



Educational and economic dimensions in the Israeli project against occupied Jerusalem

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ABSTRACT

Emboldened by American partiality for the Israeli occupation and the feeble Arab-Islamic support for the Palestinian cause, Israel has been taking advantage, over the last five years, of the current events and changing conditions prevailing in the regional Arab system. The Israeli occupation authority employs the two contingent devices of education and the economy in occupied Jerusalem as a base for counter-action in its desperate effort to hit the collective political consciousness that demands terminating occupation, liberation and self-determination. The occupation authority in occupied Jerusalem has employed a systematic scheme to isolate the city from the rest of the West Bank territories. Their aim is to destroy its trade movement in order to tighten the loop of hegemony around the vital economic and social sectors, and to deprive the Palestinian Authority from returns of tourism. Life for the residents of the city has become complicated in every possible way, prompting them to abandon their city. All this would be a part of a 'voluntary immigration' policy as a prelude to Judaizing the city, evacuating its residents, replacing them with settlers and, ultimately, dropping the city off the partition claims. The measures adopted by the occupation authorities take advantage of the educational and economic dimensions and employ them as leverage for penetrating the articulating points of the resisting Jerusalemite society. This goal is being achieved by shaking the foundations of the educational system and by obstructing endeavours seeking to improve and propagate it. The occupation authority continued to perpetrate its scheme of 'displacement/settlement' when it recently expelled 100,000 Jerusalemites from their city. In light of the aforesaid, this research examines, as its main theme, the impact of putting the educational and economic dimensions to use in the Israeli project against occupied Jerusalem, on the fate of the city, and on the equation of the Arab–Israeli conflict. The paper also argues that it would be natural that a popular youth movement emerging in the face of Israel's intransigence will nominate its own political leadership, dissociated from the political leadership of the Palestinian factions, so that insurrection can continue.

KEYWORDS

Israeli occupation of Palestine; Israeli occupation authority; Palestinian resistance to occupation; Palestinian displacement and resettlement in Jerusalem

Introduction

It might be said that the impacts of economic development almost approximate the bounds of a reciprocal relational networking between society and education, since the

latter is usually employed as a vital reliant device for laying the foundations of progress, revival, growth and advancement, and for supporting the wheel of developmental mobility by qualified human cadres, as development, in its diverse dimensions, identifies with principles of justice, democracy, stability and independence, both individually and societally.

'Adapting' the syndrome of 'education/economic development' in an effort for bringing about societal change causes internal effects that are taken into account when considering social transformations; the nature of the prevailing cognitive pattern and the official policy of the state. It also causes other external effects originating from the ambient environment, regionally and internationally, so as to affect the structure of the existent international system, since all the said effects are factors that come together, in support or in opposition, to define the changing conditions inside the political regime itself, and to shape their process and orientations.

For theorists, dimensions of development alternate as concerns their precedence. Some believe that economic development is an assisting or essential factor required to realize development in the social and political domains, if not the only factor (Almond and Bingham Powell 1978). Others claim that 'political development is a prelude to economic growth; change, modernization, advancing democracy and setting up establishments' (Pye 1966, 33–44) within an approach that adopts multifaceted integration of societal development.

As for societies burdened with occupation, education is considered an active tool for shaping the collective political conscious that forms the core of the mobility to claim the rights of liberation, putting an end to occupation and self-determination, just as it forms, as well, the millstone for framing a mental state characterized by resistance to the occupier and rejection of submission and injustice, supported by a national unity the opposes practices of obscuring, annihilation and giving in to factuality of occupation. Besides, education, as well as other vital elements, is a tool for improving social and economic conditions, so as to contribute in consolidating endurance and existentialist rooting in land and homeland, as a preparation for the post-independence stage and for establishing the independent state.

If the process of educational development and of benefiting from its outcomes, which falls within the context of the goals of economic development in the occupied society, is met with considerable opposition by the occupying authorities, in order to obstruct the upgrading of education and the realizing of economic growth and independence, in an effort to maintain a state of dependency on the occupation in many different domains, then the acute crises caused by occupation might hit spots of identity, national political consciousness, the integration of the internal texture and the ability of the 'legal' authority to reach the articulating points of the society with its services and its power, even if the occupation was forced, under the pressure of resistance, to grant the society under occupation authority to administrate the civil affairs of the population, but not sovereignty, in order to undermine the pursuit of an independent political entity, or claiming such an entity (Weiner 1971).

All this is demonstrated in the policy adopted by the Israeli occupation towards the Palestinian occupied territories, and especially towards occupied Jerusalem (the subject of this research), and it is manifested in basically overlooking any discussion over the city among issues of negotiations for the final status, reaching back to 1991. By this, the Israelis seek to deepen the existent imbalance to their benefit and to impose different

facts on the outcomes of the peaceful settlement process, after undermining foundations of the 'two states' solution. They also seek to gnaw the territories allocated for the coveted Palestinian state and to rip Jerusalem off the partition plan, in an atmosphere characterized by American partiality for the Israeli occupation and by the feeble Arab-Islamic support for the Palestinian cause, as well as by Palestinians' fragmentation, since 2007, that damages the national project.

The measures adopted by the occupation authorities take advantage of the educational and economic dimensions and employ them as leverage for penetrating the articulating points of the resisting Jerusalemite society. This goal is being achieved by shaking the foundations of the educational system and by obstructing endeavours seeking to improve and propagate it. It is also being achieved by trying to 'cauterize' the collective consciousness through disseminating ignorance and aggravating symptoms of the deteriorating economic situation to excess. This is done at the expense of juristic claims, within the context of a scheme aiming at isolating Jerusalem from the rest of the occupied territories of the West Bank, breaking up the societal texture of the city and severing its parts – by the racial segregation wall and military check-points – and evacuating its inhabitants in order to Judaize the city and to obliterate its identity and its Arab-Islamic features, prompted by the presumption of 'The Eternal Unified Capital of the State of Israel'.

By that, the occupying authority aims at 'drawing' the fate of Jerusalem with a 'pre-emptive' policy that is considered an alternative of the 'final status', and not a solution to be included within the framework of a comprehensive settlement of the Arab–Israeli conflict, as a negotiated outcome that would lead to the establishment of the independent Palestinian state, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif (Holy Jerusalem) as its capital.

In light of the aforesaid, this research examines as its main theme the impact of putting the educational and economic dimensions to use in the Israeli project against occupied Jerusalem, on the fate of the city and on the equation of the Arab–Israeli conflict. Other marginal questions arise dealing with the position of the two poles, education and economy, in the Israeli scheme against occupied Jerusalem; the ways in which these two poles are put to use so as to serve the Judaizing project; the spots that are influenced by the said project's reflections on the factuality of the occupied city and on its fate; and on the Palestinian cause and the Arab–Israeli conflict in light of the determinants of the occupier's ongoing aggression; of the Palestinian counter resistance, and of the declared Palestinian, Arab and Islamic attitudes, as concerns considering Jerusalem the capital of the coveted Palestinian state; and of the resolutions of international legitimacy, as well as of impacts of the American role.

The educational dimension in the Israeli project

The educational process forms one of the important Israeli reliant devices to obliterate the Arab-Islamic identity in occupied Jerusalem, and to hit the national Palestinian aspiration to liberation, self-determination and establishing the independent Palestinian state, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

Similar to other vital sectors, the educational sector has been affected by the critical historical turning points of the Palestinian cause. The Israeli aggression in 1948 resulted in occupying 78% of the land of historical Palestine, including the western part of Jerusalem,

while the eastern part, with the rest of the West Bank, was entrusted to the Jordanian administration until the Israeli aggression took place in 1967. Thus, Palestinian students in these territories were attached to the Jordanian educational system. During that period, 82 schools were founded: 29 were state schools, 44 were private schools and nine were affiliated to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, although they worked under the direct supervision of the Jordanian Ministry of Education, in compliance with the 1964 Jordanian law of education that specified the educational stages and considered the obligatory education basic and free. The obligatory education covered elementary stage (1st–6th grades), and the preparatory stage (7th–9th), while the secondary stage (10th–12th grades) was not considered an obligatory educational stage (The Jerusalem International Foundation 2010).

After the aggression of 1967, when the rest of the West Bank, including the eastern part of Jerusalem, was occupied, the occupying authority invalidated the Jordanian educational law and assigned the elementary stage to the supervision of Israeli Ministry of Education, and the secondary stage to the supervision of the occupation municipality in Jerusalem. The education bureau in Jerusalem governorate was closed and a number of the officials therein were arrested. The private schools, local and foreign, were allowed to run their own business, provided they abided by the occupier's demands, especially those concerning curricula (The Jerusalem International Foundation 2010).

All this took place simultaneously with endeavours that sought to impose the Israeli curriculum which was enforced in secondary schools of eastern Jerusalem, controlled by the occupying authority, in an effort to obliterate national feelings and authentic Arab and Palestinian values. That was done in addition to imposing punitive measures, such as closing schools, expelling and arresting in order to confront the unified Palestinian resistance that was opposing the Judaizing of education, led by private schools committee that comprised schools of Awqaf (religious endowments) and schools founded by associations, trustees councils, churches, convents, as well as private and foreign schools that carried on teaching the Jordanian curriculum and functioned as the educational authority by virtue of their affiliation to the Directorate of the Occupied Territories Affairs in Jordan.

Added to that, Palestinians abstained from sending their children to the state schools and chose the private schools where the Jordanian curriculum was still taught. Therefore, the number of students in state schools, controlled by the occupying authorities, in the elementary, preparatory and secondary stages, decreased during the period 1966–72, while private schools were overcrowded with students. The idea of founding special schools for Arabs spread and was adopted by the Islamic Al-Makassed Philanthropic Association that started to put the idea into effect during 1968–69, supported by the Jordanian government that continued to pay the teachers who worked at Jordanian schools before the occupation, while Al-Makassed undertook to pay the salaries of new teachers (The Jerusalem International Foundation 2010).

Due to the resistance of the Jerusalemites against the Israeli curriculum and the failure of the state schools, the so-called 'unified curriculum' was adopted. It added parts of the Jordanian secondary stage curriculum to the Israeli curriculum taught at Israeli schools. The result was burdening the students with more weekly classroom hours, and this had a negative impact on the students' educational achievements, and led to a further decrease in the number of students in the state schools.

The Jordanian curriculum was reapplied in Jerusalem successively: The secondary stage in 1973, the preparatory stage in 1978 and the elementary stage in 1981. Parts of the curriculum were changed, as regards removing Palestine from the maps in history and humanities books, and using Hebrew place names, such as 'Yerushalem', 'Judea and Samaria'. In addition, teaching Hebrew and 'The city of Israel' was enforced in schools, and importing books from Arab countries was banned (The Jerusalem International Foundation 2010).

With the founding of the Palestinian National Authority in 1994, in pursuance of the Oslo Accords, the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education, whose name was changed in 1996 to the Ministry of Education after founding an independent ministry for higher education, assumed the responsibility of the different stages of education in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, except in Jerusalem where only the Awqaf schools were assigned to the ministry. As for private schools and those supervised by UNRWA, they adopted the Palestinian general view, though they were not legally affiliated with the Palestinian Authority.

The Awqaf schools, the private Palestinian schools, and the UNRWA schools in the east of Jerusalem carried on teaching the Jordanian curriculum. As for state and municipality schools, the occupation authority removed the logo of the Palestinian Authority from the covers of the books, and enforced the teaching of the Hebrew language and the history of 'Israel'. In the curriculum, the geographical historical facts and the issues related to Islam and the Arab civilization heritage were all distorted. Although the Palestinian ministry tries to support the school in east Jerusalem, it always runs up against the challenges of the educational sector stemming basically from the occupation policy that aims to control the said sector and to subjugate it to the benefit of its Judaizing endeavours.

According to the Palestinian data for the academic year 2013–14, there were 230 schools in the Jerusalem governorate, apart from the schools controlled by the Israeli Ministry of Education and the Israeli municipality, with 68,661 students, of whom 32,969 were male and 35,692 female students (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics 2014).

The laws that govern education in occupied Jerusalem

The educational process in occupied Jerusalem lacks a unified authority. On the one hand, the occupying authority imposed itself through state and municipality schools while harassing other schools. On the other, the Palestinian ministry in fact controls only the Awqaf schools, but it enjoys cooperation of the UNRWA schools with regard to its orientations. As for private schools, they have affiliations and orientations: some cooperate with the Palestinian ministry, others enjoy the support of the occupation authority, the rest are either independent or associated with different Arab, international or religious bodies.

The educational system in Jerusalem refers to the 1964 Jordanian law of education and to the Israeli educational law, in eastern Jerusalem and in the surrounding suburbia that have been included within the borders of the occupation municipality. Other laws branch out from the Israeli law; the law of obligatory education of the year 1949 that charges parents with the responsibility of enrolling their kids in obligatory education and assigns the responsibility of providing obligatory education to the state; the 1953 state law of education that divides schools into three types: public schools controlled by the occupation authority, religious schools controlled by the occupation authority and independent schools. The 1969 schools supervision law deals with eastern Jerusalem in

particular. It expands the supervision mandate of the Israeli Ministry of Education to include state and private schools as concerns administration and methods (Al-Shnaq 2014). But the occupation authority discriminates flagrantly between schools of eastern and western Jerusalem with regard to allocated budgets, applying law of obligatory education, facilities, equipment and efficiency of teaching cadres.

The official objectives of the education were formulated by the Israeli government as per the 1953 education law that targets Jewish youth with an education based on 'values of the Israeli culture, scientific achievements, devotion to the state and to the unity of the Israeli people'; cultivating 'love of the state of Israel, toiling for it and protecting its existence' and deepening the feeling of 'the justifiability of the struggle of the Jewish people, who have returned to their historical homeland for re-establishing their national existence on the land', being 'God's chosen people living in the promised land', while obliterating the Palestinian existence in Palestine and obscuring their resistance and struggle against occupation that aims at attaining independence (Esbanioli 2001).

At the same time, the consent of the occupation authority to teach the Jordanian curriculum for the elementary stage in schools of eastern Jerusalem, controlled by the said authority as per instructions issued in September 1, 1981, was conditional upon confining the teaching of the Jordanian West Bank curriculum in addition to the Hebrew language, to the official elementary stage, according to specified class hours. In order to teach the said curriculum, the occupying authority also stipulated teaching the Hebrew language and 'The State of Israel' book; revising books of humanities literature by replacing the word 'Palestine' in the geographical maps and in the curriculum with 'Israel', so as to obliterate the name Palestine, and replacing 'Al-Quds' with 'Jerusalem', as 'the eternal unified capital' of the Israeli entity. The occupation authority also stipulated adopting Hebrew place names instead of Arabic names for geographic and archaeological sites; and blotting out Arab-Islamic ancient monuments, demonstrating instead presumed Jewish antiquities and fabricating Hebrew designations for many Arab Islamic sites claiming that the origins of the said sites are Hebrew (Al-Shnaq 2014).

The schools controlled by the Palestinian Authority face many difficulties being, basically, affiliated with an authority that, itself subjugated to occupation, has no actual sovereignty inside Jerusalem, due to constraints imposed by the occupying authority and to the endeavours of the latter to control the educational sector.

Challenges

The acute intricacies faced by the educational sector in occupied Jerusalem constitute a part of the Israeli occupation's scheme to Judaize the holy city through enacting racist laws, imposing effective measures that help tighten the occupation's grip on the said sector while obstructing its progress on the course to development, and obliterating the sector's Palestinian identity. All this is demonstrated in the following:

- Since 1967, the occupation authority started to Judaize education in schools of eastern Jerusalem, legally, administratively and practically, through: cancelling the Jordanian laws system that governed the educational process, the most prominent of which is the 1964 law of education No. 16; annexing elementary and preparatory state schools to the Israeli Ministry of Education; closing the Bureau of Education in Jerusalem

governorate; subjecting private schools to the 1968 law No. 564 that enables the occupation authority to influence and supervise the schools; affiliating Arab schools, administratively and systematically, to the cadre of the Israeli Ministry of Education (Al-Shnaq 2014); issuing a military directive in 1980 that grants the military magistrate substantial authority at universities of the West bank and Gaza strip (Nofal 1989) in an effort to obliterate the Arab Palestinian identity, to tighten the grip on all Jerusalem, and to sever its attachment with the Palestinian milieu.

The Israeli hegemony involved interfering in the curricula of the Arab schools; omitting any anti-Zionism allusion (Nofal 1989), banning the circulation of books that deal with Islamic thought and the Arab community in Palestine, hindering or preventing the organizing of school activities such as meetings, cultural or sport events, the closure of schools and universities, resorting to force by the occupation army to suppress any attempt to protest by the students (Mendelsohn 1989).

- The harsh social and economic conditions suffered by Jerusalemites under occupation have a bearing on the course of the educational sector. This leads to the emergence of negative phenomena, such as an increased rate of dropping out of school, a decrease in the rate of enrolment and in the learning level, and students abandoning studying to join the work market early.

The racial policy of the occupation has prevented around 10,000 students in Jerusalem from pursuing their studies, out of 93,000 students attending schools in eastern Jerusalem; thus, the said policy has blocked the process of secondary education for approximately 40% of the students, prompting them to join the work market early, in the face of the stifling economic situation that forces 95,000 children in Jerusalem to live below the poverty line (*Al-Ghad*, 2014b).

- Lack of a unified authority: a major problem that faces the educational sector in Jerusalem is the multiplicity of the authorities that supervise the educational process in Jerusalem. At present there are 42 schools affiliated to the Islamic Awqaf Directorate. They comprise 600–700 of the teaching cadre and take in approximately 12% of students; that is, in addition to private schools, including those affiliated with the church, the religious Awqaf, the associations and other schools that belong to Palestinians, which take in approximately 20% of the students in Jerusalem. The major problem lies in the accommodation of most students at schools affiliated with the Israeli municipality and Ministry of Education that seek to replace the Palestinian curriculum with the Israeli curricula in an effort to obliterate the national identity and to harm feelings of Islamic-Arab belonging (*Al-Ghad* 2014b).

Needless to say, this problem leads to the absence of a unified philosophical or strategic educational vision that should be adopted in schools, paving the way for the occupation authority to interfere in bringing up the youth and steering their inclinations towards the benefit of its interests and its Judaizing efforts.

- Counter-battle against the Israeli curriculum: the educational cadre in occupied Jerusalem is fighting a fierce battle against imposing the Israeli curriculum, especially after the occupation authority managed to enforce the curriculum in six schools affiliated with it. At the same time, the occupation authority seeks, through granting money to private schools, to infiltrate the core of the educational philosophy and to insert the racial Zionist concepts within details of the curriculum. It also seeks to distort Palestinian curriculum so as to obliterate everything that relates to issues of 'Al-Nakba' (the

catastrophe) and 'Al-Naksa' (the setback) whatsoever, as well as everything that relates to the massacres and crimes committed by the occupation authority against Arab Palestinians; and trying at the same time to sneak the Zionist narrative into the curriculum.

- Incompetence of infrastructure: manifested in the deficiency of the necessary capabilities for providing school requirements and for renting buildings, and with the shortage of the teaching cadres in all subjects, especially the Arabic language, the English language and mathematics. Besides, 41% of schools in eastern Jerusalem lack 1300 classrooms (*Al-Ghad* 2014b) leading to overcrowding of the available classrooms and depriving some students of a chance to enrol in schools due to the unavailability of vacancies. This, in turn, has its negative impact on students' performance and learning abilities.

Caused by due to Israeli obstacles, the problem of insufficient funds and limited mobility creates a negative atmosphere for the ability to organize social and extra-curricular activities. Even though both are important in familiarizing students with the serious challenges that are playing havoc with their Jerusalem environment, in particular exposure to drug addiction and the reckless use of social media (*Al-Ghad* 2014b).

- Dropping out of school: the aggressive policy of the occupation has led to an increasing number of Jerusalemite students to drop out of school at a rate that approximates 50%, in an effort to assimilate them in the Israeli work market as cheap labour, and to encourage the spread of negative pursuits, such as alcohol and drug abuse among the youth who make up 55% of Jerusalemite society (Samman 2012).
- Military checkpoints and the racial segregation wall: every day, more than 20,000 Jerusalemite students having to pass through military checkpoints to reach their schools on the other side of their occupied city, after being expelled by the Israeli occupation authority, together with 90,000 Palestinians, beyond the racial segregation wall. The narrow apertures in the depth of the reinforced wall are the only 'hole' road for hundreds of the 'expelled' to minimize their ordeal while trying to reach their home city, to spare themselves waiting long hours at the checkpoints, and the agony of the exhausting inspection by occupation soldiers; if they were lucky enough to pass through the checkpoints.

The number of these students was overwhelming up to some time ago. But to fend off pressure by human rights organizations that have launched a campaign against the occupation authority, the occupation policy that aims to deepen the ongoing changing realities resulted in accommodating approximately 12,000 students in 'contracting' schools. The latter were founded by the occupation authority in areas beyond the wall, so as to create a counter-migration outwards from the holy city. This was intended to embellish the ugly image of the occupation authority in the eyes of the international community. In reality, however, this had little effect in alleviating the situation.

The impacts of the racial wall and the military checkpoints, whether stationary or shifting, have complicated the educational process and impeded its progress. Such impacts enable the occupation authority to limit students' and teachers' commuting to and from schools, to detain them for a long time for inspection, or exposing them to the aggressive Israeli measures, and sometimes to deny them access to the city by

refusing to grant them the necessary permits. Hence, all this interrupts attendance at school, or causes students to drop out of school entirely (Jibreel 2012).

The economic dimension in the Israeli project

The occupation authority in occupied Jerusalem has employed a systematic scheme to isolate the city from the rest of the West Bank territories. Their aim is to destroy its trade movement in order to tighten the loop of hegemony around the vital economic and social sectors, and to deprive the Palestinian Authority from returns of tourism. In so doing, life for the residents of the city has become complicated in every possible way, prompting them to abandon their city. All this would be a part of a 'voluntary immigration' policy as a prelude to Judaizing the city, evacuating its residents, replacing them with settlers and, ultimately, dropping the city off the partition claims.

All the above has given rise to an economic and social deadlock: the unemployment rate in Jerusalem governorate in 2013 was 23.6%; in Palestine it was 27.0%; 22.4% in the West Bank and 35.7% in the Gaza strip (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics 2014), while approximately 75.3% of east Jerusalem residents and 82.2% of children live below the poverty line, according to data of 2014. This reflects the policy of impoverishment practised by the occupation authority against occupied Jerusalem (Durzi and Ibraheem 2014).

In addition, the occupation authority seeks to disengage the economy of Jerusalem from the territories controlled by the Palestinian authority, and to affiliate it with the Israeli economy. This is realized through imposing restrictions on mobility and transportation. It represents one of the main impediments restraining development and economic growth in the face of the resulting challenges which include separating the Palestinian communities; denying the Palestinians access to their lands, projects and work sites; and increasing dependence on basic social services, provided by the occupation authority, and on international aid. This has inflicted gross losses and a strangling recession on the economy of Jerusalem, as a result of isolating the occupied city from its natural markets and societal milieu, and of wearing down its traditional role as the historic, economic, religious and cultural centre of the Palestinian occupied land (Records Bureau of Palestinian Authority, 2010).

The racial segregation wall has aggravated the burden of the adverse challenges that face the economic growth in Jerusalem. These include isolating residents' communities from the centre of their activities in Jerusalem, thereby limiting the flow of income and causing huge damage to Jerusalemites, as manifested in a direct loss of income that exceeds US\$1 billion, which is expected to reach US\$194 million annually (Records Bureau of Palestinian Authority, 2010).

Accordingly, tourism and trading sectors have been severely hit due to restricting mobility to and from occupied Jerusalem. This has resulted in bankruptcy and the shutting down of 250 economic enterprises or their internal 'immigration' to Ramallah and other territories controlled by the Palestinian authority, amid increasing rates of poverty and unemployment, deteriorating of income level, and the growing hardships of living conditions.

Jerusalem has witnessed refraining by the private sector from investing in the city or in its surroundings, except for individual initiatives and efforts, due to the package of taxes and charges imposed on Jerusalemite merchants and business men, in compliance with

Israeli laws and regulations. These include general taxes and municipality taxes that weigh down on both the citizen and the trader in Jerusalem, topped by nine kinds of taxes: income, employer; welfare; added-value; commercial placards; properties; national insurance; health insurance; pension fund; savings and obligatory compensation, the total of which takes 40–55% of a trader's income (*Al-Ghad* 2014a).

Though tourism is considered the main source of revenue for 40% of the economy of occupied Jerusalem, the contribution of tourism in the Palestinian gross domestic product (GDP) at present does not exceed 4% as a result of the aggressive policy of the occupation authority. This is manifested in the closure of the West Bank cities, obstructing local tourism to Jerusalem, imposing harsh legal and financial constraints, controlling a considerable share of tourism revenues and refusing to grant the licences required for founding or expanding hotels, while steering foreign tourists to hotels inside the Zionist entity, and those located in Shaikh Jarrah and Bab Al-Khalil. Accordingly, the number of hotels belonging to Arabs has decreased since 1969 from 40 to 29 (*Al-Ghad* 2014a).

The tourism sector is among the Palestinian sectors most vulnerable to Judaizing as the occupation authority relies on Jewish tourist guides to promote the Zionist claims and to distort the Arab-Islamic history of the holy city.

Measures of Judaizing eastern Jerusalem were followed by closing national Palestinian establishments amounting to 88 establishments, 32 of which consistently since 2011 up to the present, and 56 partially. Thirty-three establishments were forced to move their headquarters and their activities to the occupied West Bank in an effort to deny Jerusalemites access to social, economic, cultural, educational and medical services, and to force them to abandon their city (*Al-Ghad* 2014a).

A mechanism for freezing the construction of residential buildings has been adopted in order to restrict and obstruct development of such buildings. This has been achieved through a policy of confiscating lands and seizing vast areas there from, under various designations, such as 'green zones' or unregulated streets. The Palestinians are allowed to build their houses within an area that does not exceed 13% of the so-called limits of Jerusalem occupation municipality, provided that an in-advance approval is attained. This has occurred after the occupation authority has already seized 87% of occupied Jerusalem lands for settlement purposes, 35 percentage points on the pretext of 'public interest' and more than 52 percentage points have been turned into 'green zones', or unregulated streets or areas (*Al-Ghad* 2015).

Most Jerusalemites suffer a housing crisis due to the package of Israeli laws and regulations that obstruct granting building licences, and to the high costs of obtaining a licence, as well as to the practice of demolishing buildings. All this makes the city in need of 200,000 residential units to meet the deficiency accumulated over the years. Yet, the occupation authority does not grant more than 200 building licences annually, while the natural increase rate of the population requires more than 1500 building licences annually (Report of the Department of Jerusalem Affairs in PLO n.d.).

But the scarcity of lands, due to successive confiscations by the occupation authority, the fragmentation of estates and the power of the trustee of absentees properties, have forced one-fifth of Jerusalemites to live in unlicensed buildings threatened by demolition in an effort to preserve their belonging to Jerusalem. Usually, the result is either demolition and paying costly taxes, or forcing many of them to move to the peripheries, off limits of the so-called 'Limits of Jerusalem Municipality', and eventually exposing them to penalties

or to losing their Jerusalem identity. That is besides having to live in old houses that lack proper hygienic conditions, public services and convenient infrastructure, since many of these houses are not connected to a sewerage system. In addition, 50% of the water network needs rehabilitation.

The policy of demolishing houses is one of the occupation authority's measures that aim at harassing Jerusalemites through allegations of building without a licence or by the implementation of penalties. In 2014, around 214 buildings were demolished, including houses, shops and stockpiles destroyed by the occupation authority's bulldozers or whose owners were forced to demolish them themselves. The number of demolished houses was 87, which caused the displacement of 196 Palestinians (Durzi and Ibraheem 2014).

Usually, the above-mentioned measures are accompanied by the withdrawal of Jerusalemite identity cards or blue residence cards that are considered one of the means by which the occupation authority resorts to in order to change the demographic balance in the occupied city. During 1967–2013, the occupation authority withdrew around 14,309 cards; 241 of them were identity cards withdrawn during 2012–13 (Durzi and Ibraheem 2014).

Accordingly, thousands of Jerusalemites lost their right to 'residence' in their occupied city in compliance with the administrative bounds specified by the occupation authority. Thereupon, Palestinians who live in the suburbs of Jerusalem are not entitled to residence, just as for other Jerusalemites who live in the other governorates of their homeland are not, or students who study abroad and others who live temporarily abroad. Recently, the occupation authorities, in an effort to vacate Jerusalem of its residents, transformed the identity cards of the Jerusalemites into 'temporary identity cards', with a validity that expires at a specified time and then need to be renewed (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics 2014).

The health sector is no better than other sectors. The policy of the occupation resulted in providing minimum health services to Jerusalemites, and in the deterioration of the services rate in hospitals of Jerusalem from 69% to less than 20%. This, in turn, caused a stifling financial deficit that represents a serious threat to the resisting will of the medical institutions in Jerusalem (Report of the Department of Jerusalem Affairs in PLO n.d.).

Although the infrastructure of the occupied city is included within the mandate of the occupation authority, the municipality does not allocate more than 12% of its general budget to it. This has led to the eroding and collapsing of the said infrastructure and to aggravating the problem of an interrupted water supply, especially in the neighbourhoods situated behind the racial segregation wall, whose responsibility is disclaimed by occupation municipality, on security pretexts (Durzi and Ibraheem 2014).

Occupied Jerusalem in the light of Israeli Judaizing incentives

As the actual reality of the holy city is subjected to the contingent devices of settling, Judaizing and transgression that accelerated after 1967, the issue of 'adapting' the said reality in future represents the opposite side of the scheme that aims at enforcing previously planned different realities within outcomes of the peaceful settlement process. At this point, we will consider the following remarks:

- Although the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) has adopted the demand of establishing the Palestinian state on lands occupied in 1967, with Holy Jerusalem as

its capital, alongside the Israeli entity, and agreed to relay issues of the final status to the final stage, in compliance with the Oslo Accords, the final stage of which was supposed to be finalized in 1994, Israeli's response has always been manifested in escalating aggression against the Palestinian people.

In its aggression, the occupying authority was encouraged by the absence of any real discrepancies between the Israeli parties whether their orientations be leftist, rightist or religious with regard to the Palestinian cause. All the parties adhere to 'No' regarding withdrawing to the borders of June 1967, the partition of Jerusalem, the right of return, and the suspending of constructing settlements in return for recognizing 'Judaism of the state' in order to reach a final agreement on the peaceful settlement. This is intended to hit the core of the Palestinian cause and to shake the foundations of the Arab initiative for peace, which Israel never addressed. This constant Israeli attitude is sometimes expressed with 'tactical adaptation' of its outcomes according to the stage, within the sequence of frames that were provided for the settlement (for more details, see Benzi-man 2000; Bshara 2005; and Abou Taleb 2007), and shaping those outcomes so as to deepen the existing imbalance in the occupied territories to the benefit of the occupation. This, in turn, has produced a prolonged negotiation course, which started in 1991, that has not achieved any tangible results.

- Just like other issues of the Arab–Israeli conflict, the issue of Jerusalem enjoys a consensus among Israeli people who claim that the city is 'the eternal unified capital of Israel', on the basis of religious Jewish beliefs and textual Biblical and Talmudic contents.
- The Israeli attitude towards the future Palestinian entity does not go beyond the frame of an autonomous authority concerned with residents' civil and life affairs, but has no say in security or sovereignty issues. Although some members of the Israeli left claim in public that they have no objection to the idea of establishing a Palestinian state, they refuse any compromises relating to the occupied territory required for establishing that state, amid changes created inside the territories that hinder the its establishment.
- With the acceleration of the settlement process and the continuation of erecting the racial segregation wall despite the decision issued by the International Court of Justice on July 9, 2004, ruling that the wall should be pulled down and the Palestinians who were harmed by its erection be compensated, some questions are raised concerning the probability of establishing a geographically connected Palestinian state on the lands occupied in 1967, whose area does not exceed 22% of the area of historical Palestine.
- The occupation authority never ceased its endeavours to establish different realities in occupied Jerusalem that lead to Judaizing the city and obliterating its Arab–Moslem–Palestinian identity, as well as to bringing about grave changes in its features. This was achieved by encircling Arab towns and villages around Jerusalem with 15 huge settlements, inhabited by 200,000 settlers; by sprawling over one-third of the lands that have been confiscated since 1967; and by carving up the quarters of Jerusalem with eight settling outposts where 2000 settlers live among Jerusalemite citizens. In addition, 33,000 Palestinian citizens, living in the old city where the area does not exceed 1 km², were crowded out by 4000 Jewish settlers living in four settling blocks and 56 settling units. Jerusalem is now being surrounded by the racial wall that extends as far as 142 km, supported by 12 military checkpoints, in an effort to complicate the lives of the Jerusalemites and to sever them from their Palestinian social texture (Report of the Department of Jerusalem Affairs in PLO n.d.).

Data from Al-Zaituna Center for Students and Consultations, based in Beirut, state that by the time the racial wall will be finished, the governorate of Jerusalem will have lost 90% of its land; 617 holy sites and cultural monuments will be isolated from their Arab-Islamic milieu (*Al-Ghad* 2014b). The result would be separating more than 18 Palestinian towns and villages from the occupied city and expelling more than 100,000 Jerusalemite citizens to outside the wall, threatening them with losing their identity cards and denying them access to their city and to locations of their work and study, thereby damaging the Palestinian societal fabric and dispersing Jerusalemite families in an effort to sever their familial relations, and blocking access to holy religious sites (*Al-Ghad* 2014b).

Furthermore, application of the recently issued so-called law of ‘Absentees’ Properties’ on property (real-estate) owners in occupied Jerusalem, targets stealing 13% of the lands still owned by Palestinians, and confiscating the said lands for settling purposes; that is, after already seizing 87% of the land. This means that each Palestinian who owns land in occupied Jerusalem but lives in the West Bank or Jordan or abroad will be vested in the Trustee of Absentees’ Properties. This could be considered an expansion of Israeli racial laws.

All this proceeds in conformity with the Israeli scheme for the year 2020, that aims at evicting Jerusalemites from their city, and at creating a new political–social–demographic reality wherein the number of Arab-Palestinian citizens does not exceed 12%. According to Palestinian data, the current number of Arab-Palestinian citizens in Jerusalem governorate is 404,165, against 1 million Jewish settlers in both eastern- and western-occupied Jerusalem (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics 2014).

- Although the occupation authority violates decisions of international legitimacy that call for the elimination of the Israeli occupation and acknowledge the ‘illegality’ of the measures carried out in the lands occupied in 1967, including Jerusalem, the said authority transcends the international dimension and carries on the implementation of its persistent pattern of aggression against the Palestinian people. American partiality that supports the said authority by the acute schism between words and actions that characterizes the West’s attitude, in general, towards the Israeli entity, the feeble Arab and Islamic support of the Palestinian cause, and the Palestinian split that began in 2007 all damage the national project.
- If the displacement–settlement colonial nature of Zionism was the detonator of conflict in the region, then the rights of the Palestinian people that were subject to aggression, usurpation and transgression are to be considered on the opposite side of the conflict. The persistent denial of these rights, especially the Palestinians’ right to return to their homeland as well as to self-determination that occurs concurrently with implementing the policy of settlement, Judaizing, murder and lands confiscation, represents an obstacle to all attempts at reaching a peaceful settlement. In the same way that the unceasing struggle for defeating the occupation, recovering what has been stolen and attaining independence represent a major factor in inflaming and continuing the conflict.

Conclusions

Undermining the pillars of Palestinian societal development represents a hectic Israeli endeavour to implement the scheme of Judaizing occupied Jerusalem, obliterating its Arab-Islamic identity, evicting its inhabitants and determining its fate in advance as the

‘eternal unified capital of Israel’, within the context of the comprehensive Zionist project in occupied Palestine.

The Israeli occupation authority employs the two contingent devices of education and economy in occupied Jerusalem as a base for counter-action in a ‘desperate’ effort to hit the collective political consciousness that demands terminating occupation, liberation and self-determination; to cauterize the national cognition that constitutes the frame of resisting occupation and opposing injustice and oppression and to pull down foundations of educational upgrading and economic growth in order to shatter supports of independence and to guarantee the duration of subjugation. That is in addition to ‘infiltrating’ into articulating points of the resisting Jerusalemite society, shaking its will and steadfastness, and pushing the residents to ‘voluntary’ immigration from their homeland in order to replace them with settlers.

Settlement, the racial segregation wall, the demolition of houses and transgression of religious holy sites, both Islamic and Christian, can be categorized as some of the most prominent expressions of the Israeli ‘Judaizing’ scheme. The occupation authority completes this scheme through its ‘displacement/settlement’ equation, just as it recently expelled 100,000 Jerusalemites from their city. This was done by taking advantage of current events and changing conditions prevailing in the regional Arab system over the last five years, when each Arab state is preoccupied with its own internal problems, and believing that it will not be held accountable and responsible for its aggression. Israel was emboldened by American partiality for the Israeli occupation and the feeble Arab-Islamic support for the Palestinian cause.

Considering the Palestinian will of solidity and steadfastness against the racism of the colonial displacement–settlement occupation, the battle of liberating the Palestinian citizen and his homeland, within the frame of the Arab–Israeli conflict, will not be decided soon with a ‘certain’ settlement, whatever its form and scope might be. This is due to the inability of such a settlement to resolve the conflict, as well as to its lack of power to put an end to the historical injustice that has befallen the Palestinian people. As for the partial ‘accords’, they only transmit issues of the final stage to another time, and do not alter the pattern of reactions to the conflict or adopt a way to manage it by other ways and means.

Furthermore, it is unlikely that the occupation authority will be compelled, under potential international and Arab pressure, to withdraw from the lands occupied in 1976, to accept the establishment of a Palestinian state in the said lands, to dismantle the settlements and to acknowledge the right of return, in accordance with the Arab Initiative for peace. This is not only due to the intellectual bases and the Zionist foundations on which the Israeli entity rests, but also because accepting the above, in itself, augurs the end of Israel. Considering the current regional-Arab scene, this is in addition to the fact that Israel is not ready to reach such a settlement or to make any concessions.

Therefore, seeking to change the existing equation in the occupied homeland basically depends on the continuation of the Palestinian resistance in all forms. As happened at the beginning of October 2015 and continues today, Palestinian young men and women, mostly belonging to the post-Oslo generation, without being related to any of the factions or organizations, rose up against the crimes and aggression of the occupation in Jerusalem and in all occupied Palestine to defend the occupied homeland, to terminate occupation, to attain liberation and self-determination, to establish the independent Palestinian

state – with Jerusalem as its capital – and to ensure the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homeland in accordance with the goals stated in the national movement.

However, given the fact that the Palestinian split that occurred in 2007 has prevented the arena of the uprising youth from being unified – youth who represent a societal fabric enriched with national factions from different trends and orientations – it has been difficult for this youth movement to find political expression and the bringing about of conciliation and national unity is hindered. This split has led to the absence of a unified organizational political leadership for the popular youth movement, and it is being replaced with individual movements and resistance devices that are simple by nature but decisive in the justification of its collective right and national goal.

Considering the extent to which the Palestinian cause has been ignored by the international community, the feeble Arab-Islamic support, the accumulation of crises in the Palestinian arena without serious efforts to deal with them, the absence of a political horizon due to the Israeli adamancy, and the despair of waiting for so long for a reconciliation that seems likely never to happen, it would be natural that the said movement nominate its own political leadership, dissociated from the political leadership of the Palestinian factions, so that the popular youth movement may get on with its uprising.

Moreover, since the conflict is basically Arab-Zionist and the battle is not only the battle of the Palestinian people, this calls for Arab-Islamic support, morally and materially, for protecting occupied Jerusalem, consolidating the steadfastness of its residents in their homeland and supporting the Palestinian cause. It also calls for putting an end to the Palestinian divide, putting internal affairs in order, and developing a unified national strategy for confronting the aggression of the occupation.

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