Jerusalem Walls: Transforming and Segregating Urban Fabric

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Jerusalem Walls: Transforming and Segregating Urban Fabric

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Abstract

Jerusalem city witnessing last touches of constructing the Israeli wall that came as a part of a general strategy aim to separate the city from its periphery. The city, that includes about 400,000 Palestinians considered as the hub of fifty Palestinian communities. This structure is interlinked by complex cultural, social, and economic relationships. This aims to de facto annex vast areas to Israel using different means like land confiscations, colonial activities and finally constructing the wall in order to reach the city “Israelization”. Israel claims that Jerusalem is an open city as was declared immediately after 1967. On the ground, since 1967, Israel created different kinds of walls to divide Jerusalem into Palestinian enclaves and Israeli contiguous urban scheme (Hasson, 1996).

This study investigates the impact of Israeli policies on Jerusalem area since 1948. Since then all planning practices were directed to isolate Jerusalem by cutting off all surrounding Arab communities. The aim of the study is to shed light on the hidden agenda of the Israeli planning strategies and its impact on the Palestinian urban structure.

In order to assess the urban settings for the study area, aerial photos were analyzed, field visits, literature and historical review were conducted. The outcome of the study shows that Israeli planning machine in the area was aiming to enlarge “Greater Jerusalem” area by annexing as much land as possible within the city boundary. Another aim was to weaken and segregate the surrounding Palestinian communities in away to make it impossible for these communities to form a center as a Palestinian hub competing the historical hub of Jerusalem.

Keywords
urban segregation; apartheid wall; urban patterns; urban structure; Jerusalem; Palestine

* The initial idea for this research was formulated during “principle of planning course” offered by the department. This class concentrated on history of urban planning in Palestine. I would like to thank the students Anjad Hithnawi and Ibrahim Natour for their efforts in data collection and analysis in this research.
Introduction

Since 1967, Israeli policy in the West Bank (referred as Judea and Samaria by Israel since 1967) have been to create facts on the ground by annexing land without its people, by constructing enclaves within and around the Palestinian built-up areas. “The Likud wanted Jewish settlement throughout Judea and Samaria, while Labor sought to leave some areas free of Jewish settlement to make possible territorial compromise…” (Rishmawi, 1987).

Settlement policy in the West Bank varied between two points of view by the Israeli decision makers, one was with the idea of holding the West Bank for final status agreement to solve the conflict (Labor Government), and the other point of view was with disperse these settlements around in the West Bank in order to incorporate the region with the Israeli system (Likud Government and Gush Emunim) (Le Vine, 1998). East Jerusalem was a different issue, immediately after capturing the West Bank in 1967; the Israeli Government applied the Israeli law to extensive areas to the north, east and south of West Jerusalem, which were annexed to Municipality of Jerusalem. The government began a rapid process to build settlements in these areas. Its goal was to prevent any challenge to Israel’s sovereignty over them and to impede initiatives leading to an Israeli withdrawal from these areas (Shachar, 1998).

Since 1967, Israel has been attempting to create facts on the ground that would forever link East Jerusalem to West Jerusalem and Israel. Israel has been trying to limit Palestinian natural growth as much as possible (Segal, 2003). Israel has established a demographic balance of 70 percent Jewish to 30 percent Palestinian in East Jerusalem. To limit natural growth, Israel has revoked Palestinian residency permits, demolished Palestinian homes and stringently limited building permits granted to Palestinians (Klein, 2005).

According to many Israeli criticisms (Dumper, 1997; Klein, 2005), settlement policies consider a problematic issue for both Palestinian and Israeli communities, this is due to many reasons such as the way the settlements damage the Arab-Jewish relations, the negative influence of the settlements on the Israelis security, the role of settlements in deepen the social disparities, and the way the settlements generate a massive waste of resources (Yiftachel, 2003). In spite of that, Israel continue constructing settlements as a part of its national strategy, the state motivate the settlers to live in the settlements through the lower price of the real state there, or through attracts residents by the tax incentives that were given (Benvenisti, 1984).

Settlements activities started in Jerusalem immediately after the war of 1967 by systematic destroying over 135 homes in the Islamic Magharbeh quarter in order to expand the Jewish quarter there (Mattar, 1982). Jerusalem master plan that published in 1974 ignored the Palestinian resident’s needs...
and finished by plan of Metropolitan Jerusalem that a large portion of the land earmarked for the establishment of more Israeli settlements (Mattar, 1982).

In Jerusalem, since 1967, Israel as part of national strategy used its military might and economic power to relocate borders, grant and deny rights and resources, and more population for the sake of increasing Jewish domination of the city. Through discriminatory zoning practices, complex planning regulations and house demolitions, Israel has managed to block Palestinian development from available land leaving it vacant until it is expropriated for “public use” for the exclusive use of Israel Jewish residents (Choshin, 1998).

The ring of illegal settlements around the core of the city served to cut off Jerusalem from Ramallah in the north and Bethlehem in the south to prevent any contiguity along the central axis (the axis goes through the mountain ridge of West Bank). Before 1967, East Jerusalem under the Jordanian rule had covered six and a half square kilometers, after 1967 when East Jerusalem was occupied, Israel annexed additional 64.4 Km². The aim of this annexation was to incorporate as much strategic high ground as possible under the Israeli control, while at the same time minimizing the number of Arabs residents that the annexation would add to the city’s population (Yiftachel, 2002).

In general, Israel established two series of walls. One delineates the Arab area by limiting and containing it, and the other was created by the preference given to the Jewish sector and its development. Eleven Jewish residential neighborhoods were established in East Jerusalem, on land annexed by Israel. Most were erected on the hilltops that surround the eastern city’s basin. Most were constructed as self-contained areas connected to the western city by means of their own state-of-the art roads. These Jewish neighborhoods broadcast a message of aggression toward and domination of the Arab neighborhoods below them (Wasserstein, 2001).

In 2000 Israel created soft border regime along the seam between east and west Jerusalem, by way of mobile roadblocks and police checkpoints. Israel has blocked many roads that connect East Jerusalem to the West Bank by digging trenches, destroying roads, and constructing walls and piles of earth. In 2002, Israel began to build system of physical and electronic separation between Israel and Palestinian territories and within the Palestinian areas, similar to the border systems between Israel and Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt (Klein, 2004).

Implemented and planned path of the wall in and around Jerusalem shows that the guiding principle is different from other areas in the West Bank. In Jerusalem the wall’s path follows the “Greater Jerusalem” municipal border that was created after 1967 occupation and has been guided by the Green Line.
UN-administrated armistice line between Israel and Jordan created in 1949). The wall penetrates deep into the Occupied Palestinian Territories. This results in a de facto annexation of all “Greater Jerusalem” Israeli settlement blocks, spanning an area of 10 to 16% of the West Bank (Brooks, 2005).

**Historical Background**

Establishing a Jewish state in Palestine means a violent imposition on the native population that is a displacement of at least some of the native population. After the war of 1948, there had been a great removal of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians. Over 700,000 Palestinians were expelled and their lands were turned over to the Israeli “Custodian for absentee property” (Weaver, 2004). That is through force, a Jewish state had been created an “Iron Wall” of military that kept the Palestinians separated from their lands. While Israel’s victory in 1967 gained territory, it brought with it a different issue; Israeli politicians favored Israeli control over all the Israeli Land “Eritz Israel”. But annexation of the West Bank was not an option as this would mean that the Palestinians in the territories would become Israeli citizens, and this will threat the demographic majority of Jews in the state. So, the Israeli problem since 1967 was a struggle to enlarge its control over “Eritz Israel” while minimizing the number of Palestinians. Many plans were emerged to minimize the Israeli responsibility for the Palestinians and guarantee maximum control over land and at the most recently, the separation wall came in 2002 to serve these aims (Weaver, 2004).

West Jerusalem was cleansed of its Palestinian residents in the first half of 1948. Its Judaization was achieved by the forced eviction of approximately 80,000 Palestinians from their homes and properties. Thirty eight Palestinian villages in West Jerusalem were destroyed during the 1948 war (Weaver, 2004). Numerous settlements were built on the ruins and occupied lands of these villages (AAWC, 2005). More settlements sprang up around Jerusalem, on land confiscated from the districts of Ramallah and Bethlehem. Their presence isolated remaining Palestinian neighborhoods in Jerusalem and formed a physical outer ring around the city. This cuts Palestinians in Jerusalem off from the rest of Palestine (Brooks, 2005).

A policy of systematic and deliberate discrimination against the Palestinian population was developed in Jerusalem through land expropriation, planning permission and building laws (AAWC, 2005). In June 1967, shortly after the Six-Days War, the Government of Israel decided to expand the borders of Jerusalem. In this way the Israeli authorities have engaged in sustained efforts to establish total Israeli control over the whole of the city of Jerusalem, including
Palestinian East Jerusalem and its surroundings (Al-Haq, 2005). A small city around thirty eight square kilometers became a large metropolis of 108 sq. km. Overnight Jerusalem became the biggest city under Israeli control in terms of both area and population (Cheshin, 1999).

During the years following the illegal annexation of East Jerusalem and the expansion of the municipal boundaries, approximately one-third of the land was expropriated to build 12 settlements, home to some 175,000 Israeli settlers by 2002 (B’tselem, 2003). The majority of the remaining land was rezoned so as to prevent Palestinian use, and in effect serve as a land reserve for further settlement construction and expansion. Only 7.3 percent of the land in municipal East Jerusalem is available for Palestinian construction, most of which is in already built-up areas (Al-Haq, 2005). In addition, between 1967 and 1993, Israel established a series of settlements outside the municipal boundaries of East Jerusalem creating an ‘outer ring’ of Israeli control that, when combined with the restricted network of bypass roads connecting the settlements to each other and Jerusalem, further tears apart Palestinian communities and isolates occupied East Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank (Wasserstein, 2001).

In its analysis of the projected route of the Annexation Wall in 2005, the United Nations Organization for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) estimated that 10.1 percent of the entire West Bank, including East Jerusalem, would be between the Annexation Wall and the Green Line. It was decided that generally the Jerusalem wall would be built on the city’s municipal limits. In the summer of 2002, Israel had already begun building sections of the separation barrier around Jerusalem in the first implementation phase of the separation plan. On September 11, 2002, the Israeli cabinet approved the “Enveloping Jerusalem” plan, surrounding the city with fences and walls from the south, east and north. The cabinet determined the current route of “Enveloping Jerusalem” on February 20, 2005 (Weaver, 2004). According to the plans approved by the Israeli Cabinet on 10 July 2005. The Jerusalem wall is approximately 90 kilometers long extending 14 kilometers into the West Bank to the east of Jerusalem and encompassing in total 4 percent of the occupied Palestinian territories. It will enclose major Israeli settlements to the north, east and south of the city, including ‘buffer zones’ of open land for settlement expansion. Snaking between settlements and Palestinian population centers, the Annexation Wall encircles about three-quarters of the 230,000 Palestinians who hold East Jerusalem identity cards, while excluding the other quarter (Miftah, 2005).

Once the wall is finished throughout Jerusalem it will total 181 km. By December 2005, over 130 km of the 8-meter high concrete structure had
been constructed. Completion of the wall will leave the majority of Palestinians in and around Jerusalem – around 190,000 people – facing two options. To stay in Jerusalem's neighborhoods, subjected to high Occupation taxes, imprisoned by Walls and a life under siege, Or to be expelled into what remains of the West Bank and Gaza or abroad and permanent loss of the right to live in the Palestinian capital (AAWC, 2005).

The Wall around Jerusalem ensures the annexation of all the settlement blocks around the city “the Jerusalem Envelope”. A chain of 181 Km, the concrete Wall forms a series of enclave Palestinian neighborhood. Palestinians are being shut in by the Wall and the settlements into 4 main ghettos (AAWC, 2005).

Northwest (the case study) Beit Duqqu, Beit Ijza, Qibia, Beit Sourik and Beit Anaan will be merged into one ghetto. Israeli Forces have confiscated and isolated 14,669 dunums from these villages. North Beit Hanina, Qalandiya, Beir Nabala, al-Jeeb and Jodaira form a ghetto. the villages will lose at least 10635 dunums from the Wall. East where Ar-Ram, Jaba’, Hizma, Anata and Shoffat form a ghetto, isolated from 6500 dunums of their lands. Southeast Abu Dis, Anata and Eizarya Ghetto where the 8-meter high concrete wall runs sealing off around 13,000 dunums for Maale Adunim.

Study Area

This study is targeting Jerusalem’s north-west Palestinian communities that represent a very profound example of the Israeli segregation policies in Jerusalem area. The site of the study is grabbed islands of lands with an area of 526.5 km (39 km east-west by 13.5 north-south) located on the western slopes of the West Bank mountains chain, it is bounded by the green line from the south and the west, “great Jerusalem” northern finger from the east, and by road No. 443 from the north, (Fig. 1).

The history of the Palestinian communities in this area is as old as the history of the holy city of Jerusalem itself; many historical and religious sites exist there (Ju’beh, 2001).

The first dramatic change that had happened in this area was in 1948 when the green line was drawn breaking communities’ relations with the surrounding Palestinian communities from the west and the south. In 1967 the whole area was annexed to Israel after the six days war (Bollens, 1996).

Until the establishment of the first settlement in this area Mevo Horon in 1970 the Palestinian villages and towns in the region with the other Palestinian communities in east and north-east Jerusalem were forming the native Jerusalem suburbs depending on Jerusalem as their urban center.
Figure 1
Study Area
These villages formed an appropriate residential area for Jerusalemites to escape from the crowded city without losing access to the social services and facilities. This encouraged a significant number of Jerusalem ID card holders to live in the villages and suburbs outside East Jerusalem borders, and that had a positive impact on these villages and suburbs. The situation lasted until 2002, when Israel decided to build the wall and isolate many communities from East Jerusalem (LAAC, 2003).

Urban Fabric Segregation

From the beginning, Israel considered the Palestinians in Jerusalem as a demographic problem and threat, Israel’s failure to restrict the number of the Palestinians in the city broke the taboo over dividing sovereignty in Jerusalem and also increased Israeli fears of ‘the other’. Israel is now attempting to achieve by means of destructive walls which will envelop the Palestinian neighborhoods what it was unable to achieve since 1967 through a belt of new construction; Jewish neighborhoods around the East Jerusalem. In this way Israel forced demographic Jewish–Arab equality in the area annexed in 1967. In the talks in the year 2000 on a permanent settlement, discussions took place on models of dividing both territory and control between Israel and the planned Palestinian state. The rightist Israeli government was not satisfied with this and strives for exclusive Israeli control over all the area annexed in 1967. This demands the destruction of the demographic, urban and metropolitan reality which developed since 1967 in Arab Jerusalem.

The East Jerusalem metropolis must be destroyed both by damaging its periphery and by weakening of the center itself, as well as cutting it off from its natural hinterland. All these measures are intended to perpetuate the control and the superiority of Jewish over Arab Jerusalem (Klein, 2001).

In order to understand the status quo, analysis is need throughout the different stages the area went through:

Before 1948 (Under British Mandate)

The study area was located under three administrative commanders. The western part was under Ramleh district, the northern was under Ramallah district, and the southern was under Jerusalem (Fig. 2).

The Palestinian communities in the study area were connected to two regional centers. Al Ramleh city (to the west) was the major center for the communities; Beit Liqia, Kharbatha Almisbah, Beit Sira, it also worth mentioning that these villages are located at about 260-350 m above see level, so
geographically they are closer to the coast than to the communities in the mountains (Ramallah and Jerusalem). The eastern communities, Beit hanina, Beir nabal, Beddu, Qubebeh, Al-Tira, were commuting to Jerusalem as a primary center and to Ramallah as a secondary one (Ju’beh, 2001).

Locals used to commute daily to the hub (Jerusalem) in order to sell their agricultural products and to buy their needs. These communities were connected tightly with Jerusalem on daily bases and were considered as suburbs or satellite communities. Accessibility helped to strengthen the relationship of the communities in the study area with Jerusalem more than the one with Ramallah. Spatially, most of these suburbs are located within the immediate ring (5 km radius) around the city of Jerusalem, while others are located within the outer ring (10 km radius) (Fig. 2). Even though all used to commute to Jerusalem more frequently than to Ramallah.

Between 1948-1967 (Under Jordanian Rule)

Israel drew the (Armistice line) green line that separated Palestinian communities from each other after the declaration of “Israel” in 1948. The study area was torn up by this line. The agglomeration of the Palestinian communities in
After 1967 (Under Israeli Occupation)

After 1967, Israel occupied the remaining lands of Palestine besides Sinai desert and Golan Heights. This means that historical Palestine is now under one regime. Although the study area and the neighboring communities in the western side of the armistice line are now under the same rule, these communities didn’t go back to their former way of living because most of the villages
to the west of the green line were destroyed. Ramallah and Jerusalem continued to serve as regional centers for the communities in the study Area. (Fig. 4).

After 1967, colonization started in the West Bank, where the machine of settling new immigrants in the occupied lands started immediately after 1967. By doing so, Israel began to impose a new layer of urban fabric within and around the existing/native ones. Israel totally ignored the physical impacts of such imposition on the existing Palestinian communities and on its urban morphology and unity. Israel started creating new settlements within the immediate ring around Jerusalem to change the status quo of the city. Ramot Shlomo, Ramot, and Pisgat Z’ev, colonies were established to change the urban fabric as well as to change the demographic scale of the city. This was the first step of expanding Jerusalem city boundary which consequently isolated the Palestinian suburbs in enclaves (al-Jubeih, 2003).

Colonization activities in the study area accelerated and intensified. By 1985 urban structure of these new colonies started to form a new shape which was going in line with the new city boundary of “Greater Jerusalem” (Fig. 1).
To do so “Israel” authorities established new series of colonies: i) along the major access leading to Ramallah, ii) to the north west direction towards the study area through Givon, Ramot, Ramot Shlomo and Givat Ze’ev colonies, iii) towards the western borders of the study area, which is adjacent to the green line (Fig. 5).

Some of the Palestinian communities (Biddu, Qattna, and Qubbabieh) in the study area were growing to form a new suburb to function as a satellite center as a result of economic development and commuting difficulty to Jerusalem during that time, Israeli polices put an end for this development by creating new colonies in the area (Klein, 2004).

Until 1995, Israel continued constructing colonies according to the following strategies:

• To ensure the separation of Palestinian communities from the green/armistice line. This was achieved by constructing Maccabeum, and the Labid complex adjacent to the armistice line (Fig. 6).
• To prevent any chance to create a Palestinian urban center within the study area, Har Adar colony was constructed.
• To enforce buffering “Greater Jerusalem” by a series of colonies in the outer ring around metropolitan Jerusalem Hard Adar, Givon, Givat Ze’ev colonies were constructed.
• To destroy any potential for urban contiguity within the study area lands belong to Al-Tira, Beit Liqia, and Khrabtha were confiscated.
• To enforce separation between North West and North East regions of Jerusalem Ataroote, Neve Yakoob and Pigat Zeive colonies were constructed along the corridor leading to Ramallah City in the North.

Current Situations
Nowadays Jerusalem northern-west area is suffering badly from the Israeli separation policies. This area is now divided into 3 fully enclosed enclaves, connected with each other and with the surrounding communities by underground gated tunnels with check points on each (Fig. 7).
This area is a grabbed island that includes mainly 18 native Palestinian towns and villages. It is segregated by 11 Israeli settlements (Fig. 8), 112 km of wall, and 4 permanent military checkpoints. In addition this area is already enclosed by 81 km of the green line and 69 km of restricted roads (Hass, 2003).

In this area a sum of 62,052 Palestinians live in three separated enclaves (Table 1):

- The Eastern zone: Qalandia, Al jib, Bir Nabala, Bet Hanina AL Balad, AL Judera.
- The middle zone which includes Bet Ilksa
- The Western zone which is the largest: Bet Surik, Biddu, Qattana, Al qubeiba, Bet Ijza, Bet Duqqu, AL Tira, Bet Inan, Bet Liqia, KH. Al Musbah, Khirbt um allahem, Bet Siera, Al Nabi Shmuel.
Zone 1

The western zone where, 12 Palestinian villages bounded by Israeli forbidden road No 443 to the north. This zone is surrounded by the apartheid separation wall on the other sides. It is connected with other Palestinian communities by two underground tunnels (Fig. 9).

The wall is blocking the center of this zone and preventing its natural growth and development – Qattana Biddu and Al Qubiba – which resulted in reducing the potentials for developing a local suburban center in this area.

The wall also separated Bet Surik village from most of its agricultural land, 4000 dunams of its lands were expropriated by the wall. This blocked urban contiguity with neighboring Arab communities like, Bei Ikse, Kharbatha Al Mibbah and Bet Ur. Further more, the recent land confiscation in the area between Bet Liqia and Altira represents another example of segregating Arab communities (LACC, 2003).
Table 1
Palestinian communities in the north west Jerusalem area, (PCBS, 2007)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Community name</th>
<th>Population 2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Zone 3</td>
<td>Qalandia</td>
<td>1205</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Al Jib</td>
<td>4848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bir Nabala</td>
<td>6360</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bet Hanina Al Balad</td>
<td>1447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Al Judera</td>
<td>2215</td>
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<td>Zone 2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bet Surik</td>
<td>3987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Biddu</td>
<td>6650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Qattana</td>
<td>7829</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bet Ijza</td>
<td>700</td>
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<td>Bet Duqqu</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zone 1</td>
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<td>Bet Liqia</td>
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<td>Kh. Al Musbah</td>
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<td>Bet Siera</td>
<td>2260</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Al Nabi Shmuel</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Zone 2

This zone is a semi-enclosed enclave consists of 4 Israeli colonies and one Palestinian village that is Bet Ikse. It has no connection with any of the neighboring Palestinian villages. It is divided into two parts: the Palestinian built up area as an enclave under Palestinian administration surrounded by colonies and the wall, and the second part is the agricultural land which is expropriated to “greater Jerusalem”. This area also includes the biggest colony in the North West of Jerusalem – Givat Za‘eve- (Fig. 10).

Zone 3

This zone is fully enclosed by the wall and this enclave includes Bir Nabala Aljudira, Qalandia, Aljib, Bet hanina al balad. This zone is intended to be connected with Qalandia Entrance and Biddu by two tunnels.
Figure 9
Current Situation (Source: AAWC, 2007)

Figure 10
Separation Wall Near Qalandia
The wall in this area broke many historical connections and relations between communities; it separates the old part of Bet Hanina from its new expansion area (Bet Hanina Aljdida), also it separates the twin cities Al ram and Bir Nabala, these two communities were in a process to form one urban fabric as a local center, the construction of the wall stopped that. People used to commute between the two towns within 10 minutes but now it takes more than 45 minutes to do so.

Conclusion

Metropolitan Jerusalem strategies and physical plans were set early in 1967, where “Israel” managed to achieve the separation of East Jerusalem from its hinterland by all means of destructive walls, demolition of Palestinian houses, expropriation of Palestinian lands and imposing Jewish colonies’ layer on top of the native Arab urban fabric (Fig. 12).

Moreover “Israeli” policies managed to damage the urban fabric and contiguity of the historical Arab communities around and within “Greater Jerusalem” boundary by segregating Palestinian agglomerations (Fig. 13).
Figure 12
Palestinian Urban Fabric (without segregation)
Figure 13
New Urban Fabric (after segregation)
All this fragmentation of the Palestinian communities’ structure sets a concrete barrier in the way of any kind of development and contiguity. This resulted in creating enclaves and separated cantons for Palestinian communities.

Planning and changing the facts on the ground by Israeli bulldozers and concrete walls aim at preventing of any possibility to build a viable Palestinian state on the Palestinian land. This is achieved through disconnecting communities, expropriation of land, imposing new changes on the natural settings of the area.

References


