The Palestinian Strategic Report

2012 – 2013

Edited By

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Chapter Six

The Land and the Holy Sites

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The Land and the Holy Sites

Introduction

During 2012–2013 Jerusalem witnessed great leaps in Israel's Judaization project. During the 2013 elections, groups advocating the construction of the "temple" and the destruction of *al-Aqsa* Mosque were able to acquire elections unprecedented political status. At the same time, they managed to improve their organization, activities and ability to coordinate. No observer or researcher will fail to see that the Judaization of Jerusalem is one of the central goals of the Israeli state, for which it utilizes resources and energy; it is progressing on the ground in an unprecedentedly efficient manner, and that it has been increasingly acquiring US cover.

Israeli settlement expansion continues to go hand in hand with land confiscation programs, construction of housing units, destruction of Palestinian agriculture, imposition of control over Palestinian water, laying bypass roads, and demolition of Palestinian homes. This is in addition to the continuing the siege of the GS and military attacks against it, destruction of its infrastructure, obstruction of fishing, and other programs for attacking Palestinians and their land.

First: Islamic and Christian Holy Sites

1. *Al-Aqsa* Mosque

a. Developments in the Political, Religious and Legal Stances Towards *al-Aqsa* Mosque

After *al-Aqsa* Mosque was occupied in 1967, the occupation authorities enacted a law called "Protection of Holy Places Law," which consisted of five items that included protecting the holy places from "desecration and any other violation," and determined a punishment for those who desecrate them or "violate the freedom of access of the members of the different religions to the places sacred to them."[1] In practice, the Israeli government interpreted this text by directing the Israeli police to prevent Jews from entering *al-Aqsa* Mosque, citing many factors and considerations. The mosque was placed under the management of the Ministry

of Defense, in a tacit admission that *al-Aqsa* Mosque is an occupied territory, the same as the rest of the WB territories captured in the war of 1967, contrary to what Zionist decrees had declared in their theory of annexing Jerusalem.

In view of these historical facts, this law and its interpretation by the Israeli police constituted a barrier to Orthodox Jews advocating the construction of the "temple." And with their gradual rise since the 1990s, these groups faced two choices: either to enact substitute legislation in the Knesset that explicitly states "the rights of Jews" over *al-Aqsa* Mosque, or resort to Israeli courts in the hope of securing gradual change in the interpretation of this law.

Since 1993, these groups began a game of exchanging roles with Israeli courts; at first they presented an inquiry to the "Supreme Court" in which they asked whether what it called the "Temple Mount" was part of the "Land of Israel"; the reply came in the affirmative. Then at the turn of the 21st century, they applied for Jews' entry into the mosque, based on the first judgment. In 2003, a provision was issued that allows Jews to enter the mosque; thus, for the first time, changing the task of the Israeli police from preventing Jews from entering, to allowing them in. Then, in 2005, a new provision was enacted that allowed Jews entry en masse "in non-Muslim prayer time." The court thus disclosed for the first time, albeit implicitly, an agenda for dividing *al-Aqsa* Mosque. Then in 2010, these groups presented a request to make offerings inside *al-Aqsa* Mosque; the court denied their request for security reasons.[2]

It seems that this legal route has reached saturation in terms of what can be achieved, as the rules of access to *al-Aqsa* Mosque have indeed changed. With the accumulation of permissions allowing Jews to enter the mosque, individually and in groups, the task of the Israeli police having changed from preventing them from entering, to protecting them and their incursions. A special task force was formed to protect Jews inside the mosque, and a security field of cameras, thermal sensors, and three-dimensional simulation programs was installed in all parts of *al-Aqsa* Mosque, the roofed and the non-roofed areas.

Despite these developments, extremist Jewish groups went to the Knesset again to complete their project. And since they had, in the previous Knesset, a limited pressure group of seven deputies, on 9/8/2012 they let their deputies present a plan to divide *al-Aqsa* Mosque into a full temporal division; consisting of nine hours a day for Jewish worshipers, and nine hours a day for Muslim worshipers,

and to limit access to it to Jews on Jewish holidays and to Muslims on Islamic holidays.[3] Despite the fact that the Speaker of the Knesset withdrew this item from circulation at that meeting, fearing the repercussions of discussing it, the project has revealed the goals of these groups in unequivocal terms.

The 19th Knesset elections on 22/1/2013, gave the temple groups greater political influence; and in the formation of the government emerging from the elections, they comprised a bloc of six ministers and deputy ministers, namely:[4]

1. Uri Yehuda Ariel, one of the biggest advocates of continuous incursions into *al-Aqsa* Mosque, and an active participant in them. He belongs to The Jewish Home Party (*HaBayit HaYehudi*), and was appointed Minister of Construction and Housing.

2. Naftali Bennett, a member of The Jewish Home Party, Minister of Religious Services, Minister of Industry, Trade, and Labor, and Minister of Jerusalem and Diaspora Affairs.

3. Danny Danon is the one who proposed a bill to ban the early morning (Fajr) call to prayer (Adhan) from mosques, a member of Likud-Yisrael Beitenu, Deputy Minister of Defense.

4. Zeev Elkin is the one who proposed division in terms of time allowed to visit *al-Aqsa*, presented on 9/8/2012; a member of Likud-Yisrael Beitenu; Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.

5. Tzipi Hotovely is a member of the Likud Party, Danon's partner in the bill to ban the early morning call to prayer; Deputy Minister of Transport and Road Safety.

6. Eli Ben-Dahan, a member of The Jewish Home Party, Deputy Minister of Religious Services.
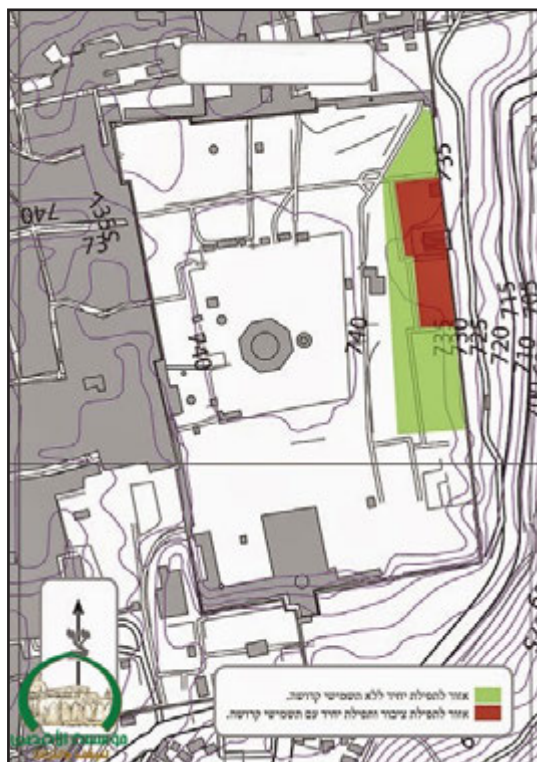
In addition, there are two leaders at the Knesset level: Rabbi Moshe Feiglin, a member of Likud-Yisrael Beitenu, is deputy speaker of Knesset, and Miri Regev, chairwoman of the Knesset Internal Affairs and Environment Committee.[5]

Despite this unprecedented progress, these groups did not submit a new draft law on the division to the Knesset. They rather opted to use their newfound powers to put pressure on state agencies to advance their agenda. Thus, they offered an idea for consideration to the effect that *al-Aqsa* Mosque is not under Israeli sovereignty, and that the entire state's apparatus must discuss ways to subjugate it to Israeli

sovereignty. Thus, the Knesset Internal Affairs and Environment Committee convened more than once to discuss this subject; it was also discussed in a special report by the state prosecutor. Starting on 14/4/2013, marches and sit-ins by these groups were organized to provoke public opinion, and a three-track campaign was launched:

1. Pressuring the Israeli police to amend the rules of entering the mosque, and restrict Muslims' entry to it, with a focus on the times targeted for division, in particular the time of forenoon (Duha). Consequently, Israeli police amended entry rules to *al-Aqsa* Mosque, and visiting Jews repeatedly attacked Muslims there.

2. Restricting Islamic endowments (Waqf) activities, and imposing supervision upon their restoration work.

3. Political abolition of the status quo, culminating on 25/2/2014 with long discussions in the Knesset on the transfer of sovereignty on *al-Aqsa* Mosque de facto to Jordanian sovereignty.[6] In fact, Jordan has limited administrative powers over *al-Aqsa* Mosque, the Islamic endowments and the Islamic courts, through the Department of Islamic Endowments and the Jerusalem Council of Endowments. However, and since sovereignty is a concept linked to possessing coercive power and the ability to enforce the law by using this force, it is effectively already in the hands of the occupation.

The temple groups view what happened in 1967, consecrating the administrative authority of endowments over *al-Aqsa* Mosque, as an historical sin. Today they look forward to using their new influence to correct this path and to place the mosque under the authority of the Israeli Ministry of Religious Services, to be administered directly by Israel, taking advantage of the state of regional political vacuum around it, and the unprecedented US support for its agenda. A document was revealed by al-Aqsa Association for Waqf and Heritage on 11/10/2013; the group called *Manhigut Yehudit* (Jewish leadership) in the Likud Party presented a scheme to the Minister of Religious Services including temporal and spatial division of *al-Aqsa* Mosque, and the basis upon which it should be run. For the first time, the scheme explicitly disclosed the plan for a spatial division of the mosque, aiming to define two spaces for the prayer of the Jews in the Eastern courtyards of the mosque: the first colored green and allocated to individual prayers of Jews, and the second colored brown and allocated to their collective prayers.[7]

Map 1/6: Spatial Division of *al-Aqsa* Mosque

There are 19 associations with "temple"-related missions, registered with the Registrar of Associations, and enjoying wide cooperation from the Knesset, Israeli government, and the political establishment.[8]

b. The Excavations and Constructions Under *al-Aqsa* Mosque and in Its Vicinity

The previous highest increase in the number of declared excavations was registered before 21/8/2012, as four new excavations were added on the west side, most notably those of the Jewish Quarter; excavations at the Old City's "New Gate,"[9] one site in the south, and another in the north called "Solomon Quarries." Israel began restoration work on this renowned historical cave; and in December 2011, a new opening was made in the Jerusalem City wall to the east of the cave's entrance, which turned out to be an opening of an excavation annexed to the cave. The authorities claimed at the time that it constituted an emergency exit for the cave's visitors. Excavation work is still ongoing in this cave that extends

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naturally 250 meters to the south; and it is likely that these operations aim to add an additional southern area to the cave, to connect it to the network of tunnels below *al-Aqsa* Mosque, in order to form a northern gateway to these excavations.[10]

Since then, it seems that the number of excavations has stabilized, and that throughout 2013, efforts have been focused on connecting these excavations the one with the other to prepare them for visitors, by forming an integrated underground tourist city.

Table 1/6: Number of Excavations Under *al-Aqsa* Mosque and in Its Vicinity, 1/8/2012–1/8/2013[11]

Region		Southern side	Western side	Northern side	Total
Type of excavations	Completed	5	12	0	17
	Active	12	13	5	30
Total		17	25	5	47

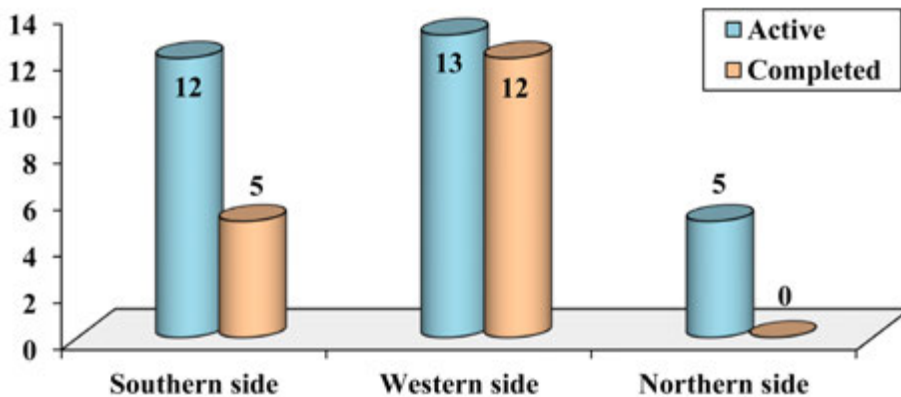**Number of Excavations Under *al-Aqsa* Mosque and in Its Vicinity, 1/8/2012–1/8/2013**
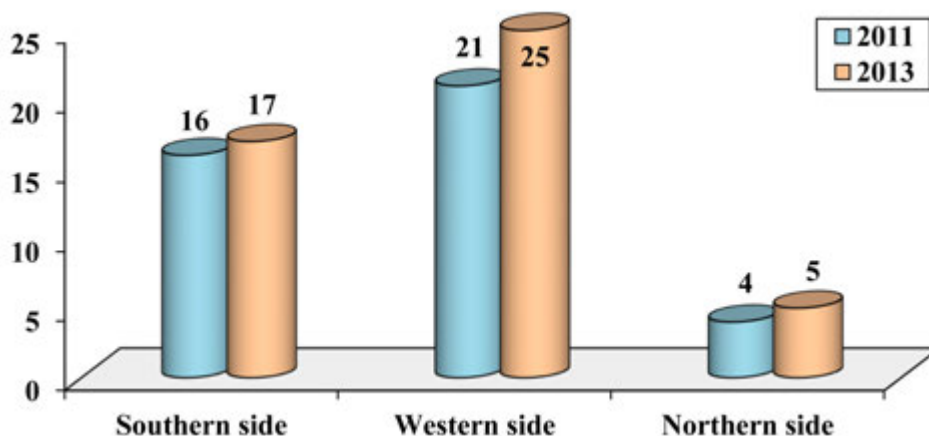

Table 2/6: Number of Excavations Under *al-Aqsa* Mosque and in Its Vicinity, 21/8/2011–1/8/2013[12]

Region	No. of excavations on 21/8/2011	No. of excavations on 1/8/2013	% increase
Southern side	16	17	6
Western side	21	25	19
Northern side	4	5	25
Total	41	47	15

Number of Excavations Under *al-Aqsa* Mosque and in Its Vicinity, 21/8/2011–1/8/2013
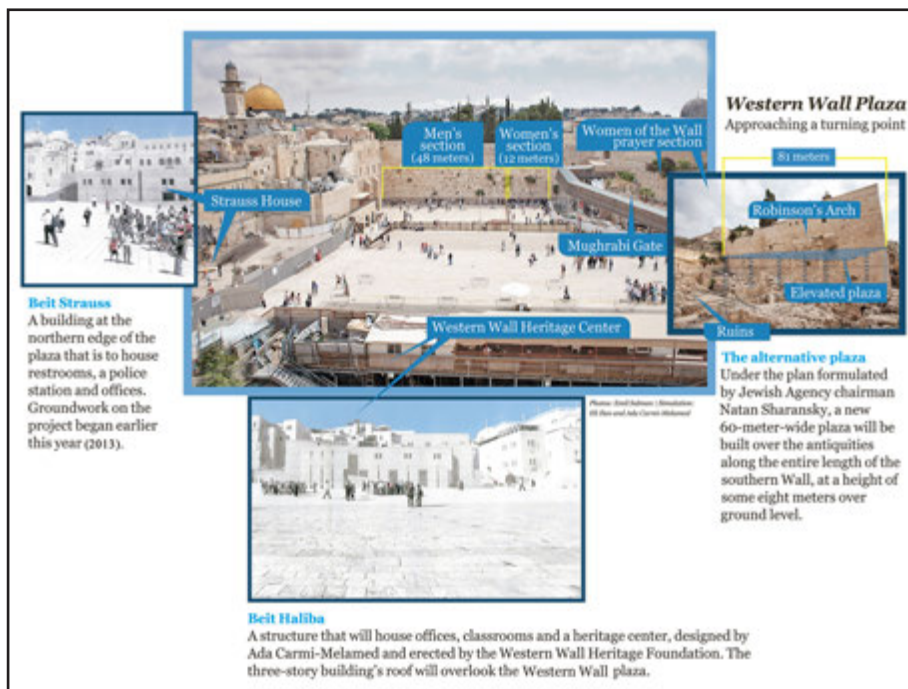

The year 2013 witnessed the crystallization of a new vision for structures in the vicinity of *al-Aqsa* Mosque, in particular in the area around the Western Wall. In 2007, the plan "old Jerusalem" known as the "Kedem Yerushalayim" had presented a concept that included the establishment of a religious seminary in the western end of the Western Wall Square and a synagogue above the Tankaziyya School. However, it is now considered the minimum plan on which the different spectra of Zionists agree, while they seek to make additions that vary from one team to another. These additions remained controversial until 2013, when a set of new buildings west of *al-Aqsa* Mosque were approved, including:

1. The Temple Institute's new Visitors' Center, taking the place of the Biblical Institute that was proposed in the scheme of "Kedem Yerushalayim." These buildings are larger than the previously proposed institute.[13]

2. The plan to establish the "Strauss House" as a new Judaizing structure north of Western Wall Square. This consists of three floors and has an area of 900 square meters,[14] in place of the one floor building previously proposed, the plans of which were presented for approval in 2010. And on 5/2/2013, stone archways in the area were demolished in order to start digging the foundations of this complex.[15]

3. The Natan Sharansky plan: to build an enormous wooden deck that would cover 500 square meters and be suspended seven to eight meters off the ground by steel beams to create an additional space for worship in the south of the Western Wall Square.[16]

Kedem 1

The Plan to Expand Western Wall Square[17]

The Strauss House[18]

As for the southern side, on 13/2/2012 a construction plan was approved for the most important and largest project in the "Kedem Yerushalayim" scheme, which has become known as the "Kedem Center." It will be built in Silwan, facing the walls of Jerusalem's Old City. It will reach a height of seven stories with a total area of 16,400 square meters, making it the largest Judaizing landmark approved so far in the vicinity of *al-Aqsa* Mosque, from all four sides.[19]

The Kedem Center in Silwan[20]

The Issue of the Mughrabi Hill[21]

The Israeli authorities had fixed a period of one month, starting on 28/10/2011, for the demolition of the Moroccan Hill, sparking a wave of public uproar in Egypt, Jordan and the Palestinian interior. The Israeli Prime Minister was forced to back down on the demolition plan at the last moment on the evening of 27/11/2011. Following this backing down, work at the site was suspended for several months; however, it was resumed quietly, starting in May 2012. Axes and hoes were used in the demolition works to avoid drawing attention and in order not to provoke any protests.[22] Press reports stated that, on 9/7/2012, a truck laden with dust and debris was taken out of the site overnight.[23] As for UNESCO, the implementation of decisions relating to the "Ascent to the Mughrabi Gate in the Old City of Jerusalem" continues to be a fixed item on the agenda of its Executive Board, without achieving any breakthrough in this file.

c. **Jewish Presence Inside *al-Aqsa* Mosque and Interference in Its Administration**

The year 2013 witnessed an intensification of incursions into *al-Aqsa* Mosque, in quantity and quality. Perhaps the most significant developments in this regard can be summarized as follows:

1. Official figures leading the incursions: Dignitaries from the temple groups reaching advanced parliamentary and ministerial positions, they started advocating and encouraging incursions. The Minister of Construction and Housing Uri Ariel and the Deputy Speaker of the Knesset, Moshe Feiglin, took the lead in calling for successive intrusions into the mosque.

2. Periodical intrusions by members of the military: a new program was introduced in the army to familiarize recruits with the "Temple Mount," whereby two incursions are implemented each week, one by male recruits and another by female recruits. Each group usually consists of 60 male or female recruits. Most of the time, and in conjunction with this intrusion, the Israeli police impose a full closure of the mosque.

Incursions by Male Soldiers   **Incursions by Female Soldiers**

As for interference in the administration of the mosque, Israeli forces have intensified restrictions on worshipers there. Friday prayers were held on 15, 22 and 29/3/2013 in a near-empty mosque. Restoration works carried out by the Endowment authorities were closely monitored. The Israeli police conducted inspection tours of those works, photographed them and halted them. They even summoned the Endowment crews working there for questioning, as happened on 28/5/2013.[24]

Over the past two years, the policy of preventing Endowment employees from entering *al-Aqsa* Mosque has evolved. As on 6/9/2012, the occupation authorities issued an injunction prohibiting the director of *al-Aqsa* Mosque, Sheikh Najeh Bkeirat, from entering the mosque, only three days after his appointment. They arrested him on 16/9/2012, holding him for two days, for approaching the mosque at a distance of less than 20 meters.[25] The ban was renewed on 3/3/2013,[26] and again on 11/9/2013.[27] In contrast, the Jordanian Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs merely condemned the ban, a few days after it was imposed.[28] With the renewal of the ban twice, it found that it had no choice but to remove Sheikh Najeh Bkeirat on 17/2/2014 from his post as director of *al-Aqsa* Mosque.

2. Jerusalem's Islamic Holy Sites

The Mamilla Cemetery, located west of Jerusalem's Old City, was the highest ranking Islamic holy site to be violated during this period. Drilling continued there to establish the "Center for Human Dignity-Museum of Tolerance." On 19/3/2013, al-Aqsa Association for Waqf and Heritage revealed 10 judaizing schemes that would totally devour the 25 remaining donums of its area. They include the development of "Independence Park," a warehouse for storing "heavy equipment

and machines, which belongs to contractors who work on nearby projects," pathways for walking, a promenade, and new buildings of both the central and magistrates courts.[29] The Israeli government announced on 10/6/2013 that it was backing down from the project of building a court complex on the cemetery's grounds,[30] while maintaining the rest of the projects.

3. Jerusalem's Christian Holy Sites

a. The Vatican Agreement

In early 2012, the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee, charged with discussing the fate of Vatican's properties and tax privileges, announced that it had made progress on the way to signing an agreement regulating this issue between the two sides. June 2012 was chosen as the date for convening the next round of negotiations in the hope of reaching an agreement.[31] The Vatican did not make public the substance of the anticipated agreement, leaving plenty of room for speculation. The critical points, of which Palestinian and several Arab sources had warned, including the PA, Jordan and Morocco,[32] can be summed up in two basic points:

1. The agreement may implicitly recognize Israel's sovereignty over Jerusalem and the territories occupied in 1967: as the disposition of the church's properties in Jerusalem will be done in agreement with the Israeli authorities, particularly those properties in the eastern part of the city. This means the implicit concession of the Vatican—with the religious weight it represents—of the legitimacy of Israeli sovereignty over these territories.

2. The vague destiny of the Last Supper room—Cenacle: a number of Christian denominations believe that the Last Supper described in the Gospel of Jesus Christ with his disciples took place in the upper room the Cenacle of the building known today as the Mosque and Tomb of David. This is a shrine that has historically remained in Muslim control and in the continual custody of the Jerusalemite Dajani family. Before the occupation, Christians were able to visit the Cenacle inside this sanctuary. Following the occupation of the city in 1948, the occupation authorities handed over its management to the Ministry of Religious Services; and it was converted to a synagogue for Sephardic Jews, the Sephardim. There was a leak to the media in 2012 that the Vatican might

agree to keep the building under Jewish management in exchange for allowing Franciscan monks to administer the Cenacle of the Last Supper or visit it at certain times of the year.

Until December 2013, negotiations over this agreement remained in progress and had not reached the signing stage.

b. Attacks on Churches and Monasteries

The years 2012 and 2013 witnessed an intensification of attacks by the Tag Mehir or "pay the price" settlement movement. These attacks were carried out against Christian holy sites, and included burning and writing abusive language. On 7/2/2012, an attack against the Monastery of the Cross was recorded;[33] and on 20/2/2012, a similar attack was implemented against the Baptist Church west of Jerusalem.[34] Then on 4/9/2012, vandals set fire to the front door of Latrun Monastery, a Trappist monastery located outside the city, and offensive phrases were written on its walls.[35]

c. The Dwindling Number of Christians in Jerusalem

The Arab Christian presence in Jerusalem remains under threat of extinction; at the end of 2012, the number of Arab Christians in Jerusalem numbered only 11,800 persons,[36] that is, a slight increase of 200 people over a two-year period; in 2010, their number was 11,600 persons.[37] Thus they made up less than 4% of the city's Arab population at the end of 2012, and less than 1.5% of the total population of the city in the same year.

4. Islamic and Christian Holy Sites in the Rest of Palestine

The extremist settlement movement, Tag Mehir, continued its attacks on Islamic and Christian holy sites during 2012–2013; and its members continued also to escape being called to account. On 17/6/2013, the Israeli government refused to classify this organization as a terrorist organization.[38] It seems that it is satisfied with the role played by this movement in terrorizing Palestinians and making them feel that they are under constant threat.

During 2012, the Solidarity Foundation for Human Rights counted 18 attacks on holy sites, most of which were implemented by the Tag Mehir movement; in addition to total or partial destruction of 34 mosques during Operation Pillar of Defense, which Hamas dubbed Operation Stones of Baked Clay. It also counted 13 attacks during 2013, a total of 31 attacks over two years, detailed in the following table:

Table 3/6: Most Notable Israeli Attacks on the Holy Sites in the Rest of Historic Palestine 2012–2013[39]

Date	Event
3/1/2012	Israeli authorities confiscate amplifiers belonging to Muhammad al-Fateh Mosque in Jaffa, occupied since 1948, and forbid broadcasting the Islamic call to prayer (Adhan).
11/1/2012	A group of settlers write slogans insulting Islam and the Prophet Muhammad on the walls of 'Ali Bin Abi Talib Mosque in the village of Deir Istiya in the Salfit district.
25/1/2012	A group of settlers smash a number of graves in the cemetery of the city of Beisan, occupied since 1948.
13/2/2012	The Israeli Supreme Court issues a decision banning the broadcast of Adhan through loudspeakers in the Salman al-Farisi Mosque in the village of Bourin in the Nablus district.
19/2/2012	Jewish extremists vandalize the mosque of Wadi 'Ara in the territories occupied in 1948.
27/2/2012	A large group of settlers storm the Nabi Yunus Mosque in Halhul, north of Hebron, and perform Jewish rituals inside the mosque.
9/4/2012	Municipality of Ashkelon, occupied since 1948, turn the Muslim cemetery in the city into a parking lot.
10/4/2012	Israeli Bulldozers vandalized the grave of Ezzedeen al-Qassam in the Islamic cemetery in the city of Jaffa, occupied since 1948.
18/6/2012	Jewish settlers set fire to the mosque of the Jaba' village, northeast of Jerusalem.
10/7/2012	An Israeli company embarks on huge excavations in the Sheikh Muwannis Cemetery in the Jaffa district, occupied since 1948, to build residential apartments for the University of Tel Aviv's students.
18/7/2012	Extremist member of the Knesset, Michael Ben-Ari, tears up a Bible in front of the media, describing it as a "vile book."
23/7/2012	The Israeli Ministry of Construction and Housing levels dozens of Muslim graves in the cemetery of the village Majdal al-Sadiq, displaced since 1948.
10/8/2012	A number of Israeli police storm and search the mosque of the town of al-Tira, occupied since 1948.
27/8/2012	Israeli forces deliver to the construction committee of Abu 'Ubaida Mosque, in Wadi al-Samn south of Hebron, a decision to halt construction operations of the mosque.
13/9/2012	Extremist settlers write racist slogans in Hebrew on the walls of Salman al-Farisi Mosque in the city of Hebron.
19/11/2012	Settlers burn the entrance of al-Ribat Mosque in the village of 'Urif in the Nablus district.
4/12/2012	Israeli bulldozers demolish the mosque of al-Mafqara east of Yatta in the Hebron district, and that for the second time in two years.
24/12/2012	Israeli soldiers storm al-Taqwa Mosque in the village of Fahma in the Jenin district.
2/1/2013	Dozens of armed settlers storm al-Hamidiyah archaeological mosque in the town of al-Khader in the Bethlehem district, having already wrenched one of its windows off its hinges.
14/1/2013	Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman storms the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron, accompanied by a number of settler leaders and journalists.

Date	Event
27/1/2013	Israeli forces raid al-Murabitin Mosque in the town of al-'Ayzariyah and launch a wide inspection campaign inside the mosque.
7/4/2013	Settlers write racist slogans and threats to the Arabs on the walls of Bilal Bin Rabah Mosque and Salah al-Din al-Ayyouby Mosque in the Taqou' village in the Bethlehem district.
24/4/2013	Dozens of Israeli soldiers storm Halima al-Sa'diyyah Mosque in the city of Jenin.
30/4/2013	Dozens of settlers attack al-Ribat Mosque in the village of 'Urif in the Nablus district and damage its contents.
12/5/2013	A group of settlers dig up a number of tombs in Sawiya village near Nablus.
13/5/2013	Settlers write racist slogans on a mosque in the village of Umm al-Qatf in Wadi 'Ara inside the territories occupied in 1948.
13/6/2013	Jewish extremists write racist slogans and draw six-pointed stars on a number of graves in the Orthodox Christian cemetery in the city of Jaffa, inside the territories occupied in 1948.
21/8/2013	Extremist settlers from the Tag Mehir movement vandalize the Beit Jamal Monastery in Jerusalem, with graffiti and damage it by throwing a Molotov cocktail at its exterior.
6/10/2013	Settlers write racist slogans on the walls of a mosque in the village of Beit Iksa northwest of Jerusalem and try to storm it.
9/10/2013	Settlers draw six-pointed stars on the walls of a mosque in Burqa village near Nablus.
8/12/2013	Settlers write offensive phrases on the walls of al-Huda Mosque in Baqa al-Gharbiyyeh, occupied since 1948.

Second: Jerusalem's Population Under Occupation

Obsession with demography remained at the heart of Israeli thinking concerning the city of Jerusalem. The agenda of dividing *al-Aqsa* Mosque had the support of a pressure group made up of deputies and ministers, who favoured reducing the growth of the city's Arab population and modifying the ratio of the population in favor of the Jewish population. This is a declared policy and an object of consensus among successive Israeli governments. It is also the central objective of the Jerusalem Master Plan 2020. In the face of the ongoing dilemma of internal migration of Jews out of Jerusalem, in a way that drains the effect of the natural increase and the new immigrants from abroad, the state apparatus has begun to rely more on the expulsion of the Arab population than on attracting a larger Jewish population to the city, and on at least the expulsion of Arabs from the central neighborhoods around the Old City, in the hope of taking hold of this center.
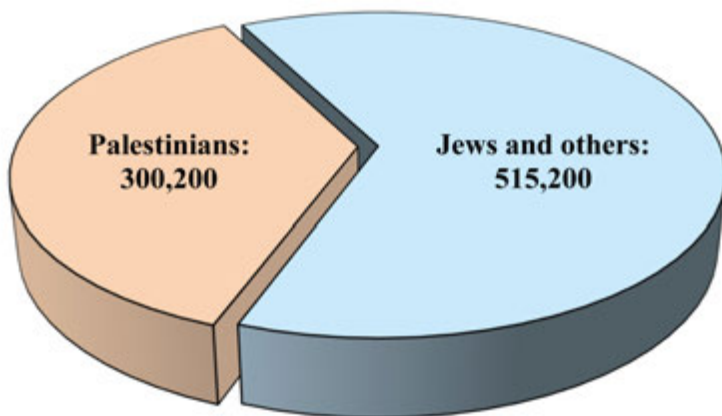
1. The Reality of the Demographic Battle[40]

Table 4/6: Number of Residents in Jerusalem (Its Eastern and Western Parts) 2010–2012[41]

Group	Year	Population	% Annual growth	% of the total population
Palestinians	**2010**	283,900	2.9	36
	2011	293,000	3.2	36.4
	2012	300,200	2.6	36.8
Jews and others*	**2010**	504,200	1.4	64
	2011	511,400	1.4	63.6
	2012	515,200	0.9	63.2

* This category includes Jews, non-Arab Christian residents, and those not classified by religion. The number of the "others" in 2012 reached 12,400, constituting 1.5% of the city's population.

Number of Residents in Jerusalem (Its Eastern and Western Parts) 2012

Palestinians: 300,200

Jews and others: 515,200

The above table indicates that Jerusalemite population growth continues to move at rates that surpass those of Jews, and that the percentage of Palestinian residents of the city is still on the rise. But we must be aware of what Israeli statistical
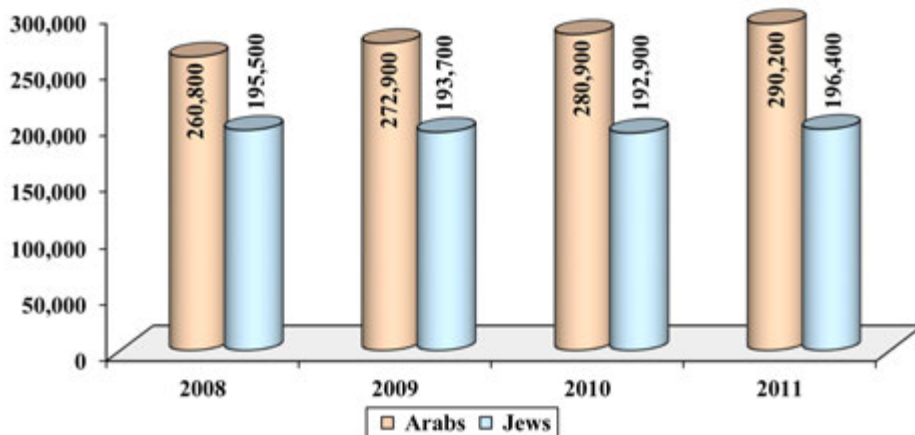
sources do not tell us, which is that an unknown ratio of the Arab population currently live outside Jerusalem's municipal boundaries, due to restrictions on housing and conditions that drive the Arab population out of the city. These people may lose their Jerusalem residency cards, if the Israeli authorities are able to find a mechanism to verify their place of residence, and then expel them from the city.[42]

As for the Eastern part of the city, according to data by the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies (JIIS), the ratio of residents has evolved over the four years 2008–2011 as follows:

Table 5/6: Number of Residents in the Eastern Part of Jerusalem 2008–2011[43]

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011
Arabs	260,800	272,900	280,900	290,200
Percentage (%)	57.2	58.5	59.3	59.6
Jews	195,500	193,700	192,900	196,400
Percentage (%)	42.8	41.5	40.7	40.4

Number of Residents in the Eastern Part of Jerusalem 2008–2011

It is noticeable here that, in the eastern part of the city, the demographic balance is tipped in favor of the Arabs, and that there is a faster increase in their ratio compared to the Jewish population. This is due to the eastern part's limited attraction for the Jewish population, in spite of the giant settlement projects under construction there.

Following a careful reading of the Jerusalem statistical yearbook for 2012–2013, *Jerusalem: Facts and Trends*, and the numbers issued by the Israeli CBS on Jerusalem, we notice the following:

a. Until the end of 2011, the growth of the Jewish population in Jerusalem (1.4%) was lower than the growth of the Jewish population in Israel (1.7%).

b. The percentage of Jerusalem's population who defined themselves as ultra-orthodox (30%) is the highest among Israel's large cities and is significantly higher than the proportion of ultra-orthodox Jews in Israel (9%). This is what made their presence in Jerusalem triple that in Israeli society in general,[44] and made them the primary cause of secular Jews leaving the city.

c. In 2010, the total fertility rate of Jewish women in Jerusalem was 4.2, higher than the total fertility rate among the Arab women of Jerusalem, which measured 3.9.[45] And the natural growth rate of the Arab population was 27.2 per thousand persons and 23 per thousand for the Jewish population (excluding the immigration factor), after it was 19 per thousand for Jews in the year 2000.[46]

d. In any case, the effect of these biomarkers does not affect the total population growth. The ultra-orthodox Jews expel more secular Jews from the city's Jewish population than they add through their natural rate of growth. Thus, during the years 2007–2011, a total of 89,830 residents left Jerusalem for other localities in Israel, and 56,760 new residents arrived in Jerusalem from other localities. In total, the population of the city shrunk by 33,070 residents as a result of a negative migration balance;[47] among them 7,500 left during 2011 alone.[48]

e. The numbers of immigrants coming in from abroad cannot compensate for the attrition caused by the negative internal migration from the city. Despite the fact that Jerusalem was the city where the highest number of immigrants arrived from abroad and took residence during 2011. Yet the number of those immigrants did not exceed 2,300,[49] due to the reduction in Jewish immigration to Israel in general.

f. Major settlements within Jerusalem's municipal boundaries vary in their ability to attract Jewish settlers. Development schemes of these settlements and their infrastructure have succeeded in bringing back the appeal of some of them, for example, Ramot Alon and Gilo. The following table may perhaps illustrate the ability of major settlements to attract Jewish residents:

Table 6/6: Number of Residents of the Most Prominent of Jerusalem's Settlements, Selected Years[50]

Year	1985	1992	2000	2006	2011
Pisgat Ze'ev	14,800	29,400	36,500	38,700	36,800
Neve Ya'akov			20,300	19,200	18,700
Ramot Alon	21,100	38,100	38,000	41,000	41,400
Gilo	23,900	30,400	28,400	25,400	27,800
East Talpiot	11,800	15,200	12,850	11,100	12,500

g. In contrast, numbers point to the existence of a limited trend among the Arab population to leave the central neighborhoods of Jerusalem and head to its outskirts. It seems that the focused Israeli policy has succeeded in achieving this. For the repellent neighborhoods were: the Old City, from which 1,240 Palestinians left, while from Wadi al-Joz and Sheikh Jarrah 430 left, and from Shu'fat, 360 Palestinians left. As for the neighborhoods that received Arab residents in internal migration, they were those isolated outside the city and behind the Separation Wall. Thus, Kfar 'Aqab and 'Atarot received 1,060 Palestinians, Shu'fat Refugee Camp 690, and New 'Anata 360.[51]

2. Attempts to Expel Palestinian Residents

a. Intensification of the Pressure on al-Bustan Neighborhood

In 2009, the occupation authorities made a decision to demolish 88 properties in al-Bustan neighborhood. Neighborhood residents initiated legal proceedings before Israeli courts against the decision; and at the same time instituted a state of popular protest. They set up a permanent solidarity sit-in tent that has become a destination for supporters; in addition, they performed their Friday prayers in the tent. This action protected them from the execution of those demolition orders. The municipality began using multiple methods to break this popular movement. It proposed a settlement that, at face value, aimed at lessening the inhabitants' loss; while in essence, shifts the dispute to the residents themselves. For it proposes the demolition of only 29 properties out of the original 88. In return, the residents share the rest of the properties. Moreover, Israeli forces targeted the activists in this matter, such as Sheikh Musa Odeh who was sentenced to three months' imprisonment in 2012 for throwing stones at Israeli soldiers; and the Israeli forces

tortured his youngest son Musallam (12 years) who was arrested more than 12 times and was placed under house arrest.

Up to the end of 2012, these policies had not succeeded in breaking the popular movement of al-Bustan residents. Thus, the municipality resorted to threats of mass demolition, in September 2012 at the latest if the residents did not respond to the proposed settlement. But when the deadline came, they referred the matter to the Knesset (10/9/2012). The Knesset, in turn, discussed the issue and declared that its State Comptroller's Committee would take a tour of the neighborhood on 26/10/2012 to discuss the application of the Planning and Construction Law to the case at hand. In light of this repeated threat, the municipality sent its crews more than 15 times in 2012 alone to distribute demolition orders, or to take photographs and measurements in preparation for demolition; yet, it could not tear down one house in al-Bustan neighborhood in two years. However, the Israeli authorities still hope to be able, with time and with continued pressure on the population, to exhaust and break their popular movement.

b. Evacuation of Bedouin Communities East of Jerusalem

At the beginning of 2011, al-Jahaleen Arab Bedouins, residents of the Bedouin communities located in eastern Jerusalem, received eviction notices. It became known then that the Israeli army was planning to fully empty that area of its Bedouin population in order to pave the way for completing the eastern sections of the Separation Wall, which will annex the settlement bloc of Adumim to the city of Jerusalem. During the years 2012–2013, the Israeli army continued its campaign to implement this evacuation quietly, trying to avoid drawing any attention. They chased them along their travel routes in the vicinity of Jerusalem to force them to migrate to the points of concentration northwest of Jericho, where they want to force them to reside. On 18/4/2012, Israeli forces demolished 16 Arab al-Jahaleen structures in the north of Jerusalem.[52] Then on 8/6/2012, they demolished several houses and barns belonging to them in the east of the city.[53] Raid and demolition operations continued at intervals until early 2014, when on 17/2/2014, they demolished five residential structures.[54] Then on 12/3/2014, they demolished several residential and agricultural structures.[55] At the beginning of this displacement campaign, the number of Arab al-Jahaleen in the region was estimated at 2,300 people;[56] while the precise number of those who have migrated from the area under these procedures is not known.

3. Demolition of Houses and Structures

The number of housing units demolished in Jerusalem in 2012 was 61, including 14 self-demolitions, i.e., they were demolished by their owners. As for 2013, the number of demolished structures totaled 106, including 14 structures demolished by their owners.[57]

4. The Palestinian Population's Deepening Cost of Living Crisis

Figures released by Israeli sources continue to confirm the general trend of poverty among Jerusalemites, which has been fixed at 70% since the year 2009.

Table 7/6: Extent of Poverty in Jerusalem and Israel 2010–2011 (%)[58]

Category	2010	2011
Within the non–Jewish population	77	73
Within the Jewish population	25	24
In Israel	24	25

The latest field survey (the socio-economic survey conducted in 2008) showed that 100% of the Arab population in Jerusalem are classified as poor, while only 24% of the Jewish population fall in this category.[59] And if this data is compared with the data of the labor market, which says that in 2011, the rate of participation in the labor market in Jerusalem among Palestinian men (over 16-year-old) was 59%, while that among Jewish men it was 49%,[60] we conclude that this poverty is artificial and is the outcome of a methodical impoverishment process.

5. Conditions on the Ground in Jerusalem

A study of developments in Jerusalem over the years 2012–2013 cannot be complete without a look at the conditions of confrontation on the ground that the city had witnessed over these two years, especially during 2012. According to a daily review of events in the city, statistical research showed that in 2012 alone, there were 78 confrontations, 6 stabbings and 21 other incidents. These resulted in casualties in the ranks of Israeli soldiers, through petrol bombs, beating or burning. Al-'Isawiyyah, Silwan, Shu'fat Refugee Camps and Jerusalem's Old City were the main centers of this flare-up, which used to end at the Qalandia checkpoint, without an echo of it or response to it continuing in the WB.[61]

The repeated raids of *al-Aqsa* Mosque, the incursions of the municipal crews, the demolition orders they distributed in the neighborhoods, and the prisoners' hunger strikes, in particular that by the Jerusalemite prisoner Samer al-'Issawi, constituted the main flash points in the city.

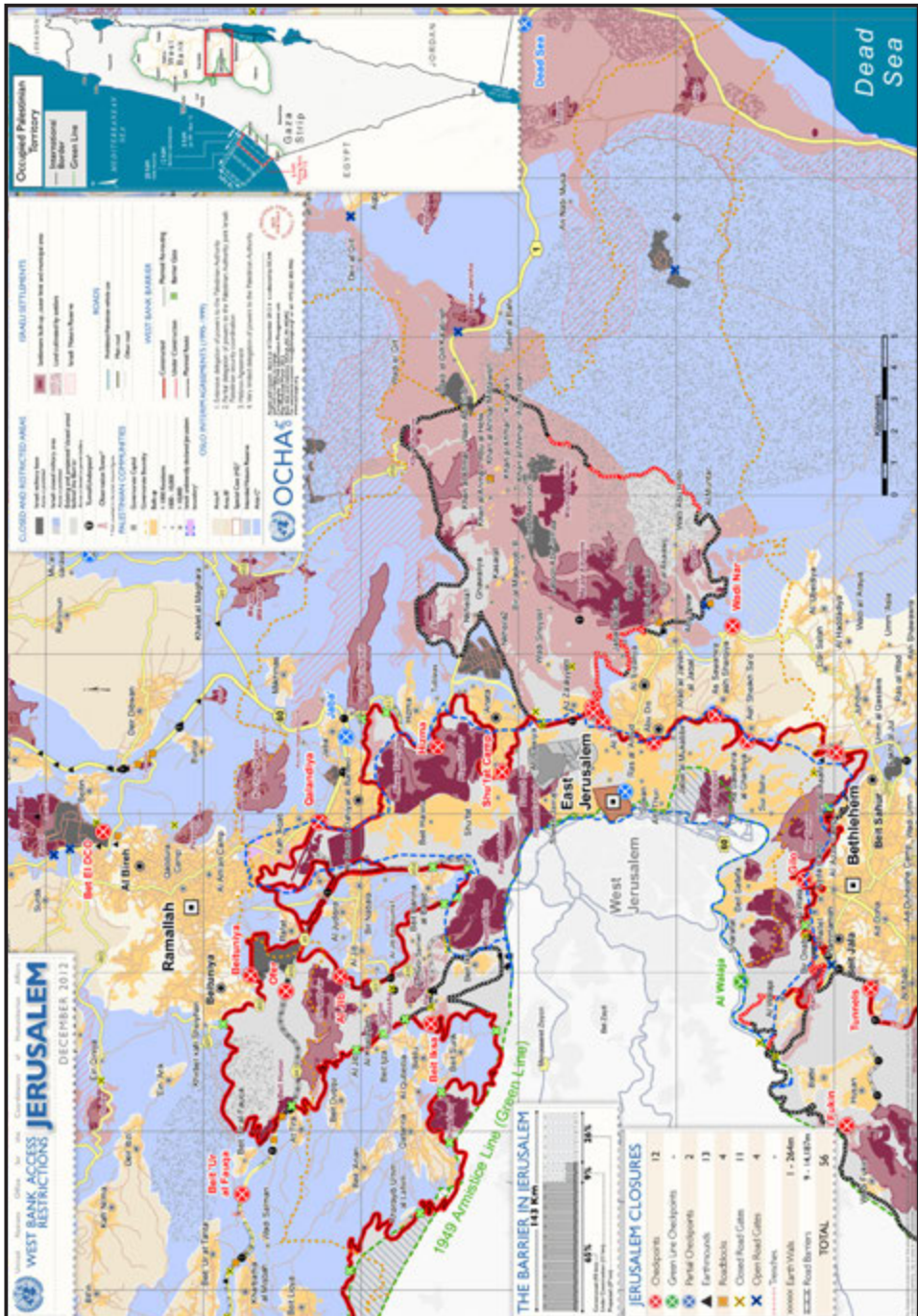## Third: Judaization and Settlement in Jerusalem

1. Developments in the Building of the Separation Wall Around Jerusalem

Despite the Israeli government's repeated media threat to finish the Wall's eastern section around Jerusalem, which includes the Ma'ale Adumim settlement and the blocs of settlements surrounding it up to Jerusalem's city limits, within what is known as Project E1, in reality the work on these sections remained unchanged during 2012. Statistics by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs-occupied Palestinian territory (OCHA-oPt) stated that what was added to the Wall during this period was only three kilometers on the section surrounding Qalandia from the west, in the far north of Jerusalem; this made the isolation of Qalandia complete. As for developments in the work on the Wall, they are illustrated in the following table:

Table 8/6: Work on the Separation Wall Around Jerusalem, December 2011–December 2012[62]

Category	2011	2012
Constructed (km)	90	93
Percentage (%)	63	65
Under Construction (km)	14	13
Percentage (%)	10	9
Projected (km)	38	37
Percentage (%)	27	26
Total length of the Wall (km)	**142**	**143**

Map 2/6: The Separation Wall and Jerusalem Closures[63]

2. Consolidating the Settlements in the WB

2012 and 2013 witnessed a regular pace of settlement building. In 2012, the building of 12,244 housing units was approved. While in 2013 the building of 11,066 new housing units was approved in various parts of the WB. However, in the latter year, a larger geographical distribution of units was approved. The number of settlements that received approval for new housing units was 36 settlements throughout most of the WB.

Table 9/6: Residential Units Approved or Proposed for Construction in the Settlements of Jerusalem and the Rest of WB 2012–2013[64]

Location	Settlement	2012		2013		Total
		No. of approved or proposed units for construction	Total no. of housing units in each governorate	No. of approved or proposed units for construction	Total no. of housing units in each governorate	
Jerusalem	Ramat Shlomo	1,500	10,558	1,918	3,904	**14,462**
	Gilo	942		891		
	Giv'at Hamatos	4,627		–		
	Har Homa	168		210		
	Ma'ale Adumim	2,490 (E1 region in general)		204		
	Kfar Adumim			329		
	Pisgat Ze'ev	–		183		
	Giv'at Ze'ev	831		131		
	Kochav Ya'akov	–		38		
Salfit	Alei Zahav	–	–	1,144	2,292	**2,292**
	Bruchin	–		550		
	Elkana	–		284		
	Yakir	–		160		
	Ariel	–		135		
	Kiryat Netafim	–		19		
Ramallah	Modi'in 'Illit	–	106	992	2,099	**2,205**
	Talmon	–		559		
	Beit El	–		326		
	Shilo	–		142		
	Adam	106		80		

Location	Settlement	2012		2013		Total
		No. of approved or proposed units for construction	Total no. of housing units in each governorate	No. of approved or proposed units for construction	Total no. of housing units in each governorate	
Nablus	Itamar	–	452	675	1,217	**1,669**
	Gilgal	–		234		
	Karnei Shomron	350		218		
	Immanuel	102		–		
	Bracha	–		90		
Bethlehem	Betar Illit	398	1,128	322	601	**1,729**
	Efrat	207		155		
	Giva'ot	523		–		
	Alon Shevut	–		60		
	Nokdim	–		40		
	Tekoa	–		24		
Hebron	Sansana	–	–	325	700	**700**
	Ma'on	–		230		
	Karmiel	–		97		
	Tene	–		48		
Tubas	Rotem	–	–	170	170	**170**
Qalqilya	El Matan	–	–	37	52	**52**
	Alfei Menashe	–		15		
Jericho	Almog	–	–	31	31	**31**
Total		**12,244**		**11,066**		**23,310**

Regarding Jerusalem in particular, the essential trends and developments of the settlement program can be read through:

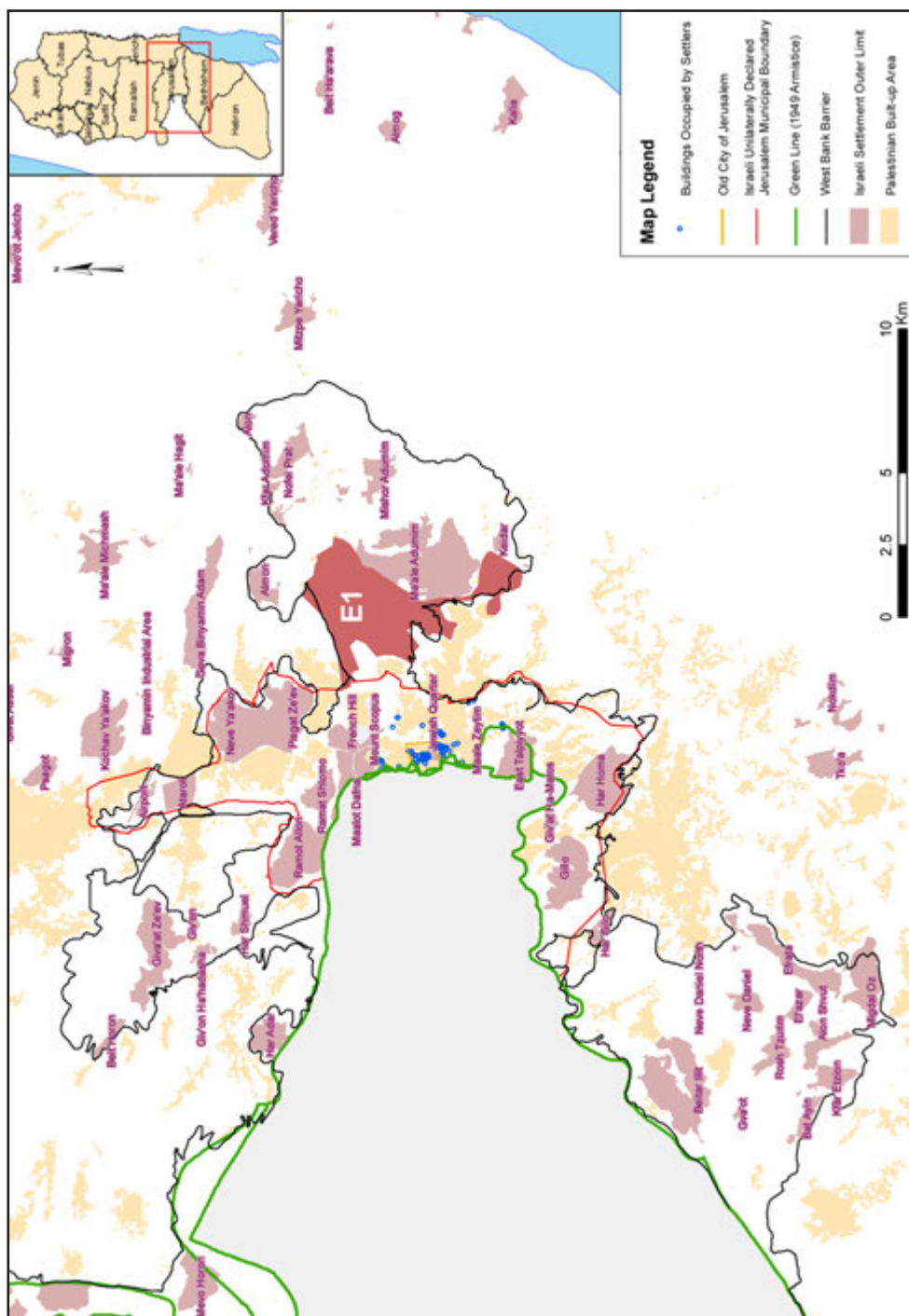**The Continued Strengthening of the Southern Sector Settlements**

During the preceding years, the clear Israeli direction was to strengthen the south Jerusalem settlements. These mainly consist of the settlement bloc of Har Homa and Gilo (including Har Gilo); and in 2011, the settlement of Giv'at Hamatos was added to them as a principle settlement within this bloc. This trend can be attributed to the success of the Har Homa settlement in attracting Jewish citizens, after several disappointing results in the eastern settlement blocs, and to some extent the northeastern ones. Har Homa is very close to the Jewish commercial and urban center in west Jerusalem; it is also connected to it by direct road that do not pass through any Palestinian neighborhoods.

During 2012–2013, the general trend to strengthen the southern bloc settlements did not seem to have changed; as in 2012, the construction of 5,737 housing units in the southern sector settlements was approved, representing 54.3% of the total units approved that year, as can be seen in table 9/6. The largest number of these housing units was in Giv'at Hamatos, where the approval of a plan to expand it was done in one stroke as part of what the Israeli government considered "punitive measures" in retaliation for the decision to recognize Palestine as a non-Member Observer State in the UN; it approved the building of 4,627 residential units in one single decision. In 2013, the government sanctioned the construction of 1,101 housing units in the southern settlement sector, representing 28.2% of all the approved housing units in Jerusalem during that year. It seems that the slower pace of sanctioning construction in 2013 came to make way for finishing the 2011–2012 approved housing units in the southern sector; 17,064 housing units.[65] It would also make room for the completion of the infrastructure projects vital to the success of the expansion in this region, the most important of which is Highway 50, which will link the southern sector settlements to the Jewish center in the west of Jerusalem. The municipality depends on this Highway to spread the success of the Har Homa case to the rest of the settlements in this sector.

Ramat Shlomo: An Attempt to Promote the North

In 2012–2013, the settlements situated north of the Old City were promoted, in parallel with promoting those in the southern sector, while attempting to achieve territorial contiguity between the settlements of Ramot Alon, Ramat Shlomo and Ramat Eshkol. These settlements enjoy the same distinction enjoyed by Har Homa to the south, which is being directly connected to the Jewish center in west Jerusalem, and is a natural extension of it. The attempt to promote this settlement sector was subject to questioning and study by Israeli planners, as its population has been stable since the beginning of the 1990s, and only achieves limited growth. So, the decision to expand construction in this bloc carries a degree of risk, but what happened in 2012–2013 was that the construction of 3,418 housing units was already approved (see table 9/6). If we add the number of approved housing units in the northern settlement sector Ramat Shlomo, Ramot Alon, and Ramat, during 2011–2013, we find that they belong to the second phase in terms of new constructions, with a total of 4,953 housing units over the next three years.[66]

Map 3/6: Jerusalem Settlements[67]

Looking at map 3/6, we find that the southern and northern sectors together constitute the two main pillars of the plan to encircle the Old City and isolate it from the mass of the Arab population. The two sectors have the same characteristic, which is being a natural extension of the Jewish center in west Jerusalem, and being directly connected to it. This allows them to attract Jewish citizens and is a more conservative and realist development than the previous attempts at development in the eastern settlements.

Adumim Bloc: Between Politics and Realism

In 2012–2013, the Adumim bloc (located outside Jerusalem's municipal "boundaries," which constitute the main Jewish attempt to expand eastward) was the third most rapid in terms of expansion, as, over a two-year period, the construction of 3,023 housing units was approved.

When examining the trends in the expansion of the Adumim bloc over a longer period of time, we find that, during 2011, it did not exceed 40 units; while in 2012, it reached 2,490, and then decreased in 2013 to 414. The announcement made in 2012 came the day after the vote on granting Palestine non-member UN observer status, in the context of "punitive measures" carried out by Israel in retaliation for this move.

The expansion in the Adumim bloc is not a consistent policy, rather a deliberate response to a political development that provoked the Israeli government. The Adumim bloc is the bloc least able to attract the Jewish population in the vicinity of Jerusalem. In spite of its having an area equivalent to the entire area of the Jerusalem municipality, its population has grown by only about seven thousand settlers over a 10-year period, with the population at the end of 2011 standing at approximately 36 thousand settlers.[68] At the same time, over the past few years, an American-European position was formed that considers that the expansion of the bloc dashes the hopes of a two-state solution. This position helps to deter Israel from planning to expand it or even from completing the sections of the Wall around it, and explains the use of the expansion of this bloc as a political response to developments that Israel considers to be a threat to its interests.

Nof Zion into Phase III

Project Nof Zion began as an investment by the company Digal Investments & Holdings Ltd, a private initiative to establish an upscale residential suburb designated for the wealthy, on the northern slopes of Mount al-Mukaber facing Jerusalem's Old City, and targeting mainly Jewish buyers from the US.[69] Work on the first phase was completed in 2008, in conjunction with the global economic crisis that began in the US. At that time, the Nof Zion project faced hindrance of sales and marketing; to the extent that the investment company offered Arab and Islamic parties the option of selling the entire phase through intermediaries.[70] The Project continued to stumble until 2011, when its financial crisis was overcome by introducing new partners, and by obtaining the sponsorship of the Ministry of Construction and Housing and the Jerusalem Municipality to allocate the settlement for religious Jews. Work resumed on the second phase and ended in late 2013. The Israeli Construction and Housing Minister laid the foundation stone for the third phase of this settlement in August 2013.[71] The second and third expansion phases aspire to solve the problem of the isolation of this settlement from Jewish neighborhoods, by trying to connect it to the East Talpiot settlement, located to the southwest of Nof Zion.

Summing up, in 2012 and 2013, the construction of 14,462 housing units in the settlements of Jerusalem were approved, 47% of them located in the southern sector settlements, and 24% in the northern ones. If the residential units approved during 2011—as in the table 10/6—are added to the analysis, fundamental change in settlement planning policies toward Jerusalem can be inferred. First, the thinking was of centralized internal and external settlement rings, which failed to attract the hoped-for population, since they were distant and isolated from the Jewish center of west Jerusalem. Then there was a more realistic and conservative policy that adopted the formation of two wide settlement sectors in the south and the north, directly connected to the Jewish center of west Jerusalem, a "natural extension" of it. They also encircle the Old City and isolate it from most of the Palestinian population bloc concentrated in the farthest neighborhoods.

Table 10/6: Number of Approved Housing Units in the Settlements of Jerusalem and the Rest of WB 2011–2013[72]

Category	No.	Percentage (%)	Expected assimilative capacity
Approved housing units in the southern sector	18,165	44.6	61,761
Approved housing units in the northern sector	4,953	12.2	16,840
Approved housing units in the rest of Jerusalem settlements and the WB	17,600	43.2	59,840
Total	40,718	100	138,441

3. Infrastructure That Reinforces the Jewish Presence

The same settlement trends can be detected in the infrastructure that the Israeli municipality in Jerusalem works on establishing, for the southern settlement sector is being enhanced by Highway 50, which connects it to the Jewish center of west Jerusalem. Also, the northern settlement sector is being enhanced by Jerusalem Road 21, which connects it to the 'Atarot industrial park, built on Qalandia's lands; while the cable car project aims to attract more Jewish visitors to the south-western region of *al-Aqsa* Mosque, where the Western Wall Square and its Judaized environs lie.

Highway 50

During 2013, the Moriah Jerusalem Development Company, along with the Israeli Municipality of Jerusalem, began work on building Highway 50, which will secure a direct link between the southern settlement sector and the Jewish center in the west of Jerusalem, thus enhancing the chances of this sector attracting Jewish residents. At the same time, this road aims at connecting the residents of the Gush Etzion settlement bloc in Bethlehem with Jerusalem's Jewish Center by linking it to Route 60, which reaches those settlements; thus providing territorial contiguity between Jerusalem's municipal borders and the Gush Etzion bloc to the south. The budget allocated for this highway is estimated at about $1.1 billion, as it will
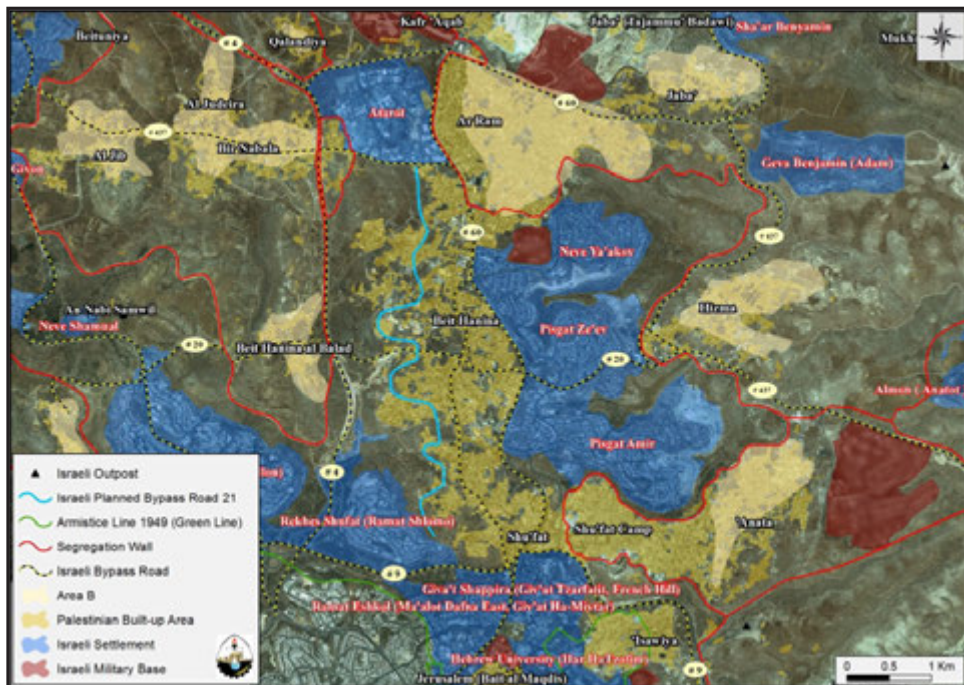
be a multi-lane highway, with many exits and services. It is expected to devour 238 donums from the Palestinian towns of Beit Safafa and Shurfat, and turn both towns into marginal outliers that have no territorial contiguity with any Palestinian population mass in Jerusalem.[73]
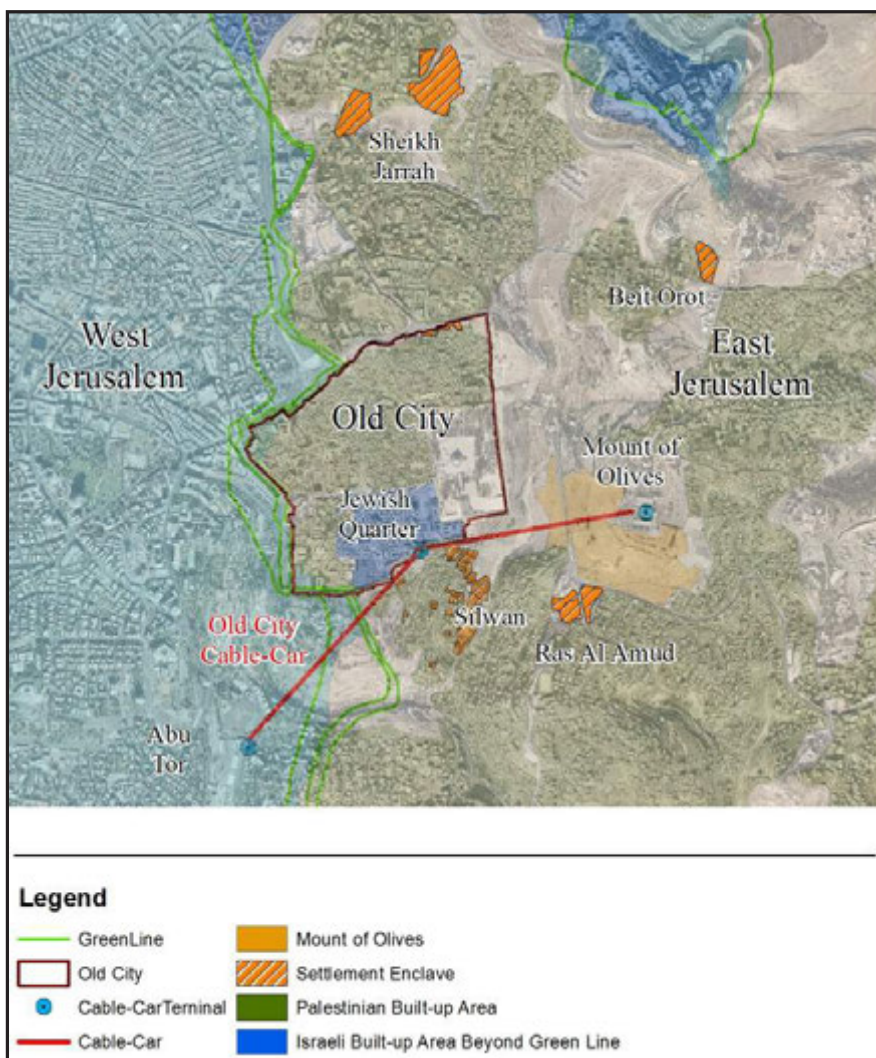
Map 4/6: Highway 50[74]

Jerusalem Road 21

On 21/1/2013, Israeli bulldozers began work on building a road that connects the settlement of Ramat Shlomo, which forms the center of expansion for the northern settlement sector, to 'Atarot industrial zone established on the lands of Qalandia to the north. The road is designed to attract the Jewish population to this settlement by providing job opportunities in the Industrial region for its residents. They would be the closest and most able to access the facilities of the 'Atarot industrial zone without being compelled to have contact with the Palestinian population in the suburb of Beit Hanina, which separates the two regions. It is expected that work on this road will continue until 2015, and that its cost will be nearly $30 million.[75]

Map 5/6: Jerusalem Road 21[76]

The Cable Car Project South of Jerusalem's Old City

On 1/5/2013, Jerusalem Municipality published a plan to build a cable car to transport passengers to the Mughrabi Gate, the entrance of the Western Wall Square. The mayor said that this cable car will consist of two main lines: the first from the Mount of Olives, and the second from the west of Jerusalem, and the system would be capable of ferrying between four and six thousand passengers an hour.[77] It is clear from this scheme that its aim is to bring the largest possible number of Jewish tourists to the area of the Western Wall and the Jewish Quarter, which form the focus of the Jewish presence in the Old City of Jerusalem. This scheme was disclosed during the election campaigns of candidates for the municipal elections in Israel, for which the mayor of Jerusalem, Nir Barkat, was preparing to run in the month of August 2013, in the hope of winning a new mandate.

Map 6/6: The Cable Car Project for Jerusalem's Old City, May 2013[78]

Fourth: Political Developments Concerning Jerusalem

1. Developments in the US Position on Jerusalem

The year 2012 witnessed important developments in the US position on Jerusalem, especially as it was an election year. It presented a good opportunity for Israeli blackmail and for Israel to gain more concessions. These developments can be summarized as follows:

Al-Zaytouna Centre for Studies & Consultations

a. On 31/7/2012, the US Department of State issued its International Religious Freedom Report for the year 2011. This report carried new positions in US foreign policy; they used to refer to *al-Aqsa* Mosque as "Haram al-Sharif/ Temple Mount," they changed the order to become "Temple Mount/ Haram al-Sharif." They also removed the usual observation found at the beginning of the report stating that Haram al-Sharif is "among the holiest sites in Islam. Jews refer to the same place as the Temple Mount."[79] These amendments show that the report has begun to adopt the name "Temple Mount" as the default title. The most prominent development was the report's criticism of the Israeli government policy that "denies all non-Muslims opportunities to worship at the Temple Mount" and that "only Muslims are allowed to pray at the site, although their access has been occasionally restricted due to security concerns." Police "removed non-Muslim visitors if they appeared to be praying."[80] The report also criticized the policy of the Jordanian-controlled Jerusalem Islamic Waqf that "restricts non-Muslims from entering the Dome of the Rock shrine and Al-Aqsa Mosque, a practice it started in the year 2000. The Waqf does not allow non-Muslim religious symbols to be worn on the Temple Mount/ Haram al-Sharif."

This report came ahead of the position of the Israeli government itself in this regard, and framed Israeli actions in a "defensive" position: "defending" itself and "justifying" its policies of preventing non-Muslims from praying in the mosque. The 2012 Report on International Religious Freedom, which was issued in mid-2013, confirmed the same position,[81] which means that the US position on *al-Aqsa* Mosque has indeed changed, and the matter was not a mere mistake or a hasty position in the previous report.

b. The inclusion of the item "Jerusalem is the capital of Israel," as an item on the program of the election candidates, both the republicans and the democrats, in the presidential race.

c. Placing al-Quds International Institution, the leading popular Arabic and Islamic institution working in the field of Jerusalem, on the "terrorism" list on 4/10/2012.[82]

2. Holy Sites Custodianship Agreement

On Sunday 31/3/2013, an announcement was made in Amman of the signing of an agreement between the Jordanian king and the PA president concerning Jerusalem's custodianship, which Jordanian and Palestinian news agencies

headlined as the agreement on "The Defense of Jerusalem and Holy Sites." A careful review of this agreement and the titles of the signatory parties reveals that, in practice, it does not bear any legal value; rather it bears no more than a moral and nominal status.

The Palestinian signatory party has no role in Jerusalem in his capacity as the PA president, as the Oslo Accords deny him this role; although the PLO and the presumed State of Palestine have the right to the future of Jerusalem as part of the right of self-determination of the whole Palestinian people, which has not yet been achieved. This strips this agreement of any legal or real value, except that it recognizes the facts on the ground and confirms them morally; and perhaps it will resolve any possible clash over the representation of Jerusalem after Palestine was accepted as a non-member observer state at the UN.

Although the official news agencies and various media, which picked up the news, headlined the agreement as an agreement on "The Defense of Jerusalem and Holy Sites," or "to protect al-Aqsa Mosque and the holy sites," the agreement itself does not mention the word "protection" or any of its derivatives, except for the characterization of the historical role of the Sharif Hussein Bin Ali, and it does not mention the word "defense" except for the characterization of the role of Jordan as "better able to work for the defense of Islamic holy sites... ."

Furthermore, the text of the agreement did not mention any of the threats to *al-Aqsa* Mosque and the holy sites, for it is devoid of the words "occupation" or any of its derivatives, and "Israeli" or any of its derivatives, as well as the words "Zionist," "assault" and "violation."[83]

Fifth: Israeli Settlement Expansion in the WB

In 2012, Israeli settlements and outposts witnessed remarkable expansion. An analytical study conducted by ARIJ, confirmed that since the beginning of 2012 and until August of the same year, and out of 199 Israeli settlements (the total number of Israeli settlements in the WB), Israel carried out expansion works on 151 settlements, 76% of the total number of Israeli settlements in the WB. The expansion included the construction and adding of an additional 1,018 buildings and 854 new mobile homes.[84]

The expansion of Israeli settlements in the WB continued during 2013 at a fast pace. The expansion plans announced by the Israeli government, represented by its different ministries (Ministry of Construction and Housing, Israel Land Authority, and Israeli Civil Administration and others...) were announced in a way that affirmed the vitality and status of settlements in any final peace settlement agreement with the Palestinian side. In 2012, plans and tenders for 12,244 new housing units were announced. As for 2013, plans and tenders were announced for the construction of 11,066 housing units in 36 Israeli settlements, located in 8 Palestinian governorates out of a total of 11 governorates in the WB. Most of these, 7,957 housing units (72% of the total settlement units) are in the Israeli settlements located west of the Separation Wall that Israel seeks to annex to its borders under any agreement with the Palestinians.[85]

During 2013, Israel confiscated 10,800 donums of Palestinian lands in the occupied WB for various military and settlement uses, including 196 donums in eastern Jerusalem. The confiscation of more than half of this area (5,770 donums) was done in the month of July;[86] this is the month in which the Palestinian side agreed to resume the peace process, after a lapse of nearly three years.

The figures released by ARIJ for the year 2012 pointed to a rise in the number of Israeli settlers living in the settlements from 240 thousands in 1990 to more than 656 thousands in 2012. These settlers live in 196 Israeli settlements and 232 outposts, scattered throughout the WB, including those that were set up in eastern Jerusalem.[87] According to ARIJ, the number of settlers in the WB amounted to 693 thousand settlers in 2013.[88] As for the statistics by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), they indicate that the number of settlers in the WB totaled 563,546 settlers at the end of 2012, living in 144 settlements; of these, 26 settlements are in the Jerusalem Governorate.[89] The population of Jewish settlers in the Israeli settlements in the occupied WB has grown at an annual rate of between 4.7–4.9% since the year 2000, at a time when the population growth rate in Israel was 1.7%.

Israel has insisted on continuing its settlement activities, even after the re-launch of the peace process. Thus, Israeli authorities agreed to issue tenders and bids for 1,573 new housing units in Israeli settlements in the occupied WB at the start of the first round of negotiations on 31/7/2013.[90] *Maariv* newspaper revealed on 31/7/2013 a secret agreement between Netanyahu and Naftali Bennett, Chairman of The Jewish Home Party, to let pass the building of 4,500 housing units in the WB and Jerusalem

settlements. In the second round of negotiations, and specifically on 13/8/2013, Israel agreed to issue tenders and bids for the construction of 2,125 housing units in the WB. Also in October 2013, Netanyahu issued a decision to build 1,500 housing units in Jerusalem, in conjunction with the release of a second batch of Palestinian prisoners during the negotiation process.[91] Furthermore, the Israeli Defense Minister froze the former government's decision, which allowed the establishment of the Palestinian al-Nuway'imah village on part of the territories of the Jordan Valley, and canceled the decisions by Israeli courts to dismantle four Israeli outposts, and worked on legitimizing them, albeit indirectly.[92]

As for Israeli sources, which seem to be trying to minimize the seriousness of the settlement and Judaization measures, they indicate that "work began on 2,534 new housing units in the settlements in 2013, compared to 1,133 in 2012."[93] The number of housing units on which work has been completed totaled 1,271 units in 2012, while in 2013, their number reached 1,365 units.[94]

Sixth: Israeli Attacks on Agriculture and Water Resources

Agriculture in Palestine is an integral part and a key component of the Palestinian national, cultural, economic and social fabric. It is a symbol of resilience, defiance and adherence to a land that has become a target of confiscation and settlement. The Israeli blockade and other practices during 2012–2013 caused significant damage to this vital sector, notably:

- Bulldozing, uprooting and burning of fruit trees, estimated at more than 45 thousand olive trees and numerous citrus trees; in addition to the destruction of agricultural facilities.

- Confiscation of thousands of donums of land to the benefit of settlements and the building of bypass roads.

- Crossings closure has impacted agricultural exports, and had a negative effect on the freedom of transporting and marketing agricultural goods at home, causing damage to some of these goods, especially vegetables and fruits; and that led to lowering their prices.

- Closure of the fishing port in GS and restricting the movement of fishermen inflicted approximately a $2 million loss in fisheries income.

Israel continued its attacks on Palestinian farmers and Palestinian lands. At first it bulldozed lands belonging to Palestinians in the Jordan Valley; then it demolished whole Arab villages and displaced their inhabitants. Moreover, it destroyed their crops and deprived them of ability to gather and pick them; not to mention what the settlers do in spraying crops with toxic pesticides and cutting thousands of olive, citrus and fruit trees.

Palestinian farmers suffer from attacks by armed settlers, who chase them in the WB in order to terrorize them and force them to abandon their crops. For example, during the week 4–10/10/2012, 220 olive trees and 20 vineyards were destroyed in Bethlehem and Nablus. With the start of the olive harvest season, the WB territories witnessed significant escalation in the attacks. In many instances, the Israeli occupation forces sided with the settlers, provide them with protection, and forced Palestinian farmers to leave their lands.[95] During the olive harvest season (15/9–30/11/2012), Israelis carried out more than 76 attacks on olive trees and farmers, among them 70 attacks were carried out by Jewish settlers, and 6 attacks were carried out by the Israeli army. Thus, 2,183 olive trees were damaged, of which 1,900 trees were cut or uprooted.[96] In 2013, Israeli forces and settlers uprooted more than 13,057 fruit trees, including 880 trees in eastern Jerusalem.[97]

During Israel's November 2012 war on GS, Operation Pillar of Defense, which Hamas dubbed Operation Stones of Baked Clay, the Israeli army systematically destroyed the agricultural sector. The Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture estimated the losses in plant production to be more than $110 million, which included vegetables and various fruits and field crops, etc., beside the destruction of one thousand agricultural wells.[98] During this aggression, Israeli forces razed 10,062 fruit trees (olives, citrus and fruits), and destroyed an area of 1,016 donums of greenhouses, 2,704 donums of exposed vegetables, 467 donums of strawberries and 4,271 donums of field crops. It also destroyed 22 nurseries, 2 agricultural experiment stations and 2 nurseries belonging to the Ministry of Agriculture.[99] The targeting by Israeli forces of Palestinian agricultural lands turned them into lands plagued by white phosphorus shells, depleted uranium and various internationally banned weapons.[100]

As a result of Israel's depletion of groundwater basins, and because of restrictions imposed on drilling and rehabilitation of wells, the amount of water extracted by the Palestinians was reduced to less than the quantity stipulated in the Oslo Accords. In 1999, the Palestinians used to extract 138 million cubic meters (MCM) of water from the aquifers of the WB; however, this amount decreased to less than 93 MCM

in 2009 and to 86.9 MCM in 2011.[101] As for the coastal basin, the amount extracted was estimated to be 178.8 MCM in 2011, which exceeds the amount of the safe extraction of the basin three fold. The coastal basin suffers from degradation in water quality, and Yusuf Ibrahim, head of the Environment Quality Authority of the GS Caretaker Government, announced in late May 2013 that 90% of water from the aquifer in the GS had become unfit for human consumption, due to measures taken by the Israeli occupation of stealing water, razing border wells, and failure to rationalize water consumption. Ibrahim confirmed that 20% of GS beaches are unfit for recreation, for they are polluted with wastewater.[102]

Israel built dams in the northeastern regions of GS to prevent the arrival of water from the WB and intercept groundwater coming to GS. This is in addition to depleting water by drilling wells to draw it, and retaining valleys' water inside the Green Line, especially Wadi Gaza, which plays a role in increasing the amounts of underground water. Furthermore, Israel drilled more than 24 wells in the settlements that surround GS, in order to drain millions of cubic meters of water.[103]

A report by OCHA-oPt in 2012 mentioned that Israeli settler activity in WB has "significantly impaired Palestinian access to, and use of, a growing number of water springs." It added that in 40 springs settlers had begun to develop the surrounding area into a "tourist attraction." They began gradually developing the springs and their environs, including the construction of pools to collect the springs' water, and the installation of picnic benches and tables. They even gave these places Hebrew names. This has provided jobs and income to the settlements, at the expense of the Palestinians.[104]

In addition to the unfair distribution of water between Palestinians and Israelis, and Israel's theft of Palestinian water, there is the problem of lack of water networks for a number of Palestinian communities. For example, Israel refuses to connect Palestinian homes in Area C to the water network, which forces tens of thousands of them to buy water; in addition, in the summer, they are forced to buy water at prices many times as high as those paid by "their neighbors," the Israeli settlers.[105]

Water statistics in the WB carried out by PCBS in 2010 indicate that the number of Palestinian communities that have no water networks totals 109. So the citizens in these areas depend on the purchase of water from water tanks at high prices, and on drilling rainwater harvesting wells as alternative sources, causing them much hardship. Perhaps one of the strangest actions carried out by Israel is that, at the time that it withdraws water from Palestinian lands and depletes their groundwater

to supply its cities, it goes back and sells the surplus to them, as the amount of water purchased in 2011 from Israel National Water Company (Mekorot) amounted to 57 MCM in the WB and GS (excluding those parts of the Jerusalem Governorate annexed by Israel after its occupation of the WB in 1967).[106]

Seventh: Demolition of Buildings

Israel continued the demolition of Palestinian homes and expulsion of Palestinian citizens from their homes and public buildings in Area C of the WB (which is the area under total Israeli military and civilian control), as well as in eastern Jerusalem.

The majority of house demolitions and expulsion of the Palestinian population are in violation of Article 53 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. According to statistics by OCHA-oPt, during 2012, 540 Palestinian-owned structures in Area C, including 165 residential structures were demolished, on the pretext that they lack Israeli permits for construction; this led to the displacement of 815 people, over half of them children.[107] The occupation agreed to only 5% of requests for building permits submitted by Palestinians in Area C.

A study by ARIJ indicated that the number of homes demolished by the Israeli authorities in the WB during 2013 totaled 267, including 95 in eastern Jerusalem. As for the houses threatened with demolition, their number reached 978 houses, including 255 houses in eastern Jerusalem.[108]

In the course of their aggression on GS (dubbed by Israel "Operation Pillar of Defense"), the Israeli occupation forces carried out extensive destruction of buildings and public facilities, in November 2012. Al Mezan Center for Human Rights pointed out that at least 963 houses were damaged or destroyed, including 92 completely. Of those 92 houses, 52 were directly attacked. Another 179 houses sustained serious damage. The Center said that the occupation forces destroyed dozens of public facilities that sustained varying degrees of damage, among them:

> 10 health centers, 35 schools, 2 universities, 15 NGO offices, 30 mosques, 14 media offices, 92 industrial and commercial facilities, 1 UNRWA food distribution Centre, 8 ministry buildings, [it should be mentioned that the Abu Khadra Complex contains numerous ministerial headquarters, and was calculated as a single case], 14 police/security stations, 5 banks, 34 vehicles, 3 youth clubs, 3 cemeteries, and 2 bridges.[109]

Eighth: The Separation Wall

There was no major change in the construction state of the Separation Wall during 2013; however, the Israeli army issued an extension of the validity of a number of Israeli military orders issued for military use for "the purpose of the construction of the wall" in several areas of the WB, including the city of Beit Jala, west of Bethlehem, the village of Walaja, northwest of Bethlehem, the village of Bil'in, west of Ramallah, and the village of 'Azoun 'Atma in Qalqilya, and on the south side of the Hebron Governorate. According to a report by ARIJ, there was 55 km of the Wall (7% of its total length) under construction; while 495 km (64%) were completed. Moreover, 224 km of the Wall (29%) was still in the planning phase.[110] The report issued by OCHA-oPt in 2013, mentioned that in addition to what has been constructed already, there remains 10% of the route of the barrier under construction, while the construction of 28% of it has been planned, but Israeli authorities have not begun work on it yet.[111]

Until July 2012, the UN Register of Damage collected over 26 thousand claims for material damage caused by the construction of the Wall in the northern WB.[112] According to OCHA-oPt report "The Humanitarian Impact of the Barrier, July 2013" about 11 thousand Palestinians, living in 32 communities located between the Wall and the Green Line, depend on the granting of permits or special arrangements to live in their own homes.[113] And in order to access agricultural lands, farmers are directed to 74 gates in the Wall, the majority of which (52) only open during the olive harvest season (October-December).[114]
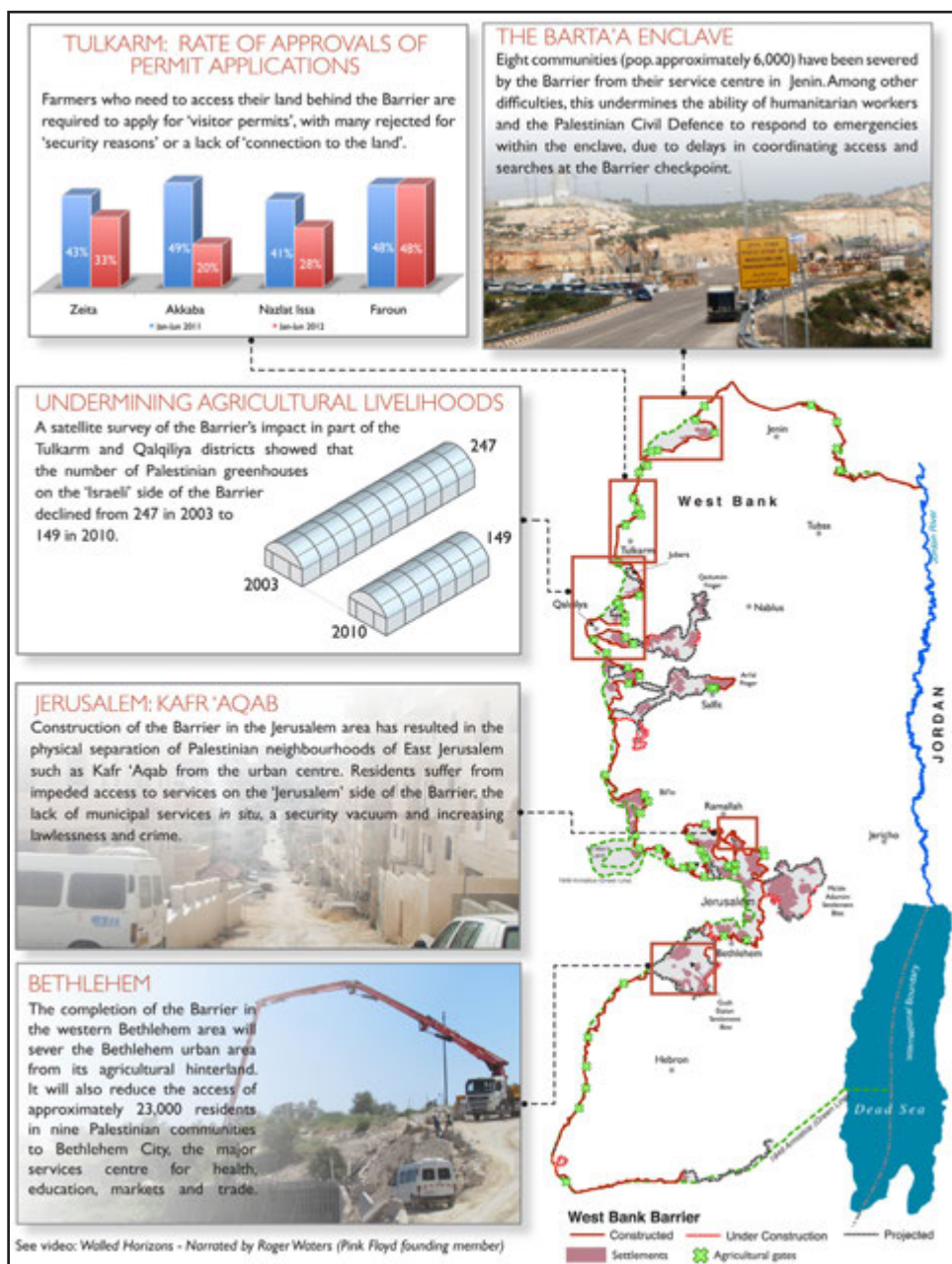
The report added that nearly half of the Israeli settlements in the WB (71 out of 150) and over 85% of the settler population are located in the area between the Green Line and the Wall's route.[115] OCHA-oPt's report "The Humanitarian Impact of the Barrier, July 2012" said that the agricultural livelihoods of thousands of families in 150 Palestinian communities have been severely undermined due to the permit and gate regime, which restrict access to their farmlands behind the Wall. The majority of permit applications are regularly rejected on grounds that farmers failed to prove their "connection to the land" to the satisfaction of the Israeli authorities. "The limited opening of the 'agricultural gates' has forced permit-holders to stop cultivation or to shift from labor-intensive to rain-fed and low-value crops."[116]

According to the same report, during the olive harvest season of 2011, 42% applications submitted for permits to access areas behind the Wall were rejected citing "security reasons" or lack of "connection to the land."[117]

Map 7/6: The Separation Wall Route in the WB, July 2011[118]

Map 8/6: The Impact of the Separation Wall on the Humanitarian Situation 2012[119]

TULKARM: RATE OF APPROVALS OF PERMIT APPLICATIONS

Farmers who need to access their land behind the Barrier are required to apply for 'visitor permits', with many rejected for 'security reasons' or a lack of 'connection to the land'.

43% 33% — Zeita
49% 20% — Akkaba
41% 28% — Nazlat Issa
48% 48% — Faroun

* Jan-Jun 2011 * Jan-Jun 2012

THE BARTA'A ENCLAVE

Eight communities (pop. approximately 6,000) have been severed by the Barrier from their service centre in Jenin. Among other difficulties, this undermines the ability of humanitarian workers and the Palestinian Civil Defence to respond to emergencies within the enclave, due to delays in coordinating access and searches at the Barrier checkpoint.

UNDERMINING AGRICULTURAL LIVELIHOODS

A satellite survey of the Barrier's impact in part of the Tulkarm and Qalqiliya districts showed that the number of Palestinian greenhouses on the 'Israeli' side of the Barrier declined from 247 in 2003 to 149 in 2010.

247 — 2003
149 — 2010

JERUSALEM: KAFR 'AQAB

Construction of the Barrier in the Jerusalem area has resulted in the physical separation of Palestinian neighbourhoods of East Jerusalem such as Kafr 'Aqab from the urban centre. Residents suffer from impeded access to services on the 'Jerusalem' side of the Barrier, the lack of municipal services in situ, a security vacuum and increasing lawlessness and crime.

BETHLEHEM

The completion of the Barrier in the western Bethlehem area will sever the Bethlehem urban area from its agricultural hinterland. It will also reduce the access of approximately 23,000 residents in nine Palestinian communities to Bethlehem City, the major services centre for health, education, markets and trade.

See video: Walled Horizons - Narrated by Roger Waters (Pink Floyd founding member)

West Bank

JORDAN

Jenin
Tubas
Tulkarm
Qalqilya
Nablus
Ariel
Salfit
Ramallah
Jericho
Jerusalem
Bethlehem
Hebron
Dead Sea

West Bank Barrier
— Constructed — Under Construction — Projected
Settlements Agricultural gates
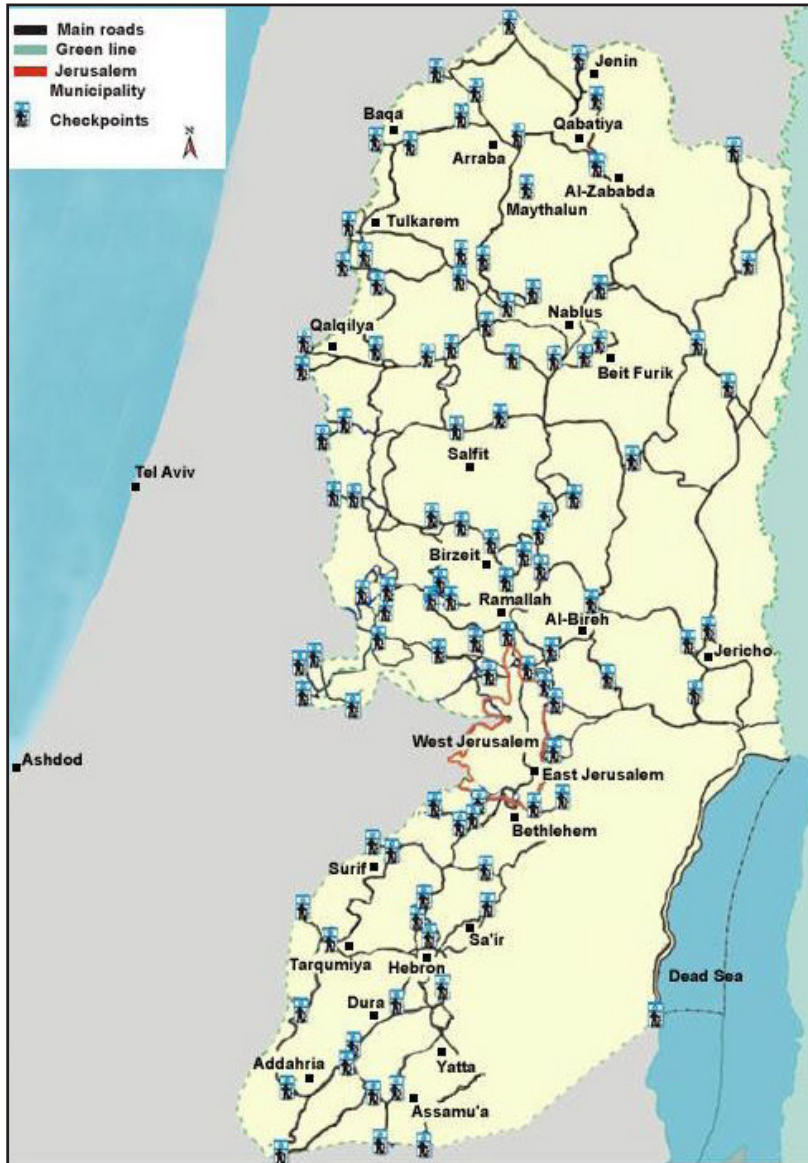
Al-Zaytouna Centre for Studies & Consultations

Ninth: Bypass Roads and Checkpoints

Israel continued the policy of enhancing its influence and making life easier for the settlers in the WB through the expansion of road construction. 'Abdul Hadi Hanash, a Palestinian expert in settlement affairs, said that the "bypass roads constructed by Israel on WB lands have a length of about 900 km." He alerted observers to the presence of Israeli proposals to build new roads with an estimated length of about 600 km. He explained that these roads would lead to the usurpation of more than 18 thousand donums of Palestinian agricultural lands, and the uprooting of tens of thousands of olive trees and grapes.[120]

According to the new modified Israeli plans, Israeli authorities have begun construction work on a new network of roads, which will link cities within Israel and illegal settlements and outposts in the WB. Work has begun on Highway 9, which will link the coastal Israeli city of Hadera with the north of the WB, 20 km in the direction of the Trans-Israel Highway 6 to connect with the intersection of Baq'a and Jatt, along the Separation Wall, and all the way to the Jordan Valley and the borders with Jordan. The damages caused by this plan will affect Palestinian villages inside the Palestinian territories occupied in 1948, in the second section of the scheme known as Highway 61. About 700 donums of private property owned by the people of western Baq'a and Jatt will be confiscated. This plan will also prevent any territorial contiguity between the two villages, and will swallow all the land that had been earmarked for their expansion.[121]

A report by B'Tselem—The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, mentioned that up to February 2014, there were 65.12 km of roads in the WB that Israel had classified for the sole, or virtually sole, use of Israelis, first and foremost of settlers. It also prohibits Palestinians from even crossing some of these roads with cars, thereby restricting their access to nearby roads that they are ostensibly not prohibited from using. In these cases, Palestinian travelers have to get out of the car, cross the road on foot, and find an alternative mode of transportation on the other side.[122]

In the comprehensive closure survey completed at the end of June 2012, OCHA-oPt field teams documented and mapped 542 obstacles blocking Palestinian movement within the WB. These include 61 permanently staffed checkpoints (excluding checkpoints on the Green Line), 25 partial checkpoints (staffed on an ad-hoc basis) and 436 unstaffed physical obstacles, including roadblocks, earth mounds, earth walls, road gates, road barriers, and trenches.[123]

Map 9/6: Israeli Checkpoints in WB[124]

Conclusion

Based on this detailed reading of the developments concerning Jerusalem, we can expect, in the near future, the temple groups to continue to take advantage of their unprecedented political influence, and work to intensify their storming

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of *al-Aqsa* Mosque, and to impose a permanent and real change in the rules of access to the site. They will try to completely write off the Islamic Waqf and place the mosque under the administration of the Israeli Ministry of Religious Services, or at least to reach an agreement on a joint management by the two sides. It is expected that the demographic balance in Jerusalem will continue to go in favor of the Arab population; however, the main point of strength that the Israeli authorities will try to take advantage of is to take account of the numbers of Jerusalemites isolated outside the Wall and try to deprive them of their blue residency cards. It is also expected that the pace of settlement will continue and be concentrated in the South and North sectors, and that work will continue on the completion of infrastructure projects that promote these two sectors, along with the possibility of proposing new projects. If this is achieved, it will begin to rein in the demographic imbalance in favor of the Palestinians in the city.

Due to Israeli settlement and Judaization policies, the suffering of the Palestinian people will apparently not end; for the resumption of the peace process in the second half of 2013 had no effect on the feverish pace of construction of new settlements in the WB. The increasingly racist and extremist Israeli government, supported by an Israeli society moving in the same direction, continues with its hostile programs in a more severe and efficient manner. These programs involve the confiscation of lands, construction of settlement housing units, laying hands on water resources, destruction of Palestinian infrastructure, construction of the Separation Wall and building bypass roads.

It is expected that the same Israeli policies will continue in the short term, taking advantage of the weak state of Palestinians, and the sorry state of affairs in several Arab countries, represented in internal strife caused by the process of change and uprisings; in addition to the counter-waves to change and external interference. Furthermore, these Israeli policies will continue to benefit from the international environment, especially American cover, to work as a state above the law, not subject to pressure or accountability. However, in the event that the Palestinians manage to put their house in order and launch a new uprising, and in the event conditions in the Arab region changed for the better, in a way that serves the course of revolutions and change to the advantage of the people of the region, this will impose new and significantly different calculations on the Israeli side.

Endnotes

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11 Hisham Ya'qoub et al., *'Ain 'ala al-Aqsa: Taqrir Tawthiqi Yarsud al-I'tida'at 'ala al-Masjid al-Aqsa fi al-Fatrah bayna 1/8/2012–1/8/2013*, p. 49.

12 A comparison between published numbers in: Hisham Ya'qoub et al., *'Ain 'ala al-Aqsa: Taqrir Tawthiqi Yarsud al-I'tida'at 'ala al-Masjid al-Aqsa fi al-Fatrah bayna 21/8/2011–21/8/*2012, p. 79; and Hisham Ya'qoub et al., *'Ain 'ala al-Aqsa: Taqrir Tawthiqi Yarsud al-I'tida'at 'ala al-Masjid al-Aqsa fi al-Fatrah bayna 1/8/2012–1/8/2013*, p. 49.
It must be clarified that the calculation methodology has changed in the mentioned report, for the number of excavations were 38 on 21/8/2011 as in: 'Abdullah Ibhais, Ziad al-Hasan and Mariam 'Itani, *'Ain 'ala al-Aqsa: Taqrir Tawthiqi Yarsud al-I'tida'at 'ala al-Masjid al-Aqsa fi al-Fatarh bayna 22/8/2010–21/8/2011* (Eye on al-Aqsa: An Inductive Documentary Report on the Aggressions Against al-Aqsa Mosque During the Period 22/8/2010–21/8/2011) (Beirut: Al Quds International Institution, 2011), p. 32. And they became 41 excavations as in: Hisham Ya'qoub et al., *'Ain 'ala al-Aqsa: Taqrir Tawthiqi Yarsud al-I'tida'at 'ala al-Masjid al-Aqsa fi al-Fatrah bayna 21/8/2011–21/8/*2012, p. 79.

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[40] In the context of this discussion and analysis, it should be noted that many figures mentioned here are based on data published by Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies (JIIS), which is almost the only side in Israel issuing detailed figures related to Jerusalem. JIIS depends on data released by CBS supported by results of its field studies. However, the former's figures are issued a year after CBS had issued its figures. Thus, while the CBS issues 2012 figures in mid 2013, JIIS issues 2011 figures at the end of 2013. Thus, we usually rely on the figures issued by the CBS, which publishes the *Statistical Abstract of Israel* yet without detailed data.

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This Report

The Palestinian Strategic Report 2012–2013 is the eighth in a series of annual resourceful academic studies. It discusses the developments of the Palestinian issue of this period in an objective and comprehensive manner. The meticulous analytical reading of events tries also to foresee the near future. This Report has become a basic reference on Palestinian studies, it is a must read for all those concerned.

An outstanding team of 13 academics and experts contributed to this Report in seven chapters. They covered the internal Palestinian situation, the Israeli scene and the Israeli–Palestinian relations including wars and the peace process. They also discuss the Arab, Muslim and international stances towards the Palestinian issue. This Report focuses, also, on the issue of Jerusalem and the holy sites, and the suffering of man and land under the Israeli occupation. Besides, the demographic, economic and education indicators are, also, studied and analyzed.

Al-Zaytouna Centre, as usual, has surpassed other reports in this superlative work. It is a serious addition to the field of Palestinian studies, and those interested in this field, including specialists, experts, libraries of universities and research centers, should have their copies of this Report.

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