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**Judaization of the City of Jerusalem**  
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At the beginning of the Ottoman rule in the first quarter of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, countries of the Levant witnessed the settlement of about 1,000 Jewish families in Jerusalem, Safed and Hebron, of whom about 300 resided in Jerusalem<sup>1</sup>. During the 17<sup>th</sup> Century the number of Sephardim Jewish sects in Jerusalem increased. In 1777, other Jews came from Poland, helping establish the Ashkenazi sects in Jerusalem. Nevertheless, the number of Jews in Jerusalem up to 1793 did not exceed a few hundreds.<sup>2</sup>

Jews in Jerusalem had remained an insignificant minority, leaving it from time to time. In 1806, their number was estimated at about 2,000, rising to about 3,000 in 1919. There occurred another increase as a result of the migration of hundreds of Jews from Safed over the period 1834-1837, due to earthquakes there<sup>3</sup>. In a census made in 1839, the number of Jews in Palestine showed about 6,500, half of whom lived in Jerusalem.<sup>4</sup>

It seems that the remarkable increase in the number of Jews in Jerusalem was due to improvements in their conditions after the restoration of the Ottoman rule of the Levant in 1840. Competition among consulates of European countries to provide protection for the Jews in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century led to an increase in their number in Jerusalem. From among them, some 3,000 people were under the protection of Austria, some 1,000 under that of Britain, some 1,000 under that of Germany, Holland and USA<sup>5</sup>. In 1864, the number of population in Jerusalem was estimated at about 18,000, half of whom were Jews.<sup>6</sup>

In 1887, the number of Jews in Jerusalem rose to about 14,000 and in 1890 to 20,000, out of a total population in Jerusalem of 45,000<sup>7</sup>. According to some sources, , the number of Jews in Jerusalem in 1904 rose to about 40,000, of whom about 10,000 were registered with

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foreign consulates, 10,000 in the Ottoman records and 15,000 as stateless.<sup>8</sup>

In 1910, Jews were distributed over Palestinian cities at 60 per cent in Jerusalem, 25 per cent in Jaffa, Safed, Tabaria and Hebron, 15 per cent in settlements<sup>9</sup>. The number of population in Jerusalem in 1913 was estimated at about 90,000, before dropping to 50,000 in 1917, due the migration of many Jews to Egypt during World War I. In 1920, however, the number of population in Jerusalem rose to 61,000 due the return a number of Jews from Egypt. At the end of 1944, it reached to 157,000 and in 1947 to 164,500 broken down as follows:

- 63,600 Arabs and 11,200 Jews in old Jerusalem; and
- 88,000 Jews and 1,500 Arabs in New Jerusalem.

Thus, Arabs accounted for 85 per cent of the population of the old city, while Jews accounted for 60 per cent of the population of both the old and new cities and the suburbs.<sup>10</sup>

The Jews took advantage of the facilities offered by the British Mandate by appointing a municipal council for Jerusalem in 1927. The council was composed of two Muslim members, one of whom was the head of municipality, Arab Christian members and two Jewish members, one of whom was the deputy-head of municipality.<sup>11</sup>

It appears from the foregoing that the Zionist movement had continually sought to control the municipal council although Jews accounted only for 62 per cent of the population<sup>12</sup> as well as local government institutions, with the object of judaizing Jerusalem, expelling Arab population and building new houses for Jewish immigrants, thus turning them into a majority<sup>13</sup>. The Zionist movement did actually succeed in turning its scheme into reality.<sup>14</sup>

With support from British colonialist authorities and since the entry of British troops into Jerusalem on December 9, 1917, a significant phase of the Zionist scheme of besieging the city of Jerusalem and creating a Jewish majority was already achieved. Construction was banned and building restrictions were imposed in the areas surrounding the old city. In the meantime, Jews started to reinforce their presence in the new city in order to deter any potential Arab expansion. This was

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represented in a rise in the rate of immigration to Palestine, which helped reinforce the Jewish community in Jerusalem and reverse the demographic status in favor of Jews there<sup>15</sup>.

The city of Jerusalem received an abundant share of Jewish capital flows so as to become a political, administrative and educational center. So, it became the seat of the Executive Commission of the World Zionist Organization, the Constituent Fund, the Jewish National Fund and the Chief Rabbinate. In 1925, the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, comprising the National Library, was founded. In 1939, the Hadassah University Hospital was inaugurated. The Zionist movement also established a number of institutions on Mount Scopus, north east of the old city, which was then almost besieged. Newly created Jewish neighborhoods helped fill the gaps between the old ones and more tightly besiege Jerusalem<sup>16</sup>.

As The Zionist movement recognized the importance of immigration and settlement for seizing Arab land in Palestine, it equally realized the importance of education for bringing up Jewish youth to adherence to land, and to fulfill the Zionist dream<sup>17</sup>, it gave special attention to education, creating in Jerusalem and other towns, where Jews settles, three types of schools:

- a. conventional Jewish schools;
- b. Jewish missionary schools; and
- c. Zionist schools.

The Jewish Agency supervised Jewish education. By 1932, it had managed to set up the foundation of Zionist education in Palestine<sup>18</sup>. In 1932, the Agency handed the management of Jewish education to the Confessional (Millet) Council of the Jews of Palestine, confining its role up to 1948 to the provision of financial assistance. At that time, the Jews had 27 public and 10 private schools. The earlier schools were influenced by the idea of reviving and using Hebrew language in education<sup>19</sup>.

It was also decided to build the Hebrew University on Mount of Olives. The conception of the university dates back to<sup>20</sup> the first Zionist Conference, Basle, and August 1897. In July 1918, Haim Weitzman laid the foundation stone of the University and it was

opened for schooling in April 1925<sup>21</sup>. Intent on reviving the Hebrew language, the Zionist movement insisted on making Hebrew the only medium of teaching in the university.

During the time of British Mandate (1922- 48), Hebrew became one of the three official languages, in addition to Arabic and English. Thus, it appeared on official letterheads, documents, stamps and currency notes and coins. Palestine's name was depicted in Hebrew as "the Land of Israel".<sup>22</sup> Thus the Zionist dream of reviving the Hebrew language came true, as it came to be used in teaching, writing, oratory and acting and in the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

The Zionist movement tried innovations of practice at the Wailing (Buraq) Wall, such as having Jewish worshippers bring in, and place opposite the wall, chairs, screens and lanterns. The Arabs in Jerusalem were soon alerted to that unprecedented practice and protested against possible claims to the land where such articles are placed.<sup>23</sup> No sooner had breaches by the Zionist movement gone too far than the Wailing (Buraq) Wall uprising erupted on August 23, 1929.

In 1929, the Mandate Government formed a Commission of Inquiry chaired by Sir Walter Shaw that concluded that the Wailing Wall was an Islamic sacred monument and that the opposite pavement and adjoining area were Islamic Endowments. It also concluded that Jews has only the right to restricted and conditional visit, in terms of timing and manner, in accordance with common practice and customs and that the right to visit did not imply claim by Jew of any type of property<sup>24</sup>.

The Commission of Inquiry determined that the western wall if al-Haram al-Shareef is the exclusive property of Muslims and the opposite pavement the property of Islamic Endowments. Jew had free access to the western wall to perform supplications at all times subject to conditions, including inadmissibility to bring worshipping tools beside the wall, save for certain occasions, where a table and a cabinet may be allowed in<sup>25</sup>.

The Shaw Commission admitted that the Arab uprising was motivated by indignation and fear among them that the real goal of Jews was to control al-Haram al-Shareef, seize the Rock Dome Mosque and expel Arabs from Palestine to reconstruct the Temple<sup>26</sup>.

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**This would lead to further Arab revolts against Jews, unless Arabs had been convinced that their fears are exaggerated or had been proven for them to be ungrounded.<sup>27</sup>**

**At any rate, it was Jerusalem that triggered the uprising of the Wailing (Buraq) Wall and others by the Arabs of Palestine. The Holy Places in Jerusalem were the immediate cause of armed conflict between Arabs and Jews, because the Zionist movement had, right from the beginning, flouted the "Status Quo" of the Wailing Wall. Its recognition of the status quo at that time would have meant that the Zionist scheme of unearthing the Temple that, they claimed lay beneath the Holy Rock<sup>28</sup>.**

**In the aftermath of the June 5, 1967 war, and the occupation of the West Bank, the occupying authorities actively sought to implement its scheme of judaizing Arab Jerusalem through the following modalities and mechanisms:**

- 1) Terrorism: The Israeli army seized and looted schools, hotels and stores following the end of hostilities. The occupying authorities imposed curfew, collected residents for long hours day and night and sent to detention camps, where they were physically and psychologically tortured, leading to the displacement of causing about 5,000 people.**
- 2) Blasting and demolition: During the first week of its occupation, Israel removed a number of properties, under the pretext of reprisal against resistance. As a result of the blasting and demolition operations, about 1,000 residents of the old Jerusalem were displaced.**
- 3) Annexation of Jerusalem: On June 27, 1967, the Israeli Knesset issue a decree authorizing Israeli authorities to seize al-Matar area, Qalandia and Shja'fat villages, parts of Bait Hanaina, Iiram and Anata north of Jerusalem, al-Isawiyya and villages at-Toar, parts of al-Azairiyya and abu-Dees villages east of Jerusalem as well as parts of Bait Sfafa south of Jerusalem, thus subjecting about 10,000 Arab resident directly to Israeli law.**

**On June 29, 1967, the Israeli Defense Force issued a decree dissolving the Jerusalem Municipal Council, terminating the service the Jerusalem Mayor and transferring the service of the municipality personnel to the Israeli Municipality in west Jerusalem. Applicable Jordanian laws and regulations were revoked and a military administration was forcefully imposed by the Israeli government on the Arab city of Jerusalem, in spite of**

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the fact that the United Nations Resolution issued on July 4 and 14, 1967 deemed Israeli actions as nil and void.<sup>29</sup>

- 4) **Isolating Jerusalem:** The Israeli occupation authorities besieged the City of Jerusalem, barring entry into or exit, only under military permission, thus causing damage to residents of Jerusalem and the neighboring villages.
  - 5) **Judaization of the economy:** The Israeli occupation authorities closed down Arab banks in Jerusalem, confiscated their assets, replaced Jordanian with Israeli currency, banned entry into Jerusalem market of any products of Arab origin, while allowing all kinds of Israeli goods, in order to ensure the isolation of Jerusalem from the West Bank.
  - 6) **The Jerusalem population census:** On July 25, 1967, the Israeli occupation authorities conducted a general census of the Arab population in Jerusalem, thus preventing the absentees and displaced because of the war, then estimated, together with their families, at 10,000 people, from returning home.
  - 7) **Confiscation of absentee property:** The Israeli occupation authorities applied the Absentee Property Law on the residents of Jerusalem, registered and placed under their disposal all movable and immovable property, as they did the property of Arab refugees they expelled in 1948.
  - 8) **The looting and confiscation of Arab property:** The Israeli occupation authorities sought to usurp large tracts of Arab land and property in Jerusalem, under the pretext of public interest requirements. Thus, they confiscated Arab land within and outside wall and within the zoning lines of the City of Jerusalem. They also seized extensive areas of lands in the Arab village surrounding Jerusalem, denied land owners access to them, turning them into settlements, with the object of encircling Jerusalem and surrounding Arab villages<sup>30</sup>.
  - 9) **Evacuation of Arab population:** The occupation authorities continued to forcefully evacuate Arab population out of land and property, to which they had, for centuries, held title, after serving them evacuation notices.
  - 10) **Israeli settlement in the Arab City of Jerusalem:** the Israeli authorities systematically implemented their settlement scheme in Jerusalem; new districts were built on the debris of
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demolished Arab districts and on usurped and confiscated Arab land, in order to encircle Arab districts in Jerusalem<sup>31</sup>.

- 11) **Judaization of Arab education:** The occupation authorities seized all Jordanian government schools and subjected schooling there to the same curriculum as they did with schools in the 1948 occupied territories. On July 17, 1969, a school supervision law was issued, to oversee non-governmental schools, requiring that Israeli licenses be obtained and school curricula and financing sources be supervised.
  - 12) **Judaization of Arab institutions:** Following June 5, 1967, Israel closed down formal courts in Jerusalem, relocated some to Ramallah, merged others into similar Israeli courts and annexed formal courts in Jerusalem to Israeli judicature. On August 23, 1968, the occupation authorities issued the Administrative Organization Law of 1968, with the purpose of judaizing professions and crafts, requiring professional and craftsmen to obtain Israeli, instead of Jordanian, licenses related to firms, cooperatives, and professions such as medicine, engineering and law. Failure to do so will make violator liable to punishment and financial penalties<sup>32</sup>.
  - 13) **Judaization of al-Quds Sanctuary through the burning of al-Aqsa Mosque and assault against Christian religious places.**
  - 14) **Deportation of Arab population from Jerusalem with the purpose of getting rid of opinion leaders, damaging spirit of resistance and forcing families of deportees them. This act is in breach of Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention reading as follows, " *Individual or mass forcible transfers, as well as deportations of protected persons from occupied territory to the territory of the Occupying Power or to that of any other country, occupied or not, are prohibited, regardless of their motive. Individual or mass forcible transfers, as well as deportations of protected persons from occupied territory to the territory of the Occupying Power or to that of any other country, occupied or not, are prohibited, regardless of their motive.*"** This is also in breach of the United Nations Security Council Resolution No 237 of June 14, 1967, requiring the need to avoid causing damage to civilians, prisoners of war and to maintain human rights and comply with the Geneva Conventions.
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- 15) Changing and replacing street and road names for Hebrew ones in order to eradicate Arab landmarks from the city.
  - 16) The Absentee Property Law of 1973: This law was enacted with the purpose of depriving absentee Arabs of Jerusalem from the right to return and restore their property and pressuring Arab property owners to assign them, thus endorsing the annexation of Jerusalem. In spite of this law, none of Jerusalemite Arabs checked with the occupation authorities to claim reparations for their confiscated property<sup>33</sup>.
  - 17) The project for zoning Jerusalem and its suburbs was adopted with the purpose of altering the Arab-Muslim character of the City into a Jewish one as part of a scheme to Judaize Jerusalem.
  - 18) The Greater Jerusalem project: This project aims to annex Arab villages surrounding Jerusalem, making up about 30 per cent of the area of the West Bank. The Zionist scheme has made a long way ahead. Having annexed, in 1948, the western side of Jerusalem that makes up about 80 per cent of the city, Israel occupied the eastern side in June 7, 1967, thus expanding its borders from Ramallah in the north to Bethlehem in the south
  - 19) Annexation of the Arab city of Jerusalem: On June 27, 1967, Israel declared the annexation and enforcement of Israeli law on Arab Jerusalem. Starting June 28, 1967, Israel sought to expand its borders by annexing Arab areas lying north, east and south of Jerusalem, totaling 53 square kilometers. It officially declared that those areas were annexed to Jerusalem Municipality. On June 29, 1967 it dissolved the Arab Municipality of Jerusalem and its property confiscated. In 1968, it started confiscating Arab land and property within and around Arab Jerusalem. The areas within the West Bank planned for annexation by the occupation authorities are estimated at 30 per cent of the Bank. On July 30, 1980, the Knesset passed a law providing for Unified Jerusalem to be an eternal capital for the State of Israel and the seat of the Knesset, Head of the State and Supreme Court.
  - 20) Arrests, torture and collective punishment: Since 1967, Israel has been systematically inflicting collective punishment
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on, arresting and incarcerating Palestinian residents of Jerusalem and closing down their stores for long periods under administrative order, all with the purpose of intimidating and forcing them to leave Jerusalem and the neighboring villages<sup>34</sup>.

The Zionist movement justified its unfair actions against Arab population in Palestine in general and in Jerusalem in particular with false religious and historical pretexts. It propagated a series of claims that Palestine is the historical homeland of Jews; that today's Jews are the grandchildren of David and Solomon; that the Jewish people have had never left but had carried their land with them to exile<sup>35</sup> and that Jews have always remembered the torment and suffering they had undergone in the past. Therefore, the Zionism movement claims the historical borders of the land of Israel runs from Egypt's Nile to the Euphrates; that the historical rights, as mentioned in the Old Testament are that " Jews are God's chosen people " that derives their rights from God's promise to Abraham<sup>36</sup>.

The notion of historical right is indeed one of the most important pretexts on which the Zionist movement is based its alleged right to establish the Jewish state on the historical land of Israel<sup>37</sup>. Nevertheless, the Zionist claims to the Jews' religious and historical right to Palestine look lean in the face of the following hard facts of history:

- The religious claim, basically grounded on the Divine promise given by God to Abraham as mentioned in the Torah: " To them will I give it (the land) and to thy seed..." is unjust. This is simply because most Jews are not siblings of *Abraham*. Moreover, the phrase "thy seeds" does not exclude Arabs, whose lineage goes back to Ishmael son Abraham<sup>38</sup>. Such religious claim cannot serve as an adequate and basic ground for the nationalist doctrine that is based on the same land, the same language and common history. Supposing for the sake of argument that world Jewry satisfy these requirements, this would not necessarily give them the right to usurp others' land and live at the expense of their sufferings and usurped rights<sup>39</sup>. However, the
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Zionist movement among Jewish communities has succeeded in entrenching the false premise of historical ownership of Palestine, relying myths considered as unquestionable *aprioris*<sup>40</sup>.

- In the case of Jerusalem, the claim to the alleged historical right takes a special form due its unique standing from a Jewish standpoint; it symbolizes the unity and independence of Jews as well as a reminder of their political past<sup>41</sup>. Regardless of Zionist false claims, Jews were not the first to sanctify Jerusalem, but they had been forerun in this respect by the Can'nites and Jebusites, circa 3000 BC, long before Jews could develop a sense of sanctity for the city as a result their suffering and persecution in the Diaspora<sup>42</sup>.
- The claim by world Jewry to a historical right to Palestine is ungrounded, for they do not make up an individual nation of their own, but they are individuals in the nations, in which they live and whose language they speak. In terms of history, anthropology and law, such false claim cannot hold as a pretext returning to Palestine. The argument that today's Jews are the posterity of the Hebraic could not be corroborated with solid evidence by Jewish scientist and the argument that Jews rather Arabs are the residents of Palestine is an ungrounded and uncorroborated claim that stands not to reason.

It is an *apriori* that Jews were not the first inhabitants of Palestine; Canaanites had lived there some 5,000 years before and their presence had remained undisrupted. Perhaps their ownership of the land had been the earliest known and is even more powerful than Zionist claims<sup>43</sup>

In fact, the Israelis were not the first to inhabit Palestine, but, after their exodus from Egypt, they came to the Land of Canaan as invaders in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century BC. Never before had Palestine fully succumbed to Jewish invaders. Moreover, fourteen centuries of Arab rule were quite enough to entrench its Arabism. Therefore, the claims by Jews to their historical right and legitimacy of returning to Palestine are ungrounded. Historically speaking, the Jews' relations with

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Palestine were brief, intermittent and unstable. They had started and soon terminated since long and were based on invasion and occupation<sup>44</sup>. It was only for 73 years that Jews independently ruled Jerusalem during the reign of David and Solomon. Even during that period, Jerusalem had never escaped indirect subjection sometimes to Phoenicians and others to Egyptians. Moreover, the Maccabean rule had been only of a period of autonomy under the Greek sovereignty over Jerusalem<sup>45</sup>.

To say that Jews were unjustly displaced is an exaggeration, because many of them had migrated from Palestine for economic reasons up the time before Roman occupation<sup>46</sup>. According to Torah, God had forsaken Jews, because they reneged on their promises and so He gave free hand to the Roman commander Titus<sup>47</sup> to evict them from Jerusalem and destroyed the Temple in 70 AD.

The claim of international covenants to create a national home for the Jews in and to allow them to migrate to Palestine under the pretext of their persecution in central and east Europe is also ungrounded. What right can the Zionist movement have to uproot a whole people from its homeland and replace them with parts of other peoples<sup>48</sup>? In fact, the Zionist myth of eternal religious and historical rights in Palestine can never recognize the existence of another people! In the face of these false Zionist claims, the Arabs who have been since long living in and tilling the land of Palestine have stronger and more solid rights.

In conclusion, we can safely affirm that Jerusalem had been an essential target of the Zionist scheme to occupy Palestine that managed during the British Mandate (1922-48) to reverse demographic realities by dumping the country with immigrants, increasing the area of agricultural land owned by the Jewish Agency and controlling economic facilities.

After the first Arab-Israeli war (1948), the Zionist movement reaped the fruits of its scheming in Jerusalem, with the Truce Agreement between Jordan and Israel on April 24, 1949 consecrating a de facto division of the holy city.<sup>49</sup> Accordingly, Jordan was assigned the administration of the

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old Jerusalem, comprising the Holy Place within the perimeter in addition to parts of the new city beyond. Following the third Arab-Israeli war (1967), proceeded, as shown above, to carry out the final phase judaizing Jerusalem, by expanding settlement operations. The object is to Judaize the city of Jerusalem and to turn Arab Jerusalem into a small islet within a Jewish sea. By so doing, Israel seeks to isolate Jerusalem from its Arab milieu and thus entrench its sovereignty over it, in contravention with the Geneva and Human Rights Conventions and United Nations Resolutions. It appears from the foregoing that the tragedy of Jerusalem is a basic episode of the Palestinian tragedy and no settlement of this problem without a comprehensive settlement of the Palestinian question.

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