link with the modern city as there is economic extension. In more details the economic development Strategies will involve:

- Identify stable business, which contributes positively to the Old town's financial recovery and redevelopment.
- Analyze and define business, which require space outside the Old town and should be relocated.
- Establish adequate indirect measures (infrastructure) and direct tools to encourage economic growth according to realistic spatial and economic objectives.
- Elaborate an overall Subject Plan 'Urban Economy' which can give detailed reasons for adequate measures and tools.

It is also possible to use the old town strong, albeit, undeveloped assets such as:

1. The strategic location of Ramallah as a link between north and south of the West Bank.
2. The role of Ramallah as an administrative center.
3. The nearness of the old town center to the modern commercial center.
4. Availability of traditional abandoned buildings.
5. Availability of some un-planned locations.
6. Availability of labor.
7. The residents desire of inserting new investments.

Finally, it is important to explain that the regeneration approach can't be successfully implemented without an institutional set up that take in its responsibility the management of the whole process to ensure the implementation and sustainability of the regeneration plan.

## **6.5 Conclusions**

The study reveals that the urban conservation approach to old city safeguarding is not sustainable in many aspects. The lack of well-defined policies or of rigor in their enforcement, as well as the absence of commitment to social and economical issues may carry important costs in the future. According to Kocabaş (2004) more will be achieved if traditional urban conservation planning is re-conceptualised as a component of sustainable urban regeneration, which combines the physical, social and economical aspects. In the case of Ramallah old town the questionnaire results shows a clear agreement with the necessity to manage the physical, social and economical aspects in order to achieve the safeguarding objectives.

The experience of recent projects such as Aleppo regeneration project in Syria and Al-Kairouan conservation project in Tunisia, has demonstrated that a realistic safeguarding program must go for a regeneration approach as a comprehensive and integrated process.

The case of Ramallah old town proves that there is a potential for applying the regeneration approach, depending on local historical, social and economical resources.

For regeneration to be implemented in a more integrated way, a great concern towards social issues and for the protection of the existing communities must be developed. Great consideration for the protection of the natural, historical and physical aspects of the old city and the region would also be necessary for the development of a sensitive regeneration approach, besides emphasizing the old city identity by preserving its neighborhoods and public spaces diversity. Accordingly, the regeneration approach for the old town of Ramallah depend on general strategy and sub-strategies which concerned with the planning, rehabilitation, social and economical sectors and sensitive to Ramallah old town values and diversity.

A form of contemporary architecture which integrates traditional styles with the new requirements of a modern society could also be developed. The adaptation of tradition to modern city living could help create an environment that is technically functional and perceptually coherent. According to Fathy (1992), at any stage of a city's growth we should be able to see if any one element is lagging behind the others in development, and once we come to improve the city, we accept the responsibility for the future. Therefore it is concluded that there is an urgent need for a comprehensive and dynamic town plan that make the whole city contemporary.

In Ramallah old town the regeneration strategies emphasizing on the protection of the identity of the town by rehabilitating its neighborhoods and its public urban spaces and trying to achieve a balance between housing rehabilitation and the protection of cultural heritage using proper conservation. Finally, the suggested regeneration approach for Ramallah old town is aiming to take action and look for innovative ways of safeguarding the town.

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