

Strategies for Jerusalem: geopolitics of Israelization

The 1948 armistice fractured Jerusalem along a line between Jordan and Israeli areas. The two counterparts imposed their own development policy over the section they controlled respectively. On the Eve of 1967 war, Jerusalem was divided.

Since 1967 the city has been reunified and has been come under Jewish-Israeli sovereignty. On the other hand, the Arab-Palestinian control has become a minority. Hence the Israeli politics aimed to include East Jerusalem in Israel because of security and because of the devotion to hierosolymitana symbol. 64 square kilometers were sectioned from West Bank. Consequently they were renamed “East Jerusalem” and were annexed to West Jerusalem, an Israeli possession. The settlement strategy and the structured control were to impose a heavy and irreversible Israeli presence: a sort of “Existing Situation” enabled to support Israeli success in case of a possible negotiation.

The Israelization focused on the colonization of the Old City and its surroundings, on outskirts buildings. Road transport got increased in order to considerably settle the East Jerusalem urban areas. Outside Jerusalem, the Israelization focused on creating districts and on trying to maintain Jewish areas continuity.

In order to control Palestine and to prevent its effective sovereignty, the Israeli government needs 5-7 % of West Bank, corresponding to the area occupied by settlers and road bypasses.

When the urban agglomeration of Giv’at Ze’ev, Ma’ale Adumim and Gush Etzion are annexed in “Big Jerusalem” under Israeli control, they will dominate the whole central territory of West Bank and they will oppose the Palestinian urban sprawl continuity. The self-sufficiency of each Palestinian State is due to this essential continuity. What’s more, they act as buffer states because they separate Jerusalem from the Arab surroundings such as Ramallah and Bethlehem firstly. Secondly they remove the West Bank inhabitants and deprive Jerusalem of its principal urban role. Around Jerusalem there is Big Jerusalem, which is its current urban boundary.

The territory of Big Jerusalem has a half-moon form and enlarges upon a N-E, S-E, S-W axis over an area of 500 square kilometers. Cut and territorial policies are to prevent high Palestinian urban agglomerations, such as Ramallah's in the North and Bethlehem's in the South. This kind of agglomeration is a great obstacle for urban density. In order to break away the Jerusalem geographical isolation, the best ethnic and geographical area is located in the inhabited Western Israeli and in the inhabited Eastern Arab areas.

The main highways and the ring roads go through Jerusalem. Their aim is to establish a regional control as regards infrastructure in order to turn the city into a metropolitan area. The urban Jerusalem extends a big area including 10% of West Bank, which is equivalent to 440 square kilometers. Here there are 75% of West Bank settlers and the most Israeli buildings.

The road network in Jerusalem is in favour of the urban integration into Big Jerusalem and into Urban Jerusalem. Therefore the colonial agglomeration outside the urban boundaries such as Giv'at Ze'ev in the North, Ma'ale Adumim in the East and Gush Etzion in the South can be reached by safe landlines and can link the inland, the new Israeli land settlements in Jerusalem, to the Western areas of the city.

Far from being an inaccessible *cul de sac*, the Israeli urban sprawl policy had turned Jerusalem into an important road junction and into a main area in Israel.

The government has power over Jerusalem thanks to the military control over the two sides of the city. The goal of setting the Israeli control through urban settlement and infrastructure integration was reached despite the rivalry between different departments. Nevertheless the economic launching, the Palestinian population growth and its social involvement are weak and undermine the current control. The Palestinian growth asks for new demographic goals and new areas for buildings, jobs and public services for Jewish people. The constraint in building new houses will probably rise against the Israeli government because it had just compromised the Israeli sovereignty agreement through a strong municipal administration. The possible urban sprawl would cause demographical issues and the recent barrier seems to not have solved the urban and political issues.

According to the goal of separating Jerusalem from West Bank, the Israeli government has organized the building of a road, the “Ring road”, which rounds the current Jerusalem boundary and links the East Jerusalem settlements to West Jerusalem. The road reinforces the Jerusalem separation from the Palestinian districts, villages or towns which are outside the urban boundaries and they will be isles apart.

The separating goal was pursued through the building of two settlements bands: an inner ring surrounding on all sides West Jerusalem and an external ring including Giv’at Ze’ev in the North, Ma’ale Adumim in the East, Betar and Efrata in the South-West.

Therefore the real city separation from the West Bank inland takes place reinforcing the pre-existing settlements along the external Ring Road and separating the Palestinian villages inside the Ring from other villages or other towns. Therefore the Palestinian district territorial continuity is broken off through a highway network that links the Jewish pre-existing settlements. The road junction takes place through high speed road system and is used only by Israeli people.

The Israelianization policy effects had risen widespread reactions and common behaviours among Israeli people. This attitude has underlined the separation, the isolation of Palestinian people from Israeli infrastructures.

As regards the Old City where there are colonial control over the Jewish district and its growth, the colonization expanded to other Old City districts. The famous Jerusalem mayor Kollek shot for a mosaic aspect in the East side in order that each district maintains its own ethnic identity and conforms to the general integration at the same time.

Pursuing the mosaic policy, the municipal administration hasn’t reunified the city and hasn’t encouraged a real negotiation with groups of people in Jerusalem. Even if the government tried to encourage Palestinian community through attractive social advantages and modern attitude, on the other hand it discriminated, repressed and shunned the Palestinian people. It’s the reason why they have kept a sense of otherness. The Jerusalem issue yet remains unsolved despite of the Israel sovereignty, the Palestinian social and political break-up. From the Jewish-Israeli point of view Jerusalem hasn’t been normalized and the Palestinian deterritorialization is far to be completed.

The split Palestinian situation is due to the deep feeling of otherness in the Palestinian inhabitants in Jerusalem. It is detached from West Bank and hasn't found new links in the social, urban and economic development process, that the Israel government had expected.

The non-acknowledgment strategy allowed the government and the Israel administration to easily realize the Jewishization-Israelization of the city purpose. An organized subject was used, it was useful to represent and to consider the Palestinian people's behaviours and interests in order to contrast the Israeli monoethnic plan.

Besides the Jewish classical pressure, a new hostility developed between secular and extremely orthodox group. It caused a residential segregation primarily based on their own behaviour rather than their own ethnic group. An urban conflict developed between extremely orthodox groups and laymen, Jewish, and orthodox people. The former's life style was extremely traditional and was based on life in the *shtetl*, which are typical Jewish villages in Eastern Europe. As regards the latter, they were in favour of a modern, laic, western urbanity.

Therefore most of inhabitants in that area are involved in the human and functional isolation model. East Jerusalem is getting free from Palestinian Gaza and Palestinian West Bank.

Today the Jerusalem identity aspect is so strong and precise because is now conscious to be Israeli.

This is the content that will be developed in the final analysis, where the sources and the influence in the Israeli-Palestinian relationship will be elucidated.