Viktoria Waltz
(Editor)

THE FABRICATION OF ISRAEL

About the usurpation and destruction of Palestine through Zionist spatial planning

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to all the people who lost their homes for the Israel Project.

You will meet them all over the world and some of them we met here and there - listen to some of them.

'I am Omar, born in Irbid/Jordan, living in Germany, married to a German and working as a doctor. My family is from Jaffa. When Jaffa was threatened by the Zionist militia my grandmother fled by boat like many others in 1948. The boat was supposed to go to Egypt, but had to change direction and landed in Beirut. She and her five children, one of them my father, were put into one of the many refugee camps. My uncle, brother of my mother - her husband already died - had fled to Jordan and landed in Irbid. He searched for his sister and finally found her in Beirut. He brought the whole family to Irbid. I was born in Irbid, but I am Palestinian.'

'I am Khalid, born in Um El Fahem/Israel, living there with my family, working as an engineer. My family is originally from Hebron-Al Khalil, today part of the West Bank. In 1947 after UN Resolution 181 my grandfather sent his son, my father, who was only 18 years old, to the area of Um El Fahem, where the family had land. He wanted my father to look at it and to preserve the documents to the land. He went there, stayed for a while, and when he wanted to come back Israel had been founded and he could not return. He lost touch with the family and was eventually married in Um El Fahem. His land is now the location of a new colony. I was born in Israel and I am Palestinian.'

'I am Lina, born in Birzeit, living in the West Bank, working as university lecturer. My mother's family is from the Netanya area. Every night my grandma, Um Michel, watches the blinking light at the coast remembering the time when she, 12 years old, had to flee with her mother from their village. They arrived in Birzeit where we live now. I am a refugee in my own country, Palestine.'

'I am Khalil, born in Nablus, living in Peking, a student at the sport university. My family left Nablus in the '67 war and fled to Saudi Arabia. They have residence there and Israel's occupation prevents them from coming back to Nablus. I did not get the residency right of my parents and cannot go to Nablus as well. I lost any identity and China is only giving me permission for a limited stay. I don't know what will happen. I have no passport, and I am a Palestinian.'

'I am Amina, living in Amman/Jordan, working as a researcher in an institute. My family is from Kufr Labad, Tulkarem, where I was born. In '67 my father lived under Jordanian occupation in Amman, where he found work. He was denied entry back to Palestine, therefore the whole family had to leave and join him in Amman. All my family can only visit our house as tourists. My mother has a big plot of olive trees. We don't know how long we can harvest on our land. I am Jordanian now, and a Palestinian.'

'I am Yasser, born in Spain, living in Anata/Jerusalem, working as an engineer at Birzeit University. My family is from Anata. My father left the West Bank after 1967 to find work and a future. He married a Spanish lady. I came back to Palestine with my Spanish passport to study in my country, to marry a Palestinian and to live in my family's house. I am 'illegal' here in my own country, Palestine.'

'I am Moussa, born in Beirut in a refugee camp, now living in New York and working in my own pet shop. My family is from Beit Umma, West Bank. During the first

Libanon war I was defending my people; after the PLO had to leave from Beirut I had to leave too and came to New York to study. But I had no support and I started to work as a businessman. I am a refugee, with an American passport. I am a Palestinian, but I may visit my country only as a tourist. If I visit Israel will put me in jail as a former fighter, so I cannot visit.'

'I am Mohammed, born in a refugee camp close to Amman. My family were bedouin from the Bir Saba area. They were thrown out in 1948 by the Zionist militia and fled over the Jordan river to the East Bank. I studied in Germany, but did not finish my studies. I had to go back to Jordan, married, and work now as a tour guide for German groups. I am still living in the camp. I am a Palestinian refugee, forced to live in Jordan.'

'I am Mariyam. I was born in Jifna, West Bank. After I finished my education at the Schmidt School in Jerusalem I went to Germany to study pharmacology. I finished and married a German. Therefore Israel refused the extension of my passport. Since then I am 'staatenlos', however I am a Palestinian.'

'I am Jihad, I was born in Jerusalem and my family is from Jerusalem originally. I married a Japanese lady and went to Japan for a while. I am a businessman, but what can I do in my poor country?. Every year I come back for some weeks to see my mother and the family to help me maintain my identity as a Palestinian. This t time Israel refused to extend my identity card. For three months I’ve been at the American Colony Hotel, waiting for a court decision. I am a Palestinian and a Jerusalemite, born in Jerusalem, and cannot live without it'.

An endless story

Abstract

The fabrication of the Jewish State of Israel was done by political planners; planners who understood a lot about the power of space and imperial strategies in occupying foreign countries. Their plans were in good harmony with the interests of the main European imperial powers of the time in that specific region, well known for its wealth of resources. Together they were intent on taking all possible steps to realize the idea of a physical base for a Jewish state through policies related to religion, historical interpretation, geography, culture, and finally, space and land.

All this was justified with the persecution of Jews in Europe since the 19th century and even more with the Nazi policy of systematically killing and expelling most of the Jews from Germany and Europe from 1936 to 1945, known as the Holocaust.

Correspondingly, institutions, regulations, and funds were established since the first Zionist Congress was held in Basle in 1897. Since then these measures successfully assisted in seizing Palestinian land and colonising it with Jews from abroad. The main tool used in taking land from Palestinians was the exploitation of land and property laws as well as planning regulations declared by the Ottoman Empire and later by the British Mandate. Through that policy the Zionist institutions did not occupy more than 6-7% of the land of Palestine in the Mandate borders. When the British withdrew in 1948, the State of Israel was declared unilaterally and by force and around 60% of Palestine came under Zionist control, including the biggest part of the coast, the most fertile plains, and most water resources. An additional expulsion policy utilising the British emergency laws and a world-wide 'hunt for migrants' filled this occupied land with Jews from all over the world and emptied it of Palestinians in a very short time, reducing the Palestinian population inside Israel ‘borders’ to half of the former Palestinians living in this part of Palestine. The other half then became refugees in their own land (West Bank and Gaza Region), or went to reside outside their country. Observing that this, as granted by many Israeli writers, was done systematically we might call it the first phase of the Palestinian genocide.

After 1967, when Israel occupied the West Bank, the Gaza Region, and East Jerusalem - again by military force - the same procedure was followed. The same laws were exploited to expropriate and expel even more Palestinians in addition to killing many. This consequently was a second phase in executing the genocide of the Palestinians.

Of course this planned and systematic undertaking created conflicts. Palestinians fought this project as soon as it was clear that it would lead to their total expropriation and eventual elimination from the geographic map. In 1948 around three quarters of the nation was systematically expelled from its land by force. This does not include the thousands of Palestinians who left before 1948 because of limited expectations under the British Mandate and beginning conflicts with the Zionist militia. It is recorded by Israeli writers that special death forces wiped out the total male population of villages between 1947 and 1949 by purpose and program. In addition, more than 500 villages were destroyed and left in ruins or were totally erased. Until today more than half of the nation is living outside their mother country as 'recognised' refugees. Many thousands were killed by Israeli soldiers after 1967. Palestinians in Israel are being stripped of their properties until today, leaving approximately 6% of their original land in their hands in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem regions. Their property was confiscated for Israeli use leaving less

than 20% of the total Palestinian land. The destruction and plundering of archaeological sites and the destruction of the unique landscape by military and private activities deprived the Palestinians of their cultural, social and natural heritage. This is the result of systematic planning with very clear goals and correlating measures. As a national heritage is a constitutional part of a national identity, depriving a people from its history and identity must be considered a crucial crime; the fabrication of Israel in this manner is a crime. It can be considered as genocide of the 20th and 21st century, with lucid and perverse components. It might be called the geographic and cultural 'holocaust of the Palestinians' (Publisher Husni Ayesh in an interview with the editor 20.02.2007). According to Webster's Encyclopaedia 'holocaust' stands for "a great or complete devastation or destruction", a "systematic slaughter" and also for "any reckless destruction of life" – and this is what happened in Palestine against the Palestinians from the beginning of the Zionist project and what is still slowly continuing in a very cool and silent manner, based on ideology and clear aims.

The flow of this publication follows the flow of this systematic plan to fabricate a Jewish State at the expense of the Palestinians, their land, their culture and their properties. Beginning with the Congress of Basle in 1897, the Balfour Declaration in 1917, the UN division resolution 181 in 1947, the occupation of the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem in 1967, until the recent construction of a gigantic wall and fences between Israeli colonies and Palestinian villages and cities, all of this was the work of reckless planners, geographers, architects, water managers and most of all the Zionist politicians and consequent Israeli governments, the accomplices. Planners in particular may understand the Israel project as a warning and a horrifying example showing the extent to which planning can be used not only to neglect, but to eliminate the powerless - against all proclaimed objectives of social, ecological, cultural or economical sustainability.

This publication portrays recent plans and programs for the next steps in splitting and reducing what is left of Palestine. This time these programs are proposed by international consultants and planning groups in co-operation with or alongside Israeli plans to divide the remainder of what was Palestine before the Jewish State was proclaimed, in addition to being another step in the Palestinian genocide. Finally, an outlook to a just solution will be given based on existing UN resolutions which are still considered valid and the basis for peace by the international community.

Structure

Dedication

Abstract

Introduction

I

Viktoria Waltz

Brief Information on Country and Society and the Current Territorial, Political and Socio-economic Situation in Palestine 16

II

Viktoria Waltz

The Fabrication of Israel with Tools of Spatial Planning since 1897

1. The Zionist Plan from Basle 1897 until 1948

1.1 Prior to British Mandate and after – essentials for the fabrication of the Jewish State 29

1.1.1 The Zionist colonisation plan - ethnocratic aims of the Zionist movement 31

1.1.2 Land policy and planning reforms under the Ottomans since the 19th century fostering Zionist settlement 33

1.2 The Zionist colonisation process under British Mandate and side effects of the Ottoman land laws on Palestinians 37

2.1.1 Pushing concentration of ownership and transformation of Palestinian land properties 37

2.2.2 Strategic distribution of Zionist land purchases 39

2.2.3 Strategic location of Zionist colonies on the usurped land 40

1.3 The imposed division of Palestine by UN decision 181 and Zionist 'ethnic cleansing' 43

Conclusion

III

Planning in Israel – from fostering the Jewish character of Isarel to an ethnocratic planning system 50

Viktoria Waltz

1. The usurpation of Palestinian land in Israel – steps prior to 1967 53

1.1 Initial steps of Judaising the country – expropriation and planning 53

1.1.1 The National Judaising Plan of 1950 54

1.1.2 The program of 30 ‚New Cities` - Jewish centres of rural development 56

1.2. The usurpation of Palestinian land 'by law' 59

1.2.1 Land grab from 'absentees' and 'state land' 59

1.2.2 Land grab for water control 60

Conclusion

Kassem Egbaria

2. Two Spatial Systems for one land: Spatial inequality in the development of Palestinian communities and actual needs for equity 65

2.1 The Israeli context 67

2.1.1 The Israeli society 68

2.1.2 Current conditions of Palestinian citizens in Israel 68
2.2 Land ownership and management in Israel 70
2.3 One Land - two spatial planning systems 70
2.3.1 Goals and intentions of comprehensive national spatial 70
Planning 70
2.3.2 The national master plan: Israel 2020 74
2.4 Ethnocratic planning – results 76
2.4.1 Land shrinkage for a growing community 76
2.4.2 No opportunity for development 77
Conclusion: Meeting the challenges

Kassem Egbaria
3. Discriminative housing policy in Israel's Palestinian localities – the example of Tayibe 84
3.1 Tayibe, a Palestinian community in Israeli context 88
3.1.1 Tayibe, a Palestinian community in Israeli context
3.2 The Israeli housing policy 90
3.2.1 Housing policy and housing development in Israeli Palestinian localities 91
3.3 The case of Tayibe: Residential environment and housing conditions 93
3.3.1 Housing conditions in Tayibe 93
3.3.2 Unauthorised buildings: a home rather than demolishing it 94
3.3.3 Housing provision in Tayibe 95
3.4 Israel's Housing finance policy 96
3.4.1 Housing finance and the 'Arab sector' 97
3.4.2 Housing finance versus management costs in Tayibe 98
3.5 Fulfilment ‘obligations’ of housing finance criteria 99
3.5.1 Financing a house in Tayibe 100
3.6 Planning zoning regulation - a prerequisite for a building permission 101
3.6.1 Rigid planning regulations also for Tayibe 101
3.7 Latent informality ‘informality within formality’ 101
Conclusion: towards supplying an orientated future 104

Kassem Egbaria
4. The impact of Israeli urban policies on the development of the Indigenous Bedouin community in the Negev Area – unrecognised villages 109
4.1 Confiscating and marginalising of the Bedouin People 110
4.2 The Bedouin community in Israel: an invisible community 112
4.3 Development of patterns 114
4.4 The phenomenon of 'unrecognised villages' 115
4.4.1 Planning scenarios: preventing further dispersal 116
4.4.2 Negligence of urban elements in the unrecognised villages 117
Conclusion 119

Final Comment 122

IV
Further devastation and destruction – Judaising of the Westbank and Gaza 124

Viktoria Waltz
1. General planning strategies and executed policies after usurping West Bank and Gaza region - short overview 126

1.1 General planning
1.2 Confiscation and expropriation
1.3 Refuse of building permits – Zones A, B, C; Master plans; S15 and RJ5
1.4 House demolition
Conclusion

Jad Isaac
2 After Oslo: The Judaisation of the West Bank, preparing the geographical holocaust in the Palestinian land since 1993 131
2.1 Expropriation tools as before and usurpation of more land 132
2.2 The ongoing process of Judaising Palestine until today 133
2.2.1 Allon/Gush Imunim/Drobless/Sharon – different architects of the same judaising and ursurping process 134
2.2.2 Colonies and master plans 136
2.2.3 The role of Israeli 'outposts' 138
2.2.4 The role of Israeli 'bypass roads' 139
2.2.5 The role of ‘check-points' 142
2.3 The Segregation Wall and impacts on Palestinian territory 144
2.3.1 Changes on the segregation wall route 145
2.3.2 The September 2007 wall change 145
2.3.3 Components of the segregation wall in the West Bank 147
2.4 The closure of the Jordan Valley - The eastern segregation zone 148
2.5 Impacts of the Israeli segregation wall 149
Conclusion 145

Jad Isaac, Viktoria Waltz
3. Gaza - the ‘Hawaii of Israel’ – a short story 152
3.1 Gaza Region under Mandate time until 1948 152
3.2 Gaza Region after 1967: destruction, dividing and usurping the fertile Land 153
3.3 Colonisation after Oslo 154
3.4 The ‘Disengagement’ 157
3.4.1 Israel still in-control - occupying Gaza 159
3.4.2 The Military Offensive “Cast Lead” 27. December 2008 to 18.January 2009 161
Conclusion 162

Faisal Awadallh/ *Ahmad Atrash*
4. Transportation and mobility in the Palestinian West Bank and Gaza Strip 164
4.1 The Palestinian Transportation Network 165
4.1.1 Palestinian Road Network 166
4.2 Current mobility conditions in the Gaza Strip 167
4.3 Current mobility conditions in the West Bank 170
4.4 Transportation Sector Impacts on Environment 174
Conclusion 175

Jad Isaac/Viktoria Waltz
5. Water – another story about robbery and exploitation of Palestinian and Arab resources through planning 176
5.1 Israel's usurpation interest on the Arab water resources until today 176
5.2 Israeli Water Shortage .- home made and dangerous 179

5.3 Israel's water grab between Jordan River and Litani River, with or without a Palestinian State plans 185
Conclusion 189

Final Comment 193

V

Killing the Cities – the example of Jerusalem/Quds and Hebron/Khalil in the West Bank, Jaffa in Israel 195

Viktoria Waltz,
1. Jerusalem and the Zionist Project 196
1.1 Jerusalem before and during the British Mandate: a time of change 198
1.2 The usurpation of West-Jerusalem after 1948 204
1.3 East Jerusalem and the Old City – development under Jordanian Governance 207
1.4 Jerusalem after 1967: Unification by force and further ethnisation 208
1.4.1 The expropriation process in the first year after the military conquest of East Jerusalem 209
1.5 Colonising Jerusalem and turning it into a Jewish City, the 'Capital of Israel' 210
1.5.1 Colony groups blocking the three accesses to the city: the north, east and south 'corridors'' 211
1.5.2 Colony groups as belts forming barriers 212
1.5.3 Colonies and projects in the surrounding area of the Old City: the Seam Project 214
1.5.4 Judaising the Old City 216
1.6 The role of the Zionist planning instruments 219
1.7 The results of segregation and discrimination of the Palestinian Jerusalemites 220
Conclusion 221

Jamal Amro
2. Destruction of the Palestinian urban fabric and landscape in East Jerusalem after 1967 and effects of the segregation wall 226
2.1 Demographic and urban transformation in Jerusalem 226
2.2 The effects of Israeli planning on continuity of Palestinian population and urban development in East Palestinian Jerusalem 232
2.3 The effects of the Israeli measures on the landscape and the environment 233
2.4 Future schemes for Jerusalem 234
Conclusion 235

Viktoria Waltz
3. Hebron-Al Khali, a step by step usurpation by aggressive settlers 237
3.1 Usurping Hebron through fanatical Jewish groups, backed by the Government 238
3.2 The division of Hebron after Oslo 239
Conclusion 242

Kassem Egbaria, Viktoria Waltz
4. The Usurpation of ancient Jaffa and the change into Tel Aviv's Old City 243

4.1 Jaffa and Tel Aviv – twins of conflict until 1948 244
4.1.1 *Jaffa's forced displacement under British Mandate until UN division plan* 246
4.2.1 *Fill in policy with Jewish refugees – building stop for Palestinians* 249
4.2 Displacement and expropriation after 1948 247
4.3 The New Development Plan for Jaffa and the rights of Palestinian tenants 250
Conclusion 254
Final Comment 255

Kassem Egbaria, Viktoria Waltz
VI The future of Palestine and International planners' complicity in Israeli Crime - an outlook 256

Annex 260

Bibliography 260
List of Maps 276
List of Tables 278
List of Figures 280
List of Images 281

The Authors 284

Appendix of Documents 286

Viktoria Waltz

Introductory Statement

This book intends to summarise findings about the special character of Zionist ‘planning’ in Palestine and Israel, translated into a planning policy over a period of more than a hundred years. For a long time the editors were following changes in land use and colonisation through ethnocratic planning and plans in the country of Palestine according to Mandate borders before 1947/1948. After the definite eradication of the so called ‘peace process’ by Sharon in 2000 it seems time again to find an explanation for the existing conflict over this land and to identify its genuine character beyond the daily news focussing on current conflict configurations. Today even Israeli scientists argue that different discriminatory mechanisms and policies are applied by the State of Israel on the indigenous Palestinian (Arab) people (Fenster 1996, Yiftachel 1999, Khamaisi 2002, Pappe 2006 and others). What was once called illegal expropriation or unjust expulsion has come to be referred to as 'Ethnic Cleansing' (Pappe 2006) and even 'Genocide' (Voelkermord) (Shamir 2005, Leibowitz1994) and 'cultural and geographical Holocaust' (Ayesh 2007, for definition see Lemkin 1944,).

We believe in facts and history explaining both the present and future and therefore went back to the roots and the beginning of the project of establishing a Jewish State through the usurpation of Palestine, trying to find the mechanism that led to the present conflict from its beginning. The focus is also related to scientists who carried out studies dealing with majority/minority relationships in terms of urbanisation and power (Greed 2000, Yiftachel 1995, Forester 1989 and others).

Knowledge helps understanding. Therefore, identifying the character of the planning which led to the fabrication of the State of Israel and its consequences for the present situation is our issue. Modern planning is a western habitude of controlling land use and spatial development according to the interests of either a state and/or main economic stakeholders. Normally it is agreed on as ‘serving the interests of the whole nation’ (German planning law and others). In the context of relations between ‘imperial countries’ and ‘third world countries’ planning can deteriorate to a unique tool of unfair control over territory, property and people to the disadvantage of the powerless. Just and social accomplishment will then only appear after fight and struggle. This is what the editors understand as having happened and as continuing to happen in Israel/Palestine.

At the end of the 19th century the Zionist Movement decided to establish a Jewish state in Palestine, claiming Palestine as the initial national home for the Jews as a people. The Ottoman Empire at that time was losing its power. The European imperial powers, Britain and France, were preparing to inherit as much as possible from the empire: territory, natural resources, and people. The coincidence of Zionists’ national plans and European economic desires made this late colonial project possible. It was established by means of expulsion and land robbery. Warning voices like King/Crane of 1920 in their report to the League of Nations peace congress about the political and geographical aspirations of the people in that region were ignored.

50 years after proclaiming the State of Israel, there is no peace and no justice or equity. Not only had the editors identified the fabrication of Israel as a result of the

unfairness that sprang from the idea of the founding of the State. Mainly tactic and imperial thinking of the first Zionist Congress in 1897 led to the idea of establishing a Jewish state on Palestinian land. In addition, it was part of imperial desires of the European powers when Palestine and the whole area were divided into Mandate areas and came under the British Mandate, after Britain promised the land to both the Arabs in the Sykes Picot treaty in 1916 and the Zionist movement in the Balfour Declaration of 1917. It was a violation of Palestinian rights and an unjust decision when the United Nations, in 1947, declared the division of Palestine, giving around 60% of Ottoman Palestine to the Zionist Movement for a Jewish State (although the Jews owned not more than 6-7% of Palestinian land) and proposing an area of less than 40% to the Palestinian side. Furthermore, the State of Israel was founded on more than 70% of historical Palestine after military aggression against Palestinian people, villages and cities. All this was realised through the process of planning copied from Europe and supported by European forces, and eventually war. Under the Ottomans sovereign Jews, Christians and Muslims lived beside each other, as long as they paid their obligations, such as taxes and military service. Since the invasion of the Zionist Movement, from the end of the 19th century on, Palestine changed into an area of conflict, where religion was turned into politics and became an important segregation factor between Jewish Zionists and indigenous people, the Palestinians.

During the past centuries the world had already experienced colonial occupation, land usurpation and abuse of the lands of other peoples: the Incas, the Red Indians, the Maori, the Australian indigenous people, and so on.

The Prussian way of extending their sandy empire three hundred years ago was well known to the Zionist movement: building colonies like forts, networking them step by step through main roads and military posts, finally surrounding the local people (the Slavs) and giving them only one alternative: to live under Prussian control, or to leave and risk the destruction of what they lived on (Diner 1980). This strategy is copied and documented in an article by one of the ideologists of the Zionist model. Oppenheimer commented at the Zionist Congress in 1903:

"Our beginning must therefore be: co-operative villages of peasants; this is the lesson of history, of economic science and our sacred tradition. But how shall it come about? Now, my friends, we should stretch a net of peasant colonies over the land we wish to acquire. To stretch a net pegs must first be driven in between which the net is to appear. Then between these pegs are stretched strong ropes, between the ropes are thick strings, and so there is a coarse network in which as need arises an ever finer network can be woven by introducing finer string just so should we, I think, proceed. As far as the means at our disposal suffice we should acquire wide stretches of land in all parts of the country, and where possible only such as guarantee certain results from agricultural labour by the constitution of the soil and facilities for irrigation. At the same time from among the great numbers of Jewish agriculturists to be found in Galicia, Romania and Russia emigrants must be attracted and set on their way to the settlements." (Oppenheimer 1903)

This statement simply explains how land usurpation through planning became a main instrument in changing the country into a fabricated Jewish territory, and also shows that conflicts were imminent.

The main aim of this book is to give the reader a better understanding of the basis of the present and enduring conflict. It should not be discriminated against as ‘anti-Semitic’ propaganda; this is not at all what we want to do. We want to help the

realization of peace and justice for the people of this region. We do not address political issues such as the violation of human rights, abuse of the Geneva Convention or neglecting UN resolutions from the Israeli side since the state began functioning. Accordingly we do not speak about terrorism or other criminal actions to justify neither Israel's military operations nor Palestinian reactions to that. We only report what happened and continues to happen, the continuation of wise and purposeful planning in order to reduce Palestinian living space and how this is possible. In fact, the basis of this process is the Zionist project to establish another nation on the land of an existing people, along with European and American support and interests in the region. As long as Israel insists on being a 'Jewish State', refusing civil and democratic equality for 'non Jews', the conflict will remain. Furthermore, there will be no just and lasting peace, not for the Israelis and not for the Palestinians, if this ethnocratic, or rather racist, 'regime' remains, Palestinians' national rights continue to be refused, and Israeli planners still adhere to the colonisation concept, realising its plan against a Palestinian reality. To promote this conclusion is another intention of this book. Planners have to insist on democratic and just solutions to spatial conflicts about land resources and land use and should not serve imperial desires.

The fabrication process of Israel until today will be unfolded as follows.

Chapter one will give a short introduction into the geo-political and socio-economic situation of Palestine in Mandate borders.

Chapter two is meant to give a historic overview of the initial colonisation process, introducing Zionist ideology as characteristic for the practiced (later Israeli) planning policy until the end of the British Mandate and the unilateral declaration of the Jewish State in Palestine on May 15, 1948.

Chapter three will look into the Zionist systematic planning within Israel from 1948 on, first showing the 'consolidation phase' and then giving an overview of the main planning policy until today, from structure to results and later on presenting two case studies, typical for the ethnocratic character of Zionist planning. The first case study concerns the housing situation executed on the town of Tayibe; the second illustrates the situation of the 'unrecognised' localities and the Bedouin.

Chapter four comments on this policy in more detail and is focussing on the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Region after the 1967 occupation. We then examine the meaning of the colonies and the strategies behind the planning. Two examples illustrate the impact of planning and the strategy behind it: the water question and the problem of mobility – given the actual aggression of the recently erected wall.

Chapter five deals with two main cities in the West Bank, Jerusalem and Hebron, and Jaffa, in Israel, core subjects for the Israeli colonisation project. Jerusalem, which is deteriorating as a result of the multiculturalism and many religions which abide in it, is becoming an exclusive ethnic ghetto for Jewish majorities as a result of expropriation and expulsion of others.

Chapter six deals with future plans for Palestine within the region: again the Israeli national plan 2020, the Palestinian plan for 2015, the international proposal of the 'Arch' and the 'Multinational Belts' of international planning groups. Finally we will examine the Jordanian/Israeli 'Jordan Valley Project' and look at the future.

We will use the words 'colony' and 'colonist', not the innocuous terms 'settlement' or ''settlers'', which could be confusing, considering that 'human settlement' is used

differently in a planner's context. We use the term 'Israelis', not 'Jews', when we speak about citizens of Israel. 'Jewish' or 'Jews' is used only as far as concerns Israel, if it describes the situation before Israel existed, or when the context needs this differentiation. For Israeli citizens we differentiate between Jewish Israelis and Palestinian Israelis. We use the word Zionism, because this is the leading ideology of the project of the state of Israel and is not to be confused with Judaism or Semitism. If we speak about Palestine we refer to a common understanding of 'Palestine' according to the map of the United Nations in 1947 based on the borders of the British Mandate from fall of the Ottoman Empire. We do not use the modified context of Israel, the West Bank, and the Gaza Region or East Jerusalem. We differentiate between West- (Israeli) Jerusalem and East- (Palestinian) Jerusalem, according to the geopolitical situation after 1948, before East Jerusalem was usurped as the 'unified capital of Israel' in 1967. We use the term 'Palestinian' and not 'Arab', though Israel describes them officially as 'Arabs' or as 'non-Jews' not willing to accept the Palestinians as a people and a nation and to justify any national desire of Palestinians or a state of Palestine.

As we sum up facts of history our main tool is the use and interpretation of facts and documents in context. The understanding (theories) behind the evaluation of these facts goes back to theories of power relation (Foucault), cultural differences and minorities (Yiftachel) and Orientalism (Said) as well as planning theories related to just land use and territory (Harvey).

About 100 maps, figures, tables and images are illustrating the facts. Some main documents complete the information in an appendix.

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I Brief Information on Country and Society and the Current Territorial, Political and Socio-economic Situation in Palestine

(According to British Mandate borders)

A brief portrait of the country of Palestine (pre-1947 borders) aims to give a current impression of the geography, population and income resources of the West Bank, Gaza Region and East Jerusalem. This is the area that was agreed upon in the peace process as a possible future Palestinian State and is rich in resources, diversity and potential. This might clarify some facts in contrast to the common proposal that Israel was 'greening a desert' and populating an unused field.

Palestine throughout its history has been an area of transition. Its strategic location between Africa, Asia and Europe invited empires and regional powers to plunder it, to occupy it or to use it as a land bridge between continents. Contrary to the Zionist argument that this country was empty, there are many documents on its cultural and social abundance and its economic prestige in the Middle East prior to the establishment of the State of Israel. If we look at the 19th century, the region of Palestine had many assets for a growing economy. Agricultural land, its main source of income, was well developed. Palestine had a strong practice of exporting agricultural products to Europe and was famous for its excellent olive oil. The country exported stone predominantly used for building, as well as handicrafts of many kinds. This prosperous atmosphere eventually came to a standstill with the imperialist impediments. (Schoelch, 1982)

Under British Mandate Palestine (officially 1923-1948) Zionist institutions were supported to the utmost, while Palestinian landowners and farmers were barred from investment. Before the British left in 1948, the United Nations decided (Resolution No. 181) in November 1947 to partition the country. This fact accomplished the Zionist aspiration to end the socio-economic, cultural, and geographical continuity of the Palestinians (see chapter II).

During the war between 1947 and 1949, Israel usurped: the coastal plane with its rich agricultural capital; the bulk of the coast and important harbours; the Negev with its minerals and the entrance to the Red Sea and Africa; the northern Galilee hills around Nazareth; the Hula region rich with water; lake Taberiya, with its significant water resources from the Lebanon and Syrian mountains, including a large part of the Jordan River Valley as a strategic position for water and borders. After Israel had taken complete control over the Palestinians and usurped most of their land, the occupation of the Gaza region and the West Bank followed in 1967, the latter important because of the two big water basins, the northern and the southern. These two aquifers feed the whole country and are still under Israeli control (see chapter III).

Moreover, control over the West Bank allows Israel to continue grabbing the fertile olive and grape fields, the quarries, many historical sites, and particularly the Old City of Jerusalem and the 'Wailing Wall' (see chapter IV and V).

Map 1 British Mandate Palestine 1923-1948, regional location

Source: ARIJ 2008

Geography

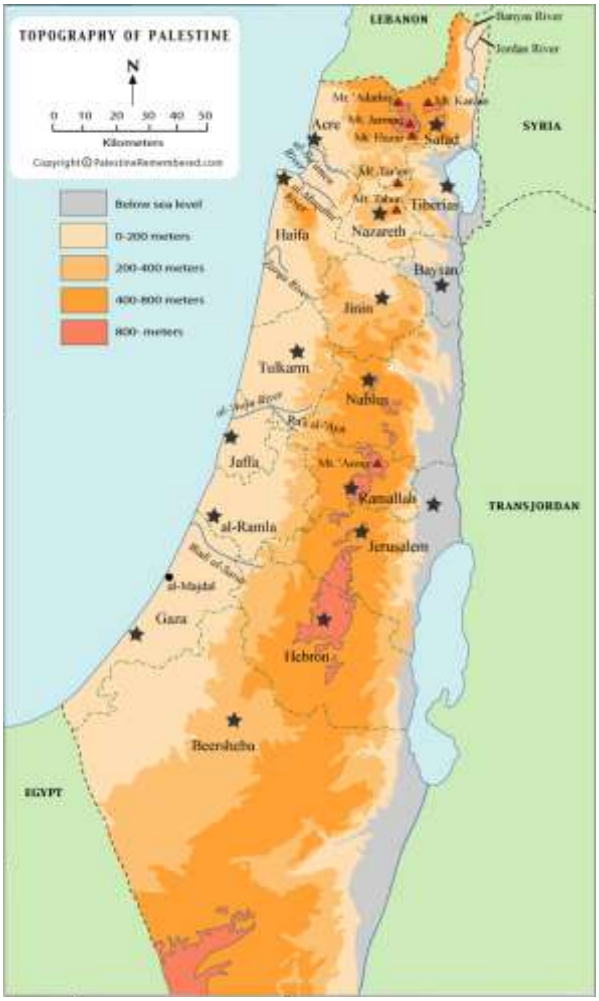
The borders of the area which, after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, became a separate country under the British Mandate made up the area of Palestine. Palestine is a small country of around 28,000sqkm, approximately 350 km long with a narrowest width of 60km.

Despite its small size, Palestine has various climates and landscapes, and features animal and plant species from Mediterranean coastal, mountainous, and desert regions (PACE, 1999:17 f; ARIJ, 2000; ARIJ, 1997, Richter 1969). In Palestine, we find the lowest point on earth, the Jordan valley, up to 400 m below sea level, and the smallest oasis in the world on the west side of the Jordan valley. The main cities, Hebron, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Ramallah, Nablus, Jenin and Nazareth (from south to north), situated on the western slopes of the Jordan rift, enjoy typical Mediterranean climates. Jerusalem, for example, is about 1,000 m above sea level, enjoys the hot Mediterranean summer as well as occasional snow during its winter.

Westward the slopes softly pass into the agriculturally productive coastal plain. The coast from north to south is the location of ancient cities like Akka, Haifa, Jaffa, Askalan, Majdal and Gaza; some of these have been inhabited for centuries. Tel Aviv, founded at the beginning of the 20th century as a 'pure Jewish' city, is the hectic coastal centre of Israel, like other new towns such as Netanya or Hadera, constructed after the foundation of the State of Israel, generally on the ruins of Palestinian villages or towns (see chapter III).

The southern part of the coast is semi-arid. Heavy rainfalls in winter are followed by a long, hot, dry summer period. The fertile sand dunes of the Gaza region, covering most of the area, are important for the ecosystem, collecting the heavy rains and filtering them gradually to the groundwater. The Negev region, besides being a desert area, is rich in important minerals. (Pace 1999)

Map 2 Palestine geography



Source: www.palestineremembered.com, 20.10.2001

Population and socio-economic situation

Accurate data for the population composition of the entire area of Palestine is difficult to find and differ from various sources: pre-1948 Ottoman, or British, current Palestinian, Israeli, or international. Furthermore, Israeli statistics include the Palestinians and the settlers in East Jerusalem and the Israeli settlers in the West Bank, whilst the Palestinian statistics do not count them, which make it even more difficult to differentiate exactly between region and ethnicity or nationality.

Today's population in the borders of Mandate Palestine, characteristics and figures

We can estimate today a population of 11 million people living in all of Palestine, approximately 5-5.5 million Jews/Israelis, and 5-5.5 million Palestinians, a relation of

50% to 50% (see (I)CBS, (Israeli) Central Bureau of Statistics, census 2007, PCBS, Palestinian Centre Bureau of Statistics, census 2007,2009).

In ***Israel***, within the borders of 1948, in 2009 ICBS recorded 7,411 inhabitants, 5,472 million Jews (including 187,000 living in West Bank colonies, 20,000 in Golan Heights and around 177,000 in East (Palestinian) Jerusalem) and 1,498 million Palestinians in Israel, forming 20.6% of Israeli society. Jews born in Israel have come to represent nearly 70%, compared to 36% in 1848. With regard to origin, 37.5% of Jews come from Israel, 34.8% from Europe/USA, 15.5% from Africa and 12.2% from Asia; 37.5% of all of them have a father born in Israel (CBS 2009: 158). Israeli society is still largely a society made up of immigrants.

In the 1967 occupied ***Palestinian territories***, in 2009 the PCBS recorded 3.9 million *Palestinians* (census 2007: 3,761,464), in the West Bank around 2.4 million (census 2007: 2,345,107), the Gaza Strip 1.5 million (census 2007: 1,416,539), including 362,000 in East Jerusalem (census 2007: 240,000). Between 40,000 and 100,000 of them were returnees, expelled in either 1948 or 1967, or those who lost their residency while living abroad for studies. Some of these entered the occupied territories during the peace process according to the Oslo agreements. The majority of these were 'Tunisians', cadres and militants of the PLO forming the new administration and government and the security forces and police; others were American-Palestinians who generally settled in the West Bank (MERIP 212, 2006).

For the year 2008, 187,000 ***Israelis*** in the West Bank, or ca. 8% of the total population, were registered as living in West Bank colonies and 177,000 in East Jerusalem (July 2008). The origins of one-third of those living in West Bank colonies are Israeli-born, with one or both parents born in Israel; one-third of them have an Asian/African background, one-third an American/European background. More than 50% consider themselves orthodox or ultra orthodox, 35% of them work in Israel, and a quarter of them own a home in Israel as well (CPRS Polls 1999).

Different characteristics

Youth*:* While in 2009 one quarter of the population in Israel is under 14 years of age (28.4%), the Palestinian society of the occupied territories is much younger, with children under 15 making up nearly half of the society (WB 40.4%, Gaza 44.9%) (CBS 2009, PCBS 2009).

Growth rate, mortality, life expectancy: The *growth rate* of the population in Israel is 1.8%, and in Palestine 3,9% in the 1967 occupied territories (o.t.) in 2009; the *fertility rate* is 4.1 births per women in the Palestinian 1967 o.t. and 2.96 in Israel (Jews 2.88, Muslims 3.84, Christians 2.11') (CBS 2009, PCBS 2009); the *infant mortality* rate is 24.2 per 1000 births for Palestinians in the o.t. and 3.8 for Israelis (2.9 for Jews, 6.8 for Muslims, Jewish settlers in the WB 3.0); *life expectancy* is 72.5 for Palestinians in the o.t. and 83.0 for Israelis in 2008 (83.3 for Jews, 79.7 for Muslims) (CBS 2009, PCBS 2009).

Household size: In Palestinian communities in the occupied territories of 1967 the average family has 5.8 members, in the West Bank 5.5 in Gaza and in the refugee camps 6.5 persons (2007), in Israeli Palestinian communities the average is around 4.8 persons per household in 2007. The average Israeli household is made up of 3.3 persons in 2008 (Jews 3.1; Arabs 4.8) (CBS 2009, PCBS 2009).

Religion: The majority of Palestinians are Muslims; Christian Palestinians form about 2% of the West Bank population, living mainly in the district of Bethlehem, as well as in East Jerusalem in 2009. In Israel the majority is considered to be Jews, 75.6%; the majority of 'non-Jews' are Muslim (mostly Palestinians), 16.1%; there is a small minority of Christians, most of them found around Nazareth, making up about 2.1%, with Druse at 1.6%, and Bahai (CBS 2007/2009, PCBS 2009).

Literacy/illiteracy: In 2008 the illiteracy rate in the '67 occupied territories was recorded as 5.9% (among those of 15 or older), illiteracy in Israel in 2008 was 4.68 %; 13.4% of Arab women were considered illiterate compared to 3.4% of Jews; 5.5% of Arab men, compared with 1.9% of Jewish men (CBS 2008, 2009, PCBS 2009).

Location of people: The *Palestinians* living in Israel are concentrated in certain regions, especially in Jaffa and Haifa, both on the coast, in the so-called triangle around Um-el Fahem, as well as in the north in Galilee with Nazareth as their main city and the Bedouins living in the Negev. In Israel, a special definition is used for a group of Palestinians: 'unrecognised people', living in unrecognised areas. They are Palestinians and compose around 100,000 people, including around 86,000 Bedouins in the Negev, in approximately 100 villages (IMEMC 2006, see section III). The *Jewish Israelis* are urban, a high percentage concentrated in the coastal cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants from Haifa to Ashqelon (11 of 14 such cities, with together 2.2 million people according to CBS 2009), only 500,000 *Jewish Israelis* or 8% live and work in rural localities, *moshavim* or *kibbutzim* (CBS 2009).

The *Palestinians* in the occupied territories as a fact of circumstance are becoming more and more urban, 73.3% living in the main cities (5 of them with more than 100,000 inhabitants according to PCBS 2009). Many of these are especially attracted by Ramalla's growing financial and administrative importance.

Israelis in the occupied territories of 1967 live exclusively in colonies, some in cities of up to 50,000 inhabitants (Ma'ale Adumim), and some in small 'pioneer' military camps of houses, intended to become villages or part of cities (see chapter IV).

Of approximately 11 million *Palestinians* in the world, more than 7 million, or around 67%, are so-called 'displaced persons', among them 5.2 million estimated as living outside of Palestine; 6.6 million are registered refugees.

The entire *Jewish* world community is estimated at 14 million; more than 8 million Jews live in countries other than Israel. Some 6.5 million Jews live in North America, the biggest Jewish community outside of Israel, and 1.5 million live in Europe (see table 1)

Table 1 Population composition and regional distribution in Israel/Palestine 2004/5, different sources and information (in million, rounded up)

Issue	**Israel**		**Palestinian 67 occupied Territories POT**			
Location / No. in mill	Israel	West Jerusalem	West Bank	Gaza Strip	East Jerusalem	Total
Jews *	5.472	0.270	0,187	0	0,177	5.636
Palestinians	1,489	0,187	2,345	1,416	0,362	5,612
Jews outside						8,350
Palestinians outside						4,500
Total Jews **Total Palestinians**						**14,000** **11,000**

* not included 20,000 Israeli Jews living in the Golan Heights/Syria
Sources: (CBS 2008, 2009, PCBS 2008, 2009)

Palestinian Refugees

According to United Nations statistics (UNWRA, 2008), today about 4.7 million *Palestinians* are registered refugees, descendants of those who were expelled in the first 'ethnic cleansing act' and fled from their homes during the wars of 1947/1949 (around 750,000 displaced persons) or 1967 (around 950,000 displaced persons); thus about 43% of all Palestinians are registered refugees (PCBS 2009, Pappe 2002). 1,373,732 million, or 30%, still live in camps run by the UNWRA (United Nation World Relief Agency for the Middle East, established for the Palestinian refugees), the majority of which are in Jordan, with some in Syria and Lebanon as well. In the West Bank, the Gaza Region, and East Jerusalem, 1.8 million, or 32%, of all Palestinian inhabitants in the o.t. are registered refugees, of which 754,263 are in the West Bank and 1,059,584 in Gaza. A total of 688,376 are still living in camps; in the West Bank in 19 camps, forming 6.5% of the West Bank's population, and in the Gaza Region in 8 camps, forming 31% of the total Gaza Population (PCBS 2006).

These refugees and their descendants still maintain their right of return to Palestine, which is upheld through UN resolutions such as 194 Art. 11, and international law (UN 2007). (see table 2)

Table 2 UNWRA registered refugees June 2008

Location/Region	**Persons**	**In Camps**
West Bank		
Jericho	19,111	8,431
Jerusalem	222,140	46,432
Hebron	174,572	48,599
Nablus	338,440	97,946
West Bank total	**754,263**	**191,408**
Gaza		
Jabalia	192,258	107,295

Rimal	170,118	81,591
Zeitun	135,281	61,785
Nuseirat	123,838	20,653
Deir El Balah	88,048	31,018
Khan Yunis	179,199	67,567
Rafah	170,842	98,660
		23,730
Gaza total	**1,059,584**	**492,299**
Lebanon		
Beirut	50,066	0,618
Mountain	81,217	37,962
Saida	101,627	59,216
Tyre	107,025	56,546
Tripoli	59,767	49,128
Beqaa	16,906	7,832
Lebanon total	**416,608**	**220,809**
Syria		
Damascus	358,603	72,926
South	25,636	9,808
Homs-Hama	39,366	22,084
North	33,378	18,828
Syria total	**456,983**	**123,646**
Jordan		
Amman South	540,818	57,935
Irbed	329,861	90,984
Amman North	507,024	122,681
Zerka	553,000	63,707
Jordan total	**1,930,703**	**335,307**
Total	**4,618,141**	**1,363,469**

Source: UNWRA 30.7.2008

The number of real displaced persons from 1967 is approximately one million according to PRRN information; many of whom were also 1948 refugees. The overwhelming majority of these are in Jordan.

Economic and living situation

For both parts, Israel and the 1967 occupied Palestinian territories, an extremely high dependence on external financial help is necessary. While huge international help to Israel was always a ‘must’, not only for Germany (‘Wiedergutmachung’), America and the international Jewish and Zionist community support half of Israel’s national budget; Palestinians, as they have lacked and continue to lack sovereign state and an independent government, have since the occupation obtained support from Arab countries for ‘resistance’, or ‘sumud’, and family remittances from abroad have played and continue to play a major role. Since the Oslo agreement, Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Region (not in usurped East Jerusalem) have been funded by international agreements, with specific requirements on how the money is used. Furthermore, the economy is extremely dependent on Israel for its market, electricity,

and water supply. While Israel has a modern industry-based economy, the Palestinian territories still subsist mainly on small family businesses.

For both societies, the unstable political situation does not allow a healthy, self-sufficient economic environment. Military and 'security' costs are a burden for Israel, and damage and closures hinder Palestinian development. However, Israel as a state pays for much of the social costs for individuals: housing, health and education are subsidised and sufficient and affordable in general. Only those Palestinians who are able to pay may achieve good standards of education, health, or housing from private, religious or charitable institutions. Consequently, among the Palestinians poverty is widespread, especially among those living in refugee camps. The same applies to Palestinians in Israel, who cannot afford the same standard of living as the Jewish majority.

The ***unemployment rate*** in the '67 occupied Palestinian territories is recorded as 25.4%, 19.5% for the West Bank and 37% for the Gaza region in 2007 (PCBS 2009; in comparison to the Israel average 6.1% in 2007 (CBS 2009), for the Arab population 11.9% in November 2009 (Jerusalem Post 5.11.2009) and 7.6% in May 2009 (Selengut 2009).

The ***relative poverty line*** according to consumption patterns (for reference household consisting of 2 adults and 4 children) were recorded as 2,375 NIS (New Israel Shekel) or US$ 580, and ***deep poverty line*** 1,975 NIS (US$ 482) in 2007 (PCBS 2009).

The ***poverty rate*** among *Palestinian* households was 34.4%, 23.6% for the West Bank and 55.7% for the Gaza Strip. The poverty rate according to income patterns was 57.3%, 47.2% for the West Bank and 76.9% for the Gaza Strip. (PCBS 2009)

The ***deep poverty rate*** was 23.8% for the whole Palestinian Territories in 2007, 13.9% in the West bank and 43.0% in the Gaza Strip according to consumption patterns; according to income patterns, PCBS found 48.0% suffering from deep poverty, 37.3% in the West Bank and 69.0% of the Gaza Strip people (PCBS 2009).

In Israel CBS found 25% of all *Israelis*, or 2.1 million households, suffering from *poverty* below the poverty line of US$ 1,337 for a 5-person household in 2005 (Selengut 2009).

Income: In 2007 *Palestinian* workers earned on average 74.40 NIS (New Israeli Shekel) per day, in the West Bank 78.6 and in the Gaza Strip 65.4 NIS; monthly (6 working days per week) income was 1,765.60 NIS or US$ 431.18 in Israel, 1,866,40 NIS or US$ 455.80 in the West Bank and 1,569.60 NIS or US$ 383,17 (4.0948 NIS= 1 US$ in 2007) the Gaza Strip (PCBS 2009a); while Jewish workers in Israel got on average 7,749 NIS or US$ 1,892.40 in 2007 (CBS 2008).

Israeli workers at the same time earned on average 111 NIS (PCBS, 2000). Average *wages* per employee in Israel was about 7,755 NIS monthly in 2006 (CBS 14.09.06 (CBS 2006); the daily wage in 2005 for *Palestinians* was 65.4 NIS in the *West Bank* (6 days per week means monthly 1,570 NIS) and 57.7 NIS (means monthly 1,385 NIS) in the *Gaza Region*. (PCBS May 2006) (NIS 4.4877 per 1 US $ in 2005; 28.07.07 1 Euro = 5.89 NIS).

Political Status

Israel unilaterally proclaimed the state in May 15th in 1948 in borders agreed on as cease-fire lines. These 'borders', shutting in more land than proposed by the UN in

the division plan (No. 181) of 1947, were the result of military aggression. Israel claims to be the only democratic state in the Middle East, but does not have a constitution. Instead Israel has a ‘Basic Law’ and many discriminatory practices and regulations towards the non-Jews in the country (see chapter III). From its first session, the Knesset, the Israeli parliament, proclaimed Jerusalem as the 'indisputable capital' of Israel. Tel Aviv was seen as an interim location of governmental institutions.

These activities of territorial usurpation against international agreements were immediately disputed in UN assemblies; many resolutions were passed demanding Israeli withdrawal – but were never executed. Furthermore, the occupation of the other parts of Palestine in 1967, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, as well as the proclamation of Jerusalem as Israel's capital in 1986, were rejected by international decisions and withdrawal was imposed on all Israeli governments. Moreover, the colonisation, the changing of the demography, economy and political status, especially in East Jerusalem, were condemned as a violation of international law and the Geneva Conventions – and still are (UN Resolution 242, 1967) (UN 2007) (see map 3).

The political situation of the *Palestinian community inside Israel* is still precarious. Officially inhabitants of the state of Israel, they lack many of the benefits of Jewish inhabitants and suffer from various forms of discrimination (see chapter III).

Palestine was supposed to exist after the end of the Mandate status – but the double game of the imperial powers promised and planned the land for both: Britain to the Zionist Movement in the ‘Balfour Declaration’ in 1917, France and Britain to the Arab Nations in the Sykes-Picot-Treaty of 1916. The immigration and colonisation policy of the Zionist movement and international protection led to several division plans between areas for ‘Jews’ and ‘Arabs’. Finally, in 1947 the imposed division of Palestine came to pass, and the Zionist Movement established the State of Israel as a Jewish State in 1948 after the withdrawal of Britain, guaranteeing all Jews in the world citizenship through the ‘law of return’ of 1950.

The Palestinians, like all other Arab nations at that time not at all willing to accept the division of their country by international force and law, could not establish their promised state, not even on what remained of their territory. The West Bank, including East Jerusalem, came under Jordanian rule and the Gaza region under Egyptian governance (see map 4). In 1967 Israel occupied both, and since then Israel’s military forces control both land and society. The ‘peace-process’ did not lead to peace; on the contrary both areas are again under Israeli military control and are divided into cantons. The two entities are extremely separated from each other, and a division of the West Bank into three parts is planned. The West Bank is already fragmented into three kinds of status: area A, under Palestinian ‘sovereignty’, includes the built-up areas only, consequently most of the villages and towns; area B, which should be under the control of both sides but in reality is under Israeli control, since Israel dominates security affairs; and area C, the area of the colonies, infrastructure, and by far the largest amount of land and main water resources, under complete Israeli government control (see map 5).

With the erection of the segregation wall and fences, a division into areas of Palestinian governed territory and Israeli governance has become even worse (see map 6). Most of the planned actions of withdrawal according to Oslo were not fulfilled on the Israeli side, even though the PLO and former president Yassir Arafat, as the head of the elected Palestinian Government, factually recognised Israel in signing all

agreements with its governments. The efforts in the first years after Oslo to implement state structures and the planned development of rural and urban areas were hindered through political and military threats. However, the Palestinian leaders still demand a Palestinian state in the borders of 1947/48 with East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine (see Declaration of Principles from 13.9.1993, Washington, signed by both sides).

See the real development (map 3-6).

Map 3 UN Distribution Plan '181'

Source: Mid East Web 2010

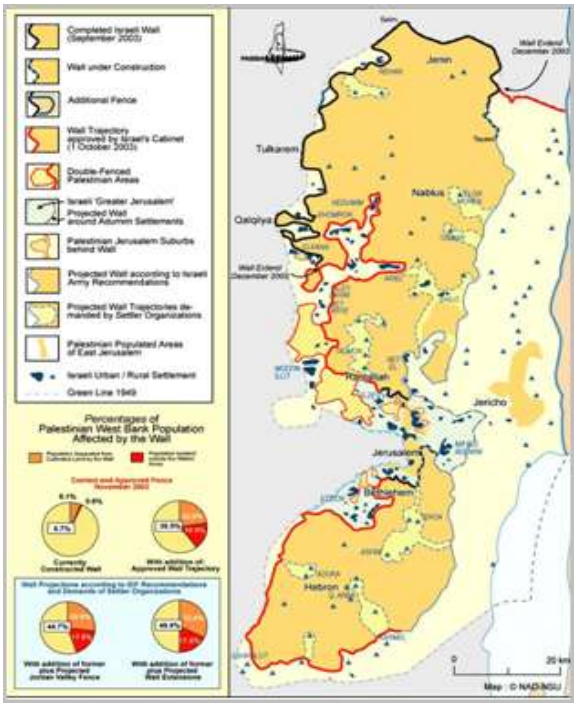
Map 4 Palestinian Governorates today

Source: Mopic 1999

Map 5: Split West Bank today ABC Zones acc. Oslo II agreement

Source: Passia 2006

Map 6: Split West Bank today – isolation through the Wall



Source Passia 2006

Summary

Palestine was and is a country rich in history and nature; a bridge between the Middle East and Europe and part of the Mediterranean region, it saw many invaders, occupiers and rulers, but to this day it has kept its rural character, its beautiful and varied landscapes, and a socio-cultural community, influenced mainly by the Islamic period from the time of the Mamluks. The Bedouins of Palestine trace their roots back more than 3,000 years, before the time of Moses. Many monuments exist as testimonies of history from different empires, from all periods where mankind represented civilisation through architecture and cultivation of the land. Palestine is a unique place on earth, with the lowest point on the surface of the earth, the smallest desert, and a large variety of nature from seaside, hills and valleys. In addition, three important religions exist in this land. Becoming a state or nation after the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, having lived without national borders for nearly 700 years and being an open space from Baghdad to Sofia, Palestine had no chance. Again foreign powers, those imperial forces who decided about a new world order after the first and second world wars, hindered such a process for other interests, eventually leading to the creation of a European outpost in the Middle East: Israel.

And the State of Israel played its role well in destroying the unit of a promised Palestinian state by means of planning, including military aggression. Thus it destroyed and is still destroying the unique character of this historic region, the once existing socio-cultural cohesion, the landscape, even nature.

The Palestinian Palestine today is reduced to some islands in a sea of an Israeli majority, without any noticeable sovereignty or space for possible political or economic action. The political leadership, despite an elected government, is entirely dependent on international funding and Israeli/American acceptance. How this could happen is the content of this publication.

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